



**A History of Migrant Labourers from Swaziland to South Africa
1920-1995**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (History Studies) in the School of Social Sciences, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the historical patterns and trends in mine labour migration to South Africa between 1920 and 1995. It explores the socio-economic impact on the lives of Swazi migrants and their families and societies. Previous studies on Swazi migrant labour are limited in scope and did not sufficiently focus on the factors that shaped migrancy particularly its relationship with Swazi miners, ex-miners, and their dependents. This thesis, therefore, sets out to fill the gap in the historiography of Swaziland. In writing this thesis the author relied on archival sources from Swaziland National Archives, documents retrieved from migrant offices, Annual Reports, books, and newspaper articles. These documentary sources were critically analysed and complemented with oral interviews with ex-migrants, miners, labour officers, and the dependences of migrants. The thesis was underpinned by the Marxist theoretical model and the social history theory to highlight the voices of the marginalised. The study reveals the different strategies used by recruiting agents to entice Swazi labour, and the trends of mine labour migrancy. It also reveals the competition for unskilled labour and the Swazi migrant's experiences of working in the South African Rand mines. This thesis has also addressed social issues and how migrancy affected families left behind. It further reveals the impact of Voluntary Deferred Pay (VDP) on Swazi miners and its impact on the ex-miners and their dependents. This study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge of migrant labour studies, focusing on Swaziland in particular and Southern Africa in general. The study promotes international migration as an important phenomenon in socioeconomic factors of sending societies such as Swaziland. It adds to the histories of sub-Saharan Africa, thus adding new perspectives to the growing literature on the migrant labour history of Swaziland. It also fills a gap in the historiography of labour migration as it covers a longitudinal period, colonial to the post-colonial period.

DECLARATION

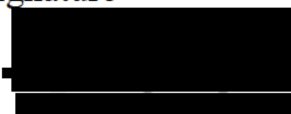
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the Almighty God who gave me the strength to soldier on and pursue my studies; to my mom Catrine Mkhabela, for her prayers, inspiration and tolerance; to my wife, Dr Nokuphila Matsenjwa for her love, motivation, and sacrifices throughout the entire duration of my studies; and to my daughters Phiwayinkhosi and Sinemelusi Matsenjwa for understanding and accepting that father needed to go and study. Thank you so much, without you all, this journey would have remained a dream.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TEBA	The Employment Bureau of Africa
NRC	Native Recruitment Cooperation
SNA	Swaziland National Achieves
VDP	Voluntary Deferred Pay
WNLA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association
EAC	European Advisory Council
SWAMMIWA	Swaziland Migrant Mine Workers Association
TOS	Times of Swaziland
ERPM	East Rand Proprietary Mines
NOLA	Natal Coal Owners Labour Association
NUMSA	National Union of Miners of South Africa

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Labour migration to the mines is not a new phenomenon in world history.¹ In Southern Africa, its uniquely distinguishing feature was the movement of adult males unaccompanied by their wives and families to the South African mining towns. This male-centred migrant labour system was the basis of the mining and agricultural-based economy of South Africa that took off with the introduction of the colonial capitalist mode of production.² This system drew African migrants from all over southern and central Africa as unskilled mine workers.

With the finding of gold in the Witwatersrand in 1886, the pressure was put on Africans to sell their labour to the white capitalist enterprise by colonial administrators although some “natives” voluntarily migrated to the South African mines. The pressure took two forms; first, the deprivation of land and taxation in the form of cash. These circumstances forced many Africans to integrate into the capitalist system of wage labour. Africans would also voluntarily migrate to buy a range of goods such as guns, clothes, and food. In contrast, others saw it as an initiation practice for prestige and relevance in their societies.³ Africans were not passive victims to be quickly drawn into wage labour. They tried to minimize the disturbing impact of labour demands and maintain a degree of control over their own lives in a variety of ways. In Kenya, the locals used several strategies of adjustment and opposition development as a response to capitalist exploitation. This included evasion of labour recruitment and active resistance to it, and abandonment and work incompetence.⁴ Africans living in the areas between the Limpopo and the Zambezi avoided the Rhodesian mines. Shona communities would sell maize to avoid mine labour.⁵ Booth stated that the Pedi and Tswana developed as migrants for the Cape and Transvaal in significant numbers as early as the 1840s. They were followed by the Tsonga and the Basotho,

¹ In the United State of America, Mexican proved to be efficient labourers in mining industries and offered cheap labour. See Samuel Bryan. “Mexican Immigrants in United States”. *Digital History*. https://www.digital history.uh.edu > disp_textbook (accessed 8 May 2017).

² Francis Wilson. *Labour in South African Gold Mines, 1911-1969*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972) p. 6.

³ Isaac Schapera. *Migrant Labour and Tribal Life: A Study of Condition in the Bechuanaland Protectorate*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947) p. 32.

⁴ Sharon Sticher. *Migrant Labour in Kenya Capitalism and African Response 1895-1975*. (London: Longman, 1982) p. 3.

⁵ Giovanni, Arrighi. “Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: A study of Proletarianisation of African Peasantry in Rhodesia”. *Journal of Development Studies*. (1971, 6:3) pp. 197-234.

arriving at the labour force in reaction to the continuous necessities of capital amassing in South Africa.⁶

The Swazis were latecomers to this labour migration trend. Swaziland remained outside the capitalist encirclement until the late 1890s because labour migration was not a common undertaking, and there was no need for it. Swazis were reliant on subsistent livelihood. This sustained them well not to be sunk to wage labour during the early period of mine labour recruitment.⁷ This means of support sustained Swazis to spurn the mine labour employment until 1894. After 1894 Swaziland was hit by sequences of unprecedented environmental disasters. Crops were atrophied by swarms of locusts such that the harvest of 1896 was almost devastated. The capability of Swazis to feed themselves was put under considerable pressure resorting to migrant labour. This burden took two forms; first, the Black population was dispossessed of their land, and second, compelled to pay taxes in cash.⁸ This state of affairs forced them to participate in the capitalist system of wage labour.

To some extent, the study of labour migrants necessitates an appreciation of the political, social, and economic setting within which the system functioned. In this specific case, it is imperative to pay due regard to the pre-colonial Swaziland socio-economic formation; missionary impacts; the infiltration of commercial capital; the colonial encounter and the nature of the colonial state; the conflicting role of the chiefs; and the limits enforced by natural disasters and the environment. This tactic is essential to account for the pattern that labour migrancy took in Swaziland. It cannot be overlooked that it was mostly men who opted to migrate to the South African mines from Swaziland during the colonial period. However, Bozzoli argued that on the contrary, the subordination of women in pre-colonial Swazi society made male labour migration conceivable.⁹

The study seeks to explore the history of the patterns and trends in mine labour migration and its socio-economic impact on the lives of Swazi migrants and their families and their societies. It begins in 1920 a period that first saw organised recruitment and Swazis joining the migrant system and, ends in 1995 a period when South African labour policies changed due to the end of

⁶ Alan Booth. "Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour 1945-1960". *Journal of South African Studies*. (1986, 13:1) pp. 125-150.

⁷ Jonathan Crush. *Struggle for Swazi Labour 1890-1920* (Kingston: Queen's University Press, 1983) p.14.

⁸ Crush, *Struggle for Swazi Labour 1890-1920*, p. 45.

⁹ Belinda Bozzoli. "Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies". *Journal of Southern African Studies*. (1983, 9:2) p.123.

apartheid policies. It further investigates how mine labour migration impacted the health condition of migrants and their families left behind in Swaziland. Moreover, it focuses on the contours of migrant labour flow from Swaziland to South Africa, from 1920 to 1995, the experience of Swazi migrants on the rand, and the impact it had on those left behind. Such forms have not been adequately explored in the historiography of Swazi migrant labour.

1.2 Literature review and justification for the choice of the topic

1.2.1 Introduction

This section reviews the literature explored in the thesis, which facilitated Swazi migrant labour from the period 1920-1995 to identify the trends and patterns of the labour issues in the country and their socio-economic impact on the families and communities. It also identifies gaps in the literature that the study hopes to fill.

1.2.2 An Overview of International Labour migrations

The historical nature of migrant labour phenomenon revealed that the beginning of the contract labour migration to South Africa, from Swaziland and other southern African countries, might be related to the modern history of international migration and, therefore, interleaved into the second period of world migration which was the industrial period which began early in the nineteenth century.¹⁰ According to Massey, throughout this period, international migration was allied to the economic development of Europe and the spread of colonialism. The European migrants were crossing the ocean in search of a better life, exchanging an industrializing region intensive in labour for another industrializing region intensive in the land.¹¹ The Southern African migrants were, and are still, exiting countries described by a shortage of capital and jobs, and by plenty of reserves of labour, going to a nation more intensive in capital, not to settle but to satisfy the demand for cheaper labour in a rapidly growing economy.¹²

Labour history is a popular topic and has attracted a plethora of scholars. These scholars have approached the study of the history of labour migration from different perspectives. Hoerder, studied migration in the Americas, he pointed out that thousands of immigrants, reached the

¹⁰ Douglas Massey. "The Social and Economic Origins of Immigration". *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. (1990, 510:1) pp.60-72.

¹¹Massey, "The Social and Economic Origins of Immigration", p. 75.

¹²Massey, "The Social and Economic Origins of Immigration", p. 80.

Americas in pursuit of prospects in the New World while many others were forcibly transferred to provide cheap slave labour for the plantations and mines of the new colonies. The movements continued throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, after most of the former colonies had acquired their independence and slavery had been abolished.¹³ Immigration was formally exhilarated almost everywhere in the Americas, to settle the sparsely settled hinterlands and to attract specific skills and know-how from the Old World.¹⁴

Passel argued that migration in America is a two-way process, with many coming to settle definitively, while others come with specific plans for a temporary stay and still others return when their plans and dreams are not realised. But persons returning have generally remained a fraction of those arriving until the Great Depression of the 1930s and the Second World War essentially put a strong brake on inward movements in many countries of the Western Hemisphere.¹⁵

Del Boca and Venturine studied the history of Italian migration and observed that Italy emerged as a country with a long history of migration. During the period 1861 -1976, approximately 26 million people immigrated to European countries while others migrated to North and South America.¹⁶ They argue that most of the immigrants constituted artisans and peasants coming from the different regions of Italy, but mainly from Mezzogiorno, South of Italy where farming was high than in other regions. Most of the labourers were agricultural and did not have much experience in the industry such as mining and textiles. The reason indicated for migration was on the one hand the slow and difficult development of the Italian economy and the economic expansion which characterised other countries between the second half of the nineteenth century and World War I.

¹³ Dirk Hoerder. "People on the move; Migration, Acculturation and Ethnic Interaction in Europe and North America". *German Historical Institute Washington, D.C Annual Lecture Series*, Providence/Oxford (1993, 6:14) pp. 15.

¹⁴ Jeffrey Passel. "The Size and Characteristics of the Unauthorized Migrant Population in the U.S: Estimates Based on the March 2005 Current Population". *Pew Hispanic Centre Report*. (March 7, 2006) p.47.

¹⁵ Passel, "The Size and Characteristics of the Unauthorized Migrant Population in the U.S", p. 65.

¹⁶ Danial Del Boca and Alessandra Venturine. "Italian Migration," *Discussion Paper*, No. 938, Institute of Labour Economics (IZA).2003.

¹⁷ John Gould. "European Inter-Continental Emigration, 1815-1914: Patterns and Causes". *Journal of European Economic History*. (1979, 8:3) pp.593-679

Also, poverty and natural disasters were another reason for Italian immigration as well as political instability. Gould revealed that after World War II, Italians emigrated mostly towards Europe, especially Germany. In the same years, the development of the industrial North stimulated mass internal migration from the South to the North-West.¹⁷ He pointed out that, the Italian emigrants would remit monies home which raised the household income thus easing budget constraints. Italian male migration also had an impact on gender roles. Women left behind had greater decision-making powers over the use of the extra income stream facilitated by remittances.¹⁸

Another study undertaken by Skeldon found contradictory proof concerning the impact of income stanching from remittances based on household surveys from South-East Asia. He found that a substantial quantity of internal remittances is spent on visible consumption such as consumer or luxury goods, yet also that these remittances increase education and housing expenditures. Researchers concentrating largely on rural areas in South-East Asia have measured how remittances modify economic circumstances in migrated households hitherto they largely disagree over the distribution of activities viewed as consumption and, investment.¹⁹ Some studies revealed that countryside to urban migration is likely to cost communities massive labour market shifts. Calderon and Ibanez, undertook a study employing data from internally disseminated people in Colombia, and observed the labour market outcomes connected to migration-related supply shocks. Their judgments disclosed that the unexpected migrant labour surplus resulted in considerable negative impacts on the wages and employment views of all workers, and in particular for low-skilled workers.²⁰ The impact of migration has also been

¹⁸ Gould, "European Inter-Continental Emigration, 1815-1914: Patterns a Causes", pp.593-679

¹⁹ Ronald Skeldon. "Migration and Poverty Reduction in Tajikistan". *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*. (2007, 1:23) p.14.

²⁰ Valentina Calderon and Ana.Maria Ibáñez. *Labour Market Effects of Migration-Related Supply Shocks: Evidence from Internally Displaced Populations in Colombia*. MICROCON Research Working Paper 14, Brighton: MICROCON (2009), <https://core.ac.ac.uk/download/pdf/645787.pdf>. p.21

²¹ Max Tuñón. "Internal Migration in China: Features and Responses". ILO Office, Beijing (2006) p.113. http://www.oit.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo/beijing/documents/publication/wcms_158634.pdf, accessed 25 November 2019.

presented by Tunon whose study examines the effects of internal migratory movements in China; he preserves that they cap in contrary labour market outcomes for urban natives through an overflow of rural migrant labour. The effects, in sending regions can be precarious, in that they can end up with an enormously slim local labour base.²¹

However, there is very insignificant information on how migration impacted the well-being of children left behind by their migrating parents. Hall and Wright have argued that the effect of migration on the well-being of occupant non-migrating children may be either positive or negative, and is essentially arbitrated by a variety of situations in the sending household and outcomes in the receiving region.²² Moreover, confirmation from previous literature proposes that the effects on children left behind are not exclusively attributable to observed migratory movements but a result of various other related conditions. For instance, migrants` children benefit through better nutrition and access to healthcare if the migrant reports positive labour outcomes in the receiving region.²³ A study by Y.Lu and Treiman indicated that acceptance of remittances in Chinese rural households was linked with intensified educational spending and investment in undertakings, which therefore replaced the impact of parental absence. Further findings on the outcomes for children left behind by migrant parents come from studies analysing differences based on the sex of the migrant.²⁴ Such results have been contested by scholars such as Meyerhoefer who noted that parental labour migration in China is associated with a distinguished interruption in the educational progress of girls. A finding they suspect is due to shifting girl`s time to domestic chores. This was noted more when grandmothers, rather than other prime-aged individuals, were left in charge of non-migrating children.²⁵ The same

²² Katharine Hall and Gemma Wright. "A Profile of Children Living in South Africa in 2008". *Studies in Economics and Econometrics*. (2010, 34:3) pp. 45-68.

²³ Hall and Wright. "A Profile of Children Living in South Africa in 2008", p.55.

²⁴ Yau Lu and Donald Treiman. "The Effect of Labour Migration and Remittances on Children`s Education among Blacks in South Africa". *California Centre for Population Research*, (UCLA), 2007
[http://papers.ccpr.ucla.edu/papers/PWP-CCPR-2007-001/PWP-CCPR-2007-001 .pdf](http://papers.ccpr.ucla.edu/papers/PWP-CCPR-2007-001/PWP-CCPR-2007-001.pdf) online, (Accessed, 23. 04 .2018).

²⁵ Chad Meyerhoefer. "The Effect of Parental Labour Migration on Children`s Educational Progress in Rural China". *Review of Economics of the Household*. (2011, 9:3) pp. 379-96.

sentiment is shared by Hanson and Woodruff whose research indicated a deleterious effect of migration on the schooling of older children in Mexico. It proposes that the absenteeism of adult role models in the household may escalate the nurturing responsibilities for girls.²⁶

A lot of studies on migrancy in Southern African societies have found that the effect of male migration on women has both positive and negative features. Migration has increased the women's household income, thereby increasing their social status in the village. The positive aspect shows how women improved their decision-making powers as they became responsible for the household decisions which empower them and as a result improve their status in their communities. These women have improved their status and empowered themselves through improved access to remittance money; increased decision-making about how to invest their money, and greater autonomy in managing household resources. They buy cattle, improve homes, and send children to school.²⁷ However, some negative impact often includes loneliness, insecurity, and abuse. Some women experienced financial exposure because they were abandoned by their husbands after some of the migrants failed to send money for long periods, which contributed to the breakdown of their marriages.

1.2.3 Literature on Labour Migration Studies in Africa and Sub-Sahara

In most areas of the world, labour migration has been viewed as a practically constant process. People migrate with their relatives from one place to another, where they resettle, and the wage earners seek novel occupations. Migrations of this type usually result in an extended stay in the host area and, in many cases, in the long-lasting resettlement of the migrants.

In many countries, however, particularly those in Africa, a diverse labour migration phenomenon exists. Labour migration in Southern Africa stems from two different classes, those seeking permanent residence in the area that they are entering and those who merely seek work for a

²⁶Gordon Hanson and Christopher Woodruff. *Emigration and Educational Attainment in Mexico*. Mimeo, (University of California Press: San Diego, 2003) p.15.

²⁷ See for instance; Scott Yabiku and Victor Agadjanian. "Men's migration and women's fertility in rural Mozambique" Presented at the 2008 Annual meeting of Population Association of America, April 17-19, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3326426>, accessed 15 March 2018; Elizabeth Gordon. "An analysis of the impact of labor migration on the lives of women in Lesotho" *Journal of Development Studies*. (1981, 17:3) pp.59-76; Colin Murray. *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p.85.

limited period, later returning to their homes in the country or region from whence they came. Indeed, the significant proportion of domestic migration by Africans in South Africa is made up of such individuals. These men spend their working life as oscillating migrants or 'men of two worlds' as Houghton named them.²⁸

Migrant labour in Southern Africa was an essential source of livelihood in the rural periphery of sending countries for many years.²⁹ Such arguments revealed that, in any case, South Africa was to close its borders to potential migrants; all the countries would have been poorer before the advent of alternative sources of revenue. Crush highlights the positive impact of labour migration on the sending countries' economies and families.³⁰ Crush and Williams share the same sentiment with Elkan that migration did not lead to the underdevelopment of the societies of origin of the migrant. These authors opine that throughout the continent, labour migration was a feature of African livelihood, and provided development opportunities³¹. Thus, such studies contest the dependency theory and favour that migration positively impacted the economic lives and families of labour-sending countries.

Available studies indicate that the social and economic impact of short-term and permanent migration on both the area providing the migrants and the receiving area is, however, probable to be significantly changed. Social anthropologists, sociologists, and economists have undertaken a substantial number of empirical investigations into the causes of migration and a great deal has been done in Africa itself.³² In reviewing this literature, if one divides the findings into economic and non-economic causes of migration, it becomes evident that, in the past, economic motives have been the dominant elements of migration choice.

²⁸ Hobart Houghton. "Man of Two Worlds: Some Aspects of Migratory Labour". *South African Journal of Economics* (1960, 28:3) p. 177

²⁹ Alan Jeeves. *Migrant Labour in South Africa's mining Economy: The Struggle for the Gold mines labour Supply 1890-1920*. (McGill: Queen's University press, 1985) p.46.

³⁰ Crush, *Struggle for Swazi Labour 1890-1920*, p. 130.

³¹ Jonathan Crush and Vincent Williams, "Labour Migration in Southern Africa Contemporary Trends and Issues. Preliminary Review". Paper Presented at Paper Presented at the ILO Tripartite Forum on Labour Migration in Southern Africa, Pretoria, 29 November 2002, p14.

³² Jonathan Crush and James Wilmot. "Crossing Boundaries. Mine Migrancy in a Democratic South Africa." Institute for Democracy, Cape Town & International Development Research Centre, 1995, p 45; Fion De Vletter. "Labour Migration to South Africa: The Lifeblood for Southern Mozambique". *Journal of Southern Africa*, (2000, 24:1) pp.137-153; Patrick Harries. *Work, Culture, and Identity: Migrant Labourers in Mozambique and South Africa, c. 1860-1910*. (London: James Currey, 1994) p. 55.

As early as 1935, Horrel in his study stated that the reasons for the migration of labour from the area that is now Malawi were overwhelmingly economic. He agreed that it was indeed possible for young men to migrate purely from a sense of adventure. Still, he argued that this did not provide sufficient explanation for the second, third, or subsequent journeys.³³ Scholars such as Hanna, Houghton and Jerome, and others all support the hypothesis that economic motives are the primary cause of an individual's desire to migrate either permanently or temporarily. These studies show the economic reasons as determining factors for the migration of Africans from their societies.³⁴ Such findings are incredibly informative to this study which investigates the history of labour migration in Swaziland.

Pursuing in the same vein, Moyo demonstrated how migration involving the young and able-bodied males robbed the countries of their productive manpower and was a factor in underdevelopment.³⁵ Murray claimed that migrant labour in the sending communities proved to be the single most destructive force in the economic development of society.³⁶ Murray undertook a study of the effect of labour migration in Lesotho. Her study shed light on the impact migrant labour has on the families of migrants. Murray's *Families Divided*; concentrated on the effect of migrant labour in Lesotho, an anthropological, field-work-based study of labour migrancy and marital relations in Lesotho during the 1970s. Murray's work marked a leading development on most previous accounts on labour migration.³⁷

During the period of colonial rule, few critical studies of migrant labour emerged.³⁸ Such studies shed light and challenged earlier models of migration. This approach to the study of migrant labour history is no doubt important in understanding the harmful impact of labour migration in Southern Africa. Mitchell set out to investigate the causes of migration in Africa, arguing that in many African countries, patterns of temporary migration have become entrenched as a way of life among certain sectors of society. He further commented on migration in Africa arguing that any theory of labour migration that is to be adequate in an African context must set out to explain

³³ Murial Horrel. "The African Homelands of South Africa". *South African Institute of Race Relations*, (1973) pp. 45-55

³⁴ Horrel, "The African Homelands of South Africa," p 47.

³⁵ Moyo, *Migration Labour and Underdevelopment in Southern Africa*, p.34.

³⁶ Murry, *Families Divided: The impact of migrant laboring Lesotho.* p. 67.

³⁷ Murry, *Families Divided: The impact of migrant laboring Lesotho.*, p.65

³⁸ Murry, *Families Divided: The impact of migrant laboring Lesotho*, p70.

not only why men leave their tribal homes, but also why they should consistently circulate between their tribal homes and the labour centers.³⁹

Such studies demonstrate the negative impact of labour migration on the sending countries as it affected production, thus their economy declined. Booth argued that migration became increasingly disruptive through the years and that by the mid-1950s between 25 and 30 per cent of Swazi working males were away from their homes. Their absence contributed to the underdevelopment and poverty experienced in the native areas they originated from.⁴⁰ This study presents the underdevelopment theory of labour migration to South African mines.

Other scholars underscore the causes of labour migration and underplay colonial coercive policies.⁴¹ For instance, Harries focused on different dynamics, which led to mine labour migration. He argued that it was not only colonial coercive policies and poverty in the sending countries, which led to labour migration. Africans sometimes voluntarily migrated to the mine centres to work and be able to buy an increasing range of consumer goods such as guns, clothes, and food.⁴²

Schapera for his part viewed labour migration in Southern Africa from an anthropological point of view by studying migrant societies.⁴³ He claimed that the migration of men in Southern Africa was part of their culture of initiation, relevance, and prestige. Schapera further argued that the Bantu have always been a migrating people having migrated from West-Central areas of Africa to the South. The Bantu were a warrior and hunting people; therefore, since the men do not engage in warrior activities, migration replaced this initiation into manhood. He presented a different theme on the historiography of migrant labour. Schapera points out that the main reason why men migrate to South Africa is that an incantation of work in the mines has occupied the place of warfare as an initiation rite of adulthood. During pre-colonial times teenagers recognized

³⁹ John Mitchell. "The Causes of Labour Migration", *The Bulletin of the Inter-African Labour Institute*, (1959) p. 24.

⁴⁰ Alan Booth, "Early History of Labour in Swaziland", p. 132.

⁴¹ For similar view see for instance, Harries. *Work, Culture and Identity: Migrant Laborers in Mozambique and South Africa*, p. 45.

⁴² Harries, *Work, Culture and Identity: Migrant Laborers in Mozambique and South Africa*, p 65.

⁴³ Schapera, *Migrant Labour and Tribal Life: A Study of Condition in the Bechuanaland Protectorate*, p. 32.

⁴⁴ Schapera, *Migrant Labour and Tribal Life: A Study of Condition in the Bechuanaland Protectorate*, p.45.

⁴⁵ Charles Van Onselen. *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia 1900-1933*. (London: Pluto Press, 1976) p. 40.

their manhood by going to war. With the end of tribal warfare in their societies initiation to manhood is viewed as going to work in the mines.⁴⁴ The study by Schapera, shed light on and challenges the models of economic motives model of labour migration. The current study makes use of such a model in investigating the causes of mine labour migration from Swaziland to South Africa.

Based on available studies, the publication in 1976 of van Onselen's *Chibaro* was a turning point. In the development of locating the history of the Southern Rhodesian mining industry, van Onselen examined not only approaches for capital accumulation in the background of colonial political economy, but also the African miners' artistic and militant responses. His assumption, however, was destabilized by a tendency to outrank miners' experiences to a suppression control/resistance model that was unable to capture the full complexity of workers' lives.⁴⁵ Schapiro differs from this sentiment as his study revealed that several Africans migrated in pursuit of work and freedom from the control and patriarchal order in the rural areas. Schapiro's work focuses on the experiences of young men who migrate from their rural communities to the South African Rand mines to define their manhood away from the controlling orders of rural chiefdoms.⁴⁶ Many rural young men preferred migrating to the urban centers or South African mines because of the control of their movement and everyday life by colonial authorities. The movement impacted the cultural way of life of those migrating to urban centers. This cultural impact has been explored by Moodie, Bonnin, and Statis. Their study was based on the articulation of migration in terms of identity, masculinity, and social mobilization of workers in the mining compounds of South Africa. Moodie for his part focuses on the uniqueness of migrant workers and how creations of masculinity changed over the 20th-century continuum amongst Xhosa, Sotho, and Tswana mine workers. Sotho migrants in their communities view themselves differently from those who had not been to the mines. They differ in the way they dress, hairstyles, and dialects from ordinary members of their communities⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Schapera, *Migrant Labour and Tribal Life: A Study of Condition in the Bechuanaland Protectorate*, p.32.

⁴⁷ Dunbar Moodie and Vivian Ndatshe. *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) p. 55.

⁴⁸ Moodie Dunbar and Ndatshe Vivienne. "Migrancy and Male Sexuality on the South African Goldmines." *Journal of Southern African Studies*. (1988, 14:2) p.45.

⁴⁹ Moodie and Ndatshe, *Going for Gold; Men, Mines, and Migration*, p. 55.

Another study undertaken by Moodie was a sociological study that spreads its latitude into the 1980s and is "about character, about the practical integrity of black South African migrant miners".⁴⁸ Moodie's six chapters explore numerous subjects allied to life in the mining compounds. These comprise social networks and solidarities, control and resistance, sexuality, and "faction fights". He examined how the style of work development, awareness, and community life formed work struggles and community struggles of workers.⁴⁹ Apart from not focusing on the experiences of the Swazi miners in his study, Moodie also concentrated on "experiences" without analytically linking them to measurable and historical factors.⁵⁰ However, this study builds, on the works of these social historians. It gained insight from the literature by Moodie when dealing with the experiences of Swazi migrants in the South African mines. Harries' *Work Culture and Identity* is a historiographical and significant development study that preceded the works of Jeeves whose methods to labour migrants were institutional, focusing on personalities and the infrastructure of labour recruitment and mining. Harries's work is also macroscopic in focus, it does not only deal with the Shangaan people in southern Mozambique and Portuguese colonial encroachment but also with the emigration of Shangaan labour to Natal, Kimberley, and the Witwatersrand. Harries also unpacks the struggles around the making of Shangaan labour central to gold mining. And while favouring culture, Harries also focuses his attention on processes and changes over time and accords a significant role to material factors.⁵¹ His work was informative in the current study as it traces the history of Swazi migrant labour from 1920-1995.

⁵⁰ Moodie, and Ndatshe, *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration*, p.65.

⁵¹ Harries, *Work, Culture, and Identity: Migrant Labour in Mozambique and South Africa*, p.115.

⁵² See also Hilder Kuper. *Uniform of Colour: A Study of White-Black Relationships in Swaziland* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand university Press, 1947); Alan Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968". *South African Labour Bulletin*. (1982, 34:57); Crush, "Struggle for Swazi Labour," p.116; Fion. de Vletter (ed.). *The Swazi Rural Homestead*. (Kwaluseni: Social Science Research Unit, University of Swaziland, 1983); Hamilton Simelane. *Swaziland moves: Perceptions and Patterns on Modern Migration*, (Cape Town: South African Migration Project, SAMPI, 2004).

⁵³ See also Kuper, *Uniform of Color: A Study of White-Black Relationships in Swaziland*, p. 58; Booth. "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968", p.45; Crush, "Struggle for Swazi Labour", p.116; de Vletter (ed.), *The Swazi Rural Homestead*, p.65; Simelane. *Swaziland moves: Perceptions and Patterns on Modern Migration*, p.28.

1.2.4 Literature on migrant labour in Swaziland

Study on Swazi mine labour migration is minimum in scope. A few scholars devoted their research to the issue of the Swazi labour market.⁵² However, most of their studies were limited in scope, and most covered the post-colonial period. The literature reviewed in the study focused on the historical overview of labour migration to the South African mines. The positions within which the Swazi labour migration to South Africa has transpired also refer to those situations that force people to abandon their customary places of residence and move to other areas where they can accumulate wealth and improve their lives. When such circumstances affect the communities where they come from and their socio-economic well-being, and their family, it presents a negative impact worth investigation.⁵³ For example, the colonial coercive policies such as taxation and land alienation together with natural disasters had the consequence of compelling people to cross the border to South African mines. The following is a brief review of the published research on Swazi labour migration to South Africa. Normally, the Swazi labour migration to South Africa has been approached in terms of its inspiration (push-factors) inside of Swaziland and its easing (pull-factors) in South Africa.⁵⁴

Booth examined the factors which formed the strains for Swazi labour during the post-World War II period. He demonstrated how the competition for Swazi labour affected both the recruiting agencies and the recruited Swazi migrants. Booth pointed out that the atmosphere of labour recruiting in the post-war period in Swaziland was carefully linked to the nature of industrialist powers at play in the country. He points out that migration became increasingly disruptive through the years and that by mid-1950 between 25 and 30 per cent of Swazi working males were away from their homes. Their absence underwrote the underdevelopment and poverty in the native regions they originated from.⁵⁵ Simelane examined how Swaziland experienced fundamental economic changes under British rule.⁵⁶ The above studies, whilst significant are limited in scope, in that they did not sufficiently focus on how migrancy impacts the Swazi miners, their families as well as the economy.

⁵⁴ Jonathan Crush and Vincent Williams, "Labour Migration in Southern Africa Contemporary Trends and Issues. A Preliminary Review". Paper Presented at Paper Presented at the ILO Tripartite Forum on Labour Migration in Southern Africa, Pretoria, November 2002, p.35.

⁵⁵ Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market 1900-1968", p.37.

⁵⁶ Simelane, *Swaziland moves*, p. 85.

Several studies show that the desire to search for employment in the South African mines by the majority of migrants was the most important reason for the increase in migration to South African mines by Swazi males.⁵⁷ It has been argued that the great level of poverty that characterized the Swaziland populace, mostly in the countryside, intensified by the decline in production in subsistence agriculture led to an increase in migration. Also, compounding the situation was the inability of the country to offer employment for unskilled Swazis in other sectors of the economy thus raising the poverty level. Such challenges have been viewed as the main driving force of the existing undocumented labour migrants to South African mines. Furthermore, in this dreadful state of poverty, it was crucial to also reflect on the impacts of natural catastrophes such as drought and floods.⁵⁸

Recent studies have begun to challenge earlier models of migration, Macdonald, for example in his study on the lives and times of African migrants and immigrants in post-apartheid South Africa, established that networks played a key role in the migration method of the greater part of migrants, mainly of those coming from traditional source countries. Macdonald found that amongst the Swazi migrants, encompassed in the model, some of them had places to live in whites in South Africa before arrival, others had some extended members of their families already working in South Africa and some had a friend or related member of their communities before arrival.⁵⁹

Koket *al* explains migrant networks as sets of relational connections that link migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in foundation and destination areas through links of kinship, friendship, and shared community of origin. They encompass the movement of new migrants from their place of origin to the destination area and the contrary flow of former migrants returning home. Moreover, networks' purposes were to work as motivating migration, simplifying migration, and guiding migration.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ See also Crush and Williams, "Labour Migration in Southern Africa Contemporary Trends", p.45; Murry, *Families Divided: The impact of migrant labour in Lesotho*, p.65; de Vletter, *Labour migration and agricultural development in Southern Africa*, p.60.

⁵⁸ de Vletter, *Labour migration and agricultural development in Southern Africa*, p.125.

⁵⁹ David McDonald. *On Borders. Perspectives on International Migration in Southern Africa*. (New York: St Maris Press, 2000) p.95

⁶⁰ Pieter Koket *al*. "Migration in South and Southern Africa. Dynamics and determinants" *Human Science Research Council* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006) p.227.

⁶¹ Donald Taylor. "What about the future? Long-term migration potential to South Africa from, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe." In McDonald, D. A. (ed.) *On Borders: Perspectives on International Migration in South Africa*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000) pp.151-167.

However, such a study has been contested by Taylor and Barlow in their proportional study on the migration perspective to South Africa from Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, which divulges the fact that Swazis who anticipate migrating were not as much interested in having family in South Africa. Such migrants' primary choice to migrate was founded on more basic needs, and the procedure would be introduced and accomplished with or without the support of family and friends. Taylor and Barlow's study reveals that for many Swazi's family encouragement was not a determining reason for migration purpose, though it was understood as significant.⁶¹

Different migration literature highlights the effect of labour migration on the family remaining behind, scholars such as Booth, Crush, Kuper, and de Vletter devoted an anthropological, fieldwork-based study of Homestead, State, and labour migration in colonial Swaziland.⁶² Booth's study shows that it seems evident from the returns and remittances that migrant labour positively impacted the communities of migrant labourers. Once that occurred, then more and more homesteads became inextricably committed to migrant wage income. As youths acquired bride-wealth independent of their fathers at a younger age than the previous generation, marriage rates and new homestead formations were accelerated.⁶³

Crush share the same sentiment as he argued that the declines in homestead size resulting from this labour migration meant that less labour was available for agriculture (or for any purpose), making the homestead even more reliant on remunerations for its reproduction. The establishment of this cyclical pattern of homestead dependency on capitalism, although successful in wealth accumulation, reinforced another aspect of the cycle.⁶⁴

There is, however, a need for a detailed study of the history of labour migration from Swaziland to South Africa. The above studies shed light on the current research when investigating the impact of labour migration on the Swazis.

⁶² See For instance Kuper, *Uniform of Colour: A Study of White-Black Relationships in Swaziland*, p.85; Alan Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968", p.75; Crush, "Struggle for Swazi Labour", p116; de Vletter (ed.), *The Swazi Rural Homestead*, p.20.

⁶³ Alan Booth. "Homestead, State, and Migrant Labour in Colonial Swaziland". *African Economic History*. (1985, 14: 107) p.145.

⁶⁴ Crush, *Struggle for Swazi Labour*, p.126.

The period 1920-1995 was selected for this study because it was during this era, particularly between 1920-1945 when Swaziland degenerated from subsistent livelihood to dependence on wage labour, and also became a labour reserve like other sub-Saharan countries. The year 1995 was selected as a cut-off date for the study. This was because South Africa witnessed an end of the apartheid era in 1994 and 1995 ushered in new labour policies which transformed the migrant labour phenomenon. This stage was characterized by the issuing of a new set of labour policies that impacted migration and the livelihood of the Swazi society.

Whilst the above studies are relevant, there are still gaps. This study contributes to the existing historiography on Swazi labour migration by investigating; labour recruitment patterns during the colonial period, the occupational health of migrant miners in Swaziland, and the transnational nature of miners' lives and their dependents. The study locates the discussion in the context of gender, class, and race thereby highlighting nuances of labour migrant's experiences within the Swazi context, which are angles that have not been adequately covered by most literature on Swazi labour history. The findings of this study will therefore contribute to the literature by adding to debates on labour migration from an African and global perspective.

Furthermore, several empirical studies turn to underscore the (neo) classical view of "push" and "pull" factors with concern to the drives for migration decision-making. Most of such studies demonstrate that migration transpires from established circumstances in migrating countries (push factors), such as unemployment conditions, deterioration of living standards, and natural disasters (floods and droughts) which put the burden on people to move. The current study seeks to present the case of Swaziland which has not been adequately covered by history scholars, thus adding to the existing body of knowledge.

Moreover, South Africa has been viewed as contributing to circumstances that institute reasons for immigration (pull factors), such as the request for cheap unskilled labour and a wage income. Still, it is also imperative to note that the review of the literature revealed that some scholars recognised the presence of social networks for labour migration to South Africa, without scrutinizing its role in the process of migration decision-making. This is, therefore, the main challenge to this study. Most of the studies of migrant labour did not cover the experience of the Swazi migrants, yet its social relation and history were affected by the colonial capitalist phenomenon of wage labour migration to South African mines thus this study addresses this gap.

The current study aims to build on the works of social historians to investigate the migrant labour history of Swaziland from 1920 to 1995. The study differs in that it emphasises the flexibility and sophistication of Swazi migrants contrary to seeing the rural background of African migrants as static as other scholars did in their studies of the experiences of migrants in the mine compounds. Migrants were not passive victims; they were aware of the dynamics of the white capitalist and thereby established a whole variety of techniques for dealing with them. In this conceptual context, the current study differs in that it examines; how Swaziland came to depend on the export of its men to South African mines, how this affected their social-economic, and family life, the experiences of the miners, and how their experiences impacted on their livelihoods.

1.3 Research Problem and Objectives: Key questions addressed

Studies on migrant labour history in Swaziland have not sufficiently explored the patterns and dynamics of labour migration and its relationship to multiple historical factors that unfold within each historical époque. Nor has the impact of Swaziland's labour migration to South Africa and its implications for the families of migrants and the economy been sufficiently explored.

The study seeks to explore the history of the forms and trends in mine labour migration and its socio-economic effects on the lives of Swazi migrants and their families and society. The study is critical because it enriches the historiography of labour migration in Swaziland. Previous studies on Swazi mine labour migration are limited in scope; they also did not sufficiently focus on how migrancy impacted the Swazi miners, their families as well as their society. Most studies concentrated on the pre-colonial period, where Swazi migrant labour history is not clearly presented; only the push factors are discussed.⁶⁵ There is, therefore, a need for such a study that covers both the colonial and post-colonial aspects of mine labour history of Swaziland.

Research Questions:

1. What factors facilitated the migration of migrant labour from Swaziland between 1920 and 1995?
2. What were the migration trends of Swazi migrant labour to South Africa?
3. What impact did the migrant labour system have on the economy of Swaziland (in terms of urban and rural transformation), their families, and rural homesteads?

⁶⁴ Booth, "Homestead, State, and Migrant Labour in Colonial Swaziland," p. 65.

4. What impact did the decline in migrant labour and retrenchment had on the Swazi ex-migrants and their families?

1.4 Research Problem and Objectives: Broad issue investigated

1. To identify and examine factors that facilitated the migration of migrant labour from Swaziland between 1920 and 1995
2. To identify and discuss migration trends of Swazi migrant labour to South Africa
3. To examine and document the impact the Swazi migrant labour system had on the economy of Swaziland (in terms of urban and rural transformation), their families, and rural homesteads
4. To examine and explore the decline in migrant labour and its impact on the migrants and their families

1.5 Theoretical Framework

The main focus of theory in social science research is to offer systematic frameworks through which to examine social phenomena. To a great extent lay, policy, government, and mass media understandings of migration assume there is a problem to address or something unusual to explain. To a social scientist, alternatively, migration is simply another social phenomenon, with related social processes, actions, patterns, arrangements, and outcomes, the examination of which illuminates our understanding of human life.⁶⁶

The literature on the contemporary forms and trends in international migration and regional contexts reveals that this is linked to the world economic system, in which the unequal development of countries, reduction of barriers to migrant flows between international borders, and differences in wages and job opportunities between countries have been considered as the most important incentives to migrate.⁶⁷ Within this context, migration has attracted several scholars and has become indeed a global phenomenon. The contemporary features of migration have been associated with the new international division of labour that was consolidated after the Second World War. This was accentuated by the penetration of capitalist markets into developing economies. The fast and growing globalisation of capital was accompanied by

⁶⁵ Barry Chiswick. "Are Immigrants Favorably Self-Selected?" An Economic Analysis, IZA Discussion Papers, No. 131, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), Bonn (2000) p.15.

⁶⁶ Oliver Bakewell. "Some Reflections on Structure and Agency in Migration Theory". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. (2010, 36: 10) p.168.

unforeseen and irreversible globalization of the labour force. The appearance of different international migratory systems in the world directed the development of a variety of theoretical models to explain the causes of international migration.⁶⁸

The research was constructed using Marxist theories and interpretations of labour migration. These theories developed in the 1960s as a reaction to the neo-Classical theories which lingered in the broad framework of the neo-Classical school of economics and underscored rational choice-making by the individual. According to Marxist theories, individuals do not make choices in vacuity, and the socio-economic context encourages choice-making.⁶⁹ The study was underpinned by the above theories in dealing with the causes of Swazi migration. Marxist economic theories contended that global capitalism was created under development. The Marxists of the 1960s claimed that migration is a consequence of disruptions and interruptions, which are essential in the process of capitalist development.⁷⁰ The theory of Marx theorised that growing numbers of progressively exploited proletarians overcrowded into ever-expanding cities (where factories were based) would ultimately result in an eruption of violent revolution in which the proletariat would remove and get rid of their authoritarians. Marx contended that great masses of men were rapidly and effectively torn from their means of subsistence, and thrown onto the labour market to sell their labour power.⁷¹

Marxist scholars such as Cooper and Wright whose works are based on the African continent contributed considerably to advancing the Marxist theory of migration. Such writers opined that the neo-Classical views of migration are uneven. They analyse certain features of the phenomenon of migration, such as push and pull factors in isolation from the socio-economic context. Marxist theories of migration examine the repositioning of people from one region or country to another in response to the economic forces at play in a specific historical context. This theory is founded on historical materialism, a method of inquiry developed by Karl Marx. Such approaches presented a great understanding of the current study in dealing with the negative impact of migrant labour on the miner's families and their societies.⁷²

⁶⁷ Bakewell, "Some Reflections on Structure and Agency in Migration Theory", p.16.

⁶⁸ Stefan Berger, *Writing History: Theory and Practice*. (London: Oxford University Press, 2003) p.80.

⁶⁹ Berger, *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, p.85.

⁷⁰ Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy: Volume I*. (New York: Dove Publication Minealo, 2011) p.185.

⁷¹ Marx, *Capital, A Critique of Political Economy*, p.161.

The neoclassical economic paradigm is based on principles of utility maximization, rational choice factor-price, differentials between regions and countries, and labour mobility. According to Harris and Todor, the neoclassical economic theory postulates that the leading causes of labour migration are differences in wages between sending and receiving countries. In other words, the elimination of wage differentials would reduce international migration, which means that workers might not migrate in the absence of wage differentials. Moreover, international labour migration is influenced by labour market mechanisms meaning that other kinds of markets do not have important effects on the international flow of workers, which presents the neoclassical economic paradigm's pitfall.⁷³ The current study was, therefore, not underpinned by this theory due to its shortcomings. Jan Breman has been viewed as another challenger of the conventions of neo-classical economics and criticized the neo-classical school for being too individualistic. These scholars viewed migration as a phenomenon that is inevitable in the transition to capitalism.⁷⁴

Marxist theories have been criticized for being too deterministic and denying agency to the migrant. However, Breman argued that to contend that Marxism rebuffs the agency of the migrant (or the worker in general) would be a mistake and that in fact, Marx was profoundly concerned about the agency of the worker. He believed in the revolutionary nature of the working-class agency. Therefore, it becomes imperative to note that the same footing of the whole Marxist philosophy is the revolutionary, transformative movement of the working class. Consequently, one could observe that Marxism, identifies the significance of the socio-economic setting and how it outlines human perception. However, human consciousness is not wholly reliant on circumstances, and there is a particular element of autonomy in it. The structural factors, overall, shape the social consciousness and the consciousness of subjects in its turn can transform the socio-economic context. Thus, the worker is ever regarded as a passive receiver. That on its own can be viewed as having subversive agency.⁷⁵ The framework is useful to the study as it investigates the experiences of Swazi migrant miners, presenting agency to the migrants.

The study was further underpinned by the social history theory, whose fundamental philosophical hypothesis was that “the social” realm, the lived, daily experience of ordinary people, delivered

⁷² Marx, *Capital, A Critique of Political Economy*, p.165.

⁷³ Johannes Breman. *Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Colonial Asia*. (Amsterdam: Free University Press, 1990) p.75.

the path to historical facts and, eventually, to what Eric Hobsbawm was to call a “total” history of any given epoch. Other realms—politics, religion, identities, etc. were having their roots in social experience.⁷⁶ The current study, therefore, used social history theory in investigating the lived experiences of Swazi migrants working in the Rand mines and how that influenced their socio-economic lives and that of their families and societies back home. Thompson contended that working-class perception was not the automated production of a set of basic circumstances produced by industrial capitalism. It was the creation of a reply to the advance of capitalism across changed sections of workers already subject to capitalist relations of production.⁷⁷ Thompson further maintained that in the social construction of their actuality, men certainly enter into certain relations, which are autonomous of their will, namely relations of production. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political, and intellectual life.⁷⁸

The study further employs the masculinity theories in conceptualising the research. This theory will help in the exhibition of gendered identities and experiences of male migrants, but also women who remained at home in Swaziland. Ratele argued that in most cultures, women are socialized into feminine standards of subordination, passiveness, loyalty, and silence, particularly about their sexuality and rights, and accomplish reproductive roles, which are an obligation for childbearing and rearing and family nurturing, while income-earning is considered their secondary role.⁷⁹ There is, therefore a need for a study of migration from a gender perspective to understand the impact of male-centred migration on women. This study incorporated aspects of these complex relations. Studies have shown that despite different assumptions and hypotheses, migration theories are not contradictory. The above historical theories will assist in critically analysing the key aims and objectives of this study.

⁷⁴ Breman, *Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Colonial Asia*, p.85.

⁷⁵ Breman, *Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Colonial Asia*, p.65.

⁷⁶ John Foster. “Eric Hobsbawm, Marxism and Social History”. *Social History*. (2014, 39:2) pp.160-171.

⁷⁷ Edward Thompson. “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in 18th Century”. *Past & Present*. (1971, 50:1) pp.76-136.

⁷⁸ Thompson, “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in 18th Century”, p.115.

⁷⁹ Ratele Kapano. “Studying men in Africa critically: Uchendu E, editor, *Masculinities in Contemporary Africa*.” (Darkar: CODESRIA, 2008) pp.18–33.

1.6 Research Methodology

The term research methodology assumes various meanings in research discourse. Kothari defines research methodology as a systematic and scientific way of approaching a research problem.⁸⁰ Kothari asserts that research methodology enables researchers to study the several stages that are primarily assumed when reviewing a research problem in line with the reason behind them. Also, it further enables researchers to understand: why a research study has been undertaken; how the research problem has been defined; how the hypothesis was formulated; why specific techniques are adopted or rejected thus enabling researchers to evaluate any adopted research method; what data is collected; which data collection methods are adopted; and what data analysis methods are used.⁸¹

In a nutshell, research methodology prepares researchers with a definite plan on how to conduct research and points out what should be done during different research phases. The current study has utilised a historical research design to trace the development of Swazi migrant labour from 1920 – 1995 and to investigate the experience of Swazi migrant and their dependents. This framework qualified the researcher to accumulate, verify, and synthesise evidence to establish historical facts. A qualitative research technique was utilised, where the researcher was required to comprehend Swaziland's migrant labour history by comparing, contrasting, cataloguing, classifying, and examining information collected from an extensive range of sources. The current study was constructed mainly on archival sources of both Swaziland and South Africa, official government documents, newspaper articles and interviews. In collecting data for this study, the author respected the ethical guidelines of The University of KwaZulu Natal.

The data for the study came from different sources. In addition to the review of the existing literature on Swazi labour migration, the study drew on fieldwork with two components: survey interviews and qualitative interviews. The fieldwork took place in three research sites: two in southern Swaziland (Shiselweni and Lubombo districts, respectively) and one in South Africa (Gauteng province). The two selected sites in Swaziland are some of the most critical sending areas of labour migrants to South Africa and were also chosen because of their geographical proximity to South Africa. (See Map 1 below in Figure1). The selection of Gauteng as a research

⁸⁰ Jaipur Kothari. *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. (Delhi: New Age International Limited Publishers, 2004) p.76.

⁸¹ Kothari, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*, p. 85.

site in South Africa was due to the distinction of being the main destination of Swazi migrants according to the results of a sample survey in the Shiselweni and Lubombo districts.

Oral data was useful in this study, and they were invaluable. This information was collected through in-depth, open-ended interviews. The advantage of this method of the interview was to allow flexibility in responding to questions raised. About sixty interviews were conducted in total with ex-migrants, their families ex-Migrant Miners Association Officers, and Labour Officers of Swaziland. There were 20 ex-miners, and 20 family members of ex-miners more especially women, ten labour officers; five officers from TEBA, and five members of the Ex-Miners Association. The interviews were conducted at the homes of the informants, with labour officers at their office of work. Each interview session took an hour; however, since it was open-ended, so the time fluctuated among informants; some took more than an hour.

The study employed the snowball sampling method to identify the group to be interviewed. This qualitative data sampling method is utilized by researchers when features to be possessed by samples are uncommon and challenging to discover. It encompasses primary data sources proposing another possible source to be used in the research (chain referral). The limitation of the snowball method is that it can lead to bias and ethical concerns but it is cost-effective, and thus increasing the number of informants limits such pitfalls.⁸² Most of the interviews were conducted in private; in this way, the interviewees were relaxed and therefore, open and willing to reply to the questions. The informants were informed that their information was protected for ethical reasons before the interview process started. For ethical reasons, a consent form was given to each informant. After interviews were completed, transcription was done to utilize the information from informants in a clear layout to appreciate its strength and weakness.

The fieldwork was accomplished in November 2019 (in Swaziland Shiselweni and Lubombo), and June and July 2019 (in South Africa Gauteng). The fieldwork in South Africa could not be started soon after the first one in Swaziland ended, because of a lack of finances to support the fieldwork travel costs. While the fieldwork in Swaziland was based on qualitative interviews with ex-migrants, their dependents government officials (labour officers), and migrant miners, in

⁸² Earl Babbie. *The Practice of Social Research*. (Belmont: Wodsworth Publishers, 2001) p.58.

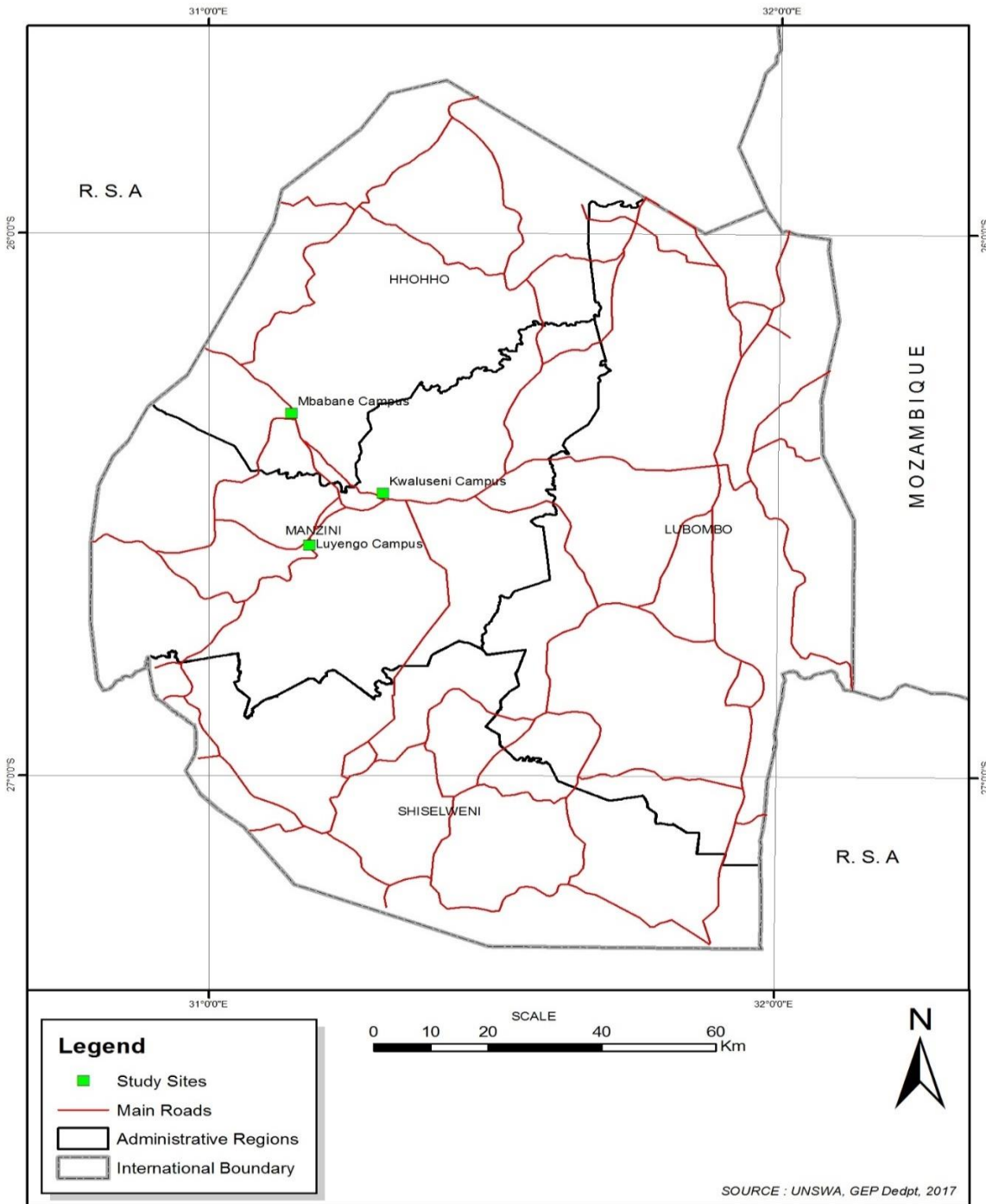
⁸³ Babbie. *The Practice of Social Research*, p. 65.

South Africa it was based only on qualitative interviews with working miners housed in hostels, who were Swazi citizens, from Swaziland.

It is important to note that, without contact with the local authorities and community leaders, it would have been impossible to conduct the interviews. Many people in the research sites were reluctant to co-operate. This was because they were tired of being interviewed, and they do not see the results of such surveys. On the other hand, some people avoided being interviewed as much as possible, since they associated the study with the activities of politicians campaigning for parliament in the Swaziland government. This fact was because the survey coincided with the year of an electoral campaign in Swaziland. Another concern was the reduced number of interviewed migrant household members (returned mine labour migrants). When the survey was conducted (during November), many migrants were still in South Africa. It became evident that returned migrants in the research sites should be interviewed during December and January when they were at home for the Christmas holidays.

Figure 1:

District Map of Swaziland



Source: University of Swaziland, Geography Department. (2017) [https:// www.causehero.com](https://www.causehero.com)

A full understanding of the migratory process entails evidence that is historically well established, ethnographically interpreted, and quantitatively rigorous. Ethnographic methods were particularly effective in capturing the rich details of the migrants' social networks; oral interviews complemented with archival work provided the historical dynamics; and the fieldwork provided a more comprehensive understanding of the role that migration plays in the real life of the community. Useful data was also collected from the Swaziland National Archives and the South African National Archives. Other useful primary data was accessed from the office of The Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA) in Mbabane. This is a recruiting agent working for the South African mining industry. Crucial statistical data was collected from the office of Labour and Social Security in Swaziland, which deals with employment in the country.

The primary data used were government reports on recruitment and labour issues. The documents consisted of: Letters of the Central District, Minutes and Correspondence; Native Grievance Inquiry files; Arthur Marwick Regional Administrator files and correspondences and Medical Records. From these files, data on the recruitment process of Swazi migrants were gleaned. The files from these Archives were useful as they provided mine reports on Swazi migrants. The reports included information such as names of migrants, companies, dates of employment, and types of work performed by the migrants. The archival files such as corresponding letters from the Regional Commissioner of Swaziland to recruiting agents provided information on recruitment patterns and employment and settler farmers' grievances regarding the labour shortage. These letters provided the researcher with information on the labour situation of the country. The files and reports also constituted registers that contained the registration of mine labourers working in different mines over the years. Also, registers contain information on the names of deceased miners. This information was vital in establishing data on the rate of labour migration from Swaziland to the South African mines over the years. The Medical Records contained information on the health status of Swazi recruits before they were transported to the South African Rand mines. Such data was important as the researcher investigated the occupational health issues of Swazi migrants and it also helped in identifying the nature of recruits from Swaziland. Moreover, archival data helped to conceptualize the history of Swazi migrant labour and the history of labour recruitment.

The Swazi archives also provided information on the different recruiting agents which were operating in the Swazi territory during the colonial and post-colonial periods. The files from the archives were in the form of records of *Natives Labour Statistics*. Such files provided the

researcher with data on the number of Swazi recruits in the different years. This data was important in discussing the labour patterns and impact in Swaziland. The files on the statistics of migrants helped the researcher to determine and map the level of labour flow over the years covered in the study. Reports on the Swazi migrants' contracts were also available. This data provided information on the duration of the contract, working hours, and medical and insurance benefits. It highlighted information on the different strategies employed by the different recruiting agents in Swaziland during the colonial and post-colonial periods to recruit labour for the South African mines. The National Archives in South Africa based in Pretoria, also housed valuable material on mineworkers. Registration files, mine reports of deceased miners and the violence in the mines over the years were collected from these archives.

However, archival sources sometimes had gaps, and this necessitated alternative sources, such as newspaper articles and oral sources. Newspaper articles from *The Times of Swaziland* and *Swaziland Observer* were also utilized. They carried adverts for local industries and community developments as well as information on labour recruitment in Swaziland. The articles also yielded information about Swazi migrants working in the mines of South Africa. From newspaper reports, the study mined information on the local developments which impacted labour migration. Though newspaper articles at times contained mistakes and discrepancies due to misquoted events, unreliable sources, or political slants and biases such shortcomings were overcome by resorting to alternative sources for cross-checking such as archival data, oral sources, annual reports, and secondary sources.⁸³ Nonetheless, newspaper articles were valuable resources because they reported on events as they unfolded.⁸⁴ Secondary sources such as books, journals, and articles were helpful in the study. They helped the author to situate the study within the existing body of knowledge in terms of acquiring and interrogating their methodology and identifying possible historiographical gaps.

Limitations

However, archival sources sometimes had gaps, and this necessitated alternative sources, such as newspaper articles and oral sources. For example, some files in the archives were not properly

⁸⁴ For a similar view, see for instance, Jennifer Newby and Sarah Hardy. *Using newspapers as Primary Sources: Documents Project*. (New York: Western Oregon University, 2011) pp. 22-24.

catalogued, as a result, some vital information could not be accessed because they were misplaced. Compounding the situation was that some files were in a very bad state due to age whilst, others had some important pages torn resulting in important information missing thus rendering the files worthless. Consequently, the researcher was compelled to sometimes rely on secondary sources. In addition, some important primary sources could not be accessed from TEBA due to Bureau's skepticism in availing some of the Swazi migrant information to any researcher as they feared such information going to the wrong hands given the ongoing matter pertinent to Swazi ex-miners finances. Because some archives are in the process of digitizing information and records, it was therefore difficult for the researcher to access vital archival information via the internet. It made research cumbersome, especially during the time of COVID- 19 when movement was restricted. To avoid all the above-mentioned challenges digitizing the archival documents is the solution. This will safeguard the documents, ensure proper storage and further improve service delivery for researchers.

1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1

The chapter provides the aims, objectives, and justification for this dissertation, analyses relevant existing literature on the subject to identify knowledge gaps and shows what new knowledge to contribute, and discusses the theoretical framework, key questions, and research methodology.

Chapter 2

The chapter explored the socio-economic conditions in Swaziland during the colonial period. It examined factors that facilitated the migration of migrant labour from Swaziland during the colonial period between 1920 and 1940 in the context of the push and pull factors. The chapter focuses on the pre-colonial Swaziland socio-economic formation; concessioner's influences; the penetration of settler capital; the colonial encounter and the nature of the colonial state and the contradictory role of the chiefs. It also demonstrates how the socio-economic condition of Swaziland was as Booth puts it, the deliberate underdevelopment by the colonial state, with the dual intent of expropriating the means of production and creating a labour force. Booth The chapter also investigates the history of the struggle for Swazi labour during the colonial period, from 1920-1945, and how it also resulted in the employment of child labour. The chapter reveals

that Swazi migrants were not passive victims of the migrant labour system but used different strategies to take advantage of the situation.

Chapter 3

This chapter examines trends of mine labour migrancy in Swaziland from the 1940s-1960. These trends were a function of the political and economic changes that had taken place in both Swaziland and South Africa. The booming Swazi economy in the 1950s as post-war developments of British colonies affected the flow of labour from Swaziland to South African gold mines. This chapter will also examine the different strategies agents employed to recruit migrant labour since Swazi labour was scarce during the World War 11 period. The chapter also explores the competition for Swazi labour that unfolded in the country. The competition was between the colonial settlers with their capital projects in Swaziland, recruitment for war by colonial administrators, and the recruiters for South African mines. This chapter investigates the role of the Swazis as players in the labour competition, and how they responded to the different strategies employed by foreign and local recruits.

Chapter 4

This chapter explores the socio-economic challenges of mineworkers on Rand, examining the themes related to life and conditions in the mines and compounds. This chapter explores the Swazi migrant's experiences of working in the South African rand mines. It investigates the social issues and lives of Swazi migrants in the South African mine compounds. The chapter further explores the development and social history of Swazi migrants on the Rand in the context of, health, deaths, and safety in the mine compounds. It explores the rapid urbanization that was accompanied by the radicalization of Swazi miners as the compounds of the rand were sites of political and labour struggles.

Chapter 5

This chapter examines the impact of migrant labour on Swaziland: the significance of remittances on households: the 'left-behind women', family and gender relations, and the rural and urban economy. The chapter reveals that migration brought complex changes to the household and the rural economy.

Chapter 6

The chapter explored the impact of Voluntary Deferred Pay (VDP) on Swazi miners and presented the consequences it has on the ex-miners and their dependents, in particular how it was utilised, its benefits to Swazi migrants, and the difficulties in accessing these benefits.

Conclusion, summary, and recommendations

In this chapter, the key trends and issues of this study are critically summarised and discussed fully.

Chapter Two

Socio-Economic Condition in colonial Swaziland and the labour Market

Introduction

Any study of labour migrancy necessitates consideration of the political, social, and economic setting within which the system functioned. In this specific case, it is imperative to pay due regard to the pre-colonial Swaziland socio-economic formation; concessioner's influences; the penetration of settler capital; the colonial encounter and the nature of the colonial state; the opposing role of the chiefs and traditional rulers. This approach is essential to account for the outline that labour migrancy took in Swaziland.⁸⁵

The Swazi territory was, to a large extent built to separate the advancing regional paths of communities. The primary external force encroaching on Swazi society before 1860 was a somewhat different atmosphere. Denoon argued that there was booty raiding of less powerful African groups over a wide area of Transvaal and Southern Mozambique, which played a role in complementing the material wealth of the ruling Dlamini ancestry in Swaziland and in establishing a local slave trade. Slaves captured through tribute raiding were either engrossed in Swazi society or traded to meet the labour needs of Boer farmers in Transvaal.⁸⁶ Swazi raiding was steadily shortened in the second half of the nineteenth century. The invasion of Transvaal by Boer settlers, wide-ranging land alienation, and the determination for new pastures certainly put restrictions on the free-ranging of Swazi worries (*libutfwo*) and ultimately led to the mapping of colonial boundaries and the exclusion of the Swazis from their hunting ground.⁸⁷

2.1 Nature of the Colonial Swazi Economy and Labour Market

In Swaziland, the economy was motivated by traders bartering cattle, ivory, and skins for horses and guns. They occasionally traversed Swaziland from the early decades of the nineteenth century. However, no regular trade was ever established, and at no point did the presence of European commodities become essential to household production or become a means to reinforce

⁸⁵ Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p. 350.

⁸⁶ Denoon Donald and Balam Nyeko *Southern Africa Since 1800*. (London: Longman, 1984) p. 134.

⁸⁷ Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p. 415.

⁸⁸ Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p. 435.

ruling class domination in society. The merchant capital did not establish a significant presence in Swazi society before the large-scale penetration of mining capital in the 1880s.⁸⁸ Moreover, the absence of Swazi participation in the mining boom of the second half of the nineteenth century is important in understanding the economic situation in the country. The reason for this might tentatively be pursued in a combination of features. Certainly, there can be little doubt that with the labour resources available to them, the Swazi chiefs and the ruling lineage were in a position to generate considerable agriculture surplus. This must be set against Swaziland's relative isolation from large and burgeoning urban markets and the limited penetration by the merchant capital of Swazi society.⁸⁹

Furthermore, ecological effects added to such limitations in the country which made pastoralism central to the nineteenth-century economy and the role of reallocated agricultural surplus in safeguarding ruling class authority within Swazi society. The support of large royal and chiefly villages, and the preservation of a standing army and local labour divisions, consumed the bulk of the agricultural surplus produced with the labour drawn from the Swazi households. The material and ideological constraints on accumulation by individual households, supported by chiefly control over land and coercive power, probably proved sufficient to reduce any move towards commodity production by commoners⁹⁰. The mineral discoveries on the Witwatersrand in the early years of the 1880s marked the decisive turning point in the process of capital penetration of Swazi society. The country was eventually covered by a series of overlapping minerals, grazing and land leases, and land grants in perpetuity. About half of the concessions which were granted conferred some form of agricultural rights to the Europeans.⁹¹

Leven further pointed out that, the expansion of capitalist relations in Swaziland was inspired by the discovery of huge gold deposits in the Transvaal, both on the Witwatersrand, as well as in the eastern Transvaal border areas of Swaziland. This conveyed prospector gathering into the country and even despite some efforts to regulate their entry, they finally increased in numbers to search for mineral deposits. They were amalgamated by a further outpouring of farmers and

89 Jonathan Crush. "Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920". *Journal of Historical Geography*. (1986, 28:59) p.65.

90 Alan Kuper. "The Development of a Primitive Nation". *Journal of African Studies*. (1941, 25:15) p. 341.

91 John Daniel. *The Geography of the Rural Economy of Swaziland*. (Durban: University of Natal Institution for Social Research, 1962) p.60.

92 Philip Bonner. "Swazi Relation with their Neighbour 1840-81." Paper presented to the African History Seminar, ICS, November 1986.

herders attracted by Swaziland's fertile soils and rich pastures. Gradually, the royal kraal granted land to settlers and mineral concessions. These concessionaires were to pay the Swazi aristocracy for the opportunity for mineral and trading rights. By the end of the 1880s King Mbandzeni, presided over a Swaziland whose territorial boundaries were remapped to accommodate capitalist interests. The King earned an annual income of between 15 000 - 20 000 pounds; 10 000 pounds from rents, transfer dues, and obligations from concessionaires.⁹²

Bonner argued that existing evidence advocates that by the 1850s agriculture was playing a pivotal role in the Swazi economy, such a claim was qualified by Allister Miller, a prominent member of the settler community, who pointed out that in the late -1880s and early-1890s Swaziland was an exporter of maize. Traders in central and southern Swaziland bought thousands of bags from the locals' multi-coloured maize which was sent to Lourenco Marques and the Transvaal or sold to the gold mines then operating along the western border. Colonialism and capitalism consequently formed a Swazi peasantry increasingly incorporated into the paths of capitalism through the production of petty agricultural commodities. Concurrently, the similar instruments of taxation and the land partition strengthened a process of proletarianisation as larger numbers of Swazi migrated to the mines of the eastern Transvaal and the Witwatersrand.⁹³

The land demarcated in colonial Swaziland can be viewed as another push force that resulted in several Swazis opting for migrant labour. Losing their pastoral land and being pushed to reserves made life more difficult for the majority of the Swazis. This led to an increased rate of young men, who were opting to work on European settler farms other migrating to work in the South African mines. It had become increasingly clear to the aristocracy that to restore their power over the land, they would have to operate within the framework of capitalist relations and the land partition. In the pre-colonial period, and before the land partition, the central dimension of aristocratic and chiefly power resided in control over bride wealth. Cattle were made available to unmarried young men in return for labour and surplus products.⁹⁴ Bonner argues that with the development of capitalism, and the land partition, aristocrats and chiefs 'based their power over the rest of the Swazi population the peasantry on their exclusive control of land as opposed to their previous control of bride wealth'.⁹⁵ The development of a generalised commodity economy

⁹³ Richard Levin, *When Sleeping Grass Awaken: Land and Power in Swaziland*. (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand, 1997) p.48.

⁹⁴ Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires: The evolution and Dissolution of the Nineteenth –Century Swazi State*. (London: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p.130.

⁹⁵ Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires*, p.177.

also meant that through petty commodity production and sale, Swazis could gain access to cattle through cash sales. But with the land partition, land increasingly became a scarce resource, and this provided powerful leverage for the Swazi chiefs and aristocracy over their subjects who were on the whole peasants who depended on agriculture.⁹⁶

The socio-economic condition of Swaziland was as Booth puts it, the deliberate underdevelopment by the colonial state, with the dual intent of expropriating the means of production and creating a labour force.⁹⁷ The colonial administration, after realizing that the majority of the settlers in Swaziland were mostly belonging to the socio-economic group with minimal capital, it was vital to offer them an adequate supply of cheap labour. The state had gathered the settlers' need for cheap labour and had encouraged labour tenancy, as part of the process of capital accumulation, from the outset. Therefore, the state wanted many Swazis to escape the reserves and work on the European-owned land. The economy of colonial Swaziland was based on the settlers running their farms, and the local Swazis were recruited as cheap labour. It was under these conditions that Swazi migrant labour was recruited for the South African mines.⁹⁸

2.2 Struggles for Labour and Socio-economic condition in colonial Swaziland

In Swaziland just as it was in the other colonial states in Southern Africa, it was realised that land apportioning alone could not offer a simple solution to the problem of labour scarcity within the European farms and capital projects such as mining, which resulted in migration to South African mines. ⁹⁹The European settler farmers in Swaziland relied on state backing to preserve an ample supply of unskilled labour. The colonial state administration was responsible for avoiding any clashes with Swazi labour. It was also the responsibility of the colonial state administration to strike a balance between the contradictory demands of the local settlers and South African capitalists for Swazi labour. Although the settler's demands for labour dominated over those of the Swazis within the colony they were in turn subordinated to those of the South African mining capital. The general lack of state support for the settler's economy is, therefore, to a large extent,

⁹⁶ Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires*, p. 185.

⁹⁷ Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968", p.45.

⁹⁸ Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968", pp.34-57.

⁹⁹ Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines*, p. 112.

explained by the dual role of the colonial state as an agent of South African capital accumulation as well as a supporter of social order within the colony.¹⁰⁰

The labour struggle experienced in the territory was also perpetuated by the difficulty the colonial state was trapped in. It faced difficulties when dealing with the problem of labour shortage between the mine recruiters and the local European settler farmers. The colonial administrator played a mediating role between the competing interests over Swaziland. This situation was mainly the result of continual revenue hunger on the part of the Swazi administration. What fuelled the hunger was that the British Empire was not interested in spending on the administration of the Swazi Colony. While supporting the settler interest within Swaziland, it developed a symbolic relationship with the South African mining companies whereby what was suitable for the mines in terms of maximum labour supply was also good for the colonial state in terms of revenue, accumulated through capitation fees and fees for recruiting passes.¹⁰¹

The colonial administration favoured the mine recruiters compared to the local European settlers as the recruiting agents ensured that tax would be paid by the potential recruits. Crush also pointed out that the colonial administrators in Swaziland regarded mine labour recruitment as a system that helped minimised tax evasion. He further adds that it guaranteed the colonial Swazi government its share of revenue expropriated straight from the Swazi labour migrants in the form of a head tax the colonial state, therefore, encouraged labour recruitments for the mines, thus frustrating the settler's efforts to secure adequate labour for their farms. The settlers in a move to complement their insufficient agricultural income joined the recruitment process for Swazi labour to the South African mines. The settler's move, however, aggravated labour shortage within the European-owned farms in Swaziland.¹⁰²

The economy of colonial Swaziland was a very unsteady system of labour tenancy and the prolonged lack of labour within the European-owed farms. The settlers gazed to the colonial state to alleviate their problems of the labour shortage. They relied on the administration to actively encourage labour tenancy through legislation, thus stemming the competition of labour in the

¹⁰⁰ Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines*, p. 124.

¹⁰¹ For further study see; Jonathan Crush. "Partition," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*. (1980, 13:1) pp. 71-86.

¹⁰² Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines 1886-1920*, p. 145.

South African mines. The colonial state attempted to institutionalise labour tenancy through numerous legislations but in practice it took no active part in encouraging labour tenancy.¹⁰³

The labour shortage in Swaziland created problems for European small-scale farmers. They also wanted to retain the system of tenancy as an alternative to the problem of labour shortage. European settler farmers in Swaziland began to protest and approached the colonial authority for help. However, this did not get a positive response as the colonial state took a passive stand on the issue arguing that the practice of exporting Swazi labour did not affect the labour situation within the country.

European settlers were concerned about the increase a labour shortage, which was worsened by the practice of allowing Swazi farmers to cultivate cash crops outside the European farms. This was viewed as a double threat to them as they competed for the same labour force. They argued that this was going to give Swazis access to cash income, hinder wage labour, as a result exacerbating the shortage of labour. Moreover, Swazi cash crops would compete with settler produce in the limited local market, and this would result in a fall in prices. The European farmers saw this as a spell of doom in their weak economy. They also did not support the idea of introducing cotton cultivation to the peasantry. They argued that cotton cultivation by Swazis would ruin the labour market and alleged that if Swazis were allowed to cultivate the crop, they would steal European-grown cotton during picking season.¹⁰⁴

All these incongruous opinions were discharged without further deliberation by the colonial state. The labour supply difficulties on the part of European farmers were persistent, and they were committed to influencing the colonial administration. The European Advisory Council, a representative body of settler interests, seized up the issue of labour shortage in European-owned farms. The body began by encouraging the modification of the master-servant Act as a means to solve the problem. The Act was primarily intended to cover labour recruitment for the mines and omitted the European farming community. The body desired the act to permit settlers the right to recruit Swazi males as soon as they were age eighteen.¹⁰⁵

However, the poor condition of labour tenancy led to desertions by young Swazi tenants as soon as they were of tax-paying age. It is significant though to note that before Swazi male tenants

¹⁰³ Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines 1886-1920*, p .155

¹⁰⁴ Crush. "Partition," p.75.

¹⁰⁵ Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines*, p.112.

reached the age of 18, they did offer a substantial amount of labour on the farms. However, the lower remunerations paid to them on the farms was a challenge; their only solution, therefore, was to seek wage employment in the mines as soon as they became of age and could be recruited.¹⁰⁶ With the persistence of labour scarcities, the settlers resorted to child labour. Some scholars of Swazi history further argued that if the children had not been employed on the farms, they would be lying idle in their homes, because there was a shortage of schools in the country. The use of child labour was expressed as a measure of relief for children of needy Swazi families during times of food shortage in the country because during such a period, boys were walking around looking for work. The employment of children specifically at such times, it was argued would enable them to feed themselves.¹⁰⁷

It was undoubtedly apparent that the settlers did not see offering high wages and better working conditions as a resolution to the problem of the labour shortage. As an alternative, they blamed labour shortage and desertions on the relative freedom of young Swazi tenants to seek employment at places of their own choice. They, therefore, assumed that labour shortage and desertion would be reduced if the colonial state introduced legislation to force the Swazi tenants to sign obligatory contracts with their landlords.¹⁰⁸

As noted early, this shortage of labour was to a large extent an exhibition of the ambiguity of interests not only between the Swazis and settler farmers but also the well-being of the latter and the colonial state. On the one hand, the settler community was in desperate need of a sufficient supply of both 'cheap' wages and unpaid tenant labour to work on their farms. Low-cost labour could be drawn from the reserves while unpaid labour could be selected from the squatters.¹⁰⁹ Though, apart from providing for the needs of the settlers, such a position could bring no value to the colonial state. On the other hand, the colonial state was regularly impecunious of funds and in need of revenue with which to run the administration of the territory. Thus, contrary to the desires of the settler farmers, the colonial state had keenly encouraged Swazi males to go and

¹⁰⁶ Swaziland National Archives (SNA), Minutes of the First Meeting of the Advisory Council held in the Office of the Resident Commissioner on the 18th October 1921, File RCS 613/21.

¹⁰⁷ SNA, Minutes of the Third Session of the Sixth Advisory Council, File 624/37 30 April 1937, pp.56-70.

¹⁰⁸ Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960", p.65; Simelane, "The State, Chiefs and control of female migration in colonial Swaziland 1930-1950s". *Journal of African History*. (2004, 45:24) p.55; Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁹ SNA, Swaziland Colonial Annual Report, 1937.

work in the South African mines to be able to tap its much-needed revenue in the form of taxes, capitation fees, and recruitment.¹¹⁰

The contradiction between the state and settlers over Swazi labour was dominated by the constant struggle for labour supply among the settler farmers. The settler community failed to contest unskilled Swazi labour with the NRC labour agents. The NRC agents were able to entice more Swazi labour as they portrayed mine work as more attractive than working locally on settler farms. The settlers resorted to continually making desperate efforts to the colonial state administration, requesting them to organise and effect modifications that would ease the problem of labour shortage on the farms. In the first instance, the settlers pressed for a revision to the Native Labour Legislation to forbid Swazis from entering into contracts of service with the South African mines.¹¹¹

Crush argued that Swazi migrants were forced into a labour market characterised by a ferocious struggle for African labour. In an environment where ‘select of the employer was frequently a substance of life and death, the subsequent designs of labour migration became of intrinsic interest as expressions of the labour market by migrants and their sending agencies such as chiefs and household heads.¹¹² Within Swaziland, white settlers were disturbed by the land expropriation and restraining of labour on the territory. Even local mines experienced the same labour challenge as the settler farmers. They all desired to secure a limited form of local mobility and stabilize their labour force.¹¹³ Moreover, Booth presented that South African employers in town and the countryside wanted to overcome the inhibitions to Swazi migration and generate a significant labour flow to South African labour markets. However, different employers had differing ideas about where such labour should go. Henceforth aggressive contests for labour developed in Swaziland. The extent and outcome of the struggle for Swazi labour became a noticeable aspect of the labour market of the country during this period.¹¹⁴

Furthermore, the European settlers in Swaziland stated that Swazi runners (native recruiting officers) should be forbidden from campaigning for labourers in the communities. Moreover, they strongly recommended that the minimum age for labourers to be recruited in Swaziland for

¹¹⁰ SNA, “Government Secretary, J.R. Armstrong, to Acting Assistant District Commissioner,” Correspondence Letters of Central District, Sitegi, 17 March 1937, File RCS 562/36.

¹¹¹ Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p. 87.

¹¹² Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p.112.

¹¹³ Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p. 115.

the mines should be raised from 18 to 21. Once again, the colonial state dismissed the prohibition of runners since it was “not likely to have the desired effect”.¹¹⁵

Eventually, the Swazi settlers resorted to pleading with the administration to consider the probability of an arrangement with the colonial government of Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) to permit black Mozambicans to seek employment in Swaziland “without any restriction or limitation”.¹¹⁶ Even though, the Resident Commissioner responsible for the Swazi territory was not benefiting from such an arrangement, so he opposed the view. In the first place, he argued that the labour market for Mozambican migrants in Swaziland was “too limited to be of benefit even to the Portuguese colonial authorities in Mozambique”.¹¹⁷ This fact becomes more obvious in the face of the strong competition for cheap African labour offered by the South African mines not only in Swaziland but in the South African region as a whole.¹¹⁸

Secondly, the colonial government viewed that the small wages (if any) paid by the settler farmers in Swaziland and the undignified working conditions on the farms would not be enticing to potential migrant workers. Third, the colonial state in Swaziland would derive no profit in terms of revenue from this agreement.¹¹⁹ It is not surprising therefore that the colonial state’s reaction to this call was somewhat undesirable and that it attributed the blame for labour shortage directly on the shoulders of the settlers.

The development policy of the colonial government was based on the idea that the economic lot of the Swazis was to take part as migrant labourers. Initially, Swaziland was seen as a complement to the South African economy, and there was no fortification of any other income-generating undertakings among the Swazi populace.¹²⁰

2.3 Labour Recruitment Process in Colonial Swaziland

The labour recruitment process in Swaziland began between 1935 and 1940 as the Witwatersrand was seen as the largest pool for Swazi labour. The gold mines on the Rand were to play an integral part in the economic life of Swaziland. The colonial state on the other hand actively restored a more operative system of labour enlistment for the South African mines. This was regardless of the increasing competition that outmigration had on the scarcity of labour for

¹¹⁴ Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p.123.

¹¹⁵ Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p.123.

¹¹⁶ Crush, *The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p.125.

¹¹⁷ Booth, “Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960”, p.110.

¹¹⁸. SNA, Colonial Administration Report for 1935, File 38/35.

¹¹⁹ SNA, Colonial Administration Report for 1935, File 38/35.

European settlers within the country. From then on it was reported that as a consequence of recruitment cooperation, the mines had benefited in that recruiting costs had been lowered and the number of deserters substantially reduced.¹²¹ The mines faced little or no competition from other recruitment of labour. On the other hand, organised labour recruitment makes tax collection a lot easier for the colonial administration. Furthermore, in areas that were inaccessible from the recruiting centres, the administration encouraged traders and shop owners to undertake the function of labour recruiters. This became an additional source of income for the administration since each recruiter was required to pay 25 pounds for a recruiting license while each recruit was charged for a travelling pass.¹²²

On the other hand, the recruiters to maximise their revenue implemented economic coercion by supplying on credit, numerous items such as clothes, grain, or cash to prospective labourers. In the absence of any alternative means of accruing cash income, the credit would be deliberated as an advance and the debtor a potential recruit.¹²³ Before migrating to the mines, Swazi recruits knew that they would start their contract with an added burden of indebtedness to the recruiters.¹²⁴

In the recruitment process for Swazi labour, Swazi traders were excluded to take part in such a business. This was made certain by the colonial state administration, as it made it challenging for Swazis to secure trading licenses. Moreover, for Swazis who were interested to venture into the trading business, their license would be examined first by the local chief then forwarded to the King, who would, in turn, solicit the consent of the Assistant Commissioner who would then submit the application to the government secretary for his authorisation before the license was finally issued. This procedure was partly aimed at eradicating any form of competition between European and Swazi traders. Furthermore, the majority of Swazi licenses were limited to butcheries or the purchase and selling of grains, making it tough for Swazi traders to offer any items as advances to possible recruits thus being successfully relegated from competing with European traders as labour recruiters for the South African mines.¹²⁵

Labour recruitment, therefore, became a valuable source of income for traders, but only for European traders since Swazi traders were not allowed in the recruitment business. The

¹²⁰ SNA, Colonial Administration Report for 1935, File 34/40, p.15.

¹²¹ Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920*, p.125.

¹²² SNA, Colonial Administration Report for 1935, File 38/35.

¹²³ SNA, Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner, 2 April 1938, File RCS 256.

¹²⁴ SNA, District Commissioner to High Commissioner, File RCS 256/38.

relegation of Swazi traders from labour recruitment was further guaranteed by complementary activities such as butchers and grain sellers in the Native areas since cattle, especially in times of food shortage, were exchanged for maize, while most Swazi butchers accepted grain since it was the only available commodity to Natives who had no cash.¹²⁶

Recruiting had become a worthwhile activity among traders, especially in the mid-1930s. Those who proceeded to the mines without assistance from the Native Recruiting Cooperation averaged 700 per annum. While the recruiter's licenses cost only 25 pounds per annum, each recruiter received 1.10 pounds or 2 pounds for each man he took to the recruiting centre.¹²⁷ Colonial findings indicated that between 1935 and 1937 capitation fees paid for Swazi recruits averaged 8000 pounds, an indication that about 4000 Swazis were recruited by traders each year. The mid-1930s saw more than 44% of the able-bodied men driven by taxation, land shortage, and lack of cash markets at home in Swaziland to the stream of labour migration.¹²⁸ (Refer to Table 2.1 on page 45) It shows the fluctuation of early Swazi migrants.

There was an increasing number of Swazi migrants who migrated to South African mines without the aid of recruiting agents such as the NRC. They were mostly employed in the coal mines or by other employers in the labour areas of the Transvaal. Some other Swazis were employed in European farms in Natal and Eastern Transvaal in the wattle plantations and on roadwork in Transvaal.¹²⁹

Whilst it was apparent that the Swazis were still primarily an agricultural community, they were gradually being reduced to a state of dependence on European traders for vital goods and on the South African labour market for money to buy them. Although during this period many Swazis experienced better yields in their subsistence farming, such achievements did not hinder them from migrating to South African mines. Many natives supplemented their agricultural production with wages from working in the South African mines. Many families continued to rely on the remunerations from those working in the mines or other industries in South Africa.¹³⁰

There were no labour migration pacts between the Swaziland government and South Africa for the provision, of a regular supply of workers for the mines as was the case with the Mozambique convention. The colonial administration in Swaziland supported labour recruitment within the

¹²⁵ SNA, Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner, File RCS 246/38.

¹²⁶ Kuper, "Uniform of Colour," p.143.

¹²⁷ SNA, Swaziland Annual Colonial Report, 1938, File 320/25, pp.5-7.

¹²⁸ SNA, Swaziland Annual Colonial Report 1938, File 215/35, pp.23-4.

¹²⁹ SNA, Native Labour Reports, Report on Labour Condition in Swaziland, Pim Report, File 563/31.

country. The administration appropriated the obligation to employ officials for registering recruits and impose a fee of one shilling on each recruit for a recruitment pass. The South African mines were thus inextricably linked to the economy of Swaziland.¹³¹

TABLE 1: Swazi labour Migration to South African Mines: 1925-1938

Year	NRC Recruits	Voluntary Migrants	Total
1925	7111	5790	13901
1926	5181	7636	12817
1927	4794	8411	13205
1928	4942	7932	12774
1929	4630	7785	14058
1930	5465	8593	11412
1931	5954	5458	9658
1932	4205	5453	13770
1933	5969	7801	13659
1934	6907	6752	8459
1935	6684	1775	7852
1936	6438	1414	7788
1938	6153	1877	8030

Source: SNA, Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1925-1938, File 630/45.

2.4 Organized Labour Recruitment Process in Colonial Swaziland

The process of recruitment for migrant mine labour in colonial Swaziland became more formalised under the Native Recruiting Cooperation (NRC) and European traders. However, indeed, some Swazis would voluntarily migrate to South African mines without support from agents. In colonial Swaziland, in every district, labour recruitment was under the control of the

¹³⁰ Colin Newbury “Historical Aspects of Manpower and Migration in Africa South of the Sahara”. *The Oxford History of South Africa, Volume I*. Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971) p525.

district officer who operated hand in hand in this activity with the district superintendent of the Native Recruiting Cooperation.¹³²

Labour recruiting in colonial Swaziland was largely dependent on the requirements of the NRC, which was a recruiting agent that operated mainly throughout the South African reserves as well as in the High Commission's territory. The establishment of this recruitment agent centralised the recruitment of labour for the mining industry. This, therefore, provided the mines essential monopoly of labour recruitment since they employed the largest number of Africans in Southern Africa. It served to eradicate competition between individual miners and to regulate remunerations in other industries.¹³³

An essential feature of the organized recruitment was the 'capture' of local traders within Swaziland by various recruiting companies. The speed with which this occurred was explicable once the role of the trader in the country in the first decade of this century was considered. If the 1890s had proved to be a rosy period for the trader in Swaziland the 1920s provided a test for its capacity for survival. The earlier period saw merchant capital making a profitable business out of the needs of the Swazi chiefs through cattle trading and the provision of European commodities. There were two types of recruiters in Swaziland who were seen at work in the county. First, there were itinerant labour agents who recruited for the various South African mining companies, their labour recruiting departments, or independent labour contractors. These recruiters came to Swaziland during peak labour emigration and stayed no longer than a few months in the country. However, it should be noted that while there was a general upward trend in the number of recruiters in the country, the actual numbers fluctuated markedly, but peaked, with the arrival of travellers in Swaziland.¹³⁴

The second type of operation in terms of recruitment in Swaziland was carried out by resident trade recruiters. They were Europeans who were running trade businesses in the country. They were working for South African mines, although several new trader recruiters established stores around the country in the early 1930s. They took on recruiting as, a side-line at the instigation of the various South African recruiting organizations.¹³⁵ Trader recruiters were used by all of the

¹³¹ SNA, "District Commissioner central district, to Government Secretary," Native Labour Reports, 22 January 1937, File RCS 562/36.

¹³² SNA, "Native Labour Reports, Report on Labour Condition in Swaziland," 1945, File 563/31.

¹³³ Donald Denoon. "Capital and Capitalists in the Transvaal in the 1890's and 1900". *Journal of African Historical*. (1980, 1:23) pp.111-132.

¹³⁴ Jeeves, "All That Glittered, Cape Town", p. 394.

more successful cullers of Swazi labour, including South African recruiting agents such as Marwick and Morris, Howe and Marray, and Tabere's Labour Organization. The labour contractor Musters first used agents and then switched to trader-recruiters by poaching from other organizations. Marwick and Morris were successful recruiting agents in the country during the early period of 1930s. They were able to forge a good connection between the Rand mines and their Swazi recruits. As a result, the two succeeded in recruiting a large number of Swazis for South African mines during the 1930s.¹³⁶

Markwick and Morris's success was further demonstrated by their success in obtaining a contract from East Rand Proprietary Mines (ERPM) to supply 5000 workers per annum for underground work. The ERPM of the Farrar/Anglo-French Corporation was the largest East Rand employer of black labourers in this period. Pooling their knowledge and experience of Swaziland and Zululand, and encouraged by the relatively significant mine workers from Swaziland and Zululand at ERPM, the two men were determined to recruit more Swazis and Zulus for the ERPM.¹³⁷

After the formation of the NRC, Marwick, and Morris retained a semi-independent status and their ERPM contract. This state persisted until their company was finally absorbed by the NRC. It should be presented that Marwick's first raids into Swaziland as a recruiter were not a great success. He went to Mbabane intending to obtain but discovered, like many before him, that 'The native continued to shirk going out under engagement and prefer to seek work for themselves.'¹³⁸ Marwick and Morris made a third attempt to secure Swazis for mine work, coming to Swaziland and 'making arrangements for the more effective organization of their labour supply'.¹³⁹

More strategies were introduced by the NRC to recruit more Swazi labour. The first task was to draw the Swaziland trading community into their operation. Traders were offered capitation fees for the supply of recruits and money was loaned to traders with which to make cash advances to prospective recruits. The traders were encouraged to establish a network of black runners to canvass for labour in the countryside. Potential recruits were offered a contract that, in length at least, was deemed to be more attractive to the Swazi. The average contract period was set at 6 months for underground work but 3-month surface work contracts were also offered. While this

¹³⁵ Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920*, p.45.

¹³⁶ SNA, "Native Recruitment Cooperation Annual Report," Native Grievances Inquiry, A. Marwick. File 1914/1.

¹³⁷ SNA, AC Mbabane, MR, Minutes Correspondence, October 1907, File D19/07/1141.

¹³⁸ SNA, AC Hlathikhulu, MR, Minutes Correspondence, November 1909, File D10/57.

contract was designed for an existing pattern of oscillatory migration, the three-month contract had the effect of ‘capturing’ some of the short-term migration common in the central district of the country.¹⁴⁰ However, the local mines remained the major employer of Swazi labour from Mbabane district. Marwick and Morris decided to concentrate the bulk of their effort in the Hlathikhulu district from which the greater proportion of the existing Swazi mine force was coming.

Marwick and Morris also took steps to control the marked propensity for desertion displayed by Swazi workers. Desertion by Swazis on the Rand was a rather selective phenomenon. The Swazi desertion rates for mine work were well above the industry average. The situation was obviously of concern to the recruiters. Marwick’s unwieldy solution was to circulate lists of previous deserters to pass issuers in Swaziland so that when they took another contract their passes would be endorsed accordingly.¹⁴¹ The other recruiting organization interested in the Swazi labour supply followed the lead of Marwick and Morris, and intense competition developed to secure the services of Swazi migrants and local traders. For example, Taberer’s Labour Organization placed several trader-recruiters on the payroll and used the services of the local manager of Swaziland Tin Ltd. to head up its recruiting operation in the country.¹⁴² Swazi migration patterns were a major achievement for the recruiting agents of the Rand mining houses. First, it was the nature of the recruiting environment and the opportunities this offered to Swazi migrants which helps to explain the new disposition towards the recruiter. Secondly, even though a vast number of recruiting organizations tried their luck in Swaziland, they were by no means uniformly successful. Only a handful had the sort of sustained success that tended to reinforce their presence in the country. Associating the more successful recruiters in Swaziland and mines to which the bulk of recruited Swazi labour was sent to South African mines, it becomes evident that the recruiters were successful insofar as they built upon existing patterns of Swazi migration and therefore upon Swazi preference for particular mines.¹⁴³

Crush posited that between 7000 and 10 000 Swazis migrated for work in South African mines. The lower figure signified the number of work passes issued to Swazis. The general margin captures the illegal migrants who went to work in the towns and farms of the eastern Transvaal without bothering to take passes. Statistics are not convincing on the number of miners who

¹³⁹ SNA, AC Mbabane, MR, Minutes Correspondence, August 1910, File 414, 1910-11.

¹⁴⁰ SNA, Draft ACR, 1911-12, AC Mbabane. Minutes Correspondence, File 44/ 12.

¹⁴¹ SNA, AC Mbabane, MR, August 1920, Minutes Correspondence, File 414, 1910-11.

¹⁴² Hilder Kuper. *An African Aristocracy*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 44.

migrated from Swaziland in the early 1920s. Neither the available work pass suggests any marked surge in the overall numbers of work seekers leaving Swaziland around the time.¹⁴⁴

Involvement in wage labour by Swazi males was an inescapable occurrence during the early period of Swazi migration.¹⁴⁵ The swing of labour towards the Rand mines which had begun after 1907 increased rapidly during the period of the 1920s. Before 1910 there were always less than 2000 Swazis in the gold mines. Within 3 years this figure had doubled and from then the average annual figure fluctuated around 4000 in some years and fell in the years of particularly good harvest in Swaziland or industrial unrest on the Rand.¹⁴⁶

Current studies with interest in mine labour responded positively to the 'relatively considerable increase' in mine labour from Swaziland during the 1920s period. Within the labour districts of the Transvaal, the change from other forms of employment to mining was distinct. The developments of preference for mine labour indicate that about 90% of Swazis employed in the labour districts were engaged in mine work. To some extent, this may have reflected an evolution in employment prospects with the labour districts themselves, but it was almost certainly a function of an increasing Swazi preference for mine work. A trivial reversal of this trend can also be detected towards the end of the period under study. The short-term migrant, who left Swaziland for brief periods to work in the towns of the eastern Transvaal, continued to make up a significant proportion of the migrant workforce but declined in relative importance after 1920.¹⁴⁷

A common set of spatial characteristic of Swazi migrant can be gathered from the period beginning from 1920s onwards. This allows for a detailed reconstruction of the Swazi pattern of employment in the Rand mines. Some mines dominated Swazi labour resources and remained key employers throughout the periods under study. This included (ERPM), Van Ryn Mines and Witwatersrand GMC mine. Of these, ERPM was by far the most important receiving over 50% of the total Swazi recruited around the 1920s, and reaching a peak of 56%. It was a massive employer of black labour with a peak recruited complement of 21000 in the 1930s. In that year

¹⁴³ Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p.45.

¹⁴⁴ Crush, "*Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920*", p.125.

¹⁴⁵ David Webster. "The Origin of Migrant Labour, Colonialism and the Underdevelopment of Mozambique," in Phillip Bonner, ed. *Working Paper in Southern African Studies*. (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand Press, 1977) pp. 236-279.

¹⁴⁶ Crush, "*Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920*", p. 58.

38% of the company recruits were from the Cape, 11.8% were from Natal and 12% were from Swaziland.¹⁴⁸

The Swazi proportion reached its maximum extent in the 1940s with 19% of a recruited workforce of 11000. The Van Ryn Mine also proved to be a consistent and relatively large employer of Swazi recruits. Swazis and Shangans migrants were the most prolific at Van Ryn and in the 1930s, 24 % of whom were from Swaziland. Van Ryn was also an employer of illegal migrant miners (52% of total workers in the 1930s) and was particularly attractive to Swazi illegal migrant labour (miners without contracts). Several mines including Main Reef West, Bantjes, Consolidated Langlaagte, and Brakpan Mines had a broadly cyclical Swazi employment pattern. The precise reason for this fluctuation and changes is impossible to determine in the absence of detailed mine histories.¹⁴⁹ However, any explanation will have to consider several variables, including mine policy towards the employment of Swazis, mine labour needs in any one year, and the changing attitudes of Swazi labour towards the mines. It is of interest to note the gradual increase in Swazi miners preferring to work in particular mines. This was experienced by mines such as Ginsberg, Robensin Deep, Knight Deep, and Consolidated Main Reef. In all of these cases, this occurred over a three to four-year period, perhaps suggesting diffusion of information about improved conditions and terms of services in those particular mines.

Moreover, there were those mines who took only a handful of Swazi recruits every year, but particular heavy complement in one year, possible in alluding to mine 'experiments' with a new labour force. The New Kleinfountain mine for example had an eight-year average of five recruits engaged but took 150 Swazis in 1940. Again, the Van Ryn Deep mine had a seven-year average of 38 but took 406 recruits in 1950 and 356 in 1960. Several mines regularly took a small number of Swazis, probably to perform a special task such as mine policing. Crown Mines, for example consistently employed about 20 Swazi recruits each year. This demonstrates the fluctuation in the number of Swazis recruited for the South African mines in different periods.¹⁵⁰

Numerous conclusions can be drawn about varying Swazi employment patterns on the Rand mines over the years. Although the Swazi mine complement directly controlled by the NRC was fairly distributed (50% of mines received at least some Swazi recruits between 1920 and 1940).

¹⁴⁷ Crush, "Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920", p.45.

¹⁴⁸ Crush, *Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920*, p.55.

¹⁴⁹ Booth, "Early History of Labour in Swaziland," p.132.

Within the context of NRC recruiting, strategies after 1920 most migrants continued to be able to exercise a certain amount of choice about where they would work. Hence congregation of Swazis at certain mines was still feasible despite the growing domination of the NRC. However, some illegal miners did end up working in the Rand to pay for their way to the mines. Once there, they had an initial degree of flexibility in deciding where to seek employment and, once a job was secured, their withdrawal of labour through desertion was likely to have a greater chance of success since they were more difficult to track down.¹⁵¹

Swazi migrants who were recruited for mine labour were employed in different mines in the Rand. Consequently, a gradual spread out of Swazi recruits occurred over time, with an increase both in the overall number of mines to which they went and, in the mines, accepting fewer than what recruits offered. On the other hand, certain mines remained dominant with Swazi recruits throughout the period. Some speculation is therefore in order on the reasons for the congregation. The psychological factors such as inactivity, familiarity, and perception of relative mine conditions, and the cultural factors such as language similarities and friendship and kinship ties, could be read from the congregation. Moreover, there was the strength in the numbers argument which saw congregation as a defensive mechanism to survive in the uncondusive environment of mine work and compound life. It appeared that a large complement of labour from one tribe meant better collective representation for that group with mine management.¹⁵²

Swazi mine labourers flocking to a single mine were actively encouraged by Swazi chiefs who could gain several tangible benefits by having their followers grouped in a limited number of mines. For one thing, the congregation would have tended to mitigate the dissolution of rural loyalties in the urban-industrial environment; particularly since Swazi mine *indunas* (overseers) were often the sons of chiefs. Second, it allowed the chiefs to know exactly where their followers were to be found in the mushrooming urban complex of the Witwatersrand. Therefore, when the chief wished to establish contact with or make some exaction from his followers, he knew exactly where to go. It is likely that it was just as important for household heads in Swaziland to know where their sons could be located on the Rand, and that they too encouraged congregation.

As many Rand mines were offering opportunities for much-unskilled labour for natives in southern African rural regions, preference for some mines over others was experienced.

¹⁵⁰ Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968," p.35-57.

¹⁵¹ Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968," p.25.

Consequently, for example, the overwhelming domination of ERPM as an employer of Swazi mine labour makes little sense without an understanding of the activities of all contractors for the recruitment of Swazi labour. The recruiters were not particularly successful in their endeavours. The process tended to be one of negative reinforcement. Swaziland acquired a reputation as a poor hunting ground for recruiters, and less effort seems to have been made to establish a viable recruiting operation in the country during the early period. It was not until the 1930s with the re-organization of the recruiting methods by the labour contractors and the influx of the second wave of independent labour agents, that recruiters experienced any sustained success in the country. Some Swazi mine workers preferred to migrate without agents and thus rendered themselves unprotected; as a result, they vented their grievances through other channels. However, those Swazis who were from independent recruits' labour contractors such as Marwick and Morris had their compound, their own 'police boys', were not directly subject to the mine staff, and could air their grievances through the Marwick and Morris compound manager.

However, those Swazi migrants who were not attached to labour recruiting agents who migrated on their own had difficulties as their status and source of revenue were on the line. Though, such migrants were assisted by the fact that a congregation of groups of workers from different parts of the sub-continent had advantages for mine management, who could 'foster tribalism' as a means of worker control.

2.5 Labour Recruiting Methods in Swaziland for South African Mines

The successful recruitment of Swazi labour had little to do with any new liking on the part of Swazi migrants since recruiters were regarded with some disfavour. However, it was rooted in the introduction of the cash advance for the mine work. One advantage of this form of recruitment for Swazis was that for the first time, the Swazi migrant could acquire cash for tax, food purchase, and bride price (*lobola*) before embarking upon the mining contract. This was a highly significant development for it led to the potential demise of several well-established methods to taxation demands such as selling cheap labour and tax defaulting followed by prosecution, fines, or imprisonment.¹⁵³

The cash advance also allowed the Swazi household head and local chief to exercise a potentially more significant degree of control over the mine wage of sons and followers. Before the 1920s chiefs and *umnumzane* household heads had to rely on remittances at the mine compound to

¹⁵³ SNA, "Register of Hlathikhulu Chiefs, Resident Administrator." Native Reports," 1947, File D48/07/2205.

acquire a portion of mine wage.¹⁵⁴ However, advance payment created a new challenge in migrant-sending country communities. It led to the breakdown of the ‘old Bantu traditions of the children helping their fathers’ and the emergence of a social environment in which ‘the young men help themselves, keep or spend their wages, neglect their homes, disappear from their homes without warning, and were sucked down in the whirlpool of Johannesburg’.¹⁵⁵

The advantage of advance funds in Swaziland before work on the Rand was obvious to chiefs and household heads. If the migrant’s family approached the local trader-recruiter for cash while the migrant was away, the money would be advanced and deducted from the migrant’s salary.¹⁵⁶ During recruitment, the proportions of the cash advance were enhanced by the competitive nature of the recruiting environment. Potential recruits could obtain advances so high that the recruit could be sure of getting the wage for an entire mine contract before leaving the country.¹⁵⁷ Despite the regulation of cash advances, the recruiters were able to use other methods to push the amount above the legal limit. As one effective recruiting device, recruiters advanced money to potential recruits to pay current and back tax, and court fines, over and above the basic cash advance. As the tax collection season got underway, recruiters would be besieged by men wanting money to pay tax and advanced without question and was often sufficient to cover the tax of the non-working relatives of the recruit.¹⁵⁸ Hence, the money advanced for tax could reach considerable sums, and recruiters made little effort to ascertain whether a request was genuine or not.

Recruiters were ever ready to advance money to pay fines for the numerous possible violations of the oppressive colonial penal code. One strategy was to pay the court fines of workers prosecuted under the country’s taxation and recruiting legislation. Recruiters would ensure the prosecution of deserters from their employees and then bail out the deserter by paying his court fine, thus increasing his debt to the recruiter.¹⁵⁹

Another tactic adopted by trader-recruiters was to advance maize, and occasionally stock, to Swazi families on credit as a book entry which did not even appear on the mining contract as an advance. Indebtedness was facilitated by the high prices charged for maize in the season of peak

¹⁵⁴ Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p.149.

¹⁵⁵ Hilder Kuper, “Colour, Categories and Colonialism: The Swazi Case”, p.297.

¹⁵⁶ Balam Nyeko, “The Rule of the Dlamini in Nineteenth Century Swaziland”. *Thorik*. (1973,4:2) pp.42-83

¹⁵⁷ Nyeko, “The Rule of the Dlamini in Nineteenth Century Swaziland,” pp.42-83.

¹⁵⁸ Bonner, *Kings Commoners and Concessionaires: The Evolution and Dissolution of the Nineteenth Century Swazi State*, p.120.

¹⁵⁹ SNA, AC Ubombo; and Native Recruitment Cooperation, February 1911, File 414/11.

demand. The exploitative practices to which this gave rise caused the colonial state some concern and the government ordered that no labour recruiter could lend, or supply money, stock or any other articles to any local labourer with whom he is executing a labour contract, over and above the advance authorised. It is, however, difficult to determine the effectiveness of this prohibition. Besides, there seems to be no evidence of any trader being prosecuted under such a clause. Since the trader-recruiters were living in the country, they were more familiar with the rural districts. They could afford to make more considerable advances since the chances of recovering the money in the event of desertion were much greater. Many Swazi households had had dealings with traders in their earlier capacity as merchants of maize, and while their business practices can hardly have ingratiated them to their customers, most had lived in the country for long periods, and some could speak the native language (*Siswati*) and, unlike the itinerants, they were well known to their clients.¹⁶⁰

Moreover, some recruiters used their advances to purchase grain for their family members before migrating to the South African mines. The trader-recruiter consequently performed a dual function on the same premises, paying advance and recruiting labour. Nevertheless, in a highly competitive recruiting environment, no recruiter could afford to sit back and wait for recruits to arrive at his trading store. A more aggressive strategy was called for and adopted by the successful trader-recruiters.¹⁶¹

Trader recruiters did not abandon local chiefs despite new opportunities for forging direct links with commoner households through the medium of the advance. The recruiters understood that a good working relationship with the local chief was paramount and should be retained. The policy of the Transvaal Labour Agents and Compound Overseers Proclamation, it prohibited chiefs from forcing their followers to accept mine contracts, to avert the social discontent that such practices had caused over the years.¹⁶² The legal prohibition was easily circumvented, provided a chief could get his followers to agree. For example, a southern labour recruiter secured 40 followers of the Hlathikhulu chief, Ntshingila, for mine work. Each individual was asked if he was going voluntarily, and all stated they were going of their own free will. How effectively and

¹⁶⁰ Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p.171.

¹⁶¹ Crush, "Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920", p.180.

¹⁶² SNA, Government Secretary's Office Mbabane Swaziland, Circular No.84, 15th December 1930, File 860/1930.

for how long such practices continued would have depended very much on the individual chief and his followers.¹⁶³

Labour recruitment in Swaziland has been a phenomenon in which Crush makes a case by arguing that good relations with local chiefs would have been essential for other reasons as well. There is evidence to suggest that chiefs were involved in the provision of advances to recruits. Before the rise of recruitment in Swaziland, black runners (agents of recruiters) were prohibited from carrying advance money. The runners had to find some way of protecting the large sum of money in their possession. The advance money was therefore left with local chiefs for safekeeping.¹⁶⁴

The second major tactic adopted by recruiters to secure an advantage over their competitors was to spread false information which was damaging to the interest of other recruiters and poaching their recruits. In theory, a recruiter should always have been aware that a potential recruit had already accepted an advance since his tax receipt would have been stamped to the effect.¹⁶⁵

Thirdly, recruiters took to recruiting underage (less than 18 years) Swazi males for mine work. The pool of potential recruits was expanded considerably by this practice. Given the difficulty of establishing the precise age of a recruit, recruiters were able to get away with this until the point where abuse became too obvious. The common recruiting agents in Swaziland Marwick and Morris instructed by the Rand mines that the 'large number' of underage recruits who were working in their compounds on three months contracts, working on the surface would be returned to Swaziland at the two recruiting agents' expense. This was done since the underage recruits were recruited by them. So, Marwick and Morris immediately warned their recruiters in the field not to forward any further underage recruits until further notice. The directors of the mines also attempted to control the practice at the administrative level by appealing to the South African Secretary for Native Affairs that because of restrictions against recruitment within the union of the native under the age of 18, representations to prohibit underage recruitment in Swaziland should also be applied.¹⁶⁶ For that reason legislation was enacted in Swaziland soon thereafter,

¹⁶³ SNA, Document of Resident Commissioner to AC Hlathikulu, MR Correspondence, File D 10/ 57.

¹⁶⁴ Crush, "*Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920*", p. 430.

¹⁶⁵ SNA, Application of Recruiting Institution to the Territories, Native labor, File 217/1938

¹⁶⁶ Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p.155.

but in the face of continued demand by Swazi households for this service and the difficulties of enforcing legislation, the recruitment of minors continued.¹⁶⁷

It is pertinent to note that Swazi labour history still fails to encompass all the partakers in the labour practice. One of the critical omitted components is the participation of children in both paid and unpaid labour in colonial Swaziland. Swazi children have remained "invisible" because their role in the colonial labour process was scantily recorded. Some scholars have argued that children remain invisible in African labour studies because they have been viewed as adjuncts of their parents, particularly their mothers.¹⁶⁸ This conception has persisted in Swaziland and studies of Swazi labour history have thus failed to vividly acknowledge that child's employment was the purpose of distinct methods of dominance and control in the emerging capitalist practice of the colonial period.

Recruiters also cast their net a little wider than the boundaries of Swaziland. Many trader recruiters made the practice of advancing money to migrants from Mozambique and Natal. There was certainly a greater degree of risk in this since the advance was more difficult to recover in the event of desertion. The period around 1912 saw approximately 400 'illicit migrants' from Southern Mozambique who came to Swaziland to sign on with local recruiters were arrested for contravening colonial pass regulations.¹⁶⁹ Since it is unlikely that all of those who came were detected the actual numbers were much higher.¹⁷⁰

Recruiters also enticed former ex-mineworkers to recruit on their behalf. They were called runners, a name used for those employed by recruiters to scout natives in their communities who are interested in migrant and joining wage labour. The runners were successful operators who were paid a fee per recruit and stood to make much larger sums of money than on mine contract. Trader-recruiters, in their turn, were able to take advantage of this situation by holding down runner fees and using unlicensed runners. The runners were working for recruiters, who had jurisdiction over them and not colonial administrators.¹⁷¹ The unlicensed runner could be paid a lower fee and the recruiter was spared the expense of a license. In one case, an unlicensed runner was prosecuted for canvassing labour for a recruiter at a higher fee. The recruiter refused to stand

¹⁶⁷ Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p.160.

¹⁶⁸ Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p.160.

¹⁶⁹ SNA, Native Labour File: Registration of Contracts of Employment of Indigenous Workers, 1946, File 035/914Y1X80/1/A,

¹⁷⁰ Booth, "Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour 1945-1960", p.120.

¹⁷¹ Booth, "Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour 1945-1960", p.135.

up for the runner in court. Many illegal runners were scouting the Swazi countryside for potential recruits. However, the illicit runner was sufficient to prompt the colonial state to include a clause in its regulation governing recruiting in Swaziland which spells out that everyone shall wear in a visible position upon his outer garments a badge, clearly indicating that he is a runner and the name of his employer.¹⁷²

The task of the runner was many and opportunities abounded for manipulation of the system, sometimes in cahoots with recruiters, sometimes acting independently. His basic role was to canvas the rural areas for recruits on behalf of his recruiter. The corners and areas inhabited by runners included tribute labour parties and weddings. Moreover, runners would loiter around colonial tax camps and courtrooms with money ready in their disposals. All the areas of the countryside were traversed by runners. Many white farmers were enraged by the ease with which runners could entice farm labour away.¹⁷³

The runners had a high profile in the rural communities of the country and were well known as a source of ready cash for anyone strapped for funds. They also kept their ear to the ground and actively sought out families or individuals they knew to be in debt to traders, the colonial state, or other Swazis. Runners were free to traverse the countryside with a lot of money to advance as the opportunity offered. However, eventually, recruiters were barred from giving money to runners, but many continued to do so. Many covert methods were adopted by the runners to make on-the-spot advances to migrants considering alternative mine contracts. Among the technique used by the Swazi runners, was to have a private arrangement with a witness which could later be publicly denied if necessary and personal loans would be offered by runners to recruits. Another strategy was to obtain the tax receipt of the potential recruit, take it to the recruiter for stamping then ferry the advance to the recruit, a practice not technically against the law.¹⁷⁴

The runners and traders without question collaborated in formulating the above devices to entice recruits in Swaziland. But runners also acted independently to maximise their benefits. Some runners obtained licenses to work for one agent, for instance, but advertised for several others as well. This degree of flexibility meant that the potential recruit was presented with a broader range of choices. Thus, the runner could obtain his fee even if the individual recruit was not favourably disposed towards the recruiter who was officially represented. The runners also

¹⁷² Booth, "Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour 1945-1960", p.65.

¹⁷³ Crush, "Landlords, Tenants and Social Engineers", p. 45.

¹⁷⁴ Crush, "Landlords, Tenants and Social Engineers" p. 35.

arranged for friends or relatives to use their licenses to maximise the time spent in the field scouting Swazi recruits.¹⁷⁵

It is also known that much of the runners' time was spent in the non-productive activity. This was because at times runners were responsible for calling up workers given a leave period by the recruiter and for tracking down potential recruits who had absconded with their advance. The period spent scouting for possible deserters was time consuming because they often proved to be too elusive to the runners. It was imperative to adopt different methods to speed up the process. One of the more ingenious of these methods was the habit of dressing in police uniform and imitating local African police, to the extent of 'arresting' deserters and ferrying them, not to colonial agents, but to the trader's store. This practice met with severe colonial disapproval.¹⁷⁶

It was a common experience to find runners defrauding both their employers and potential recruits, although the longer-term benefits of such actions were probably questionable. The terms of employment were misrepresented to entice the potential recruit, mainly if he was proceeding to work for the first time and was unfamiliar with conditions on the Rand. Some runners are said to have defrauded recruits out of their advances. Their method was to offer to return an advance to the recruiter in exchange for the cancellation of the mining contract and then to abscond with the money. Runners would win in court and not be prosecuted since they had the backing of their employer.¹⁷⁷

The runners played an integral role in the recruitment of migrant labour for the South African Rand mines. However, the runner was no passive instrument of the recruiter and ultimately of the mining capital. The profession was highly sought after by Africans forced into the labour market, and the gains were good if the runner worked his trade successfully. However, it was a niche in the developing migrant labour system that Swazis seem to have been only too anxious to fill.¹⁷⁸

The shift to mine labour by Swazis owes its existence at some point to the presence of a competitive recruiting environment in Swaziland, the Shelena region (South of Swaziland) had the greatest concentration of trader-recruiters and the most intense competitive environment. This

¹⁷⁵ Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*; p. 48.

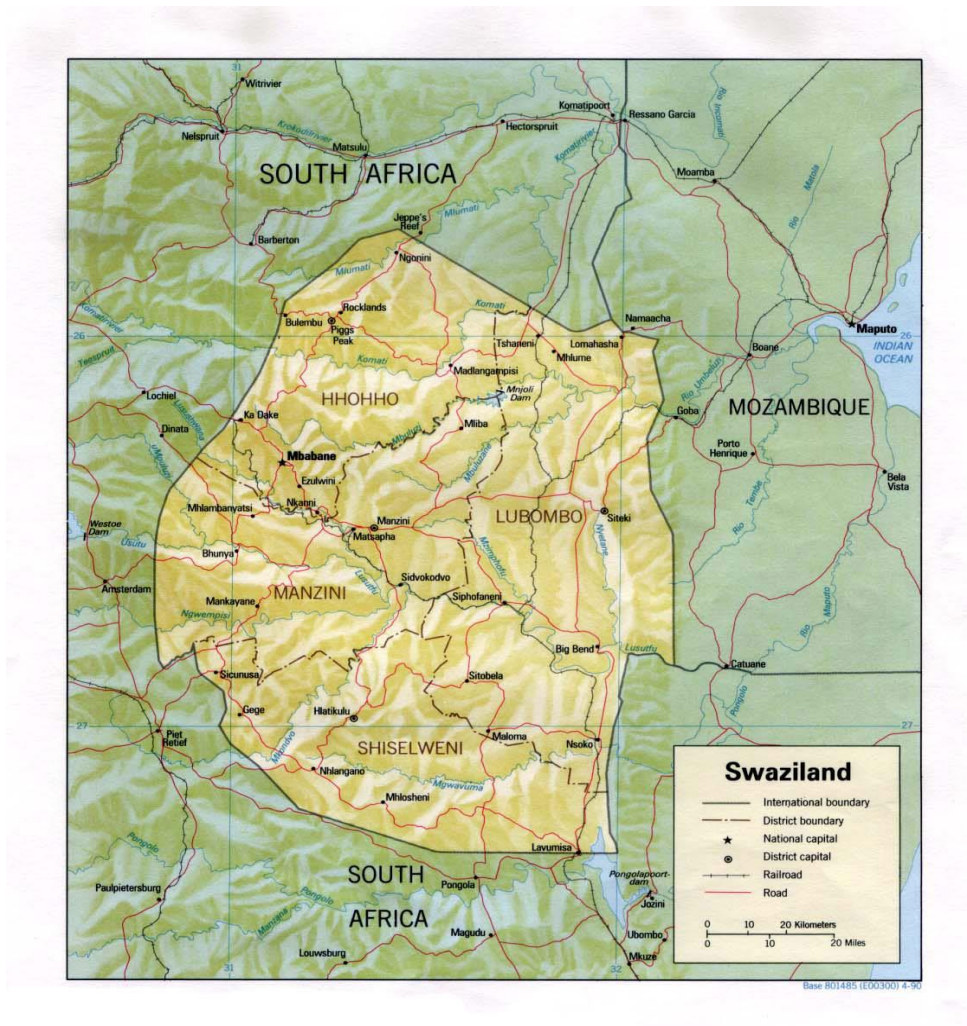
¹⁷⁶ Booth, "Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour 1945-1960" p.55.

¹⁷⁷ Booth, "Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour 1945-1960", p. 58.

¹⁷⁸ Crush, "Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920", p.115.

part of the country's proximity to South Africa played a significant role in migrants seeking employment in the Rand.¹⁷⁹ (See Map 2 of Swaziland).

Figure: 2 THE REGIONAL MAP OF SWAZILAND



Source: Extracted from www.regionalmapofswaziland.co.sz accessed, 17 November, (2018).

The domination of the South of Swaziland as a higher supplier area for the Rand mines can also be attributed to the different character of chief-commoner relations. Southern chiefs tended to mobilize their followers more effectively than those in the centre and north. The events of

¹⁷⁹ Booth, "Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour 1945-1960", p. 65.

competitions for recruits brought a new set of conditions that tended to reinforce and expand the pre-existing patterns.¹⁸⁰

Many strategies were employed by Swazi migrants to defraud recruiters. Still, the common one was that recruits would first desert after acquiring one or more advances, and second, obtain two or more advances before leaving for work on one of the contracts. Desertion could take both active and passive forms depending on the reason for abandonment. In the latter case, the recruit made little effort to avoid the traders. The recruiters also required state support in bringing recruits to trial for desertion. Even though runners could track down deserters, they had no power to arrest them.¹⁸¹

2.6 Child Labour Migrant in Colonial Swaziland

Migrant labour in Swaziland perpetrated the use of child labour. In the period between 1914 and 1947, settler farmers in Swaziland looked to child labour to solve the problem of labour shortages caused by the persistent desertion of adult male workers. Child labour was deployed in a range of situations in colonial Swaziland. The period from 1914 to the early 1930s was dominated by unpaid child labour mobilized through links of labour tenancy, while the period after 1932 shows an increase in paid child labour.¹⁸²

Hamilton Simelane has argued that to a large extent child labour in colonial Swaziland was founded on the nature of the colonial political economy. The most crucial element of the colonial political economy was the transfer of most land into the hands of European settlers. The British government was convinced at the beginning of the colonial period that the growth of Swaziland would best be realised if European settlers had easy access to land. As a result, the Crown Lands Order and the Concession Partition Proclamation of 1907, stipulated that about two-thirds of the total land area of the country was set aside for European settlement.¹⁸³

It should be noted that the structure of the pre-colonial traditional setting of Swaziland controlled labour in the territory. One of the most significant dynamics in traditional Swazi society was the creation, acquisition, control, and appropriation of the labour power of family members by

¹⁸⁰ Crush, "Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines 1886-1920" p.400.

¹⁸¹ Crush, "Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines 1886-1920" p.400.

¹⁸² Crush, "Swazi Migrant Workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines, 1886-1920" p. 450.

¹⁸³ Hamilton Simelane. "The Colonial State and the Entrenchment of Settler Economic Power in Swaziland, 1907-1939". *UNISWA Journal Research*. (1988, 1:15) pp.52-67.

family heads. The labour-power of women and children, in particular, was recognized as a resource to be deployed by family heads for purposes of family reproduction. Young children as they grow older are expected to participate in family tasks, particularly fieldwork. Girls took over specific domestic responsibilities, and boys tend and herd cattle. Through participation in work activities, children were integrated into community life, a process through which they acquired skills and attitudes to work. Until they were married, boys and girls remained dependents of their fathers who exercised authority and control over them in many ways. Landlords' mobilization of child labour, therefore, was primarily built upon such traditional practices of labour mobilization.¹⁸⁴

Another context that pushed some children onto settler farms as labourers were destitution. Some children found themselves starving in the reserves and had to fend for themselves to survive. The condition of poverty appears to have been prominent in Swaziland during the war period and after. The increase in the number of destitute was indicated by a colonial official who observed that "a definite class of destitute natives is coming into existence and paupers from this class of persons are increasing in number."¹⁸⁵ The escape of impoverished children onto settler farms was an indication of a crack within the Swazi indigenous social structure, in which the security of the individual was supposed to be guaranteed by society at large.¹⁸⁶ Traditionally, at the end of each harvest members of a chieftaincy were required to pay tribute in the form of maize and other crops.

The primary purpose of the tribute was insurance against want for members of society. It was expected that if any member became destitute, he or she would take refuge in the chief's kraal and be supported through a tribute from society. It appeared, however, that by 1945 Swazi chiefs were failing to support destitute members of society. Families were no longer able to pay tribute because of the underdevelopment of the reserves, destitution had become too widespread for chiefs to cope with, or chiefs were using the tribute for their purposes. Simelane argued that the result was that destitute children were forced to drift to areas where they could sell their labour power for survival.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ SNA, Employment of woman and children, Native Labour File 144/9, 1941.

¹⁸⁵ SNA, Employment of woman and children, Native Labour File 144/9, 1941.

¹⁸⁶ Fransman, "The Colonial State and Development in Swaziland," p.63.

¹⁸⁷ The scope of the deployment of child labour in colonial Swaziland was very wide. Child labour could be analysed at the level of homestead production for the purposes of family reproduction. At another level

In colonial Swaziland, especially under the various tenancy arrangements, it was correctly assumed that the landlords' control of the labour of male family heads meant, by extension, the control of the labour of all family members, mostly women and children. It should be noted, however, that landlords were able to mobilize child labour by concluding arrangements with the fathers of the children involved. Once the arrangement was made with the parents, family heads instructed their children to work in the fields of the landlords. The most crucial result of declining production in the reserves was to change the deployment of homestead labour. More women and children were released from homestead production activities to work on settler farms as wage labourers so that they could contribute to the income of the household. Landlords took advantage of declining agricultural production in the reserves to mobilize children for work on the farms. They sent recruiters to the reserves to mobilize children with the message that they should take up jobs on the farms to earn money to buy food for their families.¹⁸⁸ Recruitment directed toward children was more pronounced when landlords found it difficult to mobilize adult labour.

Political transformation within Swaziland also had implications for child-labour. Pre-colonial and colonial practices were intertwined. The gradual disintegration of traditional practices and the ascendancy of capitalist labour relations of the colonial period further exacerbated child-labour. For instance, by the 1930s, some Swazi children voluntarily left their homes to seek wage employment. Parental control was under stress, and traditional forms of child control were no longer sufficient to keep children under family control.¹⁸⁹ Boys formed the majority of children employed on the farms. They were typically deployed in cattle herding, as most farmers were not able to fence their farms. This arose from the fact that landlords in colonial Swazi land, like their counterparts in neighbouring South Africa, were active pastoralists. In the case of Swaziland, concentration on cattle keeping was also an indication of the low level of capitalization of farming activities. Farm cattle herding came in two stages. The first stage was calf herding, usually done by boys between the ages of seven and nine. These youngsters were required to

children were employed in most industries, especially mining, despite legislation prohibiting the employment of children under twelve in such enterprises. These levels of child labour deployment do not form part of this article for considerations of length. See, Simelane. "The Colonial State and the Entrenchment of Settler Economic Power in Swaziland, 1907-1939" p.57.

¹⁸⁸Crush, "Landlords, Tenants and Social Engineers: The Farm Labour Question in Early Colonial Swaziland", p. 45.

¹⁸⁹ Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960", p. 55.

look after the calves within the vicinity of the main house. They were not allowed to venture to distant parts of the farm because they were not able to defend the calves against lions or other predators. Calf herding usually went up to midday, when milking was conducted. After that, the calves were allowed to graze with the cows, and the young boys were released to go home.¹⁹⁰ The participation of young boys in this type of activity was widespread in the southern parts of the country where landlords were almost at the same level as neighbouring Swazi peasants as far as economic fortunes were concerned.¹⁹¹

However, child labour in colonial Swaziland was not a welcome practice by the traditional rulers. The increasing number of children who independently took up wage employment became a source of concern to the indigenous elite and parents in general. Parents were content as long as children were contracted by them to the different landlords and other employers.¹⁹²

When children began to leave home and take up wage employment independently, many parents began to fear that their authority was being undermined. The same concern was shared by the indigenous ruling class, which saw the new development as a threat to the base of their political power. They thought that parental, and monarchical control should be imposed at all stages of the indigenous social construction. They blamed colonialism and its new economic order for the emergence of independent working children. This was expressed by a member of the Swazi National Council who stated, 'it was the European that has done us some harm. The economic conditions of today are such that it has become necessary for many of our children and women to work for money.'¹⁹³

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be argued that first; the socio-economic condition of Swaziland was the deliberate underdevelopment by the colonial state, with the dual intent of expropriating the means of production and creating a labour force from the Swazis. However, the Swazis were not passive victims. They played a pivotal role in taking advantage of the labour situation happening in the county. This chapter explored the socio-economic condition of colonial Swaziland, the

¹⁹⁰ Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960", p.35.

¹⁹¹ Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960", p.45.

¹⁹² Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960", p.55.

¹⁹³ SNA, Meeting of the Decline of Tribal and Parental Control Committee, Lozitha. 16 June 1944, File 1444.

competition for labour in Swaziland, and the recruitment process of local Swazi labour by different agencies.

Moreover, it has been revealed that the recruitment process in colonial Swaziland was mainly under the NRC and European traders. However, indeed, some Swazis would voluntarily migrate to South African mines without assistance from agents. In colonial Swaziland, in every district, labour recruitment was under the supervision of the district officer who worked hand in hand in this activity with the district superintendent of the Native Recruiting Cooperation. The evolution of recruitment for Swazis to the Rand mines has also been investigated in this chapter where it has been revealed that during recruitment, the size of the cash advance was boosted by the competitive nature of the recruiting environment. It has shown the activities of runners who were employed by recruiters to canvas for potential recruits in Swaziland during the colonial period. The chapter has also presented the role of child labour used in Swaziland during the colonial period as means to quell the challenges of labour shortage.

Chapter 3

The Recruitment of Migrant Labour in Swaziland 1940s-1960s

Introduction

This chapter examines trends of migrant labour in Swaziland from the 1940s to the 1960s. These trends were a function of the political and economic changes that had taken place in both Swaziland and South Africa. The booming Swazi economy in the 1950s as post-war developments of British colonies affected the flow of labour from Swaziland to South African gold mines. This chapter examined the impact of the scarcity of Swazi labour during the World War II period and the competition for Swazi labour that unfolded in the country. The competition was between the colonial settlers with their capital projects in Swaziland, recruitment for war by colonial administrators, and the recruiters for South African mines. This chapter reveals the role of the Swazis as players in the labour competition, and how they responded to the different strategies employed by recruiters.

3.1 Competition for Labour by Local Settlers and Recruiters

The move to migrant labour in Swaziland was greatly affected by the outbreak of World War II. The recruitment of men for the war effort had a significant impact on most African countries, particularly in their domestic labour markets. According to Simelane, the British demanded the mobilization of men for employment in the different spheres of the economy. Labour shortage in the 1940s created production challenges in the colonial state. There was a demand for military recruits during the war period, which in turn increased competition for labour in the settler economies and the recruiters for South African mines. Swaziland just like other Southern African British colonies in the 1940s experienced labour problems.¹⁹⁴

As alluded to in the earlier chapter before the war; the supply of labour for the local production had become problematic in the colonial Swazi territory. The most significant effect of the labour shortage in the country was instigated mostly by migrant labour. The constant labour burdens of the South African mining industry had already begun diverting labour away from local capitalist territories. In 1939 it was estimated that nearly 30 per cent of the men were out of the region and

¹⁹⁴ Simelane. *Colonialism and Economic Change in Swaziland 1940-196*. (Manzini: JAN Publishing centre, 2003) p.40.

by the end of the same year, the local capitalist was calling for the colonial administration to control whatever labour was available.¹⁹⁵

The labour shortage during the war period resulted in the local capitalist in Swaziland complaining that workers were deserting in significant numbers most especially in the south of the country closer to South Africa. The commissioner in Swazi territory Allan Marwick stated ‘We have had a lot of trouble about these Swazi workers in the past. We spent more money on them and some of them gave us a lot of trouble by clearing off to the labour agents and getting to Johannesburg’.¹⁹⁶ Colonial capitalists opined that Swazi workers were out of control because they were known for desertions. European farmers claimed that most of the Swazi workers destroyed their passes that displayed the farm they were legally bound to work. They did this to acquire new employees leaving their current employers idle. Some used labour agents, they took cash advances and left for the South African mines.¹⁹⁷

According to Simelane, with the war, escalating in Europe, the demand for Swazi men intensified as military mobilisation increased the draining of male labour of the country. The situation was becoming worse as the shortage of labour was further created by the failure of employers to attract workers through better wages.¹⁹⁸ During the early stages of the war, the South African military authority began to demand more labour from High Commission territories and colonies. The Resident Commissioner Allan Graham Marwick in Swaziland noted,

“The question of labour, never an easy one, has increased in difficulty during the war. In addition to the usual calls to labour in the territory for the mines, Sugar and wattle plantations, farmers, and government department, Approximately 1200 were recruited for the creation military camp.”

The Resident Commissioner’s concern over labour shortage was premature as worse was yet to come. A more serious labour shortage became obvious between 1941 and 1942 when 3836 men were conscripted into the territory.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵Simelane, *Colonialism and Economic Change in Swaziland 1940-1960*, p.55.

¹⁹⁶SNA, Minutes of Advisory Council of the Swaziland Territory, 3 December 1936, File, DO 93/ 2.

¹⁹⁷ SNA, Minutes of Advisory Council of the Swaziland Territory, File, DO 95/ 2, p.4.

¹⁹⁸ Simelane, *Colonialism and Economic Change in Swaziland 1940-1960*, p. 45.

¹⁹⁹ SNA, Session of the Seventh Advisory Council of Swaziland, 9 December, 1941, File DO85/08.

The NRC, as alluded to in the previous chapter was recruiting an average of between 10000 and 14000 men per year. After military labour mobilisation ended, an average of 8000 Swazi men were working in the South African Union per year See (Table 3.1). The table highlights a growing move to South Africa. Swazi migrants found it more conducive to migrate to South Africa, besides, there was no marked increase as the figures show, but only slow growth. However, it should be noted that these official figures did not consider, men, and women who went to work in the Union independently. This draining of labour caused widespread shortages of local labour in the territory. The labour shortages were also noted on government and settler farms. The need, therefore, for labour became even more acute as settler farmers attempted to escalate their production to take advantage of the demand for commodities such as maize.²⁰⁰

Table 2: Swazi Men Employed in the South African Mines, 1943-1946

YEARS	NUMBERS
1943	7123
1944	8000
1945	8344
1946	8953

Source: H. Simelane *Colonial and Economic Change in Swaziland 1940-1960*, p. 145

The problem of labour shortage in colonial Swaziland affected the entire territory. This led to the colonial officials and settlers believing that labour was available in the reserves and tended to approach the countryside as though it were a vast reservoir of people. They never entirely accepted the fact that more men were out of the country than before. This was because the war and migrant labour were both recruiting men from the territory. The settler farmers called upon colonial officials to take steps toward labour mobilisation, especially for agriculture production. The Swaziland Farmers Association called upon the colonial government to restrict the issuing of licenses to foreign recruiters. The same call was advanced again at the end of 1941.²⁰¹

The Resident Commissioner responded to the proposal by restricting recruiters who were license holders to specific areas and contemplated imposing fixed numbers of recruits per agent. The

²⁰⁰ SNA, Regional Commissioner of Swaziland to NRC, File DO93/10.

²⁰¹ Simelane, *Colonialism and Economic change in Swaziland 1940-1960*, p.35.

settler farmers reminded colonial officials of the promise made in 1941 when military labour was mobilised, that the state would help obtain workers for local production. They, therefore, asked for the use of force to mobilise labour. In response to this call, the Resident Commissioner suggested to the High Commissioner that conscription for local production be implemented.²⁰²

While the colonial office refused permission for forced labour in Swaziland, the colonial settlers argued that it was for the good of the Swazi, who were portrayed as ‘barbaric’ and predisposed to primitive attitudes. The use of force to mobilise labour was seen as necessary to educate the Swazi to develop the right attitude towards work and to be able to create a modern agricultural economy. These demands failed to convince officials to conscript labour for local agricultural production. Some settlers began to call for whites to do more agricultural work. This was, however, contrary to the nature of settler-oriented economies whose success was largely based on the exploitation of the labour- of the colonised.²⁰³ It is essential to recognise that the labour shortage problem in Swaziland was an indication of large-scale male absence during the war years. Between 1936 and 1946 the Swaziland male population increased by 13 754, from 74 130 to 87 884.²⁰⁴ If it is assumed that the population was growing at an even annual rate, by 1942 the total Swazi male population were around 82382. By 1942, therefore, about 23 per cent of the Swaziland male population was absent, from the South African gold mines and war zones. The image of male absence became even more prominent when the number of males who had reached working age is being considered. The Swaziland census in 1946 recorded that 45.15 per cent or about 39680 of the male population were 18 years or older. In 1942 the total number of men absent was 19036. Approximately 45 per cent of the adult male population was outside the country.²⁰⁵

²⁰² Simelane, *Swaziland moves: perceptions and patterns on modern migration*. (Cape Town: Southern African Migration Project, SAMPi, 2004) p.65.

²⁰³ SNA, Minutes, McLean Luis and G.L. Wallis, EAC, 28 January 1948, File VII/77.

²⁰⁴ SNA, Minutes, McLean Luis and G.L. Wallis, EAC, 28 January 1948, File VII/77.

²⁰⁵ SNA, Report on the Labour Condition in Swaziland, 1940, File 3140.

Figure 3: Times of Swaziland newspaper Advertisement for Mine Labour Recruiter



Source: Swaziland National Archives, *Times of Swaziland*, 12 March 1941

3.2 Struggle for Swazi Labour during the Second World War period

As alluded to earlier, the outbreak of the Second World War created a labour shortage and labour competition in Swaziland. The competition was between the local colonial capitalist economies, the South African recruiting agencies, and the recruitment for military service.²⁰⁶ Recruiting agents found it very difficult to influence men to enlist for war service.¹⁹⁰ During 1942 the South African gold mines recruited close to 14,000 men in Swazi territory, which may indicate that some men were taking mine employment to avoid enlistment for war service. This resistance strategy became such a concern that colonial officials were forced to negotiate a modus operandi with South African mining companies. One ex-migrant miner Magejeza Dlamini from the Shiselweni region of Eswatini stated that in 1943 when Swazi men were asked for enlistment for the war, he chose to resist by escaping to the South African mines on the Rand,

²⁰⁶ SNA, Minutes, McLean Luis and G.L. Wallis, EAC, 28 January 1948, File VII/77.

*‘It was a common exercise for an able-bodied man to take contracts from recruits for the Rand mines of South Africa instead of enlisting. Many of my friends had gone before the war to work in the mines and came back to transform their households so instead of going to war where none of my people had ever been I decided to migrate to the South African mines’.*²⁰⁷

In May 1942 the high commissioner informed the Dominions Office that at a meeting of resident commissioners and representatives of the Chamber of Mines the question of further recruitment for military labour in the High Commission Territories had been discussed.²⁰⁸ At the meeting, the resident commissioners argued that little success could be achieved as long as recruiting for South African mines and industries was going on. They suggested that a six-month suspension of Union recruitment be imposed to direct labour to war service. Mining representatives responded that the industry was already providing an invaluable service to the British war effort.²⁰⁹

However, the Producers Committee of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines approved suspending recruiting operations by the NRC in the High Commission Territories for six months starting in July 1942. The factors prompting the Chamber of Mines to give in to the High Commissioner's demands are not very clear. It can be inferred, however, that the decision was facilitated by the circumstance that the South African gold mines were dominated by British capital. Therefore, the Committee's decision closed the South African outlet to many of those who were resisting recruitment for military service. Locally, employers were willing to release some of their employees for war service. From July 1942, the war service enjoyed a six-month recruiting monopoly in Swaziland. Despite this monopoly, common resistance to mobilization remained a reality.²¹⁰

This reaction forced the monarchy and the chiefs to resort to desperate and unconventional labour mobilization tactics. The change in tactics was first noticeable in the manner in which chiefs were employed in the process of labour recruitment. Chiefs used traditional regional

²⁰⁷ Magejeza Dlamini, Interviewed at his home Mhlosheni Eswatini, 18 October, 2018.

²⁰⁸ Hamilton Simelane, “War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945,” (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1991) p.134.

²⁰⁹ SNA, Manpower Requirements of G.H.Q. Middle East: Telegram from the High Commissioner of Swaziland, to the Dominions Office 25 May 1942, File C0968/45A.

²¹⁰ SNA, Report on the Labour Condition in Swaziland, 1940, File 3140.

meetings for recruiting purposes. The commoners believed that the meetings were the customary ones convened in the chiefs' kraals to discuss regional and national problems.²¹¹ Simelane argued that in 1942 these meetings were used to conscript men for military service. Their families only received reports of what happened from eyewitnesses after the men were taken. The traditional political structure had been transformed (at least temporarily) into an instrument of wartime colonial coercion. British wartime labour requirements, thus distorted Swaziland's indigenous institutions. There was considerable collaboration between colonial officials and indigenous leadership. The collaboration was not new, but wartime requirements intensified it. Once the meetings were revealed for what they were, Swazi men simply refrained from attending. The "bogus" meetings failed to satisfy British labour demands, and it became necessary to diversify methods of coercive recruiting the new strategy revolved around some mining companies in Swaziland. During the war years, the mining industry was the leading employer of Swazi labourers inside Swaziland and outside agriculture.²¹²

Therefore, during this period the labour situation changed, Booth asserts that in Swaziland once recruitment to the South African gold mines was suspended, there were a considerable number of men who were ready to jump to the first opening in the local mines. This was even though Swazi men did not like working in the local mines, where wages were notoriously low compared to South African mines. Through the sanction of the colonial state and in collaboration with the traditional Swazi authorities, mining companies were used to attract men with lucrative jobs.²¹³ The competition for labour in the Swazi territory during the war period was challenging for both the British administration and the settlers. According to Simelane, the colonial state was forced to attempt a balance between military labour requirements and the labour requirements of the settlers. This became even more crucial in the face of the mixed origins of the settlers in Swaziland. While the majority of the settlers were of British origin, there were a large number of Afrikaner settlers, especially in the southern part of the country. The influence of the southern settlers was still a factor in Swaziland even though the number of settlers of Boer origin was declining.²¹⁴

²¹¹ SNA, Extract from Notes of Meeting held in High Commissioner's Office for raising more recruits for South African mines, AAPC 13 May 1942. High Commissioner's Office, 13 May 1942, File D035/925/Y432/11

²¹² Simelane, *War, Economy and Society in Swaziland*, p.90.

²¹³ Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour", p. 45.

²¹⁴ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p.120.

Moreover, the Boers were characterized by British officials as poor and suffering from excessive generational land division. Although they were poor, these Afrikaner settlers were involved in several labour arrangements with Swazi peasants. They opposed British labour mobilization because it threatened the basis of their agricultural production, and they did not share the patriotic sentiments demonstrated by the settlers of British origin. This was made apparent immediately after the outbreak of the war in Europe. Rumours of settlers being disloyal to the British cause were reported in southern Swaziland.²¹⁵

The Resident Commissioner was compelled to take a tour of the region to advance wartime propaganda to help the British cause. Some residents from the south alluded to concerns about regional unrest. This attitude had a lot to do with division in South Africa, regarding that country's involvement in the war. Reports from the south suggested that farmers in the region were discouraging peasants from enlisting for war service. Even British settlers did not fully support military labour recruitment. To all farmers, the labour question was the most crucial factor, and as long as they were not assured of a constant supply of labour for their farms, they remained reluctant to support labour mobilization for the war.²¹⁶ Swazi natives living on settler farms were threatened by farmers that if they enlisted for war service their crops will be destroyed and their people driven off the settlers' farms. All kinds of misinformation were spread about the impact of war conditions on their livelihoods and families.²¹⁷ However, settler opposition did not become a severe issue. There is no evidence pointing to organized settler opposition to safeguard their labour interests. The colonial state promised settlers that it would help in the mobilization of labour for settler farms.

It is clear from the historical record, however, that such a promise was never fulfilled. The *modus vivendi* established between the colonial state and the South African Chamber of Mines did not wholly eliminate the operations of the agents of the Native Recruiting Corporation. They continued to operate covertly. It appears that when recruiting for the South African mines was suspended, NRC agents had already given money advances to many recruits. The fear of losing the money invested in labour forced the recruiting agents for the South African gold mines to try to dissuade Swazi men from enlisting for military service.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p. 125.

²¹⁶ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p. 127.

²¹⁷ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p.130.

²¹⁸ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p.145.

3.3 Postwar development and Demand for Swazi labour

Local industries such as the Havelock Asbestos Mines, Peak Timber, and Usuthu Pulp Corporation, the plantation agriculture, such as Swaziland Irrigation Scheme, all were in demand for labour in Swaziland in the post-war period. These internal labour demands conflicted with the labour interests of the gold mines recruiters. Just like the South African mines, the major characteristic of the enterprises which emerged in Swaziland between 1947 and 1960, was that they were labour intensive for unskilled workers. In the above-mentioned industries, for instance, cheap unskilled labour was required for planting trees, and site development which involved different tasks. Even in the sugar plantations, unskilled workers were needed for cane planting, weeding, and cutting. The European settler farmers were joined by this postwar foreign capital development in their quest for the competition of Swazi labour.²¹⁹

The NRC, which in the pre-war period enjoyed the monopoly of labour supply and support of the colonial administration, faced challenges with the large-scale capitalization of Swaziland's economy after the war. By the mid-1948 the effect of the growing capital penetration on the labour market in Swaziland had become clear, by the decline in the output of the NRC labour recruits. Different strategies were employed by the interested parties on the Swazi labour supply during the postwar period in the country.²²⁰

Development in wages became the first strategy employed by the local industries to draw local labour to local employment. The Havelock Asbestos Mine, which in 1939 contributed the major portion of income tax receipts in the country and provided a significant share of employment, elevated its wages in 1948, as did the wattle estates. The Havelock mines increased their monthly salaries for the second time in a year. Workers were paid 12 pounds per month. The timber industry paid 2.2 pounds for Swazi children, and the sugar estates too

²¹⁹ The period 1947 -60 saw an overall investment by the CDC of approximately 5 million pounds and of all other industries closer to 40 million pounds. Those industries were employing a labour force of 13,000 which, when added to agriculture, public works and other the sectors, brought the domestic level of wage employment to around 20,000. SNA, Colonial Annual Report for the Year, 1960.

²²⁰ Simelane, *Colonialism and Economic Change 1940-1960*, p.153.

improved its wages. The sugar cane cutters were paid 7 pounds per month. This created an impact on the output of the NRC rate of recruiting migrant miners in the country.²²¹

The local industries also used a strategy that was going to work against the policy of the South African mine workers' contracts. The contracts allowed the miners to visit home at the end of the contracts, contracts would range from 9 months to a year. Local industries, therefore, permitted their workers to go home at least once a month (after payday) for a weekend.²²² These terms of employment were attractive to workers who would go home regularly than working in the South African mines where they only went home at the end of their contracts.

In response, the NRC intensified its recruiting efforts. They opted to use the 'propaganda' strategy which had been inadequate in the past to the dissemination of NRC calendars (depicting gold mine work as rich and exciting) and such cheap but useful give away as booklets, matches, and razor blades. From 1947 onwards, it extended its propaganda events to consist of booklets on the benefits of mine labour. These messages were conveyed by the film and tape recordings.²²³ Meat and beer were provided free during the meetings of recruiting for mine labour. All this was implemented to recruit Swazi workers. The NRC even invited the paramount chief Sobhuza II during one of their meetings. They view the presence of the King as a coup of considerable magnitude as he would perhaps influence his people to support the NRC.²²⁴

The local settler farmers were also affected by the postwar shortage of labour supply. The situation was acute among settler farmers, as it was expensive for them to recruit labour similarly to the NRC and capital industries in the country. The settler farmers chose to practice all measures to 'safeguard' their local labour source from the recruiters. They warned their workers of the dangers of working in a mine; they refused to consent to the NRC to use their private roads and poached and poached their prospective recruits. In 1947 settler farmers gently began using the European Advisory Council to lobby the government into regulating the competition for Swazi labour.²²⁵ The EAC tried to request the colonial government to stop the advanced system which the recruiters were using, in response the government denied it. In 1949, the settler campaign was joined by the new development capital, which equally saw its interest in limiting labour mobility,

²²¹ Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour", p.130.

²²² Simelane, *Colonialism and Economic Change 1940-1960*, p.68.

²²³ Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour", p. 130.

²²⁴ Booth, "Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour", p.134.

²²⁵ Simelane, *Colonialism and Economic Change 1940-1960*, p.153.

beyond Swaziland.²²⁶ What is evident is that the administration began to slowly support local employment in the competition for local labour.²²⁷

A situation that had been the scuffle between European settlers and South African mine recruiters in the 1940s developed. The common interest of new progress capital and the settlers prompted them increasingly to ally against mine recruiters. The development also prompted the Swazi monarchy to realign its position in concert with the colonial administration. The developments from CDC changed the attitude of Sobhuza II, who advised natives to support industries that were developing in the country rather than the Rand mines. The Swazi king claimed that the new industries had come to develop the country and hence they were worth the support of the Swazi nation at large.²²⁸

The local newspaper *Times of Swaziland* in the 1950s began to report on the rise in foreign capital in Swaziland, in particular timber, pulp, and fruit production. The public was informed about these various companies, their terms of employment, and wages.²²⁹ Of Havelock mine in *The Times* wrote:

“At the Havelock mine, a school and a playground were provided for the children and entertainment hall for adults, ground for sports of every description was available. The roads were perfect, houses were neat. Havelock would prove a Mecca for those who love nature and desire to enjoy the peace and restfulness in the ground of nature.”²³⁰

The post-war period also witnessed a turn of events with the support given by the administrative government in the competition for Swazi labour. When the government intervened in the labour shortage problem, it initially favoured and supported local employment. Its policy changed, after the post-war and began supporting the NRC, and local capital investment. In 1954 the administration showed its support of local capital by encouraging local labour to support the

²²⁶ Booth, “Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960”, p.141.

²²⁷ Booth, “Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960”, p.155.

²²⁸ Sobhuza II at a large gathering at the Peak Timber industry gave a speech appealing to the Swazi to patronize local industries. He publicly condemned the practice of taking up employment in the South African gold mines and claiming that the Swazi were exposed to bad foreign influence. Source: SNA Department of Labour, Annual Report, 1969, File 314/62.

²²⁹ Mfanukhona Dlamini “Rise in Foreign Capital in Swaziland Economic Sector.” *The Times of Swaziland* (TOS), 17 March 1949.

²³⁰ SNA, McLean Luis and G.L. Wallis, European Advisory Council, Minutes Correspondence, 28 January 1948, File VII/77.

CDC investments. Local employment benefited the Swazis who worked in the country as they were not divorced from their social settings. Moreover, it benefited the local authorities as they easily retained control over the Swazi working class²³¹ The local industries also tried to attract labour through very high cash advances. Cash advances were not new in the Swazi labour market. What was new was that the advances were unprecedentedly high and also discriminated against agents recruiting for foreign industries. In terms of Proclamation No.82 of 1950, which was an amendment of the Native Labour Registration Act of 1913, a cash advance was described as:

“Any sum of money in cash or any substitute thereof in any form
Whatsoever supplied by a labour agent or an employer to a native upon the
condition that he shall repay or make good the same by his labour or out of
the wages to be received by him under a contract of service with any other
person.”²³²

The primary reason for the offering of advances to migrant miners was for the payment of taxes, fines, and debts to store owners or to buy food for families that were remaining behind. While the South African NRC was forced to give advances of not more than three pounds, local industries went to the extent of providing advances of between five pounds and ten pounds. Under the provision of the proclamation of 1913 which was amended in 1950 as stated vividly in a report from NRC, it shall be not lawful for any labour agent or employer to make any advance to any native above the sum or value of three pounds; exclusive of any fines imposed by a competent court, or taxes, but inclusive of the reasonable cost of food enrooted to the place of employment.²³³

The local industries using the advantage of offering high advances have an impact on foreign recruiters. For instance, Simelane argued that it had an impact on mines such as Anglo-American, (Witbank Collieries), and the Natal Coal Owners Labour Association (NCOLA). It was in later years that the NCOLA regrouped to build a recruiting depot in the country. However, the local industries took advantage of this. They were able to give high advances

²³¹SNA, McLean Luis and G.L. Wallis, European Advisory Council, Minutes Correspondence, 28 January 1948, File VII/77.

²³² SNA, Native Recruitment Cooperation Report, Siteki Swaziland, August 1951, File Ref. N532/51.

²³³ SNA, NRC Report, Swaziland, September 1951, File Ref. M 853/44.

because they argued that they were not bound by the provisions of the 1913 proclamation, which was enacted to regulate the activities of foreign recruiting agents.²³⁴ Unrestricted by any regulations, local employers were able to use high advances as instruments of labour mobilization, enabling them to have an advantage over foreign recruiting agents. The success of the high advance strategy was demonstrated by the fact that by the end of 1952 Peak Timbers had managed to increase its labour force by 2000 while Usuthu Forests had mobilized about 2500 workers.²³⁵

During the 1960s the colonial administration adjusted the system of giving advances to labour recruits. This was meant to provide the local recruiters with an advantage over the foreign recruiter. It gradually discouraged local labour from seeking employment from outside the region. The support of local government continued in the country until 1963 when labour shortage problems were combined with political pressure on the part of the administrative government.²³⁶

Between 1964 and 1965, more pressure was put on the colonial administration. This pressure emanated from the Swazi labour shortage and the shift to independence, which emboldened the monarchy to pressure the colonial administration to end further employment of foreign labour and repatriate it. In 1964 the mining sector grew more extensive in Swaziland with the opening of the Iron Ore mine at Ngwenya and the coal mine at Mpaka. Moreover, the CDC provided capital for the construction of a railway from the iron ore mine to Lourenco Marques (now Maputo). Such projects requested a larger supply of unskilled labour which Swaziland had to provide.²³⁷

²³⁴ Simelane, *Colonialism Economic Change in Swaziland 1940-1960*, p.47.

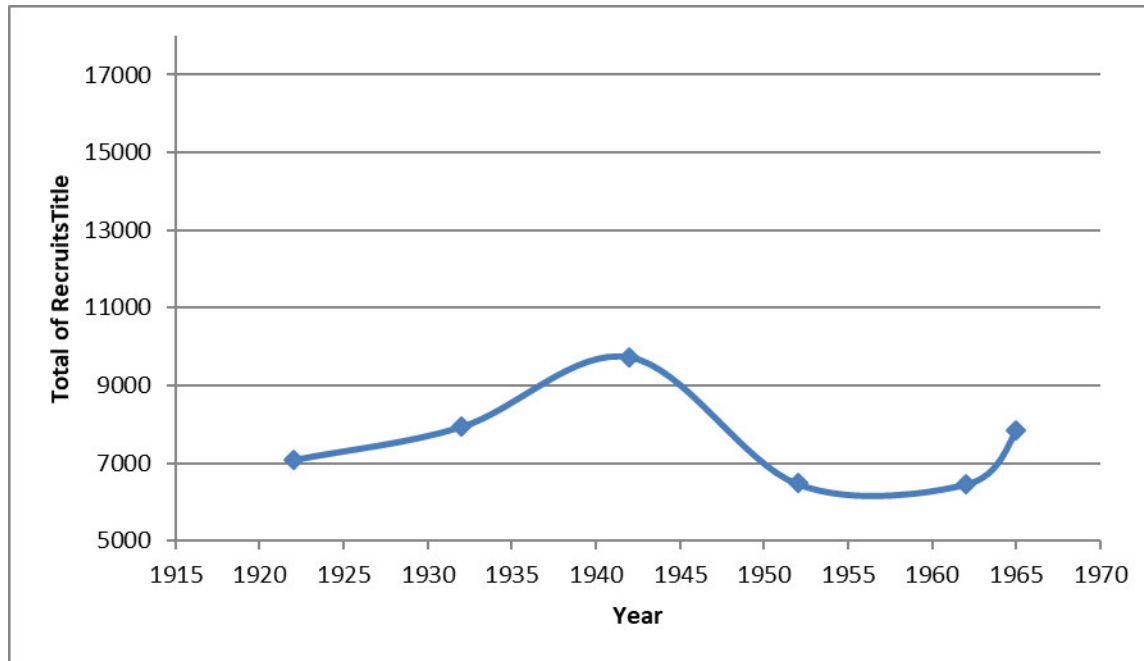
²³⁵ Simelane, *Colonialism Economic Change in Swaziland 1940-1960*, p.55.

²³⁶ SNA, Minutes of the Reconstituted European Advisory Council meeting held on 20th to 21th November, 1956, File 75/13.

²³⁷ SNA, Minutes of the Reconstituted European Advisory Council meeting held on 20th to 21th November, 1956, File 75/13.

FIGURE 4:

Person Recruited from Swaziland to the South African Gold mines



Source: Booth, *Capitalism and the Competition for Swazi Labour*, p. 12.

The graph in Figure 4 indicates the fluctuation of labour flow in Swaziland, and how it dropped during the postwar period as a consequence of the developments from the CDC and foreign capital in Swaziland. Local employment from 1947 to and 1960s in industry and agriculture provided labour, thus resulting in a decline in migrancy. However, the local economic improvement did not solve the unemployment rate as it started to increase in the 1968 period, as demonstrated in Figure 4.

The economic growth had markedly increased employment opportunities for Swazis in the country at the unskilled level. The number of Swazis employed in the South African mines which in 1922 was 7,089 had declined to less than 3,440 by 1952. The decline was further presented by the fact that between 1965 to 1968 Swazi labour was not associated with skilled trades. More to that the monopoly of Europeans, mainly the Portuguese in the building trade and South Africans in engineering, resulted to decline in migrant labour. Moreover, highly paid manual jobs such as

drivers and operatives were held by foreign Africans.²³⁸ One effect of the economic developments was to raise substantially the level of wage employment in Swaziland. It was estimated that wage employment rose from 25,000 miners in 1960 to 50,000 miners in 1966. As a consequence, migration to the South African gold mines undoubtedly declined. The Swazi labour force were not passive victims in the phenomenon of the labour struggle, the situation gave them a chance to be selective in their choice of employment. The Swazi workforce had plenty to choose from and sell their labour, where and when they wished.²³⁹

3.4 The 1950s, the Swazi Economy and its impact on labour flow from Swaziland to South African mines.

The economy of the Swazi territory transformed in the 1950s when a substantial number of Swazis were being employed in different areas of economic activity within the country. However, the 1950s still represented colonial Swaziland, with many European settler farmers and small-scale mining companies.²⁴⁰

The inter-war period saw Swaziland labour employed in settler estates, tin, and asbestos mining, public works, and domestic service. The asbestos in Swaziland became not only the major source of the administration's revenue but also the largest employer of Swazi labour within the country which generally impacted labour migration to South African mines. The 1950s saw the struggle for Swazi labour intensifying; the result was that Swazi labour was increasingly absorbed into the larger schemes of agro-forestry and sugar plantation. The capital investment in Swaziland led to a marked increase in demand for Swazi labour. A 1957 report indicates the rapid development that took place in the territory had already started to create a demand for skilled and semi-skilled Swazi labour. Unfortunately, however, the demand exceeded the supply.²⁴¹ Even though there was a major increase in the labour force in Swaziland, wages and conditions remained virtually the same as they had been in the late 1940s and 1950s. Capital investment was almost all in asbestos mining and the agricultural export sector. Other sectors of the economy, especially building and road construction were tied up with and responded to the needs of the export sector. The capitalist economies in Swaziland maximised their profits

²³⁸ SNA, Swaziland Colonial Annual Report for 1949, p.15.

²³⁹ SNA, Economic Mission, Control of Native in Union of South Africa, 1932, Circular No.55, File 3132D/1932.

²⁴⁰ SNA, Combined Executive Meeting at Gollel on 12 April 1958, Correspondence Letters, File 5 / 3402.

²⁴¹ SNA, Combined Executive Meeting at Gollel, on 12 April 1958, Correspondence Letters, File 5/3402.

through the exploitation of Swazi and other African labour within the country. They achieved this in two major ways: first by transferring the maintenance of the Swazi labourers to the Native Areas and also by paying wages that were actually below the worker's subsistence.²⁴² Moreover, the working and living condition of the local economies were horrendous. A labour officer's report in 1957 in the Agra-forestry noted that the sugar cane plantations appeared to be the most backward in outlook and planning in the labour field. It had a low standard of housing and rations needed to be improved.²⁴³

The post-war period in colonial Swaziland saw some development which was characterised by the growth of an export economy in which production for the world markets was conducted principally by expatriate-owned mining and agricultural enterprises. The economic development of the post-war period accepted the migratory labour system which largely served South African interests and local settler capital. They too had needs of unskilled labour. Whilst collective initiatives to improve wages and conditions were non-existent among the Swazi labour, it was the opposite for those who migrated to the South African mines.²⁴⁴

The labour policy in Swaziland during the 1950s pursued by the colonial administration was to extract cheap labour from the locals. This was the case as presented by Halpern who argued that as it was in South Africa, Swaziland employers and the colonial government, apparently assumed that wage earners were single men. Also, they had families which were supported by their remittances from working on the farms. Even if this was true, the resulting wage decree that the married urban worker must be separated from their families was a social challenge. Moreover, the women and children found it hard to survive by farming small pieces of land and the little that the migrant remit back home.²⁴⁵

The terms of employment meant that Swazi labours could not reside permanently in employment areas and that they had to return to the Native Areas after spending a few months in employment, thus sustaining the migrant status quo.²⁴⁶ However, there were challenges with the labour market of Swaziland during this time. As a result, local employment was not attractive

²⁴² SNA, Economic Mission, 27th October 1959 File /3402.

²⁴³ SNA, Economic Mission, 27th October 1959, File /3402.

²⁴⁴ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p.85.

²⁴⁵ Rick. Halpern. "Solving the Labour Problem; race, work, and the state in sugar industries Natal". *Journal of Southern African Studies*. (2004, 30:1) p.75.

²⁴⁶ Halpern, Solving the "Labour Problem; race, work, and the state in sugar industries Natal", p.45.

for many Swazis. The colonial administration's involvement in labour issues in Swaziland resulted in the fixing of low wages and poor working conditions. As a result of the lower wages and the rise in the cost of living in Swaziland, reports in 1949 were issued which noted the generally deplorable conditions of Swazi labour, urging the administration to fix the wage problem. Such unresolved labour challenges propelled the rise in labour migration in the country.²⁴⁷

In the early 1960s, Swaziland due to lower wages and poor working conditions experienced a high rate of labour shortage. However, in 1963 there was a strike action of Swazi workers, which persuaded the colonial administration to inquire about the issue of wages in Swaziland. The low wages and poor working conditions inevitably resulted in Swazis withholding their labour and preferably migrating to the South African mines in pursuit of higher wages, thus creating a labour shortage for some of the local enterprises.²⁴⁸ Mjahnke Dlamini an ex-migrant miner from Shiseleni in eSwatini attests to this. He stated that he left Swaziland in 1962 for the South African mines because wages in the country were low, and the mines and forest industries were paying less than the mines he said

“I left Swaziland with my neighbour who was already working in the mines, when I left I was currently employed at Maloma coal mine, so I had the skills of mining. It was the money that made me desert my job and join my neighbour to work in South Africa. I had no contract, but followed my neighbour who promised to help me secure employment in the Rand mines.”²⁴⁹

In response to the labour shortage in Swaziland due to migration to South African mines, the colonial administration limited the number of recruiting licenses for South African agents, however, no efforts were made to completely curb the outflow of Swazi labour to South Africa because such effort was going to result in the unemployment of many able-bodied males and a concurrent increase in the number of tax defaulters. This resulted in an increase in labour migration to South Africa from Swaziland.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ Simelane, “War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945”, p. 88.

²⁴⁸ Simelane, “War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945”, p.95.

²⁴⁹ Majahnke Dlamini, Interviewed at Mhlosheni Swaziland, 30 August 2018

²⁵⁰ SNA, Economic Mission, 27th October 1959, File/ 3402.

According to the Annual Report for Swaziland of 1959, on average, the wages were still much lower than those prevailing in the Union, hence the exodus of a large proportion of available labour in Swaziland migrating to South Africa. It was discovered that one reason for the difference in wage rates was that the better able-bodied men sought work in the Union, whilst the less efficient were employed within the Territory in larger numbers than would otherwise be necessary. There were no new licenses issued for the recruitment of labour for work outside Swaziland. But until wages and conditions of service improve in Swaziland and resemble more closely to those in the Union it was not considered desirable to restrict in many ways the movement of Swazis to the Union.²⁵¹

3.5 The struggle for the Labour force in Swaziland during the 1960s.

Low wages and poor working conditions in colonial Swaziland during the 1960s, which resulted in labour shortage hit hard on the small-scale capitalist enterprises in the Territory. These small-scale enterprises include small-scale farmers, who required seasonal labour for harvest and those involved in irrigated agriculture and small sugar farmers, and small-scale Agro-forestry schemes.²⁵² A farmer at Big Bend Swaziland Michael Smith when interviewed, about the working condition in Swaziland during the 1960s, noted that labour shortage was a big problem for them as small-scale farmers. The advances which were offered to Swazis were not lucrative to sustain a labour force hence many preferred migrating. This created a labour shortage. Even the squatter tenant system did not solve the problem of labour shortage on farms.²⁵³

An increase in migrant labours from Swaziland was inevitable as the colonial state was incapable of controlling wages for unskilled Swazi labour, thus it became ineffective to regulate the labour supply, especially for small-scale employers. When the issue was discussed with the small-scale farmers, undercapitalised as they were, they were informed that the only solution to the labour shortage of seasonal labour was mechanisation. Given the fact that these small-scale capitalists could not afford to pay minimum wages, mechanisation was not feasible.²⁵⁴ Mavela Zwane alleged that the wages offered by local farmers and the local mining industries were

²⁵¹ SNA, Combined Executive Meeting at Gollel on 12 April 1958, Native Labour File /3402.

²⁵² Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market 1900-1968", p.37.

²⁵³ SNA, Mr Michael Smith, Former Owner of a Farm in Big-Band Plantations, Interviewed in Manzini 27 August 2018, File 220/420

²⁵⁴ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p.68.

lower compared to that of the Union, so many unskilled workers preferred the Rand mines to local. Zwane noted,

“Going to the South African mines for me was a great opportunity as they offered higher wages compared to local wages, more offered I retrieved an attractive offer as an advance for taking a contract with the NRC. Moreover, the wages from South African mines were enough for my family as I constantly sent money home and pay my taxes.”²⁵⁵

However, the Swazi small-scale farmers blamed their misfortune on South African recruits for South African mining houses. They referred to illegal recruitment for employment outside Swaziland. They cited the case of several able-bodied men who suddenly left a farm in Swaziland for an increased rate of pay in South Africa as railway labourers. Companies with appalling working conditions suffered from a labour shortage. For instance, the Swaziland Piggs Peak timber company which by 1960 had developed 9,500 acres of conifers, and 11000 acres of Gum trees, lamented the shortage of labour.²⁵⁶

The director of the Swazi plantation bemoaned the shortage of labour too, attributing it to the continuous recruitment of Swazi labour for South African mines. He argued that while labour migration might have been desirable some years ago because there was little opportunity for employment in the country, this was not so in the 1960s owing to the development that was taking place in Swazi mining, forestry, agriculture, and irrigation. He recommended that organized labour recruiting of Swazi labourers be forbidden.²⁵⁷

Thus, many Swazi industries and plantation owners to alleviate the labour shortage called on the colonial administration to institute protective measures. The colonial administration, however, was reluctant to introduce any labour legislation that would provoke the Swazis by reversing the system of labour migration which it had encouraged from the beginning 1920s. They did not want to interfere with the freedom of mobility of the Swazi labourer. Instead reiterated its view that the solution to labour shortage lay with the employers; that is, they needed to improve the wages and working conditions to be the same as in South Africa. These suggestions if

²⁵⁵ Zwane Mavela, Ex-migrant miner, Interviewed in Manzini, 30 August 2018

²⁵⁶ SNA, Director, Swaziland Plantations, to Resident Commissioner, Minutes, File 3402/55, 23rd April, 1958

²⁵⁷ SNA, Minutes of Reconstituted European Advisory Council meeting held on 26th October 1959, File 34/02

implemented were bound to attract local labour to employment within the Swazi Territory as an alternative to working on the Rand mines.²⁵⁸

Other factors which affected labour turnover, besides the strenuous work and low wages, were the poor housing and food offered by the company. Crush argued that the compounds, which were in themselves, not attractive, were overcrowded and lacking simple facilities such as clean drinking water. Food was equally poor. It consisted of *mahewu* which was sour porridge.²⁵⁹ Such sentiment is shared by Zimvu Zwane who worked at the sugar belt in Simunye cutting sugarcane before migrating to the Rand mines. Zwane revealed that the only available job in Swaziland for unskilled labourers was in the Havelock mines at Bulembu, Swaziland Piggs Peak timber, Mondi forest at Bhunya, and the sugar belt at Simunye. Zwane who lives around Shewula thought it was ideal for working at the sugar belt since it was closer to his home; however, he asserted that he deserted his job and went to the South African mines because of the harsh working conditions in the country.²⁶⁰

Labour in the 1960s reflected an estimated 20,000 Swazis employed locally, with more than 11,000 who migrated to South Africa as labourers. Swazi migrants were still considered a valuable source of revenue for the country. This was reflected in a Labour Report of 1960:

*Attention must be drawn to the benefits to Swaziland in remittances and deferred pay from Swazis working in the South African mines, and also from the cash and goods brought home by returning recruits. This factor in Swaziland's economy should be seriously considered before any restrictions were imposed on recruitment to the mines. Such labour was responsible for over 300,000 pounds being brought into the Swazi Territory in 1958.*²⁶¹

The colonial government in a move to eradicate the problem of labour shortage, in response to local labour demands resolved to implement changes. First, the administration limited the issuing of recruiting licenses only to agencies working in the gold mines and coal mines. At the

²⁵⁸ SNA, Labour Officer's Report, 1956, File 434/02.

²⁵⁹ Crush, *Struggle for Swazi Labour 1890-1920*, p.14.

²⁶⁰ Zimvu Zwane, Interviewed in the Meeting of Ex-Mine workers Workshop, Eswatini Sibayeni Loadge, 14 October, 2018.

²⁶¹ SNA, Swaziland Annual Report, 1960, File 270/P9.

same time, it adjusted the system of giving advances to labour recruits to give the local recruiters an advantage over the recruiter to work outside the Territory.²⁶²

3.6 Transformation of labour recruitment in Swaziland from the 1960s periods.

The transformation of labour recruitment as a move to solve the labour shortage problem by the colonial administration impacted the country's labour phenomenon. For instance, the system of paying advances to labour recruits and potential labour recruits was one of the most effective strategies employed by recruiting agents to entice Swazi to work in the mines. This was, therefore, a well-established system in the late 1940s and 1950s, when several new industries began operating within the country. It could not be suddenly abandoned without having adverse consequences on the flow of labour. Therefore, several local employers had to follow suit if they were to compete effectively within South African recruiting agents.²⁶³ Recruitment has been described as a system to secure the workforce of those who do not spontaneously offer services, and in Swaziland, it has always played a necessary part as regards migrant labour. It moved Swazis from peasant farming in their tribal community to temporary employment in enterprises in the Union of South Africa, and more recently within the territory. A necessary element in the system has been the payment of advances to recruited workers.²⁶⁴ Moreover, since the Swazis were largely dependent on their produce for their subsistence, in most cases, they were driven into wage labour when they were unable to meet their basic food requirements and in immediate need of cash. In these circumstances, the advance itself was considered a necessity as it was meant to take care of the labourer's family's immediate needs during his initial period of employment.²⁶⁵

In the wake of the increase in the local demand for labour in the mid-1950s, the charge for attestation fees, which only affected migrants to the South African mines, was increased from six shillings to ten shillings and it was agreed in principle that the rates of the advances, which had been fixed to three pounds, might be increased. To give an advantage to local employers, it

²⁶² SNA, Swaziland Annual Report, 1960, File /270/P9.

²⁶³ SNA, Swaziland Colonial Annual Report 1960, File /270/P9

²⁶⁴ SNA, Minutes of the Reconstituted European Advisory Council meeting held on 20th to 21th November, 1956, File 75/13

²⁶⁵ SNA, 'Advance to Recruited Workers', Brief by Labour Officer at Meeting 27th October, 1956, File 544/458

was proposed that the permissible advance for labour recruited for employment within the country should be raised from three pounds to twenty pounds.

However, the Swazi colonial administration was still committed to securing South African interests and therefore decided to leave the maximum advance unchanged. Changing the status quo would invoke the hostility of the South African employers and government on which Swaziland's economy was still heavily dependent.²⁶⁶ The Swazi labour officer stated that it was the main interest of the Swazi colonial administration to ensure that families of labour recruits received adequate maintenance during the initial stages of their contracts. They could not deny a privilege that had already been conceded in the Union of South Africa. In these circumstances, they opined that an increase in advances from three pounds to four pounds should be agreed to.²⁶⁷

However, it became imperative that the legislation to control labour shortage was not sufficient to attract adequate supplies for local employment as most of the small local scale enterprises were highly undercapitalized and could not afford the advance. The EAC requested that the advances provided to Swazi migrants who wish to work in the mines be reduced to two pounds. This proposal was opposed by the Swazi National Council and the NRC. The primary objection advanced by both sides was that an advance limited to four pounds only enabled a recruit to meet the bare minimum of his commitments before leaving home and that to reduce the advance to a figure below four pounds would not be in the best interests of the labourers and their family.²⁶⁸

Besides, the SNC pointed out that this sum was needed, particularly by the labour recruited to work in the gold and coal mines, as during the first three months of his contract he would be paying off his advances and therefore unable to remit any of his earnings to his family. The advanced system itself was losing popularity with the administration as a result of Swazi resistance to the process of proletarianization, which took the form of desertion even before the advance could be recovered by the employer.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ SNA, "Advance to Recruited Workers", Brief by Labour Officer at Meeting 27th October, 1956, File 544/458

²⁶⁷ SNA, "Advances to Recruited Workers", Labour Officer meeting on the 27 October 1959, File 545/460

²⁶⁸ SNA, Minutes of the Reconstituted European Advisory Council Meeting held, 21st November, 1956, File 75/13

²⁶⁹ SNA, "Advances to Recruited Workers", Labour Officer meeting on the 27 October 1959, File 545/460

It is imperative to understand that Swazis were not passive victims during the struggle for their labour between the local colonial capitalist and the Union recruiting companies for mine labour. Simelane argued that the labour shortage of the mid-1950s was a product of peasant resistance to mobilisation for wage employment. Despite the pressure from colonial taxation, the Swazi continued to enjoy a measure of economic independence. Through collective ownership of land, and production for direct consumption, the peasants were able to exist without the need for capital accumulation. This, therefore, means that employers had to recruit in a labour scenario whose response was conditioned by production fluctuations in the rural sector.²⁷⁰

During the 1960s migrant labour to the Union declined as the condition of Swazi cattle and the money fetched in the local market also helped peasants resist mobilisation. By the mid-1950s the cattle trade was already a well-established source of cash to pay taxes and also take care of other family requirements. From the 1960s the condition of cattle was very good, and the owners were able to sell them at reasonable prices. The cattle were sold at sales organised by the colonial administration. The government-run cattle sales were developed during the war years to meet wartime British beef requirements. Sales tours were held in different parts of the country. The significance of the cattle sales, in the attempts to recruit labour in Swaziland, was noted by an agent of the South African Native Recruiting Corporation.²⁷¹

During the period of the 1960s when local industries were finding it difficult to satisfy their labour requirements, Swazi peasants were receiving cash from their cattle sales. Also, there was a surplus maize production. All these conditions reduced the propensity for them to enlist for wage labour. It, therefore, could be argued that recruitment for wage labour was to a varying degree influenced by the economic conditions of the reserves. That the reserves were under development is beyond dispute, but at the same time, their level of agricultural production was never static. The fact that Swazi responses to recruitment for wage employment were influenced by economic conditions in the reserves forced recruiters to employ even more competitive methods of labour mobilisation.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ Simelane, "Swaziland moves: Perceptions and Patterns on Modern Migration", p.55.

²⁷¹ SNA, NRC Report Ref. N 327/50 SNA, File, 430/420

²⁷² Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968," *South African Labour Bulletin*, (1982, 2:2) pp.34-57.

It is worth noting that the increased production within the reserves among the Swazi Natives during these years must be conceptualised as a form of resistance against the process of proletarianisation. It was therefore the constant adaptability of the peasant economy that allowed them to resist proletarianisation while remaining flexible to enter the capitalist economy at certain times. The amount of labour power supplied by peasants, as well as the wage levels they were prepared to accept, were determined by the production conditions and the yield they achieved. In this regard, the further the peasant was from obtaining the level of income required for production in his own unit, the greater the number of days he was prepared to work in exchange for wages.²⁷³

Labour migration to the South African mines from Swaziland did not wholly stop with peasant resistance to proletarianization. Even owners of capital economics were able to mobilise workers for production purposes. However, there were very high levels of desertion in most local companies. This was one of the reasons why most companies were constantly recruiting. The Swazi peasants continued to patronise local industries whenever production within the Swazi-occupied areas did not satisfy basic needs or whenever wage employment was deemed as providing better opportunities for capital accumulation.²⁷⁴

It is imperative to note that the labour shortage between, 1951 and 1955 demonstrated that the Swazis were not merely swept away by capitalist forces. Swazis resisted such penetration and, in some instances, they used the new channels of labour recruitment for their benefit. How the peasants manipulated the new development to their benefit was more impressive when considering the issue of industrial action that took place during the 1960s. The Swazi workers were beginning to be unionized to challenge the capitalist employers against poor working conditions and low wages.²⁷⁵

The period 1960s marked a change in Swazi labour relations. The most obvious one was that labour shortage, which was a result of the mobilisation for war service, was followed by an increase in the inclusion of those sections of the Swazi population which up to then had not been completely absorbed into the wage link. This was the beginning of a new era in which women, men, and children were recruited. This created a trend that became more pronounced after the

²⁷³ Simelane, *Swaziland moves: Perceptions and Patterns on Modern Migration*, p.75.

²⁷⁴ Simelane, *Swaziland moves: Perceptions and Patterns on Modern Migration*, p.16.

²⁷⁵ Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968", p.54.

war. This change took place despite attempts by the traditional leaders to turn back the clock. It is, therefore, important to note that the changes in labour relations that come about in the 1940s and continued with vigour in the post-war period had an impact on the political configuration in the country.²⁷⁶

Conclusion

Even though the labour requirement of South African industries was still important for the Swazi labour market, it is clear that an important change from the 1940s was that local labour requirements modified the dominance of South African employers and made the Swazi labour scene very different from what it had been hitherto the outbreak of conflicts in Europe. In the period from the 1940s, the Swazi working class grew in size surpassing the levels of the pre-war years. This was an indication of the maturation of capitalism in Swaziland as part of the global process of the international division of labour. This high rate of labour mobilisation as attained in the post-war decade immensely transformed the character of the Swazi working class.²⁷⁷ The extent of competition for Swazi labours in colonial Swaziland and the strategies they used in recruiting efforts gave birth to a new consciousness among those who were recruited. They become aware of how their labour power was important to capitalist economic production. Thus, this chapter has demonstrated the transformation of labour recruitment as a move to solve the labour shortage problem by the colonial administration impacted on the country's labour phenomenon.

²⁷⁶ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p. 65.

²⁷⁷ Simelane, "War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945", p. 67.

CHAPTER 4

Impact of Migrant Labour on Swazi Rural Economy and Families

INTRODUCTION

The chapter investigated how migrant labour transformed the rural economy and socio-economic lives of families of migrants in Swaziland. The migrant labour phenomenon impacted both negatively and positively on migrants and their dependents. It examines the social and economic effects on agriculture, its infrastructure and assesses the extent how remittance transformed the Swazi rural economy. It is also problematic for male-centred labour migration in Swaziland. Labour migration was predominantly male and had serious repercussions for families, particularly women and children. Remittances shaped and defined the rural household in terms of gender roles and relations. The positive and negative impacts of migrant labour in the rural economy will also be explored.

4.1 Swazi Migrants' Remittances and their Impact on their households.

Before exploring the impact of migrant's earnings within the Swazi household, which presented conflicts as a consequence of the control and distribution of financial remittances from Swazi men employed in the South African mines, it is paramount to describe a traditional Swazi household. Booth points out that an adequate description of a Swazi homestead in the nineteenth century is that it was nothing different from its Tsonga and Zulu counterparts. It was the major social and productive unit. It consisted typically of the homestead head *umnumzana*, wife or wives, grown sons and their wives, and unmarried sons and daughters. Like other Nguni homesteads it was patriarchal, although in the Swazi case, the status and position of the main wife were singularly crucial in family and national life. In a polygamous homestead the main wife, whether or not she was the first wife, was the key personage in determining succession and inheritance; it was her eldest son who was normally designated the heir, and it was to him that the estate (notably the cattle herd) was passed.²⁷⁸

The *umnumzana* was the lord and master of the homestead. It was he who controlled and allocated resources; made the crucial decisions affecting production (timing and extent of ploughing, types of cropping); mobilized and directed the human labour force and animal draft

²⁷⁸ Alan Booth. "Swazi migrant workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines 1886–1920". *Journal of Historical Geography*. (1986, 12:1) pp. 27-40.

power and determined the nature of investments (seeds, plough purchase, oxen hire).²⁷⁹ If he were far away at the time of decision-making, his commands were sent for, or things were put off until his return.

As soon as migrants' incomes began to be significant in the developmental cycle of Swazi households, conflict within the extended families also increased. The traditional supply of control and privileges was manipulated to attain certain conclusions. Elder brothers made claims over their younger brother's earnings, specifically in cases where the parents were not alive. Uncles and fathers also made similar claims. While such efforts were intended to protect households from collapsing as a result of the loss of access to migrants' remittances, the tensions they caused frequently had the opposite effect. Such family squabbles in Swaziland were experienced and were verified by some members of migrants interviewed in the study, Make Dudu Dlamini aged 68 claims that she had challenges with her in-laws every time her husband sent money from Johannesburg.

'I would be feeling very humiliated every time babe (father of my children) sent money from the mines. My father and mother-in-law would take the money and my children would not benefit from their father's hard earn money. I was not getting anything except the letters which he sent together with the money. What was painful you know is that the letters did mention the amount he had sent and how I was to spend it. Since my in-laws were not illiterate, I failed to explain to them anything, besides; I was regarded as a child, according to our traditional custom so I had no right to question anything. So, my in-laws used those traditions to make claims about my husband's earnings. Even when he had returned after maybe two years end of his contract, he did not say anything since he also knew his place in the household, his father was the (umnumzane) meaning master of the household so he alone had the right to do as he pleased with the money my husband sent. This was therefore a real challenge to me as a (Makoti) wife in the household since my in-laws were deliberately manipulating traditions for their own benefit.²⁸⁰

The fate of such wives over Swazi migrants' earnings was also shared by ex-migrant miners. Conflicts between father and son resulted and such disputes took time to be resolved and at some point, led to a breakdown in the fabric of the households. There were instances when fathers

²⁷⁹ Booth, "Swazi migrant workers and the Witwatersrand gold mines 1886–1920", p.35.

²⁸⁰ Dudu Dlamini, Interviewed in Mankayane, Eswatini, 24 September 2018

were recipients of migrant remittances. Some fathers would deliberately use their sons' earnings for their own needs, and the sons did not get anything once their contracts expired. Sagila Maseko related his own experience regarding his earnings he remitted while working in the mines,

“I was 30 when I chose to be recruited for South African mine work in 1966 I instructed my father as somebody who would be responsible for all my affairs regarding my remittance I would send home. Even though I was already married at that time with three children, but I think the culture necessitated that my father should take account of my matters. Therefore, all the money remitted when I was in the South African mines was received by my father. The understanding was that he was going to keep it for me and assist my wife and children whenever they experienced serious challenges and needs. When I came back from the mines after my contract had expired my father told me there was no money because he had used it all. I was so furious because I learned from my wife that, she and my children were not receiving any financial assistance from my father while I was away. I followed tradition and requested my father to compensate me with cattle, but that was not successful as he refused, arguing that it was his right as custom and tradition allowed it. My father and I conflicted such that I left home with my wife and children to start my own new family.”²⁸¹

It is imperative to consider that such conflicts did not end with fathers and sons, but stretched to members of the nuclear and extended families and impacted the social fabric of many communities. As clashes between fathers and sons developed over remittances, family members took sides. While some members accused fathers of spending the remittances on their requirements, others accused the sons of not accepting that it was the privilege of the fathers to use the money for general family needs including their personal needs. It became apparent that family members were influenced by personal interests and material attachments in attempting to solve family conflicts over remittances.

It is therefore evident that whilst there is no doubt that the money which Swazi migrants remitted back home played a vital role in sustaining the Swazi households., Some ex-migrants interviewed were able to recall benefiting from the money they remitted while working in the South African

²⁸¹ Sagila Maseko, Interviewed in Manzini, Eswatini, 14 September 2018.

Rand mines. Mandlenkosi Mavuso narrative reveals how some of the families were able to transform their households as a result of money remitted from working in the mines. Mavuso increased his wealth through the ownership of a large herd of cattle from the money he sent home while he was still working in the South African mines,

“I was 35 years when I went to the South African mines through a contract obtained from TEBA recruiters. I was not married back then, so every earnings I sent home went straight to my father. He purchased cattle with some of the money I was sent home. When I returned home after two years at the end of my contract I found that I had ten cattle under my name. The cattle helped me dearly as I had to return home to get married and so I used the cattle to pay (lobola) bride price for my first wife.”²⁸²

According to Simelane, control of remittances was very important because it drove to the core of Swazi patriarchy. He points out that the struggle over control of remittances pitted the parents of recruits and the wives of the recruits. In Swaziland, the official recipient was selected by the recruit depending on his circumstances or cultural beliefs. Considering what happened in other territories of Southern Africa, and probably other parts of the High Commission territories, the Swaziland situation was somehow peculiar. In South Africa and Lesotho research indicates that in the case of married recruits, the recipient was the first wife. If the recruit was not married, the recipient was the father or the surviving parent. These procedures were set by colonial administrators or responsible officials.²⁸³ In Swaziland, there was no procedure to be followed, but patriarchal factors determined who received the remittance.²⁸⁴

Since the recipient of migrants' earnings in Swaziland was shaped by Swazi culture and tradition, it became apparent that in most cases, the recipients came in different forms and did not follow any officially established procedure. For instance, some were the mothers of the recruits, even if the recruits were married. Simelane argues that in Swaziland majority of recipients of migrant remittances were women in the form of mothers claiming that the family economic reproduction was at the hands of women, once the head was absent in the household.²⁸⁵ Conflicts which are related to power between mothers and fathers also resulted when the mothers were instructed to

²⁸² Mavuso Mandlenkosi, interviewed in Mankayane, Eswatini, and 24 September 2018

²⁸³ Simelane, “Labour Migration in Post-Colonial Swaziland”. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*. (1995, 13:2) p.207.

²⁸⁴ Simelane, “Labour Migration in Post-Colonial Swaziland”, p.215.

²⁸⁵ Simelane, “Labour Migration in Post-Colonial Swaziland”, p.217.

be the recipient of the recruit's remittances, especially when the father of the recruit was unemployed, or a peasant farmer earning enough for the family to survive. Most of the fathers in these instances were therefore very bitter as they felt that according to Swazi culture and tradition, the responsibility of migrant sons solemnly belongs to them. Such conflicts were serious because the whole situation became one of power and control between fathers, mothers, and wives. The case of Salebona Dlamini presented such bitterness experienced by fathers of migrants, "When my two sons migrated for South African mine work I remained behind because I had to look after the family cultivation and the offers of the household. I got shocked to discover that the two had given the name of her mother to a TEBA official so she was the recipient of their remittances. I was very angry at this because it was like they were giving their mother's authority over me even though I was the head of the family. This was an action that weakened my authority. When they returned from the mines after their contracts expired, I was very bitter at them because they were not giving me my authority as the head of the family. It became hard for me to give those cattle to marry their wives which tradition except for a father to his sons. This created conflicts for many years within the family as they ended up paying their *lobola* bride price."²⁸⁶

Another cause of family tension and conflicts from migrants' earnings was among mothers of married migrants and their wives in the household. The bone of contention resulted in cases where Swazi migrants who were married men registered the names of their mothers instead of their wives in the TEBA office as the recipient of remittances. They were given the power to collect and control remittances and have the final decision on how the money was to be used by their sons. In such cases, the conflict was between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law.²⁸⁷

It should also be noted that Swazi migrant recruits' choices to list their mothers instead of their wives to be in charge of their remittances from the mines were under Swazi tradition and custom.²⁸⁸ According to H. Kuper, in Swazi culture, the mother-in-law is considered senior to the daughters-in-law, and they are expected to exercise authority over the wives of their sons. The mother-law is even empowered by custom and tradition to exercise control over the

²⁸⁶ Salebona Dlamini, Interviewed in Manzini, Eswatini, 15 September 2018

²⁸⁷ Kuper, *An African aristocracy*, p.30.

²⁸⁸ Kuper, *An African aristocracy*, p.34.

property of their sons.²⁸⁹ Therefore the conflicts within the households resulting from such circumstances were challenging the laws and principles of Swazi culture based on hierarchical superiority. The wives of some Swazi migrants and ex-migrants were bitter because they felt the responsibility should have been given to them. Nomvula Dlamini a woman of 60 years of age residing at Gundvini expressed how she was upset about husband's decision, while he was working in the South African mines,

“Since my husband had registered her mother at the TEBA office to be the recipient of his remittances so it was mother-in-law who was in control of the money that was coming every month from my husband's employment in the South African mines. As his wife, I thought it was my responsibility to manage the money and take care of the children after the children with it. As per tradition, it was explained to me by the household elders, that I felt bad and cheated as my children and I was not benefiting from the money while my mother-in-law was using it as she pleases. My children and I were struggling in poverty, while his mother was enjoying the earnings from remittances. My relationship with my mother-in-law was bad I was resentful of her for making me suffer as a young woman so much that when my husband returned from the mines, we moved and relocated away from the main homestead against the will of his parents. I was very bitter over my mother in law for letting me struggle while my husband was working in South Africa.”²⁹⁰

There was also hostility when the reverse occurred, wives being the primary recipients of spouses' remittances. Mothers believed that sons were defying Swazi tradition and culture. This, therefore, meant that wives of migrants were challenged on the benefits of their husbands. The wives felt displaced as the culture viewed them as children in the households. They were subordinated and criticized for receiving their spouses' migrant earnings.

Some wives who were viewed by their in-laws as rebellious insisted on receiving their husband's payments as they would once in a while visit the husbands in the South African mining hostels.

²⁸⁹ Kuper, *An African aristocracy*, p.42.

²⁹⁰ Nomvula Dlamini Interviewed at Gundvini , Manzini 30 September 2018

The actions of such women were viewed as clashing with Swazi culture, where even the movement of women was controlled by their in-laws. Such acts were a direct representation of the patriarchal nature of Swazi households. According to Simelane, Swazi society has long been mostly patriarchal, men exploited their dominance and authority, with the assistance of the colonial administration, to control the mobility of Swazi women during the colonial period. Men are inclined to stress the significance of upholding women in the homestead to guarantee that they achieved their role as agricultural producers and reproducers of the homestead, whether as wives or as daughters.²⁹¹ Therefore, migrant labour produced a clash of cultures among members of the households, where wives clashed with mothers-in-law.

Migrant labour and remittances have been well-established features in the history of capitalist development in South Africa. Even as late as the 1980s and 1990s literature showed a continuing pattern of South African mines- rural linkages and saliency of wage income in the mobilisation of household livelihoods across mines- rural divide. This study shows that, while migrant labour, rural and South African mines links, and migrant identities remain very high amongst migrant mineworkers, there is a generational variance in the actual connection of workers to the rural homestead. The current young migrants below 40 years remitted less compared to those above the age of 40 and ex-migrants from the 1950s and 1970s in Swaziland. Different reasons are presented by interviewed informants. Velaphi Dlodlu 38 years of age, a migrant miner working in Randfontein mines in South Africa, lamented, “I have no wife and only one child at home my elder brothers have wives and children and my father well he is a farmer so there is no point for me to send money back home for people to misuse. I spend all my money here in Johannesburg, I buy all that I need, and some items I take back home when I return once in the while. Unlike at home life is expensive here so money is needed. I will start to send money home once I have my wife and have a family to which I will send my money. I know of many men I work within the mines who complain that they send money home, but it does not reach their wives and children.”²⁹²

Some migrant miners more especially the ex-migrant miners who retired in their 50s, noted that despite working in the mines, in South Africa, the countryside represented their chief homestead,

²⁹¹ Simelane. “The State, Chiefs and the control of Female Migration in Colonial Swaziland, c.1930s-1950s”. *The Journal of African History*. (2004, 45:1) pp.103-1244.

²⁹² Velaphi Dlodlu, Interviewed in Manzini Swaziland, 14 September 2018

in which their wife and children reside. This close-knit relationship of these miners to the home country is replicated in the frequency of visits to the rural homestead as well as in the frequency of remittances directed to the rural homestead. They stated that working in Johannesburg did not prevent him from forgetting his home, wife, and children, and he would continuously send remittances and visited their home once he left.

4.2 Swazi Migrants and Capital holdings, Transformation of rural communities

Most studies of labour migration follow the notion that labour migration was disruptive in the socio-economic of rural sending countries.²⁹³ Even studies on Swazi labour migration follow a similar trajectory revealing the deleterious impact of labour migration. However, the current study depended on information from interviewed informants in Swaziland and South Africa thus showing a different perspective from the dependency theory. It has revealed the positive impact of migration. It shows improvement in the lives and communities of migrants because of the phenomenon, although other informants expressed the negative effects of migrating to South African mines.

The Shiselweni region of Swaziland, which had a large concentration of migrant and ex-migrant Swazis was the central focus of the researcher, where capital holding and major transformation were observed. The Mahamba area in South Swaziland located next to the boundary of South Africa is an area that contains several grocery stores selling basic commodities. It also has a few bars selling alcohol. Most of them were retained by migrant workers but run by their relatives and family friends. This to some extent reveals that investment in rural enterprises received its impetus from migrant labour. Jabhane Dlamini, an ex-migrant miner who worked at the West Rand Consolidation mine in Johannesburg and is currently the owner of three grocery stores, a retail shop, and a hammer-mill in Mahamba stated how migrant earning helped him to transform his household and start his small business which in 20 years has grown to a much bigger enterprise in the community,

²⁹³For a similar view, see for instance, Murray, *Family Divided: The impact of migrant labouring Lesotho*, p.35; Mitchell, "The Causes of Labour Migration", p. 24; Booth, "Early History of Labour in Swaziland", p.65; Alan Jeeves. *Migrant Labour in South Africa's mining Economy: The Struggle for the Gold mines labour Supply 1890-1920*. (Kingston and Montreal: Mc Gill Queen's University press, 1978) p.46; Booth, "Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour, 1945-1960", pp. 125-150.

“I was 30 when I took a contract with TEBA for South African mine work against my parents who were involved in the farming business. I worked there in the West Rand Consolidation mines, and during my free time, I was a salesman selling clothes that I bought cheaply from wholesalers and manufacturing companies. When I returned home, I had money, which I invested in my family farming business, and open one grocery of mine. After working for three years I bought a car, two sewing machines, two hi-fi stereo systems, two refrigerators, as well a bunch of clothes, blankets, bed sheets, and other domestic items which I had gathered through my part-time trading activities while working at the mine. I began building my house and a shop which I intended to use when I retired. I invested most of my earnings and remittances in several small businesses including, grocery, and tax using the car I bought and selling of maize. My business began to flourish and I retired to a well-established enterprise as I am a proud black owner of a retail enterprise in Mahamba employed several community members. I owe my success to my working as Swazi migrant labour.”²⁹⁴

Jabhane Dlamini’s statement also serves as proof that investing migrants had specific intentions for participating in the system of labour migration. They were more enterprising than consumption migrants and were able to proceed beyond subsistence to accumulation.

Many locals and migrants on their return to their rural villages enjoy the recreational facilities that are emerging in the rural areas. Sibhaha Sukati a migrant miner from Randfontein Gold mines notes,

“On my visit home, I meet with my fellow migrants in the popular bar where we share drinks. This has been our common practice, to get together and talk about work and the journey back to South Africa. Yes, we become unique among the members of our community, our dress and hairstyle distinguish us from the ordinary people. The girls throw themselves at us I guess they know that since we work in the South African mines we have lots of money. I spend a few bucks buying for my friends and those who are not working in the community. This thought was done to show the people that a migrant miner is more special than the local worker or farmer or unemployed man. Those who happened to have bought cars showcase them by opening their loud stereos for music.”²⁹⁵

²⁹⁴Jabhane Dlamini, Interviewed in Mahamba south of Nhlanguano Eswatini, 14 November 2018.

²⁹⁵Sibhaha Sukati, Interviewed in Manzini, Eswatini, and 14 November 2018.

Returning migrants bring an array of products to the rural homestead. They bring with them such items as clothes, sugar, salt, soap, and oil for their households. Some arrive with newly purchased cars, more especially those who have migrated for many years who have come due to the expiring of their contracts usually after four or five years. Others bring grocery items. Some Swazi migrants brought wooden bedsteads, chairs, eating utensils, and, most important of all, bicycles. Sometimes, village night dances are organised in honour of returning migrants. Music systems purchased by the migrant workers play a significant part in this endeavour. Former migrant miner, Nkululeko Dlamini, 71 years old and a farmer in Mahamba, notes, “Whiles working in the miners it was our custom that on holy days or month-end, I made sure I buy different goods for members of my family. I would buy items such as clothes, eating utensils, sleeping mats, and blackest. If it's December I bring with me a bicycle and a radio to be used during the holidays. My homecoming is appreciated by every member of my family because they know that I always bring them gifts from South Africa.”²⁹⁶

Elliot Skinner, however, argued that in some Southern African societies the frequent migrant, whether returning after one season or after two or three years, tries to make his homecoming as inconspicuous as possible by arriving at his home during the night. Skinner opined that one could tell which migrants reside in a particular region because of migrant culture and tradition.²⁹⁷

Moreover, Skinner claimed that there are numerous causes for returning home at night: first of all, this practice is a cultural survival from the time when a migrant seen returning would be seized and robbed by the local labour recruiters and sent away with the next batch of forced labourers; second, the migrant attempts to evade the watchful eyes of the chiefs' people, whose reports may well bring unreasonable requests for gifts; and third, the migrant, like most migrant miners tends to avoid or to play down the emotion-provoking scene which would take place if he suddenly arrived in the middle of the day. The migrant likes nothing better than to get up in the morning after his return and greet his family as though he had never been away.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ Nkululeko Dlamini Interviewed in Mahamba south of Nhlanguano Eswatini, 14 November 2018

²⁹⁷ Elliott Skinner. “Labour Migration and Its Relationship to Socio-Cultural Change in Mossi Society”. *Journal of the International African Institute*. (1960, 30:4) pp. 375-401.

²⁹⁸ Skinner, “Labour Migration and Its Relationship to Socio-Cultural Change in Mossi Society”, p.365.

4.3 Development of infrastructure in rural communities

Fiona de Vletter argued that for the migrant workers financing for the building of houses in their original rural, remote sending villages has to be understood concerning their socio-cultural influences as this reflects a sense of belonging.²⁹⁹ He further points out that, most of the migrant workers, who construct houses in their original rural villages, hardly stay in these houses.³⁰⁰

In the south of Swaziland, at Mahamba, most of the homesteads with brick and corrugated iron sheets houses were owned by the migrant workers or their partners or their widows or their parents. Constructing such a house in a village such as Mahamba requires building materials which are often bought and transported from town. The migrants, therefore, put more effort into such investments which turn to transform the communities. Most of the houses around the neighbouring areas are built using the traditional Swazi style of stick and mud *gucasithandaze*. Once a member of the family finds a paying job or migrates to South Africa, his earnings are used to construct a house of brick and congregated iron roofing. This, therefore, symbolises transformation to modernity for some, while other homestead remains in stick and mud even with migrant members of the family. Interviewed informants such as Mabandla Mabuza, an ex-migrant miner, allude to the links between mine earnings and rural infrastructure,

“When I first started working in the mines in the 1970s my family was poor. I could not find work in the country and I did not go to school so the best work was for me to take a contract with the South African mines. During my first year, I decided to transform my home as the only member of my family working it was my responsibility. We had no brick and the congregated iron roofing house in the home only the traditional *guca* kinds of houses. I decided to use my earnings to build a three-bedroom house for my family. This was a great transformation of my home since we had one modern house just like our neighbours, as you can see that old house I built with my earnings from the mines.”³⁰¹

One should note that it is the desire of most Swazi migrant workers to be buried in their rural homes, on their homestead, and among their people as well as their ancestors. Even after a long period of employment away, the migrant workers still wanted to be buried at their rural

²⁹⁹ Fiona de Vletter. “Migration and development in Mozambique: Poverty, inequality and survival”. *Development Southern Africa*. (2007, 24:1) p. 65.

³⁰⁰ de Vletter, “Migration and development in Mozambique: Poverty, inequality and survival”, p. 105.

³⁰¹ Mabandla Mabuza, Interviewed in Mahamba south of Nhangano Eswatini, 19 November 2018

homestead. This might be one of the reasons for the migrant workers' efforts to construct houses in their rural villages. One of the informants Jabhane concurred,

“Whiles working in the South African mines I knew that first, my job was dangerous, accidents occurred and death comes anytime, so to ensure that I have a proper home I sent my earnings and contracted a modern house for my family. When I die I want to be buried in my home among my relatives, so I want to have a proper home with modern houses because I am working and I am responsible.”³⁰²

Building a rural house is an expression of migrant workers' membership in the rural community.

4.4 The impact of migrant labour on the Swazi women left behind.

The impact of migratory labour has been measured given its economic, social, and political effects on southern African societies. It has been the subject of numerous studies in recent years. Several scholars have highlighted the impact of male migration on the women left behind. While some scholars view male migration in line with disruptive changes such as overloading women with the double role of being a father and mother, others highlighted how the migration of males leads to the empowerment of women. They believe that migration could be rewarding to the women left behind, as it allows them to step out of their typical gendered roles, and develop new knowledge and skills.³⁰³ A study by Boehm revealed that in Mexico, the women left behind by migrant husbands have greater decision-making powers in their homes, especially in nuclear families. They also had to make decisions on how the land had to be utilised. Boehm's study also found that women's duties further stretched to interacting with institutions such as banks, post offices, and government agencies, which is something they were not exposed to.³⁰⁴

A study by Elizabeth Gordon which investigated the impact of migration on the lives of Lesotho women revealed that women had higher strain and stress due to increased home management responsibilities such as taking care of children, providing food, and ensuring the security of the home. The pressure was even greater for the women whose husbands had been away for a very

³⁰²Jabhane Dlamini, Interviewed in Mahamba , 14 November 2018

³⁰³ See for instance, Massey Durand, Rafique, Rogaly and Seeley. “Staying behind when husbands moves: Women's experience in India and Bangladesh”, Paper No 8, Migration globalisation and poverty briefing: Sussex, 2009; G. Hugo. “Migration and women's empowerment”. In S. Gita (Ed.), “Women's empowerment and demographic processes: Moving beyond Cairo”. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) p.80.

³⁰⁴Deborah Boehm. “Now I am a man and a woman: Gendered moves and migrations in a transnational Mexican community.” *Latin American Perspectives*. (2008, 35:1) p.16.

long time.³⁰⁵ AKM Ahsan Ullah in a study conducted in the Middle East and North America examined the impact of the migration of males on the lives of the ‘left-behind women. The study assessed how the ‘left-behind women coped with the absence of their husbands. Ullah alludes to how women assume leadership positions in the absence of their husbands in the context of decision-making, as well as economic and political mobility.³⁰⁶

This study, which examined Swazi women left behind, reveals that labour migration changed the status of Swazi women who were left behind when their husbands migrated to South African mines. Dudu Sukati, a 65-year-old widow from Nhlngano, Swaziland alludes to her experience as a ‘left-behind women’,

“My husband would take a contract of 5 or 7 years for working in the Johannesburg mines, and would only visit home twice within a contract. Although as a woman your roles are known to be taking care of children and cooking, my roles in the household changed as soon as my husband left. I was thereafter responsible for taking care of finances, cattle, and fields. My husband used to send about R500 after six months, and that was a lot of money back then. According to Swazi custom and tradition cattle is the man’s responsibility. This changed in my case as I was then in charge of managing family livestock. I was thus solely responsible for selling and leasing the cattle. I would identify the cows to be sold to cater to the children’s education and those to be used for cultivating the fields. My mother in law was old and had no problem with me taking all the responsibilities in our home,”³⁰⁷

Dudu Sukati’s experiences perhaps indicate that Swazi women were able to empower themselves, and to some extent transformed traditional Swazi customs which limited women’s roles to only managing their kitchens and looking after children. The same sentiments were shared by Lahliwe, a 60-year-old wife of an ex-migrant miner from Klipdrift Gold mine in South Africa,

“When there were no employment opportunities for unskilled and uneducated Swazis in the country, my husband took a contract with TEBA which was known as an *iJoina*, and later left for work in South African mines. I was scared of being alone especially during

³⁰⁵ Elizabeth Gordon. “An analyses of the impact of labour migration on the lives of women in Lesotho”. *Journal of Development studies*. (2007, 17:23) p.45.

³⁰⁶Ahasan Ullah. “Male Migration and Left-behind Women: Bone or Boon”. *Environment and Urbanization Asia*.. (2017, 8:1) p. 59-73

³⁰⁷ Dudu Sukati a widow of migrant mine worker, Interviewed at Nhlngano north of Swaziland, 23 November 2018

the few months of his departure. I didn't have any relatives around since we had built our household (umuti) in a different community from our in-laws. I feared that I would mess up in terms of managing finances, and agricultural planning. However, with time I became stronger in managing these responsibilities. I took my husband's departure as an opportunity to realise my strength and skills outside the kitchen particularly in managing finances, monitoring land use, and my children's education. At times I received advice on how to manage the home from my husband through the letters he wrote."³⁰⁸

This indicates that in Swaziland, the wives of migrant labourers got a chance to take new responsibilities and the opportunity to test their strengths and capabilities. The left-behind women challenged the historical belief rife in patriarchal societies where that women had less autonomy and few assets at their disposal.³⁰⁹ In the same vein, Scott T Yabiku in a study of left-behind women from Mozambique highlighted how labour migration increased autonomy amongst women. Yabiku reported that the labour migration of males might stimulate women to seek employment outside their homes, which is shown to be associated with egalitarianism, independence, and autonomy. Yabiku's study also revealed that the independence gained by left-behind women often persists even after the migrant husbands have returned from the mines.³¹⁰

In the same vein, the findings of the current study revealed that when Swazi males left for work in the mines, their wives also sought employment opportunities in farms and urban areas to support their households. Lahliwe Dladla, a woman from Mashobeni, Nhlngano who was married to a migrant mine worker, stated that when her husband left for the mines, she had to get a job from a community grocery shop. This empowered her and further resulted in her in-laws, giving her respect after seeing that she managed to control finances and household responsibilities.³¹¹ The same sentiments were shared by Dudu Sukati, who stated that as women, they were compelled by the absence of their husbands to realise their strength, skills, and autonomy. Lahliwe narrated that:

“When my husband stopped sending money and communicating to us, I had to decide to go and seek employment from the local grocery shop. Unlike other women, my husband

³⁰⁸ Lahliwe Dladla Interviewed Mhlosheni Nhlngano eSwatini, 23 December 2019

³⁰⁹ Kalpana Hiralal “Women and Migration-Challenges and Constraints – A South African Perspective”. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. (2017, 26:2) pp. 158-175.

³¹⁰ Scott T. Yabiku, “Husbands’ Labour Migration and Wives’ Autonomy,” *Population Studies*. (2010, 64:3) pp. 293–306.

³¹¹ Lahliwe Dladla, Wife of Swazi Migrant miner, Interviewed Mhlosheni, 23 December 2019

never returned home. That made me realise my strength and capabilities as a woman as I had to work and solely raise my children. Apart from the grocery wages, I brew traditional beer (umcombotsi) which I sold to community members and used the money to feed my family. I also used my income to single-handedly build more houses and purchased livestock. I assumed that my husband was no longer coming back home, nor sending money because he had another family closer to the South African mines just like other male counterparts from our community.”³¹²

This indicates that Swazi women were positively empowered by the migration of their husbands to South African mines. In the absence of the heads of households, women had provided for their families, entered the wage labour market, and made any decisions about their homes. This strengthened women and caused them to realise their capabilities.

Miranda Miles in a study that assessed the migration of Swazi females to Witwatersrand during the 1920-1970s also pointed out that the male migrant labour system changed the roles of Swazi women. Women increasingly bore the burden of sustaining their homesteads through subsistence agriculture. In contrast to states such as Lesotho, Botswana, and Mozambique, few Swazi migrant workers were women. Those few females who sought employment in South Africa faced numerous challenges.³¹³ Kalpana Hiralal argued that women in the southern African region view migrating to South Africa as better than facing poverty in their home countries, even though they became victims of abuse as settlement and assimilation were a challenge for women.³¹⁴

The findings of the current study demonstrated how migrant labour liberated young wives, especially those from forced marriages. Scholars such as Margo Russell and John Bongaarts argued that migrant labour changed marital patterns and customs.³¹⁵ Whilst husbands migrated to the mines, young wives escaped their households and went to stay in urban areas.³¹⁶ Therefore, while traditional customs led to early marriages, the migrant labour system changed this as it

³¹² Dudu Sukati a widow of migrant mine worker, Interviewed at Nhlngano north of Swaziland, 23 November 2018

³¹³ Miranda Miles. “Missing women: a study of Swazi female migration to Witwatersrand 1920-1970”. *Journal of African History*. (1993, 20:1) p.40.

³¹⁴ Hiralal, “Women and Migration-Challenges and Constraints – A South African Perspective”, p.157.

³¹⁵ Margo Russell. “Women, Children and marriage in Swaziland “. *International Journal of Sociology of family*. (32:14, 1993) p.43-57; John Bongaarts and Frank Lesthaeghe. “The proximate determinants of fertility in sub-Saharan”. *Africa Population and Development Review* (1984, 10:3) pp.511–537.

³¹⁶ Russell, “Women, Children and marriage in Swaziland”, p.45.

granted women the opportunity to seek employment in urban areas rather than focusing on marriage. This breakdown of forced customary marriages was known as (*Kwetfwala*).

Gogo Lubhaca Dlamini a 70-year-old woman from Mashobeni south, under Chief Mgodzi Mdluli, shared her knowledge on how the young migrant wives took advantage of the migration phenomenon and sought their freedom.

“While it was different for us who were old in marriage and family households, most of the young women in the community would leave their households to seek a better life and jobs in the towns. Some would leave their children behind, get boyfriends in town and never return to their marital homes. This was common in those from forced marriages and the very young wives of migrants. Some, however, remained and took the responsibility to manage their households.”³¹⁷

Russell in his study of women, children, and marriage in Swaziland argued that owing to the longstanding absenteeism of migrant workers from their families, the effects of migratory labour on marital relationships can be damaging, leading to the incidence of conjugal breakdown and desertion. Magugu Jele of Kashoba shared her view on forced marriage. She pointed out that customary law which was constructed by an indigenous patriarchal system placed women under forced marriages. The girls, according to this culture, have no say in this issue, their consent is not considered. She pointed out that such marriages were often engineered by fathers who saw an opportunity to accumulate cattle by marrying their daughters.³¹⁸

The migrant labour system created female-headed households. It created a new type of family, single motherhood, which is a pattern of social relationships associated with migrants. Dudu Sukati also attested that Swazi women took the roles and responsibilities of a man in their family. She argued that this shows the gender shift and cultural conflicts as a result of migration. She opined that Swazi culture which viewed women as similar to children seemed to be transforming.

Sukati’s view was also shared by Lahliwe Dladla, who narrated her experience of how migrant labour led to women-headed households,

“My husband and I were married according to traditional customary law and he paid lobola to my parents. We relocated from his parental home after he built us a home where

³¹⁷ Interview with Gogo Lubhaca Dlamini, of Mashobeni north of Swaziland, 26 October 2018

³¹⁸ Magugu Jele, Interviewed at Kashoba North of Swaziland on 15 January 2019

I stay with the children. My husband then migrated to South African mines. For the first 6 years, he sent money and visited home. After three years of his contract, things changed. He would visit only once after a contract of 6 years. He then stopped coming home. That is when the money also stopped coming. I asked neighbours whose husbands were working in South Africa, but they all claimed they did not know his location. I was thus left at home with my children since that time and was forced to raise the children on my own. My children have now grown and are married. I even have grandchildren who unfortunately do not know their grandfather. I was older to get married and could not abandon my children and home or return to my home village since lobola was paid. I was therefore obliged by tradition and custom to remain in my marriage household for the rest of my life. So, I have been a single mother ever since my husband abandoned us many years ago.”³¹⁹

This, therefore, demonstrates that some single women in Swaziland became the heads of their respective households when their spouses were away in South African mines. Single motherhood showed that women could not rely on the social support and protection offered by men.

Swazi tradition also did impact women's sexuality in the absence of their husband. Swazi tradition had and still chastises female promiscuity in the absence of her spouse.³²⁰ Dudu Sukati, who was married to a migrant miner lamented;

“As females, our grandmothers and in-laws would constantly instruct us to be faithful to our husbands' whiles they were away in the mines. We were informed that if we were not faithful, we risked the safety of our husbands who were working in the dangerous mines of South Africa. I think such warnings were meant to scare young wives and prevent them from falling into temptations of infidelity. Our culture frowned on married women in adulterous relationships. We, therefore, waited for long periods; months, or years for our partners to return home. ”³²¹

The long separation of women from their husbands negatively affected their families, as they were left behind for an extended period, and thus became vulnerable to infidelity. Women were expected to show endurance, tolerance, and abstinence. Any contrary actions would tarnish the

³¹⁹ Dudu Sukati, Interviewed at Nhlngano, 23 November 2018

³²⁰ Simelane, “Colonialism Economic Change in Swaziland 1940-1960”, p.50.

³²¹ Dudu Sukati, Interviewed at Nhlngano, 23 November, 2018

family honours. It was impossible to find respondents who could concretely demonstrate the impact infidelity had on their marriage.

The existence and enforcement of traditional values do not mean that such values were always strictly adhered to, as there is still some disparity between theory and practice. Some wives did succumb to infidelity. The prolonged absence of Swazi men led to the birth of illegitimate children. It is, however, unfortunate that the majority of women interviewed for this study were reluctant to discuss their sexual behaviour during this period.

At first, several women interviewed were uncomfortable discussing their marital relations. However, they relented when informants were promised confidentiality and discretion. Mabandla Mabuza narrated the experience of a neighbour who returned from the South African gold mines after six years and found that the wife had a baby girl. Culture and tradition forced the migrant husband to welcome the child as part of the family. The child was often named 'Lomajozi' which means one who comes from Johannesburg, a name one would assume was to remind the other of her unfaithfulness to her husband. There are many such children in the community. They are accepted as part of their families and the community as Swazi custom protects them. According to Swazi custom there are no orphans, children belong to the family and the community even illegitimate ones.³²²

The article from the *Times of Swaziland* is an indication that some wives succumbed to temptation in the absence of their migrating husband. The article reported that whilst children borne out of infidelity were accepted in the families of migrants, their act was not condoned.

³²² Mabandla Mabuza, Swazi Ex- Migrant miner, Interviewed Mhlosheni Nhlango, 23 December 2019

Figure 5: Article Miner catches wife with man, marriage nullified



Source: *Times of Eswatini Newspaper*, 20 December 2019.

According to Simelane, by 1944, such cases of growth in illicit affairs, and in most cases, the addition of illegitimate children had increased. Again, this illustrates the fact that the conjuncture between theory and practice is not always clearly marked. This was mostly the case with those illicit affairs which cut across family ties. In such cases, the children were forced to leave their mothers to stay either with the woman's parents or join their father's family. Such developments were not peculiar to the migrated years; instead, the migration phenomenon intensified existing social processes.³²³

Infidelity cannot be viewed only in terms of the women left behind. Male migrants were involved with women in their areas of work. Evidence of migrants remaining in South Africa or at times coming with new spouses from South Africa was narrated by some informants. The infidelity of male migrants resulted in the women left behind suffering from anxiety and depression. Magugu Jele recalls,

“When my husband went to work in South Africa, I was left with my children in our home. My husband would visit once or twice between contracts. He sent money for me

³²³ Simelane, “Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Post-Colonial Swaziland”, p.217.

and the children, however, towards the end of his contract, he returned home accompanied by a Xhosa woman and two children. According to custom and tradition, he was entitled to take more than one wife; however, I was shocked because I had no knowledge that my husband had a family in South Africa. Even though there was nothing I could do, this made me sick, I could not leave my marital home since my husband had paid lobola, and I could not leave my children. My in-laws advised me to accept that my husband was a polygamous man, which depressed me.”³²⁴

The same sentiment of depression on women left behind was shed by another informant Salaphi Dlamini, who claimed that she left her marital home after her husband returned from South Africa with a Sotho woman. She stated she suffered from depression and decided to leave for urban centres where she acquired employment as a domestic worker and remained there until she remarried. She left because she was young and had no children.³²⁵ Migrant labour also did have an impact on women’s fertility. It significantly decreased the occurrence of sexual intercourse within marriage, which was significant for family-planning.

The above narratives highlight that women were vulnerable to anxiety and depression as a result of their spouses being away for long periods. However, women were not merely passive victims. They were agents of change. Many opted to move to the urban areas, sought employment, and at times turned to beer-brewing as their means of survival.

4.5 Transformation of Agricultural Production

The impact of wage labour and migration in sending communities has been documented by several scholars from different disciplines, many alluding to the negative implications of migration. The notable scholars are the underdevelopment theorists, who project that the migrant system has robbed the sending communities of able men which are accompanied by a decline in agricultural production and the standard of living of the people. They argued that wage labour was the root of rural poverty.³²⁶ Interviews conducted with ex-migrants reveal that migration did not necessarily lead to the economic decline of the rural economy.

³²⁴ Jele Magugu Jele, Interviewed at Kashoba North of Swaziland in 15 January 2019

³²⁵ Salaphi Dlamini, Interviewed in Manzini on the 24 February 2019

³²⁶ See for instance Jonathan Crush and Vincent Williams, “Labour Migration in Southern Africa Contemporary Trends and Issues. A Preliminary Review”, Paper Presented at Paper Presented at the ILO Tripartite Forum on

In Swaziland for instance, just like other sending territories, migrant labour did not undermine peasant agriculture, but instead complemented it and granted many young men the opportunity to accumulate savings quickly to get married and pay *lobola* earlier than it could have taken then if agriculture was not improved.³²⁷ The migrants interviewed stated that migrant wages were increasing and believed that it offered higher remuneration to young, uneducated, and unskilled men than the pay they could obtain locally in farms.

Migrant labour in Swaziland offered the only alternative for accumulation for many poor households in the rural communities. There were very few concrete developments and employment opportunities to draw all the Swazi unskilled men after independence 1969. Hence migrant labour was the only option for many to economically and socially establish themselves and their households. Mgommetulu Msongela shared his views on this perspective; he was a migrant miner at Rustenburg in the 1970s and 1980s,

‘My work in the mines changed my status; you see I was from a poor family. We had no cattle just like the other families in the community. In Swazi customs, cattle are inherited from elders of the family. Unfortunately for me, my father who was a migrant miner himself all his cattle died because of tsetse fly, so I had nothing to inherit. As I was unskilled independence in Swaziland meant nothing for me because I had to migrate to the South African mines to improve my household and further get married and pay *lobola* bride price. So, I am proud that I used my earnings to buy cattle and when you take a look at my Kraal I have over 80 herds which would be more had it not been thieves from Mozambique or the constant drought which affects our country.’³²⁸

Male absences in the colonial Swazi territory did affect to some extent the rural economy. Hamilton Simelane argued that approximately 4000 Swazi men were absent in the military forces while the South African mines were enlisting between 10000 and 14000 men per year.³²⁹

Labour Migration in Southern Africa, Pretoria, 26-29 November, 2002, pp.14; Murry, *Families Divided: The impact of migrant labour in Lesotho*, p.45; F. de Vletter, *Labour migration and agricultural development in Southern Africa: five studies on pattern, prospects, and planning issues*, (Rome: FAO, 1982) p.15; Arrighi, “Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: A study of Proletarianisation of African Peasantry in Rhodesia”, p.34.

³²⁷Crush and Williams, “Labour Migration in Southern Africa Contemporary Trends and Issues. A Preliminary Review”, p.14.

³²⁸ Interview with Mgommetulu Msongela, Mashobeni, South of Swaziland, 20 October 2018

³²⁹ Simelane. “Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Post-Colonial Swaziland”. *Journal of Contemporary Studies*. (1995, 13:2) p.217.

Great agricultural production remained under the safeguard of women, the elderly, and children. Gogo Lubhaca Dlamini, an informant noted that, the women were unable to improve production as they could not bring most family fields under the plough. The result was low agricultural production and general underdevelopment in most communities.

Moreover, in colonial Swaziland, agricultural production more especially in the reserves, farming was greatly reliant on physical strength as opposed to technological machinery. Their traditional methods of cultivation were very primitive, consisting essentially of hoes used in breaking the ground and covering seeds. Even cattle were used for ploughing. The hoes were ineffective did not cover a large area and limited cultivation.³³⁰ Women participated in the agricultural production of the rural economy and contributed significantly to the household income. Gogo Lubhaca Dlamini a 70-year-old woman from Mashobeni shared her experience,

“When my husband left for work in the South African mines I was left with my three young children to take care. The children, unfortunately for me were too young to assist me with ploughing our fields. Things became difficult for my family I could not plough enough of our land, so with the instruction from my husband, I temporarily leased our land to the neighbours who in return offer services to assist me with cultivation for my family. This arrangement greatly affected our family as the maize produced was not enough for my family. This kind of arrangement also meant a reduction in the amount of land under the plough for some families and thus lower maize yields. In many cases, remittances sent by my husband from the mines enabled us to buy maize to supplement what we cultivated.”³³¹

The migrant remittances and wages transformed the rural economy of the country as it improved rural development in agriculture. The influx of remitted income from migrants’ earnings helped to improve farming implements. Most ex-migrants confirm that they used their remittances to purchase land and livestock. ³³²

In post-colonial Swaziland, the improvement of agricultural technology ensured that production was not affected by migrant labour, but helped to supplement its progress in the country. Several interviewed informants claimed that as a result of the more technological advancements

³³⁰ Simelane, “Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Post-Colonial Swaziland”, p.150.

³³¹ Interview with Gogo Lubhaca Dlamini, of Mashobeni north of Swaziland, 26 October, 2018.

³³² Simelane, “Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Post-Colonial Swaziland”, p.155.

experienced in the country they were able to purchase tractors and ploughs. Mine wages, therefore, enabled the families to cultivate large fields and develop the agricultural production of migrant families. Fikelephi Mdluli, 68 years old, a wife of an ex-migrant, noted,

“When my late husband left for the mines in the 1980s, it was not the same as before. It was not a problem for me to continue with cultivating our land, even with my husband away working in the South African mines. In the community, government tractors were available for hire, so I used the money my husband sent to cultivate our land. Whether I am a woman it was not a problem what was important was money not long ago when women struggled to cultivate land when the man migrated to the South African mines. Even during harvesting time, I have no difficulties I hire people in the community to do the work in return I pay them money or bags of maize as compensation. I was able to maintain my family even in the absence of my husband.”³³³

Mdluli’s narratives allude to the agency of women in the rural economy in the absence of men. It shows that women assumed the role of heads of families and were responsible for ensuring that labour was available during cultivation and harvesting, a task previously assigned to men. This transformed the gender roles in the rural communities whose customs and traditions were predominantly patriarchal.

Similar testimony was presented by Magugu Jele, who revealed how the new agricultural technologies in Swaziland, enhanced agricultural production. Jele a 68 woman from Kashoba whose husband was working in the Rustenburg gold mine in South Africa for 15 years, stated, “My husband would only visit home once a year during the December holidays, however, that did not affect our cultivation. This was because the government had tractors to hire and some farmers hire out their tractors to the community. Even though we had no cattle, but with the money my husband was sending I was able to plough the land for my family. I had no problem cultivating all our land because only money was needed, unlike before when manpower was required for cultivation. Nowadays, physical strength is not necessarily only money is a need for farming.”³³⁴

Jele’s testimony reveals that women were opting for the new improved agricultural implement to improve rural production. There was less reliance on traditional modes of production. More and

³³³Fikelephi Mdluli, Interviewed at Madulini South of Swaziland (Nhlangano), 15 November 2018.

³³⁴ Magugu Jele, Interviewed at Kashoba North of Swaziland, 15 January 2019.

more women were hiring tractors for farming in rural areas. Tractors were provided by the government for the Rural Development Scheme, which was hired by the people at a fee. The other tractors were sourced from individual farmers; some of who were successful migrants or highly paid government officials, who hired tractors to farm communities.

The scheme by the government of Rural Development increased the involvement of women in agricultural production in Swaziland. Booth, point out that migrants would usually return to their rural homes for the ploughing season.³³⁵ However, the number of men returning home for ploughing in the 1970s declined. The reason for the decline was that migrants hire a tractor and left ploughing to the women left behind in the rural households. Women in Swaziland had always been involved in agricultural production, but with the improvement in agricultural technology, their work was made much easier than before when only traditional methods were used. The availability of tractors for hire has made it possible for more Swazi women to be involved in the cultivation of their lands with ease. The presence of male migrants was no longer a crucial necessity in production in rural communities.

³³⁵ Booth, "The Development of the Swazi Labour Market, 1900-1968", p. 45.

Figure 6: Maize fields for the household of Fikelephi Dlodlu of Madulini north of Eswatini



Source: Maize fields for the household of Fikelephi Dlodlu of Madulini north of Eswatini, 15 November 2018. (M. Matsenjwa Private Collection)

Figure 7: Maize fields for Nomalanga Magagula of Mahamba Swaziland



Source: Maize fields for *Nomalanga Magagula* of Mahamba Swaziland, 15 January 2019. (M. Matsenjwa Private Collection)

4.6 Swazi Migrant Labour and Cattle Accumulation in Communities

Migrant labour in Swazi communities influenced cattle ownership in households. In many African societies, cattle have been an indication of social position in a community. It was a symbol of economic security, prestige, and status. Those who are believed to be wealthy in rural communities are generally linked with big herds of cattle ownership. Cattle were only used during sacrifice ceremonies such as funerals or to ancestors, marriages to pay *lobola* bride-wealth, and cultivation. Africans would try to increase cattle keeping even under adverse

environmental conditions such as drought. This has been so in many societies even though some have severe problems of overgrazing and soil erosion.³³⁶

Since cattle were a valuable asset in Swazi households, it was therefore not surprising to find that a migrant recruited for South African mines invested part of their earnings in cattle. This tendency has been vividly demonstrated by ex-migrants and miners who were interviewed in this study. Their experiences suggest that the level of cattle accumulation in rural communities rose as a result of an increase in male labour migration to the South African mines. Cattle have been proven to be one of the significant options in the decision of capital investment among migrant labourers in Swaziland. Labour migration facilitated cattle accumulation. An ex-migrant miner Bafana Myeni explained,

“When I was growing up in this home we had no cattle, I went to work in the mines and with my two years' earnings, I was able to buy five cattle. The five cattle were just a beginning as I now have a large herd of cattle even though I no longer work as a migrant miner, the animals have increased through reproduction and some belong to my sons who are working locally in the Swaziland government.”³³⁷

Migrant labour also ensured that those migrants from low-income families can get married and pay *lobola* bride wealth without difficulties. Through cattle ownership in Swazi custom, a man can marry more than one wife and have multiple children who are viewed as a source of labour for rural production. Moreover, children especially daughters are also as financial prospects as females would marry and *lobola* bride wealth will be sourced by the parents. When interviewed Zimvu Zwane indicated that he came from a poor family. However migrant labour allowed him to marry multiple wives. The earnings helped him pay the *lobola*.

“In my home, my late father was just a humble man, he had no cattle and was unemployed, and he was just a farmer for his small fields. So, to marry I had to migrate to South African mines to earn money to take a wife. I took a contract with TEBA to work in Carletonville in a mine called East Driefontein mine. With my first three years of earnings, I bought 12 cattle and after 9 years in the mines I was able to accumulate 15 cattle which I used to pay *lobola* for my first wife and I have even paid *lobola* for my

³³⁶Allan Low. “Agricultural Development in Southern Africa: A Household Economic Perspective”. *Journal of Agricultural Economics*. (1986, 13: 2) p. 226.

³³⁷ Bafana Myeni, Interviewed in Manzini, 15 January 2019

second wife and still, the cattle are reproducing I can milk and use them for ploughing my fields and take care of my children as I am unemployed.”³³⁸

Several ex-miners that were interviewed alluded to how they benefitted from migrant earnings. In the southern part of Swaziland for instance, some people traced their ownership of large herds of cattle to remittances from employment in South African mines. At the same time, only a few attributed their large herds to remittances from employment in the mines.³³⁹ Vuma Simelane who spent five years in mines points out that his eighty heard of cattle he bought was the remittance money he sent to his family,

“My late wife Lasimelane was a very smart woman, she did not spend all the money I was sending, but she bought cattle, one or two each time I send money, she was able to transform economically my home. When I returned from the mines I found my kraal full of cattle, the same bread ever since those years has resulted in the cattle you see around the fields in my home .my wife did tremendous work I am a true Swazi man just because of her smart work. She is the reason my son was able to marry and pay lobola with the cattle she started for the family. ”³⁴⁰

Cattle had constantly played a significant part in the progression of rural transformation in Swaziland. Homesteads with large herds of cattle have continuously employed a high position in society. For instance, they are frequently enlisted into decision-making bodies of the chieftainships, and they mainly set rural communal values. Some migrants hold the belief that once they retire from mine work they would return to their communities as respected members because they accumulated cattle. A Swazi custom phrase says ‘*indvoza yindvodza ngetinkomotayo*’ meaning a real man is a man with the number of cattle he owns. This was further emphasised by the fact that with a large herd of cattle, more land was utilised for agricultural production. This inadvertently contributed to the high yields, which improved the social standing of the individual concerned in society.

Mzikayise Myeni an ex-migrant miner from Ndzevane, who had worked in the South African gold mine at Roodepoort Gold Mine for 20 years stated that his position within his community was elevated due to his ownership of large herds of cattle.³⁴¹ Myeni’s experience has been a clear

³³⁸Zimvu Zwane, Interviewed in Mahamba, 14 October 2018.

³³⁹ Simelane, “War, Economy and Society in Swaziland, 1939-1945”, p.44.

³⁴⁰ Vuma Simelane, Interviewed in Mlosheni South of Eswatini, 20 November 2018.

³⁴¹ Mzikayise Myeni, Interviewed 24 September 2018 in Manzini Swaziland.

indication that migrant labour has influenced the process of rural transformation. Such confirmation refutes the orthodox theories which view labour migration merely in a relation to rural underdevelopment and poverty. The evidence presented above by informants does not support the suggestion that labour migration leads to a complete deterioration in the living conditions of the people of the sending communities.

Figure: 8 Cattle found in the kraal of Babe Zimvu Zwane Ex-mine, Homestead in Mahamba



Source: Cattle found in the kraal of Babe Zimvu Zwane Homestead in Mahamba (2018). (M. Matsenjwa Private Collection)

4.7 Swazi migrants and their impact on children

Labour migration from Swaziland to South Africa meant that several children are growing up in single-headed families separated from their migrant parents. Male-centred migration has enormous implications for left-behind children. It impacts their survival, well-being, and development. Here three different outcome components are addressed: culture, education, and psycho-social effects. It is paramount to note that research specific to the impact of migration on children left behind in developing countries like Swaziland is almost non-existent.³⁴²

Migrant labour had a huge impact on fatherhood, particularly the raising of boys to men. The role of fatherhood in a Swazi son is essential as the father becomes a mentor or life coach for the child. Fathers help their sons to be emotionally secure, confident to explore their surroundings and acquire skills and values, and, as they grow older, have a better social connection with peers, and be less likely to get in trouble at home, and community. This indicates that fathers have a powerful and positive impact on the development of their children. JM Matsebula, in his study of the history of Swaziland, indicated that the father's role in a Swazi household is to infuse skills and wisdom into the children, passed through the passage by elders to children. Young boys would be taught cattle herding, hunting, and cultivation, while young girls were taught how to cook, wash and look after babies.³⁴³

Thus, migration steered fathers away from their responsibility of guiding and steering young males. Although the informants identified were adults, they were able to recall their experiences when their fathers were absent from the South African mines. One informant Msongela Dlamini of Nhlangano Mashobeni, south of Swaziland reflects his experience of growing up with an absentee father who left for South African mines when he was 15 years old. He laments how it was challenging to grow up without a father within a traditional Swazi household,

“My father was a migrant miner, he was working in South Africa ever since I was a young boy of 15 years, and he left my siblings and me under the guidance of my grandmother and mother. My mother raised us well as she was able to feed us and we cultivated our land and maintained the household. I can say that I did miss out in as far as

³⁴² James Matsebula. *A history of Swaziland*. (Cape Town: Longman Publishers, 1988) p. 25.

³⁴³ Matsebula, *A history of Swaziland*, p. 30.

acquiring skills and values of being a man since my father was not around to teach me for instance how to hunt, cattle herding, cultivating, handiwork which other boys of my age were being taught by their fathers. All the skills I know of handiwork and herding cattle I got from the community elders and my mother. I have grown to be a miner just like my father was when he was still alive. I did not go to school because I grew up believing that I would be a miner just like my father. I do not resent my father for his decision of migrating since he was able to send money to use in the home; the problem was that he was not around when I was growing up; a boy needs guidance from his father.”³⁴⁴

An absent father also had a huge psycho-social impact on children. Gogo Lubhaca Dlamini, another subject in this study, lamented the experiences of her grandchildren whose father works in the South African mines.

“My son works in South African mines, he has been working there for the past 20 years. His children were left in the care of their mother and me. The children as they grow up need their father’s principles and guidance. The boys as they grow up become problematic, they do not show respect for their mother, most of the boys drop out of school, they don’t follow the principles of elders, and I think this is because their father is not around to give guidance to the children. Children at their teenage stage more especially boys need to be guided on the right part to be the proper man.”³⁴⁵

Gogo Lubhaca’s experience reflects the negative aspect of migration on children left behind, particularly the psycho-social effects. The above informant indicates a lack of guidance due to single parenting where children are more likely to experience behaviour problems. They experience depression, exhibit disruptive behaviour, lie and exhibit anti-social behaviour. It indicates that children who grow up without fathers are more likely to perform poorly at school; take to drugs and violence and have low self-esteem, as opposed to children who grow up with a father. Studies have shown that the continuous absence of fathers significantly affects the children left behind. According to Chidimma Mbanefo, Clifford Odimegwu and Nwamaka

³⁴⁴ Msongela Dlamini, Interviewed in Nhlngano Swaziland, 26 October 2018

³⁴⁵ Interview with Gogo Lubhaca Dlamini, of Mashobeni north of Swaziland, 26 October 2018

Nwogwugwu children from women-headed households are more likely to drop out of school, have poor health, and engage in deviant behaviour.³⁴⁶

A study by Heather Millman revealed that the absence of parents in the formative and teenage years of their children's lives might erode family relationships and contribute to an inability to form and maintain a sense of unity and common purpose, where adolescent delinquency may also increase. There is no doubt that children are affected by the absence of fathers, notwithstanding their age or level of family care and support. Millman argued that children might have feelings of abandonment, anger, and loss even in the rare instance that the decision to migrate was communicated or discussed with the children beforehand.³⁴⁷

Most of the interviewed Swazi migrants and ex-migrants, despite their long absence from home, were in favour of educating their children. They expressed positive views regarding the education of left-behind children. Their remittances and earnings were directed to the education of their children. Such views were clearly expressed by one ex-migrant miner Abel Dlamini of Makhondza in south Shiselweni Swaziland, "As migrants, it was upon us to improve the community; however, since the majority of us were not educated, our children should go to school and get an education. This we viewed as important because children are an important part of our society. Children are the future generation and the progress and development of society lay in their hands so to educate them we create a strong foundation for the prosperity of the entire nation. Some of the money we earn from working in South African mines we directed it to our children education."³⁴⁸

Some migrants made education a priority due to experiences in the working environment in the mines. They acquired first-hand experience of the value of education as skilled labourers. These migrants were working as unskilled labour in the mines; they were able to see the level of jobs and wages paid to those with educational skills. Mzikayise Myeni explains,

'My wife and I are not educated. As a result, the only job that was available for me was migrant labour. I took a contract at TEBA and worked in South African mines for 20 years. Whiles working there I was able to understand the importance of education

³⁴⁶ Chidimma Mbanefo, and Clifford Odimegwu. "Level of Correlates of Single Motherhoods in Southern Africa". *Department of Demography and population Studies*, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. <http://paa.2019.princeton.edu/papers/132097> (accessed 18 December, 2019).

³⁴⁷ Heather Millman, 'Mothering from afar: Conceptualizing transnational motherhood'. *Journal of Anthropology*. (2013, 21: 8) p.25.

³⁴⁸ Dlamini Abel ex-migrant miner from Swaziland Shiselweni, Interviewed in Manzini, 23 September 2019

because those who had skills were paid high wages and were working and living in better conditions. The hard work in the mines was also not good for my health, so I felt that my children should not experience the same thing I invested in their education. I felt that education would help my children to get better jobs and live lives.’³⁴⁹

The majority of children of migrants were able to get an education and improved their lives, as their migrating parents ensured that they were supported financially for school fees and uniforms. Since many migrants saw the education of their children as an investment and would serve as financial security in their old age.

However, migration also had varying impacts on older children, thus leading to neglect in their education. The impact is reflected in the remittance sent to the household and how children are left behind to respond to learning. Hanson and Woodruff presented a negative aspect concerning school attendance which may be linked with the risk that the departures of wage earners from a household disrupt family life. They argued that the reduction in the number of adult role models in the home might increase the child-rearing responsibilities of resident household members, placing greater demands on older children to assist in running and supporting the household, and making it more difficult for children to remain in school.³⁵⁰ Nomalanga Magagula, who is a wife of a migrant, relates her own experience as her father was also a migrant worker. She could not attend school and was tasked to look after her siblings,

“When I was young I was not able to attend school because I had to look after my younger siblings. I had to clean the house wash and cook for them. My father was working in South Africa and my mother left us to stay in town after my father went to work in the mines. My grandmother who was our elder in the home was too old to care for us. I was forced not to attend school and siblings attended school while I supported and maintain the household.”³⁵¹

The above informant demonstrates how female children, due to migration, were forced to head households, and their educational future was disrupted. It also indicates how males were privileged and allowed to attend school due to the gender biases ingrained in Swazi society.

³⁴⁹ Mzikayise Myeni ex-miner, Interviewed in Manzini, TEBA office 24 October, 2019

³⁵⁰ Gordon Hanson, and Christopher Woodruff. *Emigration and educational attainment in Mexico*. (San Diego: University of California Press 2003).

³⁵¹ Nomalungelo Magagula, Wife of Swazi ex-migrant miner, Interviewed in Manzini TEBA office 28 November 2029

Conclusion

The chapter explored migrant labour, and how it transformed the rural economy and social lives of families of migrants in Swaziland. The socio-economic transformation of migrants' households has been investigated through the use of Swazi migrant, ex-migrants, and their family experiences with migrant's earnings and remittances. Remittances changed the socio-economic lives of their households, migrant earnings impacted rural agricultural production, cattle investment, housing, and education of children in Swaziland. Migrant labour also had an impact on wives, many of whom challenged traditional gender roles. Children too were affected. It had both negative and positive consequences. The chapter has shown that the impact of migrant labour was not only confined to the families but also the wider Swazi rural society.

CHAPTER 5

Migrant labour decline and its impact on the migrants and their families

Introduction

The chapter investigates the factors which resulted in the decline of labour flow from Swaziland to South African mines. The changing economies of the mines and new policies such as internalisation of mine labour by the South African government, led to massive retrenchment which created a new set of problems for the Swazi ex-miners, such as integration into their communities and households. The majority of retrenched Swazi miners, returned home without any savings or benefits. The multiple challenges that ex-migrants faced are explored in this chapter.

5.1 South African Mine Labour Policies and Impact on Swazi Migrancy

New policies for mine labour impacted the long system of migrant labour in the South African economy. These policies while meant to improve mine labour for local South Africans, negatively impacted foreign labour. It became evident that during the period towards the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, countries experienced a continuous decline in migrant recruitment. A similar situation was observed in foreign countries where the Chamber of mine drew its mine labour force including Botswana, Lesotho Mozambique, and Swaziland. This change was due to new policies introduced by the post-apartheid government. Andre Leliveld noted that the post-apartheid government experienced great job losses and extensive poverty amongst the black population. One of the priorities of the new government was, therefore to eradicate poverty amongst the South African black population by increasing employment opportunities.³⁵² It was agreed that such policies would result in a significant decline in the foreign workforce. Jonathan Crush also asserted the same notion that the downfall of apartheid and the beginning of democracy in South Africa fuelled the drive to eliminate the migrant labour system which was perceived by many as one of the foundations of the apartheid system.³⁵³

By the 1920s migrant labour was an established form of labour for the mines of South Africa, facilitated by the Native Labour Regulation Act in 1911. According to Jonathan Crush, if large

³⁵² Andre Leliveld. "The Effect of Restrictive South African Migrant Labour Policy on the Survival of Rural Households in Southern Africa". *World Development*. (1997, 25:11) pp.1839-1849.

³⁵³ Crush, "Contract Migrant to South Africa: Past, Present and the Future, Migration", p.24.

numbers of low-wage, unskilled migrant miners had not been enlisted from throughout the subcontinent, there would never have been a deep-level gold mining industry in South Africa. The world's largest supplier of gold would have been, at best, a minor producer pecking away at the surface outcrop of enormous deep-lying reefs. He opined that if an ore body similar to South Africa's had been discovered in Australia, Canada, or the United States, it would almost surely have been left in the ground as a result of an incapability to organise the precise type of labour force.³⁵⁴

Migrant labour as favoured and promoted by the apartheid government because they viewed foreign labour as non-revolutionary compared to local South Africans. The introduction of a new South African government with a new regime and new labour policies in 1994 was therefore bound to result in an inevitable change in the migrant labour system. The consequences of the changing governments indeed resulted in transformations in the structure of mine labour recruitment.³⁵⁵

However, the new policies of localisation of mine labour did not immediately lead to desired results as foreign labour was favoured by most of the South African mining companies. The mining companies at first resisted all the pressures to do away with hiring migrant workers. Swaziland continued to recruit mineworkers at a larger scale compared to the previous years of the 1980s, however, from 1995 onwards, foreign labour recruitment declined (See Table 5.1).

³⁵⁴ Crush, *Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p.36.

³⁵⁵ Crush, *Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920*, p. 40.

Table 3: Swazi Migrant Labour to the South African Gold Mine 1980-1995

Period	Number of Migrant Recruited
1980	10,219
1985	14,289
1990	17,757
1995	15,304
1996	13,800

Source: Swaziland National Archives; Swaziland Labour Department Report (1996) File 455/ 20

The recruitment of mine labour from foreign countries, mostly the Southern African countries experienced further challenges resulting from the declining and downscaling of such unskilled labour. This was initiated by policies of the new ANC-led government which tried to dismantle the migrant labour system. Informants in this study explained how migrants were offered opportunities for permanent residence. The plan was to encourage migrants to voluntarily chose out of being migrant labourers and settle in South Africa. Abel Dlamini explains that such opportunities were not welcomed by all migrants as they were strongly connected to their homelands.

Only a few eligible miners accepted the offer; many continued to opt for migrating between the mine and their home country.³⁵⁶ Abel Dlamini who worked as a migrant miner for 35 years, states that some Swazis took the opportunities to become South African citizens. He further mentioned that this policy only applied to those who had been working in South African mines for more

³⁵⁶ Abel Dlamini, Interviewed at Manzini TEBA office, 18 November 2018

than ten years. Dlamini also mentioned that those who took the opportunity to get South African identity documents had great chances of gaining employment.

“Things in the mines started to change as the political atmosphere was changing in South Africa. The coming of the first election opened doors for even us, migrant miners. In 1993 members of the ANC election campaign came to our hostel to inform us that those who had been in the mines for more than 10 years who were non-South Africans could get citizenship by voting and after 5 years get citizenship. I had been in the mines for more than 10 years since I was recruited in 1973 and worked there for 28 years. I took the opportunity with both hands since I knew the advantages of retirement benefits offered only to South African citizens. So, I voted in 1994 and now I have South African citizenship I get paid a better grant than my fellow Swazis. I only paid R1 for a stamp that was enough to vote and register for South African citizenship. I now have double citizenship which I got from working in South African mines”³⁵⁷

The policies of the new government, although at a lower scale at first were being implemented by mining companies in South Africa. South African mines from the 1990s began to require less unskilled labour but more skilled, which certainly led to discrimination against foreigners especially those who were unskilled, had less education, could not be employed permanently, and in some cases those who were unable to speak English. Such factors led to a substantial decline in migrant labour to South Africa.³⁵⁸

These changes greatly affected the labour flow of Swazi migrants as the majority were unskilled labour. Such experience was revealed by Ndlavela Dlamini, who pointed out that the mining industry unlike pre-1990 sourced skilled workers. Mines also began to employ women as they were skilled in the new technology in the mines, and that most of these women were of South African origin. Dlamini further pointed out that previously, the jobs of skilled miners which were only open to whites were now open to blacks.³⁵⁹ Dlamini, who had worked in the South African mines from 1971 to 1990 explains,

“I started working in the South African mines in 1971 as few works were available in Swaziland, education was not requested in the mines. The mine training school were

³⁵⁷ Abel Dlamini Interviewed at Manzini TEBA Office, 18 November 2018

³⁵⁸ Suzanne Dansereau. “Globalisation and Mining Labour; wages, skills, and mobility,” (PhD, International Development Studies Program, Saint Mary University, Raw Materials report, 2 November 2000) p. 65.

³⁵⁹ Dlamini Ndlavela, Chairman of Swaziland National Mine Workers Association, interviewed in Manzini, 17 October 2019

using cards, word grids, and numbers to test mine recruits for skills. Our physical strength was needed to work in the mines. However, over the year's things started to change. By the early 1990s changes developed in the mine training schools where computers and videos were used to test our skills in the mines. Such computers were fed the test and as a recruit, you will attend to the test, which is how the mine managers then determine your skills and thus be able to determine your job position in the mines. Education is now important in the mines unlike before in the 1970s where the test only required one to be smart to figure those trick questions and the machines of drilling were not complicated to operate, unlike the advanced ones which require some level of education”³⁶⁰

Ndlavela Dlamini's account of the development in South African mines shows how the recruitment exercise was transforming over time with more skilled labour preferred to unskilled labour. Such transformation in the mines presented challenges to the majority of the rural unskilled population of Swaziland whose hopes for survival was migrant labour.

The South African government further promoted the internalisation of mine labour by applying pressure on the Chamber of Mines to recruit only from South Africa.³⁶¹ This policy of internalisation of mine labour led to a significant decline in labour recruited from Swaziland. The level of decline in labour migration from Swaziland has been presented in Table 2. The table shows recruitment statistics which indicate the level of reduction in recruitment from Swaziland, wherein 1994 migrants from Swaziland for the South African gold mines was 13,947, excluding those migrants who left individually without contracts from agents such as The Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA). The number, however, decreased to 8,506 in 1999 showing almost half compared to the period 1994. This indicates the impact of the new mine recruitment policy of internalisation on mine labour recruitment.

³⁶⁰ Dlamini Ndlavela, Interviewed in Manzini Swaziland, 17 October 2019

³⁶¹ de Vletter. “Recent Trends and Prospects of Black Migration to South Africa”. p. 670.

Table:4

Labour Recruited from Swaziland to the South African Gold mines 1994-2005

YEARS	Number of Migrant Recruited
1994	13,947
1995	13,765
1996	13,340
1997	11,742
1998	9,364
1999	8,506
2000	9,307
2001	9,360
2002	7,841
2003	7,970
2004	7,598
2005	6,993

Source: Swaziland National Archives Employment Statistic Report (2009), File 30/20.

According to Crush, the gold mines in South Africa allied to the Chamber of Mines had employed about 500 000 workers in 1987. As the South African gold mining industry joined a long period of restructuring and downsizing, employment figures went down. By early 1994, the figure had dropped to 300 000. In mid-1999, after another round of retrenchment, it was around 240 000.³⁶² Thus in only a decade, the mining industry had shed over 50 percent of its workforce.

³⁶² Jonathan Crush. "Undermining Labour: The Rise of Sub-Contracting in South African Gold Mines". *Journal of Southern African Studies*. (2001, 2:1) p.31.

The retrenchments affected all the miners regardless of the nationalities involved and resulted in an enormous decline in labour migration over the years, (See Table3). These retrenchments also exacerbated poverty in many rural areas that were labour reservoirs by shutting off remittances to these households. Evidence from interviewed Swazi migrants discloses all its impact on their lives.

Table 5:

Migrant Labour from Swaziland, Botswana, and Lesotho working on the South African Gold Mines, 1990-2005

YEARS	Botswana	Lesotho	Swaziland
1990	14,609	99,707	17,757
1991	14,028	93,897	17,393
1992	12,781	89,940	16,273
1993	11,904	89,940	16,273
1994	11,099	87,935	15,892
1995	10,961	81,357	15,304
1996	10,477	76,361	14,371
1997	9,385	60,450	12,960
1998	7,752	52,188	10,336
1999	6,413	58,224	9,307
2000	6,494	49,483	9,360
2001	4,763	54,157	7,841
2002	4,227	54,479	8,698
2003	4,204	48,962	7,970
2004	3,924	46,749	7,598
2005	3,264	46,049	6,993

Source: *J. Crush, Labour Migration Trends, and Policies in Southern Africa, Samp Policy Brief No 23, March 2010, TEBA Mbabane.*

The new labour policies by the South African government impacted migrant labour from sending countries. The decline of mine labour migration in Swaziland resulted in an increase in the level of unemployment more especially for young unskilled Swazis.³⁶³

Solomon Malinga a migrant labourer in the Mponeng Gold Mine in South Africa worked as a driller for 15 years. He stated that in the 1990s it was difficult to become employed on the mines, because of the new policies implemented by the new government of South Africa. Malinga added that when he was recruited by TEBA in Mbabane in 1985 things were very clear and simple for mine recruits and employment was in abundance. He indicated that he went to the agent's office and found that there was a long list of South African mines which were looking for recruits. He was not asked about his level of education, Malinga did not go to school, but he was awarded the job. However, post-1994 mine jobs are very scarce. He added that now South African mines prioritise South Africans for jobs.³⁶⁴ From the above narratives, it reveals that the new policies of recruitment advocated by the Chamber of Mines and the South African government severely affected the recruitment of mine labour in Swaziland

The reduction in mine labour recruitment in Swaziland was very devastating, especially to the rural population who depended mostly on remittances from migrant miners. Simelane, in his study of *'Rural transformation in Post-colonial Swaziland'*, argued that the level of poverty escalated in these ex-miners' communities. He pointed out that their earnings helped them to educate their children; improve their subsistence farming, and some also bought cars and improved their standards of living. Even the country was boosting its revenues through taxes since there were higher numbers of Swazi migrants working in the South African mines before the massive retrenchment of the post-1994 era.³⁶⁵

Simelane further pointed out that the decline in migrant labour affected not only the migrants and their families in Swaziland but also the Swazi economy. Unemployment rose.

Bafana Mngometulu an ex-migrant miner from the south of Swaziland who had worked in South Africa for 11 years, at Modderfontein Gold Mines as a Timber Boy lamented about the decline of migrant labour in Swaziland, "I am not educated and all I know is mining I use my strength to work, now that the South African mines are hiring only South

³⁶³ James Wilmot. *Our Precious Metal, African Labour in South Africa Gold Industry 1970-1990*. (Cape Town: David Philip) p.87.

³⁶⁴ Malinga Solomon, Interviewed in Manzini Swaziland Office of Ex-miners Association, 30 November, 2018

³⁶⁵ Hamilton Simelane. "Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Post-Colonial Swaziland". *Journal of Contemporary Studies*. (1995, 13:2) p.210.

African nationals we are facing difficulties on unemployment. With that challenge slowly, poverty began to creep into my house and I began to sell what I had acquired in South Africa. That, of course, was in the hope of going back to TEBA and things would improve. They didn't. The stereos and blankets were sold; the shoes, bicycles, and all the goats. They are all gone! Now I am poor and miserable. This is because there are less jobs for unskilled people like me in the country yet a number of us were retrenched from the South African mines.”³⁶⁶

The decline in migrant labour had serious repercussions in the country, more especially in the southern part of the Swazi region, an area that had always supplied more mine recruits than the other region of the country. Simelane argued that this region was, a labour reservoir for the South African mines and the rest of the country. This area benefitted from monies remitted by migrants. While most of the other regions in Swaziland experienced some levels of economic development and created employment opportunities after independence, the southern region benefitted very little. The Lowveld benefitted from the establishment of sugar and citrus plantations while the central region developed into the industrial and commercial base of the country. The northern and western regions benefitted from the establishment of commercial forests.³⁶⁷ The southern region remained largely underdevelopment and poverty due to retrenchment and decline in migrancy.

5.2 Retrenchments of Swazi migrants and its Deleterious Consequences.

The decline in migrant labour was prone to create deleterious consequences for the Swazis as migrant labour was the primary employment of many. The economy of the country was dependent on South Africa. Massey asserts that a culture of migration occurs when migration develops so intensely that it becomes part of society.³⁶⁸ Frances Maphosa adds that a culture of migration, therefore, generally advances as an answer to a community's experience of the benefits of migration. Labour migration, especially, is not just an escape from poverty and unemployment, it is a route to upward social mobility for both the migrants and their families and a source of prestige.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ Bafana Mngometulu, Interviewed in Manzini Swaziland Office of Ex-miners Association, 30 November 2018

³⁶⁷ Simelane, “Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Post-Colonial Swaziland”, p.114.

³⁶⁸ Douglas Massey. “The culture Mexican migration: A theoretical and empirical analysis”. *Social Forces*, (2002, 80: 3) pp. 981-1004.

³⁶⁹ Frances Maphosa, “Changing Culture of Migration; Attitudes Education among Former Basotho Migrants to South African Mines”. *African Development Studies*. (2013, 3: 1) p.164.

One of the reasons for the downscaling of migrant labour from South African mines, was the declining gold price. G. W Seidman noted that the price of gold on the international market in the years that followed the 1987 mine-workers strike caused economic contractions in the South African economy. The gold price decreased from \$850 (US) an ounce in 1980 to \$500 (US) an ounce in 1987, and it dropped further by 1996. To deal with the lowering of gold prices, mine management decided to retrench workers and counteract operational losses. Moreover, in some companies, expired mineworkers' contracts were not renewed while in others, the response to the gold crisis led to closing down of their operations. Gold mining industries lost nearly 180,000 jobs to downscaling and retrenchments as a result of mine closures.³⁷⁰

Therefore, it can be noted that the drop in the gold price consequently had an immediate impact on the recruitment of Swazi labour. Former workers cited different explanations about the causes of the retrenchments. Amongst them were, new government policy and demand for skilled workers. Mkhethwa Mathunjwa an ex Swazi migrant who had been working in Carletonville, Mponeng Gold mine for 15 years and retrenched in 1995, lamented;

“The Rand mines were very unjust to us miners because they just wanted to get rid of us foreigners and replace us with South African locals. As migrant miners, we knew there was a policy that says so. It was very unfortunate that at the time when South Africans were not interested to work in the mines they employed people from outside South Africa to work in the mines. They employed us when it suited them when their locals looked down upon mine work. Just because now that the South African are getting interested in working at the mines, the government and the mining companies decide to send us back to our homes.”³⁷¹

Jonathan Crush attributes the decline in foreign migrant labour to high levels of unemployment in South Africa. Also, mining companies began to hire locals, which was far more cost-effective for them because they did not have to pay recruiting agencies for their services. The employment of this policy reduced the number of novice recruitments from foreign countries such as Swaziland, and it lowered the general intake of foreign labour significantly.³⁷²

Swaziland in 1990 had a total number of gold mine workers totaling about 17,757. This figure had fallen to 9,307 by 1999. By 2005 there were only 6,993 mine workers. (See Figure 9). This

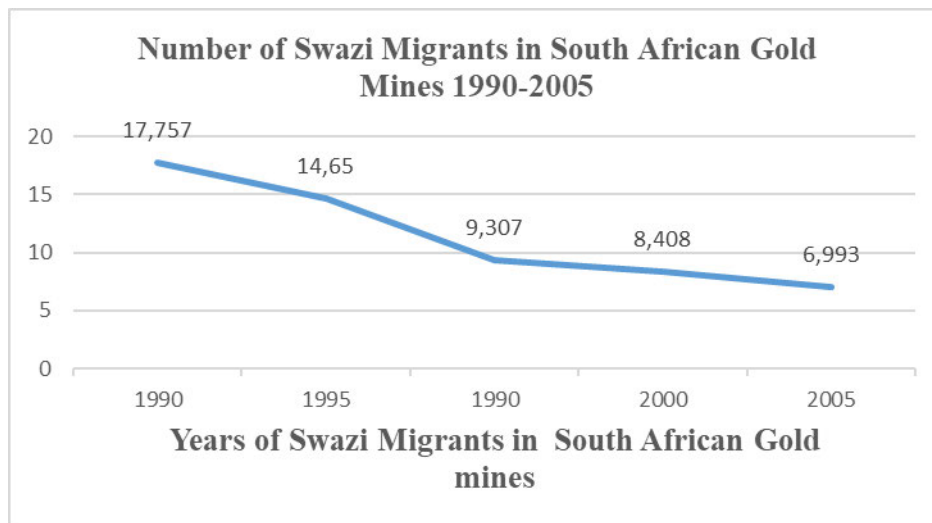
³⁷⁰ Gay Seidman. “Shafted: The social impact of downscaling on the Free State Goldfields “. *South African Sociological Review*. (1993, 5: 2) pp.14-34.

³⁷¹ Mathunjwa, Mkhethwa , interviewed in Manzini, Swaziland ex-mine workers workshop, 28 November 2018

³⁷² Crush, “Undermining Labour: The Rise of Sub-Contracting in South African Gold Mines”, p.113.

was a clear indication that the chain of depending on migrant earnings was reduced and had huge ramifications for the economy of Swaziland.

Figure 9: Swazi Migrants in South African Gold mines-1990-2005



Source: Crush. "Undermining Labour: The Rise of Sub-Contracting in South African Gold Mines", p.65.

The graph represents the level of fluctuation of Swazi migrant miners, where it is evident that it was declining, from a rise of 17,757 in 1990 to a lower level of 9,307 recruits. The massive retrenchment of migrant miners became challenging for the majority of Swazi migrant miners. Since they had no jobs or money, people's perception of mineworkers changed. Ndlavela Dlamini an ex-miner explains,

"Since I lost my job I do not have the respect I used to command when I was still working. I have since lost respect even with the social setting of my society. The periods when I was working and currently are different. This is because during those days when I came back home for holidays or when my contract was over I would buy people beer, food and blankets for even my in-laws. My return from the mines used to be known even around my community; people gave me respect everywhere I went. Now I am just a useless thing I even fail to buy myself a cigarette or sweets for my children.

Life is shameful as I have no source of income after retrenchment from my South African mines”³⁷³

Retrenchments led to shifts in gender roles and power. The authority of some miners was greatly shaken. Men used to be breadwinners while wives stayed home looking after children and the fields. The patriarchal authority of some retrenched miners was undermined as they lost their breadwinner status. Some migrants decided to live in hiding because they could not accept the loss of their powers as men and heads of households. This had an impact on their mental health, with many experiencing anxiety and depression.

The decline in migrancy created limited options for the Swazi ex-miners to invest and improve their economic standings of their households. Opportunities to make a living and support their families became difficult for the majority of ex-migrant miners. Most of the Swazi ex-miners had difficulties in dealing with the situation, so they lived in denial. What seems more difficult for them was that their families and the whole society did not understand their situation. Malinga Solomon an ex-miner from the Koof gold mine lamented his situation. He stated that ex-miners were presumed mad people by members of the community because of their mental health issues.³⁷⁴

Most of the miners were psychologically ill-prepared for the retrenchment. Evidence shows that retrenchment came when most of them least expected it. The timing and how the retrenchment was carried out had a negative psychological impact. Generally, miners were informed in advance about the pending retrenchment, although some of them complained that the notice period was too short. The short notice prevented them from thinking about what they were going to do after retrenchment. The former miners stated that in some companies, the miners were asked to either take voluntary retrenchment or risk being involuntarily retrenched. The reasons given for retrenchment were generally consistent across the different companies: the price of gold on the international market had dropped, and therefore the mining operations had become too costly. Despite the explanations given by the management, some of the migrants believed that they were retrenched to make way for more educated and skilled workers. Retrenchments had a huge impact on marital relations. Some women due to no income migrated to the cities. Migrants complained that their wives could not stay because ‘I have no money *kute imali*’.

³⁷³ Ndlavela Dlamini, Interviewed in Manzini Swaziland, 17 October 2019

³⁷⁴ Malinga Solomon, Interviewed in Manzini Swaziland, 17 October 2019

Ex-miner Solomon Malinga who worked for Koof gold mine lamented that it was very frustrating that as migrants they lost their job and regular income because of retrenchment. However, equally painful was, losing their self-respect and dignity. As ex-migrants, they had no authority. They are now fed by their sons, who also earn a meager wage because they do not work in high-paying jobs. They were now part of the group called ‘*mahlalela*’ the unemployed men, drinking traditional beer every day with nothing to do.³⁷⁵

Lubhaca Dlamini an ex-miner who worked for Western Deep Levels mines sums up their sentiments,

‘I was once told by my wife of 20 years in a marriage that she was having it better and things were easier for her and the children while I was away in the Johannesburg mines and now things have become more difficult since I am here at home doing nothing *mahlalela* meaning the unemployed. She indicates that I am only a burden, and I am just like one of the children she has to feed. I felt so awful since what she was telling was true.’³⁷⁶

Returning miners often found that the skills they acquired in the mines were relevant to the miners only for as long as they remained within the industry.³⁷⁷ Nhlabatsi Mefika, an ex-migrant miner lamented that he received a certificate for drilling and blasting from the Western Deep Level Mines. Still, the certificate was useless since he could not use them anywhere in the country. Nhlabatsi now works as a security guard at the local hospital, the Matsanjeni Hospital. He earns E500 per month with which he is expected to feed his whole family of 12 and also pay for his children’s education.³⁷⁸ This situation was similar to most of the retrenched local mineworkers who had no other economic means of survival and thus failed to maintain their households. This resulted in some families breaking up because of poverty.

Retrenchments also had an impact on education. Andrea Leliveld argued that another problem faced by ex-miners who had no alternative source of income after retrenchment was their failure

³⁷⁵ Malinga Solomon, Interviewed at Mankayane, Swaziland, 18 November 2018

³⁷⁶ Dlamini Lubhaca, ex-miner Interviewed at Nhlangano, 17 October 2019

³⁷⁷ Andrea Leliveld. “The effects of Restrictive South African Migrant Labour Policy on the Survival of Rural Households in Southern Africa: A case study from rural Swaziland”. *Journal of World Development*. (1997: 25:11) p.187.

³⁷⁸ Nhlabatsi Mefika, Interviewed at Manzini Office of Swaziland Ex-mine workers, 18 November 2018

to educate their children. For many families, migrant labour meant they had money to send their children to higher education since primary education was free. Retrenchment resulted in limited income, and poor families had no option but to sacrifice their children's education for the subsistence of the household. Those who had cattle and goats had to sell them to maintain their families and also educate their children. With the decrease in ex-miners livestock, they felt less important in their communities, and their children were forced to withdraw from school.³⁷⁹

The decline of Swazi migrants also negatively impacted miners' quality of life, particularly their status as heads of households. Myeni Mzikayise an ex-miner from Kloof Gold Mine stated,

“If you are not working, you are not a genuine father in this village. You are a father because you work. My children do not love and respect me as they used to. There is no joy in my family. I sometimes get angry with my wife when she asks me whether I am searching for a job to raise the children. I have lost my status as a man of the house. A man is a man because he can provide for his family. I now perform my wife's work, and she goes to work as a domestic servant.”³⁸⁰

A few Swazi ex-migrants tried to improve their lives after the decline in migrancy by investing their packages and savings in commercial businesses. These migrants opened up general dealer shops, and others bought tractors to rent out to local people during the farming season. However, their investment did not sustain them for long as most businesses failed, and the ex-miners fell into debt. Crush pointed out that those ex-migrants who ventured into investing their money failed to diversify their business undertakings but had a copycat approach to business which led to their businesses eventually falling and miners left with debts.³⁸¹

Simelane's study of migration and rural transformation observed that the majority of farm fields in the communities of Shiselweni where subsistent agriculture was supported by migrant earnings were affected by the sudden retrenchment of several mine workers. Some fields which were previously utilised in family agricultural activities were reverted to grazing lands due to the lack of funds to sustain subsistence agriculture. Ex-migrants who were successful farmers and

³⁷⁹ Andrea Leliveld. “The effects of Restrictive South African Migrant Labour Policy on the Survival of Rural Households in Southern Africa”, p. 190.

³⁸⁰ Mzikayise Myeni, Interviewed in Manzini, 28 November 2019

³⁸¹ Crush, “Undermining Labour: The Rise of Sub-Contracting in South African Gold Mines”, p.123.

who were using their remittances to improve their farming and were once productive farmers were forced to start living from hand to mouth, cultivating small fields.³⁸² Mavela Zwane an ex-miner explained his situation;

“I was a successful farmer in the village while I was still employed in the mines. I had five fields in the village and was the best farmer. When I was retrenched things changed for the worse for my family. I could not farm all my fields, so I decided to give some of my fields to my relatives who also abandoned them because of financial difficulties. I used to reap ten to fifteen tons of mealies from my fields. I had enough cattle to plough my fields. When I was retrenched I finished all my cattle which also presented difficulties for farming more fields. I am now failing to take care of my family I am unemployed now.”³⁸³

The retrenchment of migrant miners to Swaziland thus greatly impacted the level of their subsistent agriculture. Most households that were recipients of migrants’ earnings developed their agricultural production using migrant earnings. However, such households were affected by the sudden retrenchments of miners in the South African mines as their subsistent livelihood was greatly affected. The same situation was observed in sending countries such as the High commission territory.³⁸⁴

It, therefore, becomes evident that for a long period circular migration reflected the wishes of a transitional agrarian population to retain their traditional institutions whilst at the same time obtaining some of the benefits of involvement in wage labour. What this presented was a notion that migrant earnings supplemented subsistence production and thereby provided a means of satisfying additional needs to improve the lives of the dependents.

5.3 Occupational Health Illnesses and their impact on Retrenched Swazi migrants

It is a fact that prolonged exposure to gold mining undertakings can result in many lifelong difficulties for the employees. The Swazi migrant miners like all Southern African migrants to the South African rand mines were significantly affected by occupational health diseases. Smith points out that to reduce expenditure on African labour, the Rand landlords not only focused on

³⁸² Simelane, “Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Post-colonial Swaziland”, p.34.

³⁸³ Zwane Mavela interviewed at the office of the ex-miners of Swaziland, 25 November 2019.

³⁸⁴ See for Instance: John Taylor. “Mine Labour Recruitment in the Bechuanaland Protectorate”. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. (1978, 10: 5) pp. 92 -112; Murray, *Families Divided: The impact of migrant Labour in Lesotho*, p.115.

black workers' wages but also spent as little as possible on living conditions in the compounds. As a result, African miners died from avoidable and treatable viral diseases connected to poor diet and living conditions, as well as occupational diseases. During the first three decades of this century, roughly 93 000 black miners died from disease-related causes.³⁸⁵

The airborne dust, with a high concentration of more than 5% of alpha quartz silica, can cause occupational lung diseases, such as cardio-pulmonary TB, silicosis, tuberculosis, obstructive airways disease, and occupational asthma. E. Hnizdo and J. Murray in their study of 2255 gold mineworkers in South Africa reported the complex interaction of long-term exposure to silicon dust, silicosis tuberculosis. The study found that exposure to silica dust was a risk factor for the development of TB increases in miners.³⁸⁶ Smith in his study of 'Working in the Grave' argued that African miners were aware of the dangers involved in their work and developed their interpretation of mine diseases and accidents, and how their sick kin and the dead should be treated. He stated that a mine worker remarked, "At the mines? Truly speaking, whites have long been aware of this because when you are attested, when you leave, you are measured; a coffin already being prepared for you".³⁸⁷ The relative decline after the mid-1920s of diet- and sanitation-related diseases and pneumonia left tuberculosis and silicosis as the major health challenges in the mines. As these occupational diseases have been extensively studied, suffice it here to single out their implications for Swazi miners.³⁸⁸

According to Packard, it was tuberculosis (TB), rather than silicosis, which was a foundation of greater concern to Swaziland, if not the Rand itself, when it became the leading killer on the mines in the 1920s. TB, instigated by the inhaling of the tubercle bacilli, was transferrable but not as infectious as smallpox. It was easily contacted in overcrowded and squalid conditions. Packard opined that the disease arrived with European settlement, ultimately spreading to Africans in South Africa's urban centres. The development of the diamond industry was complemented by the emergence of compounds and gold mining, and towns created the

³⁸⁵ Matthew Smith, "Working in the Grave: The Development of Healthy and Safety System on the Witwatersrand Gold mines 1900-1936" (M.A thesis Rhodes University, 1993) p.105.

³⁸⁶ Jill Murray and E. Hnizdo, "Occupational Lung disease in the South African mining Industry" *Research and policy implementation, Journal of Public Health*. (2011, 32:1) <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21730995/> accessed, 24 November, 2019

³⁸⁷ Smith, "Working in the Grave: The Development of Health and Safety System on the Witwatersrand Gold mines 1900-1936", p.120.

³⁸⁸ Smith, "Working in the Grave: The Development of Health and Safety System on the Witwatersrand Gold mines 1900-1936", p. 125.

conditions for the propagation of this disease. The first commission on TB sat in 1912, and compensation for miners suffering from the disease began in 1916.³⁸⁹

The impact of diseases in mine work was also experienced through the role of mine management who were successful in shifting the burden of TB to the rural areas where repatriated miners suffered from the disease. Statistics have shown that between 1910 and 1912, 7 500 African miners suffering from TB were discharged and sent home. African miners were not radiographed until the 1950s, as X-rays were thought to be very expensive and unnecessary. The mines refused to accept any responsibility for the migrants in rural areas, a problem that had become severe by the 1930s.³⁹⁰ As miners were always repatriated if TB was diagnosed many returned homes and did not present their claim. Other workers, when rejected by one mine, moved on to different mines to try their luck. Mine management, in any event, created obstacles for Africans wishing to make their claims.³⁹¹

5.4 Mine Accidents and their consequences on Swazi migrant miners

It was not only the occupational health illnesses that affected the Swazi ex-miners but accidents acquired from the South African mines were also a significant factor. The ex-miners reviled how they were in constant danger whilst at work in the mines. The compensation they claimed was not enough to sustain them and their families as they were breadwinners. They contended that mine companies were more concerned with profit than their welfare as migrant workers.³⁹²

Jack Simons points out that securing the cost of labour was not merely revealed in high mortality rates from diseases in the mines, but also in neglect of occupational safety. Many accidents through the period covered by this thesis were those caused by rock falls and rock bursts, explosives, trucks and tramways, the cage/skip that transported workers and ore between underground and the surface, and the high risk involved in shaft-sinking operations.³⁹³ Carelessness, fatigue, inexperienced migrants, training, poor supervision, and "high speed" to increase profitability, also contributed to accidents.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁹ Packard, "White Plague: Black Labour: Tuberculosis and the Development of Industrial Policies", p.126.

³⁹⁰ Jack Simons. "Death in South African Mines". *Africa South in Exile*. (1961, 5:4) [http:// link.Springer.com](http://link.springer.com) accessed 24 October 2019

³⁹¹ Simons, "Death in South African Mines", p. 35.

³⁹² Simons, "Death in South African Mines", p.40.

³⁹³ Simons, "Death in South African Mines", p. 45.

³⁹⁴ Simons, "Death in South African Mines", p. 48.

According to Smith, rock falls and rock bursts were openly connected to deep-level mining and the temperature and humidity underground. The deeper the mines, the more likely were rock falls and rock bursts. Together, they accounted for most of the deaths resulting from gold mine accidents; 26 percent of the total accidents in 1903, 32 percent in 1919, 38 percent in 1929, and 42 percent in 1939. This rising trend was a result of both the expansion of mining after the abandonment of the gold standard in 1932 and the fact that mines were digging deeper.³⁹⁵ Such accidents could result in many deaths, depending on the number of workers underground at the time of the rock burst or fall. The bodies of miners were frequently covered by tons of rocks for days or weeks.³⁹⁶

The transportation of workers between the surface and underground in the cage or skip also involved risk; the rope could break, or its controller makes a serious mistake. Fatal accidents involving cages invariably involved a significant number of miners in any one incident. This was one of the aspects of life in the mines that recruits were warned against; this formed a crucial part of their socialization and initiation.³⁹⁷ Accidents in the skips, on trucks, rock falls, and rock burst, the collapse of shafts, were among the accidents most frequently reported by Swazi miners. It was common for miners to have experienced numerous accidents by the end of their mine careers. Below is an example,

On 17 January 1968, an accident befell a young man called Magejeza Dlamini a foreman Underground, was hit by a rock that broke his right hand. This was at one of the mines of Knights Deep known as Robertson shaft. Dlamini once before broke his left arm while he worked at the Premier Mine. Now he is a cripple, as those arms, even though not amputated, will no longer do any heavy work. He has been in hospitals for years.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁵ Smith, "Working in a Grave The Development of Health and Safety System on the Witwatersrand Gold mines 1900-1936", p.112.

³⁹⁶ Smith, "Working in a Grave The Development of Health and Safety System on the Witwatersrand Gold mines 1900-1936", p.120.

³⁹⁷ Smith, "Working in a Grave The Development of Health and Safety System on the Witwatersrand Gold mines 1900-1936", p.155.

³⁹⁸ Dlamini Magejeza, Interviewed in the Office of the Ex-mine workers Association, 20 February 2019

³⁹⁹ Dlamini Lubhaca, interviewed in Manzini, 25 February 2019

Lubhaca Dlamini, A Swazi ex-miner who worked for Western Deep Levels mines stated that he lost a leg in the mines in an accident of a rock fall. He explained that he was treated and given money amounting to R 16000 as compensation for the accident. Dlamini complained that he was now a cripple because he has one leg. He also complained that the money he received was exhausted when he and his family were taking care of the injury. Dlamini lamented that he is now a burden to his family and members of the community.³⁹⁹

Ngonini in his study on ex-miners in the Eastern Cape outlines the negative impact of migrant mining on the health of ex-miners. He argues that migrants who have lost limbs now depend on family members for help in carrying out their daily duties such as eating, washing, and moving around.⁴⁰⁰ Dudu Dlamini a wife of a migrant miner shared the same sentiment, she alludes to the hardships of women and the difficulty she faces in her homestead caring for her husband who is virtually immobilised by injuries from the mines,

“We, females, suffer a lot. When our husbands were in the mines we struggled to make the ends meet. For they sometimes took time to send money and you could not sit on your laurels waiting for that manna – you needed to improvise. Now they are back, some with fractured legs, cut hands, in fact, some are crippled. We have to nurse them. My husband lost the left leg as well as the left arm. He cannot do a damn thing. He has no money, no job. The mines just dumped him here at home.”⁴⁰¹

Although the mortality from accidents decreased from the 1920s onwards, the number of injuries increased but there was a reduction in the number of fatal accidents. Safety measures were popularised through the organisation of competitions among workers and between mines, and

⁴⁰⁰ Xola Ngonini. “Anxious communities: the decline of mine migration in the Eastern Cape Development” *Southern Africa*. (2007, 24:1) p.178.

⁴⁰¹ Dudu Dlamini, Wife of ex-miners that suffer from TB, interviewed in Manzini, 24 September 2019

⁴⁰² Ngonini, “Anxious communities: the decline of mine migration in the Eastern Cape Development”, p.178.

⁴⁰³ Dlamini Magejeza, Interviewed in the Office of the Ex-mine workers Association, 20 February 2019

first aid schools and underground rescue teams were set up. The medium for such campaigns included posters and advertisements and films.⁴⁰²

Over and beyond discriminatory compensation practices, mine and government authorities from the start tried to minimize the amount paid to Africans by cutting down on the numbers who could qualify for compensation. Many African miners were, however, ignorant of their right to compensation for death or severe injury. Even where compensation was obtained, the sums were so small that they were soon exhausted. Thus, one informant stated, "These compensations have no use. Magejeza Dlamini lamented,

“ In 1995, I was at work in Johannesburg, where I lost my eye in an accident, and I was given R50 000 in compensation, which was a great help to me; it lasted me ten years and then got finished. Sir, now I am in the difficulty, I have six children and their mother it is real misery regarding food and clothing for them. Owing to this difficulty, on the 21st December 1929, I was guided to Johannesburg to see the workers, when I arrived there, the workers were very much pleased to see me, if there was any permission.”⁴⁰³

Moreover, the mine houses repatriated sick miners to transfer the cost of caring for the sick from themselves to families in the rural areas. But at the same time, at least for some Swazis, the miners themselves insisted on being repatriated, preferring to die at home.

Conclusion

The chapter has examined the lives of retrenched Swazi mine workers and the overall impact on their families and their communities. It has alluded to the negative impact of retrenchments on

the migrants' well-being and their loss of standing in the community. Men who used to function as breadwinners have difficulty adapting to the new conditions in the villages: they feel relegated and emotionally and psychologically alienated from their rural communities and families. These ex-migrant workers have lost not only income; the emasculating experience of losing a job denied them any possible claims in the future. It has shown how the changing economies of the mines and new policies such as the internalisation of mine labour by the South African government led to massive retrenchment which created a new set of problems for the Swazi ex-miners such as integration and assimilation in their communities and households.

CHAPTER 6

Impact of Voluntary Deferred Pay (VDP) on Swazi migrant and Ex migrant miners

Introduction

The voluntary deferred pay of migrant miners (VDP) was a portion of the monthly wages which the mining company transferred to a collective account to the local bank of the Swazi migrant. This was to ensure that a percentage of the miner's remunerations was invested or utilized in the domestic economy of sending countries. The agreement between the recruiting agent TEBA and the sending country made provision for the deferred payment, which is the money that was paid in the worker's home country. Ngonini in his study of 'Anxious Communities: the decline of mine migration in Eastern Cape' shed light by pointing out that money deferred to the worker's salary and could be paid periodically to a relative chosen by the worker, deposited into the workers' savings account or to the worker himself at the time of his return to the home country. The monies were used mainly for the overall sustenance of the homesteads and communities.⁴⁰⁴ The chapter explores the establishment of the VDP in Swaziland, for migrant miners from Swaziland. It also focuses on how the VDP was used and how it benefited the migrants and the Swazi government. Challenges of VDP among the ex-miners in Swaziland have also been investigated and experiences and opinions of ex-migrants and their dependences explored.

6.1 Establishment of Voluntary Deferred Pay of Swazi migrant miners

The VDP scheme in Swaziland was set up in the 1950s to ensure that a higher percentage of money paid to Swazi mineworkers was invested and utilized in the domestic economy. The colonial authorities in Swaziland during the colonial period collaborated with South African mines and claimed that the VDP scheme was meant to donate to Swaziland's welfare services. As a result, all the deferred pay funds were deposited to South African banking bodies. The Swazi miners were not benefiting from the funds. The VDP scheme assisted migrant mineworkers to remit a percentage of their wages. According to an official in the Ministry of

⁴⁰⁴ Ngonini, "Anxious Communities: the decline of mine migration in the Eastern Cape, Development", pp. 173.

Employment and Labour, mineworkers working in South Africa were obliged to open accounts with any bank in Swaziland and save 30 per cent of their wages every month into this account.⁴⁰⁵

Unlike in Swaziland, in Lesotho, a deferred payment scheme was established in 1974. It was compulsory under the scheme for all mine workers to deposit 60 per cent of their wages into an account at a specific bank in Lesotho. The scheme was condemned by miners since it was obligatory. It also stimulated some Basotho mineworkers to shun it, though mineworkers who required transfer more than the proportion specified by the Act were allowed to do so.⁴⁰⁶

Fiona de Vletter argued that the deferred payment schemes in Mozambique operated differently from the ones in Lesotho. This is because mine workers had to choose how they were to be paid their remittances, either through the selected relative or as a lump sum when the migrant returned home. Even though the compulsory deferred pay was 60%, Mozambican mineworkers remitted about 76% of their wages to the country.⁴⁰⁷ In the Swazi territory, the issue of deferred payment was regulated by the colonial government. The Employment Proclamation of 1962, amended in 1965 laid down regulations governing service contracts, protection of wages, and recruiting. Control over recruitment and the VPD was exercised under the same Proclamation. Contracts for recruits were not to exceed one year, with renewal for a further maximum period of nine months, and conditions of employment were to be satisfactory.⁴⁰⁸

The Government of the Republic of South Africa concluded several bilateral labour agreements with many of its neighbours. These arrangements controlled the movement of migrant labour from the contracting States to South Africa. Secondly, the arrangements focused on the payment of taxes to the government of the sending country, as well as deferred payments to be paid to the foreign national in the sending country upon return to that country; allowances payable to family members; and monies to be paid into a welfare fund which may be set up by the government of the sending country to support such citizens during periods of their disablement upon return to their home county.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁵SNA, Native Recruitment Law, Resident Commissioner's Office Mbabane, 22 October 1962, Draft. N0. Of 1962 Proclamation by His Excellency the High Commissioner, File 314/64.

⁴⁰⁶ Sparreboom Burger. "Migrant worker Remittances in Lesotho: A Review of the Deferred Pay Scheme". *International Labour Office*. (16: 10,1996) pp.234-250

⁴⁰⁷ Fion de Vletter, "Sons of Mozambique: Mozambican Miners and Post-apartheid South Africa". *South African Migration Project*. (42:12, 1998) p. 15.

⁴⁰⁸ SNA, Native Recruitment Law, Resident Commissioner's Office Mbabane, October, 1962, Draft. N0. Of 1962 Proclamation by His Excellency the High Commissioner, 22, File 314/64 C.R.C.S

⁴⁰⁹ SNA, Department of Labour in Swaziland, Annual Report, 1969.

On 22 August 1975, an agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland was signed. It led to an establishment of an office for a Swaziland government Labour Representative in the Republic of South Africa. This office regulated migration since individual Swazi citizens were working in the Republic of South Africa.⁴¹⁰

However, the Swazi government in 1968 attempted to regulate the remittances and VDP of the Swazi miners. The independence of Swaziland witnessed the anxiety of the new Swazi government to regulate the financial receipts of miners. In 1986 the VDP was R 230, 412 and remittances were R98, 624. The VDP portion was 30 percent of monthly wages which the mine companies transfer to a collective account to the local bank. This was to ensure that a portion of the miner's wages was invested or utilized in the domestic economy. The Deputy Prime Minister (DPM), of Swaziland, in 1968, Mfundza Sukati, informed the House of Assembly that nearly 5,000 Swazis were employed in the South African gold mines. He was replying to a question by Siphon M. Dlamini who requested to know the number of Swazis working in the mines, and whether Swaziland benefited financially from the mineworkers. The Deputy Minister responded that the number fluctuated throughout the year and Swaziland was benefiting from the miners.⁴¹¹

From July 1967 to June 1968 nearly R250, 000 was received by the Swazi government as voluntary deferred pay. During the same period over R84, 000 was remitted on behalf of workers to their families in Swaziland. Additionally, miners brought home earnings and savings from the gold mines. The Swazi government decided to introduce compulsory deferred pay and to negotiate with appropriate authorities in South Africa for this to be remitted monthly for investment in Swaziland. The DPM explained that this was to benefit both the workers and the country. He argued that the deferred pay was invested in South Africa in a Deferred Pay Investment Fund. As a result, the Swazi workers do not receive the interest of the money, but it was used by the Chamber of mines as a source of charitable aid to Swaziland, which he believed needed to be changed so that the interest would be used by the Swazi government for the benefit of the Swazi miners.⁴¹²

Moreover, the consent of the Swazi government was perpetuated by the fact that many Swazis in the 1960s were mostly employed in the South African mines. Recruitment of Swazi migrants to

⁴¹⁰ SNA, Department of Labour in Swaziland, Annual Report, 1969.

⁴¹⁰ *Times of Swaziland*, 14 March 1968.

⁴¹¹ Doran M. "Swaziland Labour Migration: Some Implications for a National Development Strategy". World Employment Program Working Paper, Geneva: ILO, 2-26, August 1977.

the South African mines from the 1930s to the mid-1970s remained remarkably constant over the long run, averaging between 7000 -8000 per annum. See Table 6.1 below.

Table 6:

Recruitment of Swazi Miners for the South African Mines by the Chamber of Mines 1960-1980

Year	Recruits	Year	Recruits	Year	Recruits
1960	7894	1967	5978	1974	9350
1961	8468	1968	7505	1975	16272
1962	8838	1969	7941	1976	20634
1963	6671	1970	9035	1977	14917
1964	6157	1971	6653	1978	12153
1965	5844	1972	6901	1979	11297
1966	6420	1973	7859	1980	10284

Source: de Vletter, “Labour Migration in Swaziland: Recent Trends”, p. 18.

The money further boosted the general economic status of receiving countries and the rural economy. For instance, some of the infrastructural developments in rural areas of Lubombo and Shiselweni in Swaziland and Mafeteng and Hoek in Lesotho are attributed to the migrant labour system. Migrants miners who were interviewed stated that they were aware of monies deducted from their salary but had no idea where and how this money was utilized. Magejeza Dlamini an ex-miner explains,

“I know that there was some of our money which was taken by the company and this money we were told that it was going to help us back home when we retire from mine working. I tell you now it has been 15 years since I was retrenched from South Africa, but I have never seen any of the money. I know of none of the projects you say were developed using our money. The VDP was meant to assist us ex-miners to start our business but none of the money has been given to any of us. The association continues to inform us that our government delays such payment and it seems very obvious that I will die without even seeing a cent of the money I have worked so hard for in South African

mines. This money was going to assist me from the poverty I experience now because I cannot plough due to drought and my few animals are dying.”⁴¹³

The Swaziland ex-miners association shares the same sentiment as Dlamini. The association alludes to the unpaid benefits that were still owing to ex-miners. Vama Jele president of the Swazi ex-mine workers association stated that a commission of inquiry by Minister of Labour Hon Lutfwo Dlamini met with South African stakeholders over the unpaid funds of Swazi ex-mine workers.⁴¹⁴

The ex-mine worker's money was managed by Voluntary Deferred Pay Special Fund Board. It could therefore be argued that it is such funds that most of the ex-mine workers in Swaziland when interviewed lament about its misuse: that the government of Swaziland under the minister of labour responsible for the VDP funds do not support or benefit them or their dependents.⁴¹⁵

6.2 TEBA and VDP

The Swazi miners were critical of the VDP scheme. They did not know what the deferred pay was even used for. Moreover, miners who migrated voluntarily were excluded from the scheme yet their deferred pay was sent to their country by the mining company. Miners complained that the Deferred Pay Scheme was discriminatory in the sense that South African nationals were not subjected to the same kind of regulation. Again, there was also a challenge on how they should access their funds since most of them were retrenched or retired and their contract could not be renewed for another mine work. Lack of education was also cited by several ex-migrants as a major hindrance in their plight to address their issue of VDP benefits.⁴¹⁶

The offices of TEBA were responsible for the recruitment of miners and distributing the Swazi miner's remittances. It was also used for information and documentation of Swazi migrant miners' finances. This organization had offices established in all the sending countries. TEBA presently has agencies in southern Mozambique, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, and South Africa. In addition to labour locating, services they also assist in cash transmission, social support (compensation and other industry monetary benefits), communication services between

⁴¹³ Magejeza Dlamini, Interviewed, Manzini, 18 October 2018

⁴¹⁴ Vama Jele , Interviewed , Manzini , 15 August , 2019

⁴¹⁵ Vama Jele , Interviewed , Manzini , 15 August , 2019

⁴¹⁶ Ntombi Mhlongo. “Swazi ex-miners fail to access their unpaid VDP funds,” *Times of Swaziland*, 02 June, 2020

migrant workers and their families, community support (such as the construction of roads, bridges, and clinics through TEBA Development) and tracing and document collation.⁴¹⁷

Swaziland just like the other Southern African states have three offices of TEBA stationed in the country, one in Manzini the hub of Swaziland, the other in Mbabane the capital city of Swaziland, and in Nhlngano, the southern region of the country. Moreover, U-Bank (formerly TEBA Bank) stands as a bank assisting with financial and micro-financial services to mineworkers on gold and platinum mines. Primarily it functioned as a voluntary deferred payment scheme through TEBA Branches in Lesotho, and later presented savings account amenities, which permitted for the voluntary depositing of earnings at savings outlets on the mines. All mineworkers can withdraw cash at TEBA Bank offices in the mines or TEBA offices in Lesotho.⁴¹⁸

One of the services of TEBA was the tracing and collection of documents. TEBA traces and helps people with document collation for a comprehensive range of industry-related benefits, including pension funds, provident funds, industry awards, and Employee Share Ownership Schemes and unclaimed benefits. The tracing of ex-mineworkers is simplified by TEBA's massive database of mineworkers (both former and current), as well as its footprint throughout traditional labour sending areas situated both within and outside the Republic of South Africa. Their offices, based in these communities, allow them to support individuals with the completion and collating of documents, without them having to travel massive distances. Moreover, the office of TEBA collects and audits records before sending them to its clients or their nominated administration company for approval (a process which is tracked step by step by a dedicated in-house document tracking system).⁴¹⁹ Such an initiative by TEBA has been validated by the ex-miners and the members of the ex-miner's association that indeed TEBA does assist miners. Most ex-miners in Swaziland agreed that TEBA officers assisted them with the completion and collating of documents, thus solving the trouble of having to travel from Swaziland to South Africa.

Moreover, TEBA operates HIV awareness programs in its Swaziland offices, pursuing miners who have come home for contract renewal. It also conducts community visits to all mine worker sending communities in Swaziland through its home-based care unit and teaches the

⁴¹⁷ Henriette Latsky. "A Taste of the Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA): Mining the Past". *Journal of Eastern and Southern African Regional Branch of the International Branch of Archives* (2008,27), pp.128-146

⁴¹⁸ Latsky, "A Taste of the Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA): Mining the Past", p. 130.

⁴¹⁹ Latsky, "A Taste of the Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA): Mining the Past", p.130.

communities about HIV prevention, treatment, and care, family planning, condom use, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, and sexually-transmitted infections. To prevent infections and re-infection, TEBA also provides communities with condoms supplied by the government. However, community visits and training sessions are limited as they are provided through one healthcare worker for all mineworker-sending communities in Swaziland. TEBA also has a home-based care programme for former mineworkers in Lesotho who are ‘repatriated’ from South African mines due to illness.⁴²⁰ During interviews, ex-miners whilst validating the services TEBA provided complained of the distance of TEBA offices, that they were far from the rural areas.⁴²¹

6.3 Swaziland Migrant Mine Workers Association and VDP

The Swazi migrant miners and ex-miners have an association called the Swaziland Migrant Mineworkers Association. Its goals are aimed at improving the quality of life of migrant mine workers and their beneficiaries in Swaziland through capacity building for improved healthcare, access to social security benefits, and income generation through its effect mitigations programmes. The association is presently consolidating former mineworkers and beneficiaries and gathering records towards a class action suit against former and present mining companies. The lawsuit was to be steered cooperatively by Abraham Kiewitz Attorneys (Cape Town) and Haysfeldand Co LLP (London). SWAMMIWA aimed at signing up approximately 700 persons, even though others would not, owing to misplaced employment and other documentation, the association presented that grants could be delivered for income-generating equipment such as farming inputs (e.g. tractors) for vegetable and livestock farming.⁴²²

According to Vama Jele, president of the Swazi miner’s association, the association was formed in 1993 as a community initiative to serve the interests of miners, ex-miners, their families, and communities on issues of labour migration, post-employment rights, health, and social protection. High on the list of those interests was ensuring that they received benefits, pension,

⁴²⁰ Paula Akugizibwe, “Mines, TB and Migration in Southern Africa”, Paper Presentation at the South African AIDS Conference, 1, April 2009.

⁴²¹ See Swazi Observer News Paper, “Commission of Inquiry into the Compensation of Swazi Ex-Mineworkers in the Republic of South Africa”, Report on the Commission of Inquiry into the Compensation of Swazi Ex-Mineworkers in the Republic of South Africa, (Manzini, Eswatini, 16, October, 2001) p.15-16

⁴²² Vama Jele, Interviewed Manzini, 15 August 2019

and compensation for illness and injury, particularly tuberculosis, silicosis, and HIV and AIDS.⁴²³ Jeli pointed out that their association brings hope for ex-miners and their dependencies,

“Our programs are focused on the ex-miners and their dependencies that are perishing in Swaziland. We address health, labour migration, and social protection for migrant miners, their families and communicate. About more than 48 000 ex-miners may be found in Swaziland while 4000 remained in employment in South African mines. Well, about R41 billion remained unclaimed, R50 billion unclaimed for occupational injuries with insurance and unsettled mandatory medical services that have not been done by Medical Bureau for Occupational Diseases (MBOD).”⁴²⁴

In Lesotho, the Ex-Miners Association of the Mountain Kingdom (Lesotho) was established for the welfare of ex-mine workers in 2004. Its core attention was on the improvement of ex-miners and their families, by supporting them to be self-satisfactory and accessing their social security and other benefits due. On their inauguration, the Association had 10 103 members. However, membership has since diminished due to the high death rates of ex-miners.⁴²⁵

In Swaziland on the other hand, the association embarked on capacity-building projects for ex-mine workers (such as the Qubula Zasha Ex-mineworkers Capacity Building Project), which encompass rural mobilization, outreach educational programmes, branch membership, and leadership workshops.⁴²⁶ The association is also involved in human rights advocacy, such as the triumphant process against the Government of Swaziland for failure to comprehend the constitutional right to free education. This has led to the establishment of free education for every Swazi child, which benefitted ex-miners and their families.⁴²⁷ Vama Jele presented some duties and projects of the association in rural communities. He stated that the projects were initiated by both the South African mines and the office of TEBA in Swaziland. He also pointed out that there were challenges faced by the Swazi ex-miners and their dependencies through working with the office of TEBA,

⁴²³ Vama Jele , Interviewed Manzini, 15 August 2019

⁴²⁴ Vama Jele , Interviewed Manzini, 15 August 2019

⁴²⁵ Burger, “Migrant worker Remittances in Lesotho: A Review of the Deferred Pay Scheme”, p. 15.

⁴²⁶ Letlhokwa George Mpedi “Civil Society in Development: Small-scale Development Project (less than DKK 1 million)” 24 November 2019, accessed at <https://www.africaportal.org>.

⁴²⁷ Mpedi, “Civil Society in Development: Small-scale Development Project, (less than DKK 1 million).

“In 1999 the Swaziland minister of labour, Hon Lutfo Dlamini tried to solve the plight of ex-miners over their unpaid VDP, in Parliament by commission a commission of inquiry into the funds of Swazi ex-miners. However, no positive result came from the commission as they only met with South African TEBA and Chamber of Mines but was not able to meet with key stakeholders of the mining companies. Swazi migrants and their dependencies still suffer, from poverty and diseases such as TB and silicosis.”⁴²⁸

Figure 10:

SA businessman linked to E5.7million ex-miners con

By: Dlamini Mfanukhona



Source: *Times of Swaziland*, 31 October 2019

The Swaziland ex-miners association presented some positive results as far as assisting ex-miners and their dependents. A report local newspaper *Swazi Observer* on 9 December 2018 revealed that ex-miners funds were to be released. According to the article, Emaswati ex-miners, who worked in the South African mines and contracted silicosis and tuberculosis (TB) from 1965 onwards would soon receive compensation. The claim was confirmed by both the ex-miners association and Lutfo Dlamini. Nearly 5000 Swazi ex-miners were expected to get a share of

⁴²⁸ Vama Jele, Interviewed, Manzini 16 August 2019

the E5 billion set aside by the South African mines for the compensation of ex-miners within the Southern African region where miners were recruited.⁴²⁹

6.4 Difficulties in Accessing VDP

As alluded to earlier, some miners were unaware of the actual benefits of the VDP scheme or how to access it. For example, ex-miner Mandlenkosi Mavuso recalled:

“My son I don’t know that such money exists but what I know is that some of my money was held in the mine I was working for as insurance which some was paid to me when I was retrenched. I do not know any VDP money or any security fund that belongs to me, you know that I did not go to school so I just received the money they offered me, if whether it was all or not I have no idea. I have attended some of the meetings which was held in the iNkundla where members of the ex-mine workers association told us about such money. Apart from that, there is no information that I know regarding the deferred pay of Swazi miners.”⁴³⁰

One stumbling block for ex-miners seeking to access their benefits was the problem of illiteracy. A former mineworker from Swaziland and chairman of the Swaziland ex-Miners Association alluded to this fact. Mr. Ndlavela Dlamini pointed out in an oral interview, that he was recruited by TEBA the current recruiting agent of the Chamber of Mines to work in the Johannesburg gold mines in 1980. In Swaziland, during this period (the 1980s) there were no jobs for unskilled labour. He acknowledged that existing local mines such as the Havelock mine at Mlembe and Usuthu Pulp at Bhunya could not absorb the high population of unemployed Swazis. He subsequently opted to migrate to the South African mines in the 1980s, where he worked until he was expelled for being a member of the workers union. Dlamini further pointed out that as an association they have been trying to help the Swazi ex-miners to have access to their VDP but they do not get assistance from the ministry of labour in the country. When interviewed he lamented that:

“Many of our members of the mineworkers decided to abandon the VDP system. The reason was that we had no voice in the funds which were deposited in a collective

⁴²⁹ *Swazi Observer*, 9 December 2018 p.15.

⁴³⁰ Mandlenkosi Mavuso, Interviewed in Maznini 21 September, 2018

account and had no idea how it was managed. Once you retire it becomes hard to access all your contributions. Moreover, I acquired the South African identification document and started contributing to the South African unemployment insurance fund (UIF), this was far better than what was happening to the Swazi ex-miners, all their contributions are given to the miners once their contracts expire.”⁴³¹

Swazi ex-miners and their dependencies have also fallen prey to scams and cons who misused the funds. This was reported by the *Times of Eswatini* where a dubious South African advocate conned ex-miners a total of close to E5.7 million. The dubious advocate reportedly promised to assist the families to access unclaimed benefits which were invested with prominent South African insurance companies.⁴³² These scenarios allude to the vulnerability of the Swazi ex-miners and their dependencies.

The situation in Swaziland has not transformed. Miners and ex-miners continuously complain that their pension funds were never paid to them by the mining companies, including their VDP. They added that the government does not assist them in claiming back their funds. Hence, they are scammed continuously. According to Reuters.com, the South African mining chamber noted that there was approximately \$ 215 million in unclaimed pensions of ex-miners. According to South Africa statistics from the office of the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) the total annual remittances by foreign workers to their countries of origin, Swaziland stood at R91 million in 2011. Moreover, a total of 14 371 remained working in South African mines in the year 1996.⁴³³

There were also many irregularities in the VDP which raised serious concerns from ex-miners. They complain that the scheme was giving those who went to the mines illegally exemptions. Most miners who were not recruited through the TEBA recruiting agency were not compelled by the VDP payment act; however, they benefited from the developments constructed in the communities. However, in Lesotho, the VDP scheme appeared to more miner friendly, which is not the case with Swaziland. In Lesotho, the Lesotho Bank and TEBA, together with the Government, do their best to find ways to make the scheme less costly and more effective. As an example, there are plans to replace the joint account with individual accounts for each miner,

⁴³¹ Dlamini Ndlavela, Chairman of Swaziland Ex-mine Workers Association interviewed 12 November 2018

⁴³² Mavuso Mandisa. “South African Man Linked to E5.7 million Ex-miner con”, *Times of Swaziland*, 31 October 2019

⁴³³ Stoddard Ed. [http://: www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com), South African Chamber Claim \$ 215 million of unclaimed ex-miners Fund, accessed 12 September 2019.

which has already been implemented by one mine. This will decrease the costs of enforcement, as it will become possible to ensure the participation of all Basotho miners. Also, it will facilitate the prevention of fraud using easier detection of unwarranted withdrawals. Moreover, individual accounts are attractive to Lesotho Bank as well as to miners because they abolish the need for a miner to withdraw the remaining balance at the end of his contract. The Lesotho Bank can thus attempt to retain miners as clients even when their contracts are over, and miners can keep their money in their account if they consider this convenient.

6.5 Conflict between Swazi ex-miners and government over VDP

The difficulties experienced by former migrant mine workers and their dependents to access social security benefits have adverse effects on their families and communities. The anguish of (former) mine workers is exaggerated by their socio-economic circumstances and that of their areas of origin. Remarking on the effect of mine terminations on the means of support of workers, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) pronounces and stated that:

“when there were operational changes workers would consequentially be retrenched, effectively dumped into destitution. Whatever they will be given would not be sustainable given their literacy and numeracy levels. They were deficient in managing money and so on for the long term because of a lack of necessary skills. They would not be employed anywhere because they had no alternative training. Eventually remaining unproductive and joining the long queues of the unemployed.”⁴³⁴

In an attempt to eliminate poverty amongst the ex-miners in Lesotho, the ex-miner’s association generated agricultural activities such as the farm of potatoes and beans in Matelile Ha Sekhaupane. The plantation is in a preliminary stage but the Association goals to cover ex-miners and their dependents all over the country. The Association was aided by the ILO with market inquiries and market modification. The Lesotho Council of Non- Governmental Organizations (which supports and coordinates activities undertaken by nongovernmental organizations) is also supporting the Association by giving methodical backing and support in the application of government policy documents.⁴³⁵ The Ex-miners Association states that most ex-miners reside in

⁴³⁴ Fafuli Mike “A rage from the bottom: The Role of NUM in Transforming the Mining Industry in SA” Paper presented at International Mining History Conference held at Gold Reef City, Johannesburg (17-20 April 2012), pp-14-18.

⁴³⁵ Letlhokwa Mpedi, Informative News, “Ex-miners association leads pilot project to fight hunger”, http://www.informativenews.co.ls/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5031:ex-miners-association-leads-pilot-project-to-fight-hunger&catid=34:news&Itemid=27, Accessed 24 November 2019, p. 16.

very isolated rural areas with high numbers of TB patients. The ex-miners suffered as they experienced many challenges such as poor health care amenities. Moreover, the few health facilities were located far away from their households. Consequently, the Association recommends that ex-miners ought to be skilled in TB surveillance, referral, and support. This will develop the accessibility of services for ex-miners, their families, and the community; and enable the formation of correct data of TB patients in the country.⁴³⁶

In Swaziland, the ex-miners are bitter in the manner their VDP funds have been used by the Swazi government. Subsequently, the Swaziland government officials, together with representatives of SWAMMIWA have visited South Africa for discussions with the Departments of Labour and Health, Chamber of Mines, Compensation Fund, and other organizations managing social security for mineworkers. The meeting aimed to follow up on the delays in processing benefits for ex-mine workers and their families. The Swaziland labour department is presently discussing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and a Joint Bilateral Agreement on Employment and Labour with South Africa. Such projected MoU will comprise (amongst others) an Occupational Health and Workmen's Compensation Joint Bilateral Technical Cooperation Settlement. This agreement intends to facilitate easy access to social security benefits by migrants even after returning home and without the need to travel back to South Africa.⁴³⁷ According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security,

“the signing of the MOU on employment and labour and the three technical co-operation agreements on (i) labour migration, (ii) employment and employment benefits and (iii) workmen's compensation and occupational health benefits between South Africa and Swaziland will be a historic moment for many Swazis. It will go a long way in alleviating the difficulties in accessing and receiving employment and social benefits for migrant workers”.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁶ Mpedi, Information News, “Ex-miners-association leads- pilot- project- to- fight- hunger” p.27

⁴³⁷ *Swazi Observer*, 25 July 2019

⁴³⁸ Matsebula, “Countries to jointly tackle mineworkers' diseases”, p.19.

Conclusion

The chapter explored the impact of the VDP scheme on Swazi miners and presented the consequences it has on the ex-miners and their dependents. The VDP was used and how it benefited the migrants and the Swazi government. Challenges of VDP between the ex-miners in Swaziland have been investigated and experiences and opinions of ex-migrants and their dependencies were interrogated. The chapter also focuses on the nature of the squabbles between the Swazi government and the ex-miners over the unpaid VDP funds. This chapter has compared the situation in Swaziland with that in Lesotho and Mozambique other countries which depended much on migrant mining for the employment of its unskilled citizens. This was done to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the VDP on the Swazi migrants and ex-migrant.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The summary and conclusion section of the thesis extracts the key themes that permeate this thesis. It also provides recommendations for future studies.

The study explores the history of the patterns and trends in mine labour migration and its socio-economic effect on the lives of Swazi migrants and their families and their communities. It begins in 1920 which first saw Swazis joining the migrant system, and ends in 1995 a period when Swaziland had acquired her independence ending colonial rule. It further investigates how mine labour migration impacted Swazi rural transformation and their families. It also alludes to post-mine labour challenges in the context of health and benefits issues.

The study used a historical research design to trace the development of Swazi migrant labour from 1920 – 1995 and to investigate the experience of Swazi migrant and their dependents. The design enabled the researcher to collect, verify, and synthesise evidence to establish historical facts. A qualitative research method was used where the researcher sought to understand Swaziland's migrant labour history. The study was based mainly on archival sources of Swaziland and South Africa and official government documents, newspaper articles, and interviews. The life history of Swazi ex-migrants, their dependents, and officers from both TEBA and the Swazi labour offices was used in the study to complement secondary sources. The study was embedded in Marxist theories and interpretations of labour migration. It has also been underpinned by the social history theory, whose underlying philosophical assumption was that “the social” realm, the lived, daily experience of ordinary people, provided the route to historical truths. These theories ensured that the researcher obtains the lived experiences of Swazi migrants and their dependents. Moreover, oral interviews complemented with archival work provided the historical dynamics; and the fieldwork provided a more comprehensive understanding of the role that migration plays in the everyday lives, of the community.

There were limitations to this study informants at times could not remember information such as dates and years while others exaggerated since most of them were illiterate; some were reluctant as they thought the researcher was a journalist or campaigning since it was time for an election

when the fieldwork was conducted. Leaders of the ex-miners association were able to help to solve such challenges. The study involved extensive travel to libraries, and archives, and conducting interviews. Whilst this process was indeed an informative and educational experience, I did experience some financial challenges.

The following are some of the key trends that emerge from this study

The discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand in 1886 necessitated a great need for unskilled labour which was acquired from all the southern African territories. Different coercive means were employed such as taxation, land and alienation. This was followed by massive recruitment competition for unskilled labour.⁴³⁹ The Swazis were not indifferent to this wage labour phenomenon. The earliest chapters in this thesis, allude to the socio-economic condition in colonial Swaziland and the labour market. The thesis revealed the labour competition that existed in Swaziland during the colonial and post-colonial periods and the process of the recruitment process by different agencies. The findings revealed that Swazis were not passive victims, but they took advantage of the situation by taking advances from recruiters and chose the best employment since there was plenty of unskilled work. Others defrauded recruiters by taking advance money from many recruits and later deserted. This seriously affected the local European settler farmers as many Swazis opted for mine work than working on the local farms. There was intense competition between the South African mine recruiting agencies, European traders, and the local settler farmers. This period also witnessed the employment of child labour by settler farmers. The thesis reveals the different strategies employed by trader recruiters to enlist Swazis to join mine labour in the South African mines. It has therefore demonstrated how wage labour through colonial capitalism impacted the socio-economic livelihood of the early Swazi people and further presented the agency of the marginalised Swazis in the wake of the migrant labour phenomenon.

This study also shifts traditional narratives. It presents the socioeconomic condition of Swaziland after the Second World War which saw economic development established in high commission territories. The economic developments included the opening of mines, factories and plantations in colonial Swaziland resulting in competition for labour. This study has also revealed the recruitment process used by different agencies for Swazi labour. Propaganda was rife and even

⁴³⁹ Crush, *Struggle for Swazi Labour 1890-1920*, p. 130.

King Sobhuza II was invited by the NRC to encourage Swazis to join mine labour. Cash advances and payment of taxes were some of the strategies used by recruiters in the country.

The thesis has revealed that the recruitment methods for Swazi mine labourers were the same even in other countries which supply labour to the South African mines such as Lesotho, Mozambique, and Kenya. Recruitment practices were affected by the need for Swazis to join the Second World War. The war period transformed the labour situation in the country. Unskilled labour was scarce for European settler farmers as most men were enlisted for the war and others recruited for South African mines. Moreover, the study has alluded to the transformation of labour supply in Swaziland, as a result of the post-war development, massive local industries and factories were developing in the 1950s. The forestry industry began with the establishment of Swaziland Plantation, Peak Timber, Usuthu Forest, and sugar industry in Big Bend, Simunye and Matsapa industrial site, Mpaka and Maloma coal mines, and Havelock mine for asbestos at Bulembu. The new economic development transformed the recruitment exercise due to the new development in labour in Swaziland. There were high wages, better accommodations, high advances and monthly home visits offered by local industries thus attracting more local labour giving challenges to recruiters for South African mines. It has been revealed that local industries used local newspapers and the influence of chief Sobhuza II as a strategy to recruit labour such that there was a decline in recruitment for South African mines from Swaziland during the 1950s.⁴⁴⁰

This part of the study challenges the underdevelopment theory also known as the ‘dependency theory’ which views migrant labour as a driving force toward under developing rural communities of sending countries. In doing so it clearly depicts that migrant labour had some positive impact on the miners, their dependents and their communities at large rather than postulating that beneficiaries of migrant labour were the capitalist mine owners and their governments. This study has revealed how Swazi mine labour affected the rural economy. There was a transformation of the rural economy and the lives of the migrants’ families. It led to the development of the sending communities contrary to the traditional theories which view the migrant phenomenon as a catalyst for poverty and underdevelopment to the sending communities. This was revealed through interviews with former migrants in Swaziland and their

⁴⁴⁰ Booth, “Capitalism and Competition for Swazi Labour 1945-1960”, p. 60.

dependants, and the findings showed changes in the socio-economic lives of households, rural agricultural production, cattle investment, housing, and education of children in migrants' communities. The thesis revealed how migrant remittances were utilized in developing families economically and the rural economy. However, the study has also shown that even conflicts resulted in the households as a consequence of distribution and use of migrant earnings. Daughters in law quarrel with fathers in law over migrants' earnings, creating conflicts that took a long time to resolve. The study reveals that the discords in such families were perpetuated by customs and traditions, where women are perceived as subordinates to males. They were denied the right to receive and use their husband's earnings. At times, such conflicts led to marital breakdown, as women opted to leave home for the cities. Migrant labour led to the transformation of the migrant communities, for example, the Shiselweni region of the country, had grocery stores, bars, hammer mills, and butcheries owned by former migrant workers who used their remunerations to establish these different businesses. Some transport operators in the region of Shiselweni revealed that they bought their first cars using money from working in the mines which have developed into viable transport businesses. Migrants used their earning to build modern houses in their communities which also show their strong link to their rural households.⁴⁴¹ However, the thesis has also shown how certain entrepreneurship failed due to a lack of skills. Migrant labour in Swazi communities influenced cattle ownership in households.

Migrant labour brought the agency to females left behind by migrating men. This part of the study has clearly argued that women whose gender roles for many years experienced double exploitation, from colonial masters and chiefs and their patriarchal-influenced husbands, suddenly realize their potential. This was through elevation from gender roles of housewife and raising children into heads of household and production. The discussion on 'left behind women', and their families in this thesis alludes to this agency. It showed a different perspective to the common understanding that migration negatively impacts women; positive aspects were revealed as the position and status of women changed. Swazi women were able to empower themselves, and to some extent transformed traditional Swazi customs which limited women's roles to only managing their kitchens and looking after children. They provided for their families, entered wage labour markets, and at times were independent decision-makers.

Furthermore, the study shows that migrant labour did not undermine peasant agriculture, but instead complimented it. Swazi women would utilise the influx of remitted income from

⁴⁴¹ Simelane, "Labour Migration and Rural Transformation in Post-Colonial Swaziland", p.11

migrants which led to increased crop income and asset values in the form of land and livestock holdings. Women assumed new roles; they became the primary breadwinner and head of households. This led to a reverse of gender roles. Women took on the responsibility of cultivation, harvesting, and taking care of the household. This clearly shows the transformation of the rural communities whose customs and tradition were predominantly patriarchal. Thus, such changes created shifts in gender roles.

Another critical issue that emerged from this study is the impact of how migrant labour affected children. The absence of the head of the household, the father, had significant ramifications. Migration steered fathers away from their responsibility in guiding young males. The study has revealed that psychosocial problems are experienced by the children who are left behind by their migrating parents, despite being left with, relatives or grandparents, or mothers. The study has shown that the continued absence of fathers significantly affects the children left behind. This part of the study interrogates the ushering of a new democratic dispensation in South Africa in 1995 which resulted to new migrant labour policies enacted.⁴⁴² This suddenly promoted internalisation in the employment of mine work. Such government reforms marked a decline in recruitment of unskilled labour which was followed by massive retrenchment of Swazi miners.

This study has alluded to the post-migrancy challenges of migrants. The thesis has first revealed the leading causes of the retrenchment of Swazi migrants which include changing economies of the mines and new policies such as internalisation of mine labour by the South African government that led to the massive retrenchment of unskilled Swazi miners. This, therefore, created a new set of problems for the Swazi ex-miners such as integration in their communities and households. It had huge ramifications for ex-mine workers. Men who were previously breadwinners had difficulty adapting to the new conditions in the villages. The psychological impact of losing a job, led to mental and health issues, with some men emasculated in the process. The decline of mine labour migration in Swaziland increased the level of unemployment more especially for unskilled Swazis of the working age.

The lives of Swazi ex-miners and their dependents after retirement or retrenchment are also explored. It highlights the challenges they faced in post –the migrancy phase due to a lack of access to accrued service benefits and pensions through the VDP. The narrative focuses on the challenges of ex-miners and miners on issues of the VDP scheme. It reveals the painful

⁴⁴² Andrea Leliveld. “The effects of Restrictive South African Migrant Labour Policy on the Survival of Rural Households in Southern Africa, p.120

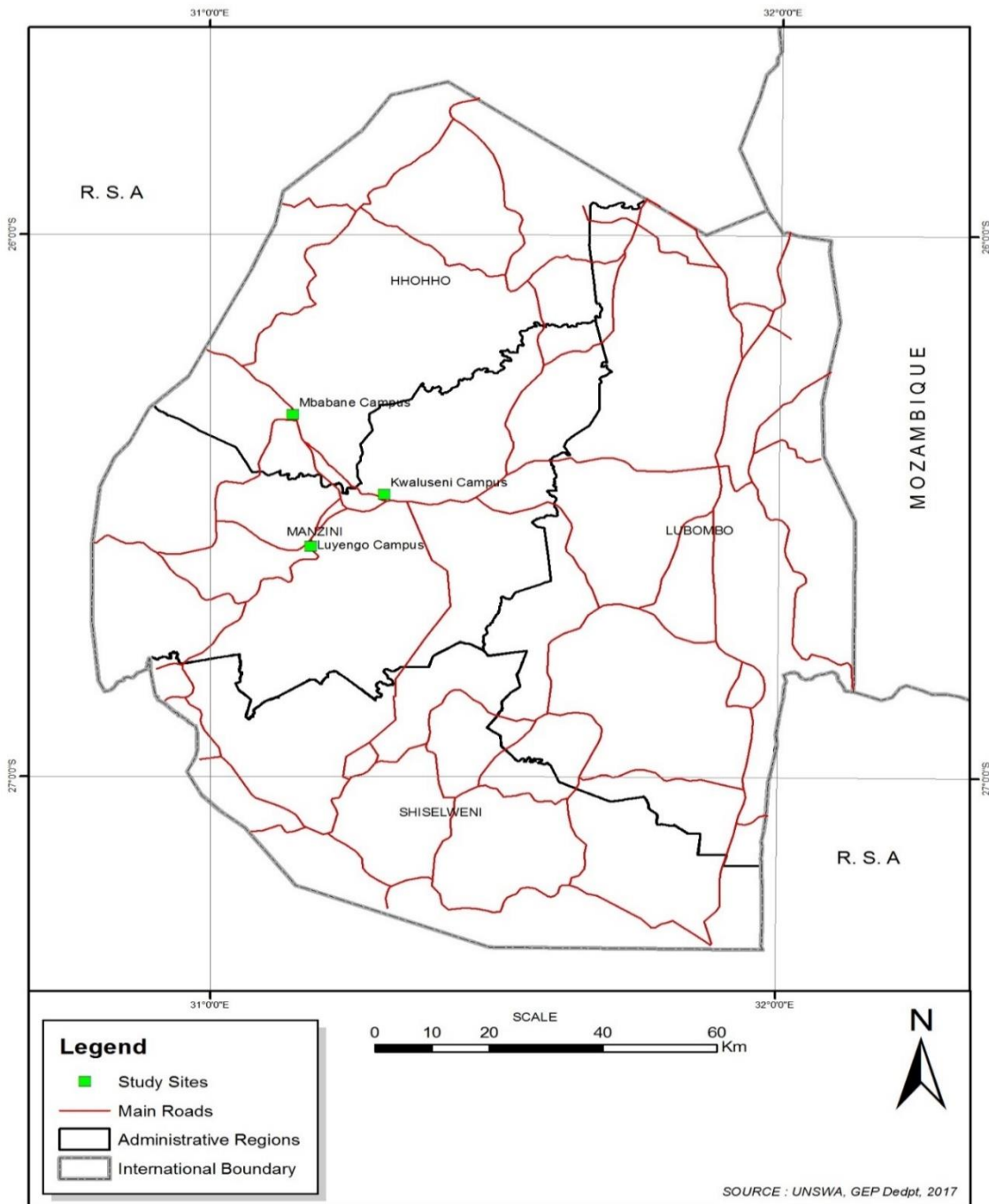
experiences of ex-migrants and their dependants over failing to access their VDP and other mine benefits. The bitterness and mistrust ex-miners have over TEBA and the local government, and how their local Association has tried to help the ex-migrant miners. VDP was meant to ensure that a certain percentage of migrant miner's wages was saved, and available to be used by the government for economic investments. It is also evident that many miners do not know how the scheme operated yet they are compelled to contribute to it. It is thus without a doubt that miners are aggrieved about the VDP scheme which does not benefit them. Moreover, the study has revealed how ex-miners and their dependents face challenges in accessing their VDP and other benefits. Some of the challenges they experienced in accessing their benefits were the lack of proper documentation, information deficit, and the fact that most former miners are illiterate to understand the procedures to follow when claiming their funds. As a result, the ex-miners fell victim to scams and bogus lawyers who exploit them. They are even exploited by the TEBA agency, which is supposed to assist ex-miners. It reveals not only the fraudulent practices within the system but that there were little efforts made to educate ex-miners about their rights post-migration.⁴⁴³

Recommendations for future studies

This thesis is well aware of the numerous gaps which remain in the fabric of this subject. It is quite clear, for example, that one of the main gaps in the history of Swazi migrant labour history is the lack of a detailed study of the impact Swazi male migration had on women in rural areas. Whilst s chapter 4 of the thesis touches on migrancy and its impact on women left behind, the main focus, however, is on male migration. A study of Swazi male migration and the autonomy of women left behind is an untapped research area. This thesis calls for more in-depth studies to be undertaken in the context of gender and migration within the African continent.

⁴⁴³ Mavuso Mandisa. "South African Man Linked to E5.7 million Ex-miner con", *Times of Swaziland*, 31 October 2019

APPENDIX 1: District Map of Swaziland



1

Source: University of Swaziland, Geography Department (2017), [https:// www.causehero.com](https://www.causehero.com), accessed 26 July 2019.

APPENDIX 2:

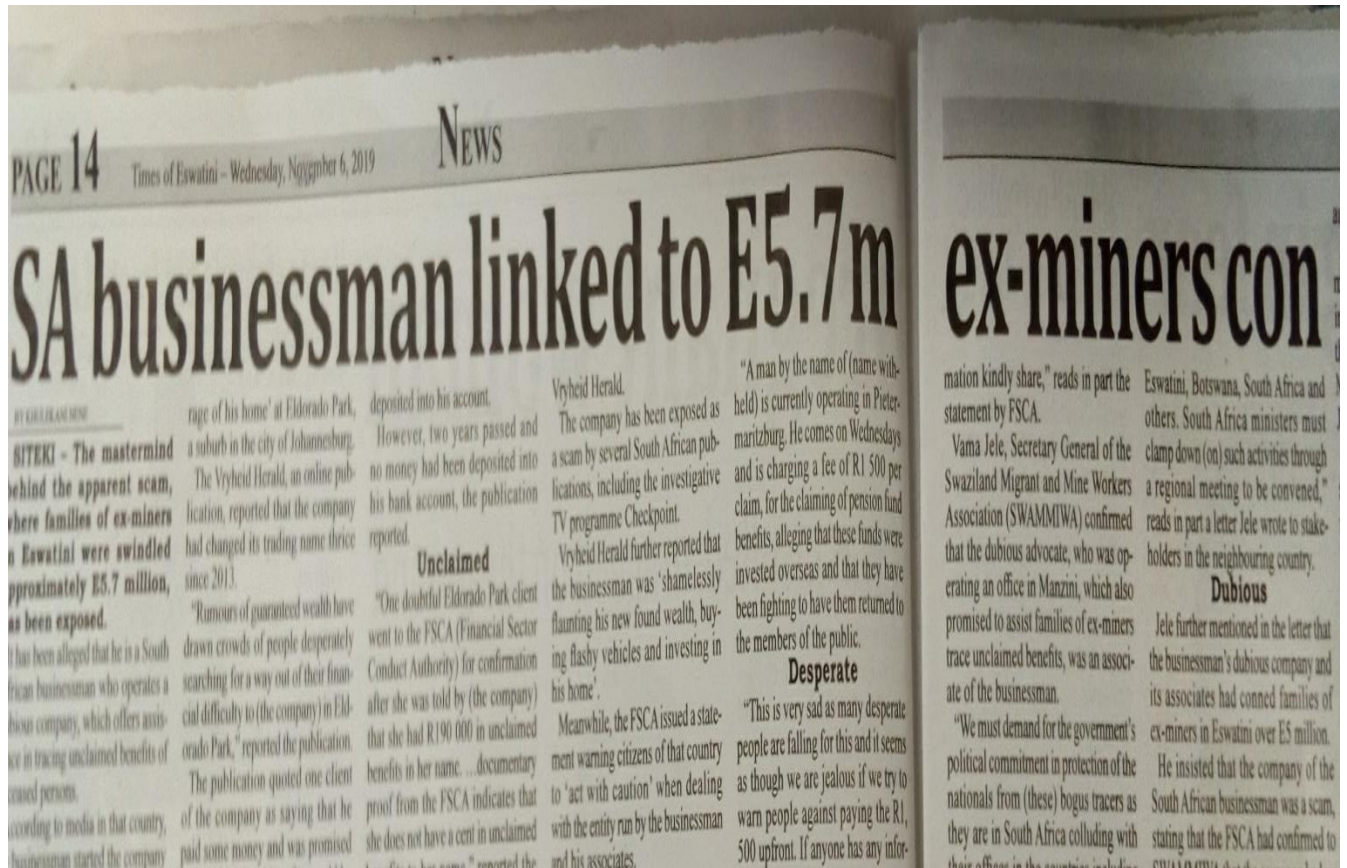
Miner catches wife with man, marriage nullified



Source: *Times of Eswatini Newspaper*, 20 December, 2019

APPENDIX: 3

South African man linked to E5.7m ex-miners con



Source: *Times of Swaziland*, 31 October, 2019

APPENDIX : 4



Gold mining using the New Hydraulic Drill by Black Miners in South African Gold Mines

Source: Tim Cohen “Is SA’s gold mining industry turning into Zimbabwe-lite?” www.daily-maverick.co.za/>article>2009_11-14. Accessed, 14 November, 2018

Appendix: 5



Source: Maise fields for the household of Fikelephi Dlundlu of Madulini north of Eswatini, 15 November 2018. (M. Matsenjwa Private Collection)

APPENDIX: 6



Source: Maize fields for Nomalanga Magagula of Mahamba Swaziland, 15 January 2019. (M. Matsenjwa Privet collection)

APPENDIX : 7



Source: Cattle were found in the kraal of Babe Zimvu Zwane Homestead in Mahamba on 14 October 2018. (M. Matsenjwa Private Collection)

MINE LABOUR RECRUITMENT
AN OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR A
SWAZI NATIONAL
TO JOIN THE NATAL COAL OWNERS'
LABOUR ASSOCIATION AS AN
OFFICE MANAGER

The Association, which is responsible for the recruitment of labour for South African coal mines, is about to appoint office managers in centres in Swaziland. If you have administrative ability, a knowledge of labour recruitment procedures and of the opportunities that exist for Black mine workers in the Republic, we are able to offer you an outstanding opportunity to build a career in a progressive, intensely interesting environment. The immediate benefits – attractive starting salaries and pension facilities – will appeal to men who have their sights set on a sound career.

IF YOU ARE SUCH A MAN, WRITE TO:—

Times of Swaziland newspaper Advertisement for Mine Labour Recruiter
Source: *Times of Swaziland*, 12 March, 1941

Appendix 9: Map of Swaziland



Source: Extracted from www.regionalmapofswaziland.co.sz accessed, 17 November, (2018).

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e. ORAL INTERVIEWS

ORAL SOURCES –INTERVIEWS (Names of interviewees who consented that their names can feature in this thesis). All interviews conducted by researcher

Dlamini Ndlavela

A former mine worker who is chairman of Ex-miners Association of Swaziland (SNEMA), from Nhlanguano in the Shiselweni region, worked at Dolfontein gold mines in South Africa, working as a Stoper. He worked from 1971-1985, 15 years of service before he was retrenched for participating in a strike action.

Interviewed in Manzini at the Office SNEMA on the, 23 October 2018.

Dlamini Vusumuzi

A former migrant worker of aged 48 years from Zindwendweni in Lavumisa. He worked in Western Deep Levels Mines as a Machine Operator for 7 years. Return home in 1990 after being diagnosed for Tuberculosis.

Interviewed at the TEBA office in Manzini on 12 October 2018.

Dlamini Abel

A Migrant mine worker of Sithobelweni aged 40 years, he is currently working in Mponeng gold Mines in South Africa as a Driller.

Interviewed at the office of TEBA in Manzini on the 12 October 2018.

Dlamini Jabhane

An ex-miner of 52 years living in Lavumisa who worked in West Rand Gold mines and Brankpan Gold Mines in South Africa for 15 years. He worked from 1979-1994. He first worked as a Stoper then a Driller. He was retrenched in 1994 because of age.

Interviewed on 11 October 2018 at CaretusManzini in a workshop for ex-mine workers by their organisation SNEMA (Swaziland National Ex-miners Association).

Dlamini Nomvula

Nomvula Dlamini was Interviewed at Gundvini , Manzini 30 September 2018. She is a widow of an ex-migrant worker. She cannot recall of the exactly name of the mine her husband worked in the mines. She recalls that he worked in Johannesburg for 25 years before he died of TB illnesses.

Dludlu Velamuva

An ex-miner of 56 years of Hluthi in Shiselweni. He was working at Randfontein gold mines. He was working as a Stoper and left in 1992 after 10 years of service. He left due to illness which he acquired while working on the mines. Interviewed at the TEBA offices in Manzini on the 14 of September 2018.

Dube Fono

An ex-Brigadier of *Umbutfo* Swaziland defense force a former chairman of the Election and Boundary Committee, of 87 years from Kudzeni in the Manzini region.

Interviewed at Lobamba on the 8 March, 2019. He has vast knowledge on Swazi history, his father was a migrant mine worker in the 1890s.

Jele Vama

Interviewed 15 August 2019 at the office of the migrant mine workers of Swaziland. An ex-miner and Chairman of the Swaziland migrant mine workers Association. He worked in Deelkraal Gold Mine in 1989 was transferred to Leeudoorn Gold Mine where he worked as a clerk for Medical Station until 1998.

Mabuza Zimvu

An ex-miner of 59 years, from Nhlambeni in Manzini. . He worked in Great Nologwa Gold Mine as Blaster, Driller and later a Machine boy. He worked for 26 years in the mine. He left in 1992 after being diagnosed for TB. Interviewed at Sibayeni Loage in Matsapha during a workshop by the Ministry of Labour and Social security, on 12 March 2019.

Malamlela Masilela

Interviewed at TEBA office, Manzini, on 9 March 2019. Masilela is a former migrant miner who worked for 14 years in South African mines. He worked mostly as a Stoper at Knights Deep Gold Mines. He was left in the South African mines in 1989. He is from Zindwendweni in Lavumisa.

Mavuso Mandlenkosi

Interviewed at TEBA office, Manzini, on 14 May 2019. Mavuso is an ex-mine worker of 63 years old, who worked in South African mines, started at the age 18 and worked for 33 years. . He left mine work in 1997. He worked at Van Ryn Mines, Brakpan Mines and West Deep Level Gold mines. He worked as a Driller until he stoped mine work because of age. He is from Mashobeni in the Shiselweni region.

Masuku Logwaza

Interviewed at TEBA office, Manzini, on 22 May 2019. Masuku is an ex-mine worker who is 66 years old, worked in the South African mines for 22 years and was retrenched in 1999. He was working at West Deep Levels Mines as a Winch Operator. He is from Nsubane in Lavumisa.

Make Dudu Dlamini

Interviewed at, Mankayane Eswatini on 24 September 2018 during the payment of the grants for the old aged by the Government of Eswatini. Her husband worked in the South African mines in Johannesburg. Name of mine she cannot recall because of age.

Make LahliweDladla, Wife of Swazi Migrant miner, Interviewed Mhlosheni Nhlango eSwatini, 23 December, 2018.

Malinga Solomon

Interviewed at Caretus office, Manzinion 11 October 2018 during a workshop of the ex-mine workers. . He is 63 years old, worked in the mines for 18 years. He worked as a Stoper then a Driller at Robison Deep Mines and Randfontein Gold Mines. He left mine work in 1997 because of illnesses. He is from Ngolowleni in the Shiselweni region of Swaziland.

Gogo Lubhaca Dlamini

Lubhaca Dlamini is an old woman of 70 from Mashobeni south under Chief Mgodzi Mdluli. She was interviewed 26 October 2018.

Mathunjwa Mkhethwa

Interviewed at his home at Sandleni in the Shiselweni region 2 November 2019. Mathunjwa worked at West Rand gold mines as a driller. He started work in 1972 and left in 1992 because of illness which he acquired while working in the mines.

Mngometule Bafana

Interviewed at his homestead at Mahlalani Area, Nhlanguano, on 2 November 2019. Mngometulu is an ex-migrant mine worker who worked in the South African gold mines for 11 years. He worked at Modderfontein Gold Mines as a Timber Boy and later a Machine Boy. He was retrenched in 1994 because of TB which he acquired on the mines.

Mgomotulu Msongelwa

Interviewed at TEBA office, Manzini, on 21 October 2019. Mngometulu from Hlathikhulu in the Shiselweni region. He is an ex-miner from EastDrifontein 057. He worked as a Stoper and later a Team Leader until he was repatriated because of age in 1988.

Mdluli Fikelephi

Interviewed at Madulini South of Swaziland (Nhlanguano), 15 November 2018. She is a wife of a former migrant mine worker. Her husband died of Illnesses after having worked 35 years in South African mines. .

Myeni Bafana

Myeni is 59 years old and was interviewed at his home in LavumisaNdabazwe on 21 October 2019. He is an ex-migrant miner who was working for the Rarteebesfontein Gold mine in July 1986 and was retrenched in 1997 after getting sick from Tuberculoses. He was working as Driller.

Sagila Maseko

Interviewed at TEBA office, Manzini, on 21October 2018. Myeni is an ex-mine worker from Ndzevane area. He was working at Roodepoort Gold Mineas a Machine Boy in South Africa. He worked there for 13 years and was retrenched in 1998. He is from Hluthi in the Shiselweni region.

Sbibanda Ceopas (Dr)

Interviewed at the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Mbabane, 18 November 2019. Dr Sibanda is the Occupational Health Specialist of the government of Swaziland. He is also Head of the Workmen's Compensation Unit. He deals much with the issues of ex-migrants miners welfare.

Sukati Dudu

Interviewed at Nhlanguano, 23 November, 2018. Her husband used to work in the South African mines in Roodepoort Gold Mines. He worked for 30 years before he was retrenched. He died working as security for the local school.

Nhlabatsi Joseph Mefika

Interviewed at his residential place LavumisaMatsanjeni, on 24 January 2019. He is a former migrant miner and is 61 years old. He worked at West Rand gold mine and Great Nologwa in 1979 as a Blaster until he was retrenched because of age in 1997. His father also worked in the South African gold mines.

Nkambule Bernard

Interviewed at Caretus office, Manzini, during a workshop of the ex-mine workers in Swaziland on 11 October 2019. Nkambule was a mine worker in Randfontein Gold Mines for 19 years. He worked as Timber Boy, Stoper, and then later was a Team Leader. He left mine work because of an accident he sustained while working on the mines in 1996. He is 67 years old from Mankayane.

Zwane Mavela

Interviewed at Sibayeni Lodge, Matsapa , 18 November 2019 during a workshop of ex-mine workers by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Zwane was a migrant mine worker, working in Knight Deep and Randfontein Gold Mines. He worked for 12 years and was retrenched in 1997. He is 52 years old from Zindendweni Area, Lavumisa in the Shiselweni region. His Grandfather and father were also a migrant miners..

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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Schedule for Miners and Ex-Miners

Personal information

Name of respondent.....

Age of respondent.....

Area of Residence

Name of your work station in South Africa.....

Number of years employed on the mine.....

1. When did you first work in the South African mines and which mine was it?

.....
.....

2. What motivated you to become a migrant miner than working in local employment in Swaziland?

.....
.....

3. How were you recruited to work in the South African mines?

.....
.....

4. Was your decision to migrate to South Africa, a positive move for your family and children back home? If yes explain how?

.....
.....

5. What was the response of your family members towards your decision to migrate and work in the South African Rand mines?

6. How has working as a migrant miner in South Africa benefited your family and your status in your community?

.....
.....

7. When comparing your salary as a migrant mine worker, with what you were earning in Swaziland would you say migration was a positive move?

.....
.....

8. Describe your experience as a Swazi migrant miner working in South African mines during your time?

a) How were the working conditions in the mines?

.....

b) The housing condition in the hostels as a Swazi migrant.

.....

c) Was there any conflict due to ethnic relations among miners? If yes tell me more about them.

.....

d) Were there any accidents and any forms of violence in the South African mines and Hostel? Can you share your experience about them, what you witnessed working and residing there.

e) Was compensation given to any accidents sustained due to working on the mines?

9. Do you know anything about the Voluntary Deferred Pay scheme of tax?

.....
.....

10. How much were you paying for Deferred Pay whiles working in the South African mines to the Swazi government?

.....
.....

11. Has this fund benefitted you or your family in anyway?

.....
.....

12. Are you still a migrant miner if not when did you stop your occupation as a migrant mine worker?

.....
.....

13 What influenced you to retire as a migrant, was it age or health issues? Please provide details.

.....
14. Many migrants more especially ex-migrants complain of occupational illnesses after mine labour. How has working as migrant miner impacted on your health condition?
.....
.....

15. Were you compensated fully when your employment as migrant miner was terminated?
.....
.....

16. What are the post-migrant challenges of a miner?
Are you currently employed?
.....

17. What form of employment are you involved in now that you are in Swaziland?
.....

18. Do you have any skills that you acquired from working as a migrant miner?
.....

19. How has the family and the community welcomed you as an ex-migrant miner.
.....

20. If you are still a migrant miner, are there transformations that you see that migrants contribute in your community and the country as a whole?
.....

INTERVIEW OUESTION 2

Interview Schedule for Swaziland Labour Officers

Personal
Information.....

Name
of Respondent.....

Age
of Respondent.....

Area
of Residence.....

Work
Position.....

1. How long have you been working as a Swazi labour officer under migrant labour department?
.....

2. How many migrants on record have migrated to South Africa from Swaziland which are registered in the labour statistics from as early as 1920-1968.
.....

3. Has there been a fluctuation of labour migrants to South Africa over the years? If so, why?
.....

4. What motived many male migrants to migrate to the South African mines on the period from 1920- 1968?
.....

5. Can you describe the socio-economic impact of labour migration to the South African mines on Swaziland?
.....
.....
.....

6. Are there economic repercussions on Swazi migrants? Eg. payment of tax? What instrument is used to collect the deferred pay from Swazi mines? How has it transform the country's financial and economic developments?

.....
.....

7. Has the Deferred pay helped the migrant miners upon their retirement or their members of the families?

.....
.....

8. In your view how has the Swaziland independence impacted the migrant labour flow? If yes explain how?

.....
.....

9. Is there state support from the Swazi government to ex-migrant workers?

.....
.....

INTERVIEW QUESTION 3

Interview Schedule for family members of migrant and Ex-migrant

Personal information

Name of respondent.....

Age of respondent.....

Area of Residence

Name of your members work station in South Africa.....

Years you have been at the mine.....

1. Which member of your family worked as a migrant labourer in South Africa?

.....
.....
.....

2. What motivated them to migrate to the South African mines instead of seeking employment in Swaziland?

.....
.....

3. As a family member was the decision to migrate a positive or negative one on the family?

.....
.....

4. What impact did migrant labour impact on the family in terms of:

Gender relations

Income

Remittances

Please give detail explanation.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

5. How has the migration of the family member impacted on the socio-economic status of the family?

.....
.....

6. How did family members communicate with migrant workers whilst in South Africa?

Were there frequent visits to Swaziland?

7 As a family do you receive any grant from Government or the mining company where your family member worked in the form of VDP scheme?

.....
.....

8 Do you have any link with the mining company where your spouse or next of keen worked in South Africa? If yes how is the relationship?

.....
.....

9 Did you receive any form of financial compensation for your relative who had worked in South African mines?

.....
.....
.....

10. What benefit did you get from TEBA since your relative worked in the mines?

.....
.....
.....



16 August 2018

Mr Mbongiseni B Matsenjwa 217079585
School of Social Sciences
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Matsenjwa

Reference number: HSS/0162/018D

Project title: A history of Migrant Labourers from Swaziland to South Africa 1920-1968.

Full Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Application

With regards to your response received 14 May 2018 to our letter of 19 April 2018, the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr S Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Professor Kaplana Hiralal
cc Academic Leader Research: Prof Maheshvari Naidu

Informed Consent Document

Dear Participant,

My name is...**Mbongiseni B. ...Matsenjwa(Student No: 217079585)**. I am a PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is: *A History of Migrant Labourers from Swaziland to South Africa 1920-1995*. The aim of the study is to explore the patterns and dynamics of labour migration and its relationship to multiple historical factors that unfold within each historical époque. It further examines the impact of Swaziland's labour migration to South Africa and its impact on the families of migrants and their society. I am interested interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter. Other than English local language (SiSwati) shall be used, and the form shall be translated into language understood by participant.

Please note that:

The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.

Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor will identity be disclosed in any form in the study.

The interview will take about (35minutes).

There cord as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisors. After a period of 5years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.

If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg

Email: Mbongiseni.Matsenjwa@yahoo.com [REDACTED].....

My supervisor is.....Professor ...Kalpana Hiralal who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Howard College Campus, Durban of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details:email...Hiralak@ukzn.ca.za.....Phone number:...0312607536.....

My co-supervisor is...N/A.....who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Howard College Campus/ Howard College Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact.....details...email..... Phonenumber:.....N/A.....

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za,Phonenumber+27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... *(full names of participant)* here by confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Social Sciences, College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Pietermaritzburg Campus,

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is ...Mbongiseni Matsenjwa..... I am a History PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, South Africa.

I am interested To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- The research aims at knowing the challenges of your community relating to resource scarcity, peoples' movement, and effects on peace.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZuluNatal, Howard College Campus, Durban. Email:Cell:

My supervisor is:

Professor Kalpana Hiralal, Department of History, Room 218, MTB Building, Howard College, Durban, UKZN. Email: hiralalk@ukzn.ac.za. [REDACTED].

(student to insert name of supervise, his/her address, email and office phone number)

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows:

You may also contact the Research Office, Westville Campus through:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION
Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

P. Mohun
HSSREC Research Office,
Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

**I..... (full names of participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the
research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.**

**I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so
desire.**

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

.....

FOUNDATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC JUSTICE-SWAZILAND

SNATCo-ops House

Office 410

Mancishane Street



P. O. BOX 6138

Manzini

Swaziland

Tel/Fax:268 25054009

26th October 2017

University of Kwazulu Natal

Private Bag 301

Scottsvill

South Africa

To whom it may concern

Re: Mbongiseni Matsenjwa

Dear Sir/Madam

This letter seeks to assure that Foundation for Socio- Economic Justice (FSEJ) will assist Mr. Mbongiseni on his research and any other information he may need while conducting his study.

The FSEJ with her partners; Swaziland National Ex- Mine workers Association and the Mineworkers Development Agency will be available to assist him with setting up meetings, visit the community and affiliate organizations and avail all data that has been collected to aid Mr Matsenjwa with his studies.

Yours Truly

Sebenzile Nxumalo

(FSEJ Chief Finance Officer)



"Sakha Sive Lesihlangane, lesinelwati, kuthula nalesinotsile"
"Creating a strong base for a strong nation"

SWAZILAND



GOVERNMENT

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To: Whom it may Concern

RE: Mr Mbongiseni Matsenjwa

This serves to confirm that the Labour Migration section in the Department of Labour will assist **Mr Matsenjwa** in giving him information and also to liaise with our stakeholders on his behalf.

Yours Sincerely



Stukie Motsa

FOR COMMISSIONER OF LABOUR