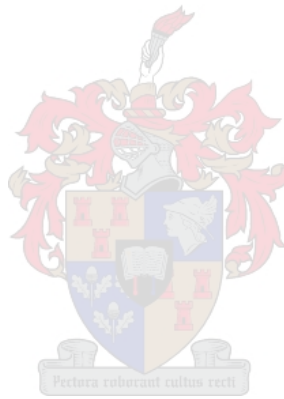


**Examining Experiences of Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs on State  
Repression in the Inner-city of Johannesburg, South Africa**

By

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*A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of master's in social Anthropology in  
the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University*

Supervisor: Dr. Efua Prah

December 2020

## **Declaration**

The production of this thesis is not a duplication of any one's work. It is my own original work aiding towards the completion of my master's degree in Social Anthropology.

Signature:

Date: 30 November 2020

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## **Dedication**

The opportunity to maneuver and fruitfully accomplish this study lies in the hands of Supernatural being. Amen!

I dedicate this thesis to my family - my late father, Diyason Matenga; my mother, Winnet Ndongeni; my siblings, Theophine Matenga, Abigail Matenga, and Grace Matenga; and, my daughter, Tanaka Matenga.

## ABSTRACT

Focusing on Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg, the study engages the ways in which the State responds and represses Zimbabweans and their enterprises in the inner-city. From data gathered I argue that State repression of migrant entrepreneurs suppresses migrants' opportunities to successful livelihoods under the false pretence of protecting the citizenry of South Africa. This is evident from the myriad ways in which State apparatuses (mainly the South African Police Service) use the legal system as a means to harass and victimise Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs because they operate without official or legal documents and the requisite registration of their businesses. This adds to the volatility of migrant entrepreneurs lives in South Africa where partial remedy is applied through various strategies they employ such as communicating dangerous hotspots via coded messages amongst themselves, bribing the metro police, developing rapport with the metro police and using fake permits to navigate the precariousness of living in illegality. A qualitative design methodology was undertaken using a snowball sampling procedure to identify participants. Ten (10) telephonic interviews of two 2 hours in duration were conducted with seven (7) men and three (3) women. Secondary data was collected through newspaper articles. The theoretical analysis uses a Marxist-Leninist conception of the State which argues that the State acts as an effective structure of repression that enables the ruling class to exercise dominance over the livelihoods of some of the most vulnerable inhabitants in South Africa – documented and undocumented Zimbabwean migrants .

**Keywords:** Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneur; Documented and Undocumented Zimbabwean Migrants; State repression.

## OPSOMMING

Die studie fokus op Zimbabwiese gedokumenteerte en ongedokumenteerte migrerende entrepreneurs in Johannesburg en handel oor die maniere waarop die staat Zimbabwiërs en hul ondernemings in die middestad reageer en onderdruk. Uit die versamelde gegewens voer ek aan dat staatsonderdrukking van migrerende entrepreneurs migrante se geleenthede tot suksesvolle lewensonderhoud onderdruk, onder die valse voorwendsel om die burgers van Suid-Afrika te beskerm. Dit blyk uit die magdom maniere waarop staatsapparate (hoofsaaklik die Suid-Afrikaanse polisie) die regstelsel gebruik as 'n manier om Zimbabwiese migrerende entrepreneurs te teister en te viktimiseer omdat hulle sonder amptelike of regsdokumente en die nodige registrasie van hul ondernemings werk. Dit dra by tot die wisselvalligheid van migrante-ondernemers wat in Suid-Afrika woon, waar gedeeltelike hulpmiddels toegepas word deur middel van verskillende strategieë wat hulle gebruik, soos om gevaarlike brandpunte via gekodeerde boodskappe onderling te kommunikeer, om die metropolisie om te koop, om 'n verhouding met die metropolisie te ontwikkel en om vals permitte te gebruik om te navigeer. die onsekerheid om in onwettigheid te leef. 'N Kwalitatiewe ontwerpmetodiek is onderneem met behulp van 'n sneeubalproefnemingsprosedure om deelnemers te identifiseer. Tien (10) telefoniese onderhoude van twee uur duur met sewe (7) mans en drie (3) vroue. Sekondêre data is deur koerantartikels versamel. Die teoretiese ontleding maak gebruik van 'n marxisties-leninistiese opvatting van die staat wat beweer dat die staat optree as 'n effektiewe struktuur van onderdrukking wat die regerende klas in staat stel om oorheersing uit te oefen oor die lewensbestaan van sommige van die kwesbaarste inwoners in Suid-Afrika - gedokumenteerte en ongedokumenteerte Zimbabwiër. migrante.

**Trefwoorde:** Zimbabwiese migrerende entrepreneur; Gedokumenteerte en ongedokumenteerte Zimbabwiese migrante; Staatsonderdrukking.

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I also appreciate participants who provided information which aided to the completion of this research. Thank you for your time and sharing of interesting life stories. I say to you, Aluta continua! Continue working hard as God shall answer your prayers one day. For those who discriminate you, don't fight back, preach the word of togetherness and civilisation. We will rise, stronger, and united, this is our time - our chance to get back to

the best of who we are (Ubuntu). Lead by example with dignity and integrity that will peacefully build Africa as a continent. May God bless you!

## List of Acronyms

ACMS	African Centre for Migration and Society
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CBO	Community Based Organisation
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IG	Inclusive Government
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organisation on Migration
MDC – A	Movement for Democratic Change - Alliance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIBDS	National Informal Business Development Strategy
NIBUS	National Informal Business Upliftment Strategy
NLSC	Native Labour Supply Commission
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
RBZ	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
RNLB	Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau



SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAMP	Southern African Migration Programme
SAPS	South African Police Services
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SME	Small to Medium Enterprise
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee
UN	United Nations
WNLA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association
ZANU (PF)	Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front
ZDP	Zimbabwe Documentation Programme

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE STUDY

### 1.1. Introduction

Chihera is a 34-year-old woman and a mother of two children who failed to cope with the economic crisis affecting Zimbabwe. She was raised by her parents in relative poverty in Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. Being born to poor and unemployed parents, Chihera encountered tremendous economic hardships including poverty, hunger, unemployment and sky-rocketing inflation hitting Zimbabwe. She tried hard to search for a living in Harare, but to no avail following the economic crisis affecting the country. After the completion of her high school studies in 2008 she had hoped to become a lawyer but failed to fulfil her dreams since her parents could not send her to University. Five years of unemployment, she was left with no choice but to leave her children with her natal family and migrated to South Africa where she thought she could gain financial security to look after her family. She stayed in the Johannesburg Central Business District (CBD). As she had no work permit, she was given fourteen days entry visa by South African immigration officers at the Beitbridge border post. The days provided by the immigration officers were not enough for her to seek employment in South Africa as she wished.

While in Johannesburg, Chihera spent several months in search for employment, but to no avail as employers in the formal sector are averse to employing undocumented migrants. After several months without having a stable source of income for her upkeep and remitting back home, Chihera decided to start and run a small business from the little she had earned as a domestic worker. She started operating a canteen in the inner-city of Johannesburg. From her entrepreneurial endeavours, Chihera is sustaining a life and the little excess she remits home. Despite sustaining a living, Chihera has been subject to harassment, repression and detention at the hands of the South African metro police as she is living in South Africa without the requisite documents. Much of the hostility she has experienced has specifically targeted undocumented migrant entrepreneurs, seen to be operating illegal or unregularised businesses with the Department of Trade Industry and the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). In this context, increasingly restrictive State laws play a significant role in governing migrant entrepreneurs.

An innovative woman, Chihera improvised adaptation strategies such as bribing the metro police, developing rapport with the metro police and using fake permits that enables her to continue sustaining her livelihood in the inner-city of Johannesburg. Although Chihera has no valid documents, she is managing to her upkeep as well as sending remittances.

Chihera's situation is not unique amongst Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. Her story is a symbol of the experiences of many other Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. My study focuses on the lived experiences of Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. It also examines various adaptive and innovative strategies and improvisations to circumvent the challenge of State repression. Although Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs contribute to the mainstream economy, migration policies have continued to exclude foreigners in South Africa (Lefko-Everett 2007; Misago, 2019).

This study is motivated by current research on repressive State-sanctioned tactics and its effects on the experiences of Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs. Much of what has been researched has been about the vulnerability of migrants to xenophobic<sup>1</sup> attacks, inequality, discrimination and persecutions from State officials whenever they do not document with them (Vearey et al., 2017). Hence, in this study, I wish to reiterate these arguments in efforts to provide further evidence that will add to our understanding of how State apparatuses are affecting the lives of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. This provides further empirical data for those fighting for migrant entrepreneurs' rights and will hopefully be useful in policy formulation. Central to the thesis is my critique of the notion of State as a protective structure that purports to herald the virtues of democratic governance. Much the scholarly focus has been on xenophobic attacks to migrants and the subsequent vulnerability within South Africa's borders. Thus, what is of merit in this study is its examination of the different

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<sup>1</sup> Xenophobia is referring to any acts of collective violence (by local communities, groups or crowds) targeted at foreign nationals or "outsiders" because of their being foreign or strangers (see Misago, 2019: 1).

tactics Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs employ in the face of State repression. By undocumented migrant entrepreneurs, I refer to those who do not have valid papers to authenticate their stay or their business in South Africa. Under examination is the way that the State uses its power to control the movement of people within boundaries of South Africa. In focusing on these aspects of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' experiences, I engage Zimbabwean nationals in the inner-city of Johannesburg to understand their relationship as foreigners and entrepreneurs with the State and, argue that repression, suppression and harassments on Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs is an inhuman practice by the State which arguably has a duty of care for all its inhabitants.

For the purposes of this study, the State is described in its regulatory terms as a system of government that uses laws and coercive power to govern and maintain order in a defined territory (Anifowose, 1999). To clearly critique the State practices on Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs, it is important to define the State in five attributes, namely;

“a public institution separated from the private activities of society; the existence of sovereignty in unitary form; the application of laws to all who live in a particular society; the recruitment of personnel according to bureaucratic as opposed to patrimonial criteria; and the capacity to extract revenue (tax) from a subject population” (Dunleavy and O’Leary in Obo and Coker, 2014: 528).

While taking a Marxist point of view, the State is understood primarily an apparatus used by the class of wealthy people for the suppression and domination of the “have-nots”, and it came into being only at a particular stage in the historical development of human society (Obo and Coker, 2014: 531). The State is further understood to be operationalised by various arms - the court, police, prisons and the army who intervene directly as a supplementary repressive force when the police are ‘outrun by events’ (ibid.). Above this ensemble sits the head of State, the government and its administration (Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 90). The responsibility of the State is to govern and maintain order within a set nation’s borders and so borrowing from Ngandwe’s definition (2013: 428), the State has more “sovereign responsibilities towards its citizens and these responsibilities are, inter alia, nation building, to protect and maintain borders, to confer nationality and to

determine the criteria for such conferment, to admit and expel foreigners, to combat human trafficking, to create jobs and to safeguard national security.” These modes of control and articulation are therefore seen as preserving order, making territories productive and controlling the movement of citizens in and out of the country (ibid.).

Thus, my research question centres on how the State treats, controls and manages Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. I explore questions that seek to understand how migrant entrepreneurs perceive the functions of the State in the inner-city of Johannesburg and also look into the different coping strategies employed by these migrants to manage with the challenges posed by State regulations on their stay and businesses in Johannesburg as well as exploring the effectiveness of these coping strategies in ameliorating the challenges posed by the State regulations.

## 1.2. Conceptual Framework: Marxist-Leninist Theory of the State

In this study, I adopt a Marxist-Leninist theory of the State, which views the State as a machine of repression used to govern societies (Sharma and Gupta, 2006). The Marxist theory of the State is used to critique the State practices on Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. The theory is embedded in the context of the State as a machine of repression which enables the ruling class to ensure dominance over lower-waged subjects. State responses in this study are repressive in nature as State authorities such as the metro police control the movement and stay of migrants and the regulation of their enterprises in Johannesburg (Chabal, 2009). The gradual burden of State laws which prohibit migrants from staying in South Africa without documents and operating their businesses without due registration has affected the livelihoods of those Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs who operate without proper documents. Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs thus suffer because of negligence of the State, specifically, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) has failed to implement a



migrant documentation policy on the ground that would allow migrants to document themselves and register their entrepreneurial activities to operate freely in South Africa.

Moreover, the Marxist-Leninist model helps to capture the cycle of life and vulnerability of an individual Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneur to State repression from their journey into South Africa to their experiences as entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

As the Marxist-Leninist theory explains, State apparatuses can be equated to the arms of the State such as the metro police, the DHA and the military which govern and control the movement of people including migrants on a daily basis. The regulatory legal obligation of the State apparatuses including the courts, police and prisons which intervenes as directly as a supplementary force is explained in the theory of the State as an idea of repressing vulnerable groups to ensure domination of the ruling class and the owners of the land (Obo and Coker, 2014). Being a perennial feature in the Post-apartheid era, the State reaction and actions directly affect migrant entrepreneurs lives as they end up arrested and deported back to their countries (Crush et al., 2015). Indeed, since 1994, thousands of migrants have been detained, harassed and deported back to their countries because of their status as foreigners (Misago, 2019). Patrick Chabal describes such institutionalised actions by the State on migrants as a calculated violence of neglect (Chekero and Ross, 2018). Such actions allude to xenophobia that Crush and Tawodzera (2014) describe in terms of the negative attitudes towards migrants, based on their identity as foreigners.

Furthermore, the theory of the State is illuminating to the study because it also grapples on the issue of resistance by the masses. In this, Marx had a conception of the fall of the State owing to the formidable force of unity by the masses (Marx and Engel, 1964). Marx urged vulnerable groups to unite assuring that they have nothing to lose except their chains - and, as I show, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs—exercise agency bribing the metro police, using fake permits to navigate the precariousness of living in illegality and communicating dangerous hotspots via coded messages amongst themselves as forms of resistance to circumnavigate State repression. This concurs with Scott's assertion, "Resistance is a subtle form of contesting suppression by making use of prescribed roles and language to resist the abuse of power – including things like 'rumour,

gossip, disguises, linguistic tricks, euphemisms,..., ritual gestures, anonymity” (Scott, 1987:137). Vulnerable people use these strategies to resist repression without directly confronting the State or the elites for safety reasons and to continue surviving (ibid.). While acknowledging that the Marxist theory of the State is extremely broad, I rely heavily on the concepts of 'repressive apparatus', resistance and the fall of the State. The fall of the State is only viewed in terms of its ability to yield to the resistance of migrant entrepreneurs. The Marxist-Leninist lens used to make sense of the conceptualisation of the State has its finger on the essential thrust of examining migrant experiences on State repression and responses of the State in regulating both documented and undocumented Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. Correspondingly, I intend to offer new insights concerning the usefulness of the techniques of adjustment employed by Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs basing on the Marxian vision of the fall of the State owing to the collective actions of resistance by the masses. This objective is motivated by the need to complement existing literature which are tilted towards challenges confronting migrants negating the critical agentic role of migrant entrepreneurs in dealing with their daily conundrum. This study is of significant standing in academic literature because it is multidimensional, crosscutting a gamut of socioeconomic issues concerning Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs. Thus, this study places more lenses on the Marxian notions of State repression and mass resistance, fields which have not been sufficiently articulated with regards to migrant entrepreneurs.

### 1.3. Statement of the Problem

The point of departure of this study focusses on the repression inflicted on Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs living in Johannesburg by the State as a behavioural manifestation of discriminatory attitudes towards foreigners. Such attitudes exacerbate migrant entrepreneur's vulnerability as they suffer miserably at the hands of the State.

Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' arrival and stay in Johannesburg was and is still typified by varying degrees of documentation as most of them fail to account for the longevity of their stay and more importantly the purpose of their stay. Questions of migrant status inform regulating officials' reaction to Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs through concerns of legality of their businesses. Furthermore, the geographic positioning of these places of business (usually in areas with high density economic transactive activity accompanied with high crime rates) contribute to the reaction of the State to both documented and undocumented as highlighted in the study. Consequently, the inner-city of Johannesburg has become a running battlefield where State officials repress migrant entrepreneurs. It is therefore apparent that the plight of Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrants engaging in various entrepreneurship activities in Johannesburg is a cause for concern, judging from the harassment as well as social exclusion conspicuously prevalent in the inner-city (Hungwe, 2013). In her study on how Zimbabwean migrants survive social exclusion, Chipso Hungwe (2013) highlighted the provocation that government officials such as the police, immigration officers, education officials and health workers are xenophobic and discriminatory to migrants in South Africa. Similarly, in my study, what is revealed is that some government departments in South Africa are discriminatory in terms of the provision of citizenship to migrants (Mbembe, 2017).

Moreover, during their entrance at the border, migrants are given not more than twenty-one days to stay in South Africa which limits their aspirational endeavours as they want to stay long in search for better livelihood options and employment opportunities in South Africa (Macheka, 2018). Notwithstanding the fundamental role of regulating the stay of foreigners on the side of the South African government, it should be noted that a number of migrants stay undocumented in South Africa because they face challenges in accessing documents "such as the renewal of asylum, permits or visa extensions, and as a result of South Africa's restrictive Immigration Act, which makes it difficult for lower-skilled workers to regularise their stay" (Vearey et al., 2017: 90). Consequently, undocumented migrants are perceived as outsiders who should be deported back to their countries (Vearey et al., 2017).

#### 1.4. Objectives of the Study

The broader research objective of the study is to explore experiences of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs on State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg. This is achieved by considering the context of State responses that Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs encounter and their subsequent strategies they develop to negotiate space and navigate State repression. I begin by focusing on Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' journey from Zimbabwe to South Africa against the backdrop of economic crisis associated with poverty and high unemployment rate in Zimbabwe and how they started their lives as entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. I then analyses State responses on Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs specifically looking at how State responses impact the livelihoods of migrant entrepreneurs. Moreover, the study extends its objective by examining the effectiveness of various adaptive strategies improvised by Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs to cope with their challenges and exclusion from the economic mainstream in Johannesburg. Finally, the study interrogates Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' perceptions on their experiences on State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

#### 1.5. Main Research Questions

- I. What are the experiences of Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs on State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg?

##### 1.5.1. Sub Research Questions

- I. How does the State respond to both Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg?

- II. What are the implications of State repression to Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg?
- III. How effective are coping strategies deployed by Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs on the challenges posed by State regulations on their stay and enterprises in the inner-city of Johannesburg?
- IV. How do Zimbabwean documented, and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs perceive the functions of the State in the inner-city of Johannesburg?

## 1.6. The Relevance of the Study

Studies on migration in South Africa have focused on xenophobic attacks on migrants, economic contribution of migrant entrepreneurs; access to social amenities such as health, housing and education of migrants; mobilisation as a political demise to xenophobic attacks (see Kahn et al. 2003; Crush et al., 2015; Misago, 2019). These include but are not limited to the work of Mbembe (2017) who argues that the suffering of migrants can be explained as violence that is backed by the national policies that govern them. Marieke van Houte (2014) characterises migrants as people who contribute to development and peacebuilding when they return to their countries, hence these people need positive support systems from the host country. Researchers into the lives of migrant entrepreneurial ventures explore the gendered aspects of migration, such as the study completed by Dodson and Northcote (undated). Others like Moyo (2017: iii) argue that, ‘migrants deploy mobility as tactical resource’ whilst Crush et al. (2015: 18) claim that “the policy lens must be re-directed away from xenophobia per se to produce spaces of integration where locals and migrant entrepreneurs can interact and coexist in more meaningful ways.” Additionally, Misago (2019) argues that political mobilisation is the factor behind xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Their studies thus tend to ignore fundamental aspects of the ways in which the impacts of State repression create innovative ways to circumvent these hardships. Therefore, this study seeks to further understand State responses such as harassments, victimisation and repression on

migrant entrepreneurs in the city of Johannesburg. Additionally, what is hoped for in this study, is to offer a critique of State repression using a Marxist-Leninist lens.

Moreover, the study identifies the gaps in the post-apartheid national informed policy frameworks which were found exclusionary and inadequate in nature, for instance, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the Immigration Act 13 of 2002 that focuses on protecting migrants. Interestingly, South Africa is loath to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of all Migrant Workers which advocates for the protection of migrants' rights. The study also adds to anthropological literature in that it manages to recognise how Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs deploy fake permits through religious and kinship ties based on consanguinity to negotiate space and to sustain their livelihoods in South Africa. The narratives explored in this study can inspire further study from academics and international and national organisations interested in understanding the realities of migration in sub-Saharan Africa.

### 1.7. Locating the Study

Geographically, the study examines Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg as a study area because the neighborhood has become the most visited destination for Zimbabweans. Like any other neighborhoods such as Hillbrow, Berea and Yeoville, the inner-city of Johannesburg has become the focal point of Zimbabwean and Nigerian migrants compared to migrants from Malawi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Cameroon (Siziba and Hill, 2018). It is where several cross-border bus terminus stations namely Park Station Bus Station, Powerhouse Bus Station and Chigubu Bus Station are situated. Through my research I discovered that these bus stations are populated by State officials who manage the movement of migrants in South Africa thus exposing undocumented migrants to police arrests and detention.

As I constructed my field, Johannesburg is a city framed for financial and employment opportunities as opposed to any other Cities in South Africa. Siziba and Hill (2018: 121-

122) note that “together with the City of Tshwane (Pretoria), these metros constitute the urban heartland of Gauteng - South Africa’s most industrialised province and the economic hub of southern Africa.” Johannesburg “has a long history of in-migration from surrounding regions and neighbouring states notably Mozambique and Zimbabwe” (ibid.). Moreover, migrants prefer to stay in Johannesburg because of its proximity to employment and it offers more business and employment opportunities (Hungwe, 2013). In concurrence, Charman and Petersen in Crush et al. (2015: 79) argue that, Johannesburg is “South African’s economic heartland and ...the primary destination for “transit migrants,” some of whom travel to the region to conduct business, including the export trade into the region.” Moyo (2017) refers Johannesburg as a city of migrants. In addition, the city of Johannesburg is transitional, strategic and linked to both global and regional networks “as well as connected to migrant origin communities” (ibid.: 5).

The city of Johannesburg is also central and closer to home for Zimbabwean migrants hence the selection of the city as a case study in this research. To this end, this study targeted Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs operating in the inner-city of Johannesburg because inner-cities or subplaces “...are the smallest named territories in South African census geography” (Siziba, 2013: 124). Therefore, a close inquiry of the inner-city surrounded by cross border bus terminuses that travel to and from Zimbabwe specifically bridges the assumption about migrant entrepreneurs’ experiences and offers a more analytical nuance depiction of the relationship between the State and Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs.

#### 1.8. Methodology: Navigating Field Work Politics

Anthropologist use qualitative methodologies to understand different cultures and life-worlds of diverse societies (The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality [AHRQ], 2013). Since the study aims to understand the experiences of a vulnerable group of migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa, qualitative research is the most appropriate design

for identifying, interpreting authenticity and analysing experiences of a group construct (ibid.). In social sciences, the evidence gathered is “analysed, interpreted, reinterpreted and debated” (Schmidt, 2007: 96–97). While admitting the methodological limitations such as time-consuming and ethical issues, a qualitative methodology is a better-equipped instrument to establish migrant entrepreneurs’ experiences and their perceptions on their regulation during their stay in South Africa.

AHRQ (2013: 1) argues that, “the hallmark of anthropology is the exploration of the complexity and nuances of human interactivity and culture.” In the process of preparing to uncover the lived experiences of Zimbabwean economic migrants in the inner-city of Johannesburg, the world witnessed the coronavirus pandemic, which has unlevelled normative social behaviour. The crisis that results from the coronavirus has been devastating on the life worlds of many people around the globe. The crisis in carrying-out this research is summarised in Pillow (2003: 175) what he calls the “politics of the gaze” in anthropological enquiries. In fact, lockdowns implemented by the South African government made it difficult to enter the field and to meet participants and to produce the knowledge. As a result, academic institutions in general and specifically Stellenbosch University raised questions on whether ethnographic research inquiries including face-to-face interviews, participant interviews and focus group discussions should be suspended or not. This resulted in a deferral of all research programmes that involved human interaction. I then reflected on several questions about how to produce new scientific knowledge on economic migrants in the field of anthropology without having direct participant contact and interaction. I questioned how would I gain access to the social and economic world of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs to understand their life worlds on State repression in Johannesburg? Additionally, I questioned which online methodologies would be suitable to produce insightful knowledge? How and what ethical considerations should I deliberate to protect participants privacy and anonymity considering the transition to gathering data virtually?

I argue that examining migrant entrepreneurs’ experiences on State repression requires qualitative research instruments to identify the underlying issues on the regulation and managing migrant entrepreneurs. Through data collection process, I was principally



guided by methodological literature provided by Parahoo (1997) who notes that a qualitative research paradigm allows the researcher to identify the best sight and time to gather information about a particular group; Schmidt (2007), Shuttleworth (2008), Rubin and Rubin (2005) and Drabble et al. (2016) who argue that the generation of authentic data can only be gathered through qualifiable research methodologies which allow researchers to describe and analyse the knowledge provided. I used their knowledge to essentially contextualise my work, to navigate the politics of the field and to provide new knowledge concerning migration.

#### 1.8.1. Qualitative Research Design

The study found a qualitative methodological approach suitable to examine the experiences of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs on State repression in Johannesburg. Parahoo (1997:142) describes a qualitative research design as “a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analysed.” Moreover, this approach was useful because it involves merging questions and procedures with thematically led data analysis (Creswell, 2007). In addition, the qualitative research approach is not entirely contingent upon sample size compared to quantitative methods; a case study, for example, can generate meaningful results with a small sample group (Shuttleworth, 2008). Furthermore, Creswell (2013) argues that research areas that are sensitive and difficult in nature, requires a qualitative research design. Therefore, in this study, I followed a qualitative research design which is relevant in studies that depict cultural traits, politics of belonging and surviving and relationships of different and social groups in a society (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002). This research design allowed me to employ tools such as telephonic interviews where Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs narrated their stories on State reaction in their businesses in South Africa. This study was not about quantifying knowledge provided by participants, but rather was about unearthing Zimbabwean economic migrants’ perceptions, challenges, coping strategies and treatment they receive from State apparatuses in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

The qualitative process allowed me to explore authenticity through in-depth telephonic interviews, where I explored the “whys and how’s” of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs, “behaviour, expression” and perceptions on State reaction on their stay and economic activities in South Africa (AHRQ, 2013: 1). As an anthropologist, I spoke to Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs who have changeable relationships with the State and theorise their experiences in a unique way. A two months fieldwork that combined ethnographic data collection techniques including ten (10) telephonic interviews and textual analysis (secondary sources) was developed to theorise a holistic and appropriate view on the phenomena of the State reaction to migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. Unlike providing a hypothesis test and quantified knowledge, the method provided a rich, authentic and holistic insight of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs experiences and opinions in Johannesburg.

## 1.8.2. Specific Data Gathering Techniques

### 1.8.2.1. In-depth telephonic Interviews

Given the nature of our current coronavirus pandemic, where physical face-to-face interviews are risky, I completed a thorough exploration of the literature in anthropological methodologies that do not require face-to-face interviews. I selectively engaged literature from Drabble et al. (2016) and Rubin and Rubin (2005) trying to figure out the best suitable research instruments which avoids human interaction. These readings focused on anthropological methodologies which included ethnography in the form of participant observation, face-to-face interviews, telephonic interviews, case study and focus group discussions. After weighing options I employed in-depth telephonic interviews, which are a more flexible version of the structured interview because they allow depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). I conducted ten telephonic interviews which were balanced in terms of gender disparities (i.e. I interviewed 3 women and 7 men). In anthropology studies, interviews are widely recognised because they point

to logistical conveniences and other important advantages of in-depth telephone interviews, “including enhanced access to geographically dispersed interviewees, reduced costs, increased interviewer safety, and greater flexibility for scheduling” (Drabble et al., 2016: 118). Convenience was achieved because, Anthropological studies emphasize the;

“methodological strengths of conducting qualitative interviews by telephone, such as perceived anonymity, increased privacy for respondents, and reduced distraction (for interviewees) or self-consciousness (for interviewers) when interviewers take notes during interviews” (Drabble et al., 2016: 118).

For instance, privacy is one of the most important advantage of using telephonic interviews as alternative to interviewing undocumented migrants who stay illegally in South Africa. Like any other interviews, telephonic interviews include open-ended questions which aim to capture experiences of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in the eyes of the State apparatuses which regulate the stay of foreigners in South Africa.

As in this study, in-depth telephonic interviews were valuable options for qualitative research design (Drabble et al., 2016), they allowed “...participants to tell their stories, uninterrupted, in a detailed and coherent manner, without worrying about what their peers may think (as in a focus group)” (AHRQ, 2013: 2). For this study, I, therefore, chose to use this type of interviews as they allowed me to cover various issues and authenticity concerning the lifeworld's and the relationship between Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs and the State. Adhering to the current devastating period of the coronavirus, telephone interviews helped me to lessen human contact, thus protecting me and participants for the potential harm of infection.

I used a checklist (interview guide) to cover all research questions. A checklist allowed for in-depth probing while permitting myself to keep the interview within the parameters traced out by the aim of the study (Berg, 2007). An interview guide is the quickest method of collecting primary data and questions can be repeated clearly for the participants to understand them thus improving accuracy and reliability of data collected. I directed questions around precise themes which included experience of being documented and/or

an undocumented migrant entrepreneur in South Africa and factors behind their stay in Johannesburg. I focused on understanding State responses to documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in the inner city of Johannesburg. To gain access to issues of security and support, I requested participants to narrate their story where State apparatuses protected and supported them. These exposed exciting stories which exposed the relationship between the State and migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. Most of these interviews were telephonically recorded and later transliterated for analysis as detailed in chapter 3 and 4.

#### 1.8.2.2. Secondary Sources of Data

South Africa has a variety of newspaper print companies which include Johannesburg News, City press News, Sowetan News, Daily News and Business Day among others, which I researched. I also consulted archival data online from numerous sources such as the Financial Mail Archive, Rand Daily Archive and Sunday Times Archive. Through these archives, I managed to gather insightful and holistic data about the State reactions on migrant entrepreneurs. These newspapers and archival information aided to supplement primary data gathered through in-depth telephonic interviews. In addition to this, I conducted four informal discussions with other Zimbabwean economic migrants who were not part of my sample. Informal conversations supported in the augmentation of my understanding of the relationship between the State and migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg.

#### 1.8.2.3. Sampling Procedure and population of the Study

“Sampling takes into consideration decisions about settings, people, events, social processes and behaviours that are observable” (De Vos et al., 2002 in Macheka, 2018: 171). Since this study involves Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs living in the inner-city of Johannesburg, I used a snowball sampling procedure to identify these participants. Snowball sampling allow participants to give the

“researcher contact information about the next person who fits the description the researcher would like to include in the research, and so forth” (ibid.). I also selected participants based on their availability and willingness to participate and on their knowledge of the research topic. I choose ten (10) Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs - 3 women and 7 men - to understand how State apparatuses respond and treat them. I telephonically arranged meetings with these selected Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg. Based on my stay in Johannesburg between 2017 and 2018, I developed a large network of friends whose contact details I still have. I frequently communicate with them using WhatsApp and telephonic platform. Over this period, we have built a healthy communicative relationship that served as an entry point to gathering data. In addition, I also have four family members (two biological sisters and two cousins) staying in the inner-city of Johannesburg whom I used to find other participants.

The study took place over two (2) months where two 2-hour in-depth telephonic interviews were held. The first set of questions attended to reasons for migrating to South Africa and their life experience of being a migrant entrepreneur in the inner-city Johannesburg. I covered topics like family structure, housing situations, financial security and religious perspectives. The second set of interviews served as follow-up questions to the initial questions. They were designed after a general analysis of the first set of questions. Topics that were imbricated onto the initial set include, politics Zimbabwean migrants’ journey, experiences on State repression, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs’ challenges, adaptation strategies, perceptions, and the possible experience of imprisonment.

### 1.9. Data analysis

Analysis is the organisation and interrogation of data “in a way that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories” (Hatch, 2002 in Siziba, 2013: 118). In addition, data analysis frequently contains “synthesis, evaluation, interpretation, categorisation, hypothesizing, comparison, and pattern finding” (ibid.). Soon after field

work, I considered transcribing data provided by participants which I presented and analysed using a thematic content analysis, one of the commonest data analysis instruments in qualitative methodology (Bryman, 2008). A thematic content analysis allows the researcher to identify, interpret and describe both implicit and explicit data gathered in the field (ibid.). Siziba (2013: 119) notes that, thematic content analysis “minimally organises and describes data set in (rich) detail.”

Through a continuous mode of data analysis, I developed salient themes in relation to research objectives, research questions and information gathered in the field. I was guided by Ruiz-Ruiz's (2009:4) cited in Siziba (2013: 119) proposition “that cognisant of this nature of discourse we have to proceed by way of three interrelated levels of analysis, that is, the textual, contextual and interpretation levels.” In this manner, I simultaneously presented meaningful data in a contextual manner underdeveloped themes which answered research question and objectives provided earlier in this chapter. In these salient themes, I interpreted genuine participant stories about their lived experiences in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

#### 1.10. Ethics

In social science disciplines there are rules and regulations that a researcher should follow to seek approval from the ethics clearance board before beginning with field work. I followed Stellenbosch University regulations to apply for the ethics clearance which was approved in May 2020 by the Research Ethic Council. I then begun my research by getting participants' informed consent after the provision of the written participant information sheet which participants read and understood about why they have been chosen to participate in the study. I telephonically informed participants that my research was purely academic and the information they provide will contribute to a thesis and a peer reviewed journal and will also be disseminated to them if there is need. I guaranteed to ensure that their participation to this study will not jeopardise their lives and businesses. I informed participants that there are no personal benefits in participating in this research, but the work produced through their participation will help to air out their grievances and

can be used to influence the International community to challenge South African State practices that are contrary to international law.

Privacy was guaranteed since there was no face-to-face interviews with participants. Humanitarian studies commend that researchers should not put participants at any harm and risk (De Laine, 2000). As mentioned earlier, telephonic interviews strengthen anonymity, privacy and abridged interviewees distraction or interviewer's self-consciousness during interviews (Drabble et al., 2016).

Additionally, I pledged to ensure that information gathered from participants will be kept confidential in a password protected device and that any audio recordings made will be demolished after transcription. To protect their identity, participants allowed me to use pseudonyms which are designated to totems. Interviews were conducted telephonically to protect participants confidentiality. To validate the academic nature of my research, I provided my student identity document and the ethical clearance letter.

#### 1.11. Chapter Outline

**Chapter Two** *Unpacking the phenomenon of migration in Zimbabwe*: This chapter is a review of the literature discussing trends of Zimbabwe labour migration in the southern African region. In this chapter, I seek to unveil the opinions of other scholars concerning labour migration in southern Africa particularly the causes of movement of people between South Africa and Zimbabwe. The chapter helps to find out ways of relating the study to similar studies that have been done by others somewhere else. It also seeks to introduce other significant studies personalities who studied similar issues. It is also in the interest of the study to agree, criticise and provide new trends and emerging issues in labour migration. The chapter begins by a brief discussion of the nature and causes of Zimbabwe labour migration into South Africa. In this section I attempt to flesh out reasons behind Zimbabwe labour migration in South Africa. Furthermore, this chapter also provide the history of the economic demise and policies that fueled migration in the post-colonial Zimbabwe. The chapter further provide literature on migrant's vulnerability and policy framework in South Africa. I flesh out the challenges of xenophobic attacks that migrants face in South Africa. I further review policy frameworks that regulate the stay of migrants

in South Africa with their entrepreneurship. I then look at the coping strategies used by migrants to circumvent challenges they face in South Africa. This chapter also helps to develop an understanding of why Zimbabweans migrate to South Africa.

**Chapter Three** *Zimbabweans voyage to South Africa: factors and politics on their journey and starting a living in Johannesburg:* In this chapter I discuss emerging data from Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs living in the inner-city of Johannesburg. To fully address the study research questions and objectives, I begin by focusing on the journey of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs into South Africa and how they established life and a source of living in the inner-city of Johannesburg. I also flesh out the challenges faced by these migrants in their businesses and strategies used to circumvent them. To understand this concept, I track how Zimbabweans migrated into South Africa specifically looking at the motive behind their transition. I argue in this chapter that State authorities use laws as tactics to control the movement and stay of migrants in South Africa, but their everyday operations which target undocumented migrants are a serious peril and instill fear to Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs. I use themes which were identified from ideas presented by participants during interviews. In addition, I then use pseudonyms which are designated to totems.

**Chapter Four** *State culture in regulating Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city Johannesburg:* In this chapter I discuss experiences of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs on State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg. Through an analysis of the State apparatus, I flesh out a discussion about Foucauldian governmentality and regulation using the Marxist-Leninist theory of the State for analytical lenses to examine experiences of both Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs on State repression in the inner-city Johannesburg. What emerges from Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs accounts is that the State is a machine of repression which affect their businesses and wellbeing. In this regard, I extend the discussion to the coping strategies used by Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs to evade State repression and their perceptions on their regulation by State authorities.



**Chapter Five** *Conclusion and recommendations:* In this chapter I offer a precise of issues that have been discussed in chapter three and four. I specifically flesh-out a summary of lessons learnt from Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' experiences on State repression in the inner-city Johannesburg. I focus on the State as a repressive apparatus used to control and monitor migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg. I also provide tactics as forms of resistance used by Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs to evade State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

## CHAPTER TWO: ZIMBABWE LABOUR MIGRATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

### 2.1. Introduction

In engaging this study in which Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs are my primary concern, it becomes central to understand the discourse on labour migration in southern Africa and why Zimbabweans leave their country in search for greener pastures in South Africa. I trace the history of the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy during the post-Colonial era - 1980 to the present. The history of economic crisis in Zimbabwe is quite interesting and enjoyed extensive literary coverage in both the political and social science disciplines. In this chapter I therefore review theoretical understandings on labour migration in South Africa, the nature and causes of the economic collapse in Zimbabwe across the overlapping fields of economic anthropology, sociology, history and economics and draw from these disciplines to develop a theoretic framework to flesh out an understanding of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' experiences in Johannesburg. A reflection of policies that led to the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy which triggers the exodus of voluminous Zimbabweans to South Africa will also be addressed. This chapter helps to find out ways of relating the study to similar studies that have been done by others somewhere else. It also seeks to introduce other significant studies which discuss similar issues on xenophobic attacks and policies that govern migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. It is in the interest of the study to agree, criticise and to provide new contemporary trends and emerging issues and factors behind migration in South Africa. The developments, manifestations and literature provided in this chapter are vital to uncover the experiences of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in their journey from Zimbabwe into South Africa, as presented in Chapter 3.

The leading questions in such an attempt are: what is the nature and trends of labour migration in southern Africa? What is the history and nature of economic crisis in Zimbabwe? What are policies that led to the decline of the economy in Zimbabwe? Since the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy, why do citizens opt to leave. Questions

addressed also include xenophobic incidents and adaptation strategies used by migrants to navigate challenges affecting them.

## 2.2. Zimbabwe Labour Migration in Southern Africa

Zimbabwe Labour migration is not a new phenomenon in Southern Africa, it dates to pre-colonial times of early 1800s where Africa's boundaries were highly amorphous (Mlambo, 2010). During that period, labour migrants moved with absolute comfort since there were no boundaries and border control mechanisms that restricted the movement of people in Southern Africa (Hungwe, 2013; Mlambo, 2018). This allowed Zimbabwean labour migrants to move with absolute comfort in search for employment in the region (Hungwe, 2013). However, during the colonial era, trends and the challenge of the movement of people changed in Southern Africa (Mlambo, 2010). Then came colonialism which created boundaries and policies that controlled labour migration tendencies in Africa. Mlambo (2010) and Hungwe (2013) states that imperialism changed the demographic and political profile of Southern African region where migration was facilitated to satisfy colonial obligations such as taxation and the movement of new goods introduced by the colonial governments. In 1890, the British Pioneer Column "armed and funded by Cecil John Rhodes established the British South Africa Company (BSAC) which claimed the territory by the name Southern Rhodesia present day Zimbabwe" (Mlambo, 2010: 3). Whiteman's government desire to practice these activities were achieved by commercialising agricultural activities from 1902 forwards, this was also in line with the practice of mining activities at Witwatersrand in South Africa (Omer-Cooper, 1966). Capitalism through different companies such as the sugar plantation in Natal, Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) and the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau (RNLB) came with the need for economic gains and development in Rhodesia (ibid.). The demand for labourers by the WNLA rendered South Africa an importer of foreigner labour (Moyo, 2017). Among many southern African nations, the expansion and continuous discovery of gold deposits around 1911 in South Africa attracted Zimbabweans, amongst other nationalities, to work in the South African mines (Mlambo,

2010). Through bilateral agreements such as the Tete agreement of 1913 and Tripartite Labour Agreement of 1937; Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Botswana, Zambia and Lesotho supplied volumes of labourers to South Africa (Crush, 199b; Siziba, 2013; Moyo, 2017). The Native Labour Supply Commission (NLSC) which sought to specifically recruit foreign workers for the agriculture sector was later established in the year 1946 as a response to the continued excessive demand for labour (Siziba, 2013). All these agreements connected southern African countries including Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia (Mlambo, 2010).

In addition, Rhodesia allowed South Africa to recruit 20000 labourers per annum formally in 1974 “...to cushion the withdrawal of Malawian and Mozambican migrant labour from the mines” (Moyo, 2017: 83). This followed the fallout between South Africa and Malawi after the April 1974 air crash in Francistown, Botswana, and the end of colonial rule in Mozambique (ibid.). Subsequently, Zimbabwe labourers movement to South Africa remarkably increased from 7000 in 1975 (Wilson, 1976) to 37000 workers in 1977 (Mlambo 2010). During that time, South Africa and Zimbabwe were the centres of labour in Africa who competed for laborers from an interconnected trans-border labour market in the region (Siziba, 2013). While the two countries were the center of the labour supplies, citizens of Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia moved to these countries in search for employment in farms and mines (ibid.). Mlambo (2010) observed that Zimbabwe doubled as a receiver of migrant labourers from its neighbours and a supplier of migrant labour to South Africa. This is in concurrence with Chekero and Rose (2018) who explained Zimbabwe's dual role as sender and receiver of labour migrants. This privilege allowed Zimbabwe to produce agricultural surplus and to meet their tax obligations to the colonial state (ibid.). Zimbabwe's dependency on foreign labour also paved the way to “proactively institutionalise the recruitment of migrant labour” between 1903 and 1933 (Siziba, 2013: 30). The institutionalisation culminated in the Rhodesian Native Labour Bureau (RNLB) which supplied Rhodesia with an estimated 13 000 employees every year on average (Mlambo, 2010; Siziba, 2013).

With Zimbabwean labour migration stretching to the post-colonialism era, the work heavily relies on migration based on labour exchange and the dire need of colonialist to exchange

goods and services. As the main discourse in this study, there is need to reflect on migration in the context of modern Zimbabwe which fleshes out the bleeding economy as the main push factor for the to migrate to South Africa. Therefore, in the following section, I uncover the history of the economic meltdown in Zimbabwe and demonstrate how it fueled the transit of voluminous Zimbabweans into South Africa.

## 2.3. Zimbabwe's Economy between 1980-2020 Fueling Zimbabwe Labour migration in South Africa

### 2.3.1. The Booming Economy between 1980 and 1990.

Since the turn of the new millennium Zimbabwe has experienced an increasing economic collapse, which has forced many of its citizens to migrate to South Africa. However, soon after independence in April 1980, Zimbabwe, under Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, experienced an economic boom, the black Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government took over an economically competitive country from the British colony (TheFinancial Times, 2015). Prior to independence, Ian Smith's government experienced a slow economic growth which was at 3.8% a year for the period between 1970 and 1979, chiefly owing to the war of liberation and economic sanctions against the UDI government of Rhodesia at the time (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 2). The attainment of independence in 1980, rejuvenated economic activity, with the GDP growth averaging about 5.5 % between 1980 and 1990 (ibid.). Mugabe inherited and promoted one of the most structurally developed economies [socialism], partially relying on international aid and effective state systems in Africa (The Financial Times, 2015). The system was successful as the economy recovered appreciably in the years between 1980 and 1982 averaging at least 10 % economic growth (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 2). This was influenced by favorable domestic and external conditions, including the lifting of economic sanctions, stimulation of overall demand in the economy with redistributive fiscal policies, and the opening of external markets which fueled economic activity (ibid.).

Towards the end of the 1980s there was increasing agreement amongst government elites that new Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) prescribed by the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Bank and IMF to third world countries as a bait to accessing loans and other concessionary funds, needed to be implemented for the long-term survival of the regime (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 2). The new policy regime designed by the government and its advisers set out to encourage jobcreation and growth by transferring control over prices from the State to the market, improving access to foreign exchange, reducing administrative controls over investment and employment decisions, and by reducing the fiscal deficit (Alwang, Mills and Taruvinga, 2002). It had wide local support and was introduced before economic problems had gone out of control (ibid.). A 40% devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar could occur, and price and wage controls were removed (Sichone, 2003).

### 2.3.2. Economic Collapse: The next Decade 1990 -2000

In the early 1990s, growth was, characterised by periods of economic strength corresponding to periods of good weather and the absence of severe drought (Sichone, 2003). During this period, however, the economy showed signs of weakening on account of low investment, an adverse internal environment and cutback in production by manufacturing industries due to foreign exchange shortages (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 3). The austerity plan adopted during the same period was followed by economic problems of increased severity (Alwang, Mills and Taruvinga, 2002).

Economic growth, employment, wages, and social service spending declined, inflation was not reduced, the deficit remained well above target, and many industrial firms, notably in textiles and footwear closed in response to increased competition and high real interest rates (Davies and Ratts, 2007). The incidence of poverty in the country increased during this time that is from 1991 to 1993 (Sichone, 2003). On the positive side, capital formation and the percentage of exports in GDP increased and urban–rural inequality fell (ibid.). ESAP was undermined by extremely unfavorable conditions such as demand for local manufacturing, drought reduced agricultural output, public revenue and exports.

Growth during three drought-affected years (1992, 1993, and 1995) averaged 2.6 %; during three good years (1991, 1994 and 1996) it was 6.5 % (Brett, 2005). Concurrently, the ANC regime in South Africa cancelled its trade agreement with Zimbabwe at that time and subjected its exports to punitive tariffs, just as Zimbabwe reduced its own, contributing significantly to deindustrialisation (ibid.). The government's failure to bring the fiscal deficit under control undermined the effectiveness of those elements in the program that were followed through (Brett, 2005). This led to growth in public borrowing, sharp increases in interest rates, and upward pressure on the exchange rate just as local firms were exposed to intensified foreign competition (Brett, 2005). Many firms failed, many others were forced to restructure, and new investment was discouraged in both the formal and increasingly important informal sector (Rogerson, 2016). The limited cuts that were made concentrated on the social services and led to serious reductions in the quality of health and education (Brett, 2005).

### 2.3.3. The New Millennium- A Lost Decade

The first ten years in the new millennium can be described as a lost decade, which occurred between 2000 and 2008 when Zimbabwe sustained a broad-based decline in economic activities leading to a cumulative decline of nearly 50 % in real GDP growth (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 3). The economic conundrum was largely attributed to a combination of factors which include economic mismanagement, poor governance, negation of the rule of law, lack of respect to property rights specifically in the context of the Government's Fast Track Land Reform program, the concomitant loss of support from the international community, capital flight, and low investment, among a host others (Brett, 2005; Zimbabwe Report, undated). The problems were further compounded by the substantial spiraling of the inflation rate from 2000, reaching triple figures in 2006 (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 3). It then skyrocketed to hyperinflation fueled by years of money creation to finance public expenditures and quasi-fiscal spending by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) in 2007, reaching the peak at five hundred billion % by year end in 2008 (Zimbabwe Report, undated; The New York Times, 2007; Wines, 2007).

Sustained high inflation culminated in real output contraction compounded by widespread controls of producer and retail prices which further ballooned shortages of most consumer items (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 3). Furthermore, expropriation of farmland and resettlement in communal and commercial agriculture exacerbated the decline in food output (Brett and Winter, 2018).

With the effect of some of these challenges being experienced in Zimbabwe, citizens began migrating to South Africa for better livelihood opportunities (Tevera, 2010; Crush, Chikanda and Mwaswikwa, 2012; Siziba and Hill, 2018; Chekero and Ross, 2018). Thus, South Africa has become a host of migrants from across the sub Saharan region with Zimbabwe being the main sender as earlier noted. Migrants resorted to work in the informal economy, and it is estimated that by 2009 unemployment was nearer 10% than the official 90% (Mawowa and Matongo, 2010). Siziba (2013: 24) portrays Zimbabwe as a country which “has now joined the list of crisis-driven” migrations along with voluminous inhabitants exported to South Africa. Crush, Chikanda, and Mwaswikwa (2012), for instance, state that Zimbabwe has become a major global migrant sending country over the past two decades. Commenting on the unrelenting crises confronting the country, other scholars argue that, in the absence of political change, Zimbabwe ‘s “biggest export will remain its people” (Siziba and Hill, 2018; 116-117). Former President of South Africa Thabo Mbeki, in a conversation with the Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon in October 2003, estimated the number of Zimbabwean migrants received by South Africa since 2007 at three million (Siziba, 2013). The exodus of Zimbabweans to South Africa encompasses a mixture of different ethnic groups which include the Shona, Ndebele and the Tonga who are vulnerable to economic crisis affecting the country (Crush, Chikanda and Mwaswikwa, 2012; Siziba, 2013; Chekero and Ross, 2018).

In short, the accelerating economic, social and political scrambling of the country led to a rush for the exits (Crush and Tevera, 2010). Furthermore, the economy went on a free-fall characterised by soaring inflation and unemployment, the collapse of public services, political oppression and deepening poverty all of which proved to be powerful, virtually irresistible, push factors for many Zimbabweans (Siziba, 2013: 24). Economic crisis in



Zimbabwe has become the talk of the world with most of the population living in extreme poverty. Munangagwa (2009:110) argues that;

Zimbabwe's economic decline has seen the country's macro-economic condition deteriorate progressively into a hyperinflationary environment and high unemployment rate of over 90% leading to many people migrating internationally in search for better living standards.

These annotations tersely "capture how in the current context, narratives about Zimbabwe are entangled in issues of migration and population displacement" (Siziba, 2013: 24).

#### 2.3.4. Policies which Led to Economic Demise in Zimbabwe.

The hype of citizen suffering dates to the mid-90s economic policies such as the ESAP as mentioned in passing earlier, the Land Reform Programme of 2000' and Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act of 2007 (Njaya, 2014). In Zimbabwe, ESAP sounded the death knell of state subsidies, free healthcare as well as free basic education (Matenga, 2018). ESAP was a market-friendly policy based on liberalisation, devaluation, privatisation, and tight fiscal discipline (Marapira, 2013). This was supposed to lead to a rapid expansion in growth, employment and exports (Brett and Winter, 2018). It failed unfortunately so many critics and Zimbabweans blame ESAP, and the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) that supervised it, for the subsequent breakdown (Brett and Winter, 2018). After 1980 the ZANU-PF government allowed industrialisation, white farming and mining to continue, while using the State to improve services and invest heavily in health and education (ibid.). It retained Smith-era controls that guaranteed cheap credit and protected domestic industry from foreign competition (Brett and Winter, 2018). The result was modest but associated growth (Brett and Winter, 2018). ESAP was later introduced to encourage economic growth and employment, reduce state interference in the economy, improve access to foreign exchange, and reduce the deficit as stated earlier (ibid.).

Hitherto ESAP is widely seen as an almost absolute failure. Growth was poor, employment contracted, many firms closed, and social services deteriorated (Brett and Winter, 2018). But the policies cannot be held solely responsible as circumstances were unfavourable when ESAP was introduced (Marapira, 2013; Rogerson, 2016; Njaya, 2014; Munangagwa, 2009). There were disastrous droughts in 1992 and 1995, and a global recession in 1991/92 reduced raw material prices and export demand (Brett and Winter, 2018). Also, South Africa cancelled its trade agreement with Zimbabwe following the government's inability to control the deficit (ibid.). This caused a sharp rise in interest rates just as local firms faced greater foreign competition (Brett and Winter, 2018). Liberalisation was implemented too quickly and not sequenced properly.

However, the results were not as bad as many people believe. There was a robust recovery in 1996 and 1997, with significant increases in investment, exports and economic growth (Brett and Winter, 2018). But then, faced with increasing political opposition, ZANU-PF began to reward its allies, starting with a Z\$ 4 billion payment to war veterans (Marapira, 2013). In 1998 the army entered the Congo and the breakdown began in earnest (Rogerson, 2016). The lessons to be learned from Zimbabwe's experience are that, old-style interventionism will not solve the present impasse, greater pragmatism should prevail; and ESAP requirements for reducing the deficit were unrealistic, and a future regime will need massive donor support to introduce the necessary reforms (Brett and Winter, 2018). Kanyenze et al. (2003) state that the failure of ESAP to shift the economy onto a superior and sustainable growth path, and especially its underperformance in terms of economic development and employment creation left a legacy of poverty in urban areas. Furthermore, the policy ushered in during the years 1990s and 2000s also boosted an imperfect record due to its emphasis on reduction of wage bill leading to retrenchments, which had a direct consequence to the exponential growth of the informal sector and as it forced thousands of the working class to migrate to other countries (Marapira, 2013; Matenga, 2018).

Additionally, agricultural activities were adversely affected by the eviction of white settlers from their farms through the 'Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP)' of 2000, which also consequently impinged on industries that heavily relied on agricultural raw

materials, further exacerbating the plight of workers both in farms and factories (Njaya, 2014). More so, urbanites' woes were further aggravated by the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment policy adopted by the government in 2007 compelling foreign mining companies to cede 51% of their shares to the government (Matenga, 2018). The policy, which is still in existence, albeit with some minor amendments, is highly unpopular because it scares away investors, hence fails to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) which is the missing link in Zimbabwe's efforts to rejuvenate the economy and create formal employment (ibid.). Poverty levels intensified in urban areas and this facilitated the exodus of voluminous Zimbabweans to South Africa (Siziba and Hill, 2018).

Poverty rates in 2007 were 80%, (The Economist, 2007) while the unemployment rate in 2009 was ranked as the world's largest, at 95% (The World Factbook, 2016). Jones (2010: 285); Chabal and Daloz (1999) argue that widespread corruption and patrimonialism were characteristics of the poor economy and high inflation rate which meant that people with connections to centers of power notably the various arms of government fared best. The situation in Zimbabwe, coupled with all evils of poverty, turned the majority of citizens including the educated into untold impoverishment at best and destitution at worst hence they could only rely on non-reputable low return survival strategies like street vending for livelihood sustenance (Matenga, 2018). This immensely contributed to increased migration to South Africa in search for better livelihood options (Siziba and Hill, 2018).

#### 2.3.5. The Global Political Agreement Era: Policy and the Economy During the Government of National Unity (GNU) – 2009 - 2013.

Notwithstanding the challenges mentioned in section 3.2.1. to 3.2.3., in 2009, Zimbabwe experienced economic recovery following the reforms adopted by the Inclusive Government (IG) in March 2009, the multi-currency regime and the cash budget system (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 11). The adoption of the multi-currency regime aimed to return macroeconomic stability and support an emerging economic recovery (ibid.).

Responding to the more stable and liberalised economic environment under the Short-Term Emergency Recovery Program (STERP), real GDP grew by 5.7% in 2009 and is estimated to have risen strongly by about 8% in 2010, compared with a decline of about 14 % in 2008 (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 11). During this period, Zimbabwe experienced the return of other citizens. The economic growth was broad-based, with agriculture predicted to have grown by;

“14.9% in 2009 on a strong maize crop yield; manufacturing grew by 10% in 2009 after capacity utilization rose from less than 10% in 2008 to levels in the range of 30-50% and mining rose by 8.5% in 2009, taking advantage of the removal of forced foreign exchange surrender requirements and full retention of market proceeds” (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 11).

Following years of financial turmoil which had resulted in sharp curtailment of banking activities, financial intermediation started to recover only in 2009 (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 11).

Total bank industry dollar deposits grew very rapidly reaching US\$1.35 billion by 31 December 2009 and US\$2.3 billion by September 2010 from US\$297.6 million as at 31 January 2009, reflecting increased confidence in the banking system, the elimination of surrender requirements, and short-term private inflows (Zimbabwe Report, undated: 11).

The 2008 election, which was characterised by the alleged rigging of elections by the ruling party ZANU-PF allowed the late Mugabe and the late former oppositional leader of MDC-T Morgan Richard Tsvangirai to ally after talks which were mediated by Thabo Mbeki the former president of South Africa. The talks resulted in the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) following the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe (Mukhlani, 2014). In February 2009, the newly installed national unity government which dollarised the economy allowed foreign currency transactions throughout the economy as a measure to stimulate the economy and end inflation (The Economist, 2016). The Zimbabwean dollar quickly lost all credibility, and by April 2009, the Zimbabwean dollar was suspended entirely, to be replaced by the United State dollar in government transactions (ibid.). In 2014 there were eight legal currencies including the

United States Dollar, Botswana pula, South African rand, Chinese yuan, Australian dollar, British pound sterling, Indian rupee and Japanese yen (Hungwe, 2014). Dollarisation reversed inflation, permitting the banking system to stabilise and the economy to resume slow growth after 2009 (ibid.). In January 2013 the former Minister of Finance of the years between 2009 and 2013 Government of National Unity, Tendai Biti, the vice-president of the Movement for Democratic Change-Alliance (MDC-A) announced that Zimbabwe's national public account held just \$217 (BBC News, 2013). The election budget for the July 2013 presidential election was \$104 million and government budget for 2013 was \$3.09 billion at a projected economic growth of 5% (News Africa, 2013).

### 2.3.6. The Economy in the Post Government of National Unity Era.

In August 2014, Zimbabwe began selling treasury bills and bonds to pay public sector salaries that have been delayed as GDP growth weakens while the economy experienced deflation (The Economist, 2016). US\$2 million was sold in July through private placements of Six-month Treasury bills at an interest rate of 9.5% (Southall, 2018). According to IMF data, GDP growth was forecast to be 3.1% by the end of 2014, a major decline from an average rate of 10% between 2009 and 2012, while government data showed that consumer prices declined for five consecutive months by the end of June 2014 (ibid.). In the same year, Patrick Chinamasa the former finance minister admitted that the country was heavily in debt and that the country needed to better attract FDI (The Herald, 2014). Officially Zimbabwe's debt is \$7 billion, or over 200% of the country's GDP (ibid.). However, this figure is disputed, with figures as high as \$11 billion being quoted, once debts to other African countries and China are included (Yamamoto, 2014). As of May 2014, it has been reported that Zimbabwe's economy was in decline following the period of relative economic stability during the GNU (ibid.). It is estimated that Zimbabwe's manufacturing sector requires an investment of US\$8 billion for working capital and equipment upgrades (Majaka, 2014). By mid-2016, the net benefits of Dollarisation seemed to have run out, leading to citizen protests and political instability in the country

which finally resulted to the forced resignation of Robert Mugabe as the president of Zimbabwe in November 2017 (The Zimbabwe Mail, 2019).

In February 2019, under the new dispensation ushered the second republic headed president Emerson Mnangagwa, Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) governor John Mangudya, through a monetary policy presentation introduced a new currency, the RTGS dollar which consisted of electronic balances in banks and mobile wallets, bond notes and bond coins (The Zimbabwe Mail, 2019). In mid-July 2019 inflation had increased to 175% following the adoption of a new RTGS dollar and banning the use of foreign currency thereby sparking fresh concerns that the country was entering a new period of hyperinflation (Samaita, 2019; Muronzi, 2019). The Zimbabwean government stopped releasing inflation data in August 2019 (Aljezeera, 2019). By September 2019 monetary economist Steve Hanke estimated that the inflation rate had exceeded 900% a year (Zero hedge, 2019). The second republic is also envisaged with a mere rhetoric verbosity that Zimbabwe is open for business which has failed to attract FDI because there are no favourable and sound economic policies (Gukurume, 2018). Currently, the economic crisis in Zimbabwe has worsened following the failure of the government to uplift the economy (Matenga, forthcoming).

To make matters worse, the political environment is a contested arena where it is evidenced by the militarisation of the State. Abductions of those who criticise the government and torture (Raftopoulos, 2019) are commonplace tactics used to muzzle critique. In the same vein, Siziba and Hill (2018) state that political and economic catastrophes are the major factors behind migration in Zimbabwe. The challenge of the political and economic crisis is triggered by the major threat, the ruling party ZANU PF which suspended the law and replaced it by its fiat (Siziba and Hill, 2018). Following these devastations, the reality for most Zimbabweans is to migrate to other countries for security and better livelihood opportunities (Chekero and Rose, 2018). Zimbabwean migration is therefore triggered by economic and political crisis affecting the country hence the notion that Zimbabwean migrants living in South Africa are both economic and political refugees (Crush et al., 2015; Siziba and Hill, 2018).

Although the Zimbabwean economic and political environment is contested, restrictive and targeted sanctions are also slowing down the recovery of the economy of Zimbabwe by blocking it from access to credit lines and trading with European countries (Chingono, 2010). The objective of these sanctions is to encourage ZANU-PF targeted individuals to respect human right, which include “freedom of expression and good governance” which have been violated since Mugabe’s era (Chidiebere, 2017:34). However, the Zimbabwean government condemn sanctions since they are stalling economic growth (Chingono, 2010). The argument is supported by section 4c of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) of 2001 where it is indicated that International financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund are prohibited to offer or extend any financial assistance to the government of Zimbabwe without the approval of USA president (ibid.). This blocked the government of Zimbabwe from accessing loans and trade with EU countries hence failing to recover the country from a collapsed economy.

Following this unbearable situation, citizens in Zimbabwe are living in unorthodox situation where they use unruly strategies named ‘Kukiya-kiya’ (translated to English as trying to make ends meet) among the Shona people (Siziba and Hill, 2018). Tendai Biti labelled the economy as ‘*ginyanomics*’, *ginya* being a “Shona colloquial word meaning ‘force’ and *ginyanomics* therefore refers to the use of force and coercion to maintain a semblance of a proper functioning economy” (Siziba and Hill, 2018: 117). According to Marapira (2013) and Rogerson (2016), the economic decimation in Zimbabwe has had massive devastating shock waves on the spine of society presenting most citizens with voting by their feet as the most viable alternative. Given these economic challenges, those who were able to move out of Zimbabwe managed to do so (ibid.). Citizenship was sought after in Anglophone countries such as Britain, Canada, Australia, and South Africa (Siziba and Hill, 2018). Migration to the “United Kingdom (UK) intensified around the late 90s and continued at a steady pace thereafter” (ibid.: 2018: 117). Given “proximity, porous borders, and affordability when compared to other popular destinations, the social profile of migration to South Africa has been more complex” (Siziba and Hill, 2018: 118) with many in the period of 2000 and 2010 heading to Johannesburg (Makina, 2010). Zimbabweans and other migrants target the Republic of South Africa because it has



proved to be economically stable since 1994 (Potts, 2010). The post-apartheid government deeply invested in industry and commerce which strengthened the South African economy (Crush et al, 2005b; Mlambo, 2010; Potts, 2010) hence attracting many migrants and local urban based citizens to seek employment (Macheka, 2018).

As noted by Siziba and Hill (2018), the exodus of Zimbabweans in South Africa attracted negative stereotyping and ethnic labelling such that along with “other migrants in South Africa, Zimbabweans are constituted as *amakwerekwere* a derogatory label that many South Africans use to refer to African foreigners” (Siziba and Hill, 2018: 118). Siziba and Hill assert that “the term is putatively onomatopoeic (like babbler in English), signifying that the languages spoken by foreign Africans are indecipherable babbling” (ibid.). Being labelled *amakwerekwere* seems incongruent given that Zimbabweans are a category of migrants with a “long history of migration and similar cultural traits with South Africans compared to any other African groups” (Siziba and Hill, 2018: 118).

It should be mentioned that Zimbabwean migrants operating in South Africa are viewed from two positions, that of migrants and that of entrepreneurs, each coming with its own operating legal framework. In view of the causes of migration to South Africa, I seek to critically look into the responses of the State to Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs living in Johannesburg.

While acknowledging that migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa is not a novel phenomenon, I posit that what is experienced in Zimbabwe in the contemporary era leaves many with limited options. The situation currently prevailing is characterised with confrontation of individual rights with the right to life usually confronting the right to security. It follows that this study will be of significant academic standing because it unpacks how Zimbabwean migrants are defying all odds including inhibitive laws to sustain their lives through entrepreneurship in their quest for survival. The negation of the right for safety in pursuit of the right to life, which in the process seems to be also under serious threat, takes centre stage in this study.



## 2.4. Migrants Vulnerability to Xenophobia in Post-Apartheid South Africa

The experience of migrants in South Africa is beset with numerous challenges, which include xenophobic attacks and police detention as some of them stay illegally in the country. Misago (2016) notes that xenophobia is a long-standing challenge in post-apartheid South Africa. Since independence, South Africa has evidenced tens of thousands of foreigners' harassments and attacked to death because of their foreign tag name (ibid.). During this period, violence related to xenophobia increased in informal settlements and townships (Misago, 2016). The wide spread of xenophobic violence in South Africa was recorded in 2008 where 100 000 migrants were displaced leaving 62 dead and 670 wounded (Misago, 2016). Worse off, residents destroyed and looted properties worth millions of Rands (CORMSA 2009). The 2008 xenophobic violence resulted in rising cases of destruction of properties, threats of mob violence, looting, murder and injuries (Misago, 2016). Xenophobic violence against migrants continued to increase in the years between 2010 and 2013 (ibid.). In February 2010, more than 130 Ethiopian migrants were attacked to death in Siyathemba around Johannesburg (Amnesty International, 2010). In October 2012, police conducted an operation known as Hard Stick which seized trading stocks and forcibly closed 600 migrant businesses in Limpopo province (Amnesty international, 2012). Cinini (2015: 70) detailed the February 2013 Daveyton incident of the Mozambican taxi driver Emido Macia who was beaten and dragged by a police van to death.

In Gauteng, it is estimated that 120 foreign nationals died of which 5 of them were burnt alive leaving at least 100 injured, a further 1000 without shelter and 120 shops permanently closed. (Misago 2016) The UNHCR ROSA (2015b) testified at minimum 250 episodes resulting in 140 deaths and 250 serious wounds. In 2015, xenophobic violence continued in provinces such as Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Limpopo (Misago, 2016). Data from the police indicated that nine people in Gauteng and seven in KwaZulu Natal were killed. Moreover, the number of people displaced exceeded 6,000, with hundreds of businesses looted and destroyed (Misago, 2016). In 2016, Katlehong Township in Gauteng reported the evidence of xenophobic violence (Mkhize,

2016). Moreover, ACMS recorded 25 incidents which took place between January and October 2018 (Misago, 2019). Citizens who participate in xenophobic violence most of them live in poor and overall scarce service delivery and employment opportunities (Misago, 2016). To that end, the lives of foreign Africans living in South Africa are marked by discrimination, exclusion, and fear, regardless of whether they are newly arrivals or long established; legally or illegally resident; economic migrants, asylum seekers or refugees (Cinini, 2015: 75).

## 2.5. Migrant Challenges in their Entrepreneurship Activities

Securing formal employment in South Africa is challenging to migrants due to competition with the locals and lack of proper documents (Gumbo, 2015; Crush et al., 2015). Even with valid documents, formal employment is difficult to secure given prevailing anti-migrant attitudes and South African employers' suspicion of documents such as asylum-seekers' permits (Handmaker et al., 2008; Landau and Segatti, 2009; Northcote & Dodson; Crush et al., 2015: 145). When migrants fail to secure formal employment in South Africa, they join what Gumbo (2015) terms the burgeoning informal economy, specifically street trading and shop entrepreneurship in the form of small businesses. This reinforces why people are drawn to urban centres in quest for formal employment. Consequently, the fiasco to get gainful work drives the African migrants to venture in informal entrepreneurial activities (Christal, 2017). Migrants adoption of entrepreneurship has caused them to dominate small-scale businesses, spaza shops trade in most South African cities including Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town (Liedeman et al., 2013; Gumbo, 2015). Small-scale entrepreneurs are the most successful migrants' businesses although they are prone to criminal elements, robbery, looting, police brutality, demand for bribe by corrupt State officials and vandalization of their premises during xenophobic attacks (Charman et al., 2012; Liedeman, 2013; Gumbo, 2015; Crush et al., 2015).

Moreover, migrants operating without proper documentation cannot make use of formal banking facilities and, instead, deal exclusively in cash (Laribee, 2008; Ma, 2008; Park, 2009a; Liu, 2010). Operating without bank accounts exposes them to robbery since they will not be able to bank their money and profits (Liu, 2010). In addition, migrants have to carry larger amounts of cash that they generate from their businesses which exposes them to the risk of being robbed (Crush et al., 2015). Moreover, the local authorities' plans for the community, community projects as well as programmes generally exclude migrants and so the migrant entrepreneurs operate at the mercy of their landlords and clients. (ibid.).

Even though migrant entrepreneurship sustainably contributes to South African economic development through employment creation and the provision of affordable consumer goods, migration is increasingly viewed as a cultural inversion and accountable for society's ills (Crush et al., 2015). Xenophobic attacks, crime and protests against foreigners are common with an increasing number of incidents relating directly to their businesses in South Africa (ibid.). On page 19, they further state that ant-migrant entrepreneur sentiments may be aggravated by South African perceptions that potential employment opportunities are given to the migrants at their expense. South Africans carry the belief that migrants will qualify for black economic empowerment legislation and accordingly this may progress to South Africa being inundated by goods from foreign countries (Crush, et al., 2015).

Although the South African government deploy authorities to protect businesses from crime, migrant entrepreneurs are viewed as a serious threat to national security than crime itself (Crush et al., 2015). Migrant entrepreneurs are mostly targeted by corrupt authorities, security guards, police, government officials, and xenophobic citizens (ibid.). Lodene Willemse in his study on the role of economic factors and *Guanxi* networks in the success of 113 Chinese shops in Johannesburg, he argues that migrant entrepreneurs are constantly approached by state authorities who stop at nothing in their efforts to try and extort bribes in return for letting them evade the immigration laws (Crush, 2015). The struggle to learn and speak native languages make migrants easily identified hence the natives take advantage for their incompetence (ibid.).

Having offered a discussion of the challenges of migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa, in the section that follows, I will be exploring the coping strategies they use to prolong their stay in South Africa. Most researches on vulnerability of migrants in South Africa dwell on general problems facing general migrants (Crush et al., 2015). In this study, I seek to pay specific attention to specific problems facing a special category of migrants-migrant entrepreneurs-an area which, hitherto, remains with little critical interrogation. Thus, this study endeavours to shed light on the vulnerability of Zimbabwean migrants doing their entrepreneurship activities in Johannesburg. This category of migrants is affected in several ways including migrant status (documented or undocumented) and business status (formal or informal) thereby exposing them to a double tragedy which has until now gone without notice by previous researchers.

## 2.6. Migrants Adaptive and Coping Strategies

When vulnerable migrants face segregation, exclusion and xenophobic attacks, they use different strategies to manage probable threats affecting their wellbeing and business. In response to some of the above-mentioned challenges, victims of xenophobic attacks flock into Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to seek shelter and representation (Gallo-Mosala, 2008). For instance, "...the Scalabrini Centre opened its doors to accommodate some 100 fearful migrants, and subsequently opened a soup kitchen feeding over 300 people a day, both South Africans and migrants" (ibid.: 9). Yeoh and Kong (1994) also notes that, the Chinese use their associations to negotiate space, alleviate the impact of discrimination and fight legal battles to protect their rights.

To circumvent the challenge of documentation, Chekero and Rose (2018) state that migrants establish robust relationships or social networks including marrying South Africans to access permanent documents. Pineteh (2014) argues that marrying South Africans is the most significant strategy used by foreigners in South Africa which helps them obtain documentation that allow them to reside and start businesses. Using a wide range of social networks, migrants at individual and group level invest in collective action as a social safety net which reduces their vulnerability (Putnam, 2000). In

entrepreneurship, migrants learn the basics of the native language to improve communication with customers and suppliers (Crush et al., 2015). For example, “a basic grasp of the dominant local languages in Soweto, such as isiZulu and Setswana, helps to facilitate transactions when supplies are ordered” (ibid.: 110). Zimbabwean migrants use language as “the most salient cultural artefacts” to navigate and negotiate the politics of identity confronting their status as *amakwerekwere* in South Africa (Siziba and Hill, 2018: 118).

Against the backdrop of “criminality, resentment and disapproval of their business activities by local spaza owners, migrants have devised ways of securing their goods, including having very small windows that they use as counters and reinforcement with burglar bars” (Crush, et al., 2015: 110). Moreover, migrant entrepreneurs often use the same structures which they sell their goods as places of residence in order to cut accommodation cost and increase security (Gumbo, 2015). In some cases, migrant entrepreneurs employ security guards to protect their businesses from threats and unlawful behaviour (Crush et al., 2015).

The thinness of this section is a testimony to the paucity of research on the adaptive mechanisms used by migrant entrepreneurs to ameliorate their daily conundrum. This research is an addition to this area.

### 2.7.1. Immigrants and Police Brutality in South Africa

Police brutality is one of the major xenophobic experience facing migrants in South Africa (Crush et al., 2015). In 2012 in Limpopo province, the police launched an antagonistic military-style “Operation Hardstick”, to apprehend criminals and tackle illegal activities (Crush et al., 2015: 1). Operation Hardstick shut over “600 migrant businesses, detained owners, confiscated their stock, imposed fines for trading without permits, and showered them with verbal abuse” (Supreme Court, 2014; Crush et al., 2015: 1). Shop owners were informed that “foreigners” were not allowed to operate in South Africa, that their asylum-seeker and refugee permits did not entitle them to run a business, and that they should

leave the area (ibid.). Regardless of fighting against crime, the operation operated selectively, attacking only foreigners' businesses and not South African entrepreneurship in Limpopo (Crush et al., 2015). The Supreme Court in the landmark 2014 case of *Somali Association of South Africa and Others v Limpopo Department of Economic Development Environment and Tourism and Others* claimed that the police actions "tell a story of the most naked form of xenophobic discrimination and of the utter desperation experienced by the victims of that discrimination" (Supreme Court, 2014: 6-7; Crush et al., 2015: 2).

Such State actions on migrants are "asymptomatic of an endemic problem: that is, the myriad regulatory and legal obstacles and the culture of police and official impunity that confront migrant throughout South Africa" (Crush et al., 2015: 2). In 2013, the Johannesburg City Council launched the Operation Clean Sweep which violently removed and confiscated around 6,000 metropolitan informal traders of which many of them were foreigners (ibid.). The operation ceased following the Constitutional Court ruling where Acting Chief Justice Moseneke claimed that "Operation Cleansweep was an act of "humiliation and degradation" and that the attitude of the City "may well border on the cynical"" (Constitutional Court, 2014; Crush et al, 2015: 2). Although migrants face discriminatory treatment from the police, their contribution is immense as many of them engage into entrepreneurship activities hence creating employment and fostering economic growth in South Africa (Gastrow, 2013). The City Press (2015) reported some cases where the police officers coordinated the looting of migrant properties in Soweto. The occurrence of sporadic, and progressively coordinated attacks to migrants exemplifies the ramifications of discrimination in South Africa (Cinini, 2015).

Police actions on migrants are also against the dictates of Human Rights Law - Article 5 which states that, "no one shall be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" and Article 9 which also states that, "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile" (Cinini, 2015: 71). In the post-Apartheid era, South Africa has experienced a change of the laws that govern migrants, "but it is critics describe it as not much better than its predecessor, the Aliens Control Act" (ibid.: 72). Therefore, police actions against migrants are xenophobic acts of violence and human rights abuses. When found undocumented, migrants will be arrested and sent back to their countries.

### 2.7.2. Experiences of Detained Migrants in South Africa

Once an individual has been arrested as a suspected undocumented migrant, he or she will spend some time in detention awaiting determination of status and, where appropriate, deportation. The time spent in detention varies widely, from a few days for uncomplicated cases from some neighboring countries, to several months or even over a year for complicated cases (Schravesande, 1997). Usually, the person will first be held in a police cell for a few days, and later transferred to Lindela or a specially designated detention facility where he or she will stay until his or her status has been determined, arrangements have been made with the home country through the national embassy, and transport has been arranged. Lindela is a Repatriation Centre which was established by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) in 1996 as a holding facility for foreigners awaiting deportation (Africa Check, 2016). It is in Krugersdorp West about 40 kilometers outside of Johannesburg (ibid.). In contrast, in Cape Town most migrants are detained either at local police stations such as Sea point police station, or at prisons such as Pollsmoor prison (Crush et al., 2015). Migrants are also detained in police cells in more remote areas, such as the Komatipoort police station near the Mozambican border (ibid.). In the case of Mozambican and Zimbabwean undocumented migrants, who comprise most deported persons, the procedures are standardized (Masawi, 2017). The Mozambican government has authorised the South African authorities to determine the nationality of Mozambicans, and thus no individual approval is needed from the Mozambican authorities prior to deportation (Human Rights Watch, 1993 in Crush et al., 2015). Zimbabwean authorities visit the Lindela detention facility on a regular basis, and thus facilitate the repatriation process for Zimbabweans (Schravesande, 1997). For other nationals, the process can be much more cumbersome (ibid.). If the country has a diplomatic mission in South Africa, the mission will be contacted by the Department of Home Affairs to approve the repatriation; in some cases, where no mission exists, approval for repatriation must be sought via mail (Crush, et al., 2015). In 2005, the South African government deported 150



000 Zimbabweans “by the end of 2015, over 15 000 migrants had been ‘repatriated’ by the South African government” (Hiropoulos, 2017: 1).

During these operations, the police raid the residences of suspected illegal migrants, arrest and march them down to the police truck labelled “*gumba kumba*” in Shona (a native language in Zimbabwe). *Gumba kumba* is translated to the “collector of everything” and it is a term used by many “Zimbabweans in South Africa to refer to the police truck used to deport undocumented migrants back to their countries” (Masawi, 2017: 159). Even some locals as well as some of the undocumented migrants hate *gumba kumba* because its arrival can also mark their last time, they will see their beloved ones again (ibid.). After being marched into the truck, migrants are taken to the police station for detention (Crush et al., 2015). Illegal migrants are detained at police stations throughout South Africa and later transferred to Lindela Detention Facility (ibid.).

### 2.7.3. Reasons behind Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

The endless xenophobic violence in South Africa result from a number of reasons. The independent South African government inherited the legal migration instruments which were used during the apartheid era to exploit, repress and treating them with suspicion (Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008). Abe and Katsaura (2016: 55) note that, “there is no doubt that living together remains one of the most urgent social problems in South Africa.” South Africa is apparently labelled the Rainbow nation however, “after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission whose primary goal was national reconciliation ended its process, the ideal of the rainbow nation gradually lost its hold on many South African citizens, replaced by the ironic rhetoric of the “onion” (ibid.). Giving the onion as an example, Abe and Katsaura (2016: 55) state that, the skin represents the foreign migrants, the layers represent the politically peripheral ethnic groups who occasionally become victims of exclusionist attacks, and the core represents the politically strong ethnic groups. As a rainbow nation, South Africa should not be based on racism but to



develop a nation that includes the ‘xenos’<sup>2</sup> to achieve the ant-apartheid legacy’s harassment of migrant black labour (Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008). Furthermore, “the myth of the ‘weak state’ serves to cover up the power of capital, which is benefiting from the drive to informalisation and the irregular work of undocumented workers” (ibid.: 1323). This rhetoric proposes the intensification of a new-fangled probable social hierarchy and a considerable core that does not exist (Abe and Katsaura, 2016). Seeing that new social problems became more visible after the period of national reconciliation; the concept of social cohesion became prominent in public discussions demanding analysis (ibid.).

Humiliation, abuse and victimisation of migrants in South Africa are socially justified with the logic that the victim is a foreigner (Whitehouse, 2012). In her doctoral study about lives of informal African migrants in Johannesburg, South Africa, Spel Christal (2017) states that although migrants strategically endeavor to manage their vulnerability, the unremarkable activities related to livelihood and socio-economic wellbeing are often coupled with ant-immigrant feelings against foreigners, humiliation, oppression and victimization. Ilesanmi (2011) notes that ant-immigrant feelings in South Africa gradually affect the stay of foreigners in the country. Vigneswaran (2010), Landau (2012), Christal (2017) argues that, ill-treatment which foreigners receive is supported and fueled by predominant media discourses, propaganda and national political highlighting the collusion of the State in criminalising illegal migration in South Africa. In relation to criminality by foreigners, in 1997, the Defence Minister, Joe Modise, stated;

As for crime, the army is helping the police get rid of crime and violence in the country. However, what can we do? We have one million illegal immigrants in our country who commit crimes and who are mistaken by some people for South African citizens. That is the real problem (Human Rights Watch 1998:124).

Congruently, in 2004 the Johannesburg’s Executive Mayor, was cited decrying the presence of “30 Nigerians on every street corner committing crime and undermining the

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<sup>2</sup> Xenos is a translation of foreigners in the sense of a person from another country (see Elizabeth, 1993).

city's safety and security" (Landau et al., 2005a in Cinini, 2015: 75). The invention of "criminality" by the State or political figures, which is often reported as the opium for citizens, that is, reproducing the dehumanisation of illegal migrants as the norm in society, does not satisfy the question of choice and why or how some people resist it and others fall for it" (Christal, 2017: unpagged). Though State apparatuses are broadly acknowledged as actively and less frequently submissively complicit in fueling xenophobia, the analysis often laid the solution on the State (Neocosmos, 2008). That is, to a large magnitude, "understanding the socio-economic experiences of the illegal migrants as a failure of the State's migration policies" (Christal, 2017: unpagged). In trying to address this, "there is the possibility to become blindsided to other rigorous query of the problems or challenges of illegal African migrants in South Africa" (Christal, 2017: unpagged). Attention should be called to straighten social relations between the locals and foreigners and the role of the State in shaping the relations (ibid.). Reis et al. (2000), discuss the significance of the State as a unifying force that assist people to reach their wish in relationship dynamics and outcomes.

## 2.8. State and Policy Framework on Migrant Entrepreneurship

In light to the fact that migrants are exposed to numerous challenges which most can be categorised as xenophobic in nature and exclusion in the socioeconomic and political services, this section aims to explore the policy framework used to regulate the migrant entrepreneurship in South Africa. I discuss what has been said with reference to the policies that exist in the post-apartheid era.

The question of inclusion and exclusion of the informal economy and migrant entrepreneurs in the economic and social service delivery is well documented in South Africa. As stated earlier, migrants highly participate in the informal economy because of xenophobia in the formal sector in terms of acquiring employment as priority goes first to South Africans. The South African government's "support for the informal economy and migrant entrepreneurs in particular in the Post-apartheid era is conditional and exclusionary in nature along lines of citizenship and immigration status in South Africa"

(Crush, et al., 2015: 239). The State programmes target and support the locals while migrant entrepreneurs are excluded (ibid.). Crush et al., (2015) argue that, South Africa's informal economy policies are clearly envisioned to improve the South Africans against non-citizens. In 2013, National Informal Business Development Strategy (NIBDS) aimed at ensuring that the informal sector is integrated in the mainstream economy under the guidelines of the DTI which stereotypes migrant entrepreneurs as "foreign trader invasion" (DTI, 2013b: 20). The strategy document observed that South Africa has no legal frameworks that manage the advent of migrants (DTI, 2013b: Crush et al., 2015). Furthermore, South African citizens believe that the emigration and refugee status give migrants an undeserved privilege to do business in South Africa (DTI, 2013a). The strategy stresses the imperative for registering informal entrepreneurial activities on a national registration database built from a municipal base and the need to crack down on counterfeit goods, which is associated with immigrant-run businesses (ibid.: 29).

In addition, in terms of responses to the so-called migrant entrepreneurship challenge, the Bill proposes upliftment of local entrepreneurs, the need for clear policy and regulations on migrant entrepreneurs such that there could be "no trading without being legal in the country, and partnership promotion between local and foreign traders" (Crush et al., 2015: 240). Analogously, Dadoo (2013) states that, the Bill is implicit on the criteria that will be used in issuing licenses to entrepreneurs. The Department of Home Affairs is considering that the Bill should be aligned to the Immigration and Refugee Acts whereby trading licenses should be granted to migrants who have documents valid for a period of more than 6 months (DTI, 2014d; Crush et al., 2015). Furthermore, the licensing of migrant entrepreneurs is only granted upon status confirmation by the Department of Home Affairs (ibid.).

To make matter worse, the Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and business associations are involved in monitoring and implementation of licenses to entrepreneurs (Crush et al, 2015). However, the obligation of licensing authorities to involve these organisations in monitoring and implementation sounds suspiciously like an attempt to get South Africans on board to assist the police in identifying and rooting out foreign traders (Crush, 2013). The situation continues as migrant entrepreneurs should be in

position of a valid business permit in terms of the 2002 South African Immigration Act and any other documentation that might be required to authenticate the status of their stay in South Africa (DTI, 2014d; Crush et al., 2015). Licenses would be only granted to migrants who have first acquired a business permit under the Immigration Act or a refugee permit under the Refugee Act (Crush et al., 2015: 241).

Effectively this means it is requisite that all migrant entrepreneurs first seek a business permit in their country of origin and guarantee of R2.5 million for the purposes of trading in South Africa (Crush et al., 2015). Without business permits, migrants would not be approved warrants to trade in terms of the Bill (Skinner, 2014). Segatti (2013) contends that the Bill scapegoats' migrant entrepreneurs who want to do their business in South Africa. In addition, one of the Bill's latent objectives is to ensure that foreigner should not operate businesses in South Africa (Crush et al., 2015). Duncan (2013) argues that, the proposal gives the State authorities a reason to harass migrant entrepreneurs and "to be a sop to South Africans who feel they face 'unfair competition' from foreigners" (Crush et al., 2015: 241). For Segatti (2013), the Bill simply threatened an immediate blow to an already fragile sector, that of regional cross-border trade. The poorly conceived draft of the Licensing of Businesses Bill exhibits, "the major intent to circumscribe informal entrepreneurship as well as to stop foreign nationals" (SAMP, 2014: 3). It is disheartening that the Bill does not consider the economic contributions of migrant entrepreneurs that encompasses employment creation and an input into the national fiscus (Crush et al., 2015).

The Bill was formed against foreigners whereby it was used by politicians as a scapegoat against migrant entrepreneurs (Crush et al., 2015). The South African newspaper, the Mail and Guardian (2012) reported that, "in 2012, an ANC peace and stability policy document proposed that non-South Africans should not run spaza shops without adhering to certain legislation which may or may not apply to South Africans and called for a strengthening of laws against "foreigners" running spaza shops" (Crush et al., 2015: 242). The migrant rights organisation such as the People Against Suffering, Oppression and Poverty, argues that the Bill is against the constitution of South Africa and does not recognise migrants as contributors to the economy (Crush et al., 2015). Literature also

illustrates that the ruling party ANC seems to be more protecting the elites and capitalist ventures in townships and not the majority who rely on the migrant entrepreneurs for affordable basic needs and wants (Zwane, 2014b). In concurrence, Crush et al. (2015: 242) argue that the proposal by the DTI is a testimony of a deliberate exclusion of migrant entrepreneurs and government yielding to the capitalist pressure group demands.

The aims of the Bill were controversial to organisations that represents migrant owned businessmen and migrant entrepreneurs. In the early 2015, the controversial arguments between policy makers and migrant organisations influenced a call for the revision of the Bill towards migrants but nothing altered since the xenophobic streak is still evidenced “at the highest level of the DTI with statements from the former deputy trade and industry minister Mandisi Mpahlwa about foreign-owned businesses hampering rural growth” (Crush et al., 2015: 243). At one of the “national Small-to-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) summit held in White River, Mpumalanga, the deputy of small business development minister Rosemary Capa was quoted saying; “You still find many spaza shops with African names, but when you go in to buy you find your Mohammeds and most of them are not even registered” (Crush et al., 2015: 243). In terms of the controversies surrounding competition from migrant businesses, the new Small Business Development Minister Lindiwe Zulu in 2014 made several forthright statements (ibid.). She said that South African spaza owners should learn from the business practices of their foreign counterparts who were described as “better at running shops than the local owners – they have a great network system” (Zwane, 2014b in Crush et al. 2015: 243 - 244). Finally, the Minister made another clear statement on potential proposals that foreign entrepreneurs are not allowed to own spaza shops in townships as local traders could not compete (Crush et al., 2015). She was quoted saying that;

I think we need a conversation as South Africans around that issue. What are you going to do with the ones that are already here illegally? Throw them in camps and say don't make a living? They must make a living. The more they make a living, the more they contribute to the economy. They pay taxes and are active participants in the economy. By allowing them to be immigrants you have given them a right to make a living. It's a human right (ibid., 2015: 243 - 244).

The minister also urged migrant entrepreneurs to share their skills with the local business operators (ibid.).

Nevertheless, the celebratory open citizenship for all South Africans is masking the second parallel process that is occurring: the ‘rainbow nation’ is being built on the exclusion of the black African ‘other’, the *amakwerekwere*” (Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008: 1331). This is also in opposition to the notion of an ‘open boarder’, which presents visa free travel to all Africans (Christal, 2017: unpagged). Provided literature specifies that the “State apparatus often targets migrants for exclusion and abuse: the police, the army, the DHA and the media alike” (Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008: 1331). What is most astonishing is that;

the old racist ideas are now targeting migrants, as skin-colour is once more an indication of the ‘propensity’ to commit crime as well as being used as a stereotypical profiling to capture the ‘intruders’: Dark skinned refugees and asylum-seekers with distinctive features are especially targeted for abuse (Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008: 1331).

Consequently, the post-apartheid era leave “little doubt that South Africans hold deep-rooted negative opinions about migrants and refugees in general and migrant entrepreneurs in particular” (Crush, et al., 2015: 27). As mentioned earlier, migrants are victimised and forced to flee back to their country (ibid.). Thus, they are constantly depicted by the State as unsolicited “parasites, as driving South African small businesses to the wall, as taking jobs from citizens and as engaged in nefarious business practices” (Crush et al., 2015: 3). These accusations have exacerbated migrant vulnerability to homicidal ‘attacks and looting of migrant-owned small businesses being motivated by the State (ibid.).

## 2.9. Conclusion

Migration has become more complex and uncontrollable in Africa with South Africa being the main receiving country of migrant entrepreneurs in Southern Africa. The influx of

migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa raises serious challenges to migrants as most of them are exposed to xenophobic attacks, harassments and detention by State authorities who act as apparatuses to control the movement of people in the country. However, migrants are not docile in their responses to State-led violence. Indeed, they employ different strategies such as learning the local language and marrying the natives to negotiate space and acquire documents in South Africa. What has been shown in this chapter is how the State uses its power and policies to control migration in South Africa some of which are xenophobic in nature as they exclude migrants in the society, formal and informal economy.

## **CHAPTER THREE: ZIMBABWEANS VOYAGE TO SOUTH AFRICA: FACTORS AND POLITICS OF THEIR JOURNEY AND STARTING A LIVING IN JOHANNESBURG.**

The jaguar is sleek and moves silently through the forest. Its power stems not only from its brute strength, but also from its physical adaptability. The jaguar blends in with its surroundings. Other animals know little of its clandestine habits or isolated habitats. It doesn't disturb the calm of the forest, which enables it to make its kill more easily. Once the jaguar makes its kill, it does not linger over it; it takes from the kill what it needs and moves on (Stoller, 2002: 28).

### **3.1. Introduction**

In this chapter I discuss emerging data from Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs living in the inner-city of Johannesburg. What is argued in this chapter is that Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs use tactics such as bribery, kinship and friendship ties and financial capital to circumvent challenges affecting them. These relationships are based on mutual trust and their closeness. I begin by focusing on the journey of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs into South Africa and how they established life and a source of living in the inner-city of Johannesburg. I also flesh out the challenges faced by these migrants in their businesses and strategies used to circumvent them.

For undocumented migrants, operating as entrepreneurs is not their choice. Rather, it is by default since they lack documents required in the formal sector. Therefore, their migration to South Africa is a transition from poverty in their motherland to everyday running battles and arrests by State authorities. According to Siziba (2013: 151) "entry into South Africa, in many ways mirrored and reproduced the living conditions that Zimbabwean migrants emerged from."

I use the subheadings Mingling in with the environs: The Journey of Zimbabwean migrants into South Africa; Setting up life in South Africa and "Entrepreneurship is Our Daily Routine": Entrepreneurship – A Livelihood Strategy for many Zimbabwean Migrants



which were identified from ideas presented by participants during interviews. The narrative is driven by my 10 participants, Shumba, Nzou, Dube, Chihera, Chikonamombe, Mukanya, Mhofu, Nhenga, Chirandu and Masiziba. While using Stoller's quotation as a leading and stimulating statement, this chapter uses the Jaguar as a representation of Zimbabwean migrants [participants] who emigrated to South Africa.

### 3.2. Mingling in with the Environs: The Journey of Zimbabwean Migrants into South Africa

Shumba's journey from Zimbabwe begins during the summer season of the year 2006. What could have motivated a man with two wives and four kids to leave his motherland, which happens to be the only country he had ever set foot on for the past thirty-eight years of his life. Zimbabwe was hit by poverty, hunger, political instability and skyrocketing inflation which reduced his salary as a teacher to something that barely affords him meals for his family. These tormenting economic and political hardships made Shumba emigrate to South Africa where he perceived the pastures were greener. Scholars like Marapira (2013) and Rogerson (2016) describe the economic decimation in Zimbabwe as a massive destructive wave on citizens' spine forcing them to migrate to other countries in search of better livelihoods. In Crush and Tevera's (2010: 1) narration, the deepening economic crisis in Zimbabwe became a 'virtually irresistible and influential push factor for many Zimbabweans.' On, one hand, this economic free fall influenced several migrants such as Shumba, Dube, Chihera and Mhofu to migrate to South Africa. On the other hand, some migrants like Chikonamombe, Mukanya and Nhenga argued that there is "fast money" in Johannesburg compared to Zimbabwe hence favouring doing business in Johannesburg.

Shumba, a Shona speaking man, belongs to the Shona Tribe, a southern African ethnic group from Zimbabwe. I called Shumba in the morning of Monday, 29 June 2020. When Shumba answered my call, we exchanged greetings in vernacular Shona as usual. He asked, "*Irisei nyika yababa*" [translated loosely to English as "how is the nation of our father"], "*Triko baba,*" [meaning "we are there father"] I responded. Shumba asked about the situation in Zimbabwe because he had noticed that I was calling from Zimbabwe. I

then steered the conversation to my research and requested if he could share with me his journey to South Africa. He paused a few minutes, cleared his thought before starting to narrate his ordeal and said, “My journey to South Africa was arduous, painstaking and nerve-wrecking experience. Because of it, I sometimes wish I could turn back the hands of time and start over”. Like a Jaguar which moves in a glossy and silent way, Shumba added, “I came to South Africa via an illegal crossing point near the Beitbridge border post. I took a bus on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2006 from Karoi [a small town situated in Mashonaland West province of Zimbabwe] to Harare [the capital city of Zimbabwe] where I stayed for 2 days trying to source information about crossing the border post without a Visa.” As he tried to blend in with the surroundings, Shumba met some individuals popularly known in Zimbabwe as *malayicha*<sup>3</sup>. *Malayicha* are popularly known for their sought - after service of facilitating the transportation of goods from South Africa to Zimbabwe for Zimbabweans living in South Africa, mostly via illegal means. The *malayicha* also assist illegal border crossings of undocumented migrants through the Zimbabwe – South Africa border post by providing transportation services and liaising with immigration authorities. Shumba stated that it was the *malayicha* who assisted him to illegally cross the border. “For *malayicha*,” Shumba said, “it is their business to assist undocumented migrants to cross the border. They earn a lot of money in doing this business. They usually charge migrants between R1000 and R1500 to cross the border.” Shumba was charged R1500 but negotiated to pay R1300. The issue of engaging *malayicha* to negotiate entry at the border was clearly noted by Shadreck Macheka (2018) in his study on vulnerabilities faced by Zimbabwean migrants who have an irregular status in South Africa. While driving a Van, *malayicha* picked Shumba up in Harare around 12 O'clock in the afternoon in a van that had 7 other migrants. They and arrived at Beitbridge border post at around 3 O'clock in the morning.

Jaguars, like any other carnivorous predators seeking prey, are faced with novel situations on every kill which resonates with participants including Shumba who shared

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<sup>3</sup> Malayicha refers to a person or to people who offer informal or formal logistical services including transporting goods and assisting undocumented migrants to transit to and from South Africa.

the perilous circumstances associated with crossing the border through an illegal crossing point. I posed a question to Shumba and other participants on the challenges faced when undocumented migrants cross the border. This is what Shumba had to say; “In the process of crossing the border, we met six soldiers who threatened to arrest us. As is the standard procedure, we paid a R600 bribe for them to look the other way.” Another *Karanga* [a Shona tribe belonging to the southern region of Zimbabwe] participant Mhofu corroborated Shumba’s account of events by stating that he also bribed soldiers during the process of crossing the border.

These narratives echo Macheka’s (2018) findings that undocumented migrants negotiate through money to circumvent the border. Other participants, who went by the names of Nzou and Mukanya, reflected that they were assisted by soldiers whom they paid bribe to cross the border. “Soldiers play a functional role in assisting us to cross the border through illegal points,” said Nzou grinning. “They took us through the forest called *Luthumba*, brandishing their AK-47 rifles at us as if we were prisoners of war. All my life, I had never had a pistol pointed in my direction, let alone an AK-47! I could only pray for them not to accidentally pull the trigger. They did this to hoodwink their fellow soldiers into thinking that they had arrested us and were taking us to their camp, when they were facilitating our crossing,” said Shumba. This form of corrupt and an illegality by soldiers has earned them a bad reputation.

However, such an experience of undocumented migrants has brought benefits to migrants and developed a relationship between them and State authorities. Shumba further revealed that, “Soldiers also helped scare away the infamous *Magumaguma* [bandits] that rob and rape undocumented migrants - and wild animals that threatened to approach our group.” Shumba said that they walked as a group of 12 for more than five kilometers through the savanna brush that is known to contain wild animals and robbers, under the scorching African sun without enough food and water. They then crossed the crocodile infested Limpopo river that marks the border. In Macheka’s (2018) study, such a tactic was useful in protecting women as he related frightening stories of womenfolk, who are raped, killed and robbed by bandits while crossing the border through the forest. “I honestly thought I would encounter crocodiles at Limpopo river, but thankfully the river

was dry hence there were none,” stated Shumba. As he describes, illegal migration is a wretched and fatiguing experience.

In these narratives, they are variable experiences when crossing the border. Listening to participants such as Nzou and Chirandu, haulage trucks and buses are also involved in trafficking undocumented migrants into South Africa. Chirandu reiterated that he had no passport, but he used a bus to cross the border after paying R2000 to the bus driver. He further clarified that bus operators make it easier and save time compared to crossing the border through illegal points. According to Macheke (2018: 193), transborder buses smuggle migrants to “maximise profit by having a fully booked bus rather than turning people away because they have no passports.” Indeed, migrants create a very close relationship with bus drivers to negotiate entry into South Africa. At the border post, Chirandu, confirmed that bus drivers, process and negotiate with immigration officers to facilitate the crossing of undocumented migrants. In his own remark, “During negotiations, I was asked to remain seated in the bus and immigration officers came to search the bus, but they did not ask anything. She pretended as if she did not see me.”

Looking back at Shumba’s experience he arrived in Mussina early in the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2006, tired, thirsty and famished. In Mussina, Shumba met a middle-aged man who advised him that he was supposed to pay R100 for him to evade the police and soldiers. Shumba said, “I was afraid because soldiers and the police were arresting undocumented migrants, so I got into the toilet where I met a certain man who introduced himself as Ray. Ray recommended that I should bribe the police when caught. As luck would have it, Ray forgot his wristwatch in the toilet and upon realising it, I took it with me and ran to give him back his watch. He was delighted and offered me a ride in his car to the taxi rank. He then said let’s drive to where cross border haulage trucks park in Mussina otherwise the police would arrest you if you remain behind.” Whilst in Ray’s car, Shumba witnessed the arrest of other undocumented migrants. As the Jaguar traverses the bush surreptitiously and has clandestine habitats the South-African soldiers and police failed to identify Shumba as he, like the Jaguar, travelled furtively. Shumba was then dropped where haulage trucks park in Mussina.

When he was dropped off, Shumba met two Zimbabweans, a woman and a man who were selling traditional made baskets under the *Mukuyu* (*Ficus sycomorus*) tree. He asked for connections to get transport heading to Johannesburg. During that time, two police officers were going towards the *Mukuyu* tree under which he was standing. One of the two Zimbabweans said to Shumba, "Those two police officers are searching for undocumented migrants, so if they see you here, they will arrest you." They then advised Shumba to hide in the baskets. Shumba narrated, "I then hid in the baskets. After a few minutes, the police officers arrived and exchanged greetings with the basket sellers. They then gave the vendors my description and asked if the vendors had encountered me. However, the basket sellers replied that they saw me, but that I had left five minutes ago. Police officers left without asking any more questions." While he was still in the baskets, another man who worked at the border post came to talk to the basket sellers. He was a close friend to one of the basket sellers. The basket seller narrated Shumba's story to that man and asked if he can assist him to reach Mussina taxi rank. The man agreed to assist Shumba. Shumba then came out from underneath the baskets and entered the man's car. The man then drove him to the taxi rank. Before departing, Shumba was advised to put a R50 note inside his passport whenever the State authorities ask for a visa. Shumba then got into a taxi whose destination was Johannesburg. He sat on the back seat as he considered it safe and hoped that other passengers would obscure him. On their way to Johannesburg, the taxi was stopped at a roadblock and police officers asked everyone to come out of the car and they demanded everyone to produce a South African identity card or a valid visa if you are a foreigner. Nearby was a police van full of arrested people who Shumba assumed to be undocumented migrants. "My heart sank, as I feared that I too would be arrested" narrated Shumba. Passengers then produced the requested documents to the police officer. Remembering what he had been told, and desperate to reach Johannesburg, Shumba said he then put a R100 inside the passport and gave it to the police officer. When the police officer saw the 100 rand, he then took the money and ordered Shumba to go back into the vehicle. The taxi proceeded with the journey and arrived in Johannesburg around 4 O'clock in the morning of 8 October 2006.

When Shumba arrived in Johannesburg, he expected to be picked-up by his cousin, but his cousin did not answer the call when Shumba phoned him. Shumba phoned several

times but he was later blocked. Shumba had to say, “I had confidence that my cousin was coming to fetch me, but he started avoiding me.” Shumba was stranded and desperate since he had nowhere to go and secure accommodation. At the same time, Shumba did not have enough money to buy food. He then stayed at Johannesburg Park Station, sleeping on public benches and eating whatever food he could scavenge in the vicinity. On his 5<sup>th</sup> day at Park Station, Shumba developed friendship with street traders who were selling fruits at the station. He then narrated his story to them and asked if they could help him. Traders were shocked with Shumba’s story until one of them volunteered to temporally accommodate him in Hilbrow. Shumba was excited since he did not expect such a privilege.

Compared to other participants, Shumba’s tormenting journey and devastating experience to start a life in Johannesburg ends here. Against all odds, Shumba toiled and later obtained a permanent refugee permit through the Zimbabwe Documentation Programme (ZDP) and now works as a teacher while concurrently doing his entrepreneurial activities. His family later followed him to South Africa. He had reached “the promised land!”

In addition to this menacing journey to South Africa, in the following section I delve into how Zimbabwean migrants establish life in Johannesburg. I also focus on housing which is the most challenging crisis for migrants in South Africa. Outlining from Zimbabwean migrants’ narratives, I will demonstrate how Zimbabweans opt to establish entrepreneurial ventures in South Africa specifically looking at why they choose to follow that route as a source of livelihood. Furthermore, I will establish their various maneuvers in their enterprises thereof.

### 3.3. Setting up Life in South Africa

#### 3.3.1. Navigating the Struggle of Accommodation in Johannesburg

Like any other living being upon arrival at a new geographical location, migrants need accommodation when they arrive in South Africa. Although accommodation is regarded

as a basic need for all in South Africa, it is a challenging factor to migrants. Accessing accommodation in South Africa requires one to be well-connected, legally documented and adequately financed. Silverman and Zack (2008) together with other scholars reveal accommodation to be a struggle for urban dwellers in South Africa. Gibson (2008) and Pithouse (2008) in Siziba (2013: 170) state that social movements mobilising around housing involve intense politics and politicking. In this section, I will look at new arrivals in a foreign country and how migrants with or without documents navigate the challenge of securing accommodation in Johannesburg.

Participants such as Chikonamombe, Chirandu and Mhofu attested to the fact that accommodation guarantees the longevity and security of their stay in South Africa. Mhofu revealed that he first secured accommodation before migrating to South Africa. “For me, accommodation was not a challenge because my sister stayed alone, and she rented a three-bedroomed flat in Braamfontein. When I told her that I wanted to start a life in South Africa, my sister guaranteed accommodation” said Mhofu. Another participant, Chikonamombe, buttressed this fact by stating that close relatives living in South Africa accommodated him upon arrival, and that the same applied to many other migrant acquaintances of his. For most participants, having acquaintances that resided at their chosen destinations eased their access to accommodation upon arrival. In other words, the migrants had social capital. Social capital is a strategy used by migrants to create space in South Africa (Siziba, 2013). Giddens (1984); Chambers (1992) and Bourdieu (1977) also argue that social capital is contributory in overcoming shocks and stress affecting vulnerable groups. Among the Hausa traders, Paul Stoller (2002: 42), in his study about the Africanisation of New York City observed that their prestige, and subsequent ease of access to necessary resources that include accommodation, is determined by the breadth of network of relatives—what he termed the migrants’ “wealth in men.” In contrast, it is tougher to access accommodation and other resources for migrants who do not have kinsmen, but they connect with friends who accommodate and assist them. A participant, Chirandu, stated that, “When I came to Johannesburg, I had no relatives but Sifiso, a high school friend, welcomed and accommodated me.” These discourses allow us to see that, “the right associative networks are characteristically those built around relations with other Zimbabweans and Other others” (Siziba, 2013: 173). It is



also a culture of Zimbabweans in which kin-based associations, friendships and social obligations are dominant.

These narrations are testament to the fact that kinship and friendship ties play a significant role in securing accommodation for new arrivals. However, for Shumba the situation was different because his cousin who had promised to accommodate him avoided him upon arrival. Shumba said, “I found myself stranded and desperate when I was blocked, avoided when yet I had been promised paradise.” Still, Shumba managed to connect with people with whom he created new friendships to secure his accommodation. What it means is that societies are built on connections, solidarity and togetherness and requires that individuals to associate with dignity, honesty and integrity for survival. Utilising kinship ties and friendship relations in societies has helped Zimbabweans to acquire accommodation in Johannesburg. Despite one being a foreigner, migrants do get plenty of meaningful gains. Arguing that kinship and rudimentary social ties are too complex - they extend to strangers but when they realise that they belong to the same tribe and come from the same motherland. Durkheim and Mauss (1963: 87) clinched that “humans are members of the family Hominidae” hence standing with one other based on race, nationality, ethnicity and kinship.

Participants such as Dube and Chihera who had money and who had previously visited Johannesburg on several occasions secured their own accommodation in Thembisa using hard-earned personal savings. “While I was in Zimbabwe, I worked as a teacher and I was saving money. This was the money which I used to acquire a flat in Johannesburg,” stated Dube. According to Silverman and Zack (2008) the power of money cannot be discriminated in accessing housing. “This penetration of the housing field is predicated on the permeability of the housing market through economic capital...” (Siziba, 2013: 172). Wealth, including money, safeguards a migrant’s quality life (Stoller, 2002). It is therefore worth noting that economic capital forms the base of life and holds meaningful benefits that help migrants to penetrate the housing field.

Like in Siziba (2013: 171), “identity appears to play an important role in how Zimbabweans engage in their place making endeavours and sharing accommodation.” Zimbabweans mingle amongst themselves based on nationality and create social relations to share



accommodation in Johannesburg. In this case, migrants like Mukanya and Masiziba share rental space to minimise the cost of living. Masiziba said, “Us as Zimbabweans especially the Shona, we are united, we don’t hate each other so we connect and engage to share accommodation and to minimise living costs. This helps us to budget money for other activities.” Hence, a sense of identity and the newly formed social relations tend to act as a symbol of strength, togetherness and unity among Zimbabweans in South Africa. However, migrants lamented problems arise when one has a girlfriend or boyfriend or a relative who wishes to visit, as it is obviously difficult to welcome them into the shared space which will be too small to accommodate extra people.

Whilst conversing with Mhofu, I got to understand that migrants organise themselves based on common religious grounds such as Christianity to find a place to live, particularly a room in flats. “For example, the house that I lived in costs us 2000 to be shared among the three of us. After attending multiple church services at Methodist in Hilbrow I met colleagues with whom I shared common interests, and we organised ourselves in circles of trust and occupied a room in inner-city of Johannesburg,” said Mhofu. He further revealed that, “With the help and recommendations from a Christian Pastor, I was introduced to other individuals who were also looking for partners to share the cost of living.” Thus, religious affinities encourage people to share and live together. For Dube (2017: 192), “churches connect different people hence creating social relations which can be used to share the cost of living.” He also posits that, “church members make efforts to live together by setting up church social media groups where they share information about accommodation” (ibid., 2017: 137).

In the section that follows, I move on to demonstrate how entrepreneurship practices are used as a livelihood strategy employed by Zimbabweans. Entrepreneurship appears to be a daily activity that sustains migrant Zimbabweans’ livelihoods.

### 3.3.2. “Entrepreneurship is Our Daily Routine”: Entrepreneurship – A Livelihood Strategy for many Zimbabwean Migrants.

In the inter-city Johannesburg, entrepreneurship is the most used survival strategy implemented by Zimbabweans. Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurial activities range from welding, hair dressing salons, transport services, canteen work, construction services to offering education services at day care centres and colleges. What could have pushed them to be entrepreneurs? Migrants including Masiziba, Chihera, Shumba, Chikonamombe, among others, highlighted the scarcity of employment accessible to foreigners as the main driving factor. Masiziba argued that she spent several months in search of employment, but to no avail. This off-course was because of a lack of proper documentation.

Shumba, like many other migrants searched frantically but to no avail as most employers were averse to employing undocumented migrants. Therefore, after several months without having a stable source of income and unsuccessfully looking for employment, Shumba and other migrants like him decided to enter entrepreneurship activities. Having failed to secure formal employment on arrival, migrants join entrepreneurship (Crush et al., 2015). Dube, one participant, reveals entrepreneurship as a substitute of formal employment. He stated that, “After a frantic and protracted search for employment as an undocumented immigrant, I realised that it is a waste of time because employers do not employ people without proper papers. The simplest route is to invest in entrepreneurial activities.” When employment is not available, migrants look for other activities including entrepreneurship for survival purposes (SAMP, 2016). In the same vein, several migrants such as Chihera, Chikonamombe and Dube mentioned that entrepreneurship is the only business in which migrants could make a living and generate income. They further revealed that all they must do is to avoid and evade State authorities.

What emerged from documented migrants, however, is that they do not want to work for someone. For them to survive, they prefer to create their own employment. Chirandu among others revealed that he never dreamt working for someone, his passion was to be an entrepreneur. “My brother, entrepreneurship is in my blood, I own a successful

construction company here, and I wouldn't have accomplished the same in Zimbabwe. Here there are a lot of construction activities going on as compared to Zimbabwe," said Chirandu. He regarded Zimbabwe as a deteriorating country associated with high levels of corruption and sky-rocketing inflation. In such economies, there are generally low levels of construction work and competition is very high hence startup companies succumb to big firms demand for construction work. This finding is similar to Nzou's narration who links the employment sector with the violation of migrants' labor rights. He argued that, "In the employment sector there is systematic violation of migrants' labour rights where migrants work for long hours but are paid meagre amounts. I think employers take advantage of our legal status because they know that we are afraid of reporting them to the ministry of labour." I then asked Nzou, why he is afraid of reporting such cases to the ministry of labour. "Most of us operate without proper documents and others use fake permits, so migrants in that situation are afraid of being arrested by State authorities," replied Nzou. The study findings concur with studies by Macheka (2018) and Crush and Tevera (2010) who state that undocumented migrants in South Africa are paid little due to their illegal status. Other participants acknowledged entrepreneurship by mentioning that it is a sign of hard working and an indication of success. This is enabled by the spirit of making more money.

On the other hand, Mazisiba argued that there is high rate of turnover in Johannesburg. She said, "You can easily do business in South Africa because there is fast money in Johannesburg." This assertion concurs with Crush et al., (2015: 101) who notes that "South Africa has also earned a reputation for the opportunities it offers to migrants who wish to start and operate small-scale informal businesses." Due to migrants' entrepreneurial prowess and resilience, they dominate in retail trade (Liedeman et al., 2013). In most cases, as has supported by the previous narrations, migrants are more interested in operating their own businesses than working for someone. In such instances, participants complained about high levels of abuse of immigrant workers by employers. They associated this with sexual harassment particularly women and low wages which are not enough for livelihood sustenance. Masiziba described wages as peanuts which can only afford her meals and transport to work whilst her family suffers. This was contrary to the reasons that made her migrate to South Africa. Chirandu narrated

that remitting back home is a biggest challenge when one is working for someone, as the salaries are too paltry to afford doing so. Hence, this will to support families back home using funds earned is a robust impetus for migrants to start their own businesses.

### 3.3.3. Migrants Raising Capital to Startup Entrepreneurship.

Although they face financial difficulties in South Africa and back home, migrants start their businesses on their own. Nzou's narrative points to the fact that despite one being educated, Zimbabwean migrants lower their pride and work for the lowest paid informal jobs such as domestic work and security guards to save and invest to start their businesses. Chihera and Nzou argue that small and lowest paid jobs play a role for migrants in raising capital to startup entrepreneurship. Although migrants are not satisfied with lowest paid job salaries, the small money they get adds to something valuable which allow them to invest in entrepreneurial activities. Mhofu had to say, "You see brother, I am now running a big shoe industry, but I started working as a garden boy in Randburg where I received R2500 per month. I managed to save that small amount to startup the Shoe industry I currently run. I was saving R1500 per month and managed to raise R25000 which I invested in this industry." These narrations revealed that despite receiving small amounts and bad working conditions in their informal work, migrants accept the situation and excel in those despite these negative factors.

Those that struggle to save money on their own, engage in rotational savings with close and trustworthy friends and relatives. During the interviews, it came to light that migrants participate in voluntary associations (rotational savings) in which they rotate money amongst themselves. During an interview, Nhenga stated that they form voluntary associations with other migrants to raise capital and rotate it amongst members of the association. Participants frequently alluded that rotational saving associations are formed depending on migrant's familiarity and trust and these rotational savings help migrants raise huge amounts of money to invest in entrepreneurship deals. Rotational savings stand as a very important strategy used by migrants to startup entrepreneurial activities.

These associations connect different kinds of individuals who collaborate when it comes to financial needs. Moreover, these connections are based on mutual understanding and trust.

Other participants borrowed money from their relatives while others obtained small loans from private money lenders who lend at high interest rates. Borrowing of money and money lending is based on social networking. Chihera revealed that he borrowed money from his cousin who trusted him. “If he did not trust me, he could have denied lending me some money to start my own business,” said Chihera. In these discussions, it became apparent that there are no government schemes that support migrant entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, documented migrants are qualified to apply for financial support such as bank loans (Perberdy, 2016). For example, participants like Shumba confirmed that in 2015 he was among the beneficiaries of small business loans sponsored by the SMME under the Department of Trade and Industry and the Industrial Development Corporation.

#### 3.3.4. “Coronavirus has destroyed us.” Sentiments echoed by Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs on Challenges Affecting them

The world has witnessed a devastating Coronavirus pandemic which has claimed the lives of many people. It has prompted governments including the South African government to implement lockdown measures to control and mitigate the spread of the virus. South Africa was thrown into disarray as it attempted to manage and control the virus effects on its economy and citizenry. As a result of streets closure and restricted movement of people, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs are not able to work. Moreover, their families are simply suffering from starvation. In conversation with Chihera, she lamented that she invested in a canteen located in Braamfontein where she sold different types of foodstuffs which include fish and chips, but she closed it because of lockdown restrictions. I asked Chihera to share with me how the coronavirus affected her business. She responded, “Lockdowns are prohibiting us from opening our businesses since the numbers of people affected by Coronavirus are increasing daily. Everyone knows that we

own nothing in South Africa, and we are supposed to pay and buy every basic need and want. I cannot even afford to pay rentals and to buy foodstuffs for my family.” She went on to say, “We are really starving. We are praying for a miracle so that we can manage to survive through these tough times”. This was supported by other participants who reported failure to pay rent to their landlords, their employees and to cater for their livelihoods.

When I interviewed Chikonamombe about the impacts of Coronavirus on his ice cream business, he stated that the pandemic has negatively affected his business because during lockdowns, the South African government deployed the metro police, SAPs and the military to enforce laws that forbid the operation of businesses and the movement of people in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, hence his sales have plummeted. He further disclosed that when the government loosened lockdown measures, they implemented rigorous checks on business registrations and documentation, which Chikonamombe obviously did not have. Those without registration papers or permits are not allowed to do their businesses. One cannot exaggerate the role played by migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. Small businesses contribute to the GDP in South Africa and help in the creation of employment to South African nationals. A report of 2015 by Mckenzie International Institute demonstrated that in southern Africa, migrants contributed \$6.7 trillion to the global GDP output in 2015, which is \$3 trillion higher than they would have produced had they stayed home (Africa Renewal, 2019). This goes to show the dire situation that migrant entrepreneurs are finding themselves in. They are simply dying of hunger because they are not operating and generating revenue for their families. On this issue, Mukanya lamented that the South African government announced relief measures such as the COVID-19 SMME Debt Relief Finance Scheme for entrepreneurial businesses plighted the lockdown restrictions, but these measures ignored illegal migrant entrepreneurs.

Through desk research, the study discovered that many migrant entrepreneurs are exempted from accessing support that would allow them to survive the severe impacts of the lockdown simply because they do not meet governments’ requirements, even though they contribute to the economy (Africa Portal, 2020). Moreover, the South African

Department of Small Business Development reported that they could not process 6497 of the 9840 enterprises who applied for relief due to applicant's failure to submit the required compliance documents (ibid.). These challenges exemplify that government shows little change in its agenda when it comes to dealing with migrant entrepreneurs and its interventions exclude small businesses owned by migrants. This notion is also supported by Rogerson (2015) who argues that "government programmes only target South African citizens rather than everyone in the informal economy. This means that refugees, asylum-seekers and other migrants are not the intended beneficiaries of government programmes" (Crush et al, 2015: 239). Veritably, the pandemic may be an excuse for isolating migrants, and this include the suddenly closure of the Zimbabwe – South Africa Beitbridge border post and the xenophobic-rhetoric behind scheduled lockdown regulations about stores that are permitted to operate. Both measures mentioned above are hard-hitting, and reminiscent of apartheid era tactics on migrant entrepreneurs.

Apart from the coronavirus pandemic, participants illustrated other challenges affecting Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs. South African citizens do not consider migrant entrepreneurial ambitions and their role in sustaining their livelihoods and the mainstream economy. They instead severely attack migrant enterprises (Crush et al., 2015). Since 2008, Zimbabwe migrant entrepreneurs have been vulnerable to violence and xenophobic attacks (Crush et al., 2012). Nzou felt that he is not safe in South Africa as he reported violent attacks against him motivated by xenophobia, abhorrence, criminality and looting of business operations. In the same vein, Dube revealed that in November 2018 along Juta street, his night club was attacked and looted by Zulu-speaking people. "They called me names like 'amakwerekwere', shouting that I am enjoying in the fruits of their land whilst they are suffering. They took everything and vandalized my property, luckily they did not attack me, but they threatened to shoot me by pointing their guns at me." Statistics reveal that in the years between 2008 and 2010, '20 migrant entrepreneurs were killed, 200 migrant-owned shops looted and more than 4,000 displaced due to xenophobia attacks targeting migrants' in South Africa in general and Johannesburg in particular' (Crush et al., 2017: 23). In 2012, South Africa witnessed a record "140 deaths and 250 serious injuries" (ibid.). The endless cases continued in 2014 were an estimated



200 migrant owned businesses were looted and 900 migrants were relocated (Crush et al., 2017). These cases included Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs. The othering of the Zimbabweans and xenophobic attacks associated with criminality deeply affect migrants' well-being as they struggle to cope and start again in their enterprises to earn a living. Ideally this goes to show that, migrant entrepreneurs lack proper protection from criminal elements exacerbated by South African citizens who take advantage of the government's blind eye to the welfare of migrants.

Economically, lack of access to financial services which include startup capital and access to bank loans is a major challenge to Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs. I probed Chirandu who argued that lack of proper documents blocks access to bank loans and government support schemes. He further stated that he thinks he is "contributing a lot to the South African economy because his business is employing six South Africans whom he pays R150 per day. The challenge is that the government does not consider me because I am not documented," said Chirandu. Like other migrants Chirandu further deliberated that he wishes for government to one day help them get documented. Keeping migrants undocumented is a deliberate government ploy to keep the migrant entrepreneurs outside of the South Africa mainstream economy (Crush and Tevera, 2010). Consequently, this lessens the burden on their fiscus as undocumented migrant entrepreneurs are denied access to official bank loans.

Like other migrants, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs demonstrated that their stay in South Africa is associated with varying degrees of documentation. The same applies to their businesses. Participants like Dube, Chikonamombe and Nzou amongst others revealed that they fail to secure the longevity of their stay and registration of their businesses. Participants who included the above-mentioned trio uttered frustration with the requirements for one to be registered with the reality that high corruption levels at the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) exist. Shumba bemoaned that DHA officials demand bribes to guarantee acceptance of their application for documents. "People usually pay a bribe between R2500 and R15000 depending on the type of documents wanted by a particular migrant," said Shumba. A huge proportion of migrants who can document themselves by acquiring permits and asylum status are able to register businesses which



then helps secure them. Business operations by unlicensed individuals constitutes violations of trading laws as well as city regulations (Stoller, 2002). Consequently, migrants who are found guilty are prone to State harassments, arrest and confiscation of their goods which adversely affects migrants' livelihood sustenance (see chapter 4.3).

### 3.3.5. How Migrants Navigate Through the Challenges They Face in their Entrepreneurship Operations.

This section discusses coping strategies used by migrant entrepreneurs to circumvent constraints confronted by their businesses. These include trading at their homes and participating in rotational savings commonly known in South Africa as stokvels.

To survive during coronavirus and lockdowns imposed by the government of South Africa that restricts the opening of certain businesses and the movement of people, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs revealed that they use their savings to continue surviving in the foreign land. Savings as articulated by Masiziba, help them to survive in the form of paying rents and buying foodstuffs for their families. She stated that, "I was saving my profit since 2018 and I am using it to provide for my family. This pandemic came as a surprise and has affected my dreams to a greater extent. Luckily my savings are sustaining my wellbeing and my family is surviving." Other interviewees indicated that they are being pushed to reign-in their enterprise expenditure to survive. Some participants such as Shumba mentioned that they had to send their family back home to Zimbabwe to cut the cost of living. He had to say, "Instead of using a full flat for accommodation, I scaled down to a one room and sent my family home." Such survival strategies help migrants to continue surviving in South Africa during the coronavirus pandemic.

In addition, it appears that migrants that were interviewed highlighted that they are getting aid in the form of food stuffs from NGOs and other well-wishers to cushion them during the coronavirus pandemic. This comes at a time when the South African government provided groceries to the locals but excluded migrants in that relief programme. A

participant Nzou stated that, “Had it not been for the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg which provided us with groceries, life would have been tougher than what it is.” This has indeed helped migrants to survive during the pandemic when their businesses are prohibited from operating and their source of income is severely eroded.

To overcome financial crisis in their operations, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs organise themselves and participate in rotational savings (stokvels) which allow them to rotate cash amongst themselves. As mentioned in section 3.3.3. of this study, voluntary associations are formed based on kinship ties, friendship and trust where migrants rotate cash on monthly bases. These rotational savings help Zimbabwean migrants raise huge sums of cash when there is need to make bulk orders. In a nutshell, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs use several tactics to continue sustaining their livelihood in South Africa.

### 3.4. Conclusion

This chapter has described how Zimbabweans migrated to South Africa specifically looking at why and how they transited to Johannesburg. We have seen how Zimbabweans circumvent challenges while crossing the border without proper documents, and how they negotiate with State authorities to stay and operate their businesses in Johannesburg. The picture thus far demonstrates how desperate Zimbabweans are and how they use various tactics to maneuver in search for greener pastures. The chapter further demonstrates how Zimbabwean migrants use kinship ties, social and economic capital to secure accommodation and to raise capital to start their businesses. Moreover, the study discussed the challenges affecting Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in their businesses and how they navigate them. Empirical evidence reveals that migrating to South Africa is not by choice but by default, it is linked to economic challenges affecting the generality of Zimbabweans. At the same time the employment sector for migrants in South Africa is associated with low wages and sexual harassment which forces migrants to opt for entrepreneurship. Also, lack of proper documentation leaves migrants with no choice but to invest in entrepreneurship activities to sustain their livelihoods.

In chapter four, I demonstrate that State authorities are the biggest challenge that Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs face in the inner-city Johannesburg. I will specifically flesh out the coping strategies migrants implement against State repression, experiences and perceptions of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs on State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

## **CHAPTER 4: STATE CULTURE IN REGULATING ZIMBABWEAN MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS IN THE INNER-CITY JOHANNESBURG.**

The State does not come into existence for the fulfilment of a moral purpose. It does not emanate from the will of the people. It originates from conflict and operates as an instrument of domination (Solo, 1978)

### **4.1. Introduction**

Through an analysis of State apparatus, the theory I attempt to put across in this chapter stems from the Marxist-Leninist model of the State to examine experiences of Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs on State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg. What emerges from Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' encounters is that the State is a machine of repression which affects their businesses and wellbeing. As Bottomore (1971) in Wetherly (2005: 3) expresses it, "The State is one of the important agencies of social control, whose functions are carried out by means of law, backed ultimately by physical force." In this regard, I begin by a discussion of registration and licensing of entrepreneurship activities in South Africa by migrants. I then flesh out migrant entrepreneurs' experiences on State repression and strategies they implement to circumvent the State's perceived repression. I finally discuss migrant entrepreneurs' perceptions on regulation of their activities by State authorities.

I argue in this chapter that State authorities use laws as tactics to control the movement and stay of migrants in South Africa, but their everyday operations which target undocumented migrants are a serious peril and instill fear to Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs. It also affects them in sustaining their livelihoods. The way State authorities interfere with migrant entrepreneur's business activities in the name of enforcing the law enables us to look closely at how Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs perceive this as State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg. They, as a result, feel isolated notwithstanding the fact that they contribute to the mainstream economy. Migrant

entrepreneurs are targeted as a threat of law and order, as being undocumented or unlicensed. But the system of State apparatuses particularly the DHA had already isolated migrants from documentation; it did so through an array of laws which have to do with the repudiation of, or restrictions that hold them from acquiring proper documents. For example, in this chapter I ask the following question; How does the State respond to both documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg? What is the role of the State in the regulation of documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg? How do documented and undocumented migrants perceive the functions of the State in the inner-city of Johannesburg? What are the implications of the State response to documented and undocumented migrants?

#### 4.2. The Role of the Government in Formalisation and Registration of Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs in the Inner-city of Johannesburg

In this section, I demonstrate the role of the government in the registration process of documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg. Migrants share different perspectives on registration processes they went through depending on their status and experiences. For documented migrants, they follow certain procedures to register their businesses. Registration guarantees migrant entrepreneurs' legality and longevity of stay in South Africa and that of their businesses. However, undocumented migrants operate illegally as they struggle to register themselves due to lack of proper documents and a subsequent absence of proper infrastructure to conduct their businesses thereof.

To legalise their businesses, documented migrants apply for licenses at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) at a fee of R175 (BusinessTech, 2019). Registered entrepreneurs will be able to access documents such as Company registration, tax registration number, domain name registration, B-BBEE certificate, Compensation Fund registration, unemployment Insurance Fund registration and business bank account (ibid.). Registration is done at the municipality where migrants are required to submit authentic documents that guarantees formal business dealings in South Africa.

Thereafter, registered migrants have their business regulated by the State (Crush, et al., 2015). The study revealed that when documented migrants came to Johannesburg, they had every reason to joining the formal, regulated economy of South Africa. They sought and received licenses to start their businesses. Shumba and others stated that they are obliged to pay tax to South African Revenue Services (SARS) as it is every business' legal obligation. Regularisation offers migrants opportunities to operate without hustles in South Africa (Bansek, 2016). The State frequently inspect and control migrant entrepreneurs at migrant's workplace to check if they are complying with laws and consumer regulations. Moreover, the State also offers protection services to licensed businesses. In this case, migrants revealed that security guards are all over the streets where registered entrepreneurs' sites are situated.

The study finding reveals that 60% of participants are not registered. Undocumented migrants who are not able to legalise their stay in South Africa are not able to apply for business permits and cannot access the above-mentioned services. This was resoundingly echoed by migrants operating in the informal economy and who are illegally staying and conducting their businesses in South Africa. A participant, Mhofu, stated that the authorities of the city of Johannesburg do not tolerate undocumented migrants. He associates this with xenophobia and policies that restrict them from staying and to doing business in South Africa freely. Migrants argued that even if they qualify to stay and do business in South Africa, the Ministry of Home Affairs only offers them asylum which does not guarantee the longevity of their stay in South Africa as they are only given six months to stay legally in the country. One migrant, Nzou, stated that he has the potential to double his business revenue by expanding operations, but government restrictions associated with denial of asylum renewals at Home Affairs demotivates him from doing so as he feels insecure. This situation is common among undocumented migrants and migrants who migrated to South Africa as refugees. According to Refworld (1998), South Africa only began to abide formally by the International Refugee law after signing a basic agreement with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR) in 1993. South Africa became a part to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and United Nations (UN) refugee conventions in 1995 and 1996 respectively. The treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa does not comply with the refugee law. There is no

legislation implementing the South African governments obligations under these documents, so all refugee handling procedures are governed by internal regulations of the DHA, leaving ample room for confusion and abuse of the process (ibid.). Conversations with participants, some who claim to have been detained for up to three weeks at police stations, established that there was extensive corruption in refugee determination process with DHA officials demanding bribes for granting of asylums. Participants claimed that their asylum applications were turned down as a matter of course. Refugee applications were determined by a panel which does not itself communicate with the applicants directly, thus applicants denied asylum were not furnished with reasons for the denial. A participant, Dube, supported that the procedure of seeking and renewing asylums is a challenge because sometimes the DHA outrightly denies to document migrants. He said, "The application of asylum is monotonous and hectic. Asylums are not just given to every migrant; the DHA requires specific and tangible reasons linked to politics and war from your country. At the present moment, there is no political unrest in Zimbabwe as compared to previous years, so it is very difficult to successfully seek asylum."

Zimbabwean migrants perceive the situation as characterised by lack of government support for migrant entrepreneurship. Taking a Marxist approach to the narrative, the DHA is being used by the establishment as a tool for migrant segregation, a creation born of the local people's desire to exclude foreigners from their country thereby depriving migrants established advantages and privileges. Political leaders from ANC and their apologists such as the Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini known for his xenophobic utterances assume that migrant's conflict with the locals is as a result of them (migrants) competing with locals for jobs, housing and in accessing social services in South Africa. This scenario acts as an excuse for the ruling class when faced with unfulfilled citizen demands such as employment creation, access to housing, water and sanitation (Gallo-Mosala, 2008). Furthermore, in trying to meet the welfare of South Africans, the State engages in repression on the other demographic groups existing within the population, some of which are foreigners.

However, participants such as Mhofu and Chikonamombe revealed unwillingness to register their businesses because they do not want to pay tax. Some participants argued that the profit margins that they make are not suffice for them to remit relevant taxes to the government and still be able to have enough for their livelihoods. Nhenga reiterated that, “I am not getting much in my business, and the government tax is exorbitant. With the little that I get, they [the Government] forgets that I am supposed to pay rents, employee salaries and remit back home and as such, I don’t register my company to evade tax.” Migrant entrepreneurs operating unregistered businesses fail to attract big clients who prefer dealing with registered companies (Crush et al., 2015). There is creation of a vicious circle whereby migrant entrepreneurs are locked in a state of stagnation and subsequently cannot pay the requisite taxes to SARS. According to Marx the ruling class controls the means of production and therefore those that do not contribute by paying taxes are viewed as people who are defiant to the country’s laws and may just need to be eliminated out of the system through suppression. Tax evasion by migrants simply means that they are resisting, and this fulfils Marx’s assumption that the proletariats will one day resist against the ruling class. Resultantly, this may lead to the fall of the State because revenue from migrant entrepreneurs must be accounted into the national fiscus to sustain and maintain the status quo.

In the following section I focus on the experiences of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in inner-city of Johannesburg. I specifically discuss State responses on migrant entrepreneurs and how they impact on their experiences as entrepreneurs in South Africa.

#### 4.3. “We are always at the receiving end of the metro police harassments:” The Experiences of Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs on State Repression in the Inner-city of Johannesburg

State responses to migrant entrepreneurs are legislative in nature. They are guided by the DTI policies such as the 2006 Integrated Small Business Development Strategy (ISBDS) and the 2013 National Informal Business Development Strategy (NIBDS) which regulates, promotes and support entrepreneurial activities into the mainstream economy



(Crush et al., 2015). NIBDS works hand in glove with the municipality to ensure that all businesses are registered (ibid.). In March 2013 the South African government outlined the Licensing of Businesses Act of 1991 which provide and enable framework for procedures for application of business licenses (Holmes, 2013). The bill gives power to each municipality to monitor and maintain an up-to-date register of all licensed businesses in its area of authority (Crush et al., 2015). This is in tandem with Foucault's theory of governmentality which states that punitive power is exercised through disciplinary means in a variety of institutions (Lewellen, 2003). The implication of the Act was to be undertaken by inspectors and so-called Qualified Community Based Organisations that are given power to assist municipal licensing authorities in monitoring and enforcement of law (Crush et al., 2015.). To this end, by not documenting with DHA as a legal citizen and registering with the DTI as a legal entrepreneur, migrants are breaking the law by operating their businesses unregularised.

In Johannesburg, there are numerous migrants running their businesses with only a few who have managed to legalise their stay and register their businesses. Six out of ten interviewed Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs failed to document their stay and register their businesses in Johannesburg with reasons described in chapter 3.3.4. of this study. By not legalising their stay in South Africa and not registering their businesses in Johannesburg, undocumented migrant entrepreneurs are vulnerable to State harassments and confiscation of their wares because they are operating outside the law. The city of Johannesburg responds by generating by-laws and claim that undocumented migrants are breaking the law since they are operating illegally and unlicensed. Notwithstanding their fundamental role to control and monitor small businesses, the city of Johannesburg should also understand why migrants operate illegally. Conveying it with Chirandu, he revealed that the application of documents at home affairs is difficult and stressful. "In 2010, there was a Programme under the ZDP which assisted Zimbabwean migrants to regularise themselves. Those who came before or during that time, managed to document themselves. However, the programme was stopped and those who came after were not able to document themselves," said Chirandu. I asked, what does it mean to your situation as undocumented migrant entrepreneurs? "It simply means that I cannot legalise my stay here because I came in 2016 after ZDP. I am operating illegally because

I do not have proper documents which allow me to register my business,” replied Chirandu.

Supposedly, the city of Johannesburg uses its power as a chief source of conformity and social discipline to let the informal die while letting the formal live (Foucault, 1991; Rabinow, 1991). In formulating its response, the city of Johannesburg gets rid of undocumented migrant entrepreneurs through repression and diminishing their activities. The metro police unleash its brutality against migrant entrepreneurs who strive to earn a living. The immediate undesirable impact of police raids and harassments is evident from the individual testimony of migrant entrepreneurs most affected. Chirandu a migrant entrepreneur operating along Jeppe Street, for example, reported that he was harassed with his stock confiscated by the police. “In these trying times to survive, I was interrupted by the metro police who suddenly arrived, harassed me and took everything,” said Chirandu. In the same vein, Mhofu attested that his employee was threatened by the police who asked for a license and the owner of the business. He said the metro police also took R1000 from the cashier threatening to arrest them since they failed to produce a trading license and their documentation.

Although State authorities are responsible for enforcing the law and controlling the movement of migrants in South Africa, migrants complained about the metro police’s actions. In a discussion with Mukanya, it came to light that the metro police confiscate undocumented migrant entrepreneurs’ wares. Mukanya had to say, “Our experience as foreigners is pathetic. Cops frequently confiscate our goods, harass and demand bribes from us. We are operating like we are in hell my brother; the situation is tough. In some occasions we get arrested and detained.” He admits that he is illegally staying in South Africa but reiterated that such a treatment is not fair especially if the government is reluctant to document and register them to legally operate. Other vulnerable migrants like Nhenga grieved that they feel abused because after confiscation of their goods they must restock from their meagre profits. Generally, State repression is abusive and disturbs migrants who are trying to sustain their livelihoods while contributing to the mainstream economy. For Scott (1987: 29), State repression is “...too certain and real.” Surprisingly South Africa is called the rainbow nation meaning a nation for all citizens regardless of

race and colour. However, the “rainbow nation gradually lost its hold” by discriminating foreigners (Abe and Katsaura, 2016: 55). The ‘rainbow nation’ is being built on the exclusion of the black African ‘other’, the *amakwerekwere*” (Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008: 1331).

Essentially it seems that the South African government inherited apartheid migration policies to repress and abuse foreigners (Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008). Abe and Katsaura (2016) argue that migrants abuse indicates that living together is a social problem in South Africa. As a rainbow nation, South Africa should be based at developing a nation that includes foreigners to defeat the apartheid legacy of exclusion of non-citizens (Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008). State practices should be considerate in governing migrant entrepreneurs especially on the question of documentation and registration of their businesses. Currently the DHA is acting like a government apparatus used to suppress the rights of foreigners as illustrated by their unorthodox means of dispensing with the undocumented migrants.

Targeting of migrant entrepreneurs also opposes the dictates and purpose of the 1996 South African Constitution. “Sections 205–208 describe the function of the South African police services. In particular, section 205(3) states: ‘the objects of the police service are to prevent, combat and investigate crime, to maintain public order, to protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property, and to uphold and enforce the law’” (Alfaro-Velcamp and Shaw, 2016: 992). It is crucial to emphasise that migrant entrepreneurs should not be neglected, but equally need protection like their South African counterparts (ibid.). This decree, “However, tends to get lost in relation to immigrants in South Africa and their treatment” (Alfaro-Velcamp and Shaw, 2016: 992). While taking a Marxian perspective which views the State as primarily an instrument used by the capitalists for the annihilation of the have-nots, undocumented migrant entrepreneurs are considered lousy merchants who must face the same treatment as drug dealers (Obo and Coker, 2014). This also concurs with Rogerson’s (2016: 235) assertion that, “The local urban state in Africa usually serves the interests of the elite and middle class protecting the interests of capital particularly during periods of ‘normalcy’ when the State is not under pressure.”

Indeed, the daily conundrum of Zimbabwe migrant entrepreneurs' usual life and, more generally, the absence of the State's care is perennial and immediate sources of misery for most foreigners. The State target on migrant entrepreneurs, and especially police harassments and raids has affected most deeply those without documentation and those with no means to secure their businesses through registration. State harassments also bring further trouble to migrants in that it upsurges everyday uncertainty. The State negligence in protecting and supporting the poor, in this case migrant entrepreneurs, the more it becomes a source of victimisation (Chabal, 2009). The general consequence of police repression is a process of dehumanisation, it takes the forms of the humiliation on migrant entrepreneurs and suppression of their livelihoods. Sadly, these are mere politically and man-made tragedies imposed by the State against foreigners. Nonetheless, what is appalling in the case of migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg is the fact that repression exercised upon them and their businesses has been so hostile. It degrades migrant entrepreneurs and deflects migrants' dynamisms from more productive businesses.

Moreover, the Johannesburg urban space within which migrant entrepreneurs operate has been turned into an amphitheater of notorious contestations between State apparatuses and entrepreneurs as control of geographical space takes precedence over migrants' livelihoods. Most migrants who participated in the research echoed the same sentiments that it is common practice for migrant entrepreneurs to spend all day long in running battles with the metro police as the interests of urban formality, cleanliness and livelihood sustenance confront each other. As such, the livelihoods of migrants are fast becoming real issues of governance in Johannesburg but are facing strong confrontations from State authorities. For Lifebvre (1968), such practices by the State simply means a strong denial of the urban poor's rights to the city. The right to the city is the right to appropriate urban space by the marginalised groups in urban areas (ibid.). In the context of Johannesburg, the right to the city is only restricted to a small political, economic elite, and the indigenous majority at the expense of enterprising migrants who are denied the right to sustain their livelihoods. Although, the right to the city should allow for all classes including migrants to access, use urban space and make contribution to the development of the city (Lifebvre, (1968).

For Michael Foucault, the State should use laws as tactics to cater for the needs of the population which includes migrant entrepreneurs thus ensuring equality and that their operations are included in the mainstream economy. What is required to reduce inequality is documenting and registering activities of the vulnerable informal workforce (Bremman, 2013). Lack of documentation compels migrant entrepreneurs to live beyond the pale of State regulation (Stoller, 2002). Failure to document migrant entrepreneurs exposes the State's negligence to document them and shows that its strategies which are suppressive in nature naturally sprang from their lack of faith in the proletariat's potential and from the whole system of the economy and the government sectarian views and their elites' character (Marx and Engels, 1964). When arrested, it is likely that the metro police will hand over them to the DHA for deportation, as such, they always take precautions to avoid being detained and deported back to Zimbabwe. Lenin's criticism avowed State actions of exclusion in societies which has caused and continues to cause relapses into anarchism and adventurism (ibid.). He argues that there, "Is need for a State, but not the kind of the bourgeoisie needs, with organs of government in the shape of a police force, an army and a bureaucracy separate from and opposed to the people" (Marx and Engels, 1964: 262). To make matters worse, crackdowns on migrant entrepreneurs put them at risk of their health and life. For example, a participant grieved that his wife was sexually harassed during an arrest by the metro police. He had to say, "A police officer grabbed my wife's buttocks in public view and I never attempted to do anything about that since I also wanted them to set me free even if I had no documents and an operating license. I was even ready to bribe them if they were to set me free." The study further found that the notoriety of police officers does not consider the welfare of migrant entrepreneurs living with disabilities particularly the blind and the physically impaired who are also subjected to the same treatment as the able-bodied. In Newtown, a participant, Shumba, witnessed a police officer pushing a disabled migrant entrepreneur when there were quarrelling on the issue of licensing. Disabled people are the most vulnerable group since they do not have equal employment opportunities as able-bodied individuals for menial jobs which are easier to find. Most of them become entrepreneurs who are continually involved in police harassments due to lack of proper documentation and operating in undesignated sites and when the police arrives, they cannot escape. The

view of most migrant entrepreneurs demonstrates that they are contributing so much to the South African economy in the form of employment creation and contributing towards the GDP growth. It is however worrisome to note that State authorities regard migrant entrepreneurs with insolence, pursuant to the implementation of restrictions against them. Their businesses are facing infinite aggression from city authorities as they try to plaster under all vicissitude of informality (Huchzermeyer, 2011). However, the State should not only not exist as a supplementary repressive force but must improve the ease of doing business for migrant entrepreneurs by loosening registration and licensing requirements for migrant's small businesses.

Other participants demonstrated a consensus that the entrepreneurial enclave of Jeppe Street in the inner-city of Johannesburg is associated with state harassments. They argued that Jeppe Street is a private entity which should not be under the management of the municipality. However, the October 2013 Operation Cleansweep which sought to diminish informal traders in Johannesburg, the metro police took the operation as a scapegoat to target migrant entrepreneur's operations at Jeppe. While acknowledging State power to govern cities and implementing relevant policy measures, these functionalities are questionably undermining the viability of migrant's businesses in favor of protecting the wealthy class. The critical aspect of the municipality's policy draws attention on how they manage cities and whose interests they serve. The task of the city of Johannesburg is multifaceted. It extends its obligations to respond to social, and economic problems that affect the well-being of urban dwellers, they should consider the needs of all and sundry, the haves, the have-nots as well as the migrant entrepreneurs' welfare before harassing and arresting them. However, their actions exclude the wellbeing of migrants through repression and seizure of their goods. The management of migrant entrepreneurs in the inner-city of Johannesburg requires the State to craft policy frameworks that consider their welfare and make sure that migrants who are contributing to the mainstream economy are assisted to document and register their businesses.

Although unlicensed migrant entrepreneurs violate government laws that prohibit them from operating without licenses, they still operate and earn, but are always on the lookout for State authorities. Nzou said, "On several occasions the metro police come at my

workshop and take my stuff and fine me. I try to reason with them that I am trying to make a living, but they do not listen to my issue. They told me that I should follow the government laws. They further said I should apply for a license because I could not do business without a license. Although they took my stuff, they told me that if I pay a fine, I will get my bags back. So, I paid the fine and got my merchandise back.” This is an indication of the fact that migrant entrepreneurs lose a lot of money through regular payments of fines. Considering the small profits that they make it is difficult for them to sustain their businesses on the long run hence exacerbating poverty in their families.

The South African public culture has become increasingly xenophobic, and politicians often make statements that the “deluge” of migrant entrepreneurs sell food stuffs which they sleep on and that they are responsible for rising unemployment. The perception that migrants are responsible for a variety of social ills, has resulted in migrants increasingly becoming the target of abuse at the hands of citizens and members of the police, the army and the DHA. Chirandu told me that the police officers assaulted him when he failed to produce documentation for his stay in South Africa and a license for running his business. “They arrested me, verbally abused me and violently threw me into a police van” said Chirandu. In Foucauldian perspective, migrant entrepreneurs are subjected to disciplinary institutions and they are forced to behave the way State authorities want. In response to illegality and informality the South African police perform disciplinary actions by enforcing the law and diminishing all illegal activities in the country. Moreover, in a liberal point of view the powers of the government are shifted from the national government to the local authorities to govern and to control activities of people within the confines of their jurisdiction (Foucault, 2007). This means that the local government make policies and laws which are to control entrepreneurship and inclusively migrant entrepreneurs. It ought to be understood that unregistered migrant entrepreneurs are considered undesirable elements and thus the fate of undesirable entities in a repressive state regime is to control and repress those entities (ibid.).

Participants also complained that the police do nothing when migrants shops are targeted by violent protesters in Johannesburg. In the inner-city Johannesburg, migrant-owned shops had been repeatedly attacked and looted, the police failed to protect migrants. A



xenophobic atmosphere in South Africa has resulted in increased harassments of migrants. A participant, Chihera, revealed that their local competitors facilitate violence to intimidate and force migrant entrepreneurs out of the business, this is a xenophobic strategy used to forcefully shut down migrant owned businesses. When I posed a question to participants on State reaction to xenophobic attacks, they responded that the police are very slow to such incidents. They usually come after the damage has already been inflicted to victims. Moreover, a personal testimony from a participant Shumba confirms that the metro police hold an innate negative opinion about migrant entrepreneurs. He had this to say, “When they come to attend to the scene of the criminal act instead of investigating more about the culprits, the police tend to focus primarily on questioning the legality of our stay in South Africa as well the regulatory compliance of our businesses”. This illustrates that the mind of the police is corrupted because they use the law to suppress and repress the rights of the vulnerable groups rather than using the laws as tactics to protect the welfare of every citizen including migrant entrepreneurs. “...the good governor does not have to have a sting-that is to say, a weapon of killing, a sword-in order to exercise his power; he must have patience rather than wrath, and it is not the right to kill, to employ force, that forms the essence of the figure of the governor” (Lewellen, 2003: 137). In line with this contention, managing migrant entrepreneurs does not necessarily entail arrests, but includes consideration, and, of their protection and welfare.

Participants who once experienced deportation expressed misgivings over the situation at the repatriation centre, called Lindela. While detained for more than a year, immigrants experience malice at the hands of the South African police. Ill-treatment by the police at Lindela is also identified by Macheka (2018: 197) who notes that migrants face “uneasiness and distress” over the issue to deportation, the police “demand sexual favours and soliciting for bribes in return for contact with their families.” Mhofu described the situation at Lindela simply as “hell.” He grieved that at Lindela migrants are overcrowded, there is no access to the outside, there is also violent behaviour by authorities, poor quality of food and dirty blankets. One of the participants Dube lamented the Johannesburg prison where detained migrants share cells with felons. In this social context, a recent media report revealed that a Zimbabwean man told The Witness that he



and 19 other foreign nationals were being kept in “inhumane” conditions in a single cell at Loop Street police station as they wait to be deported back to their home countries (The Witness, 2019).

Other victims grieved that they are kept for long in the police cells. “We are being kept in inhumane conditions. Police cells were created to detain people for 48 hours, but we are being kept here for weeks now” said a victim (The Witness, 2019). To this end, brutality and detaining migrants for more than a year is in contradiction with the immigration Act amended in 2011, “which places a ceiling of 120 days on immigration detentions” (Macheka, 2018: 198). Section 34(1)(d) states that, ‘... illegal foreigners may not be held in detention for longer than 30 calendar days without a warrant of a Court which on good and reasonable grounds may extend such detention for an adequate period not exceeding 90 calendar days’, and they ‘shall be held in detention in compliance with minimum prescribed standards protecting his or her dignity and relevant human rights’ (Immigration Act 13 of 2002, 2014). The Refugees Act 130 of 2008 adds that, “the detention of asylum-seekers and refugees is technically barred because international law prohibits the detention of asylum-seekers for deportation” (Alfaro-Velcamp and Shaw, 2016: 995). However, participants demonstrated that deportation delay is motivated by lack of money for transportation and failure by officials to corroborate migrant’s nationality. Macheka (2018: 198) argues that a process of delaying to deport migrants “is bureaucratic and it can take more than a year while the undocumented migrant remains in detention.”

Assault and theft by officials during the process of arrest seems disturbingly common at Lindela. Several participants claimed to have been beaten and robbed of valuables by the police. Through desk research, the Human Rights Watch documented numerous serious human rights abuses at Lindela. It photographed more than ten migrants who claimed to have been assaulted by security forces and obtained medical reports documenting their injuries (refworld, 1998). A victim claimed that he was brutally beaten after complaining to security guards about poor bedding facilities at Lindela. Dube alluded that they were not enough blankets at Lindela and detainees sometimes died of malaria and fever. A victim interviewed by The Witness (2019) said that, “We are not allowed

visitors. We don't have basics like toothbrushes and toothpaste, and we haven't had a change of clothes since we were released from prison."

Furthermore, other participants described instances of corruption involving officials. Migrants said that police officers often suggest a bribe as an alternative to arrest and deportation. Chikonamombe revealed that a metro police officer volunteered to drive him to a relative to collect money for a bribe. Others revealed that the arresting police officer force migrants to buy beer before being released. The exponential frequency of corruption and xenophobic hatred in South Africa is an indication of activities in the foreign land of restrictions organised by State authorities. In this sense South Africa is seen as a flat and endless grid, a vast checkerboard of sovereign State, with State authorities concerned with their own satisfaction at the expense of fellow beings. Their own satisfaction is against the will of the State which aim to cease illegitimacy in its territory.

For Chabal (2009: 131), "...the State has served as a source of resources, which those in control have diverted for their own patrimonial purposes." In Johannesburg, police officials have "conspired to undermine the efficacy of the State by depriving it of the revenues to which it was entitled *and* by diverting the activities to which it should 'formally' have been devoting its energy" (ibid.).

Indeed, in the case of Johannesburg, corruption has weakened the State and condensed its aptitude to function. In turn, such disrepute has opened the mindset of migrant entrepreneurs to use their urgency in navigating State repression which has prolonged their stay and operations in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

#### 4.4. Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs Navigating State Repression in the Inner-city of Johannesburg

The study discovered that during police raids, migrant entrepreneurs close their shops to protect their merchandise. Participants like Chihera revealed that sometimes police officers use ambush attacks to approach and arrest undocumented migrant entrepreneurs. She further stated that in such situations migrant entrepreneurs use coded

whistles and certain signals upon the arrival of the metro police to alert their unsuspecting counterparts. For Scott (1987), such everyday forms of resistance require little coordination, and are predominantly effective survival strategies used by vulnerable groups to resist brutality against them. Thus, alerting each other is a symbol of togetherness and unity of purpose among migrant entrepreneurs, this illustrates that they are well connected to the extent that they stand with each other during exasperating times.

Whilst some undocumented Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs are worried about harassments and arrests, most of them reported that they are now used to such situations. Other participants such as Nzou, Nhenga and Chikonamombe disclosed that they pay bribes to State authorities whenever they are arrested. They indicated that it is their everyday routine to bribe the police. Nhenga had to say, "If you want to survive without disturbances in Johannesburg, you have to bribe the police." Since it is their everyday routine to bribe the police, it assists them to develop rapport with the police officers to the extent that at times they do not have to pay anything for them to operate. They negotiate for space using these relationships. The relationships formed between migrants and State authorities are often kept stable and well serviced to guarantee migrants' safety and protection. Such cordial relationships form a base for protection and survival for migrant entrepreneurs.

To hide their identities as undocumented migrants who operate illegally in Johannesburg, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs revealed that they use both fake permits and operating licenses which cannot be doubted by the police. Most of the participants stated that the use of fake permits has protected them for many years. Masiziba illustrated that, "I am operating two salons which are not registered but, when the police arrive, I produce fake papers. Police officers cannot distinguish between an original and fake permit, so it appears difficult for them to authenticate my documents." The use of fake permits is the most used strategy by undocumented migrants in South Africa. There are certain unscrupulous individuals who offer fake permits to undocumented migrants who want to acquire anything that requires documentation. In their study of immigrants in South Africa,

Alfaro-Velcamp and Shaw (2016) also recognised the unlawful market in migrant documentation that operate in Cape Town.

Illicit documentation markets are characterised by a blurring of legitimate and illegitimate documentation entrenched in the legal nebulousness of foreigners and their capability to gain and maintain legal status. Such documentation can only be authenticated by the DHA. While migrants are conscious of the consequences of being in position of fake documents, they articulated frustration with the level of corruption at the DHA and their difficulties in renewing Asylums and permits. Migrants complained that the DHA officials demand ridiculous bribes to accept their applications for asylum and permits. Shumba had to say, "It is stressful bro! when I was still using an asylum, I paid a bribe of R2500 to Home Affairs officials so that they can accept my application letter to seek asylum." Other migrants such as Chirandu revealed that they had to pay a bribe of R15000 to seek work permits. Migrants prolong their legal status by purchasing months on their asylums and permits from unscrupulous certain individuals. These difficulties force migrants to participate in illegal markets of emigrant documentation.

Using these strategies to evade police repression, migrant entrepreneurs have been able to prolong their stay to operate for a collective average period exceeding five years. The use of fake papers aids the undocumented migrants to validate and subsequently prolong their stay and operations in South Africa since the police cannot dispute the originality of such papers. In their own little ways, migrants are foreign symbol of resistance to State repression. These techniques of adjustment, especially the use of fake papers employed by Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs fall within the Marxian vision of the fall of the State. According to Marx collective actions of resistance by the masses will ultimately lead to the fall of the State. Migrant entrepreneurs through persistent struggles and perpetual resistance would succeed in capturing the capitalist State establishing their supremacy which would finally lead to the creation of an inclusive society. These resistive tendencies are emanating from migrant entrepreneurs who have succeeded in interpreting their times and experiences and as such are acting in accordance. Just as the Jaguar (see chapter 3.1.) Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs are being sleek in navigating the challenges bedeviling them in South Africa. Moreover, migrant entrepreneurs are blending-in with

their surroundings, the acquisition of fake documents to qualify them as regularised migrants is an example. They make their kill through earning revenue from their businesses.

Moreover, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' movement has its ultimate entity, of cause, the conquest of the State and the ruling class and naturally penetrating for space to sustain their livelihoods and arising from their economic struggles. Nothing more is required in such circumstances; it is merely a question of the State to adopt inclusive and protective measures to deal with the present emergence of migrants struggling to sustain their livelihoods. Since Marx and Engels (1964) criticise the State social antagonism, they suggest tangible solutions thereof, which Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs accepted, expounded and put into practice. Migrant entrepreneurs are always alert and act swiftly for the fulfilment of their agenda. Migrants tactics act as "levers of the movement in the beginning but become an obstruction as soon as the State outgrows them; after which they become reactionary" (ibid.: 73).

#### 4.5. Perceptions of Zimbabwe Migrant Entrepreneurs on State Repression in the Inner-city of Johannesburg

Migrant entrepreneurs feel that State repression and victimisation is an inhumane practice associated with wanton and unfounded hatred and discrimination levelled against fellow Africans. It came to light that if it was a question of general dislike of foreigners there would probably be hatred of other foreigners as well, but it appears that the xenophobic attitude is only directed on foreigners of black African origin. A participant, Masiziba, lamented that, "Compared to any other race, we are seen like germs on a wound which apparently need iodine solution all in a bid to eliminate us. They feel we are hindering progress by putting pressure on basic service delivery as well as on the job market. The real culprits plundering the South African resource base are left alone because maybe they have strong political protection while fellow black Africans enjoy nothing more than

the air.” She further grieved that the locals hate poor black migrants while the rich like the Gupta’s who are of Indian descent are left to enjoy the good of the land.

Most participants indicated that harassments and victimisation which Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs receive is fueled by social media and propaganda campaigns during election time. Migrants demonstrated that the perception that Zimbabwean migrants are criminals and are stealing jobs from South Africans is a mere rhetoric. In conversation with a participant, Nenga, he illustrated that, “The mere rhetoric that we are stealing jobs from South Africans is a myth. It is a common slogan used as a pretext to the xenophobic attacks against us.” For Landau (2012) a catchphrase “stealing jobs” is used by South Africans to justify the xenophobic outbreaks against foreigners. Furthermore, criminality is commonly leveled against migrants who are viewed as people who migrate to South Africa for the sole purposes of perpetrating criminal activities. The imprint of this rhetoric is dominant in South Africa and is successfully used by political actors to expel migrants from the country. Among other participants, Shumba, bemoaned that the former Mayor of Johannesburg, Herman Mashaba, was xenophobic, his recorded statements that, “Foreigners are all over the Street corners committing crimes.” Shumba added that, “I wish one day if we could have a leader like Julius Malema who love and respect his fellow Africans.” The invention of criminality by politicians dehumanise migrants thus exposing them to repression and xenophobic attacks (Christal, 2017). Instead, the State should act as a unifying force to straighten and shape social relations between citizens and migrants. (Reis et al., 2000).

In Nzou’s discussion it became apparent that victimisation and oppression in South Africa is socially justified with the logic that the victims are outsiders. Participants noted that they tactically endeavor to manage their susceptibility, their activities are tied up with anti-migrant feelings against them. “South Africans including the State hate us, they do not want to see us excelling. They feel an element of jealous when we utilise the available resources and use our brains to improve our lives,” said Nzou.

The process of registration appears to be weighed down by beauracracic barriers that hinder documentation. Migrants demonstrated that the ploy is well coordinated so as to nip all migrant entrepreneurial activities in the bud. The migrant entrepreneurs suspect

that the businessmen in the formal sector do not want them to control a percentage of the market. Shumba echoed that, “Shoprite has for some time been feeling the pinch from the informal sector which runs small spaza shops scattered all over high density neighbourhoods in Johannesburg to the extent that they have proposed to install their own smaller shops in neighbourhoods to compete with informal entrepreneurs.” To this end, the formal sector puts pressure to the ruling elite to endorse laws and regulations that favour their business operations while suppressing the informal sector. According to Lenin (1984), the State is used as a tool for class oppression. This ideally bears a dual school of thought, the first being that there is a strong desire by the ruling elite to control other social classes within the society when politico-economic disputes cannot be fairly resolved. In a democratic capitalist nation like South Africa, the ruling class maintain power and dominance. The other school of thought is that local businessmen in the informal sector use arms of the State to protect their interest while migrant entrepreneurs are forced out of competition through exclusion in the policy framework and xenophobic utterances.

One of the issues raised by the participants was the illegal detention which extend beyond the stipulated times. They noted that it appears that the South African authorities are overwhelmed by the number of migrants whom they have to deal with. When such a system gets overwhelmed it opens up to a plethora of malicious activities which among others include, authorities demanding for bribes, sexual harassment, neglect and general incompetence. “To be fair there are just too many of us holed up in this nation and it appears migrants constitute a great number of people in South African prisons and other detention camps,” said a participant, Chikonamombe. It simply means that the South African government has a role to play in regulating the stay of foreigners and strengthening the borders so that they ensure that undocumented migrants are kept out of the country.

An overwhelming number of participants regards the inner-city of Johannesburg as surrounded by corrupt and cruel State authorities. Like Shumba, Chihera, Masiziba and Dube, Chikonamombe had a radical approach to relating his perception on State response to their businesses. During an interview, Chikonamombe argued that the fact



that the metro police, whose responsibilities, among others, are to control the movement of migrants, protect citizens including migrants and businesses from delinquency, they themselves are seen as enacting delinquent behaviour. Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs are targeted by corrupt State authorities, like others, a participant, Chihera, noted that migrant entrepreneurs are usually confronted by police officers who try to extort bribes from them in return for failing to legalise their stay and businesses. According to interviews, police officers betray the government by creating relationships with migrants who they negotiate with for them to be set free. Such relationships are based on self-interest between the police and migrants, “a choice and action of these parties directed solely and simply to the gains of the greatest possible advantage over any and all other individuals in order to acquire all that can be possible acquired” (Solo, 1978: 32).

In Nzou and Chihera’s interviews, they both concurred that to some extent migrants put pressure on the South African government and decried bad governance in their home country Zimbabwe. Chihera said that, “If it was not ZANU-PF’s mismanagement of the country, I would be home working and looking after my family with dignity. I really miss home; Zimbabwe is a peaceful country where anyone would want to live in.” She further said that, “Rampant corruption by the ZANU-PF elite is responsible for our misery as migrants in South Africa. They must stop corruption! Or else we will die at the hands of foreigners who call us *makwerekwere*, thieves and our women as commercial sex workers in Hilbrow.” Zimbabwean migrants understand the devastating situation in their country fuelled by bad governance. Moreover, they are privy that the South African government is not obliged to look after them especially when they are undocumented and cannot be classified as refugees since Zimbabwe is not in a war situation.

#### 4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I used a Marxist-Leninist theory of the State to explain the experiences of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs on State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg. I demonstrated that undocumented migrants fail to register their



businesses due to lack of proper documentation that would legalise their stay in South Africa with some failing to register because they do not want to pay tax. On the other hand, registered migrant entrepreneurs operate with their businesses regularised by the State. Empirical evidence in this chapter reveals that State authorities, which include the metro police, use their legitimate power to repress and control the operations of migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg. The State maintains the status quo through stipulated laws which governs migrant entrepreneurs. However, the subjects resist State laws by over-staying and operating without licenses. Despite heavy clampdown by the DHA and the metro police, migrant entrepreneurs show no signs of repatriating back to Zimbabwe. As a way of resisting repression, some migrant entrepreneurs use fake documents acquired from unscrupulous foreign individuals to authenticate their stay in South Africa.

Finally, in this chapter I argue that State repression on migrant entrepreneurs is real and being experienced on a daily basis by Zimbabwean migrants in the inner-city of Johannesburg causing suffering which is exhibited through confiscation of their merchandise, subsequent detentions and incarceration. Sources of livelihoods are constantly diminished by State authorities. Furthermore, I assert that State repression is an inhumane reality and in this regard, it is imperative that international organisations such as the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) and International Organisation on Migration (IOM) must be engaged so that they investigate the purported human rights abuses on the hands of the South African government.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*“Apathy in the face of evil is morally deplorable”*

### 5.1. Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to display evidence that the study aims, and research questions were addressed through the amalgamation of the literature and in light of the new migrant entrepreneurs' stories and perceptions generated from the empirical findings. Moreover, the chapter serves to make recommendations on experiences of Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs on State Repression in the Inner-city of Johannesburg.

### 5.2. Revisiting Experiences of Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs on State Repression in the Inner-city of Johannesburg

The way State authorities respond to migrant entrepreneurs enables us to look closely at how Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs experience State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg. I observed that the South African metro police target undocumented migrant entrepreneurs because they are viewed as a threat to law and order. The systems of State apparatuses particularly the DHA isolates migrants from getting documented. This goal is achieved through an array of laws which have to do with the repudiation and restrictions that hold migrants from acquiring proper documents. In this case, lack of proper documentation such as work permits and business permits excludes them from accessing government support schemes, further worsening their already endangered livelihoods. For Chabal (2009) these circumstances are equated to the concepts of suffering and vulnerability. Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' vulnerability to exclusion is extreme due to the hostility they face from the metro police who do not observe the

constitutional provisions. The constitution is crafted towards inclusion for all inhabitants, including migrants.

I argued in this thesis that repression of migrant entrepreneurs is an inhumane practice enacted by the State to suppress migrants' livelihoods while protecting the citizenry of South Africa. What has been shown is that migrant entrepreneurs are subjected to harassments and victimisation by the South African metro police because they operate without documentation and requisite registration of their businesses. Furthermore, Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs are incarcerated to time-lengths exceeding the 120 days stipulated maximum detention time dictated within the South African Migrants Act. Due to their denial of legal registration, their merchandise is confiscated on a regular basis and only released through fine, bribe and other corrupt acts. I have also shown that Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs develop rapport with the metro police, communicate dangerous hotspots via coded messages amongst themselves and use fake permits which cannot be authenticated by the police. Such strategies have been able to validate and subsequently prolong their stay and businesses in Johannesburg.

Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs' exposure to police brutality in the inner-city of Johannesburg impinges on their livelihoods on daily basis. As a result of State repression, migrant entrepreneurs go by their daily routines in fear of being arrested. This affects their entrepreneurial aptitude which negatively impacts on the growth of their businesses. They fear that without recognition of their operations from the State, their businesses can be interfered with at any time which result in the disturbance of their sources of livelihoods. These modes of control and articulation by the metro police in conjunction with the DHA are therefore viewed as preserving order, making territories productive and controlling the movement of people in and out of the country.

The State apparatuses are also responsible for governing foreigners, disciplining them and letting them live or die in their territory. Like Marx, Foucault argues that, disciplinary power has the characteristics of the modern theory where power is exercised through disciplinary means in variety of institutions such as schools, prisons, army and police (Lewellen, 2003; Maggiore and McMahon, 2007).

### 5.3. Recommendations

Based on empirical findings, the study provides the following recommendations:

As reflected in the study, there ought to be concerted efforts towards engaging both regional and international organisations. Understanding that apathy in the face of evil is morally deplorable. No one should just watch and do nothing when crimes are being committed against humanity. Engagement of organisations such as Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union (AU), United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) and International Organisation on Migration (IOM) is of paramount importance. Such organisations must be engaged so that they investigate the purported human rights abuses on the hands of the South African government. A lasting solution must be found that will ultimately cater for the documentation of migrant entrepreneurs so that they get to be conscripted into the mainstream economy and can live peaceful productive lives. If anyone is found guilty of any crime the law must be used as reference in dealing with the matter

Furthermore, if globalisation is real, opening up of the borders and creating one global village, South African citizens and their State should civilise themselves by accepting migrants as their fellow brothers and sisters in their country. Migrant entrepreneurs are not stealing from anyone but are just people who are striving for survival while contributing to the south African economy through employment creation and the improvement of GDP.

In addition to that, Zimbabwe must fix its economy by fighting rampant corruption, arresting the runaway inflation as well as return to the rule of law so that it creates more opportunities for its citizens thus curbing the influx of people rushing to South Africa in search of greener pastures.

### 5.4. Further Research Suggestions

This study will incite further debates around the impacts of coronavirus pandemic on migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. The study contends that there is still paucity of the knowledge gap specifically in understanding the ways in which migrant entrepreneurs

navigate and sustain their livelihoods during pandemics or times of international health crisis. Also, the prompt impact of the lockdown measures implemented by the government of South Africa are devastating for migrant entrepreneurs. Through streets closure and restricted movement of people, migrant entrepreneurs are not able to work, their families are simply wallowing in poverty. The coronavirus impact on migrant entrepreneurs is exacerbating issues of food insecurity for the urban poor that depend on informal trade and has increased their vulnerability to poverty. Therefore, future studies could incorporate migrant entrepreneurs' experiences of aspects of health and well-being and the responsiveness of the state at a national level.

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## Appendix A: Telephonic interview Guide

1. Please share with me your experience of being documented and/or an undocumented migrant entrepreneur in South Africa? How did you come? What are the factors that pushed or pulled you to stay in Johannesburg? In short tell your journey and experiences until the present day?
2. Please share with me your experiences as a migrant and entrepreneur on State repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg?
3. How does the State\* respond to both documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in the inner city of Johannesburg? How does the State protect and support migrant entrepreneurs?
4. Does the State consider migrant entrepreneurs to be an important contributor to the economy of South Africa?
5. How do you think the State acts to guarantee that migrant entrepreneurs are protected? What type of infrastructure support has the State provided for migrant entrepreneurs? Please be specific in this answer by indicating when the infrastructure support was provided, what was provided and where?
6. What is the role of the State on the regulation of documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg?
7. What are the policies put in place by the State?
8. How do documented and undocumented migrants perceive the functions of the State in South Africa? What do you think about the regulation of migrant entrepreneurship in South Africa?
9. What are the implications of the State response to undocumented migrants? How does the State response affect your businesses and your stay in South Africa?
10. How do undocumented migrants cope with the challenges posed by state regulations on their stay in South Africa? How do undocumented migrants register their business if they do not have documents? How do they operate?
11. How do migrants support each other to navigate challenges posed by the State regulation?

12. How effective are the coping strategies employed by migrant entrepreneurs in ameliorating the challenges posed by the State regulations?
13. How do you think the State describe its relationship with migrant entrepreneurs?  
Does it work closely with migrants? If so, how? Please elaborate.
14. Please tell me about the ways through which the State engages other migrant entrepreneurs that you know of.

\*I will have already explained to them my working definition of the State.

## Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

Greetings!

My name is **LUCKYMORE MATENGA**. I am a full-time student in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. I am studying towards a master's in social Anthropology. In the fulfilment of my master's programme, I am conducting research titled '**Examining Experiences of Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs on State Repression in the Inner-city of Johannesburg**'. The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of Zimbabwean documented and undocumented migrant entrepreneurs of State-led repression in the inner-city of Johannesburg.

### What is the research about?

Migration has been on an upward trend for decades in South Africa with Johannesburg becoming a major destination for many Zimbabweans. The relative economic and political stability in South Africa has exacerbated the increase of migrants in Johannesburg, as many people migrate for better livelihood opportunities. However, the 'foreigner' tag, which is placed on African migrants living in South Africa exposes them to numerous challenges which include xenophobic attacks, police detention, victimization, violence and hostility. What further compounds the catastrophes confronting economic migrants in South Africa is the existence of two categories of migrants, that is, documented (legal) and undocumented (illegal) with the latter considered the most vulnerable as the State consistently implements aggressive measures to 'manage' them. What is evident through the rich volumes of literature about migration to South Africa is that migrant work (both illegal and legal) plays an important role in fortifying both the formal and informal market economy of South Africa. What is missed in this record is a plurality of research that pays attention to critically analyzing state-led violence against migrant entrepreneurs. Hence, this study, seeks to account for the prevalence of violence and repression sanctioned by the South African state in their efforts to regulate the influx of migrant labour into South Africa.

### What is involved?

I am inviting you to be part of my research by providing information about the experiences of both documented and undocumented Zimbabwean Migrant Entrepreneurs. This will be conducted through 2 in-depth telephonic interviews. During the interview you will be asked questions regarding your experience being a Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneur, living and working in South Africa. Questions will also be directed at your direct and indirect interaction with police and other State regulatory forces. This will be done in not more than 2 hours. If you allow me, the interviews will be recorded and hand-written so

that I will not miss any data provided during the presentation of the information provided. If you would not like to have the interviews recorded, please indicate so and I shall only make hand-written notes. I require telephonic consent from you to partake in the research. Two sets of interviews will be conducted with participants who agree to partake in the research. The first set of questions will attend to participants life experience of being a migrant entrepreneur in the inner-city Johannesburg. I will use an automatic call recorder software on my phone to record all verbal consent and telephonic interviews. I will cover topics like family structure, housing situations, financial security and religious perspectives. The second set of questions will serve as follow-up questions to the initial questions. They will be designed after a general analysis of the first set of questions. Topics that may be imbricated onto the initial set include, remittance structures, gendered experiences and possible experiences of imprisonment.

The questions asked in the interviews will assist in understanding the role of the State in the life experience of Zimbabwean migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg. Your participation in the interview is voluntary as you may decline to answer particular questions or withdraw from the research with no negative consequences. In the event that my research triggers emotional distress to participants, the Johannesburg Parent and Child Counselling Centre (JPCCC) have agreed - at no cost to you, to offer counselling services to participant, should there be a need. JPCCC is located at 2nd Floor (Entrance 13), CMI Building, Cnr. Empire & Hillside, Parktown, 2001, South Africa. Their contact number is 011 484 1734.

### **Will my privacy be protected?**

Data obtained from participants will be stored as anonymised, non-identifiable data. Paper data will be kept safe under lock and key cabinet in my apartment in Johannesburg. Electronic data will be kept in a Microsoft one drive accessible only to the researcher. Data will be kept securely for 5 years following this study, given the likelihood of additional longitudinal studies with the cohort. The researcher takes primary responsibility for the maintenance and eventual disposal of the research data. None of your personal information will appear in my report. If a participant withdraws, the use of their dataset will be withdrawn from use in the study unless explicit informed consent is obtained to use their data after withdrawal. Since the research is for academic purpose, once completed it will only be accessible through the electronic library at Stellenbosch University in Cape Town, South Africa. However, those participants that wish to read the thesis are welcome. The completed thesis will be made available to them. In the process of compiling data, I will use pseudonyms so that no one will identify the provider of the information. I will **NOT** provide real names in the research. The information provided will be kept confidential in

a password-protected device. The possible outputs to be produced from this research is a peer-reviewed article.

### **Why take part?**

This project aims to contribute to the field of migration studies. It aims to reveal the multiple ways in which the movement of migrants is regulated and, in some instances, punished. The work produced through your participation and contribution will help strengthen and foster positive outcomes for Zimbabwean entrepreneurs living in Johannesburg.

Thank you for agreeing to participate!