

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE VULNERABILITY OF YOUNG ZIMBABWEAN  
FEMALE IMMIGRANTS IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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## DECLARATION

I, Rachel Chinyakata (11605723), hereby declare that this thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Gender Studies at the University of Venda, hereby submitted by me, has not been submitted previously for any degree at this or any other university, and is entirely my own work. All reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

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Signature

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Date

## ABSTRACT

*The existence of humans has always been associated with movement, owing, among other reasons, conflicts, to disasters and search for more habitable areas and better living conditions. Historically, migration of women has not been given much attention by scholars; international migration literature has always been dominated by data on male migration. However, almost half of the immigrants coming into South Africa are women. Young female immigrants are considered more vulnerable than their male counterparts. Through a qualitative approach, this study aimed at investigating the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa's largest city and its industrial and commercial heartland, in order to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise their vulnerability. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used for data collection, and Atlas.ti qualitative analysis software was used to analyse the data. The population of the study was young female immigrants between the ages of 18 and 35 years residing in Johannesburg, and experts in the field of migration. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to select the participants. The findings of this study highlighted that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to abuse, discrimination, xenophobia, poor health, and social and economic problems. The abuse, discrimination and xenophobia were perpetrated by their partners, the society, colleagues in the workplace, employers, and the authorities who are supposed to protect and provide services for these immigrants. These problems were a result of the intersecting factors that cause the young women's vulnerability. These include nationality, gender, legality, language barriers, type of work, poverty (and the desperation it generates), and competition over job opportunities. The study indicated that these female immigrants do not look for the law's protection because they are afraid of being deported, and they are afraid of the police, who are reluctant to protect them, and often further abuse them. The study recommends the adoption of the Multistakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy which was developed in this study to minimise the young women's vulnerability. This strategy promotes the collaboration of different parties at all levels – individual, community, civil society, regional and national – in achieving this all-important purpose. All these stakeholders should collaborate in initiatives to promote and protect the rights of these young women, and ensure gender equality in migration.*

**Key words:** Abuse, challenges, exploitation, immigrants, vulnerability, strategy, young female

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Chinyakata family, for trusting in my abilities and also supporting me throughout this journey. I also dedicate this work to all those who spend their time tirelessly in standing up against inequality. Finally, this study is dedicated to all the female immigrants who are vulnerable to any form of abuse, discrimination, and other social and economic problems. Do not give up the fight for better living and working conditions.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CoRMSA	Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DZP	Dispensation of Zimbabwe Project
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West Africa
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
ICRMW	International Convection on the protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and their Families
IFDH	International Federation for Human Rights
IGAD-RMPF	Inter-Governmental Authority for Development Regional Migration Policy Framework
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPID	Independent Police Investigative Directorate
MPFA	Migration Policy Framework for Africa
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights
SA	South Africa

SADC	Southern Africa Development Region
SAHO	South African History Online
SAMP	Southern Africa Migration Project
SAPS	South African Police Services
STIWANISM	Social Transformations Including Women in Africa
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHR	United Nations Human Rights
ZSP	Zimbabwe Special Permit



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research by outlining the background to the study in order to identify the research gap. The chapter also includes the problem statement, aim and objectives of the study, research questions and the significance of the study. Thereafter the methodology, ethical considerations, preliminary literature review and theoretical framework are discussed. Finally, the chapter presents the delimitation of the study, definition of terms and the study layout.

### 1.2 Background

Migration is an important part of human existence. People have always been migrating from one place to another in search of better living and working conditions (Kalitanyi & Visser, 2010; Khattak, Khatoon, Khattak, & Khattak, 2016). The number of international migrants is estimated to be about 244 million (Michael, Boer & Donor Relations Division, 2016; Skeldon, 2017), which is a rise from 232 million in 2013 (United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), 2013) and of these 48% are women (International Organisation for Migration (IOM), 2016). This is a rise from 2005 in which women numbered 46,6% of all migrants (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2008). The migration of women has always been happening, but it was not recognised because of the stereotyped view that women only migrate as dependents and for marriage, or to accompany spouses or their parents (Ghosh, 2009, Caritas Internationalis, 2012). As a result, the migration of women internationally was invisible. In the past few decades, women started to migrate independently as the main economic providers of the family (African Union, 2016; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Population Division, 2016; Department of Home Affairs (DHA), 2017). This signified a shift in migration towards the feminisation of migration as now economically active women were migrating as the primary breadwinners.

The percentage of female migrants differs according to regions. In more developed regions the share of female migrants is 51,5%, and in the less developed ones it is 45,3%. The percentages of women migrating as compared to men in other regions are 51,2% in North America, 52,3% in Europe, 52,4% in Asia and 46,8% in Africa (Frank & Spencer, 2010; IOM, 2016). In Southern Africa the number of female migrants has remained constant over the years. In 2005 and 2015 the percentage of female migrants

in Southern Africa remained at 41% of all migrants in the region (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). In South Africa female migration is also high. Female immigrants account for about 42% to 44,4% of all the immigrants in the country (Africa Check, 2016a; South African Institute for International for International Affairs (SAIIA), 2019). This number does not include undocumented female immigrants because of the absence of statistics in relation to this group. Evidence from the arrest and deportation of undocumented immigrants shows that there are large numbers of undocumented immigrants in South Africa, including women (Aref, 2015; Campbell, 2015; Africa Check, 2016b).

Owing to widespread poverty, disease and degradation, and the high male unemployment rate in Africa, women are pushed to take the responsibility of earning an income for their families, thus resulting in a steady increase of women migrating to other countries (Caritas Internationalis, 2012; Russell, 2014). The feminisation of poverty in the Southern Africa region is resulting in many female-headed households depending on the migration of women in search of work to fend for their families (Crush & Williams, 2010; Crush, 2017). The migration of women in search of better employment gives them a chance to send remittances to their families in their country of origin. These are used for all the basic necessities of the families such as food, shelter, clothing and education.

The migration of women internationally is undoubtedly high. Women migrate to lift their standard of living and their families' condition (Niriella, 2014). According to Caritas Internationalis (2012), migration is not a gender-neutral phenomenon. This means that women and men experience migration differently. They show differences in migratory behaviour, and face different challenges and opportunities. Both men and women have to cope with different challenges such as vulnerability to human rights abuses, exploitation, discrimination and health risks. Most of the migration policies are gender-blind, meaning that they do not take into account non-equitable outcomes in the migration of men and women (IOM, 2004; Chisale, 2015; IOM, 2017a).

As women migrate both legally and illegally, they become vulnerable to challenges owing to their gender, class, age, ethnicity and nationality. In the United States of America, migration is restricted to the skilled or professional, thereby restricting unskilled women. These unskilled women end up entering the country without proper documents, making them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation (Michael, 2011). Undocumented female immigrants are vulnerable to lower wages, though they do most of the dangerous and labour-intensive work. In the United States of America, for example, undocumented

migrants are paid lower wages and are not provided with health insurance and other benefits for their families. This exposes them to enormous social and economic difficulties (Castaneda & Ruelas, 2011). Undocumented female migrants around the world are afraid to voice the challenges they face because of fear of deportation (Ghosh, 2009; Castaneda & Ruelas, 2011; IOM, 2013a). Sometimes when they try to report, authorities abuse them. This puts the lives of the female undocumented immigrants at greater risk because they cannot get the help they need.

As a result of gender stereotypes and gender division of labour, female immigrants in destination countries are pushed into occupations and sectors associated with traditional gender norms. This is seen through women being at the lower end of the employment hierarchy characterised by insecurity, lower wages, poor working conditions and lack of social protection (Frank & Spencer, 2010; Crush, Dodson, Williams, & Tevera, 2017). In most societies, although female immigrants may be skilled, most of them end up doing the work of unskilled people. In the labour market, there are highly gendered views of what work is appropriate for women. This results in most female migrants being often concentrated in care activities, domestic work and informal sector occupations despite their higher qualifications (Ghosh, 2009). This is confirmed by Khathoul (2015), who writes that skilled female migrants are faced with the risk of non-recognition of their skills and employment limitations on their permits, i.e. discrimination based on gender, nationality and ethnicity. These women are represented in low-skilled occupations, resulting in loss of their personal skills, or deskilling.

Insufficient attention to women in international migration leads to lack of recognition of women, which indirectly deprives female immigrants of information about employment opportunities, and their rights and entitlements in the destination areas. The work they do is often excluded from the legal framework surrounding work contracts, and is less able to ensure them legal protection (IOM, 2009; Crush et al., 2017). This situation makes them vulnerable to long working hours, lower wages than their male counterparts, and risk of exploitation and abuse (Ghosh, 2009). This is evidenced in China, where female immigrant workers are overrepresented in low-paying, labour intensive factories, where they are exposed to the violation of their rights, sexual harassment and abuse by employers (Kanthoul, 2015). The same situation is also rife in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), where the labour markets are stratified by gender, which provides very different incentives and opportunities for male and female immigrants. Owing to their being poorly paid and at the lower end of the employment

hierarchy, young female immigrants end up committing crimes, including prostitution, in order to supplement their wages (Niriella, 2014; Crush et al., 2017). This puts a lot of undocumented female migrants at the risk of prosecution and contracting HIV.

South Africa attracts a lot of immigrants from many countries. This is evidenced by a recorded increase of immigrants into South Africa from 3% to 6% between the years 2000 to 2015 (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). The number of immigrants in South Africa is difficult to determine. This may be because many immigrants in the country are undocumented, hence it is difficult to account for them. The estimated number varies according to different scholars. The number varies from 2,4 million to 3,1 million (UN DESA Population Division, 2016; DHA, 2017). South Africa is known as the major destination for female immigrants in the SADC (Crush et al., 2017). Zimbabwe is the largest contributor of immigrants into South Africa (Statistics SA, 2015; DHA, 2017). An estimated 3,4 million Zimbabweans have left their country for other countries (Idemuda, Williams, & Wyatt, 2013). Large numbers of women are also emigrating from Zimbabwe to other countries, including South Africa, as a result of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme in the 1990s, combined with the political crisis of the 2000s (Dick, 2015). This has left many Zimbabwean women with the option of migration in order to flee from political persecution and economic crisis in the country. Many female migrants are attracted to South Africa because the country is economically stronger than other African countries, and employers are willing to hire immigrants, including the vulnerable and undocumented, because they provide cheap labour (Idemuda et al., 2013).

Although there is evidence of female immigration into South Africa, not much has been done or written about the vulnerability of young female immigrants (SAIIA, 2019). The evidence on their vulnerability is still not there in the literature on migration. South Africa's current migration system does not consider gender aspects in migration and consequently fails to consider gender specific migration drivers, trends, and vulnerabilities (SAIIA, 2019). Many studies focus on migration in general, which is not gender- and age-specific. They do not take into account the implications of gender and age on migration. According to Chisale (2015), women and child immigrants in South Africa have become marginalised migrants. This is partly due to their exclusion from migration policies and literature. In order to understand the role and challenges faced by young female immigrants, it is essential to look at how gender influences the whole migration process, and to have an in-depth gender analysis of migration issues

(Petroziello, 2013; Fleury, 2016). There is a need for research in order to understand the vulnerability of young female immigrants as a result of their gender, coupled with other factors such as their age and their migration status. It is therefore important to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in order to understand their situation and develop a comprehensive strategy so that their vulnerabilities can be appropriately addressed.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

Historically, the migration of women was not given much attention by scholars. As a result, international migration literature has always been dominated by data on male migration. Young female immigrants are migrating independently every day in search of better living and working conditions. The migration of young females is a very important aspect of migration, which is often overlooked. However, young female immigrants face multiple forms of discrimination as women, young people and migrants (Cortina, Taran & Raphael, 2014). Coupled with this, young female immigrants are at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation in the destination countries (Kanthoul, 2015). Although women all over the world face challenges, it is worse for young female immigrants since the conditions in their destination countries may not be favourable for women to thrive (Media Club South Africa, 2014). Young female immigrants in various locations are more vulnerable to adversity than their male counterparts. In Johannesburg, South Africa, young female immigrants are vulnerable to challenges such as exploitation, abuse and lack of recognition both in the workplaces and in the communities they live in, because of their gender, status as immigrants and age. This situation calls for an urgent effort to find ways of protecting young female immigrants by making them less vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

### **1.4 Aim and objectives of the study**

This study seeks to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa, in order to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise their vulnerability.

The objectives of the study are:

- To first identify contributory factors to the migration of young females from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg.

- To examine the challenges faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg.
- To determine the factors contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg.
- To explore coping strategies used by young Zimbabwean female immigrants to cope with their vulnerability.
- To propose a comprehensive strategy to minimise the vulnerability of young female immigrants in Johannesburg.

### **1.5 Research questions**

- What are the factors contributing to the migration of young Zimbabwean females to Johannesburg?
- Which challenges are faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg?
- What are the factors contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg?
- What coping strategies do young Zimbabwean female immigrants use to deal with their vulnerabilities in Johannesburg?
- What strategy can be proposed to minimise the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study will contribute to the understanding of the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. The outcomes of the study will be used as a benchmark for assessing the practical challenges of young Zimbabwean female immigrants, and the way forward. Understanding the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to their challenges is necessary in order to address this problem. According to Phipps (2008), there should be gender-specific policies as migration creates gender-differentiated experiences and outcomes. It is hoped that the study will guide government policy makers to formulate practical policies which will assist in minimising the vulnerability of young female immigrants. To the young female immigrants, this study will be a platform for amplifying their voices, perceptions and concerns regarding their vulnerability in order for their issues to be visible and addressed. Most studies of migration have not focused on young female immigrants. This study therefore aims to

add the gender perspective which has been neglected in the existing migration body of knowledge. Most studies on migration have limited data on age and gender implications in international migration (Cortina et al., 2014; McDuff, 2015). The study will also develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise the vulnerability of young female immigrants.

## **1.7 Research approach**

The study made use of the qualitative research approach. This was chosen because it was the most appropriate for the topic under study. The aim of the study being to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg, in order to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise their vulnerability, the study seeks a deeper understanding of the topic. Therefore the qualitative approach was necessary as it provides richer answers to questions given to participants by the researcher (Hossain, 2011). Owing to the qualitative approach's unstructured, open and flexible nature, the study was able to explore diversity in the opinions of the participants rather than quantifying them. The qualitative research approach enables the researcher to understand the world through the eyes of the participants as they explain a particular issue (Pierce, 2008; Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2015). This was particularly important because the study sought to understand the situation of the participants as they see, experience and narrate it. The topic under study was a sensitive one, so the qualitative approach was the best in such a case.

### **1.7.1 Research design**

A case study research design was used in the study. This was because the researcher wanted a holistic understanding of the vulnerability of young female immigrants. In order to achieve this the case of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg was examined. The case study research design is useful when studying an area where little is known, or when you want to have a holistic understanding of the situation or phenomenon (Laws, Happer, Jones, & Marcus, 2013; Kumar, 2014). A case study research design was suitable in having in-depth information of the topic under study. This is because little was known on the vulnerability of young female immigrants as literature on migration was biased towards male migrants.



### **1.7.3 Sampling**

The study made use of purposive sampling in conjunction with snowball sampling to select participants. The criteria used were that the participants had to be immigrants from Zimbabwe, young (between the ages of 18 and 35), and female. Purposive sampling was used to select the migration experts to be interviewed. The sample size was twenty participants. A smaller sample was chosen specifically to get detailed information from those few participants who were interviewed.

### **1.7.4 Data collection**

Data was collected through the use of qualitative in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Both methods were used in order to validate the findings. Qualitative in-depth interviews helped to focus the research and explore a new or sensitive topic in detail (Laws et al., 2013). In-depth interviews helped because little information was known about the topic under study, so with this type of interview there was no need for predetermined questions. The topic was also a sensitive one, so in-depth individual interviews were of great assistance because some participants felt free to open up in a one-to-one setting rather than in groups. Six out of eighteen young Zimbabwean female immigrants were interviewed. Also two migration experts who are individuals from organisations dealing with migration issues were also interviewed. These helped in getting specialised knowledge about the vulnerability of young female immigrants. The migration experts also helped in generating a comprehensive strategy and recommendations to minimise the vulnerability of young female immigrants. Focus groups were used as they provided shared experiences of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. Two focus group discussions with six participants were conducted.

### **1.7.5 Data analysis**

Data was analysed through the use of the Atlas ti. software. This was used because the literature on the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants was limited. Themes were therefore identified from the data instead of being preconceived.

### **1.7.6 Ethical considerations**

The researcher adhered to the regulation code of ethics in order to protect the participants. She received an Ethical Clearance Letter from the University of Venda



Research, Ethics and Publication Committee, which gave permission to collect data. This thesis followed the regulations and guidelines stipulated by the University of Venda Research, Ethics and Publication Committee. The following measures were adhered to in order to maintain high ethical standards:

- (1) **Informed consent:** The researcher informed the participants about the purpose of the research before they agreed to be part of the study. The participants were also informed about their rights – for example, to withdraw if they felt they no longer wanted to be part of the research and to participate voluntarily. The participants consented to participate voluntarily, and they signed a written consent as evidence of voluntary agreement to take part in the study.
- (2) **Voluntary participation:** The participants were not forced to participate in the study, but participated of their own free will.
- (3) **Avoidance of harm:** Harm to the participants was carefully avoided. Interviews were stopped whenever there were any signs or complaints of discomfort by the participants.
- (4) **Confidentiality:** Confidentiality was discussed between the researcher and the participants before the study began, and all the records of their information were kept in a secure environment.
- (5) **Anonymity:** The actual names of the participants were not used in this study. Only pseudonyms were used in order to avoid participants being linked directly with their information.

### 1.7.2 Location and population

The study was located in Johannesburg, which is one of the hubs for immigrants in South Africa. The population of the study were young Zimbabwean female immigrants between the ages of 18 and 35 staying in Johannesburg, and migration experts working in organisations dealing with migration.

### 1.8 Preliminary literature review and theoretical framework

This section gives a brief discussion of the literature review to familiarise the reader with some of the topics that are covered in Chapter 3, which deals with the literature review in this study. This preliminary literature review highlights the necessity of conducting the study by identifying some of the gaps which warrant an investigation on the vulnerability of young female immigrants.

### 1.8.1 Contributory factors to migration

The migration of people is determined by a variety of factors. The world today is unstable: there are a lot of environmental disasters and wars and an unstable economic environment, to mention only a few troubles. These cause people to move in search of better living, working and educational opportunities that are not offered by their own countries. Economic disparities between countries continue to influence the migration of people. Low incomes push people to other countries (Basita, 2013). For example, millions of Zimbabweans move to other countries, specifically to South Africa because it is economically stronger and offers better economic incentives than their home country (DHA, 2014).

Around the world the lack of peace and security continue to be a problem. In different continents people are being displaced and forced to move because of violent conflicts and persecutions. In 2015, in Africa, the total number of refugees was 19,5% of the total number of migrants (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). This shows that forced migration is rife in Africa. Though both men and women move within the same environment, the factors that influence them are not the same. Female immigrants are not only forced to flee political conflict, but also gender-based persecution such as rape, domestic violence, gender inequality, forced marriages and female genital mutilation (Sammers, 2010; UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014; Ferrant & Tuccio, 2015; Triandufyllidou, 2016). Although women are pushed to migrate because of these gender-based persecutions, they sometimes face more challenges at their destinations. This is because of the universality of patriarchy in which they are likely to meet the very same challenges that they have fled from, and other difficulties related to their status as immigrants.

In addition, some women are becoming increasingly educated and independent, which might push them to migrate to further their education and find better jobs (Fleury, 2016). This means that women might migrate in order to uplift their standard of living. In view of the above it is important to conduct a study on female immigrants in Johannesburg in order to find out what is contributing to their migration. Most of the migration data focuses on men, and are not generalised to women. Furthermore, the limited data on female migration does not concentrate on young female immigrants in Johannesburg. It is therefore essential to discover the factors contributing to their migration in order to gain a comprehensive picture of the problem.

### **1.8.2 Migration, gender and vulnerability**

Migration is a very important current phenomenon occurring globally. Men and women move all over the world in search of better lives. However, migration studies have often focused on migration involving men. This painted a picture that women do not migrate. The fact of the matter is that like men, women have always moved from one place to another. Before the 1960s, migration of women was nearly invisible, and not recognised (Ghosh, 2009), because they were taken as passive in the whole migration process, and their place was assumed to be in the home (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). Women were just seen as the other in the migration process as they migrated to accompany their spouses, and for family reunion (IOM, 2009).

Currently, women and girls are participating in migration as economic actors, but this is still not very visible (Care International & ODI, 2014). Most international migration policies are still designed with the male breadwinner in mind, since there is still a conventional belief that women migrate for marriage. This is not the case because women, especially the young and active, move with or without their families for employment and education (Ghosh, 2009). There are an estimated 244 million immigrants in the world, and of these 48% are women (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). The current trends show that women continue to migrate in large numbers (Sammers, 2010). This trend is commonly known as the feminisation of migration. Therefore it is very important to look at migration from a gender perspective, specifically the female gender; and yet the migration of women continues to be side-lined.

Various migration theories, policies and literature are patriarchal in nature. Earlier migration scholars saw migration as a gender-neutral phenomenon. According to them, men and women experience migration in the same way (Lee, 1966; Dugbazar, 2007). This made them ignore the role and influence of gender in the whole migration process. In addition, the earlier scholars of migration were sociologists and male. Though these men claimed to be scientific and objective, they showed bias by promoting male perspectives, because the knowledge they produced favoured them (Appelrouth & Edles, 2010). This is seen in the dominance of migration literature by issues concerning male migrants. The fact is that migration can never be a gender-neutral phenomenon; rather it can be perceived as a gender-specific phenomena. For instance the decision to migrate might, for a man, be individual but for a woman it is influenced by a variety of factors. In the migration of women gender plays an important role. In some societies, women are expected to make decisions based on their families rather than individually

(Chant & Raddiffe, 1992). This means that female migration may be restricted as the rule in a particular society may be that they should seek approval from their husbands, in-laws and other relatives, but men might not need approval from anyone. For women to migrate they may have to overcome these barriers, which can sometimes lead to divorce.

In the destination areas for migration the influence of gender can also be seen. There are non-equitable outcomes for both males and females. There is no doubt that for some women migration can enhance their autonomy, power and access to resources by having economic independence, confidence and greater freedom. According to Martin (2004), when women move to more industrialised societies they become familiar with new norms regarding women's rights and opportunities. Women can also change the traditional norms as they gain access to education or economic opportunities, thus also increasing their human capital (Fleury, 2016). But for some women migration creates more challenges for them. They might face stricter gender roles, and also traditional gender roles can be reinforced in the destination country. For example, in refugee camps women continue to be reproductive members of the family responsible for domestic activities, while men find themselves unable to fulfil their traditional roles as they cannot continue with their patriarchal role of being the providers. These frustrations experienced by men may result in increased family tensions, domestic violence against wives and children, depression and alcoholism (Martin, 2004). The rights of female immigrants who obtain their legal residency through family formation or reunification may be limited to their spouse's willingness to support their immigration claims. Female migrants may become victims of spousal abuse, and many are reluctant to leave their spouses as they (the spouses) control access to the women's legal status.

Female migrants are also at a disadvantage as compared to their male counterparts. They face higher rates of unemployment and underemployment compared to migrant men and both local men and women (Cortina et al., 2014; Fleury, 2016). Female immigrants end up in informal sectors where they are discriminated against by unfair labour practices. Their work is neither covered nor partially covered by the labour legislation, social security and welfare provisions of the destination countries (ILO, 2008; Kanthoul, 2015). This makes migrants vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by the employers. They become subjected to little or no pay, long working hours, insufficient rest periods, and restrictions on movement and association. This is worsened by the fact that female migrants, especially undocumented ones, cannot complain about this because of fear of deportation or being tried in a court of law (Cortina et al., 2015).

In South Africa the role of gender in migration keeps on being side-lined by the international migration policy. The 1999 international migration policy was created as the basis of all immigration legislation and regulation in South Africa (DHA, 2016). When this policy was created the migration of women into South Africa was invisible. During the 1990s men from other Southern African countries migrated to South Africa to work in mines and farms (Crush, Williams, & Peberdy, 2005) but female immigration was prevalent in South Africa. This made the South African international migration policy biased. In the 2000s, scholars started acknowledging the presence of female immigrants in South Africa (Adepoju, 2003; Crush et al., 2005). Even so, the South African international migration policy does not take into consideration the issues of female immigrants, thus putting them at risk of abuse and exploitation. There is a need to update laws in all countries to take into consideration the current trend of the feminisation of migration. This will aid in avoiding gender discrimination, abuse and exploitation of women.

It can be noticed from this discussion that gender is a very important aspect in migration studies. It is important to look at the vulnerability of young female immigrants as influenced mainly by gender, but also by other factors such as age, status as migrants and nationality. Literature and policies on migration continue to ignore the issues of female migration (Chisale, 2015), thus making the migrants vulnerable to abuse and exploitation both economically and socially. Therefore, in order to remedy the situation of young female immigrants there is a need for an in-depth gender analysis of migration issues (Petroziello, 2013; Fleury, 2016).

### **1.8.3 Theoretical framework**

This study discusses migration from different theoretical perspectives. This is relevant in understanding the issues relating to the vulnerability of female immigrants. Different migration theories, that is, the Ravestein migration distance hypothesis, the network theory, and the push-pull theory explain the factors that influence migration (Samers, 2010; King, 2012; Manning, 2013; Jansen, 2016). The Ravestein migration distance hypothesis argues that the main drivers of international migration are economic (King, 2012). This means that people migrate to seek better economic opportunities: for example, better jobs and a better standard of living. The network theory highlights that social ties existing in the destination countries act as the motivation for migration (O'Reilly, 2012). The push-pull theory combines elements of both the Ravestein migration distance hypothesis and the network theory. It explains migration in terms of

push factors, which repel people from a place, pull factors, which attract people to a place, intervening obstacles which are barriers to migration, and finally the personal factors which influence a person's decision to migrate (Faist, 2012; Jansen, 2016).

Even though these migration theories explain the factors that contribute to migration, they fail to explain the aspect of gender in migration. Therefore, only explaining and applying these theories would not have done justice to the study, since the study looked at the vulnerability of young female immigrants. Therefore, in order to cover this gender gap in migration theories, feminist theories are also used to discuss and explain the study.

The feminist theories in this study are the feminist conflict theory, radical feminism, the standpoint theory, African feminism, and the intersectionality approach. The goal of the feminist conflict theory is to address gender inequality and power imbalances between groups of people, specifically males and females (Turner, 2013). In the case of this study, young female immigrants are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation because of the patriarchal nature of the society, which puts them at a disadvantage. Radical feminism aims at fighting patriarchy and inequality between men and women. These two theories advocate for gender equality by removing all the factors that promote gender inequality (Ryle, 2015). Relevant to this study is the fact that the radical feminist seeks to abolish all the mechanisms which create unequal opportunities for female immigrants as compared to their male counterparts. The standpoint theory and African feminism advocate the situated experiences of women, and rejects the notion of white women generalising their experiences to the black women and women in Africa (Akin-Aina, 2011; Hesse-Bibber, 2014). Therefore, to understand the vulnerability of young female immigrants it is important to look at their own experiences based on their location and from their own point of view, because they are the ones to best explain their vulnerability. The intersectionality approach looks at the multiple sources of oppression for women that act simultaneously to cause disadvantage in their lives. They argue that gender is not the only factor that puts women at a disadvantage; there are other factors like their class, nationality, age and culture, to mention only a few (Pannel, 2012; Basha, 2014; Ryle, 2015).

For the purposes of this study the integrative approach was adopted, whereby the push-pull theory and the intersectionality approach were used to interrogate and explain the phenomena under study. The push-pull theory explains migration based on push factors, pull factors, intervening obstacles and personal factors (Lee, 1966; Kurekova, 2011;

Chang, Liu, & Chen, 2014; Jansen, 2016). The push-pull theory has been chosen for its comprehensive explanation of the causes of migration. Most of the literature on migration has focused on migration of men. This study claims that migration was not only by men, but also by women. All the factors raised by Lee also apply to the migration of women.

So far the push-pull theory only covers the first objective, which is about factors that contribute to young female immigrants' migration. In order to address other objectives that cover the vulnerability of young female immigrants, the intersectionality approach was used, because unlike other theories, it looks at the different sources of oppression of women. This approach assisted in looking at the different issues that point to the vulnerability of young female immigrants. The intersectionality approach has therefore guided this study in looking at the disadvantages of young female immigrants from a gender perspective. It has also helped to identify the personal disadvantages in young female immigrants' lives. These include nationality, age and their status as immigrants. Combining the push-pull theory and the intersectionality approach has been helpful in interrogating and explaining issues of migration more holistically.

### **1.9 Delimitation of the study**

The study was limited to Johannesburg, South Africa, to determine the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants located there. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalised to other areas.

### **1.10 Definitions of key terms and concepts**

**Exploitation:** it is the act of taking advantage of something or someone for one's own benefit. It can be through, but not limited to, sexual exploitation, forced labour and slavery (IOM, 2004). In the context of this research, it refers to the economic, physical, sexual and social exploitation of young female immigrants by their male counterparts, their employers and the destination country's society at large.

**Gender discrimination:** refers to the systematic unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender which denies them rights, opportunities or resources (Revees & Baden, 2000). In this study, gender discrimination refers to the discrimination against young female immigrants on the basis of their gender.

**Gender equality:** refers to women having the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere



(Revees & Baden, 2000). In this study, it will refer to young immigrants having the same opportunities as their male counterparts.

**Immigrants:** are people who enter and reside in a country usually from other countries in search of employment and better living conditions (UNESCO, 2016). In this study, immigrants refers to young females in South Africa from Zimbabwe.

**Migration:** the intentional or unintentional movement of people internationally or within a state. In this study it refers to the movement of young female immigrants from other countries into South Africa.

**Patriarchy:** refers to the societal structures that institutionalise male physical, social and economic power or dominance over women (Ryle, 2015). In the case of this study, patriarchy will refer to all the social arrangements or beliefs that give men power over women.

**Strategy:** refers to a complex web of thoughts, ideas, insights, experiences, goals and expertise aimed at providing guidance for specific actions in pursuit to achieve a certain goal (Nickols, 2016). In simple terms it is a plan of actions aimed at achieving a desired goal. In this study the term strategy will be used to refer to a plan aimed at minimising the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

**Vulnerability:** is being at a higher risk of being subjected to discriminatory practices, violence, natural disasters, or economic hardship, than the other groups within the state (IOM, 2011). In this study, vulnerability will refer to the exposure of young female immigrants to economic and social challenges, abuse and discrimination.

**Violence against women:** any act of gender-based violence that normally results in physical, sexual or psychological harm, coercion or subjective deprivation of liberty (IOM, 2004). In the context of this study, violence against women will refer to any violence against female migrants resulting in physical, sexual or psychological harm.

## 1.11 Chapter divisions

**Chapter 1: Introduction and background.** Introduces the study and provides background of the study. The background and the preliminary literature and theoretical framework also included to justify the study. It also includes the problem statement, aims and objectives, the significance of the study, a summary of the research methodology, and definition of operational terms.



**Chapter 2: Theoretical framework.** Various migration and gender theories are discussed and explained in the quest to account for migration. These are the Ravestein migration distance hypothesis, the push-pull theory, the network theory, feminist conflict theory, radical feminism, the standpoint theory, African feminism and the intersectionality approach. Much of the emphasis will be given to the push-pull theory and the intersectionality approach, as they are the theories that were used to guide this study.

**Chapter 3: Literature review.** The chapter discusses, explains and analyses the body of literature that exists in the field of migration. Specific reference is given to the historical overview of migration, trends and patterns, and legislation and policies protecting the rights of female migrants and guiding migration. The types of migrant, factors contributing to migration, benefits of migration, the challenges faced by female migrants, their coping strategies and strategies to deal with migrants' challenges are discussed.

**Chapter 4: Research methodology.** This chapter presents the research approach which was used to address the objectives of the study. The research design, population and location, sampling strategy, data collection, analysis methods, measures of trustworthiness, study limitations and ethical considerations are discussed.

**Chapter 5: Profiles of the participants and contributory factors.** In this chapter the biographical profiles of the participants are presented, followed by analysis and interpretation of the data that emerged on the objective that sought to identify the factors contributing to the migration of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

**Chapter 6: The vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants.** This chapter continues with the data presentation, analysis and interpretation. It focuses on the challenges faced by the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg, and highlights the factors that contribute to their vulnerability.

**Chapter 7: Coping strategies and a comprehensive strategy to minimise vulnerability.** This chapter continues with data presentation, analysis and interpretation. It gives an outline of the coping mechanisms used by the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to cope with vulnerability. This chapter also discusses some of the strategies identified by the participants to deal with the vulnerability of these immigrants, and includes a comprehensive strategy developed by the researcher to minimise the vulnerability of young female migrants.

**Chapter 8: Overview, summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.** The overview of the study, summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations are presented in this section. The contribution of the study is also highlighted.

### **1.12 Conclusion**

Chapter 1 has laid a foundation for this study by providing a background, problem statement and comment on the significance of the study and the literature which justified it. The aim and objectives of the study were presented, and the research methodology, ethical considerations, the delimitation of the study, definition of terms and the study layout were explained. The next chapter presents different theories that are used to explain migration and gender issues, and that guide the study.

## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter covers the theories that guide and explain this study. Different migration theories and gender theories are discussed in order to explain the phenomena under study. The migration theories help us to explain migration from different points of view. Though these theories provide insight into migratory behaviour, they do not take into account the influence of gender on migration. For this reason both migration and feminist theories are discussed in this study to explain the vulnerability of female immigrants. According to Jarvilouma, Moisala and Viikko (2003), feminists provide the strongest foundations and theoretical innovations for gender studies.

The migration theories discussed include the historical migration theories and more recent ones. The historical migration theories include the Ravestein migration distance hypothesis and the push-pull theory. The modern migration theory discussed in this study is the network theory. Mixing historical and recent theories helps in interrogating the issue of migration from a multiplicity of angles.

The feminist theories discussed in this study are from two broad categories of ideology or feminist movements. These include the Western feminist movement (from which radical feminism and feminist conflict theory were derived), and the black feminists, also known as the third world or post-colonial feminist movements (where the standpoint theory, African feminism and also the feminist intersectionality theory fall) (Mishra, 2013; Tyagi, 2014). These theories have been used in this study to examine the issues facing female immigrants.

### **2.2 The significance of theories in research**

Human beings have always been on a quest to discover, explain and understand the laws of the universe and the behaviour of every living thing. This has given rise to different ideas which are critical in constructing theories. A theory is helpful in explaining and predicting everyday experience and phenomena of the world (Delport, Fouché & Schurink, 2011; Craib, 2015). This means that theories explain and predict different phenomena that occur around the world, whether in the natural environment, in the social environment, or the biological and psychological aspects of human beings and animals. Theories can also be defined as an organised body of concepts and principles intended to explain particular phenomena (Tavallaei & Abu Talib, 2010). This means that theories

combine concepts and laws in order to answer the how and why questions. In research, theories help to provide detailed and organised explanations of the problem being researched.

According to a study by Hlanga (2012:32), in researching challenges, theories determine the policy environment. This means that theories help to highlight 'how the phenomenon is perceived; what is known about it; what aspects should be emphasised; and what actions or decisions ought to be taken.' According to this statement, theories are essential in looking at the research problem, and connecting it to the larger structural environment. That is how policies are linked with the problem, the knowledge that is available concerning the problem, and what can be done to solve that problem. Such an angle of viewing the world is essential in providing insight and solutions to the problem under study.

In social sciences theories are essential, because they are employed to explain and understand the experiences of individuals, groups and communities, and general ideas about the world (Craib, 2015). It is important to understand the various experiences, cultures and behaviour of different people when seeking to have knowledge about them, or to have critical insights into their ways of life. Theories help with ideas that can be used in order to minimise social ills or remedy certain challenges. This means that theories can provide specific laws that can explain an occurrence of a certain problem. Therefore when one understands a specific problem one can devise appropriate solutions, or make recommendations. In short, theories are actually a roadmap towards finding a solution for a certain problem.

Theories are essential in explaining migration from different angles, but they are silent on the role of gender in migration. This limits scholars and researchers' ability to holistically explain and understand the issue of gender in migration. Therefore, it is important to use feminist theories as they explain the conditions under which women migrate, and their predominance in certain occupations (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). It would be difficult to understand the role of gender in migration if feminist theories were left out. They help to explain various migratory behaviour and the vulnerability of female immigrants. There is a need to develop a theory or a model which will be capable of explaining the issue of gender in migration which migration theories have often been blind to. By doing this researchers will have contributed to migration studies by closing the gaps created by migration theories' neglect of gender. Such a theory or model will be critical in integrating both gender and migration issues.

## **2.3 Theories discussed in this study**

### **2.3.1 Migration theories**

Migration is the movement of people from one area, or social context, to another. Though the definition of migration can be seen as simple, the process of migration is more complex. This is because it encompasses the preparation for migration, the actual migration and the post migration stage (Manning, 2013). It also includes the opportunities and challenges of each of the stages. Therefore in order to explain and understand the complexities of migration different theories were developed over time.

The new migration theories added to the areas that had not been previously explored in migration studies. In this study various migration theories are discussed in order to achieve the goal of fully explaining the complexity of migration discourse. Through looking at multiple migration theories the gender gap which has been left by many migration theorists will be clearly seen.

This section discusses theories of migration with specific reference to Ravestein's migration distance hypothesis, push-pull theory and the network theory. The assumptions of each theory, its links with the current study, its strengths and weaknesses are pointed out.

#### **Ravestein's migration distance hypothesis**

The Ravestein distance hypothesis is one of the earliest works by migration theorists, developed in the nineteenth century by a geographer named Ravestein (Ravestein, 1885; Samers, 2010). For Ravestein, the primary reasons why people migrated were economic (King, 2012). He assumed that people migrate for higher wages, or to find better working conditions. This can be seen in the recent trends of migration whereby people still migrate to seek better economic opportunities (Basita, 2013; Galvin, 2016). Ravestein developed laws of migration based on data from the 1871 and 1881 British censuses that he used to determine the way people migrate from one area to another. The actual number of laws by Ravestein are not known because scholars differ about the total (Tobler, 1995; Samers, 2010; Manning, 2013). These laws of migration help to provide some explanations on the causes of migration. For the purpose of this study, some of these laws are discussed in the next paragraphs.

The first law of the Ravenstein migration hypothesis states that migration is inversely related to distance. This means that the migration of people is influenced by the distance a person has to travel from the area of origin to the destination area. As the distance to the destination area increases the number of migrants migrating tends to decrease (Dugbazah, 2007; Sammers, 2010; King, 2012). King (2012) argued that those who travel longer distances will be heading for greater centres of industry and commerce. This theory's assumption can be helpful in explaining the reason why many Zimbabweans are in South Africa and other neighbouring countries as compared to other African states, and states outside Africa. The high number of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa can be attributed to South Africa's geographical proximity to Zimbabwe. In other words, Zimbabweans find it easy to migrate to South Africa because the distance from Zimbabwe to South Africa is shorter than the distance between Zimbabwe and other African countries, such as Nigeria, Egypt or Libya.

Another law of the Ravenstein migration hypothesis highlights that migrants are attracted to industrial areas where many economic activities take place (Dugbazah, 2007; Ravenstein, 1885; Samers, 2010; King, 2012). This means that people migrate to places where they can find jobs and improve their economic standing. This assumption would help to explain why most migrants in Southern Africa are attracted to Johannesburg. The reason for this is that Johannesburg is the industrial hub in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). As a result, many immigrants are determined to travel a long distance to go to Johannesburg in search of work as this, they think, will improve their living conditions. However, if nearer countries have better economic opportunities people are likely to migrate to such countries rather than those that are further off.

The other law developed by Ravenstein is that migrants tend to move towards an area of absorption (destination area) at the expense of dispersion (emigration from that area) (Samers, 2010; Manning, 2013). This means that as migrants go to a destination area, others from that area move to other regions i.e. there is counter-migration. In other words, when migrants move from their countries people will come from other countries and replace them. It must be noted that this law of migration does not really refer to the current migration trends occurring globally. It contradicts what is happening, for example, in Zimbabwe people move to South Africa and fewer people move to Zimbabwe from other countries owing to the lack of opportunities in Zimbabwe. Another example is that of war zones. When people flee from war zones there is no counter migration. A closer look at the issue of Johannesburg in South Africa shows that when both international

migrants (i.e. migrants from other countries) and internal migrants (people from other provinces) come and flood the area, there are fewer people moving out of the region because everyone wants to be in Johannesburg, the economic hub of South Africa and SADC.

Another law of the Ravestein migration hypothesis maintains that women migrate more than men over short distances. The results of the 1871 and 1881 British censuses indicate that women travelled more than men over short distances (King, 2012). Ravestein (1885), in Samers (2010), stated that women migrate more than men. Traditionally, women are associated with domestic life. However, in terms of this law in Ravestein's migration hypothesis, there were more women migrating than men as proven by the census done in Germany. The higher number of women than men migrating to the city was due to women's search for employment in the manufacturing sector. This was in contradiction of traditional expectations that women should stay at home and focus on domestic chores and bearing children. This showed the role of women as economic migrants rather than dependents, travelling not only to accompany their spouses or for marriage, but as the primary economic providers for their families.

Women's migrating more over short distances than men might be because of their traditional gender roles, which include taking care of the children and elderly relatives, and doing the household work. Such responsibilities tie them to the family, so they cannot move to places far away. However, women preferring to migrate to areas that are not far away is problematic because over the past two decades they have been migrating over long distances at the same rate as men (Sammers, 2010; Dich, 2015; United Nations, 2016). Though the above argument shows that the migration of women has always occurred, migration theories have remained silent about the role of women in migration, thereby furthering the patriarchal agenda in migration literature.

The Ravestein hypothesis also indicated that migration is governed by the push-pull process, an idea which was further articulated by Lee in 1966. The favourable aspects in an area attract people, and the unfavourable push them away. According to the Ravestein hypothesis, the main pull factor for migration is the presence of economic opportunities (Ravestein, 1885; King, 2012). This means that people will always go where there are economic opportunities such as employment and business opportunities in order to improve their standard of living. Young female immigrants may travel to places with more economic opportunities for them to develop. In Zimbabwe, the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in the 1990s has led to both men and women

losing their jobs. Women have therefore taken on the burden of caring for their families, and are forced to look for work. Since there are no jobs in Zimbabwe because of the economic situation in that country, Zimbabwean women are forced to migrate to other areas. This has ultimately given rise to the feminisation of migration in Zimbabwe, when women travel in search of attractive economic opportunities (Dick, 2015).

Though the Ravestein migration distance hypothesis helped to explain some of the factors influencing migration, it has received a lot of criticism from some scholars. Much of the criticism is of the notion that distance decreases the number of people travelling. This is not applicable in today's world owing to improved transport and communication (Dugbazah, 2007). According to Dugbazah (2007), the main criticism against this theory is that a long distance is not in itself a hindrance to migration, but it is rather the desire to maintain contacts like close family relationships in the area of origin, and the expense and difficulty of travelling. This means that people might not want to travel to far away destinations because they want to maintain closer family relationships, and it might be too expensive and difficult to travel longer distances.

The law that migration produces counter-migration might not always be applicable in many countries. This is because countries with a strong economy continue to be flooded by immigrants, and emigration occurs at a lower rate. For instance, as has been mentioned, there are many Zimbabweans migrating to South Africa, but there are no people replacing them because of the lack of opportunities in Zimbabwe as a result of an ailing economy.

The other weakness of Ravestein's theory that needs to be brought into focus is its inability to encapsulate the critical aspects of gender and migration that are addressed by this study. The theory acknowledged that women migrate in large numbers, but it did not look at the effects of migration on women. This made female migration continue to be discounted. The Ravestein migration distance hypothesis has thus proved to be inadequate in providing a holistic gender-centred analysis of migration.

### **Network theory**

The network theory originated in sociology and anthropology in the 1970s. It is attributed to the work of Douglas Massey (Massey & Espana, 1987; Samers, 2010; Manning, 2013). According to O'Reilly (2012), the network theory is more sociological as it is informed by the general theory of how social life unfolds. This means that the theory is a result of how social groups or people interact every day. It attributes migration to



personal, cultural and other social ties (Dugbazah, 2007). Networks in migration are interpersonal relationships linking migrants with their kin, friends and community members who are in their home country (Arango, 2017). Some of the ties can be institutions or organisations that help migrants to get jobs, or adjust to the destination area (Poros, 2011). According to Manning (2013), networks are a series of interconnected social, political and economic relationships that individuals manage to maintain across the world. This means that networks in migration are not only based on social interaction between individuals. They could also be the result of organisational interactions: for example, political parties extending information to other organisations that have the same interests. Business corporations share information with recruitment agents across the globe if they are in need of labour. These relationships and communications facilitate the migration of people.

According to this theory, information about opportunities in receiving countries is sent through social networks such as friends, family and neighbours who emigrated (Agesa & Kim, 2001; DHA, 2017). This means that people are likely to migrate when they have information from the people they know and trust. Migration networks assist in the migration period and reduce the financial and psychological costs associated with the migration (King, 2012; Castles, de Haas, & Miller, 2014). For instance, the availability of someone in a destination country can lessen the burden of not having a place to stay as soon as you arrive. The presence of friends and family can also help one to cope with a new environment. This means that social networks can provide a support base for new migrants. They can provide food, shelter, information about access to jobs, health care and other services, religious organisations, and recreation and emotional support in the destination area (Samers, 2010; Arango, 2017).

The network theory helps to understand migration as a social product, not a result of economic and political activities, but an outcome of all the factors of interaction (Boyd, 1989; Joly, 2017). This means that migration is not only determined by economic incentives as stipulated by the adherent of the classical perspectives, but also by the presence of significant others in the destination countries who act as information providers. According to Boyd (1989), being socially connected to someone creates a migratory information feedback mechanism where contacts act as conduits of information to potential migrants. Castles et al. (2014) argue that migration can be conceptualised as a diffuse process in which networks can cause the cost of movement to fall and migration to rise. This means that having contacts in destination countries can

cause other people to migrate to those destination countries, thus making the migration networks widen and expand. This is because every person that migrates can act as a source of information to those that have stayed at home, and they can also facilitate movement (Arango, 2017). Thus networks provide room for migration, which leads to more and more people providing information and facilitating movement.

The network theory on migration clearly states the social reasons why migration increases. It also explains why migration continues to happen in other regions even if sometimes the economic incentives are low (Arango, 2004). For example, in South Africa some migrants are low-paid, but they still migrate to the country because of the social networks they have created and the availability of family and friends.

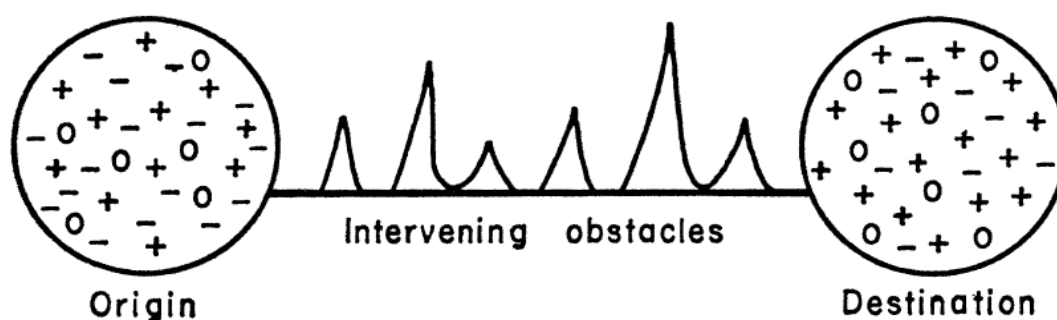
The network theory provides an important explanation of migration. This is because it is almost impossible for people to migrate to places where they do not have information or people they know. However, it should be noted that the network theory has some shortfalls (O'Reilly, 2012). One of its greatest weaknesses, as with most migration theories, is that it views migration as a male-only phenomenon, which constitutes a very serious omission in the migration discourse, because whatever difficulties migrating women experience have a serious adverse impact not only on them, but also on their families. The gender bias displayed by the advocates of the network theory made this theory unsuitable for this study.

### **Push-pull theory**

The push-pull theory was developed by Everett Lee in 1966. It is seen as a reformulation of the Ravestein migration distance hypothesis. Ravestein looked at the push and pull factors to migration, but did not expound on them. Lee therefore developed a migration theory from the ideas Ravestein had put aside.

According to Lee (1966), the act of migration can be explained under four major factors: those associated with the area of origin, with the area of destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors. According to this theory, every area has factors which act to attract people to it (pull factors), and there are others which repel them (push factors) (Chang et al., 2014; Jansen, 2016). That is in every country there are positives that attract people, and negatives that repel them (see Figure 1 below). Push factors may include natural disasters, unemployment, poor health and education, wars, desertification, persecution and discrimination. For young female immigrants push

factors might also include some issues related to gender discrimination: for example, forced marriages, domestic violence and social oppression.



**FIGURE 1: ORIGIN AND DESTINATION FACTORS AND INTERVENING OBSTACLES IN MIGRATION**

**Source:** Lee (1966)

Pull factors may be job opportunities, better living conditions, political and religious freedom, better medical care, family links and higher salaries (Lee, 1966; Taylor, 1986; Kurekova, 2011). The push and pull factors in the original and destination countries are differently defined for every migrant or prospective migrant (Jansen, 2016). This means that every immigrant perceives benefits and costs differently. Migration eventually occurs when the the pull factors outweigh the push factors (Faist, 2012). This means that the positives in the destination country have to overcome the negatives in both countries of origin and destination. What might act to attract a person may repel another.

According to this theory, there are also factors that act as barriers to migration. Variables such as distance, physical and political barriers and having dependents can impede or even prevent migration (Lee, 1966). If the destination country is too far, some people may choose not to migrate, but opt for a nearer country. Having dependents may be a barrier to migration because some people cannot leave their families. On the other hand having family members in a destination country can actually provide networks for migration. Permits, visa restrictions and tighter migration laws can also act as barriers to migration. However, some people may try to overcome them by resorting to undocumented migration methods. Bernstein (2011) notes that strict immigration policies and border controls will only push immigrants to use other illegal channels to migrate.

Lee (1966) stated that the migration process is selective. Differentials such as age, gender and social class affect how a person responds to the push-pull factors, and these conditions shape how people overcome intervening obstacles. Furthermore, a person's education, knowledge of a potential receiving population and family ties can facilitate or retard migration. The push-pull theory will be used in this study to guide the explanation on the contributory factors to the migration of young female Zimbabwean immigrants, and the barriers they face in the migration process.

Even though the push-pull theory explained factors about why people migrate, it failed to explain gender-specific migration experiences (Jolly & Revees, 2005). The theory was based on Ravestein's migration hypothesis, but it ignored the law of migration – that women migrate more than men – which was proposed by Ravestein in his earlier work. Without the theoretical underpinnings which include both genders, it is difficult to fully explain the vulnerability of young female immigrants by using this theory only. It is important to add another theory which explains their vulnerability from a gender perspective.

To sum up: migration theories failed to take into account migration according to gender. They ignored the role played by gender prior to migration, during migration and after migration in the destination countries (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). There is no doubt that migration can entrench traditional roles and inequalities, and expose women to various vulnerabilities. This is worsened by the absence of theories, policy and practice that link gender equality concerns with migration (Jolly & Revees, 2005). Therefore it is very important to look at migration from a gender point of view.

### **2.3.2 Feminist theories and migration**

This section covers the various feminist theories that help to explain the vulnerability of female immigrants by considering the aspect of gender in migration discourse. They have been incorporated into this study because migration theories have failed to explain migration from a gender perspective, thus demonstrating scholars' indifference to the uniqueness of women's experience in migration, and the dominance of the patriarchal ideology. Owing to the influence of patriarchy, scholars and theorists in migration studies did not see the migration of women as a significant event. The side-lining of women and issues that affected them reduced the significance of women's experiences during migration. These patriarchal tendencies gave rise to feminism, whose goal was to put women and their issues at the centre of social activities.

Feminism is an activist movement, and a set of ideas aimed at transforming society so that women become active citizens in all spheres of life. Feminism is women-orientated, and concentrates on issues that concern women with the aim of bringing about change in their issues (Kimmel, Hearn & Connell, 2005; Ibeku, 2015). Feminists conceived theories that privilege women's issues, voices and lived experiences. These theories aim at social transformation, and redressing injustices that destroy the lives of women (Hesse-Biber, 2014; Mama, 2014). According to Lorber (1997), feminist theories were developed as a way to resolve gender inequality and its pervasiveness that are present in all parts of the world. Gender inequality is embedded in all structures of society such as marriage and families, work and economy, politics, religion, the arts and cultural production, and languages (Lorber, 1997; Kimmel et al., 2005). Feminism is aimed at promoting gender equality in all spheres of life.

Feminists advocate the rights of women, and call for injustice against women to be addressed. However, a minority group's, for example female immigrants', disadvantage is often ignored in the destination country's movements that advocate gender equality. This is because sometimes female immigrants are few and less visible, and their immigrant status makes them not seen as important compared to local women or the destination country's citizens. According to Manning (2013), studies of migration should pay attention to the issue of different sexes in migration. Therefore it is important to explain the disadvantages of female immigrants from the feminist viewpoint. Feminist debates help scholars and policy makers to understand what is causing women's disadvantage (Altman & Pannel, 2012). Although there have been extensive studies on the causes of migration, feminist debates also help scholars and policy makers to understand the role of gender in migration.

The theories discussed in this study include the Western feminist theories, which generalise the experiences of women, and the post-colonial feminist theories, which examine the unique experiences of women. Though these theories show significant differences they have a commonality in the fight for justice for women. For the feminists, male privilege is a common factor which they want to do away with (Kalawole, 2011). This section includes the feminist conflict theory and radical feminist theory, which are broad categories of Western feminism. These two theories were formulated and applied to the issues of women around the world. However, some feminists later argued that the experiences of women cannot be generalised because women face various challenges based on their location, class, race, sexual orientation, and cultural and religious beliefs.

This gave rise to the post-colonial feminist movement, which looks at the situated and subjective experiences of women (Mishra, 2013; Tyagi, 2014; Scott, Clayleff, Donadey, & Lara, 2017), as in the intersectionality approach, the standpoint theory and African feminism, which are discussed in this study. These three theories explain the lives of black women in Africa, and their disadvantages. The intersectionality approach will be applied to the issues of young female immigrants in Johannesburg, because of its powerful account of the various sources of disadvantage of female immigrants.

### **Western feminism**

This section discusses feminist conflict theory and radical feminism, which can be categorised as Western feminist thought. The pioneers of these theories were white women of the Western world whose aim was to fight patriarchy and unequal power relations between men and women. These theories generalised the experiences of white women in Europe to all other women in various locations.

#### ***Feminist conflict theory***

Feminist conflict theory was developed from the earlier work of Karl Marx (1818-1833). Conflict theory asserts that social structure is based on the dominance of some groups over others (Lindsey, 2015). In this theory, society is seen as made up of individuals from different social structures competing for limited resources, whereby the dominant groups always try to maintain their dominance by controlling all the resources. According to the theory's assumption, competition over resources is the heart of all social relations. Individuals that benefit from any particular structure will strive to see those benefits maintained. Change for people to treat each other equally does not just happen through adaptation. It always happens through some form of conflict between people with competing interests (Cragun & Cragun, 2014). The oppressed should engage in some form of conflict against those who oppress them for change to occur.

Women are evidently inferior to men in their access to wealth, power, authority and other kinds of valuable resource. The feminist conflict theorists explain how the powerful are able to take resources from those without, or with little, by using force (Usman, 2014). In the context of this research, the powerful are both local men and women and immigrant men with power over female immigrants. These people use their power to exploit young female immigrants. The theory argues that gender is best understood in terms of power relations. Men's dominance over women is viewed as an attempt to maintain power and privilege that they have always had in the society to the detriment of women (Cragun &

Cragun, 2014). The theory tries to address gender inequality and gender roles in which male interests and privileges are put first (Turner, 2013). This approach postulates that there is nothing normal about patriarchal or male domination in a society (Fleras, 2012). The feminist conflict approach therefore prescribes changes to the power structure, advocating a balance of powers between genders. Young female immigrants in South Africa are vulnerable to many forms of abuse and exploitation in all spheres of their lives by powerful oppressors. This is because of the patriarchal nature of most societies, which puts women at a disadvantage, leading them to have unequal powers in terms of their migration and in the destination country.

Feminist conflict theory explained how the society is always fighting for unlimited resources, with the powerful always striving to maintain their status by oppressing the weak. This theory, like other early feminist theories, has been criticised for its failure to account for other sources of oppression that exist in women's lives. It is not only patriarchy and their social standing in the society that put women at a disadvantage, but other complex factors such as age, race, nationality and culture. The theory took the struggles of women as a battle between equals, and did not look at the distinct causes of disadvantage in women's lives.

### ***Radical feminism***

Radical feminism emerged as theory which problematised patriarchy at all levels of the society. It emerged in Germany as a response to the challenges that were faced by women working in the civil rights and anti-Vietnam movements. These women were not allowed to present their positions on the causes they engaged in. Their views were not taken seriously by men they were working with, even if some of them were very significant. They were insulted and ridiculed by men for their views (Lindsey, 2015). This kind of treatment made women realise their own oppression on the basis of their gender, and they organised themselves to oppose it. This gave rise to the radical feminist movement.

Radical feminists' main theoretical watchword is patriarchy. Patriarchy can be defined as men's universal and persistent oppression and exploitation of women which can be found in all spheres of life where men and women are in contact (Lorber, 1997). This results from the belief embedded in most men's consciousness that women are inferior to men. Radical feminists believe that sexism (the belief that people of one sex are superior to people of the other) is the core of patriarchal societies, and all societies reflect sexism. Therefore radical feminists advocate the creation of separate institutions that are women-



centred and rely on women rather than men (Lindsey, 2015). In support of this, Lorber (1997) highlighted that there is a need for women-only spaces where they can think and act without men putting them down, harassing and abusing them. This would help eradicate the oppression of women by men who see themselves as the superior sex.

Radical feminism theory aims at reordering society by eliminating male supremacy in all social and economic contexts. It seeks to abolish patriarchy by challenging existing social norms and institutions. It also challenges the traditional gender role by challenging sexual objectification of women, and raising public awareness of the challenges women face. Most societies are patriarchal in nature, since men are oppressors of women. Women have been viewed as the other to the male norm in being marginalised and oppressed. Radical feminists seek to abolish patriarchy and believe that the way to do this is to address the underlying causes (Willis, 1984; Ryle, 2015).

Radical feminism explains how women are marginalised in many societies, giving them less power and making them vulnerable to all kinds of exploitation. It aims at abolishing traditional gender roles by raising public awareness of challenges women face. According to Ryle (2015), radical feminism seeks to restructure society and promote consciousness-raising activities. In the context of the study, female migrants are marginalised in the whole migration process, thereby strengthening the patriarchal ideologies in many societies. Female immigrants are vulnerable because of societal inequalities between men and women. Therefore, there is a need to abolish such inequalities by raising issues facing young female immigrants. This can be done through research that will raise awareness of how young female immigrants are vulnerable in order to minimise the systems that promote their vulnerability.

Radical feminism has been criticised for universalising gender oppression. Radical feminism presented women's experiences in a monolithic view. It has been accused by other scholars of neglecting ethnic and social class differences among men and women. In addition it was also seen to downplay other sources of oppression as negligible. Radical feminism was believed to be raising the voice of European white middle-class women whose experiences could not apply to women of other races in other countries. Such weaknesses make it unable to fully guide the study on the vulnerability of young female immigrants.



## Post-colonial feminism

Post-colonial feminism is a branch of feminism which challenges the universalising of experiences by white European and North American feminists. Even though feminist conflict theory and radical feminism helped in explaining the oppression of women, these theories were biased because they did not give special attention to the experiences of black women. They mainly advocated for the rights of white women in Europe and North America, forgetting the experiences of black African women. They generalised experiences of women, thus turning a blind eye to the specific experiences of women in different societies or groups. This gave rise to the post-colonial feminists, who include black feminists. They advocate for the situated knowledge of women (standpoint theory), and identify multiple sources of oppression of women (the intersectionality approach) and experiences specific to African women (African feminism) (Akin-Aina, 2011; Hesse-Biber, 2014; Basha, 2014). These theories help the researcher to effectively explain the disadvantages that are specific to black African women, as this study's focus is on young female immigrants in South Africa. The vulnerability of young female immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa is discussed below, using the standpoint theory, African feminism and the intersectionality approach.

### ***Standpoint theory***

Feminist standpoint theory is rooted in the Marxist and Hegelian idea that an individual's materials and lived experiences shape his or her own understanding of his or her social environment. This implies that what an individual possesses and his or her everyday experience determines how he or she sees their social environment. The feminist standpoint theory was developed between the 1970s and the 1980s as a critical theory about relations between the production of knowledge and practices of power (Lorber, 1997; Harding, 2004). When the standpoint theory emerged most scholars and theorists were men. Although they claimed to be scientific and objective, they still showed bias by emphasising and promoting the relevancies, interests and perspectives of men. This indicated that scholarship was masculine. Their methods, concepts and theories were conceived and based on the male social universe (Appelrouth & Edles, 2010). This underscored the dominance of men in knowledge production, which resulted in knowledge favouring masculine ideologies. It was the dominance of masculine knowledge, methods, concepts and theories which led to the emergence of the standpoint theory. This theory was conceived with the sole purpose of making and

promoting knowledge made by women informed by their specific experiences or circumstances.

Standpoint theory criticises the production of knowledge that oppresses women. This theory rejects knowledge that is based on European masculine thinking which oppresses women, including black women. This theory places emphasis on the victims of oppression by bringing their voices to the mainstream dialogue (Hesse-Biber, 2014). Women's life stories are also valuable form of knowledge. According to Assiter (1996), standpoint means situated knowledge. In her argument Assiter used the term epistemology, which refers to the production of knowledge. This means that one of the themes of the standpoint theory is producing knowledge of the oppressed groups. The standpoint movement advocates for the production of knowledge by women themselves for women as subjects rather than accepting traditional masculine biases which always push their knowledge to the periphery (Assiter, 1996; Harding, 2004). This is because women's voices are different from those of men and they can be heard only if women challenge these hegemonic values. Standpoint theory emphasises the power of self-definition. This means that the oppressed groups have the mandate to participate in knowledge production through sharing their experiences with scholars and researchers in order for their issues to be put in the forefront of knowledge. As women take part in producing knowledge, the knowledge they produce becomes relevant and meaningful for them. From this argument, one can conclude that in terms of female migration the oppressed group that is the female immigrants have to produce knowledge which privileges them by taking part in researches that put their information in the forefront of discussions. Migration literature has been dominated by literature on male migrants, thus making the female migrant invisible in theory and policy on migration, and vulnerable to all forms of exploitation and abuse in the destination country.

The standpoint theory also rejects the notion that knowledge can be universalised. They advocates of the standpoint theory strongly argue that knowledge is socially situated (Mojab, 2015). According to Hill Collins (2000), women should not be reduced to one homogenous group as they have different experiences. Harding (2004) further argues that knowledge should be based on experience. Therefore, different experiences should enable different perceptions of people and their environment. Harding (2004) adds that each oppressed group should be able to identify its distinctive opportunities to turn an oppressive feature of the group's condition into a source of critical insight on how the dominant society thinks and is structured. This means that the most disadvantaged

groups have the responsibility of creating their own knowledge. In relation to the vulnerability of young female immigrants. The immigrants themselves have to articulate their voices in terms of how they are vulnerable in order to create insight on their situation rather than that their experiences should be generalised using knowledge generated in other societies.

According to the standpoint theory, the different situations that women and men find themselves in produce different kinds of knowledge (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). This means that the knowledge that people have is based on their situation. In support of this, Smith (1997) states that firstly no one has or can have a complete and objective knowledge. Smith argues against male scientists who take scientific knowledge as universal, general, neutral and objective. In the true sense their knowledge is partial, particular, masculine and subjective. Therefore men's knowledge cannot be applied to women. Different sexes and different social situations will produce unique knowledge based on experience; hence knowledge is subjective. Secondly, no two or more people can have the same standpoint. This means that every individual has got his or her own uniqueness therefore their experiences are different. Thirdly, the standpoint from which people speak must not be taken for granted. A person's standpoint should be recognised, and people must be reflexive about it and also problematise it. This shows that an individual's standpoint is essential, and a source for solving their identified challenges (Smith, 2005; Appelrouth & Edles, 2010). In terms of this study, the standpoint theory helps in explaining the importance of having situated knowledge that applies to a specific group of people in a specific context. From the standpoint theory's perspective, knowledge and experiences of female immigrants cannot be universalised. Female immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa might have different experiences from female immigrants elsewhere in the world. Therefore, the knowledge on the vulnerability of young female immigrants has to be subjective, based on their situation. A specific standpoint has got its specific challenges. Thus the challenges to the vulnerability of female immigrants using Johannesburg as the standpoint can highlight the specific challenges faced by the female immigrants in that situation. This also provides the researcher with a roadmap on how to provide the solution to their challenges, which is not possible when challenges are universalised.

Standpoint theory maintains that the sciences and its research methods are biased on the issues of gender, race, class and sexuality. Research disciplines that focus on women do not permit any conceptual framework in which women located in different

class, racial, ethnic and social locations become the subjects or the authors of knowledge. Therefore, standpoint is an approach to enquiry which advocates for the production of knowledge from an insider perspective rather than knowledge being imposed by outsiders (Figueroa & Harding, 2003; Harding, 2004). When women take part in knowledge production through taking part in research on which they can air their views become empowered to speak for themselves, or define their own experiences. In relation to female migration, standpoint theory explains how female immigrants' knowledge in specific situations has been discriminated against. Therefore standpoint feminism advocates for female immigrants to speak for themselves in different fora in order to problem the forms of oppression they are facing.

### ***African feminism***

African feminism emerged in the 1970s as a perspective or a movement specifically created by African women to address the challenges that African women in the African continent face (Mekgwe, 2008). Their main concern is in addressing the challenges specific to African women in Africa as they have been left out in knowledge production. African feminism arose as a response to the exclusion of black African women in Africa. The Western feminists side-lined the issues that were being faced by black women in Africa by generalising experiences to all women. The aim of the African feminists is to create a discernible difference between women who were colonised and those deemed as colonisers (Goredema, 2010). African feminists reject the use of the term feminism because it is believed to be a Western term with Western roots (Nkealah, 2016). Instead they advocate for the use of terms such as womanism, STIWANISM (acronym of Social Transformations Including Women in Africa), and nego-feminism (Adimora-Ezegibo, 1966; Mekgwe, 2008). In another argument by Arndt (2002), African feminists protest against white history and white domination in feminism. This is because they maintain that it furthers the agenda of colonialism. Their main concern is the fact that white women in Europe cannot represent them adequately because their experiences are different from those of black women in Africa.

According to African feminism, Africa is not monolithic. This movement holds that Africa is not uniform, and therefore the challenges facing women in different parts of Africa are different. Their differences are based on their location, culture, religion, nationality and class, to mention only a few (Akin-Aina, 2011; Kalawole, 2011). People in different environments are socialised differently, so their challenges are different. As a result, their experiences cannot be generalised. In terms of gender and migration, many may argue

that there is literature on women's migration, but that literature is not specific to female migrants' migration in Africa. Female migrants in Africa do not face the same challenges as those in the Western world. This is due to their differences in location, culture, religion, class and nationality. With this in mind, it is important to look at the vulnerability of young female immigrants from an African feminist perspective.

African feminism voices the reality of women from various African countries (Ahckire, 2014). It rejects the distortions and misrepresentations made by the Western global feminist scholars. It is characterised by an ongoing process of self-definition and redefinition (Akin-Aina, 2011). This means that African feminists give black African women an opportunity to define their realities and correct the misrepresentations by white feminists. African feminist theory is empowering in giving a platform to the previously oppressed groups to voice their concerns and take part in their own development. According to Nkealah (2016), African feminism aims at creating a new, liberal, productive and self-reliant African woman within the different societies of Africa. As regards this study, African feminism gives young Zimbabwean female immigrants an opportunity to talk about their vulnerability, and provides a solution as a way of empowering them. African feminism gives the female immigrants an opportunity to define themselves in order to remove some of the misrepresentations about them by other migration scholars.

One of the aspects of African feminism is in addressing cultural issues that feminists feel pertain to the experiences of African women in Africa. They take into consideration the different cultures and histories of African people in order to embolden women and educate them (Nkealah, 2016). African feminists aim at disrupting the domination of men. This in turn leads to the transformation of gender relationships and conceptions in African societies (Arndt, 2002). African feminism looks at gender roles in the context of other oppressive mechanisms such as racism, neocolonialism, cultural imperialism, socio-economic exclusion and exploitation, gerontocracy, religious fundamentalism, and dictatorial and corrupt systems. This means that African feminism plays a role in challenging and calling for an end to the exploitation of African women.

African feminism as a way to move away from white domination in feminism provides alternative concepts to feminism. These include Ogunyemi's concept of womanism, Molar Ogundipe-Lislie's STIWANISM, (acronym of Social Transformations Including Women in Africa) and Nnaemeka's nego-feminism (Adimora-Ezegibo, 1966; Mekgwe, 2008). Womanism is black centred, it is accommodationist. Unlike radical feminism, which

excludes men, African feminists want meaningful union between black women and black men and their children in order to see meaningful change (Ogunyemi, 1988; Arndt, 2002; Ibeku, 2015). In the context of migration, in order to minimise the vulnerability of young females, all stakeholders, including local and migrant men and children, have to play a role in resolving the challenges faced by female immigrants. The second concept nego-feminism refers to is the feminism of negotiation. It is also referred to as noego- feminism. This feminism promotes the principles of negotiation, give and take, compromise and balance, which are shared values in many African cultures. The nego-feminists believe in negotiation and compromise (Nnaemeka, 2004; Ibeku, 2015). Nego-feminism implies that female immigrants have to negotiate with various stakeholders in order to resolve their challenges. The last concept, STIWANISM, is about including African women in the social and political transformation in Africa (Ogundipe-Lislie, 1984; Mekgwe, 2008). In this regard it is important to include the young female immigrants in challenging their status quo and also in contributing to the transformation of their situation.

African feminism is regarded as a movement that brings about social change, especially when it comes to how women are treated (Ibeku, 2015). This is evidenced by some significant changes in the lives of African women over the past two decades in producing knowledge (Mama, 2014). To complement this, it is essential also to produce the knowledge on the vulnerability of young female immigrants in order to help minimise these vulnerabilities. According to Mama (2014), African feminism is philosophical, experiential and practical. African feminism is thus a tool that can help women to overcome their challenges.

Criticism against African feminism was around its definition. African feminists are tied to colonialist history, and define themselves as against Western feminists (Mekgwe, 2008). This derails them from having a liberated future because they are concentrating on the past that is about colonised Africa rather than on the present day and the future of Africa. According to Mekgwe (2008), if Africa still defines herself against the West, this makes it continue being in a colonial trap as it has not yet reached a level of self-definition. Mekgwe (2008) comments that African feminism has been seen to have self-contradictory elements both in its definition and in using the term Africa (n) itself. The use of this term hinders it from the development of a feminist theory that is not stagnant and parochial. This stance makes African feminists focus on local concerns to the exclusion of wider contexts. Owing to these critiques, African feminism will not be suitable to be used in the study on the vulnerability of young female immigrants.

### ***The intersectionality approach***

The intersectionality approach emerged in the 1980s as work by the black feminists. It can also be called black feminist thought, multiracial feminism, third world feminism, and the multi-axil approach of the multi-consciousness (Scott et al., 2017). The intersectionality approach emerged as an approach in feminism that analyses the complex origins of multiple sources of oppression of women (Anthias & Yuval Davies, 1983; Crenshaw, 1991; Scott et al., 2017). Early feminists, of which the majority were middle-class white women, looked at the oppression of women from a monolithic point of view and generalised these experiences to all women. This means that these early white feminists considered women as uniform, thereby universalising their own experiences to the black women. The intersectionality approach advocated that women are unique and therefore they have to be treated differently according to their situations. According to the intersectionality approach, there are multiple sources of oppression or disadvantage faced by women. Therefore it emphasises giving equal attention to all the sources of oppression which play a role in putting women's lives at a disadvantage. In explaining the multiple disadvantages faced by women Hill Collins (2000) uses the term matrix domination. Hill Collins further states that there are four dimensions of power that are linked together in order to shape black women's experiences. These include a structural dimension, a disciplinary dimension, a hegemonic dimension and an interpersonal dimension. The structural dimension seeks to explain how social institutions are organised to produce black women's subordination over time. The disciplinary dimension highlights the role of the state and other institutions that rely on bureaucracy and surveillance to regulate inequalities. The hegemonic dimension deals with ideology, culture and consciousness, and the interpersonal dimension deals with the level of everyday social interaction (Hiesse, 2014: 227). This shows how women experience multiple forms of oppression influenced by different systems such as the government and its institutions, culture, religion and society.

The main aim of this approach is to analyse how different forms of disadvantage, oppression, dominion or discrimination intersect (Knudsen, 2006; Basha, 2014). Different forms of oppression are present at the same time in a woman's life and they are related in causing distress. According to Mohanry (2013), the intersectionality approach understands gender relations as structured by other differentials. This theory thus explains the specific experiences of women on the basis of gender, age, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, nationality, religion and how they interact simultaneously (shaped by one another). It explains how systematic injustice and social inequality occur



on a multidimensional basis (Knudsen, 2006; Basha, 2014; Tyagi, 2014). The intersectionality approach seeks to correct the tendency to perceive one system of oppression or domination as more important than another. The advocates of this theory maintain that it is impossible to separate gender from other identities and the unique ways those identities interconnect (Ryle, 2015). This means that all the distinct systems of oppression should be recognised since they can affect a person simultaneously. According to Altman and Pannel (2012), gender matters, but it does not matter in the same way, and it is not the only factor that matters. In terms of the vulnerability of young female immigrants looking at gender matters, but it does not matter without other factors such as nationality, status as immigrants and age. These forms of disadvantage construct one another, so they must be read simultaneously.

The intersectionality approach is essential in this study because it will help in understanding the vulnerability of young female immigrants by interrogating their vulnerability through the lens of gender, nationality, status as immigrants and age. There is limited literature on the issues that put female immigrants at risk, so it is essential to look at the vulnerability of young female immigrants in terms of these issues. The intersectionality theory will explain the disadvantages of young female immigrants from different axes. Hence the intersectionality approach will help to focus on the excluded forms of oppression of female migrants (Nash, 2008). These forms of oppression derive from young female immigrants' nationality, gender, age and status as immigrants. In addition, the intersectionality approach will assist to overcome specific shortcomings in migration literature by looking at different factors which disadvantage female migrants. Various migration theorists concur with the above points by pointing out that it is critical to sharpen the understanding of gender-based inequality by including other markers of difference (Bernieria & Sen, 1982; Chow, 1996) and their intersections (McCall, 2005; Nash, 2008; Valentine, 2007). The attempt to link gender, nationality and age will help us to understand young female immigrants disadvantages, and will also aid in eradicating it.

One of the strengths of the intersectionality approach is its ability explain not only women's differences from men, but also differences among women themselves. These differences have to be acknowledged and understood in order for us not to universalise women's experiences. With this in mind, the intersectionality approach will help to best explain the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa.



## **2.4 Theories applied in the study**

Various migration and feminist theories have been discussed in the above sections in order to help widen the reader's view on the theoretical issues relating to young female immigrants. The discussion has helped the researcher to have different, and broader, views on the issue of female migration. The use of a variety of theories has enabled the researcher to adopt an integrated approach in which two theories are used to interrogate and explain the phenomenon under study, namely, the push-pull theory and the intersectionality approach. The push-pull theory explains migration based on four factors. These include the push factors, pull factors, intervening obstacles and personal factors. The push-pull theory possess strength in explaining the causes of migration as influenced by a variety of factors. These include economic, social, political, environmental and personal factors, which either pull into an area or push a person out of an area. The push-pull theory has been chosen as a result of its comprehensive explanation of the causes of migration. Most of the literature on migration has focused on the migration of men. This study claims that migration was not only by men, but by women as well. Therefore, all these factors involved in the push-pull theory also apply to the migration of women.

So far, the push-pull theory only covers the first objective, which is about factors contributing to young females' migration. In order to address other objectives that cover the vulnerability of young female immigrants, the intersectionality approach was used, because unlike other theories, it interrogates various sources of oppression of women. It argues that for women's issues to be addressed there is a need to address the multiple sources acting at the same time to put women at a disadvantage. The intersectionality approach assisted in looking at the different issues that point to the vulnerability of young female immigrants. It has also helped with other causes of disadvantage in young female immigrants' lives. These include nationality, age and also their status as immigrants. Combining the push-pull theory and the intersectionality approach has been helpful in interrogating and explaining issues of migration more holistically.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter contains a discussion of various theories which were used to interrogate and explain the issue of young females' migration. The migration theories discussed include the Ravestein migration distance hypothesis, push-pull theory and the network theory. The feminist theories that were discussed include radical feminism, feminist

conflict theory, standpoint theory, African feminism and the intersectionality approach. However, the push-pull theory of migration and the intersectionality approach are what have been used to guide this study. The push-pull theory was used because of its strength in explaining migration as a result of many factors. The intersectionality approach was used because of its strong ability to account for the different factors which act simultaneously in causing disadvantage in a woman's life. This has assisted in explaining the vulnerability of young female immigrants as a result of gender, age, status as immigrants and nationality, only to mention only a few influences on their lives.

This section has also been used to highlight the absence of a theory which infuses aspects of gender into the migration discourse. This argument underscores the need for a theory or a model to ensure that issues of gender are not left out in the migration debate.

## **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The main aim of this section is to critically review some studies carried out by various scholars and organisations on the issue of migration. Since most of the studies on migration have focused on men, this study looks at migration literature in general and then narrows its focus to female immigrants. The literature review also identifies gaps in the literature when it comes to female immigrants.

The review in this thesis is organised as follows: historical overview of migration, trends and patterns of migration around the world, legal instruments protecting immigrants, migration policy frameworks, types of migrant and gender, migration and vulnerability linkage. The study also looks at the determinants of migration, opportunities brought by migration, challenges faced by migrants, and their coping strategies.

### **3.2 Historical overview of migration around the world**

The phenomenon of migration has always been part of human existence, and can be traced at least as far back as early modern times. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries about two million settlers crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Europe to America to settle there. In addition, from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century almost 12 million Africans were trafficked from West and Central Africa to the Americas to work as slaves in what was known as the slave trade (Manning, 2013; South African History Online (SAHO), 2015). Those who survived the appallingly inhuman, crowded conditions on board ship were bought and put to work in cotton, coffee, cocoa, rice, sugar, and tobacco fields, in gold and silver mines, in construction, and as skilled labour or domestic servants. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries people started to migrate in larger numbers than ever before this era became known as the era of mass migration, in which about 50 million European migrants moved to North and South America (Manning, 2013; Sequeira, Nunn & Qlan, 2017). This was due to improved transport technology and the economic boom in America. Large numbers of people migrated to America during that period for better economic and employment opportunities. In ancient times, more than 2 000 years ago, Africa was also experiencing migration. This took place when the Bantu-speaking people moved from Nigeria to Cameroon and other regions of Central, Eastern and Southern Africa (Manning, 2013). In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries European settlers migrated from Germany, Britain, Portugal, France and Italy to occupy places in Africa as colonisers

(Carmody, 2011; Pakenham, 2015). Many of them settled permanently, for farming, mining and other economic activities.

In the history of migration studies most of them have often focused on migration involving men. This paints a picture that women do not migrate. The fact of the matter is that migration of women has always existed, but before the 1960s, migration of women was nearly invisible, and not recognised (Ghosh, 2009), because they were taken as passive in the whole migration process, and their place was assumed to be in the home (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). This is not surprising because most of the literature was by men, and most societies are influenced by patriarchy. Women were just seen as the other in the migration process as they migrated to accompany their spouses and for family reunion or unification (IOM, 2009). In the 1960s and 1970s, the phrase 'migrants and their families' meant male migrants and their wives and children (Boyd & Grieco, 2003; Triandufyllidou, 2017). This simply showed disregard of women as they were always seen as appendages of men in a patriarchal society. This made the experiences of women in international migration overlooked. That is why theories that explained international migration, for example, the push-pull model of 1966, could not explain migration in terms of gender. The theory just explained the migration of people based on push-pull factors and the intervening obstacles (Jansen, 2016). The Ravestein migration distance hypothesis acknowledged the migration of women, but it did not give an in-depth analysis of their experiences (King, 2012), which increased the invisibility of women in the migration process. This changed in the 1970s and 1980s when research on international migration began to include women. Nevertheless, this did not cause a shift in perceptions of who migrated, and how migration affected both men and women (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). Evidently, the migration of women was still not seriously recognised, thus giving rise to the vulnerability of women who migrated.

In the 1980s and 1990s, as a result of the intensifying feminist debates, there was a focus on gender equality and relations in migration. Migration studies were now beginning to pay attention to women's involvement. But women's migration issues were still on the margins of international migration theories (Pipper, 2005; Tharenou, 2008). In other words, the issues of women's involvement in migration were not adequately covered in international migration theories. During that era (i.e. 1980s to 1990s), although women had become visible in international migration, the roles and responsibilities they performed and held in their destination countries were still genderised. This was because they were still influenced by their responsibilities as wives

and mothers. Therefore they were expected to be involved in child care and domestic work while their husbands worked in the public sphere. These gendered responsibilities resulted in the failure of women to participate in the labour market whilst their husbands had all the freedom to participate (Boyd & Grieco, 2003).

In the 1990s, there was a shift in the migration of women as larger numbers started to migrate not only for family reunification but independently, voluntarily or involuntarily (Omelandiuk, 2005). Large numbers of women started to migrate as the main income earners instead of just following their male relatives (Martin, 2005; Caritas Internationalis, 2012). Currently, women and girls are participating in migration as economic actors, but this is still not very visible (Care International & ODI, 2014; Müller & Szabo, 2016). This may be due to the patriarchal nature of most societies, which gives much attention to the male breadwinner as a norm. Even if many women are migrating as the main economic providers, their migration is not taken seriously. This is because it is seen as transgressing the expected norm that women should be at home taking care of the children and doing the domestic chores. Most international migration policies are still designed with the male breadwinner model in mind, because the conventional notion that women migrate for marriage still abounds, even today. However, this is a misconception because women, especially the young and active, move with or without their families for employment and education (Ghosh, 2009; Guo & Al Ariss, 2015; Müller & Szabo, 2016). There is a need for research and policy adjustments to attend to the issue of the exclusion of women in the migration process.

### **3.2.1 Historical overview of migration in Southern Africa**

Migration in Southern Africa was happening even before colonial borders were drawn. People in the SADC region would always move to other areas in search of better land to cultivate and pasture their animals. Some would be fleeing from civil wars, and territorial disputes (Crush et al., 2005). An example is the Nguni people in the 1820s moving from what is now called KwaZulu-Natal province towards the north, some reaching as far as present-day Zimbabwe (Ferguson, 2013). This shows that two hundred years ago people in Southern Africa were migrating, even though there is not much documentation thereof.

During the past colonial era, countries in Southern Africa were major destinations for migrants from Europe who came to settle permanently and exploit some of their significant resources. For example, Zimbabwe attracted settlers from the United

Kingdom who were interested in mining and agriculture (Zanamwe & Devillard, 2010). These mines and farms in Zimbabwe opened room for other African immigrants from Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique to come and work there. It is surprising that though Zimbabwe was one of the immigrants' destinations, it is now seen as a country of emigration more than immigration. The huge exodus of people from Zimbabwe is attributed to the political instability and economic collapse of the country in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The economic difficulties faced by Zimbabwe attract fewer people to it, and force more people to emigrate in search of better economic opportunities.

The history of migration in Southern Africa cannot be complete without looking at the emigration of people from Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia, as well as Zimbabwe, who migrated to South Africa to look for work. Until today most of the regional migration is more to South Africa than to the other countries (Crush & Williams, 2010). In the 1970s over 260 000 male migrants came to work in South African mines, some of them from as far as Tanzania (Crush et al., 2005). According to Crush et al. (2005) in their Southern African migration project conducted in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe, many adults interviewed had a parent and a grandparent who had worked in South Africa in the past. About a quarter of the people in Namibia and Zimbabwe had a parent who worked in South Africa; so did 41% of the Batswana, 54% of Mozambiquans and 83% of the Basotho respectively (Crush et al., 2005). It is important to note that Botswana in the 1960s was a migrant-sending country, but from around the 1970s till today its economy has continued to grow, and attract labour and expertise from other countries (IOM, 2010; Galvin, 2016).

In the past the migration of women, even in the SADC region, was ignored. Very little attention was paid to it because the focus was on the migration of men to work in the mines and on farms. Although women also migrated to work in domestic service, they were not given much attention (Crush et al., 2005). This is not surprising since in a patriarchal society men are considered as the main breadwinners. As a result, too much attention has been paid to issues concerning the migration of men. With the feminisation of poverty in many Southern African countries, females are now seeking work through migration (Hoffman & Buckley, 2011; Levko-Everrett, 2015), taking up the responsibilities of breadwinning, just like men (McDuff, 2015). This may be because some men are failing to fulfil their traditional gender roles, and other households are female-headed. These households may be a result of divorce, or the death or migration of the male figure.

In this case, they do not migrate to join their husbands, but do the same thing that men are often expected to do in a patriarchal society, namely, fend for their families.

### **3.2.2 Historical overview of migration to South Africa**

The migration of people into South Africa can be traced back to many centuries ago. Migrants into South Africa consisted of white migrants, mainly from Europe (Crush & Williams, 2010), who were considered as desirable migrants. These whites were given citizenship more easily than other races with the aim of increasing colonial domination. Migrants from Asia, particularly India, who entered after 1860 to work in the sugar plantations were excluded, and their growing population was considered a threat to the system of white control (DHA, 2016). This means that the white people in South Africa promoted the migration of people of the same race and origin, and excluded other races in the quest to preserve their colonial domination. During the 1930s Jews from Europe started immigrating into South Africa. However, since they were considered as undesirable on political and racial grounds, immigration laws were made stricter for them (DHA, 2017).

Human mobility in South Africa and its neighbouring countries dates back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century in the colonial era, when labourers would come to work in mining and agriculture. This era thus saw migration as a male phenomenon. Mines and farms were dependent on the cheap labour of the immigrants from other countries. According to DHA (2017), in the colonial era the region that is now called the SADC was linked through migrant labour. This means that even in the past the SADC region was linked through a single labour market. People from within the region would seek work in neighbouring countries, especially South Africa. Even though labourers from other countries were migrating into South Africa, the migration was difficult because of tight border security, and restrictions, especially on Africans. The apartheid government promoted secret migration for blacks in order to ensure that there was abundant cheap labour, but they were against black immigrants applying for citizenship. From 1913 to 1986 blacks were only allowed to enter South Africa as contract workers, and they were not allowed to apply for citizenship (Wentzel & Tlabela, 2006; DHA, 2017).

As a result of the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa opened its doors to the world, especially African and Asian migrants (Wentzel & Tlabela, 2006; DHA, 2015a). This was because the new democratic government wanted to reverse the racially based migration process and incorporate South Africa not only into the other African states, but



into the rest of the world. Such a situation has led to more migrants flocking to South Africa. After the collapse of apartheid in South Africa, migration was guided by the White Paper on International Migration of 1999, which legislated the Immigration Act No. 13 of 2002. In 2017 a new White Paper on International Migration was developed in order to guide the migration process in South Africa (DHA, 2017). This was done after it was realised that the world is ever- changing, and therefore the 1999 White Paper on International Migration was not fully in line with the current migration trends occurring globally.

Information on the history of female immigration into South Africa is limited. This might be because migration in the past was seen as male-dominated, as men migrated to work in mines and farms in South Africa (Musvipiwa, 2017). This showed a gender bias in migration literature because historical movement across Southern Africa involved women. For example, from about 1920 to 1945 women from Lesotho migrated to the Witwatersrand to do work such as beer brewing, cooking, laundry and sex work (Dodson & Crush, 2004). After 1994 in the new political dispensation, with the introduction of visitors' permits, large numbers of women from neighbouring countries migrated to South Africa for business purposes. They would purchase goods and sell them in their home countries (Dodson & Crush, 2004). Women, then, have always migrated into South Africa, but were ignored as they were seen as minority migrants, and viewed as opposing the expected gender norm by migrating. There is also evidence of Zimbabwean women migrating in the past to South Africa on short visits, either to shop or trade (Dodson, 1998; McDuff, 2015). The migration of women from Zimbabwe to South Africa during this period was seen as a family survival mechanism owing to the feminisation of poverty in Zimbabwe, which has pushed many women from Zimbabwe to migrate as a strategy to take care of their families.

### **3.3 Trends and patterns of migration**

Migration is a complex phenomenon which should be explained from different angles for it to be fully understood. This section discusses international, continental (African), regional (SADC) and national (South African) trends and patterns of migration in order to give a full picture of the phenomenon of migration globally.



### 3.3.1 Worldwide trends and patterns of migration

The trends and patterns of migration differ from place to place and are influenced by a variety of factors such as politics, economic dynamics, the environment and society (Chinyakata, 2015). This means that trends and patterns of international migration are not the same, but differ according to the environment, and are influenced by the events and situation occurring in a region. This makes migration patterns very different and complex.

The number of international migrants worldwide is continuing to rise owing to factors such as income differences in various countries (Bernstein, 2011), wars and displacement, especially in the Middle East and Africa (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016), and natural disasters, among others. Currently there are around 244 million international migrants (Michaels et al., 2016; UN DESA Population Division, 2016; IOM, 2017c). It is important to note that this number might not be the exact figure, as a large number of migrants are migrating without proper documentation. The current number of migrants is an increase from 222 million in 2010, 101 million in 2005, 173 million in 2000, 161 million in 1995, 153 million in 1990, 113 million in 1985, 102 million in 180, 90 million in 1975 and 84 million in 1970 (see Table 1 below) (UN DESA Population Division, 2016; IOM, 2017c). The number of international migrants has thus tripled from 84 million in 1970 to 244 million in 2015. The increase might be attributed to improved and cheaper transport and communication facilities.

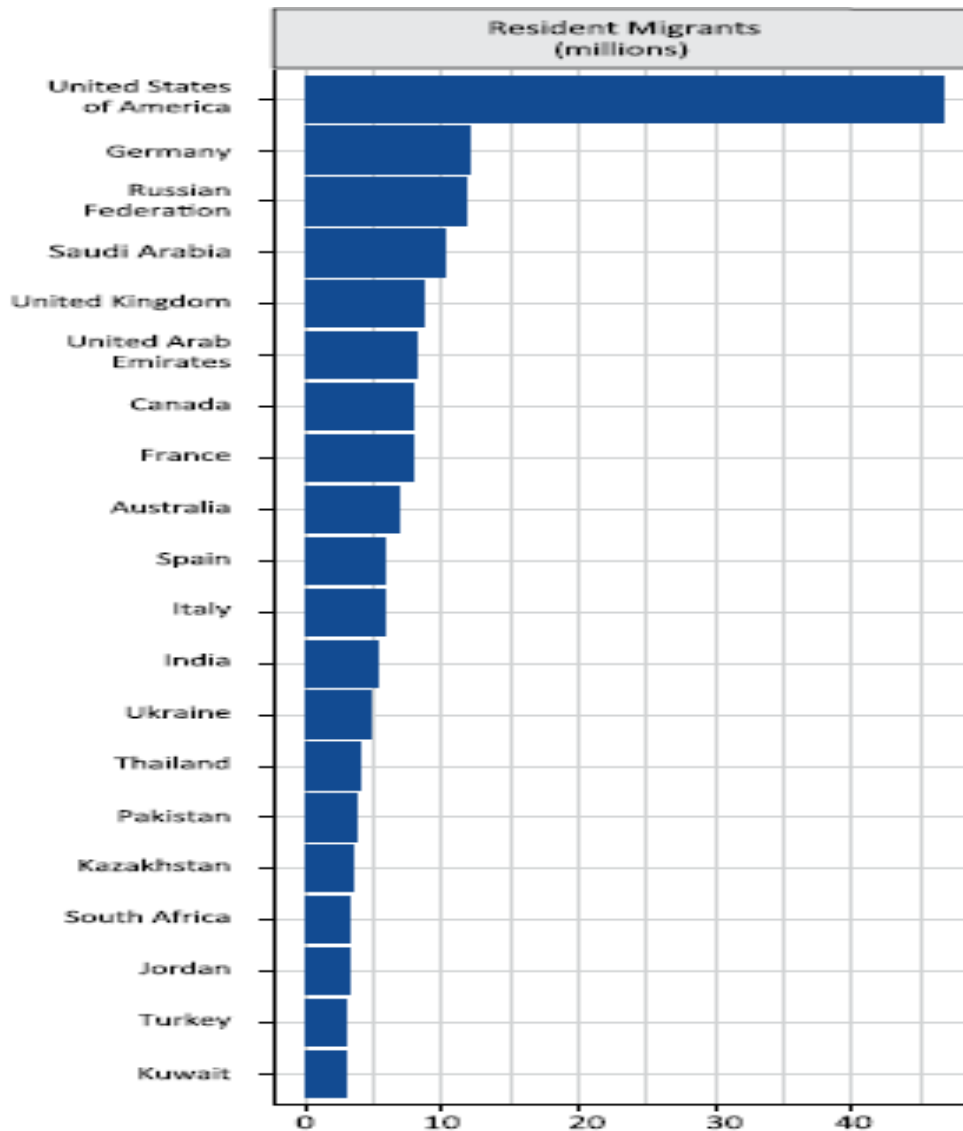
**TABLE 1 INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS 1970-2015**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of migrants</b>	<b>Migrants as a % of the world's population</b>
1970	84,460,125	2.3%
1975	90,368,010	2.2%
1980	101,983,149	2.3%
1985	113,206,691	2.3%
1990	152,563,212	2.9%
1995	160,801,752	2.8%
2000	172,703,309	2.8%
2005	191,269,100	2.9%
2010	221,714,243	3.2%
2015	243,700,236	3.3%

**Source:** IOM (2017c)

High income countries, also known as developed countries, play a very significant role when it comes to hosting immigrants. About two-thirds of the 244 million international migrants live in high-income countries. In 2005 about 71% of the total international migrants lived in high-income countries (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). This might be because the world's rich countries' total population is about 15% of the world's total population. Therefore, owing to their fast-growing industries they need more workers from other countries (Bernstein, 2011). These migrants in the high-income countries mostly come from developing countries, which are largely associated with high birth rates and employment shortages. People therefore migrate to high-income countries with low birth rates, a high ageing population and surplus employment opportunities. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2015), developed countries hosted about 86% (12,4 million) of the total number of refugees, and the least developed countries hosted close to 25% (3,6 million). Unlike developing countries, most developed countries have the resources and the capacity to take care of refugees. However, developed countries in Europe and America are now being strained by the refugee crisis. As a result, these countries are now developing stricter laws and measures to curb migration (McElmurry, Kerr, Brown, Zamora, & Center, 2016; Smith, 2017).

The data on the total numbers of international migrants in different continents differ. According to figures from the United Nations in 2015, Europe had the largest number of international migrants at 76 million, followed by Asia, which had 75 million, North America had about 54 million, followed by Africa with 21 million, Latin America with 9 million, and Oceania with eight million (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division compiled a list of the top 20 countries around the world hosting international migrants in 2015. They included the United States of America (47 million), Germany (12 million), the Russian Federation (12 million), Saudi-Arabia (10 million), the United Kingdom (nine million), the UAE, Canada and France (eight million each), Australia (seven million), Spain and Italy (six million each), India and Ukraine (five million each), Thailand, Pakistan and Kazakhstan (five million each), and South Africa, Turkey and Jordan (three million each), as indicated in Figure 2 below (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). It is important to note that South Africa is the only country in Africa in the top 20 countries. This might be because of South Africa's economic dominance, and religious and political freedom compared to other countries, which make it attractive to migrants compared to the rest of Africa.



**FIGURE 2: TOP 20 COUNTRIES HOSTING IMMIGRANTS IN 2015.**

**Source:** UN DESA Population Division (2016)

In terms of female migration the number of immigrants migrating internationally is almost the same as that of migrating males. Their total number is around 117 million, 48% of all international migrants (UN, 2016). This is a figure for migrants in general. The different numbers of females and males migrating continentally and nationally is more difficult to determine. In some countries and continents the statistics on migration according to gender are missing, as migration of people continues to be generalised, and not gender-specific. According to Sammers (2010), migration studies remains underresearched, even though it has not escaped the attention of social sciences; for example, the issue of gender and its influence in migration. Most international migrants are 25 to 45 years

old (IOM, 2017c). This is because this age-group consists of energetic people who want to maximise their economic opportunities.

Migration trends and patterns include, firstly, the globalisation of migration (Czaika & de Haas, 2014), the movement of people to different parts of the world, including destinations far away from their home countries. This can be attributed to advanced communication and transport. The second pattern is the acceleration of migration, the greater numbers of people migrating in this era than the past (Czaika & de Haas, 2014).. In 1990 it was 154 million, in 2000 about 175 million, in 2013 about 232 million, and in 2016 about 244 million international migrants, which is an all-time high (Michaels et al., 2016).

The third trend is the differentiation of migration, that is, the diversification of types and modes of entry (Czaika & de Haas, 2014). These include documented and undocumented migrants, economic migrants and forced migrants, to mention only a few. The fourth trend associated with migration is the migration of displaced people, including environmental and war refugees. The fifth trend includes the feminisation of migration, which relates to the higher percentage of women migrating. This trend was first recognised from the late 1880s. But although the migration of women was notable, most migration theories and literature on migration remained silent about the role of women in migration (Sammers, 2010). Lastly, there is the proliferation of migration transitions, which identifies migration as a complex phenomenon, with previously sending and receiving countries now both sending and receiving, and some of them becoming countries of transit (Castles & Miller, 2009; Sammers, 2010; Bernado, 2014). For example Zimbabwe was a previously migrant receiving country, but it has currently become a sending country. Botswana was also a sending country, but of late it has become a migrant receiving country.

### **3.3.2 Trends and patterns of migration in Africa**

Migration in Africa continues to be a burning issue. According to the UDESA Population Division (2016), there are about 21 million international migrants in Africa. Of these 18 million have originated from within Africa, and the rest from other regions of the world. The trends, patterns and drivers of migration in Africa have been changing over the past century. This is due to, but not limited to, the changing economic environment, changes from colonial governments to independence, poverty, wars and environmental disasters. The patterns and trends of migration in this continent are difficult to determine, because

Africa is perceived as a continent of mass migration and displacement due to poverty, violent conflict, and lack of good governance and environmental disasters (including drought and floods). It can also be argued that migration of Africans is due to the processes of development and social transformation which are increasing the capabilities and aspirations of many Africans to migrate (Flahaux & de Haas, 2016). The major categories of migrants in Africa include economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors and children. Most migrants in Africa move towards the regions of prosperity and economic and political stability. This in turn has triggered and maintained intraregional disparities (Zanamwe & Devillard, 2010). For example, poor countries continue to experience brain drain as skilled professionals go to other countries to seek greener pastures, leaving their country without such professionals. This hampers the development of their country, thus leaving it in perpetual poverty.

African migrants travel long distances to other continents, and some within Africa. Shimeles (2010) provides a picture of the destination countries of most African migrants. France is the most common destination for most emigrants from Africa (14%), followed by Côte d'Ivoire (9%), Saudi-Arabia (8.1%), and South Africa and USA (5% each). Most Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in the West had a share of African immigrants of less than 3%. Combined, the share of African migrants living in Western Europe, Canada, USA and Australia is about 37%. These countries are the major destinations of immigrants from Africa (Shimeles, 2010). But even if these countries are the richest and most developed, immigrants are also attracted to other countries, for family reunification, religious fervour, colonial ties and linguistic similarities.

Not only do African migrants go to other parts of the world, but people from other continents are also attracted to Africa. According to Park (2009), there has been a significant increase of Chinese immigrants to Africa. They may be attracted to Africa because of the business opportunities there. Some of the countries in Africa with the most Chinese immigrants include South Africa, Nigeria, Madagascar, Mauritius, Angola, Algeria and Sudan (Park, 2009).

About 80% of all migration in Africa is within the continent, and it is mainly intraregional and interregional. For example, there are migrants moving from Zimbabwe to South Africa, which is within the SADC region. Some migrate across regions: for example, from North Africa to Southern Africa. The migration of people and their routes of migration in

Africa differ according to each region. It is therefore important to look at the different trends and patterns of migration in all five regions of Africa. These include East Africa, Central Africa (also known as Middle Africa), West Africa, Northern Africa, and Southern Africa.

The migration of people on the African continent has been on the increase in all these regions of Africa as indicated by Table 2 below. The trends show that women in Africa have been migrating in large numbers in the past two decades. In most regions they account for half of the immigrant total, and in others just below half of the total (see Table 2 abovebelow) (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). This shows that the feminisation of migration is a current and persistent phenomenon in Africa, which calls for the issues of female migration to be put in the forefront of discussions on migration. According to an issue paper by the United Nations Commission for Africa (2016), there is female migration, but most migration studies solely focus on male migrants, leaving out females and children. Women are important immigrants, as a significant number are migrating independently for economic reasons.

**TABLE 2: INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT STOCK IN AFRICAN REGIONS**

Region	Number of international migrants (thousands)				International migrants as a %age of total population		Females among international migrants (%age)		Median age of international migrants (years)	
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015
World	172,703.3	191,269.1	221,714.2	243,700.2	3	3	49	48	38	39
Africa	14,800.3	15,191.1	16,840	20,649.6	2	2	47	46	27	29
Eastern Africa	4,844.8	4,745.7	4,657	6,129.1	2	2	49	49	27	26
Middle Africa	1,756.7	1,928.8	2,140	2,307.7	2	2	49	50	27	24
Northern Africa	1,885.7	1,782	1,921.6	2,159.0	1	1	44	41	28	28
Southern Africa	1,222.3	1,439.4	2,203.3	3,435.2	2	5	41	41	35	37
Western Africa	5,090.9	5,295	5,918	6,618.5	2	2	47	47	26	27

**Source:** UN DESA Population Division (2016)

In East Africa and the Horn of Africa, migration is driven by factors such as the search for economic opportunities, education, political instability, conflict, climate change and trade (IOM, 2015a). The migration of people in this region is both intraregional and international. The three major source countries for migration are Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea. People from these countries move northwards to the Mediterranean region, to Europe via the Horn of Africa, and to Egypt, Libya and Sudan. They also move eastward to the Middle East (often to Saudi-Arabia), through Northern Somalia across the Gulf of

Aden. Some of them move southwards to Southern Africa (Bernado, 2014). Of these migrants 33,7% move to countries outside Africa (Shimeles, 2010). The large movements in this region are attributed to political instability and conflicts, which force people to move in search of refuge. Some of the migrants in this region do not survive the journey to Europe, as some of them drown in the Mediterranean Sea. According to IOM (2016), there was an increase of deaths in the Mediterranean from 3 179 in 2014 and 3 777 in 2015 to 5 083 in 2016. Some of the migrants were from the Horn of Africa. Female migration also occurs from the Horn of Africa as females migrate to Arab countries to work. Some of these women are subject to trafficking and enslavement. They often find themselves working as domestic workers in houses where they are vulnerable to violence.

In Central Africa, the Central African Republic is the country where most emigration takes place in this region. This means countries in Central Africa are mostly countries of origin rather than of destination. This is due to the large numbers of refugees fleeing conflict in this region. Most of its refugees are located in Chad, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (UNHCR, 2016). Though the DRC is one of the countries which hosts refugees in Central Africa, the country itself is politically unstable: since 2013 it has been one of the five countries in the world with the most internally displaced people (AU, 2016). Gabon hosts a large number of refugees in this region owing to its oil fields in which they come and work. More and more people from other countries continue to migrate into Gabon because of its expanding economy and labour shortage. Some countries in Central Africa (for example, Gabon and the DRC) are transit countries for migrants from Central Africa and West Africa, with some heading for South Africa (Bernado, 2014).

In West Africa most of the migrants travel within this sub region as a result of the ECOWAS free movement protocol, which allows for greater regional rather than international migration (Adeniran, 2014; AU, 2016). The ECOWAS protocol was a decision by the West African leaders in the early 1970s to promote intraregional integration of organisations and economic cooperation of West Africa for the development of the region. This was coupled with the introduction of free movement for citizens of West Africa to the rest of the countries in the ECOWAS region (Adepoju, 2015). Over the last decade labour migration has increased in this zone. Some of the migrants from West Africa end up in European destinations by crossing the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, mostly using cargo ships which are not suitable for



carrying people (Bernado, 2014; Hernández-Carretero & Carling, 2012). This is the result of the recent diminishing opportunities to find work. West Africans looking for better economic prospects in Europe end up in the hands of human traffickers or slave traders, as they are kidnapped and sold into the slave trade in Tripoli, Lybia. Once they are captured, they are kept in camps where they are often beaten and tortured, before being sold (Hlatshaneni, 2017).

In North Africa the major reasons that drive migration are unemployment and political instability. North Africa has experienced the Arab Spring, and its shockwaves have influenced the dramatic migration of people in the region. The Arab Spring is also known as the Arab revolution, which was a wave of demonstrations, protests, riots and civil wars in North Africa and the Middle East. This revolution led to intense emigration of people from this region to France and other Arab states (Saudi Arabia, for example) (Fargues & Fandrich, 2012). Most of the migrants in North Africa (about 91.2%) move from their countries to other continents. Thousands of migrants have escaped from Lybia to neighbouring countries like Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia. Thousands of these migrants risk their lives trying to reach Europe illegally across the Mediterranean (Bernado, 2014), but many of them have drowned because of overcrowding on unstable boats. Egypt is one of the countries in North Africa which receives migrants from other countries in this region, and from sub-Saharan countries. Some of them settle permanently in the country, but others use it as a transit country (De BelAir, 2016). Because of this Egypt is experiencing a lot of economic and political strain.

The migration patterns in Africa may be understood by looking at the characteristics of people in the destination countries. If a migrant is able to identify with these people they are likely to migrate. According to Shimeles (2010), most African countries share extensive commonalities. These may be linguistic or historical or political connections. For example, a large number of immigrants from Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Eritrea are found in the same region owing to their strong ethnic, religious, political and linguistic ties. Similarly, immigrants from Burundi and Rwanda can easily fit into the population in Uganda and Tanzania because they have languages in common with some ethnic groups which reside there.

In the same way as family unification, tribal relations can also influence the movement of people. South Africa has a large number of people from Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique. The people from Botswana are attracted to the Batswanas, those from Lesotho by the Basothos, those from Swaziland by the Swazis and those



from Mozambique are attracted to the Shangaans (Sibanda, 2008). In the same way, Côte d'Ivoire attracts people from its neighbouring countries as they share the same language and historical roots. On the other hand, migrants from Equatorial Guinea typically head to two main destinations, Gabon (52%) and Spain (31%), which reflect colonial roots (Shimeles, 2010). Similarly, some migrants from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia have moved to Europe because they can easily identify with the culture there with the post-colonial ties they have (Flahaux & de Haas, 2016).

### **3.2.6 Trends and patterns of migration in Southern Africa**

Migration is an extremely important and prominent feature of the Southern African region. This is because Southern Africa, like any other region of the world, experiences all types of migration, including mixed irregular migration, labour migration and displacement due to conflict and natural disasters (IOM, 2017b). Data from the UN DESA Population Division (2016) shows that the percentage of migrants in Southern Africa from the year 2000 to 2015 has increased from 2% to 5%. It is important to note that this increase is the highest of all African regions. In Southern Africa there is massive interregional migration. An estimated seven million economically active people have migrated in this region, and the number is assumed to be more as it does not account for undocumented immigrants. There is also evidence of the migration of women. The migration of women in this region is estimated to be at 41% of the total number of migrants (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). Zimbabwean women number about 44% of Zimbabwean migrants. This indicates a very significant shift from the past where Zimbabwean women were confined to their rural homelands (Crush & Tevera, 2010; McDuff, 2015). Bernado (2014) states that women in Southern Africa constitute a significant number of migrants in this region which cannot be ignored. Even so, according to Camlin et al. (2014), women's mobility in sub-Saharan Africa continues to receive little attention in migration studies. This shows a need for an in-depth study on female migration in the region.

In terms of country analysis there was a significant increase in the percentage of immigrants migrating to South Africa and Botswana between the years 2000 to 2015. Botswana had an increase from 3% to 7% and South Africa an increase from 3% to 6% (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). This might be due to the economic dominance of South Africa and Botswana in the SADC region (Galvin, 2016). Migrants are likely to move there in search of better economic opportunities than in their countries of origin.

Migrants in Southern Africa do not only come from within the region. Much migration is from other countries towards the south, because of Southern Africa's strong economy,

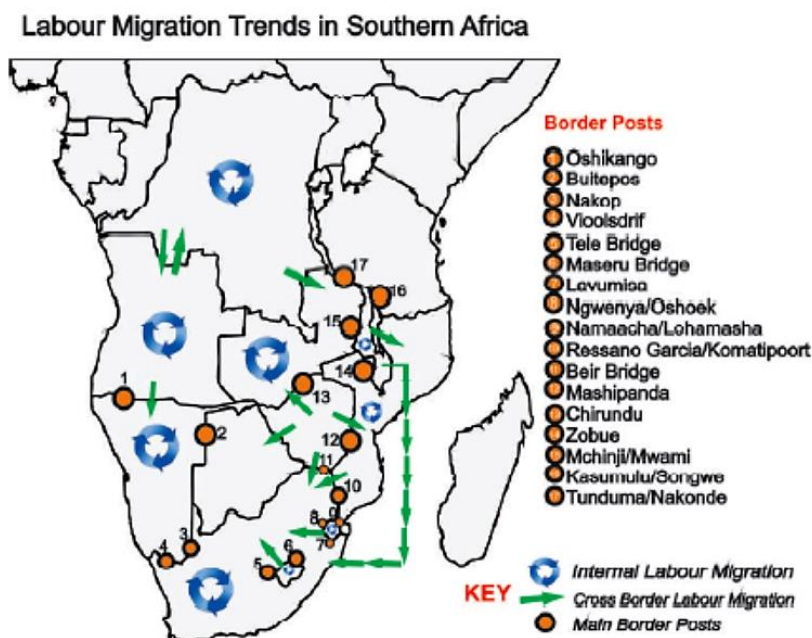
which makes it attractive to people from other parts of Africa who seek employment in mining, manufacturing and agriculture. Large volumes of migration are due to industrial development in South Africa, Botswana and Zambia, which has attracted both skilled and unskilled labourers from the region, the Horn of Africa and West Africa. Statistics from 2013 show that Southern Africa had over four million migrants, excluding irregular ones, and of these 44% were women (IOM, 2017b). Thousands of asylum seekers, economic migrants and victims of trafficking, including women and children, add up to the numbers of irregular migration flows into Southern Africa. These originate especially from the Horn of Africa, particularly Ethiopia and Somalia (IOM, 2017b). This means that the number of migrants in the SADC might be more than the estimated number owing to irregular immigrants.

As indicated in the above argument, much of migration in the SADC is towards the southern parts of the region, especially to South Africa. This can be attributed to its political stability and economic dominance in the region, and the political, economic and social decline in some countries (DHA, 2014). Ethnic and language similarities make it easy for migrants from Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Botswana to blend into communities in South Africa (Shimeles, 2010). The people from Botswana are attracted to the Batswanas, those from Lesotho to the Basothos, those from Swaziland by the Swazis and finally those from Mozambique are attracted to the Shangaans (Sibanda, 2008). This shows that linguistic similarities and tribal relations are an important factor leading to the immigration of people into a country.

Immigrants to South Africa continue to be very difficult to quantify. The total number of people entering the country increased from one million in 1990 (Crush & Williams, 2010) to 2,1 million in 2011, 2,4 million in 2014 and 3,1 million in 2015 (IOM, 2014; UN DESA Population Division, 2016; DHA, 2017). In fact, the number of immigrants to South Africa is considered to be more, because of people moving to the country illegally, or without proper documentation. South Africa continues to receive both short-term and long-term migrants from all over the world. For example, in 2011, 12,3 million movements were recorded in the enhanced Movement and Control System (eMCS) in respect of the arrival of foreign nationals in the country. These movements rose up to 16,5 million in 2016 (DHA, 2017). This shows that huge numbers of people are continuing to flock into South Africa. This might be due to the tourist attractions in the country, economic reasons such as seeking employment and better living standards, while some people are here to study and visit their relatives. From 2014 to 2016, over 121 000 temporary residence permits

were issued. Of these 24% were relative visas for spouses, 4% were critical skills visas, 1% were business visas, 18% were study visas and 14% were visitors' visas (DHA, 2017).

According to the UN General Assembly (2013), female immigrants comprised about 42% of the total immigrants in South Africa in 2013. Currently they consist of 44,4% of all the immigrants (SAIIA, 2019). During the early 2000s various scholars started acknowledging the presence of female migrants into South Africa (Adepoju, 2003; Williams & Peberdy, 2005), but little attention has been given to the issues and experiences of female migrants in South Africa. This gave rise to the gender gap in the consideration of migration issues, leading to the vulnerability of female immigrants.



**FIGURE 3: LABOUR MIGRATION TRENDS IN SADC**

**Source:** IOM, (2014)

Zimbabwe is one of the largest sources of migrants to other countries in the region. This is seen in Figure 3 above showing arrows of emigration from Zimbabwe to almost all the countries sharing borders with it (IOM, 2014; IOM, 2017b). This is further explained by Zanamwe and Devillard (2010), who state that Zimbabwe is mostly a country of origin more than destination, or a transit country. Most of these migrants are migrating to South Africa and Botswana, because these countries are economically more advanced than other countries in the SADC region (Bernstein, 2011). Their movement might also be attributed to Zimbabwe's Economic and Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP)

implemented in 1991 as a result of pressure by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for Zimbabwe to pay back the debt it had incurred in the country's development after independence. The goals of the programme were to ensure economic growth, attract foreign investment, and reduce unemployment and poverty. However, the ESAP did not achieve the expected results which led to greater economic hardships, many industries closing and unemployment rising (Potts & Mutambirwa, 1998; Crush et al., 2015). In 1997 Zimbabwe pulled out of the ESAP and re-established control of its social and economic policy by expropriating land from thousands of white farmers, which led to the displacement of over a million farmworkers and their families (Crush, Chikanda, & Tawodzera, 2012). International investors fled the country because it was no longer safe to do business there. This led to the instability of the Zimbabwean economy characterised by the hyperinflation which ultimately reached to about 231 million per cent in 2008, a shortage of foreign currency, and the inability of the country to pay its debts (Orner & Holmes, 2010; McDuff, 2015). This led Zimbabwe to experience shortages of basic commodities and services such as food, fuel, medicine, clean water and sanitation, and also consumer and industrial goods (Zanamwe & Devillard, 2010). The economic crisis in Zimbabwe has also pushed Zimbabwean women to migrate. Some women in Zimbabwe have assumed the breadwinner role by overcoming the traditional belief that confined women to domestic roles. According to McDuff (2015), the migration of women from Zimbabwe to South Africa and other countries has become institutionalised and accepted as very important for the survival of the family. Therefore, more women are migrating to other countries, especially South Africa owing to its proximity to Zimbabwe. However, few studies have been conducted on the migration of Zimbabwean women to South Africa.

Of the total number of immigrants in South Africa, the vast majority (1,5 million) are Zimbabweans (IOM, 2017b). This is supported by data from Statistics SA (2015), which show that the largest number of permits was issued to Zimbabweans. Furthermore, according to Crush and Williams (2010), the available statistics do not account for undocumented Zimbabwean immigrants, but deportations help the authorities in host countries to determine the number of undocumented migrants, because from time to time they are deported back to their countries of origin. This is the only way the destination country can know about the number of undocumented immigrants.

In the light of the above discussion, it is abundantly clear that there is huge migration of people in the SADC, especially into South Africa. There is also a considerable number

of female migrants in South Africa, but data on their experiences in the whole migration process are limited. As noted above about Zimbabweans, very few studies in South Africa have focused on the experiences of female immigrants. It is important for studies on migration into South Africa to close this gap.

### **3.4 Legal instruments for the protection of immigrants**

This section covers laws and instruments that have been put in place by the United Nations and various governments to protect the rights of immigrants, including females. These instruments include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the Convention for the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Their Families. This section will also look at the Constitution of South Africa as the supreme law that safeguards the rights of everyone living in South Africa.

Migration is one of the few options for young women to find decent work, and escape poverty, persecution and gender-based violence. Young female immigrants are at great risk of exploitation and abuse, both when they are still in transit, and also in the destination countries. They have to deal with human rights violation based on their immigration status and their sex. Previously, immigration has been looked at from an economic perspective, meaning that it was seen as a solution to unemployment and poverty. This caused immigrants, especially females, to be treated as commodities rather than individuals with rights (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014), and become more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse in destination countries. This puts female immigrants in great need of human rights protection.

Various countries have the power to determine the admission of migrants to their countries, and their detention and removal from the country. However, such measures should be taken in a way that upholds their rights as human beings (UN Chronicle, 2013), because international human rights should be granted to all people whatever their citizenship, nationality, origin, gender and immigration status.

#### **3.4.1 Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948, and was adopted by most member

states of the United Nations, including South Africa (IOM, 2013b). According to the General Assembly,

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of member states themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction (UN, 1948:1; General Assembly, 2008; Global Migration Group, 2008; Brown, 2016).

This means that the UDHR protects the rights of every individual despite their gender, age, race, nationality, sexual orientation and other differentials. This is adequately articulated in Article 2 of the UDHR 'Everyone is entitled to all rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration, without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national and social origin, property, birth or other status' (Global Migration Group, 2008). The UDHR distances itself from using a specific term which promotes bias towards a specific group of individuals, for example, the use of the term 'men' to refer to all people. Rather it uses the terms 'all human beings', or 'everyone' (United Nations Human Rights (UNHR) Office of the High Commissioner, 2014). Such shows that the UDHR is intended for everyone, men and women alike. In addition, the UDHR urges that every individual, society, country and organisation should be able to uphold and promote the protection of all individuals. This clearly shows that no one in the society has the right to violate the rights of another person.

The UDHR is an important tool in protecting the rights of all migrants. According to the UDHR, all human beings are equal in dignity and in rights, therefore all people are required to act with reason and conscience towards one another in the spirit of brotherhood (Brown, 2016). This instrument protects against the discrimination of people on any basis, including gender and nationality. In many countries migrants are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation socially and economically. Most of their rights are undermined, and some of these migrants take this as normal because of their fear of deportation. Brown (2016) comments that migration has huge consequences for the realisation of human rights. Although according to the UDHR, all persons have got rights irrespective of nationality or citizenship, often human rights are inaccessible or denied to some



migrants. Therefore, the UDHR can be used as a tool to protect the rights of young female immigrants who are often at the centre of abuse and exploitation both socially and economically because of their age, gender and status as immigrants.

In October 2008 the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon highlighted that there is a need for cooperation between governments, non-governmental sectors, civil sectors and migrants themselves in countries of origin, transit and destination to ensure that human rights instruments are implemented, and that migrants are aware of their rights and entitlements (Global Migration Group, 2008). This means that all the stakeholders have the responsibility to ensure the safety of migrants, and uphold their rights. This instrument should protect young female immigrants against all human rights abuses.

### **3.4.2 International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Their Families (ICRMW)**

The ICRMW was adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 1990, and instituted on 1 July 2013. It places emphasis on the rights that are already contained in major human rights treaties. It is an essential human rights instrument, a comprehensive international treaty focused on protecting the rights of migrants (UN, 2005). This is because it recognises that all migrant workers and their families are entitled to protection (Thompson, 2013).

The ICRMW considers that migrant workers and their families often find themselves in vulnerable situations in their destination countries. Therefore this instrument gives international protection to the rights of migrants. The ICRMW is an essential instrument when it comes to the protection of young female immigrants and their families, because many of them come to seek employment in the destination countries, and they often find themselves under oppressive conditions.

The ICRMW articulates that countries should take adequate action to make sure that illegal migration does not continue. In addition it is the duty of countries to give migrants and their family members information about their rights as enshrined in the Convention. Such information should also be provided to the undocumented young female immigrants so that they can have knowledge of legal migration channels (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014).

With the guidance of the ICRMW various efforts have been made to safeguard the rights of immigrants at international conferences: for example the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, which addressed the root causes of migration related to poverty and the abuse of female immigrants (UN, 1994); and the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, which promoted non-discriminatory policies on migration. This conference emphasised that migration policies should not be based on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia or related intolerance (UN, 2001). Additionally, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and General Assembly Resolutions 56/131 of 2001, 58/143 of 2003 and 60/131 of 2005 urged countries to better protect the rights of female immigrants (UNESCO, 1995; UN Women, 1997-2007).

### **3.4.3 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children**

Human trafficking is one of the most serious transnational organised crimes. Women and children are vulnerable to trafficking and its effects, which are mostly detrimental to their health and day-to-day functioning. Undocumented economic migrants also end up in the trap of traffickers because they are discriminated against in finding work (Chuang, 2017). The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children is one of the most fundamental instruments to safeguard people from being trafficked. This Protocol was adopted by the General Assembly Resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000, and instituted in December 2003 (UN, 2000; Mangu & Mbata, 2016). The purpose of the Protocol are to prevent and combat the trafficking of people, specifically women and children, who are considered to be the most vulnerable to trafficking. The Protocol also seeks to protect the rights of the victims of trafficking. In order for this to happen the Protocol also encourages co-operation among all countries.

Every state should prosecute perpetrators of trafficking, make sure that legal proceedings are followed, and provide assistance to the victims of trafficking such as housing, food, clothing, counselling and information. This assistance should be done in a manner which safeguards the rights of the victims of trafficking, and also in the language that they understand. The Protocol stipulates that the victims of trafficking should also be provided with educational and employment opportunities to ensure that they recover well. The country which the trafficked person is a national of or has the right to permanent residence is also required to facilitate his or her safe return and also take measures to combat trafficking (UN, 2000; US Department of State, 2014).



The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children has been put in place and is helping to a certain extent in controlling human trafficking. However, most traffickers are not prosecuted, and very few victims of human trafficking are rescued or freed (Chuang, 2017). This calls for different stakeholders to look urgently for more practical strategies to combat human trafficking. It is also important for the people vulnerable to trafficking, especially women and children, to know their rights so as not to be coerced and manipulated into exchanging their freedoms and rights for opportunities that put them at more of a disadvantage.

The SADC is one of the regions that is taking steps towards the realisation of the goals of the Protocol. Since 2017, the SADC has made significant progress in making human trafficking a crime (SADC, 2017). This is because trafficking in persons is a major security concern since other people or traffickers are profiting from exploiting other human beings. In the whole SADC region 13 countries have legislation which is aimed at combating trafficking and punishing its perpetrators. The DRC and Namibia are the only countries which have not yet legislated against human trafficking, but they are working towards legislation to combat this scourge (SADC, 2016; 2017). In order to realise the goals of the Protocol the SADC came up with a ten-year plan to combat human trafficking from 2009 to 2019 (SADC, 2017). This shows how serious human trafficking is in the SADC, and how the member states are working very hard to abolish it as it violates human rights.

#### **3.4.4 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

CEDAW is one of the instruments which protects against discrimination against and the mistreatment of any women, including female immigrants. Known as the practical plan to achieve significant progress for women, the CEDAW was adopted on 18 December 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, and it was instituted in 1981 (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014; United Nations General Assembly, 2015). Women around the world, including young female immigrants, have rights to protection as enshrined by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (SADC Protocol, 2015). This tool protects young female immigrants against being unequally treated as a result of their gender. They should have the same rights as their male counterparts.

The CEDAW is in line with and informs the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in mainstreaming a gender perspective in its implementation. It recognises that women and girls are almost half of all international migrants, hence there is a need to address their situation and their vulnerability by incorporating a gender perspective into policies, and strengthening international laws, institutions and programmes to combat gender-based violence, including human trafficking and discrimination (UN General Assembly, 2013).

In order to advance the agenda of the CEDAW, the Paris agreement highlighted the significance of a gender-responsive adaptation action. It pointed out that this action must by all means respect, promote and fulfil the rights of migrants, and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN Women, 2017). The CEDAW is thus a significant tool in safeguarding the rights of female migrants, and making sure that they participate as full actors in all spheres of their lives in the same manner as men.

In 2001 The Durban World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance was held in South Africa. This was a landmark event in the struggle to improve the lives of victims of racial discrimination and intolerance. This Declaration also specifically concentrated on eliminating all the discrimination against individuals on the basis of gender, which is in line with the mandate of the CEDAW. The Declaration recognises the need for countries to focus on gender issues, more precisely gender discrimination, and how multiple barriers faced by female migrants intersect (UN Women, 2017). It stresses the promotion of more detailed research on the contribution of female migrants to the development of the destination country (UN Women, 2017).

The Beijing Platform for Action was also one of the most fundamental conferences which realised the goals of the CEDAW. This Platform for Action calls for the protection of the rights of all women, and calls for states to:

Ensure the full realisation of the human rights of all female migrants, including women migrant workers, and their protection against violence and exploitation; introduce measures for the empowerment of documented female migrants, including women migrant workers; facilitate the productive employment of documented female migrants through greater recognition of their skills, foreign education and credentials, and facilitate their full integration into the labour force. (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014: 88).

According to this statement, the Beijing platform promotes the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. It also gives specific reference to human rights protection of female migrants, meaning that migrants should be protected from all forms of discrimination and abuse, whether they are documented or undocumented. In addition, it encourages states to facilitate the fair employment of female immigrants by recognising their skills, giving them the proper remuneration, and also incorporating them into the labour force, including labour unions.

### **3.3.4 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is a true reflection of democracy in the country. In its Bill of Rights it points out that every person must be treated with respect to safeguard the right to human dignity of persons, the right to equality, and the enjoyment of all fundamental freedoms (Section 1 (a), 9 and 10). The state is required to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights that are in the Bill of Rights. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa also states that the state and no one shall discriminate against other people on one or more grounds, including gender. Young female immigrants in South Africa should benefit from the stipulations of the Constitution (Mashele, 2015). This is because it is the supreme law of the country. However, young female immigrants and migrants in general in South Africa continue to be subjected to abuse, exploitation and mistreatment because the law seems not to be taken seriously by stakeholders.

The Constitution also states that the limiting of people's movement should be sound, reasonable and justifiable (DHA, 2017). This means that immigrants into South Africa should not be limited without any justifiable or concrete reason.

### **3.5 Migration policy frameworks**

This section discusses the different migration policy frameworks which guide and regulate the movement of people within Africa. The discussion begins with highlighting African continental migration policy frameworks, it narrows down to the SADC, and then to South Africa. This is important as it will help to give a picture of the roles of these different policies and frameworks in guiding and regulating the movement of people in the continent.

### **3.5.1 Continental migration policy frameworks**

The movement of people is a very important aspect of human existence, bringing both risks and opportunities. With effective regional and continental instrument it becomes easier, and opportunities gained by migration are maximised. Therefore, there is a need for economic integration regionally and globally, and different countries should contribute to that. The African Union has adopted some legal and policy instruments to regulate migration. These policy frameworks are within the vision of integrating the economy of Africa as set in the Abuja Treaty on Establishing the African Economic Community of 1991, which was put into force in 1994. According to this treaty, all member states should take necessary measures to achieve increasingly the free movement of individuals, and ensure that these people have the right of residence (Landau & Achiume, 2015; DHA, 2017). This is done in order to promote the development of the continent of Africa through the integration of the whole continent. Over the past few years the African Union has committed to taking the Abuja Treaty further by adopting Agenda 2063. Agenda 2063 is a vision and a plan of action aimed at promoting an integrated, peaceful and prosperous Africa. According to this commitment, all the countries in Africa and its people should work together in order to build a united and prosperous continent with shared goals (DHA, 2017). This can be achieved through the migration of people with different skills to areas where these skills are limited to promote the development of the whole of Africa.

The Abuja Treaty is further articulated in two policy documents. These are the African Common Position on Migration and Development (ACPMMD), and the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA). These two documents were adopted by the member states of the AU (Landau & Achiume, 2015). They govern how member states should regulate the migration and treatment of migrants in their countries, and provide guidelines on how different countries in the African Union should formulate their own migration policies.

#### **The African Common Position on Migration and Development**

The African Common Position on Migration and Development acknowledges that migration is an important tool for the development of Africa. It covers a number of areas in migration, including migration and development, human resources and the brain drain, remittances, trade, migration and peace, security and stability, and migration and human rights (AU, 2015; DHA, 2017:15). This shows that this policy is interested in the economic issues related to migration for development as it looks at the movement of people as

resources for economic development, and the remittances they send back to their countries of origin in order to uplift their economies. The policy also concentrates on the trade between African states, and how brain drain is affecting some states. The African Common Position on Migration and Development encourages the promotion of policies within Africa that encourage the retaining of skills within Africa. This may help to reduce brain drain by which Africa loses skilled personnel to other continents. The policy is also an essential tool in promoting peace, stability and human rights in Africa.

It also acknowledges the increase in the migration of women as economic migrants, and calls for the safeguarding of the rights of female immigrants, because women are exploited in the workplace owing to the type of work they do (AU, 2006; Klavert, 2011). The African Common Position on Migration and Development promotes the protection of the rights of female migrants and recommends all member states to do so. This is important because in order for Africa to fully develop, there is a need for equity and gender equality, which are indicators of development. The policy also encourages states of the African Union to develop mechanisms to promote the empowerment of women (Klavert, 2011), including those from other countries who are considered to be more vulnerable.

### **Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA)**

The MPFA is one of the frameworks that has been developed by the African Union Commission. Its aim is to provide member states with rules for managing migration. The MPFA also guides the design and the implementation of migration policies, and the mainstreaming of migration into the development of countries of both origin and destination.

According to the AU (2016), the MPFA was a result of the need for AU member states at national and regional levels to come up with ways to address issues related to migration in order to promote migration for development. The MPFA covers a broad range of areas and acknowledges that migration issues are many, complex, and cut across disciplines. Therefore the MPFA looks at issues related to migration, including gender, health and conflict, among others (AU, 2016). But even though it covers the issues of migration and gender, most of the national migration policies in Africa do not. The MPFA covers nine key areas or issues, including labour migration, border management, forced displacement and the human rights of migrants. Other key issues are related to internal migration, migration data and statistics, migration and

development, and interstate cooperation and partnerships (Klavert, 2011; Landau & Achiume, 2015). The MPFA also calls for member states to develop and adopt a policy that protects and promotes migrants' human rights, including guidelines for combating xenophobia and discrimination (Achiume & Landau, 2015). This means that the MPFA guides member states in coming up with policies that encourage migration for the development of the whole of Africa, and for the upholding of the rights of migrants.

The MFPA informed the development of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development Regional Migration Policy Framework (IGAD-RMPF) in 2012. The IGAD-RMPF consists of six countries namely Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan. They were the first in Africa to provide a policy framework which is in line with the mandate of the MFPA (AU, 2016). The MFPA encourages the other member states to develop cutting-edge migration policies which will guide the migration of people in Africa for the continent's economic integration and the development.

### **3.5.2 SADC region migration policy frameworks**

The SADC, like any other region of Africa, is working towards the creation of a peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa. This can be achieved through the free movement of people, capital and goods in the region. Various protocols have been introduced over the past years in order to promote the movement of people, goods and capital for the development of the SADC region.

**The Protocol on the Facilitation of the Movement of Persons** is one of the protocols governing migration in the SADC region. This protocol was introduced in 2005 to facilitate the movement of SADC citizens to other member states without the need of a visa for a period of 90 days, such as when people from the SADC are migrating into South Africa as visitors, and are given 90 days to reside in the country per year (DHA, 2017). However, only five SADC member states out of 16 have ratified the protocol. These countries are Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland and South Africa (AU, 2016). In order for this instrument to be effective in governing migration in the region at least two-thirds of the member countries should ratify it.

Another SADC protocol that facilitates the movement of people is the **SADC Protocol on Education and Training** of 1997. This tool recognises that human resources development is important for the socio-economic development of Africa. Therefore the protocol advocates the elimination of immigration formalities in order to promote the free movement of skills and students within the region (SADC, 2013; DHA, 2017). The

movement will be for the purposes of study, teaching and research, to mention only a few. This protocol is a very significant tool to promote the acquiring and transferring of skills among people in Africa, because students are given the opportunity to acquire knowledge at universities and colleges in other countries within the SADC. Qualified people – for example, teachers – will also provide their skills in countries where there is a shortage. This in turn promotes the development of the whole region.

**The Labour Migration Policy Framework** is another tool to manage the movement of migrant workers within the SADC region. This is a very important tool because most of the people migrating within the region are in search of employment. Therefore, their safe migration should be promoted for the development of the destination countries through the skills they bring, and their countries of origin through the sending of remittances. According to ILO (2015a), the aim of the Labour Migration Policy Framework is to promote sound management of labour migration within the SADC region for the benefit of both the sending and receiving countries. This is done by promoting regular and safe migration within the region. This policy encourages the development and implementation of national labour migration policies (DHA, 2017). This means that countries within the SADC region should develop their own labour migration policies in order to encourage skilled personnel to help with the skills shortages in that country. For example, in South Africa the Migration Act (Number 13 of 2002) provides the critical skills permit to promote the migration of foreign nationals with critical skills to come and work in South Africa. Furthermore, the Labour Migration Policy Framework calls for the protection of migrant workers' rights at the workplace and in their communities. It also requires countries to improve migration control and strengthen mechanisms to combat trafficking and smuggling of migrants for work reasons (ILO, 2015a). In short, the Labour Migration Policy Framework advocates safe intraregional labour migration within SADC for the benefit of the whole region.

Other protocols have been introduced to encourage the free movement of people and achieve prosperity in the SADC. These include the **SADC Protocol on Tourism** of 1998, which is aimed at abolishing visas for tourism visits for SADC citizens, and the **SADC Protocol on Free Trade** of 1996, which promotes trade in goods and services and cross-border trade in Africa (SADC, 2013). This also includes the movement of people within the region for business purposes.

Although there are all these instruments to facilitate the movement of people in the SADC, the region still lags behind in coming up with a regional instrument that facilitates



migration and economic integration of the region. Some of the member states have not ratified the above instruments, making the vision of economic integration and development through migration a still distant prospect for the SADC. Consequently, the region remains behind in realising the ideals of the Abuja Treaty, but South Africa is making great strides to encourage regional cooperation and development through migration (DHA, 2017). This is evidenced by its adoption of unilateral and bilateral approaches in removing visa conditions for the SADC and other nations outside the SADC. For example, South Africa has taken a step by implementing visa waivers with 11 of the 16 SADC countries, and also introducing the Zimbabwe and Lesotho special permits. This arrangement allowed for the documentation and provision of permits to people from these two countries who were residing illegally in the country (DHA, 2017). South Africa is playing its part in fulfilling the Abuja Treaty, but in order for it to be fully realised all 14 member states of the SADC need to take steps to encourage economic cooperation and development in the region.

### **3.5.3 Migration regulations in South Africa**

Migration management is very difficult for many countries, including South Africa. Migration policies and laws must be improved and implemented in order to manage the movement of people in and out of the country. This section covers the various rules that administer migration into South Africa. These include the international migration policy, the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002), and the Refugees Act (No. 130 of 1998), which regulate the migration of people into South Africa after democracy.

#### **International Migration Policy of South Africa**

South Africa has a long history of migration of people from other continents and from across Africa. Historically, migration to South Africa and laws governing migration favoured whites, and excluded people from Asia and black people. Before 1948 scores of black immigrants came to work in South Africa, which depended on this cheap labour. These black immigrants from Southern Africa were oppressed as a way to ensure colonial domination (DHA, 2017). In 1913, the Immigrant Regulation Act excluded Indian labourers and compelled them to work under specific conditions and at a specific time. This was done as a way to suppress the growing Indian population. The Act also excluded blacks, and was later amended to exclude Jews (DHA, 2016). With the exclusion of other races, the promotion of the migration of white people was prioritised. Semi-skilled and skilled whites from other African states such as Kenya, Zambia and



Zimbabwe were welcomed and given citizenship. This was an Act to boost the white population. Immigration under the apartheid government manifested in tight border security and other restrictions, especially on Africans considered politically undesirable (DHA, 2016). In short, during the apartheid regime immigration into South Africa was biased mainly towards whites. Blacks and Indians were only allowed to immigrate as labour for the whites. During their stay in the country they were subjected to various kinds of discrimination and exploitation.

After apartheid, in the new democratic era, South Africa's main goal was to repeal all racial and exploitative laws, and integrate South Africa into the SADC region, the African continent and the rest of the world. The process included the drafting of a Green Paper on International Migration with the mandate to adequately manage migration and the opportunities it brought, while ensuring that the country and its citizens were safe (DHA, 2016).

The first International Migration Policy for post-apartheid South Africa was developed in 1999 following the White Paper on International Migration by the DHA, which is the department responsible for immigration services (DHA, 2016). The 1999 International Migration Policy was the basis for all subsequent immigration legislation and regulations, as it was the first policy guiding migration after apartheid. Though this policy is of great significance in the changing social, economic, legislative and regulatory changes from 1999 up to the last few years, it is no longer suitable for addressing the migration needs of the country, or the current changes occurring globally (DHA, 2017).

During the past decade migration has become more dynamic in its forms. Policies therefore need to be reviewed constantly in order to be applicable to modern migration. With this in mind, in 2015/16 the DHA developed a Green Paper on International Migration which reviewed the 1999 International Migration Policy. This Green Paper came as a result of discussions and interviews with various stakeholders on the challenges that have emerged since the publication of the 1999 White Paper. The argument was that South Africa should embrace migration for development while safeguarding its sovereignty, peace and security (DHA, 2016). A series of discussions and interviews helped in knowing the gaps in and shortcomings of the 1999 policy. These also helped in coming up with a new White Paper on International Migration in 2017 to inform policies and laws of migration in South Africa.

In the year 2016/17 this White Paper was approved by the Cabinet and published in March 2017. It is a strategy for managing international migration in order to achieve the

national developmental goals (DHA, 2017). The White Paper will help in promoting migration for the development of South Africa while safeguarding the interests, security and peace of its people. It is designed to attract foreign investment, trade and commerce, skills and entrepreneurship, and tourism into South Africa.

### **Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002)**

The Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002), which was amended in 2007 and 2011, regulates the migration of people into and out of South Africa, including during migrants' period of stay in the country. According to section 9(1), no person is allowed to come into the country using places other than the ports of entry which have been put in place by the government (DHA, 2017). It is illegal to use other routes of entry which are not the borders controlled by the South African DHA. According to section 9(3) of the Immigration Act, no person shall enter nor depart from South Africa unless they have a valid travel document, for example, a passport (Mthembu-Salter, Amit, Gould, & Landau, 2014).

The Immigration Act also provides for the issuing of various types of visa to foreign nationals. These include the S11, which is granted to visitors, the S13 for study, S14 for treaty agreements, S16 for crew, S17 for medical treatment and S18 for relatives. The Act also regulates the provision of the S19 (1) for critical skills, S19 (4) for general work, S19 (5) for intra-company movement, S21 for corporates, S20 for retirement, S22 for exchange programmes and S23 for asylum transit (DHA, 2017; 20).

The Immigration Act, section 25(1), states that foreign nationals who hold permanent residence permits have the same or should be awarded the same rights, privileges, duties and obligations as citizens. These should be exercised as stipulated by the law or the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa with regard to citizenship (DHA, 2017). According to the Immigration Act, sections 26 and 27, permanent residence permits can be granted to holders of general work visas, quota work visas and critical skills visas, holders of business visas and financially independent persons. They can also be given to spouses and children of South African citizens and permanent residence permit holders, relatives of a South African citizen or a permanent residence holder, a retired person or a refugee (DHA, 2017).

## **Refugees Act (No. 130 of 1998)**

The Refugees Act regulates the admission of refugees into the Republic of South Africa (Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014). Section 22 states that asylum seekers should be issued with temporary residence permits as they are waiting for the outcome of an application to fulfil their full refugee status (Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014; DHA, 2017). This means that no one will be deported back to their country when they are applying for refugee status.

Section 24 stipulates that a refugee permit should be granted for a period of five years (DHA, 2017). This might be because the Act gives the refugee such time as they await the resolution of whatever has driven the person out of his or her own country. After these five years the Refugee Act entitles a refugee to apply for a permanent residence permit. This will be given after the Standing Committee has certified that the individual will remain a refugee (DHA, 2017), because some of the people will have fled serious persecution which may still be occurring in their country of origin. It would therefore be risky for someone to go back to their country. The decision to give a refugee a permanent residence permit will thus depend on the reason why they fled. If the persecution they fled is over, and it is safe to go back to the home country, a refugee will not be given a permanent residence permit.

South Africa, like many other countries, has not yet managed to put a migration policy framework and gender-neutral legislation into effect. Though its migration legislation may seem gender-neutral, it is actually gender-biased. The South African immigration policy and immigration acts are based on the highly gendered notions of a normative migrant. This normative migrant was traditionally considered to be a male breadwinner who would migrate with the wife and children as dependants, or a single unattached migrant, usually a man (Crush & Dodson, 2004). Therefore the International Migration Policy of South Africa, the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002), and the Refugees Act (No. 130 of 1998) are not comprehensive in regulating and guiding the migration of female immigrants in South Africa.

### **3.6 Types of migrants**

Migration can be classified according to the motivation which leads people to migrate. They may migrate because their own country may not have any economic opportunities which they need to sustain themselves and to fend for their families. Some people are motivated to migrate because they have relatives in another country. Their move may be

to be reunited with family members already there. Lastly, people may be forced to leave their country owing to natural disasters, like earthquakes, famine, flooding, etc. Migration can also be classified on the basis of the legal status of the migrant. As a result, there can be documented and undocumented migrants. Documented migrants are those who have the required legal documents (i.e. visa or permit) to reside in the destination country. Undocumented migrants are those who enter the country illegally.

### **3.6.1 Family formation and reunification migrants**

Family formation is the migration of people to form families; for example, a person moving from one country to another for marriage. Family reunification is the migration of people to join family members, especially where the head of the household has already migrated alone to the destination country (Ghosh, 2009). As soon as he or she settles in the new country, the rest of the family can join. Many countries recognise the right to family reunion for migrants, because it is protected by international law (IOM, 2011). An example of international law which recognises the rights to family is the ICRMW. This Convention encourages countries to facilitate the reunification of migrant workers with their spouses, children and relatives (International Commission of Jurists, 2014). Families provide a strong network for migration because through family communication information is shared. The presence of family in the destination country also makes it more comfortable for migrants to move into the country.

However, migrating under that category may be disadvantageous, especially for female partners. Such status for the migrant can be a source of abuse of young women. For example, in arranged marriages, young brides may not have given consent either to marriage or their migration into a new country. They are forced by their families to get married to people chosen by their families, which may expose them to abuse by their partners. The migrating spouse might be a victim of domestic violence, but unlikely to report it because of fear of deportation (Cortina et al., 2014). When a person gets married, he or she becomes entitled to a spousal accompanying permit or visa. Any disagreement with the spouse may lead to divorce, which cuts out the permit entitlement, thus leading to the deportation of the female immigrant (International Commission of Jurists, 2014). Therefore, young female immigrants sometimes stay in an abusive relationship with their spouse because their migration rights are tied to their partner. South Africa is one of the many countries which promotes the family formation and reunion type of immigrants through its S18 permits (DHA, 2017). It is assumed that most

of these are women and children since historically migration into South Africa has favoured men (DHA, 2017).

### **3.6.2 Economic and labour migrants**

These are migrants who migrate in order to enhance their economic opportunities by seeking jobs and education in another country (Fleury, 2016). Economic and labour migrants may migrate through the official labour programmes that match workers and employees, or seek work after migrating (Cortina et al., 2014). Some of the migrants can be helped by various work agencies to find work before travelling to another country, but others just travel and start to look for work upon arrival. Economic and labour migrants constitute the largest group of migrants (Zanamwe & Devillard, 2010). This is supported by data from the ILO (2016), which show that in 2013 approximately 150,3 million migrants from a total number of 232 million were working in destination areas. This shows that most migrants migrate for economic reasons. Most countries encourage the migration of people for work, especially highly skilled personnel. For instance, most developed countries in Europe, the USA and Australia, and developing African countries with fast growing economies like South Africa, encourage the migration of highly skilled people because they are important in the development of the host countries (Boucher, 2009; Kofman, 2014; DHA, 2017).

Literature shows that female immigrants are also migrating as economic immigrants. According to the ILO (2015b), there are about 66,6 million female migrant workers. Even though they constitute a significant number, the type of work that most of them are involved in is gendered. Gendered job markets influence female migrants' work opportunities, the money earned, and their risk of sexual exploitation (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). Most females are found in domestic service, but also in teaching, and in health care as aides and professionals in private homes, nursing homes and hospitals, where they risk being exploited (Cortina et al., 2014). Those in domestic service work for long hours with little pay, usually with no benefits, and most of them are abused by their employers, because domestic work is one of the types of menial work that are not given much consideration by the authorities. The abuse becomes more severe for undocumented immigrants because they do not report it for fear of arrest and deportation. They keep on suffering at the hands of their employers.

### 3.6.3 Forced migrants

Forced migrants include refugees, asylum seekers and people who have been driven to leave their countries owing to factors such as environmental catastrophes, or development projects, or conflicts. This type of migration includes some form of force or coercion which may threaten an individual's life. This can either be natural or man-made (IOM, 2011). In Africa millions of people are refugees as a result of being displaced by conflict and persecution (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014). There are around 18,5 million displaced people, and of these 71% are from five countries, namely Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and the DRC. The percentage of refugees in the total number of migrants in Africa has decreased from 36,3% in 1990 and 24,4% in 2000 to 19,5% in 2015 (UN DESA Population Division, 2016). In Southern Africa, South Africa continues to receive large numbers of asylum seekers and the majority are from Zimbabwe (DHA, 2017). This may be due to the political crisis in Zimbabwe in the 2000s whereby people from the opposition parties, mainly those from the Movement for Democratic Change, were persecuted by the ruling Zanu-PF party under the leadership of Robert Mugabe (Dick, 2015). As a result many Zimbabweans fled to other countries, mainly South Africa, from the brutality of Mugabe's regime. Even though there is a refugee crisis in Southern Africa, the region has the lowest percentage of refugees to the total number of migrants compared to other regions in Africa (AU, 2016). This may be because it is much more politically stable than other regions in Africa, for example, North Africa, East Africa and Central Africa.

Some scholars argue that economic migration may be another form of forced migration since people are forced to escape poverty and unemployment (Samers, 2010). The economic situation of a country can leave a person with only the option of migrating to survive. Female immigrants who are in the category of forced migrants may experience many challenges in relation to their legal and physical protection. This is worsened by the fact that gender is not included in the official definition of refugee. Yet many women are also fleeing gender-based persecution such as rape, honour killings, domestic violence, forced marriages and female genital mutilation, from which their home governments are unwilling or unable to protect them (Cortina et al., 2014). This shows that gender should be seriously considered in issues of international migration in order to safeguard the rights of female migrants. Female refugees become vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence. They also have limited access to basic commodities such as health care, food, documentation and nationality (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014).

### 3.6.4 Undocumented migrants

Undocumented migrants are also known as illegal migrants who migrate to another country and enter without the required visas or permits (IOM, 2017c), or overstay a visa or permit period. They may also include immigrants who work in contravention of visa conditions: for example a person who has a study visa who is working full time (IOM, 2017c). Undocumented immigrants can also be those who have been born into illegality (IOM, 2017c). For example, when parent without the proper documents to be in a country give birth to a child, the child cannot be given any documentation because the legality of the child is tied to the parent'. Undocumented migrants can also be those remaining in a country after their asylum applications have been rejected (IOM, 2017c).

Female migrants are also found under the category of undocumented migrants. They face a wide range of discriminatory bans in the migration process, and as a result they end up migrating through illegal channels (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014). Such practices leave them vulnerable to all forms of abuse and exploitation during their movement from one area to another, and when they reach the destination country. Most countries are against the stay of undocumented migrants. The South African Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002) calls for the arrest and deportation of undocumented migrants (Polzer, 2010). However, South Africa continues to face serious challenges related to the presence of undocumented migrants, because some of its neighbouring countries' governments cannot give their citizens proper travel documents owing to shortage of the necessary resources (Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE), 2011). Zimbabwe is one of the countries which contributes immensely to the population of undocumented immigrants in South Africa. According to Hammerstad (2012), the majority of Zimbabweans in South Africa are undocumented. In 2010 the South African Police Service estimated that the number of undocumented immigrants in South Africa was between 3 to 6 million (South African Police Service (SAPS), 2009). Probably this situation may be the result of Zimbabwe's proximity to South Africa, which makes it easier for Zimbabweans to enter the country illegally. The large numbers of Zimbabweans in South Africa may also be a result of porous borders, and corrupt border officials. The fact that some immigrants enter South Africa illegally makes it difficult to quantify the number of immigrants in the country. The undocumented status of many Zimbabwean migrants, especially women, renders them vulnerable to abuse at the workplace and in the communities they live in since they cannot report to anyone for fear of deportation.



### **3.6.5 Trafficked migrants**

Human trafficking is one of the ways in which people move from one place to another. Trafficked migrants can be defined as those who are recruited, harboured and transported for labour purposes. Force, fraud or coercion is often used for human trafficking. These migrants, like those in Libya (EBL news, 2017; IOM, 2017c), are kept in bondage or slavery (US Department of State, 2014). The trafficking of women for prostitution and forced labour has been one of the fastest growing criminal activities internationally. According to Cortina et al. (2014), victims of trafficking are acquired in a number of ways including being kidnapped, or enticed to migrate voluntarily with the promise of a well-paid job. Victims of human trafficking are subjected to physical and mental abuse including beating, battering, rape, starvation, forced drug use, confinement and exclusions. They are also forced to engage in unprotected sex and work for long hours. Most of them end up suffering from mental breakdown, and are exposed to sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The worst part is that they are denied any medical care (Cortina et al., 2014; SADC, 2016), since most of the victims are women who are smuggled into the destination country without proper documentation. These people are considered as undocumented immigrants. As a result, they can be subjected to abuse, and are also unable to access medical care or protection. Such a situation warrants urgent attention which is often not available in most patriarchal societies because issues about women are not often taken seriously.

## **3.7 Contributory factors to migration**

Migration is determined by a number of factors, economic, social and political. They are discussed under the following headings: economic disparities between countries, education and employment opportunities, conflict, war and environmental disasters, political persecution, gender expectation and gender norms, gender-based structural inequalities and discrimination, gender-blind government policies, and social networks at home and abroad.

### **3.7.1 Economic disparities between countries**

Economic disparities between countries contribute significantly to international migration (Jolly & Revees, 2005; UNDP, 2005; Bernstein, 2011). According to Sanderson (2013), the world is characterised by huge income gaps. For example, in 2010 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated that citizens of Qatar had the highest incomes in the



world with an average of USD 88 559. In contrast, a citizen in Congo earned an average of USD 328, which is 270 times less than the income of an average Qatar citizen (Sanderson, 2013). Congolese citizens might therefore migrate to Qatar and other rich countries in search of greener pastures. In many developed countries, there has been a dependency on the care offered by women from poor countries due to demographic changes, growing participation of women in the workforce, and reduced services for child and aged care (Ehrenreich & Hochild, 2003; Dywilli, Bonner & O'Brien, 2013). Migrants from poor regions in Africa, Latin America, Southeast and Central Europe and Asia have migrated to developed regions as employment opportunities opened up in Europe, North America and parts of Asia (Ali, 2004).

### **3.7.2 Employment opportunities**

According to Pipper (2013), human beings migrate for employment opportunities and improved well-being. Nowadays, even women are largely migrating on their own to enhance their economic opportunities by seeking jobs in other countries (Fleury, 2016). The economic power, rewards and opportunities in both sending and receiving countries influence migration (Jolly & Revees, 2005). Lack of jobs in the sending country acts as a push factor to migration, while jobs in the receiving country act as a pull factor to the migration of women. In some situations, migration becomes the best option for women in the face of poverty or for the betterment of their families. Their aim is to send money back home (Jolly & Revees, 2005). The money sent home is used for the general upkeep and education of the family. Some women even remit their income in order to invest for their future so that when they return to their countries of origin they can use their investment to sustain themselves. In other words, some women go back home at a later stage and use their investment to start businesses so that they can continue earning an income in their country of origin.

### **3.7.3 Educational opportunities**

The number of people migrating for educational purposes is increasing. According to Lee (2014), the top six countries hosting 63% of the global international students include the United States (20%), the United Kingdom (13%), Germany (8%), France (8%), and Australia and China (7% each). Migrants, especially young people, want to acquire knowledge and skills that will make them competitive in the labour market (Raghuram, 2013; Browne, 2017). Educational attainment makes a person competitive, even globally, as most countries prefer skilled workers, and their selection of migrants is based

on the skills that the migrants have. Educational programmes have become internationalised (Bijwaard & Wang, 2016). This means that with some educational programmes, qualifications and knowledge acquired can be applied in different countries. This makes students want to move from their countries to others in search of educational opportunities, especially in countries with highly ranked universities. Some female migrants also migrate for educational purposes. For instance, in the Horn of Africa girls in rural areas are forced to leave school and get married at an early age, so to flee from this some migrate to cities to finish their education (Cossor, 2016).

Although there is evidence on the migration of people for education, research on their experiences is limited (Bijwaard & Wang, 2016). This might be because most scholars concentrate on the migration that directly leads to a better lifestyle; for example migration for work, or as a result of a humanitarian crisis. Even though migration for educational purposes is not considered a primary cause of migration, it is essential as it provides an avenue for improved livelihood for the migrant (Cossor, 2016). Attention should therefore be paid to the experiences of educational migrants, and to the differences of these experiences according to gender.

#### **3.7.4 Improved technology**

Improved transport and communication have made migration from one place to another much easier. Better Transport enables people to reach far away destinations cheaply and in a very short period of time (Bernstein, 2011). Owing to communication technology such as telephones, emails and the social media information about opportunities in other places can be easily shared (Czaika & de Haas, 2014). When information is easily accessible about the available opportunities in the destination country, people are likely to migrate.

#### **3.7.5 Humanitarian crises**

Humanitarian crises are some of the reasons why people are forced to move out of their home countries. According to Martin, Weerasinghe and Taylor (2014), a humanitarian crisis is any situation in which there is a threat to life, physical safety, health and lack of basic necessities needed for survival. A humanitarian crisis such as war is triggered by human beings, and others occur naturally. They include drought, famine, hurricanes, tsunamis and earthquakes, to mention only a few. When people fail to cope with these crises they are pushed to move to other places, and even other countries. In wealthy

countries, if natural disasters occur, the authorities can sustain and assist the affected population because of the resources they have. Therefore, emigration is not likely to take place. In poorer countries, where the population is much more vulnerable to disaster, the authorities lack the resources to give them the necessary help and protection (Martin et al., 2014). In these cases people will often move to other countries in search of more stable and habitable conditions. In the case of Haiti, many of its citizens have migrated to other countries, especially the Dominican Republic and the United States of America in search of refuge (Martin et al., 2014) because of its political instability, poverty and natural disasters such as earthquakes and hurricanes. Another example of people fleeing their country's crisis is the case of Zimbabwe in 2009, when members of the opposition parties faced violence and detention by the Zanu-PF government, which forced many Zimbabweans to flee to other countries, including South Africa, in search of refuge (Human Rights Watch, 2009). The cholera outbreak in the country in 2009 left about 39 000 people dead because of the disregard of the people's welfare by the ruling Zanu-PF which had allowed the health care system to collapse. This led to the death of many people. Those who had resources fled to other countries to seek proper health care (Human Rights Watch, 2008). Humanitarian crises are one of the events that leave people with no option but to migrate if they are to survive.

### **3.7.6 Social networks at home and abroad**

Social networks are very important as they connect individuals in different parts of the world and enable people to get information about opportunities for growth beyond their borders, which may prompt them to consider migrating. Women are more likely to migrate if there are individuals that they know in the destination country. Parents are more comfortable when their daughters migrate with a friend or a relative that accompanies them. The stronger the social network, the lesser the perceived risks. Social networks offer assistance in finding jobs and places to stay, and enable remittances (Beine & Salomone, 2013). Though these social networks are important in facilitating the decision to migrate, some can be very dangerous. Women who have no connections in the destination country may use recruitment agencies to facilitate the process of their migration (IOM, 2009); but this may be risky. Some young female immigrants may be led into dangerous jobs which may cost them their lives.

### **3.7.7 Gender expectations and norms**

The expectations and norms that define women in societies act both as motivating factors to migration and as a hindrance to women. In some countries, single women are more likely to migrate (Fleury, 2016), but in some other countries, single women are not allowed to migrate because of fear of moral corruption and prostitution when they arrive at the destination countries. This situation is prevalent in Sri Lanka, Ghana and Nigeria (Kanaiaupuni, 2000; Shaw, 2005). In some societies, women are expected to make decisions based on their families rather than individually (Chant & Raddiffe, 1992; Fleury, 2016). This may result in women choosing to respect their families' decision against migration, even though such migration may seem to be offering better economic opportunities. The more restrictive the role assigned to women by culture or religion, the less the actual migration of females (Omelandiuk, 2005; Hofman & Buckley, 2013). This means that if religion and culture expect women to actively participate in their homes as mothers and wives, they are less likely to move to other countries independently to search for work. In contrast, in some countries, such as the Philippines and Sri Lanka, migration may be considered more acceptable than divorce (Asafar, 2011). Some parents encourage their daughters to migrate as they see it as their daughters' duty to go and work, and then send money back home (Jolly & Revees, 2005). If societies are less patriarchal in nature and encourage the emancipation of women, migration is likely to take place. In view of this, it is important to investigate the reasons behind the migration of women in the SADC region, especially the migration of young females from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

### **3.7.8 Gender inequality and discrimination**

Patriarchal societies are marked by gender disparities. Such societies are characterised by marginalisation and exploitation of women. Such a situation constitutes gender inequality and discrimination, which may push some people to migrate, and others not to. Some women migrate to escape gender discrimination and norms (Sammers, 2010; Ferrant & Tuccio, 2015). Others migrate in search of independence. On the other hand, some young women leave their countries because they are being forced into specific occupations and because of abuse and violence meted out to them (Jolly & Revees, 2005). Women also migrate to escape social stigma, especially when they are single, have restrictions on their freedom, pressure to marry or remain chaste until marriage (Jolly & Reeves, 2005). Ferrant, Loiseau and Nowacka (2014) maintain that gender-based discrimination which promotes migration includes early and forced marriage,

female genital mutilation, gendered social stigmas or potential gender-based violence. In Ethiopia, many young girls have left their country to avoid early marriage (Boyden, Pankhurst, & Tafere, 2012). In Southeast Asia, many women migrate specifically to escape forced marriage (Lam & Hoang, 2010). Migration may act as a way to challenge gender discrimination when women move to countries with lower levels of it. Women coming from patriarchal communities might see that they are being oppressed by their cultures, thus causing them to escape through migration.

### **3.7.9 Gender-blind government policies**

Gender policies have influence in both the migrant receiving and sending countries. Australia is one of the countries with a flexible approach in terms of women's migration because of their skills-based approach. In Australia, migration is based on the skills assessment of an immigrant, not on gender. As a result of this approach, many women are migrating to Australia because they can compete at the same level as men. In some countries, women lack access to education, and tend to be excluded by the selection criterion of skilled migration. Some governments restrict female migration in order to protect them from abuse. If these women cannot migrate owing to lack of the required skills, they might end up migrating by accompanying their spouses. Having an accompanying spousal visa makes women vulnerable to irregular forms of employment because they are not allowed to work in the country without skilled visas (Omelaniuk, 2005). Some government policies do not support the empowerment of women through education. If women migrate without education, they will be lacking particular skills to meet the demands in the destination country (Ferrant & Tuccio, 2015). This puts female migrants at risk of being employed in low-paid and less legally protected employment sectors, as well as vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

### **3.8 Opportunities created by migration**

Migration can create opportunities for women both at the individual and family levels. This means that the opportunities created can benefit the migrant herself and also her family. These opportunities or benefits can also benefit the country both of origin and destination. These benefits include the ability to send remittances to their families back home to improve the lives of their families, returning with new skills, norms and expertise to their countries, and giving the women autonomy and access to resources. The following is a detailed discussion of the opportunities created by migration.

### **3.8.1 Remittances**

Remittances sent back to the countries of origin by some immigrants are very important as they contribute massively to the gross domestic product of a country. Studies show that women globally remit more than men (Crush et al., 2017). A study conducted in South Africa also indicated that male migrants are 25% less likely to remit than working female migrants (Collinson, Stephen, Kathleen, & Clark, 2003). McDuff (2015) states that the emigration of women from Zimbabwe is encouraged by their families because they are more likely to send remittances back to their families more than male migrants. In another study, it was seen that Philistine female migrants remit more than men (Lo Goff, Salomone & Sebastein, 2015). This might be due to the women's caring nature that makes them take the responsibility of taking care of their families back home. Female migrants make sure that their remittances are spent on food, clothes and the general well-being of their families back home (IOM, 2005). The remittances are very important as they help alleviate poverty in the household back home by funding education, reducing child labour and paying for medical costs for family members (Escrivia & Ribas, 2004; Yang, 2004). The remittances give the female migrants a sense of worth in their communities, and increase their autonomy (Temin, Montgomery, Engebresten, & Barker, 2013; Fleury, 2016). They not only benefit the families and communities of the female migrants, they also uplift the worth of the female migrants themselves. Their communities view these migrants as the breadwinners, a role that elevates the women's status in the society, and gains respect for them from its members.

### **3.8.2 Acquisition of new skills, norms and expertise**

Female migrants in destination countries can learn new skills that are relevant and useful for the development of their home countries. According to Martin (2004), returning migrants bring in much-needed skills. In addition, there are programmes that are aimed at economic development by identifying migrants with specific skills needed by the home country, and facilitating their return and reintegration (Martin, 2004). Upon arrival from abroad, some women start their own businesses with the skills acquired (Petrozziello, 2013), as in, for example, Sri Lanka and Spain (Shaw, 2005a; UNFPA & IOM, 2006). Moreover, female immigrants may adopt new norms from their host countries which can help them to change their traditional roles (Ferrant & Tucclo, 2015). This will in turn help women to overcome all gender-related discrimination and abuses.

### **3.8.3 Autonomy, empowerment and access to resources**

Migration of women can enhance their autonomy, power and access to resources by giving them economic independence, confidence and greater freedom. According to Martin (2004), when women move to more industrialised societies they become familiar with new norms regarding women's rights and opportunities. They can also change the traditional norms as they gain access to education or economic opportunities, thus also increasing their human capital (Fleury, 2016). Temin et al. (2013) state that many families rely on their daughters to migrate, resulting in the improved worth of girls to their families. Not only migrant woman gain autonomy; those women who stay at home when their spouses migrate also acquire greater household and economic responsibilities, such as deciding how funds will be used (Martin, 2004). Control of how to use funds gives these women the power to decide on how that money will be distributed within the household. However, some men will send money back home and dictate how it should be used.

### **3.8.4 Poverty reduction**

Migration can be beneficial in reducing poverty for the immigrant and her family, and also for the country of origin, because sometimes the wages that the migrants get in the destination country can be many multiples of what they would get doing a similar job at home (World Bank, 2016). Migration can also be of benefit to the country of origin by improving its socio-economic status. The remittances can be a source of foreign currency needed for the development of the country of origin (World Bank, 2017). Migration can also contribute to reducing poverty in the areas of origin through investments. According to a study on rural urban migration in Ghana, the majority of the migrants indicated that their overall well-being has been enhanced by migrating. These migrants indicated that some of them are reducing poverty through creating jobs, remitting their income, and investing in their home area (Awumbila, Owusu, & Teye, 2014). Migration can reduce poverty through the transference of skills, knowledge and technology from the destination country to the country of origin (IOM, 2017c), thus influencing the country's productivity and economic growth.

From the above discussion, it can be noted that migration can be beneficial for the individual migrant, family, community and also both the country of origin and the country of destination. Through migration poverty is reduced at individual, household, community and country level. This is done through getting employment and business opportunities, sending remittances, investing in the home country and also transference of skills,



knowledge, technology and expertise. It can also be noted that as a result of migration female migrants' are exposed to new norms and in some destination countries women's rights are upheld. This increases their autonomy, empowerment and access to resources. With the benefits of migration for women in mind, it is also essential to address their vulnerability in order for these benefits to be maximised.

### **3.9 Gender, migration and vulnerability**

Gender is a very important question as it cuts across all disciplines. According to WHO (2017), it is the social construction of the differences between men and women. These include the roles, behaviour and relationships that are considered to be appropriate and unique according to each sex. There are certain roles and behaviour that are considered the norm for each sex, and these are termed gender roles. Gender plays a significant role in the migration of people. According to IOM (2017a), gender affects the reason why people migrate, who will migrate, the social networks that will be used to migrate, and labour relations and opportunities in the countries both of origin and destination. This means that certain norms can either influence or restrict migration, and employment opportunities for migrants.

There has been a long androcentric assumption in migration that only male migrants are the ones moving for economic purposes. An androcentric assumption means that the experiences of men are assumed to be the norm, and that these experiences provide criteria with which women's experiences and behaviour are evaluated (Pilcher & Wheleham, 2017). This means that the experiences of the male migrants were considered to be representative of experiences of all migrants. This overshadowed the experiences of female migrants (Triandafyllidou, 2016), making them passive in the whole migration space.

Before the 1970s, most of the migration literature was silent on the migration of women, owing to the patriarchal nature of most societies, which disregarded issues facing women. In most traditional societies migration was regarded as a male phenomenon. Therefore much focus was on the male migrant. In the 1980s and the 1990s gender started being considered in the migration literature (Dobrowolsky, 2016), but there were still gender misconceptions when it came to the migration of women. They alluded to the fact that women follow male breadwinners in the whole migration process as dependants (Dobrowolsky, 2016). Such misconceptions made migration for men as breadwinners a norm, while female independence was seen as a transgression against the expected



gender norms for women. Migration for women in that era was only acceptable when they were migrating to accompany their spouses and for marriage. Currently, as was noted above, women are migrating independently as the main economic providers of their families. They can be found in all the categories of migration such as illegal migration, economic migration and as asylum seekers.

Although women are migrating independently, gender plays a role in the whole migration process, notably during the pre-migration stage. Some societies restrict the migration of women. In such societies, when men migrate they are seen as behaving according to the expected norm of being the breadwinner (Dobrowolsky, 2016; Triandafyllidou, 2016). This allows them to migrate to different areas in search of economic opportunities so that they can fend for their families. When women in such societies migrate they are seen to be transgressing against the expected norm, unless they are migrating as dependants (Triandafyllidou, 2016). For example, in Asia the share of women migrating has increased since the 1980s until the present especially in countries such as the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. But in other countries in the same region the number is significantly low. In Bangladesh female migrants comprise only 3% of the total number of migrants, because the country restricts the migration of women and encourages the migration of men (Belanger & Rahman, 2013). The restriction on the migration of women from Bangladesh is because it is believed that it is the only way the state can protect its women from abuse. In contrast, men are encouraged to migrate because it is seen as an economic development strategy (Belanger & Rahman, 2013). Such a situation also shows how gender inequalities emanate from the policies and laws in a state.

In order for women to migrate they have to overcome many barriers. These include cultural, religious, political and intrahousehold barriers (Belanger & Rahman, 2013). In a household the gender power relations influence the migration of people. Women in homes that are not patriarchal, and where there are no specified roles and responsibilities assigned to a certain gender, are more likely to migrate than those who come from patriarchal homes. According to Pilcher and Whelehan (2017), in most traditional homes there is gender division of labour, whereby men are responsible for providing for their family through finding work outside the home and getting wages. Women in these homes are expected to be involved in the management and performance of housework and caring (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2017). Such a setting will encourage the migration of men more than women.

During migration men and women have different experiences. Mostly women and children are victims of human trafficking. Over the past few years, Southern Africa has become a fertile ground for human trafficking, due mainly to its porous borders, high rates of poverty and gender inequality (Mangu & Mbata, 2016). As a result of the borders through which people can easily be smuggled into another country, more people are being trafficked. Owing to gender inequality, women can be easily coerced into being trafficked mostly for sex work. During their migration these women experience sexual exploitation and physical violence from the traffickers, who are mostly men (Frankel, 2017; Le, Ryan, Bae, & Colbum, 2017). This shows the terrible experiences that women have to endure, especially the victims of trafficking, during migration.

In a destination country the influence of gender on migration is also visible. In the economic environment there is evidence of inequality between men and women. Female immigrants have a higher chance of being unemployed than their male counterparts. Those who are employed are likely to be employed in gender-segregated positions and sectors. For example, in the United States of America female migrants are segregated into occupations with lower wages and traditional gender roles (Fillippen, 2016). Gender inequality linked with poverty makes women from poorer countries to be mostly concentrated in domestic work. According to the ILO (2015b), the estimated number of female migrants who are domestic workers is 8,45 million compared to male migrants, who are just 3.07 million. This situation is also common in Southern Africa, where women from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho are employed in white and middle-class homes where they provide domestic labour (Lindio-McGovern & Williman, 2016). Female immigrants in the destination countries are concentrated at the lower end of the employment hierarchy. The work they do is associated with their traditional roles of caring for children and domestic chores. Such a situation shows a distinct difference between them and their male counterparts.

It should also be noted that gender plays a role in destination areas. Some women who are overqualified find jobs as domestic workers, childminders and caregivers for the elderly (Motus, 2017). Women in these occupations often experience financial extortion by their employers (Crush et al., 2017). Female immigrants who are qualified often find jobs in sectors that do not match their skills, and they are often underpaid. Though not having education can be one of the contributory factors in gender inequality in the labour market, sometimes better education and training is not a remedy for the female immigrants' situation, because some emigrant women with skills end up working in less

skilled professions. For example, in some countries female immigrants who are nurses by profession can find work as caregivers, and fail to find work as nurses; but citizens of the country who are qualified nurses will not work as caregivers (Motus, 2017). This shows that female immigrants not only suffer as a result of gender, but because they are immigrants they cannot compete on the same footing with the citizens of the destination country. Another example is that of immigrants with teaching qualifications who end up working as housewives. In the light of this it is important to have gender-specific interventions to promote women's access to dignified opportunities in the destination area (Motus, 2017).

In the family context, male and female migrants also experience migration differently. One of the gender effects of migration in the family is the fact that migration rights can be tied to one of the spouses. This is one of the reasons why female immigrants often find themselves in a vulnerable situation. In most traditional families the husband is the primary migrant, and the wife is the secondary migrant (Banerjee & Pham, 2014). In such instances the migration rights will be tied to the husband. The female immigrant will only receive the migration right as an accompanying spouse. Upon divorce the female immigrant loses that right, and has to go back to her own country.

Female immigrants migrating as the accompanying spouse are not allowed to work in some destination countries. Some of these immigrants who had careers in their home countries would want to be integrated into the economy of the destination country by finding jobs (Banerjee & Pham, 2014); but integration becomes very difficult for the female immigrants because they would have entered the country as an accompanying spouse. Therefore, they are likely to be given a spousal visa or permit which limits their chances of employment. For example, in Canada, the migration of skilled professionals and their dependents is encouraged. The problem is with incorporating the dependents into the labour market as some of the dependents will not have skills (Phan, Banerjee, Deacon, & Taraky, 2015). This makes them fully dependent on their husbands. As a result, this exposes some women to violence by their partners as their migration rights are tied to them. Sometimes they cannot report such abuses because they are afraid of being deported.

In destination countries female immigrants face multiple challenges as a result of other factors, not just gender. Although gender is considered a significant factor in the challenges faced by female immigrants, it is important to look at other factors which intersect in their life leading to their vulnerability. Lack of proper documentation exposes

them to the risk of abuse and exploitation both socially and economically. According to Dobrowolsky (2016), some female immigrants experience challenges based on their migrant status. Illegal female immigrants are most likely to be vulnerable because they have no legal documentation that allows them to be in the country. According to the UN (2017), undocumented female immigrants are mostly more vulnerable to exploitation than other kinds. This makes them abused by their husbands, the people they live with in the society, their employers and even the authorities. Sometimes the police and immigration officials are the ones who abuse the illegal female immigrants. This means that these immigrants do not have anywhere to report their abuse.

Immigrants are regarded as a threat in most countries, especially during a recession. They may face challenges just because they are immigrants. This makes them discriminated against, as they are accused of causing unemployment for the citizens. When a country's economy declines, citizens start feeling insecure, and this apprehension is projected to the immigrants (Aysa-Lastra & Cachon, 2015). Since immigrants are not citizens, they are seen by the citizens as straining the resources of the country. This may make them vulnerable to violent threats and attacks against them. For example, in South Africa, owing to the economic challenges that the country is facing, violent xenophobic attacks and discrimination against immigrants are common (South African Government News Agency, 2015). Female immigrants may be denied other fundamental rights that are essential to them. They face human rights violations because they are not citizens of the country that they have migrated to. They can be denied access to health care, employment and education (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 2017).

In short, this section highlighted the influence of gender in the whole migration process. The gender and other differentials like lack of legal migration documents and status as immigrants play a very massive role in the vulnerability of female immigrants. With this in mind exploring further on the vulnerability of young female immigrants is essential to add on to the existing body of knowledge. This is because the experiences of men are different to those of women, therefore it would be unjustified to generalise these experiences.

### **3.10 Challenges faced by immigrants**

This section expands upon the vulnerability of female immigrants to the challenges they face, which are mostly economic and social. They include, among others,

unemployment, underemployment, legal restrictions, abuse and exploitation in the workplace, abuse by recruitment agencies and traffickers, restrictive gender norms and roles, lack of access to health care, spousal abuse, language barriers, gender discrimination and prostitution. These challenges are discussed in detail below.

### **3.10.1 Unemployment**

Female immigrants face higher rates of unemployment than male immigrants, and both local men and women (Cortina et al., 2014; Fleury, 2016). According to Crush et al. (2017), data from South Africa show that female immigrants have a lower probability of being employed than male immigrants. This may be attributed to the multiple intersecting forms of discrimination that women face such as xenophobia, discrimination based on their sex, age, nationality, and their status as immigrants, which often limits their chances for proper employment. In 2004, fewer than 60% of female immigrants from non-OECD countries had jobs in OECD countries (Ghosh, 2009). Women who migrate for family reasons have the lowest employment rates compared to women with skills who migrate independently. This situation is seen mainly in Australia, since skilled migrants are allowed to come with their families, but if these immigrants do not hold skilled visas they are not allowed to work there (Ghosh, 2009). Some skilled female immigrants who migrate for family reasons may be refused permission to work by their patriarchal husbands, who dominate their households by controlling the household income. Limited access to information, education and skills worsens the situation of female immigrants in finding work. South Africa has both skilled and unskilled immigrants, and work for both is scarce. This might be because the country is facing high unemployment (Statistics SA, 2017). However, unskilled immigrants in South Africa are more at risk of unemployment (Bernstein, 2011), and end up being a burden to the destination country by using public resources for nothing, and some may be involved in crime as a way to make a living.

### **3.10.2 Underemployment**

Many migrants flee the economic difficulties in their countries. Some of them are highly skilled and educated, but often they are unemployed, or work in positions below their qualifications. For example, 70% of the Peruvian domestic workers in Chile were found to have completed high school or university (Ortega, 2001). Underemployment may be the result of migrants being refused recognition of their professional credentials and expertise, or be due to language, race, cultural barriers, discrimination or xenophobia (Pipper, 2005). Female immigrants suffer from both discrimination as women and as

migrants. This is likely to lead them to occupying the lowest paying jobs, being isolated, or exposed to sexual violence (Petrozello, 2005).

### **3.10.3 Legal restrictions**

Legal restrictions may prevent women from benefiting from migration at the same level as their male counterparts. Some countries restrict visas to those required for certain occupations, for instance, health work or domestic work (Pfeiffer, Richter, Fletcher, & Taylor, 2008). Some countries may not allow women to gain legal status without their husband's help, thus reinforcing patriarchy (Martin, 2004). Some laws restrict accompanying spouses from obtaining work (Ghosh, 2009). This puts women at risk of being abused by their spouses because they economically depend on them. Some countries restrict women from doing the same type of jobs as men. Data from the World Bank (2015) show that about 100 countries restrict women to particular occupations. This often results in restricting women from taking higher paying jobs such as mining and manufacturing (World Bank Group, 2015). According to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, states should take measures to improve the legal protection of female immigrants against gender inequality, gendered labour markets and the reinforcing of the traditional roles of women (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014). In most countries, undocumented immigrants are restricted from freely finding work. When they work, they are paid lower wages and perform jobs that are mostly dangerous. The worst part is that they are not provided with health insurance and other benefits. In the USA, female immigrants have limited access to basic rights, adequate income and housing (Castaneda & Ruelas, 2011).

### **3.10.4 Abuse and exploitation in the workplace**

Immigrants also face some abuse in the workplace from their employers and other colleagues. In 2001 about 1 600 women who migrated from Sri Lanka reported harassment in their workplaces (UNFPA & IOM, 2006). The abuse of female immigrants in the workplace occurs because most senior managerial positions are held by men, hence they tend to abuse women in order to maintain their dominance. Most immigrants are usually employed in the low income and less formal sectors, which expose them to abuse or violence, because the work that they do is often not given much consideration by the labour laws of the destination country, especially when they are undocumented migrants. Studies have shown that female immigrants working in informal sectors are discriminated against because of unfair labour practices. Their work is not covered, or is

only partially covered, by labour legislation, social security and welfare provisions of the destination countries (ILO, 2008; Kanthoul, 2015). For example, in the US only 35% of the adult immigrant population are covered by employer health insurance. This makes them vulnerable to poor health because they cannot afford health care. Some immigrants are subjected to little or no pay, long working hours, insufficient rest periods, and restrictions on movement and association (Cortina et al., 2015). As noted above, this is worsened by the fact that female migrants, especially undocumented ones, cannot complain about this because they fear being deported or tried in a court of law (Cortina et al., 2015). So these women continue to be abused in the workplace because the abuse is not reported.

Domestic work, sex work and entertainment are some of the sectors not covered by employment laws in some countries (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014; Fleury, 2016). Where domestic work is covered by employment laws it is rarely monitored to see whether employers are exercising what is expected of them by the law. According to the UNHR Office of the High Commissioner (2014), there are several shortfalls in the protection of domestic workers, including their legal protection. This leads to exploitative practices in the workplace and limited avenues of redress. Most immigrants are reluctant to report them because of fear of losing their jobs and being deported.

### **3.10.5 Abuse of migrants by recruitment agencies and traffickers**

Recruitment agencies are important in facilitating the migration process. Most of them charge exorbitant fees to do this. Where migrants cannot pay immediately, they are expected to pay later when they have settled in the destination country; but some female immigrants find it difficult to pay their debts owing to unemployment, underemployment and low wages (Ghosh, 2009). This puts them at risk of violence from these agents. Furthermore, their reliance on recruitment agencies puts them in a contractual bondage with employers they have never met, which leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse when they arrive in the destination country (Halabi, 2008).

Migrants are sometimes trafficked to other countries to work as slaves. For example, in Libya immigrants from West Africa are taken as commodities and sold into slavery, with all its abuse and violence (*The Guardian*, 2017). What is disturbing is the fact that African governments are aware of the Libyan crisis, but they keep on ignoring it (Hlatshaneni, 2017). This makes the trafficked lose hope because they have no one to protect them. Most of them are women and children. In a study about trafficked women in destination



countries, it is stated that trafficked people are often subjected to physical and mental abuse, including beating, battering, rape, starvation, forced drug use, confinement and exclusions. They cannot escape these abuses because their passports are often confiscated by the traffickers (Cortina et al., 2014). They are forced to engage in unprotected sex, which exposes them to sexually transmitted infections (STIs). They are also forced to work long hours and are often denied access to health care (Cortina, 2015). According to the SADC (2016), most of the trafficked women experience trauma, mental health disorders such as depression, physical and sexual disorders, and some commit suicide.

### **3.10.6 Restrictive gender norms and roles**

Restrictive gender norms and roles are common in patriarchal societies. According to one study by the World Bank (2014), traditional social norms dictate that good women do not leave their homes, and women do not migrate. Those who do manage to migrate might face strict gender rules, and traditional gender roles can be reinforced in the destination country. For example, in refugee camps women continue to be reproductive members of the family, responsible for domestic activities, while men are unable to fulfil their traditional roles as they cannot continue with their patriarchal role of being the providers. The frustrations experienced by men may result in increased family tensions, domestic violence against wives and children, depression and alcoholism (Martin, 2004). The rights of female immigrants who obtain their legal residency through family formation or reunification may be limited to their spouse's willingness to support their immigration claims. They may become victims of spousal abuse, and many are reluctant to leave their spouses as they control access to their legal status.

### **3.10.7 Lack of access to health care**

Access to health care is one of the challenges faced by migrants in the destination country. According to Vearey (2013), migration groups experience various vulnerabilities in poor health care and poor health outcomes. The unstable socio-economic status of migrants, combined with their illegal status, makes them unable to access health care (Thomas & Gideon, 2013). Migrants, especially the poor, are thus exposed to serious risks, such as not eating a healthy diet and living in unhealthy conditions. Female immigrants are more at risk when it comes to accessing health care, because gender-based constraints concentrate them in informal occupations with limited protection and medical aid benefits (Thomas & Gideon, 2013). Female immigrants also face challenges

in trying to gain access to health care. This might be due to their lack of information on health-related education, isolation, inability to access services based on legal status, and fear of deportation or other repercussions if their immigration is illegal (Ghosh, 2009; Crush et al., 2017). Their inability to access health care is also due to their lack of money.

There is limited information on how migrants access health care in different parts of the world. There is also limited information on how access to health is gendered and how it plays a role in furthering the already existing gender inequalities between men and women (Thomas & Gideon, 2013). It is therefore important to conduct studies in order to find out how access to health care among immigrants is gendered in order to remedy the situation.

### **3.10.8 Spousal abuse**

Violence and abuse towards female immigrants is common. This can be emotional, psychological, physical and sexual (UN General Assembly, 2013). Violence and abuse faced by female immigrants is perpetrated not only by the society at large, but also by people who are mostly close to them, for example, their spouses. Stress faced by spouses in the destination countries often increases intimate partner violence (IOM, 2013a). The spouse, in this case the husband, may face stress due to the type of work he does, which can be demanding. In some instances, stress is triggered by failure to find a job, which results in failure to provide for the family. This sometimes makes the spouse bitter and angry to the extent of abusing the wife as a defence mechanism to cope with his challenges. In one study, about 31% of Latin American migrant workers in the US reported increased intimate partner violence since migrating (UNFPA & IOM, 2006). If the migrant status is dependent on the abuser, the migrant woman might be reluctant to report him, thus increasing the risk of repeated abuse (Fleury, 2016). One in 10 women who have migrated to South Africa reported to have experienced sexual violence during their migration (Giorgio et al., 2016). As a result, these female migrants are facing many health consequences, including physical injuries, trauma and STIs. Even so, some female migrants do not get justice (IOM, 2013a). This might be due to isolation, lack of language skills and information, and distance from family and community networks (IOM, 2013a). The perpetrators of such abuse usually get away with the crime and continue to abuse these women.

### **3.10.9 Language barriers**

Communication is essential for day-to-day interaction with other people. Some immigrants find it difficult to communicate in the local language as some can only speak their native language. The impact of not speaking the destination area's language has its effects in many places such as the job environment, at school, and in health care settings. According to Hagginbottom et al. (2015), poor language proficiency is one of the most identifiable barriers which affects female immigrants. This was seen in rural areas in Alberta, Canada, where female immigrants in maternity care could not express their feelings and needs appropriately (Hagginbottom et al., 2015). Therefore they ended up not being given the proper care that they wanted. Another study showed that female immigrants in abusive situations find it impossible to deal with the abuse they face because of the language barriers (Yakushko & Morgan-Consoli, 2014). This means that the victims might fail to communicate with the law enforcement authorities. This makes them hesitate to report abuse. Sometimes when they report, they are not understood and they cannot adequately tell of their experiences owing to language difficulties. Consequently, the perpetrators get away with the abuse.

The USA is one of the countries in which immigrants face significant language barriers. This is because it is not a completely multilingual country. The main language is English, and therefore non-English speaking immigrants often find it hard to survive in that country. According to Nunez (2016), immigrants who cannot speak English often struggle to find jobs, have social relationships and even complete other basic tasks like buying food and filling in forms.

### **3.10.10 Discrimination**

Discrimination is the act of treating a person or people in a manner different from the normal one because of their unique characteristics. Discrimination affects both male and female immigrants in the destination area. This means that both genders are exposed to discrimination because they are all immigrants. Immigrants experience discrimination as a result of factors such as nationality, religion, ethnicity, language and race (Nangia, 2013). This means that immigrants' unique characteristics can be grounds on which they are discriminated against. According to Nangia (2013), younger immigrants are more likely to be discriminated against than the elderly. This might be because young immigrants are seen as more energetic than the elderly ones, so they are more likely to compete with the locals for jobs than the elderly, who have retired or are soon to retire.

Moreover, the young female immigrants are at their reproductive age, and are likely to give birth. This might strain the limited resources of a country through adding those to the population who may want to benefit from national resources. Even so, women experience discrimination differently from men. For example, a study in Europe found that Arab female immigrants were more vulnerable to discrimination because they were highly visible as a result of the traditional religious clothes which they wore (Yakushko & Morgan-Consoli, 2014). Certain characteristics which distinguish people of different nationalities expose them to abuse as they can be easily identified. Arab female immigrants have been shown to be vulnerable because they are forced to dress in a certain way, but not their men. This makes them easily recognised and abused.

### **3.10.11 Forced prostitution**

Trafficking of women and children for sex work is one of the most persistent issues around the world. This form of migration is closely linked to forced and illegal migration and transnational crime networks. Upon arrival in the destination country, these female immigrants may be forced to engage in prostitution as a way to survive and provide for their families. According to Ghosh (2009), forced or displaced migrants are usually at greater risk of forced prostitution. In Europe there is a growing number of women who are trafficked for forced prostitution and sexual exploitation (Freedman, 2017). During departure from their countries of origin, they are sometimes not aware that they are being transported for sexual exploitation because the traffickers promise them lucrative jobs in the destination country. These trafficked migrants are required to pay a certain fee for their transportation. If they do not have the money they are required to make plans to pay for their transportation upon arrival in the destination area. This exposes them to involvement in sex work as a way to pay the debts they incurred for their transportation (US Department of State, 2014)

Similarly, according to *The Zimbabwean* (2016) newspaper report, women from Zimbabwe come to South Africa to search for greener pastures, but sometimes they do not find work. This forces them to engage in prostitution for their own survival. Evidence shows that female migrants are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation (Crush & Ramachandran, 2009), but many of them fear to report such cases to the police and other relevant authorities. This might also lead to the increased likelihood of contracting HIV/AIDS and other STIs. For example, in France, 69% of the HIV diagnoses in 2003 were of women, and 65% of those were migrants (UNFPA & IOM, 2006).

From the above discussion, it can be noted that migrants specifically women are more vulnerable to a diverse range of social and economic challenges. Although this is the case, there is still a gap in literature on the challenges experienced by female migrants especially in Africa. Therefore, this study conducted in Johannesburg, South Africa. Johannesburg is one of the cities in South Africa with the most migrant population because it is the economic hub in South Africa. Due to this, it is essential to investigate female immigrants' vulnerability to challenges in order to develop strategies for their situation to be minimised.

### **3.11 Strategies used by immigrants to cope with challenges**

Migration is associated with many challenges that impair the normal functioning of the immigrant and his or her family. Sometimes migrants have to learn to cope with the challenges that they are faced with because they cannot go back to their home countries. The reasons why they chose to leave may be persisting, hence they find it better to endure the challenges at their destination. Besides, there may be advantages in staying where in the destination country which are worth meeting challenges for. According to Yakushko (2010), migrants use a diverse range of strategies to cope with the challenges they face in their host countries. Discussion of some of these follows.

#### **3.11.1 Therapy**

According to Hinos (2013), therapy was used to reduce the stress and anxiety faced by undocumented Latinos in the USA. Therapeutic procedures help immigrants in discussing their challenges with professionals, and devise solutions to them. In some instances immigrants do not use therapy because they may not be aware that such a service is provided. Those who are aware may not have the funds to pay for therapy.

#### **3.11.2 Religion**

Religion is one of the most fundamental coping strategies which help the immigrants to go on despite the challenges that they may be facing. Religious beliefs and practices such as praying and reading the Bible help the immigrants to stay calm in the midst of the challenges they may be facing (King, Heinonen, Uwabor & Adeleye-Olusae, 2016). In Norway, the female Philippine immigrants turned to religion as it provided them with comfort and uplifting thoughts (Straiton, Ledesma, & Donnely, 2017). In another study, Philippine immigrant nurses sought relief by resorting to religion. They believed that

prayer enabled them to get through the difficult times (Connor, 2016). Another study in London indicated that about 48% of the immigrants participated in faith-based organisations in order to deal with the exclusion they encountered in the communities they were living in. These faith-based organisations also provided spiritual and material help to the new migrants in London (Datta et al., 2007). Recently there has been an emergence of white garment churches commonly known as *masowe* which consist mostly of congregants from Zimbabwe. These churches usually conduct their religious meetings under trees and near rivers, and they are opposed to a materialistic lifestyle. Having their own religious group gives immigrants a sense of belonging, and they can express themselves in the way that they do in their home countries. The immigrants might also be opposed to the way the local churches conduct their religious meetings.

### **3.11.3 Cultural groups**

As people migrate they must undergo a process of adaptation to the destination country's culture, commonly known as acculturation (Cobb & Xie, 2017). Immigrants might fail to adjust to the destination country's culture because of discrimination, language and sometimes having a culture which is the direct opposite of the destination country's. Failure to adjust to the destination country's culture might even worsen the immigrants' difficulties, which may result in depression and other psychological challenges (Cobb & Xie, 2017). In order to cope with this some immigrants form their own cultural groups. In these groups immigrants can actually take part in activities they have in their own countries. For example, in Winnipeg, Canada, African refugees performed cultural rituals to enhance their social cohesion and relatedness to their countries of origin (King et al., 2016). During these cultural rituals immigrants socialise, share information on opportunities in the destination areas, and provide support to their more vulnerable counterparts.

### **3.11.4 Social support**

Social support is one of the significant coping strategies used by immigrants in the destination country. Immigrants form close relationships with others from their home country. This provides them with a sense of belonging, and helps them to adjust to the environment and ethnic identity. The friends that they associate with become a substitute for their families since they are away from their home country (Hinos, 2013; Straiton et al., 2017). Social support is essential for immigrants as it enables them to feel that they have people who care. Being in another country brings people of the same origin

together to an extent that their friends become as valuable as their own family. They can share their experiences (Connor, 2016). Sharing experiences can also result in coming up with solutions to the challenges they face.

### **3.11.5 Overtime work and having more jobs**

Immigrants various coping strategies to cope with the low income they get. In a study by Datta et al. (2007) immigrants in London engaged in what they referred to as tactics to cope with the low income they were paid. The immigrants indicated that they would work overtime and look for more than one job. This shows that immigrants are willing to go an extra mile to ensure that the incomes that they get can sustain them and their families back in their country of origin. Therefore, they work overtime and in multiple jobs in order for them to cope with the financial challenges that they face. In addition, immigrants may work for long time and have little time to rest and socialise. This is the case because they came to the destination country to make some money so that they can take care of their families and invest in their home countries. This does not give them much time to socialise.

### **3.11.6 Education**

Education is one of the strategies to overcome poverty, unemployment and other social ills being faced by people in different communities. Some immigrants use education as a way to improve their livelihoods in the destination country. In some instances the less educated immigrants take part in furthering their studies (King et al., 2016). Acquiring a better education also increases their chances to get a better paying and stable job. This means that acquiring education is also an important coping strategy. Evidence from around the world has shown that in 1990 to 2002 the number of migrants with higher education in the world rose from 29.8% to 34.6% whilst that of the low educated declined from 44.9% to 36.4% (Barrientos, 2007). This increase in the number of migrants with higher education might be because more migrants are getting educated in order for them to get stable employment opportunities. This implies that migrants perceive education as a strategy to overcome the economic challenges that they face in the destination country.

### **3.11.7 Patience, self control and contentment**

Other coping strategies used by immigrants include patience, self-control and contentment (Connor, 2016). These strategies are intrinsic as they enable a person to



understand their fate and that sometimes it cannot be quickly changed or it will remain unchanged. Therefore, they accept their situation and choose to have a positive mind and attitude despite the negativity that they may face (Hinos, 2013). This helps immigrants to accept their situation, as a result they will not stress about the challenges they are being faced with. Being content will also assist the immigrants not be involved in illegal activities such as crime in order to have flashy lives. Therefore, these coping strategies help an individual to be resilient despite the challenges that they are facing.

The above literature indicated that the immigrants use different strategies to deal with the challenges they are facing. Although this is the case a gap still remains. There is limited studies which show how immigrants in the African context, specifically young female immigrants, cope with the challenges that they face. Therefore, there is a need to gather data on the coping strategies that they use to cope with the challenges that they are facing.

### **3.12 Strategies to deal with migrants challenges**

This section discusses some of the strategies that have been developed in order to deal with the challenges of migration. Strategies that are discussed are the Regional Strategy for Southern Africa, SADC Regional Action Plan on Labour Migration, Southern Africa Strategic Plan of Action to Address Mixed and Irregular Migration and the Home Affairs Strategic Plan.

#### **3.12.1 Regional Strategy for SADC**

The SADC Regional Strategy (2014-2016) was proposed by the IOM Southern Africa to deal with the vast regional movements of people within the region, and ensure safe and dignified migration. This strategy presents a holistic approach in dealing with migration. It focuses on the humanitarian needs related to migration linked to developmental opportunities, and tackles migration issues increasingly through a regional rather than a country-by-country approach (IOM, 2014). The SADC Regional Strategy aims to promote migration at a regional level in a way that protects the rights of the migrants and maximises their potential for development. This strategy highlights the need for the different member states, regional organisations and other key stakeholders to develop policies and strategies which respond to migration issues in a coherent, collaborative and rights- based approach (IOM, 2014). In order to promote this approach the strategy advocates the prioritisation of human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment

in all interventions, and greater protection to all vulnerable immigrants. The key interventions of this strategy include mixed migration, immigration and border management, migration health, emergencies and regional cooperation (IOM, 2014).

The SADC Regional Strategy provides an approach to promoting migration in a way that safeguards the rights of migrants, including those who are vulnerable. The strategy focuses on the role of the government and the region in tackling migration challenges, but little attention is given to including individuals, civil society groups and immigrants themselves, who are also essential parties in solving migration issues. There is a need for strategy that includes all stakeholders in dealing with migration issues.

### **3.12.2 Southern Africa Strategic Plan of Action to Address Mixed and Irregular Migration**

The Southern Africa Strategic Plan of Action to address mixed and irregular migration was developed by the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa and its partners as a common strategy for the region to increase the effectiveness of the measures to address mixed and irregular migration in the region. This strategy has a human rights-based approach which is about the member states treating immigrants in a dignified manner, and in a way that is in line with human rights standards (IOM, 2015c). It advocates that member states should take ownership in implementing its planned activities to protect the rights of immigrants, and encourages the implementation of initiatives that are gender-sensitive and protective to migrating children (IOM, 2015c). Literature shows that female immigrants and minors who are migrating are more vulnerable to abuse, so this strategy aims to protect them (Chuang, 2017). It encourages the cooperation of all stakeholders, combining knowledge and expertise to achieve its goals (IOM, 2015c).

The Southern Africa Strategic Plan of Action to Address Mixed and Irregular Migration has six strategic priorities: (1) legislation and policy that are responsive to the current trends of migration (IOM, 2015c); (2) capacity building for officials so that they can identify and protect vulnerable migrants; (3) operations which identify migrants with specific needs and ensure referral; (4) and (5) focus on communication, outreach and data collection for policy improvement; (6) emphasis on cooperation and coordination on regional and national levels in addressing migration issues (IOM, 2015c).

Although this strategic plan provides an almost comprehensive plan to improve migration as well as protect the rights of migrants it also side-lines the capacity of the society and

individuals in collaborating with the governments to come up with a solution that is effective.

### **3.12.3 SADC Regional Action Plan on Labour Migration**

Labour migration plays a significant role in the SADC. People move from one country to another within the region for economic purposes. The SADC Regional Action Plan on Labour Migration therefore stresses that there is a need for governments to harmonise policies and their labour migration standards through bilateral and regional agreements (IOM, 2014). Therefore it prioritises data collection and management in order to inform policies governing labour migration. The strategy is also aimed at developing cross-border and regional migration programmes to ensure the protection and the basic rights of labour migrants (IOM, 2014). The Plan's aim is to maximise the benefits of migration for migrants and their families, and the host country's and sending country's governments. This is possible through having policies that promote safe migration and the protection of migrant workers in the destination area, access to dignified employment, and fair treatment in the work environment. It also facilitates the exchange of skills and expertise, and sending remittances to the host country for the development of both sending and receiving countries.

The SADC Regional Action Plan on Labour Migration is a very significant instrument in facilitating the migration and protection of labour migrants. This strategy only provides an approach for protecting the rights of migrant workers, but sidelines those migrants who are not working because they are undocumented, uneducated and using spousal accompanying visas. It is therefore not suitable for mitigating holistically the vulnerability of young, unemployed female immigrants.

### **3.11.4 Home Affairs Strategic Plan (2015-2020)**

The Home Affairs Strategic Plan is a broad strategy which is aimed at improving the mandates of the Department of Home Affairs in South Africa. These include the legislative, civic services and immigration mandates (DHA, 2015a). In terms of migration this strategy aims to make South Africa fully integrated with other nations, and harness immigration to achievement of national goals. According to the Plan, this should be done by facilitating the movement of people lawfully for the development of the country and national security. This strategy entails that the DHA should be focused on the protection of all the people that live in South Africa (DHA, 2015a).

According to this strategy, in order to manage immigration there is a need for capacity, system and co-operation by the government and the public. A national policy should be developed in engagement with all stakeholders (DHA, 2015a). In order to achieve this, a series of discussions was held, and a Green Paper on International Migration was drafted. Later a White Paper on International Migration was also developed to guide the development of the new legislation on migration in South Africa (DHA, 2017). This White Paper responded to the issue of regulating migration in order to compete for the immigrants with critical skills through a risk-based approach which promotes immigration in the national interest (DHA, 2015a). Hence some immigrants without skills, or those with skills which are not on the critical skills list end up migrating without documentation, which might make them vulnerable.

The Home Affairs Strategic Plan, like the other strategies identified above, is not comprehensive. It is mostly concerned with the movement of high-skilled people into the country for the development of the nation, and does not provide measures to ensure the protection of the rights of immigrants who are semi-skilled or without skills who are also working in the country.

### **3.13 Conclusion**

In this chapter the historical overview, patterns and trends of migration around the world, in Africa and South Africa were discussed. The legal protection instruments for the protection of female immigrants and the different migration policy frameworks were highlighted. This chapter also pointed out the types of migrants, opportunities created by migration, linkage of gender, migration and vulnerability, and the challenges faced by female immigrants.

According to the migration trends and patterns, the migration of women does exist: data have shown that women are migrating at almost the same rate as men. The discussion on the types of migrants indicated that women can be found in all the categories of migrants, but literature on female immigrants' experiences is still limited. Much of the migration literature and policy is still concentrated on the male migrant, regarded as the desirable migrant who would migrate as the breadwinner for the family. The literature review also indicated that there are a number of legal instruments to protect female immigrants from human rights abuse and other forms of abuse and exploitation. Female immigrants are vulnerable in the destination country, but the review showed that the literature on the experiences of female immigrants in Africa, specifically in South Africa,

which hosts the largest number of immigrants in Africa, is limited. It is therefore important to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean in Johannesburg in order to add to the existing body of knowledge. This study adds the aspect of gender which has been for neglected in the literature on migration. The study is also important in mitigating the vulnerability of young female immigrants, as it proposes the development of a comprehensive strategy to address their problem.

The following chapter focuses on the methodology applied to answer the research questions on the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research approach which was used to collect and analyse data in order to answer the research questions on the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. This chapter presents the research paradigm, research approach and research design which guided the whole data collection and analysis. Also discussed are population, location and sampling techniques, data collection and analysis, the trustworthiness of the data, ethical considerations for the protection of the participants, justification of the specific methodology of this study, and finally, the study's limitations.

### 4.2 Research paradigm

The term paradigm was derived from the Classical Greek term *paradeigma* (“a standing side by side”), and means a conceptual framework shared by a community of researchers (Cresswell, 2009; Rubin & Babbie, 2010; Babbie, 2016). Neuman (2014) describes a research paradigm as the whole system of thinking. It refers to a set of beliefs that guide the research process or the process of inquiry (Killan, 2013). They provide a frame that can be used to observe and understand a phenomenon (Babbie, 2016). Understanding these beliefs, or principles, is essential in order to justify the research methodology employed in the study.

The choice of a specific research methodology that the researcher uses to guide his or her study is determined by any of the paradigms specifically in the two areas of the philosophy of science known as ontology and epistemology. Ontology has to do with objectivity and subjectivity. The key idea is whether social entities should be considered as having a reality external to social factors, or be considered as social constructs built from the actions of social actors (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Scotland, 2012). Epistemology is concerned with how knowledge is produced, acquired and communicated (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Bryman, 2012; Scotland, 2012). Therefore, every paradigm has its ontological and epistemological assumptions (Scotland, 2012). This means that each paradigm is unique in its assumption of reality and knowledge production. There are many research paradigms (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2011), but for this study, only interpretivism paradigm is discussed.

#### 4.2.1 Interpretivist research paradigm

The interpretivist paradigm was used as the philosophy underpinning this study. Interpretivism can be traced back to the work of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Wilhem Dilthey (1833-1911) and Max Weber (1864-1920), whose arguments were based on the premise that research should be aimed at understanding, or *verstehen*, of humans' unique lived experiences in their context. Humans are in a process of continuously interpreting, creating, giving meaning, justifying and rationalising their daily actions (Babbie & Mouton, 2012; Scotland, 2012; -Antwi & Hamza, 2016). Hereunder is a table which captures the basic assumptions of the interpretivist research paradigm.

**TABLE 3: ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF INTERPRETIVISM**

Orientation	Interpretivism
Ontology	<p>Idealism--multiple realities, understanding socially constructed meanings</p> <p>Reality is subjective, influenced by the context of an individual</p>
Epistemology	<p>Inductive process to knowledge or theory production</p> <p>Exploring and understanding the world of the participants by focusing on their meanings and interpretations</p> <p>Seeking to understand a specific context</p> <p>Interactive relationship in knowledge production--meanings arise from the process of social interaction</p> <p>Reflexivity: i.e. empathetic neutrality of the researcher</p>
Methodology	<p>Qualitative methodology</p> <p>Concentrates on understanding and interpretation</p> <p>Flexible and unstructured methods, i.e. interviews, focus group discussions, observation.</p> <p>The use of small samples to gain in-depth understanding</p>

**Source:** Compiled for this study

The ontological position of the interpretivist paradigm is idealism, which denotes that there are multiple realities which differ from one person to another. These differences



are only known through understanding the socially constructed meanings of the people (Scotland, 2012; Aliyu, Bello, Kasim, & Martin, 2014; Ormston Spencer, Barnard & Snape, 2014). The social world is complex, therefore interpretivism allows the participants to define their own meanings in respect to their environment, feelings, experiences and challenges (Potrac, Jones, & Nelson, 2014). Interpretivists believe that reality is subjective, and influenced by the context of an individual, which can include the environment, experience, perceptions and interaction between the researcher and the participants (Ponterotto, 2005). The interpretivist research paradigm was useful for the researcher as it helped in understanding the reality of the participants in their natural context.

In terms of epistemology, interpretivism considers knowledge to be acquired through an inductive process. An inductive process in knowledge production means that theories, laws and patterns are built from observations of the world (Scotland, 2012). In other words, interpretivists believe in knowledge production through focusing on and understanding the experiences of people, the meanings they attach to their experiences, and how they interpret them. From these, theories can be created, unlike with the positivists, who apply and test already existing theories. Interpretivism contributes to the development of new and unique ideas through exploring and understanding the world of the participants by focusing on their meanings and interpretations. Moreover, the paradigm assumes that human beings' behaviour cannot be predicted or explained using laws as in the natural sciences. Interpretivism therefore encourages methods which are open and flexible to interaction as a way of sharing participants' experiences, and the meanings attached to those experiences (Antwi & Hamza, 2016). The study sought to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants by exploring their social world and understanding their experiences through interacting with them. With the guidance of the interpretivist research paradigm, the researcher was able to do this.

Unlike the positivist paradigm, the interpretivist research paradigm recognises that the relationship between the researcher and the participants is interactive. The researcher must be subjective, not objective. This means that the research cannot be value-free, because the researcher will be dealing with people who are affected by the research. As far as the interpretivist paradigm is concerned, findings have to be negotiated and agreed by the researcher and the participants (Scotland, 2012; Aliyu et al., 2014; Antwi & Hamza, 2016). The relationship between the researcher and the researched should be characterised by reflexivity. Reflexivity is concerned with the empathetic neutrality of the

researcher when conducting research. According to Scotland (2012), reflexivity is needed to avoid obvious or conscious bias on the part of the researcher, and it also encourages the researcher to be neutral in the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data. In the light of the paradigm, the researcher was able to enter the natural setting of the participants, build rapport and interact with them through the interviews and the focus group discussions. This enabled her to get in-depth information on the topic of this study. Reflexivity enabled her to empathetically understand the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants, and it also enabled her to remain neutral.

In short, the interpretivist research paradigm was chosen for this study because it enabled the researcher to understand the socially constructed meanings of the participants from the participants themselves. Secondly, it guided her in understanding the multiple realities of the participants in their natural context. This gave rise to new and unique ideas from the participants. Interpretivism allowed for an interactive relationship between the researcher and the participants, which yielded much-needed in-depth information about the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

### **4.3 Research approach**

A research approach can be defined as a way of finding out knowledge (Antwi & Hamza, 2016). It can also be defined as the way research is conducted (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault, 2015). There are two main types of research approach. These are qualitative and quantitative. The selection of the most appropriate approach for a study depends on the research questions, and the paradigm guiding the research (Antwi & Hamza, 2016), specifically the two areas of epistemology and ontology.

This study is guided by the interpretivist paradigm. Therefore the qualitative research approach is appropriate for this study, because the researcher wanted to understand the world of the participants through their understanding and interpretation of their own reality. The qualitative research approach provides a unique approach to research in which emphasis is on the individuals interpreting their own social world (Bryman, 2012). This made it preferable, unlike the quantitative approach, whereby the participants' views are limited to the responses given by the researcher, from which the participants have to choose. The qualitative approach uses highly unstructured instruments – for example, in-depth interviews – which gave richer answers to the researcher's questions about the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg (Hossain, 2011; Bryman, 2012).

Another reason for using qualitative research was its emphasis on an inductive approach to knowledge production. Unlike quantitative research, which takes a deductive approach whereby the researcher aims at testing theories, in qualitative research the focus is on generating new ideas and new theories which can later be tested through quantitative research (Bryman, 2012; Antwi & Hamza, 2016; Lo Biondo & Haber, 2017). Much focus of qualitative research is on exploring and describing a new area where little is known, and also, as noted above, understanding people's beliefs from their own perspectives (Antwi & Hamza, 2016). In this study the researcher was not interested in testing any theory, but wanted to understand the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg from their own perspective.

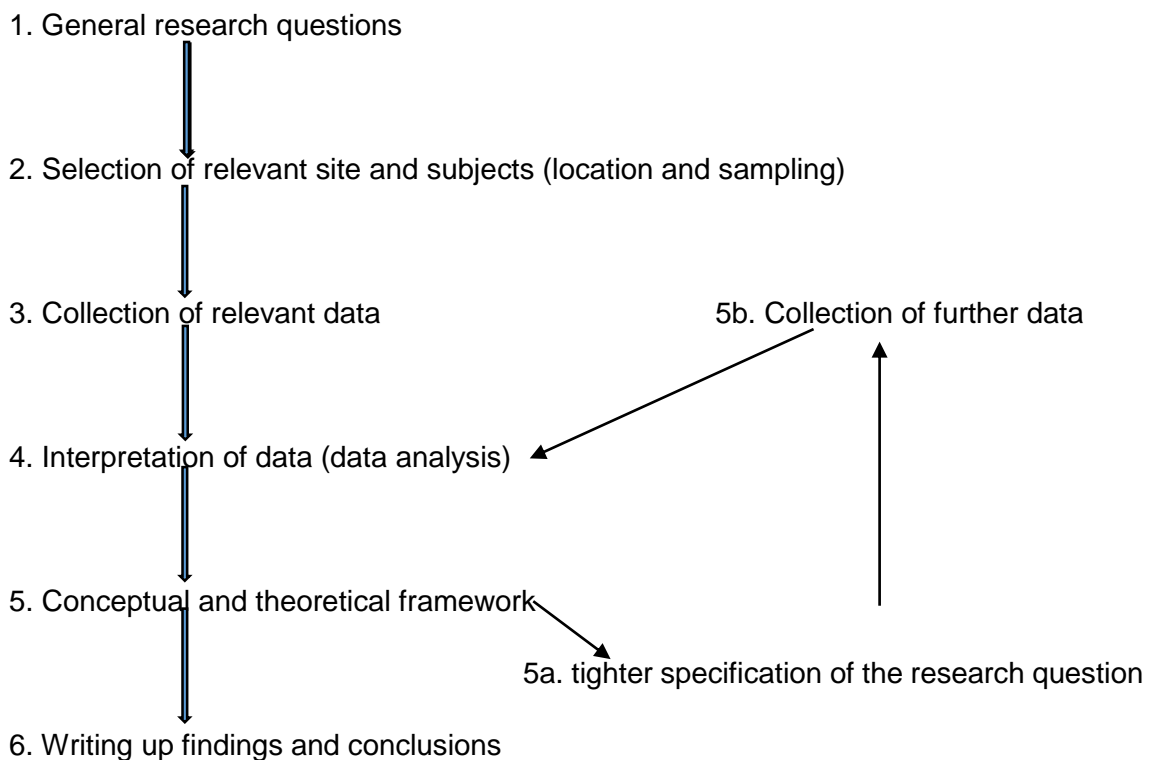
The qualitative approach also enables the researcher to understand the socially constructed meanings through getting closer to the participants and interacting with them in their natural context. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), qualitative researchers are more concerned with subjectivity whereby they gain access to the natural setting of the participants so as to gain an insider's experience. This enables the researcher to experience the subjective dimensions of the phenomenon under study. The researcher interviewed the participants in their natural settings so that she could observe some of the issues they were raising. This helped the researcher to look at the participants' way of life, living conditions, and non-verbal gestures.

The other unique characteristic of the qualitative research approach is that it is unstructured and flexible as compared to the quantitative approach. Its aim is to explore diversity in participants' views on the phenomenon being investigated rather than merely quantifying responses. Qualitative research does not seek to generalise the findings beyond the context in which the study has been made. It instead seeks to understand the behaviour, experiences and beliefs in that context (Bryman, 2012; Kumar, 2014). The researcher was dealing with a sensitive topic where the participants were difficult to locate, and sometimes unwilling to participate owing to their fear as young female immigrants, because some of them did not have the required migration documents, or passports; they had entered the country without permits, or had visitors' visas which later expired before they had left the country. Therefore, with such concerns, the qualitative research approach was the best option for this study, because it enabled the researcher and the participants to build rapport before the interviews, and the participants to gain trust in the researcher. The researcher had to assure the participants that their information would not be linked to them as their participation was anonymous.

The qualitative approach was also used because of its capacity to emphasise the voices of the participants. As a result, the approach enabled the voices of the participants to be included in the data presentation through the use of quotations which captured the exact words as they were said by the participants. These were later analysed in order to derive their underlying meanings.

### Outline of the main steps of qualitative research

Figure 4 below highlights the main steps to be followed in qualitative research:



**FIGURE 4: STEPS FOR CONDUCTING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

**Source:** Bryan (2012: 384)

#### 4.4 Research design

A research design can be defined as the map of how a study is going to be conducted in order to meet the objectives of the study. It shows the procedures which are going to be used to collect and analyse data, to select the participants, and how information is going to be analysed. According to Kumar (2011: 396), a research design is a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions.

A case study is one of the research designs which can be employed in answering the research questions. It can be used in both qualitative and quantitative studies. This depends on the type of knowledge that the researcher wants (Ryazan, 2015). If a researcher is aiming at generalisability, objectivity and validity, the philosophical tradition underlying the research will be positivist. Therefore such a study will be quantitative in nature. In contrast, if the researcher is aiming at understanding the subjective experiences of people in their natural setting, the underlying philosophy will be interpretivist. The study will therefore be qualitative in nature. Depending on the philosophy being followed, case studies can be descriptive, exploratory or comparative.

A case study is a sample of one event, instance, state, and sub-unit at one point at a time (Pierce, 2008; Kumar, 2014). The case study research design is useful when studying an area where little is known, or when one wants to have a holistic understanding of the situation or phenomenon. This is because case studies allow for an intensive and detailed examination of the case through multiple methods like interviews, observation and focus group discussions (Bryman, 2012; Laws et al., 2013; Kumar, 2014). As has been stated, in this study the researcher adopted an interpretivist position. Therefore, a case study research design enabled the researcher to choose a single case in order to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. According to Yin (2003), a case study research design is used when you want to study contextual issues because they are important in the study, and also in instances where boundaries are not clear between the context and the phenomenon under study. In this study, the case under study was Zimbabwean female immigrants. It could not be chosen without the context, which was Johannesburg. It is in this context that young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable. It would therefore have been impossible to study the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants without considering the context they were in. A case study research design acknowledges the influence the environment has on people's behaviour and experiences. In this study an exploratory case study was used and it enabled the participants to share their experiences in their natural setting. This would not have been possible with a quantitative research design.

#### **4.5 Study location**

The study was conducted in Johannesburg. Johannesburg is one of the hubs for immigrants in South Africa because there is no policy aimed at dealing with displaced people (Williams, 2016). Johannesburg is one of the richest cities in South Africa, a reputation which makes many immigrants want to stay and work permanently there. As

a result it also accommodates young female immigrants who have settled there permanently. Zimbabwean immigrants are found in large numbers in Johannesburg. However, Chaka (2016) contends that most of them are extremely vulnerable.

The researcher did not concentrate on one specific area in Johannesburg, but went to different localities she was referred to find young Zimbabwean female immigrants. She collected data in Southgate, Hillbrow, Soweto, Turffontein, Braamfontein, Hursthill and Johannesburg's inner city.

#### **4.6 Population**

In order to solicit information on a specific topic of interest it is important to identify the population of the study from which a sample will be drawn. Population refers to a set of individuals who share common characteristics (Pierce, 2008; Kumar, 2014). Robinson (2014) defines population as the totality of people from which a sample is drawn. The population of this study consisted of young Zimbabwean female immigrants between the ages of 18 and 35 staying in Johannesburg, and migration experts working in organisations dealing with migration. The study focused on young Zimbabwean female immigrants aged from 18 to 35 because people in this age range still fall under the category of youth in terms of the South African Constitution (National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), 2015). This age group is more likely to migrate because they are young, energetic, ambitious and still want to explore in their search for better opportunities. Those who were chosen for this study had to have been living in Johannesburg for more than one year, because they are regarded as long-term immigrants (IOM, 2017c). This was important because they had been in the selected area long enough to have had experiences to share in relation to the phenomenon which was being investigated. The inclusion criterion for the migration experts was that they had to be working in organisations dealing with migration issues.

#### **4.7 Sampling**

This section discusses the sampling procedure which was used to select the participants for the population of young Zimbabwean female immigrants and migration experts. Sampling is the procedure of selecting units for observation from a population (Babbie, 2016). It is the selection of participants to be included in the study from a population of interest. There are two broad types of sampling procedure: probability and non-probability. Non-probability sampling was used in this study.

#### 4.7.1 Sampling strategy, sourcing of participants and sample size

Non-probability sampling is used when the aim of the study is not to generalise the results (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). This study was aimed at exploring and understanding the diversity of the participants rather than generalising or quantifying. The researcher did not have a population list; the non-probability method enabled the researcher to get the participants through referral. Under the non-probability sampling technique, both purposive and snowball sampling were used.

Purposive sampling was used to select participants because this allowed the researcher to choose the participants on the basis of some specific criteria that were judged to be essential (Bless et al., 2015). Purposive sampling allows for the selection of information-rich people who are proficient, knowledgeable and experienced about a particular phenomenon (Etikan et al., 2016). In this study, purposive sampling was used because the researcher wanted to select young female immigrants from Zimbabwe since they were more knowledgeable and able to share their experiences than anyone else. The inclusion criteria for selecting the participants have been provided (see Table 4 below). Purposive sampling was also used to select migration experts from organisations directly dealing with issues of migration (see Table 4 below).

**TABLE 4: SAMPLING SUMMARY**

Sampling cohort	Sampling strategy	Reason for inclusion	Criteria for inclusion
<b>Young female immigrants</b>	Purposive sampling + snowball sampling	The young female immigrants were most knowledgeable about their vulnerability.	Zimbabwean nationals, residing in Johannesburg for not less than one year, between the ages of 18 to 35
<b>Migration experts</b>	Purposive sampling	Possess specialist knowledge about the vulnerability of young female immigrants	Working in organisations dealing with migration issues

**Source:** Compiled for the study



According to Palinkas et al. (2015), snowball is a type of purposive sampling. In this study the two sampling techniques have been used to complement each other because with purposive sampling the researcher was able to identify the specific characteristics of the participants to be included in the study, while snowball sampling helped her with the actual recruitment of the participants through referrals. Snowball sampling is a technique whereby a small number from the sample is initially selected by the researcher, and asked to nominate other individuals who will be prepared to be interviewed for the research (Plooy-Cillers, Davies, & Bezuidenhout, 2014). Taking into consideration the inclusion criteria, the researcher was initially referred to two participants by a gentleman who was working for a certain migration research institute. The identified participants also suggested some other participants who could share their experiences about the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The identified participants referred the researcher to other participants, and so on, until data saturation was reached. The sample size was twenty participants. The researcher chose a smaller sample because she wanted to get detailed information from those few participants who were interviewed.

#### **4.8 Community entry**

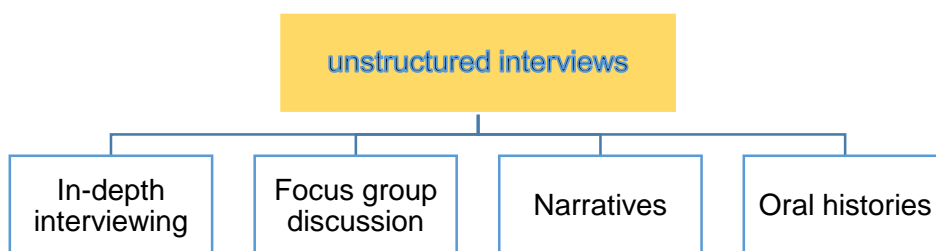
Entry into the Johannesburg community began with getting into contact with a gentleman who was working for a certain migration research institute in Johannesburg, to whom the researcher was referred by a friend. This study was first discussed with him through social media. This was when the researcher told the gentleman the purpose of the study and the target population. The gentleman gave contact information of two people who suited the inclusion criteria for the study. Later on, these people became part of the study, and gave the researcher other contact details for people who could be included.

The researcher approached the participants directly in their natural context, not in an institution in which approval would have had to be sought from the managers. The participants were taken as independent people who had the right to consent on their own to be involved in the study. All the participants were above the age of 18, and therefore had the right to make their own decisions as adults to take part in the study. The researcher contacted the participants before the focus sessions and the in-depth interviews by phone and in short meetings. During these the researcher informed the participants about herself, the study and its purpose. Thereafter, she encouraged the participants to ask questions. Then she invited the participants to participate. Those who agreed to participate were asked to sign the informed consent letter. Thereafter the

researcher just talked to the participants for a short while as a way to build rapport with them. Appointments and dates for the interviews and focus group discussions were set.

#### 4.9 Data collection methods

This section discusses the data collection procedures which were used to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Data was collected through the use of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, which are subtypes of unstructured interviews (see Figure 55 below) (Kumar, 2014). The in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions were combined in order to validate the findings, because in the focus group discussions the opinions of the participants supported what was said during the in-depth interviews. During the focus group discussions new ideas emerged that had not been discussed in the in-depth interviews. The interviews were conducted one-to-one between the researcher and the participants because some of the issues being discussed were sensitive. It allowed the participants to open up more and share their experiences. The data collection was done in two phases. During the first phase, the qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted, and during the second phase the focus group discussions took place.



**FIGURE 5: TYPES OF UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

**Source:** Kumar (2014:193)

##### 4.9.1 Phase 1: In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were used to solicit information from the participants. They help set research focus and explore a new or sensitive topic in detail (Laws et al., 2013). This study on the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg was sensitive because the participants discussed their personal experiences. Some of the participants were undocumented young female immigrants. The study used in-depth interviews because these were flexible, and yielded more data as the researcher probed for information according to the responses (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delport, 2011).

She probed for more information whenever the responses were left hanging. This in turn allowed the participants to elaborate more on their responses. In a qualitative interview topics are discussed in detail, leaving little or no information unknown (Babbie, 2008). It was important to conduct face-to-face interviews because some people open up when they are not in a group environment, especially when discussing sensitive topics. The young female immigrants were able to open up without the fear of being judged. Interacting with the participants enabled the researcher to understand their vulnerability. The in-depth interviews were used to solicit information from six young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

The participants were interviewed in the areas where they lived. The interviews were conducted privately without any other person present except the young female immigrant being interviewed, and using an interview guide which consisted of the general questions which were being explored. This was done to ensure that the participants were able to describe their views in detail. The interview process was flexible, depending on each participant. The researcher guided the interviews by following up on the questions, and making sure that the interview process did not detract from the purpose of the study. The interviews enabled the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to share their experiences with the researcher. The principal researcher conducted most of the interviews.

The researcher also interviewed two migration experts who were individuals from different organisations directly dealing with migration issues. This was done in order to get specialised knowledge about the vulnerability of young female immigrants. The migration experts were also important in generating recommendations and a comprehensive strategy to reduce their vulnerability.

During the interviews, a voice recorder was used to capture all the data. This enabled the researcher to take note of non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions, that were being shown by the participants as they were being interviewed.

#### **4.9.2 Phase 2: Focus group discussions**

The use of focus group discussions in this study helped to supplement the data that were gained through the in-depth interviews. While interviews helped in getting at the subjective experiences of individuals, focus groups helped in gaining intersubjective (shared) experiences from people who had collectively experienced a certain situation (Kumar, 2014; Terre Blanche et al., 2014). All the participants had experienced being a

young Zimbabwean female immigrant in Johannesburg, so grouping them was essential in order to get information on their vulnerability.

Participants deemed relevant to the study were chosen to participate in the focus group discussions (Babbie, 2016). This made the responses more authentic because the participants were providing information based on their lived experiences. Two focus group discussions, each with six participants, were conducted. The participants were different from those of the interviews so as to get new ideas. The discussions were more like conversations between the participants themselves. Such conversations stimulated the participants to discuss their vulnerability more. The focus groups also helped to gain further clarification of some of the issues raised during the interviews or omitted. Each discussion lasted for a maximum of two hours. They were conducted by the researcher as the facilitator, and by the research assistants, who were taking notes. The focus group discussion guide was used during the discussions, and also a voice recorder.

#### **4.9.3 Process followed for data collection**

There are different processes or stages that have to be followed when collecting data. For this study interviews and the focus groups were conducted by following the interview process espoused by Boyce and Neale (2006:4). This process includes the following:

- a) **Planning:** For the purpose of this study, the researcher prepared to conduct the interviews by identifying the participants through purposive and snowball sampling methods.
- b) **Developing instruments:** The researcher then developed an interview guide with open-ended questions which were used to solicit information during the interviews and focus group discussions.
- c) **Training research assistants:** Three research assistants were recruited and trained in how to conduct interviews, and transcribe and analyse data. A training workshop for qualitative data analysis was attended.
- d) **Collecting data:** The researcher then collected data from the participants through the use of interviews and focus group discussions. This was done with the help of the research assistants. The collected data were stored in the voice recorder and in hard files which contained the note pads.
- e) **Analysing data:** Data from the interviews were analysed through the use of the Atlas.ti data analysis package.

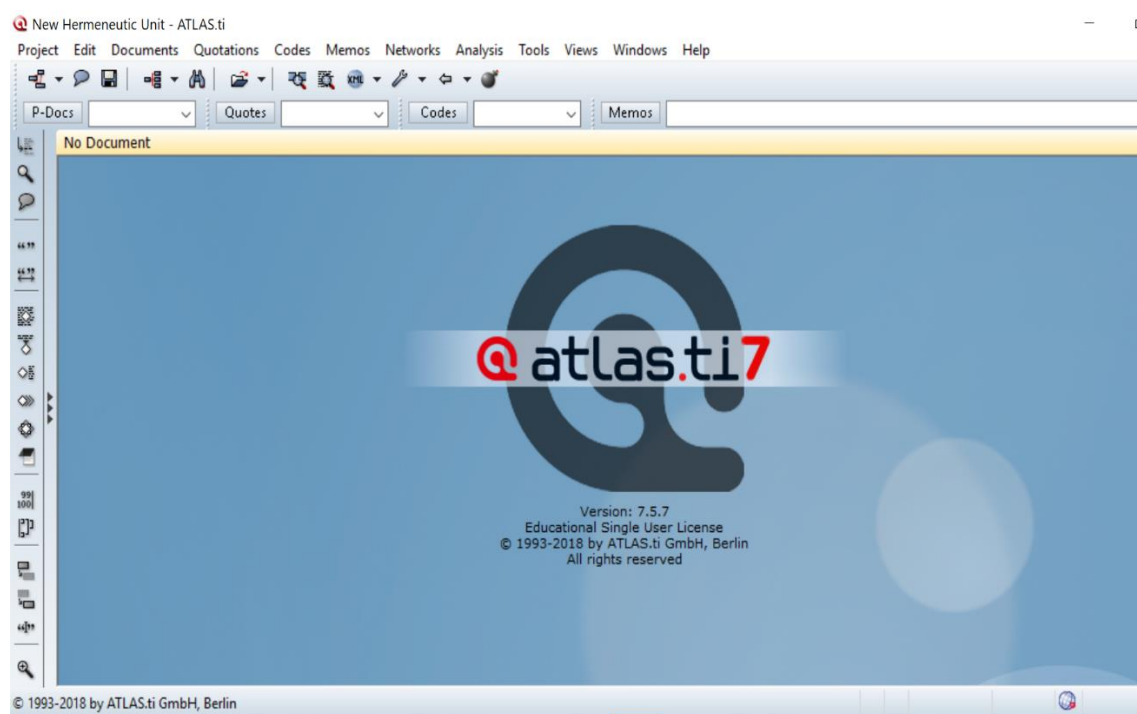
- f) **Disseminating findings:** The researcher will disseminate the findings of this study by making the thesis available at the library and online.

#### 4.10 Pre-testing data collection instrument

The interview guide was pre-tested using three young female immigrants, at separate times. Pre-testing the interview guide was essential as it assisted in determining its simplicity or difficulty, and its applicability, reliability and relevance in answering the research questions. After the pre-testing, some of the questions were reviewed and adjusted according to the comments of the participants. The feedback was important because it helped the researcher ensure that the research questions were clear and focused.

#### 4.11 Data analysis

According to De Vos, Srydom, Fouché, and Delport (2011), data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the collected data. The data were analysed through the use of Atlas.ti software (see Figure 6 below).



**FIGURE 6: ATLAS.TI MAIN WINDOW**

**Source:** Atlas.ti

The Atlas.ti is a qualitative data analysis software that enables the production of themes from the data (Friese, 2002; Hwang, 2008). The Atlas.ti package was chosen because it provides a more transparent, replicable way of data analysis (Hwang, 2008). It stores all the primary documents that were coded, the themes as well as the network diagrams. Therefore for accountability other parties can easily follow the whole analysis procedure by checking the contents of the hermeneutic unit for the analysis. Different themes emerged from the data, rather than preconceived themes. An inductive approach to themes development was used (Hsieh & Shanno, 2005; Kumar, 2014), so that themes would emerge from the data. There were several stages followed in analysing the data through Atlas.ti. These are discussed below.

#### **4.11.1 Preparing the data**

This stage began with the researcher typing the data from the interviews and the focus group discussions on a Microsoft word document to be transferred to Atlas.ti as a primary document. The researcher also translated the data into English, and corrected all the grammar and spelling mistakes. The researcher created a new Hermeneutic Unit in the Atlas.ti software, and developed a project named PhD Gender Studies analysis to analyse the data from the participants. Then the researcher prepared data into transferable files for transference to Atlas.ti and these files were put in one folder which is called the Primary Document Manager (Fiese, 2002; Archer, Janse van Vuuren, & Van der Walt, 2017). These files were named.

#### **4.11.2 Familiarising oneself with Atlas.ti workspace**

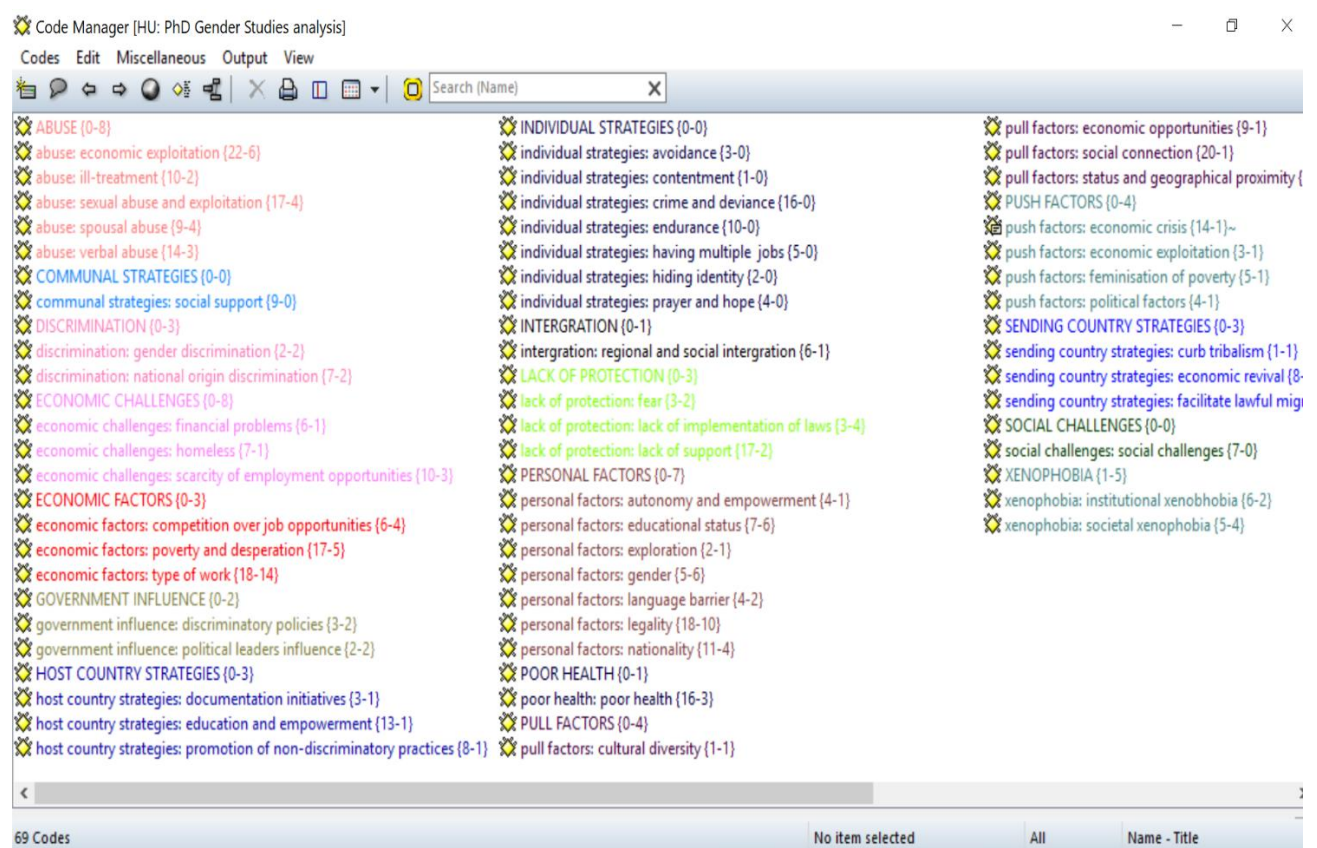
This is when the researcher familiarised herself with the Atlas.ti page as the workspace. It contained coding, groups, memos, networks and ways to find the documents being used (Archer et al., 2017). During this stage the researcher created a new project on the Atlas.ti workspace. It was named, and the data which the researcher wanted to analyse were also added.

#### **4.11.3 Coding**

At this stage the researcher went through the primary documents individually, reading the data to make meaning from them. She selected quotations or data from the interviews, and allocated codes. There are codes that are created for a specific text, called open codes. Free coding has to do with codes that are created without being



associated with a specific text. Coding by list entails assigning a code to a piece of text from a list of already existing codes. The Atlas.ti software also supports the use of in-vivo coding, in which a text passage is used as a code. In In-vivo coding, the maximum number of characters used is 40. Coding with drag and drop is another way of assigning codes in Atlas.ti to a selected text. Finally, there is automatic coding, in which codes are automatically assigned to specified sections of the text (Friese, 2002; Hwang, 2008; Archer et al., 2017). For the purpose of this study, the researcher developed the codes inductively through a process of open coding. As the researcher progressed, she coded by list quotations with a similar meaning to other already coded quotations. After open coding the researcher also employed axial coding to examine the veracity of her codes. During this phase the researcher reviewed the codes to check if there were commonalities between codes. Such codes were then merged. She reviewed the codes to see if they were answering the research questions, and their link with the literature. She developed a total of 86 codes from the data analysis, using Atlas.ti (see Figure 7 below).



**FIGURE 7: CODES AND THEMES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA**

**Source:** Atlas.ti



#### **4.11.4 Fixing mistakes, creating comments and memos**

During this stage the researcher went through the data and the codes in Atlas.ti. Identified mistakes in codes, and fixed quotes. She also commented on the codes, and stored them.

#### **4.11.5 Creating themes and filtering**

Through the use of Atlas.ti, codes which were related were clustered together into themes. These themes in Atlas.ti are known as families. The researcher went to the code manager and selected the various codes that belonged to one family and grouped them. She then named these groups.

#### **4.11.6 Relationships represented using the network manager**

The researcher then developed diagrams to show the relationships of themes to their codes and quotations using the network manager in Atlas.ti. These network diagrams show co-occurring codes and quotations, i.e. those which can be found in more than one theme.

#### **4.11.7 Creating a report**

The researcher created a collection of the themes, codes and quotations, and saved them in the outputs folder. She then presented and analysed the data according to the different research questions and themes that emerged. She also transferred the network diagrams to the chapter on data presentation and analysis to show the relationships between the themes, codes and quotations.

### **4.12 Trustworthiness of the data**

Trustworthiness has been found to be a good criterion to ensure that qualitative methods are precise and measure what they are supposed to measure. Since there are some scholars who maintain that qualitative data cannot be relied on, some qualitative researchers have proposed different criteria by which qualitative studies should be evaluated. These criteria will be discussed below.

#### **4.12.1 Credibility**

Credibility is concerned with the question 'How believable are the findings?' (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Kumar, 2011). This means that the data should truly reflect the views of the

participants (Diane, 2014). In other words, credibility is about ensuring that the results are consistent with reality. In order to ensure the credibility of the data in this study, the researcher acknowledged that some of the participants could not speak English. The questions were therefore translated into their home languages in order to maximise their participation, and they were allowed to respond in those languages. The researcher made sure that translation into English was done accurately by working with experts. She also shared the preliminary research findings with some of the participants to check if she had misrepresented or misinterpreted the views of the participants. In order to ensure the credibility of the study findings, the research report was made available to the participants of the study in order for them to ascertain whether or not the findings accurately represented their views. The credibility of the findings was also ensured by using triangulation, whereby interviews were supplemented by focus group discussions.

#### **4.12.2 Transferability**

Transferability can be closely linked with external validity. Transferability is concerned with whether the results can be applied to other contexts or not (Policit & Beck, 2012; Elo et. al., 2014). This means that the findings of the study should be applicable to related studies or situations in environments similar to where the actual study was undertaken. The researcher ensured that the results could be transferred to the wider population of the study, who were the young Zimbabwean female immigrants, by making sure that the best practice was used in the collection and analysis of the results. The researcher also purposefully selected the participants by adhering to the inclusion criteria to make sure that the findings were representative of the selected population.

#### **4.12.3 Dependability**

The findings of a study have to be dependable. According to Anney (2014), dependability refers to the stability of the findings over a period of time. It can also be defined as the constancy of the data over similar conditions (Cope, 2014). In order to ensure dependability of the findings the same data were analysed by three researchers separately, and the results were compared. Inconsistencies in the data were discussed and addressed. The data were also coded and recoded after a few weeks in order to see if the results were still the same. The findings of the data were also discussed with peers pursuing their doctoral studies. These peers helped to identify the categories that were not covered by the research, and also other themes that had been left out when the analysis was done.

#### **4.12.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability is concerned with the objectivity of the researcher and the neutrality of the data. It is the way of establishing whether or not the researcher has allowed his or her own values to intervene in the data-making process (Byman & Bell, 2007; Bryman, 2012). The researcher ensured that her values did not disrupt the data. In this research, the researcher was subjective in adopting a reflexive stance. Reflexivity denotes that the researcher should be empathetic and neutral at the same time. In qualitative research it is difficult to be objective because the research deals with people who have feelings. The researcher did not influence the participants' views. The findings of the study were a true reflection of the participants' views because the information from the interviews was not altered in any way. To ensure confirmability, the data collection and analysis were done by the researcher and the assistants. Recordings were replayed in their presence to ensure that the data were transcribed correctly as expressed by the participants. Each transcript was compared with its audio recording by the researcher and the assistants to ensure that what was transcribed was exactly what the participants had said.

#### **4.12.5 Ecological validity**

This is the criterion concerned with the collection of the data in the natural environment. This is important as data is collected in naturally occurring situations which encourage truthful and real findings as opposed to artificial, fabricated ones (Bryman & Bell, 2007). To ensure ecological validity data were collected in the natural settings of the participants. In this study the researcher interviewed young Zimbabwean female immigrants where they lived and worked in order to observe some of the non-verbal cues and surroundings of the female immigrants. Interviewing the participants in their natural environment helped the participants to be comfortable, which made them open up during interviews.

#### **4.13 Ethical considerations**

Ethics are defined as what is legitimate or right to do during the research process in order to protect the participants. The researcher made use of informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, avoidance of harm, and anonymity as the research ethics. The researcher had ethical clearance from the University of Venda's Ethics and Publication Committee, which granted the researcher permission to conduct the study in Johannesburg on young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

#### **4.13.1 Informed consent**

Informed consent is giving information about research to the participants so that they can make well-informed decisions on whether to participate in the research or not. The purpose is to conduct research openly and without deception (Silverman, 2013; Kumar, 2014). The researcher informed the participants about the usefulness and the relevance of the research, and what she wanted from them, the purpose of the research, how the participants were supposed to participate, and also how participation would directly or indirectly affect them.

#### **4.13.2 Avoidance of harm**

Avoidance of harm is an ethical principle that protects the participants from any type of harm, whether physical, emotional, legal or social. It is unethical to seek information from participants that creates anxiety or harassment. Steps should be taken to avoid any type of harm when conducting social research, especially when human beings are involved (Laws et al., 2013; Kumar, 2014). The researcher avoided all harm by safeguarding the rights of the participants. She ensured that the participants information was kept safe and anonymous in order to protect the participants, especially the undocumented, from any legal harm. She told the participants to communicate whenever they were feeling uncomfortable with the interview process so that the interview could be stopped, and checked the non-verbal cues of the participants to identify if there were any signs of discomfort.

#### **4.13.3 Voluntary participation**

Neuman (2014) states that the researcher must not force participants into participating in the research process because that is unethical. The researcher ensured that participation in this research was voluntary, and informed all the participants about the purpose of the research. They were then asked if they were willing to participate. Only those participants who indicated that they were willing to participate in the study were included. The participants were also informed that they were allowed to withdraw at any time if they wished to do so, and when they felt too uncomfortable to participate.

#### **4.13.4 Confidentiality**

Sharing information about the participants with others for purposes other than research is unethical (Kumar, 2014). Data collected from the participants should be kept secure

at all times (Bless et al., 2015; Babbie, 2016). Confidentiality was discussed with each participant before the interview began. This made the participants comfortable to share information on their experiences, and helped in getting in-depth knowledge on the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Confidentiality was also ensured by destroying all information provided by the participants after analysing the data.

#### **4.13.5 Anonymity**

Anonymity is the ethical principle that protects the identity of the participants from disclosure (Neuman, 2014). It is unethical to identify an individual and the information provided by him or her. After information is collected its source should not be identifiable (Kumar, 2014). Names were not used at all to ensure that anybody who read the results would not know or identify the participants. The researcher assigned numbers to the participants to make sure that their information remained anonymous.

#### **4.13.6 Positionality and avoidance of bias**

Positionality is the stance that the researcher in the research assumes. In other words, the researcher is either an insider, or an outsider, or both. During the research process, the researcher assumed an outsider position as she lacked the personal experience of being an immigrant residing in Johannesburg. The participants were acknowledged as they were the 'knowers' of their lived experiences as young female immigrants. To avoid bias or misrepresenting the information from the participants, the researcher had peers to review data collection and analysis (Babbie, 2016). The assistants did not possess the same characteristics as the participants in order to avoid bias and to validate the findings.

#### **4.14 Limitations**

There were various challenges that were faced during the data collection. Firstly, some of the participants were unwilling to participate for security reasons. Most of the undocumented young female immigrants were reluctant to participate for fear that the information they provided might be used against them, which might lead to their detention and prosecution. In order to resolve this, the researcher explained the purpose of the study. Only those who agreed to remain were included in the study.

The other problem encountered was that some of the participants did not agree to the use of tape recorders. Their concern was that the information they provided could be

taken to the authorities. This indicated the insecurities of the young female immigrants. In order to respect the privacy of the participants who had not consented to the use of tape recorders, they were not used.

The other limitation was that some of the participants required some financial incentives to participate in the study. Some of them insisted on being paid because they said that the interviews wasted the time which they were supposed to use to raise money by doing something other than sitting for interviews. However, the researcher only included those participants who did not require any financial incentives.

#### **4.15 Conclusion**

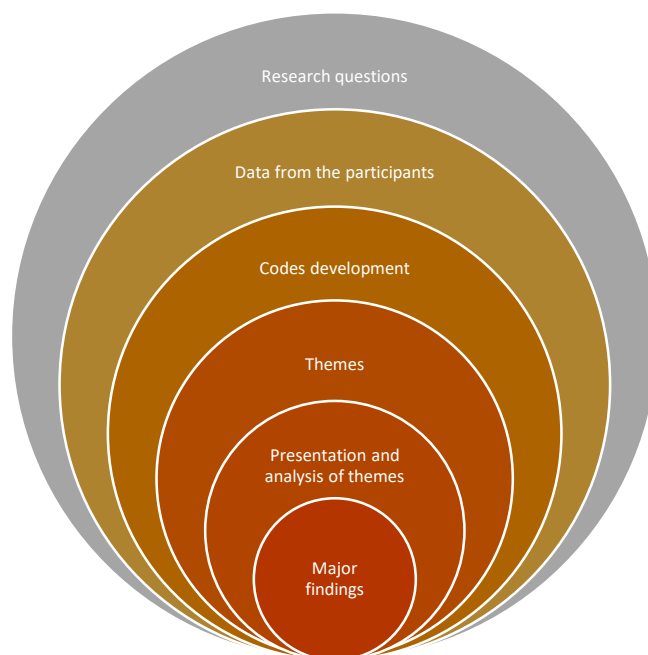
This chapter explored the research approach which was used to guide the collection and analysis of the data. The positivist and the interpretivist research paradigms were discussed. The interpretivist research paradigm was chosen as the philosophy guiding this study. Qualitative research approach was chosen because the researcher wanted to get in-depth information on the topic under study. The case study research design was used as the design of the study.

This chapter explained the strategy on how the participants were selected from the population for participation in the study, and how the data were collected through the use of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The data analysis technique and the steps that were taken to analyse the data were discussed. In order to ensure that the study produces quality and reliable results measures of trustworthiness were followed. This chapter also outlined the ethical considerations that were followed in order to safeguard the rights of the participants and ensure that the researcher remained professional. Limitations that were encountered during the study concluded the chapter.

## CHAPTER 5: PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS AND CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the data from the interviews and focus group discussions on the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. Atlas.ti was employed to analyse the data, search for patterns, and make meaning. Data were imported to Atlas.ti, coded and categorised into themes which were organised according to the objectives of the study and the major research questions. The data on the phenomenon being studied were solicited from the participants through the interview guide which was developed from the major research questions. Codes and themes were developed from the collected data. Lastly the themes were presented and analysed to determine the major findings of the study (see Figure 8 below). Hereunder follows a diagram to show how the research findings which are discussed in this chapter and other chapters were developed.



**FIGURE 8: SUMMARY OF THE DATA ANALYSIS STAGES**

**Source:** Developed for the study by the researcher

### 5.2 Biographical information of the participants

This section presents the biographical characteristics of all the participants that participated in this study. It specifically focuses on the age, migration status, current



employment and educational qualifications of the participants. Their period of stay in Johannesburg is also considered. This section also presents the biographical information of the migration experts that were included in the study, which comprises their occupation and years working on migration issues. Table 5 and Table 6 below show a summary of the biographical characteristics of the participants.

**TABLE 5: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS**

Participant	Age	Marital status	Documentation	Employment status	Highest qualification	Number of years in Johannesburg
A	34	Single	Work permit	Office cleaner	O level	12
B	30	Married	Spousal accompanying permit	Unemployed	Degree	6
C	35	Single	Work permit	Sales consultant	Diploma	8
D	32	Cohabiting	Undocumented	Unemployed	O level	6
E	30	Single	Work permit	Teacher and hairdresser	Degree	7
F	31	Single	Undocumented	Waitress	College Certificate	12
I	25	Single	ZSP	Hairdresser	Form 2	5
J	31	Married	Undocumented	Entrepreneur	O level	10
K	32	Married	ZSP	Waitress	College Certificate	8

L	29	Married	Undocumented	Domestic worker and runs a day care	O level	7
M	28	Single	Undocumented	Sexual worker	Diploma	5
N	35	Single	Undocumented	Unemployed	Primary school	15
O	32	Single	Application pending	Hairdresser	O level	11
P	31	Married	Asylum permit	Hairdresser and entrepreneur	Diploma	10
Q	32	Single	Work permit	Receptionist	Diploma	9
R	35	Single	Study permit	Social worker	Degree	7
S	26	Single	Undocumented	Sexual worker	Primary School	6
T	33	Married	Work permit	Lecturer	Master's degree	16

**Source:** Compiled for this study

**TABLE 6: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF THE EXPERTS**

Expert	Gender	Marital status	Age	Occupation	Number of years in migration issues
Participant G	Male	Single	30	Social worker and part time researcher	3
Participant H	Male	Married	35	Researcher	2

**Source:** Compiled for this study

### 5.2.1 Age, gender and marital status

All the young Zimbabwean female immigrants were 25 to 35 years old. Four participants were aged 25 to 29, and 14 were aged 30 to 35 (see Table 5 above). This signifies that all the participants were young and active, and therefore likely to migrate. This is in line with some studies among migrant communities in South Africa in which the majority of the participants were young and considered to be active (Forced Migration Programme, 2006; Nzayabino, 2011). One migration expert interviewed was 30 years old, and the other one 35 years old. All of the participants from the population of young Zimbabwean female immigrants were female. From the population of the migration experts both the two participants interviewed were male (see Table 6 above).

Only six of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants were married; the majority (11) were single, and only one was cohabiting (see Table 5 above). The large number of those who were not married might be because of the autonomy and independence women get from migration. Some might resist patriarchal abuse, and choose to lead single lives. Some of them might have been single because they were still young, and not yet ready to get married. With some immigrants working in more than one job in order to supplement their salaries, marriage becomes a huge commitment that they cannot manage. Of the two migration experts interviewed, one was single and the other one was married.

### **5.2.2 Migration status in South Africa**

Eleven participants indicated that they were in Johannesburg legally and had the required documents. Of these participants five had work permits, one had a study permit, one an asylum permit, two had spousal accompanying permits and the other two had Zimbabwean special permits (ZSP). Six of the participants indicated that they were undocumented – five were without permits, and one had neither a permit nor a passport. Of the five who did not have permits two had crossed the border illegally, and the others had overstayed the periods that were stipulated on their short-term visas. Only one participant indicated that she was waiting for the outcome of her permit application (see Table 5 above).

### **5.2.3 Level of education and employment status**

Most of the participants who participated in this study had a tertiary qualification. Four of the participants had degrees, three had diplomas and two had certificates. Seven did not have any post-secondary qualification. Five of them had reached high school, and the remaining two participants indicated that primary school was their highest level of education (see Table 5 above). People who are educated are more likely to migrate than those who are not. This is consistent with the findings from a study by Dugbazar (2007), which indicated that the probability of migration rises with the level of education attained. Although this is true, many of these migrants had in the destination countries sought alternative forms of employment which did not relate to their level of education and skills (Pipper, 2005). This ultimately results in deskilling of the immigrants.

Most of the young Zimbabwean female participants (i.e. 15 out of 18) were employed, and only three were not (see Table 5 above). Of those who were employed 10 were employed in the informal sector, or self-employed. This was a result of the increasing irregular migration of people which flooded the formal job markets (Crush, 2011; Crush et al., 2012; Theodore, Pretorius, Blaauw, & Schenck, 2018). This leaves many young Zimbabwean female immigrants with no other option but to work in the informal sector, or create employment for themselves. Most of the participants indicated that the informal jobs were their only option. The jobs that they were doing were not those that they were qualified for. For instance, Participant E, who had a bachelor's degree in sociology and an honours degree in gender studies, was working as a teacher and a hairdresser. Participant M had a diploma, but made a living as a sex worker. It is important to note that the types of job performed by the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are often

associated with stigma and abuse, and are gender-specific. Female immigrants find it difficult to find jobs even if they are educated.

#### 5.2.4 Years residing in Johannesburg

The number of years that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants have been residing in Johannesburg varies. However, all the participants indicated that they were long-term immigrants. The participants' years of residing in Johannesburg ranged from five to sixteen years at the time of the interviews.

### 5.3 Contributory factors to the migration of young Zimbabwean females

This section aims to establish the factors that contribute to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg. These are discussed from the perspectives of the immigrants as well as the migration experts. From the data three major themes emerged from the factors contributing to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants (see Figure 9 below). These include push factors, pull factors and personal factors.

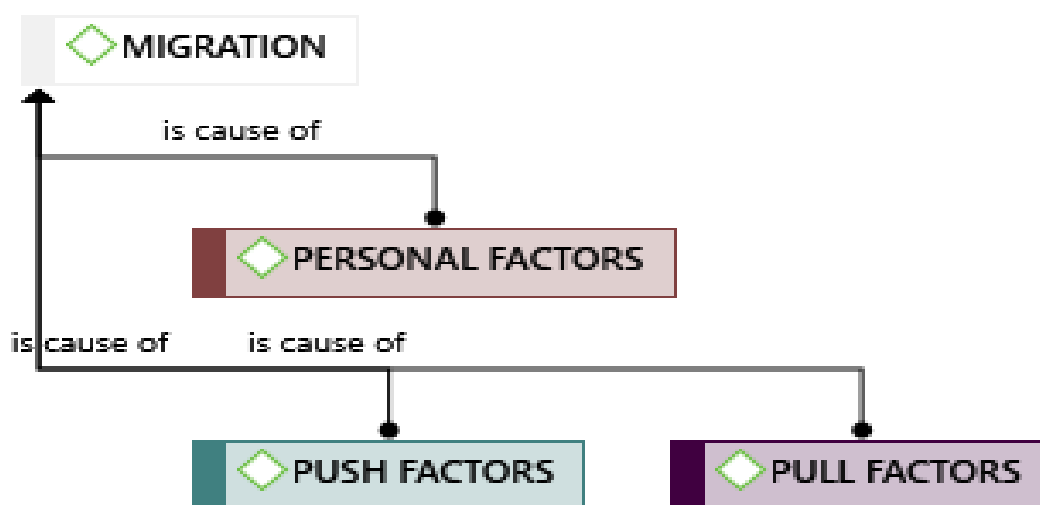


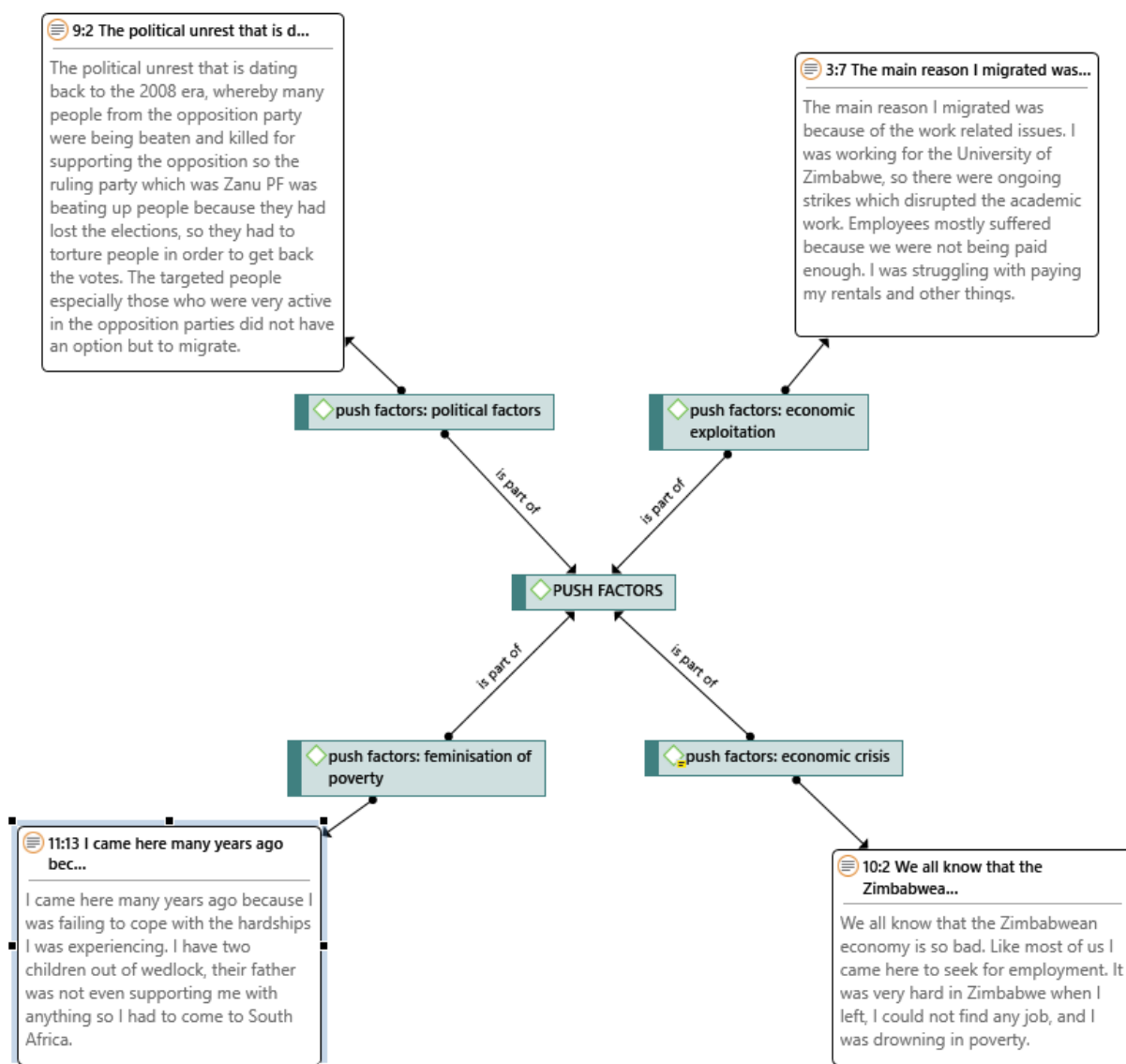
FIGURE 9: CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO MIGRATION

Source: Atlas.ti

#### 5.3.1 Push factors

The information gathered from the interviews and the focus group discussions showed that there were some factors that pushed young Zimbabwean female immigrants from

various parts of Zimbabwe to Johannesburg and to many other regions of the world. The push factors in Zimbabwe left many Zimbabweans with no hope for survival in Zimbabwe. They therefore had to migrate in search of better living and working conditions. Most of the factors that were identified by the young Zimbabwean female immigrants which led to their migration were similar. A number of subthemes under the theme of the push factors contributing to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg are discussed below. These subthemes include economic crisis, economic exploitation, unemployment, feminisation of poverty and political instability (see Figure 10 below).



**FIGURE 10: PUSH FACTORS**

Source: Atlas.ti

## Economic crisis

The study found out that the economic state of Zimbabwe is the major factor that contributed to the migration of many young Zimbabwean female immigrants from the country. The majority of the participants said that the economy of Zimbabwe has become so tough that millions of people were jobless and in poverty. Previously, some women from Zimbabwe depended on their husbands to provide for their families. But with the collapse of the country's economy which led to the retrenchment of many men who were providers, many women were left hopeless. Women could no longer depend only on their husbands for survival. Consequently, they had no choice but to migrate to other countries for their own and their families' survival. The participants had this to say:

*Firstly, I would like to believe that it is due to our economic situation: the men who were known as the providers are also struggling with finding proper work, and some of them are not even working, so as women we have to chip in so that the family survives (Participant D quote 5:18).*

*Even for those who have husbands it's actually tough because the economic challenges that our country is facing don't spare you because you are a woman. So we are coming here to find a better lifestyle even though things here are getting tough. People are just glad that at least they are getting food on the table (Participant I, quote 10:5).*

The above responses indicate how the poor economic conditions of Zimbabwe have led to the migration of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Previously women would depend on their husbands' income for survival, but owing to the economic collapse women also had to come out of their comfort zone by migrating. These poor economic conditions in Zimbabwe which are leading to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants can be dated back to the late 1990s and the early 2000s. This was when the ESAP was introduced by the Zimbabwean government as dictated to by the IMF and the World Bank. This was done in order for Zimbabwe to repay the debt which was incurred from the country's expenditure on infrastructure and other developments after independence. The ESAP led to the many economic woes such as devaluing of the dollar, privatisation of companies, cuts on import controls and the removal of export incentives. The move led to high unemployment, wage declines and poverty. But the elite Zimbabweans and the white farmers continued to prosper as a result of low wages and export profits (Potts & Mutambirwa, 1998; Orner & Holmes, 2010). The then



President of the country, Robert Mugabe, blamed the economic challenges of the country on victimisation by Western imperialists. Subsequently, in 1997 Zimbabwe withdrew from the ESAP by taking control of social and economic policy. This led to the land expropriations and invasions which ultimately led to the fleeing of investors, shortages of foreign currency, rising inflation, and sanctions by the US Congress and other Western countries (Orner & Holmes, 2010; McGregor & Primorac, 2010; Crush et al., 2012). Many industries closed down, and many people were left unemployed. The health and education systems deteriorated, and most of the people were left in abject poverty. The ESAP is still having a tremendous effect on the country after over two decades from its implementation. According to this study, it has led to the migration of many people from Zimbabwe, including young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Some of the participants indicated it in this manner:

*The economic crisis which continues to be persistent in the country is pushing people out of the country. This economic crisis is highly influenced by politics. There is the issue of the ESAP which was related to the land and the industries being distributed to the black people. This led to the downfall of the economy of Zimbabwe since most people who were given these farms and industries did not have the capacity to maintain them and grow them. Investors also left the country because it was deemed unsafe. This caused the GDP per capita and family income to fall. There was also a problem of high unemployment: some people could not afford basic services, and public health, education, road infrastructure and other services were affected (Participant H, quote 9:3).*

*By the time I came here to South Africa the Zimbabwean economy was very bad. The environment was no longer welcoming in Zimbabwe (Participant R, quote 19:1).*

*Most of us here were driven by the economy of Zimbabwe to come here. In Zimbabwe there was a certain time when we reached the point of no hope for survival. There were no jobs, no money in the banks, no basic commodities in the shops. Most ordinary Zimbabweans could not afford to pay school fees for their children. That was the breaking point for many, especially us women who used to stay at home and leave our men to migrate. We started migrating like nobody's business to ensure*

*that our children got school fees and food. As a woman it's just difficult to watch the children suffer (Participant M, quote 14:1).*

The above statements by the participants further indicate that the economic situation in Zimbabwe is leading to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This is because many ordinary Zimbabweans cannot afford basic needs such as food, shelter and health. For some who could afford to get these basic needs they were not easily available due to shortages of goods and services. Also other services like the roads and the housing infrastructure as well as the GDP per capita rate were also affected. According to the IOM (2010), the GDP in Zimbabwe declined by over 46 per cent from 2000 to 2007. This was as a result of the unstable macroeconomic environment, coupled with intermittent droughts, foreign currency shortages and an increase in oil prices. This consequently led to severe shortages of basic utilities including electricity, fuel and water, and most basic food and non-food commodities. Ultimately, Zimbabwe became an inhospitable environment as evidenced by the emigration of Zimbabweans to other countries to seek greener pastures.

The economic crisis in Zimbabwe has led to a shortage of cash both in foreign and local currency, which has worsened the poverty in many Zimbabwean households. Most people cannot withdraw their money from banks, and this leads them to purchase money on the black market at high interest rates (Majaka, 2017; Newsday, 2018a). The producers and suppliers of basic commodities mostly procure their goods with foreign currency bought on the black market, and hike their prices in order to make profits to buy foreign currency. Such a situation affects the general public as they have to pay more for basic needs when they are being underpaid at work (Majaka, 2017a; Newsday, 2018). The findings of the study have indicated that owing to the cash shortage prices, young Zimbabwean female immigrants are pushed out of the country in order to find a better lifestyle. In turn they send groceries to their dependants instead of buying expensive goods. The participants indicated below how the cash crisis has pushed them to migrate to Johannesburg:

*Even if you are working there is no money in the country, so it's tough. I could not bear to stand in a line for money that I have worked for. Worse, you will be getting less than 50 bond per day. My sister recently joined me here after retiring early from teaching. There isn't any hope for growth when you are in Zimbabwe. Here we buy groceries very cheap and send them back to our families. We also have access to cash. The cash crisis*

*is just a put off - it's just difficult to survive in Zimbabwe (Participant P, quote 17:2).*

*In Zimbabwe you work for nothing, money is scarce in the banks, you buy it on the black market at high interest, and at the end of the day you remain with nothing. Who would want to stay in such a country when you have an opportunity to go elsewhere? (Participant I, quote 10:1)*

It is worth noting from the above responses that the economy of Zimbabwe is in bad shape. That is why there is a severe shortage of cash in the bank. This has pushed some young Zimbabwean female immigrants to migrate to South Africa where they can easily get the money that they have worked for without any struggle. The above responses also indicate that the rise of the basic commodities as a result of cash shortages has also pushed some of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to South Africa where they can buy cheaper basic commodities and send to their dependents back in Zimbabwe. This in turn results in the decreased poverty rates at the household level for the families of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

Some of the participants stated that the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy has left few or no opportunities for employment. Hence young and energetic women had to migrate in search for employment so that they can take care of themselves and their families through the remittances that they send back home. Some of the participants said the following to indicate how unemployment led to their migration:

*When I finished school there was no vacancy in Zimbabwe. I tried to apply for one many times, but I did not get any work. I did first aid in nursing. I have all the certificates in first aid (Participant F, quote 7:7).*

*We all know that the Zimbabwean economy is so bad. Like most of us I came here to seek for employment. It was very hard in Zimbabwe when I left, I could not find any job, and I was drowning in poverty (Participant I, quote 10: 2).*

*I had finished my degree, but I could not find work (Participant R quote 19:2).*

The above responses indicate how high unemployment in Zimbabwe has pushed multitudes of young Zimbabwean female immigrants from Zimbabwe to other countries to search for work. Crush et al. (2012) state that approximately 35% of those who

migrated to Zimbabwe in the last one and a half decades were never employed in that country. From one of the statement above, it is clear that some of the participants never worked soon after graduating. According to Bhebhe, Nair, Muranda, Sifile and Chavunduka (2015), owing to the Education for All policy Zimbabwe produces a lot of graduates with certificates, diplomas and degrees from various institutions, but these graduates end up flooding the economy because it has not been growing enough to absorb them. Young people are also finding it difficult to be employed in Zimbabwe because they do not possess the required work experience, unlike adults (Bhebhe et al., 2015). Therefore, in order not to bury their careers and to avoid the frustrations associated with unemployment, many of them are forced to migrate to other countries to look for employment. According to the push-pull theory, lack of economic opportunities in the sending country propels people towards areas with surplus opportunities (Jansen, 2016).

### **Economic exploitation**

Linked to the economic crisis in Zimbabwe, the economic exploitation of young Zimbabwean female workers by their employers has also been identified by the participants as a major factor contributing to the migration of young Zimbabwean females. Some of the participants indicated that they would spend months without being paid, while others indicated that they were paid too little to live on. The participants expressed their sentiments in the following manner:

*I worked as a nurse aid in Zimbabwe, so I had some challenges at work because my employers were mistreating me. I would go for months without any pay until I decided to quit that job (Participant A, quote 1:58).*

*The main reason I migrated was the work related issues. I was working for the University of Zimbabwe, so there were ongoing strikes which disrupted the academic work. Employees mostly suffered because we were not being paid enough. I was struggling with paying my rent and other things (Participant C, quote 3:7).*

*I was working as a civil servant in Zimbabwe, and the salary I was earning was too little to live on. So I decided to look for greener pastures elsewhere (Participant E, quote 6:45).*

The above responses show the economic exploitation of the participants by their employers as the main reason behind their decision to migrate to Johannesburg. Owing

to the depressed economy of Zimbabwe, many people working for private companies and the government are being paid very little. According to Bardsley (2010), Sibanda (2018) and NewsDay (2018b), since the economic collapse in Zimbabwe the remnant of employed people are being paid less than an acceptable income in both government and private sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, mining, health, education and other sectors. Many people are afraid to protest against the low incomes because of the fear of being dismissed from work. In April 2018 a number of nurses went on strike as a way to voice their concern of being underpaid by the government, with most of them receiving below 500 Zimbabwean bond notes per month. These nurses were urged to report back to work, and all those who did not were dismissed with immediate effect (Washinyira, 2018). According to Majaka (2017), about 75% of the population are living below the poverty datum line of USD 500 per month because some of them are not employed. Those who are in informal businesses cannot raise much money, and those who are employed formally are being given pitiful incomes. According to a study by McDuff (2015), the female immigrants indicated that they had migrated to South Africa because the government could not pay them their salaries. The above indicates that female immigrants are pushed out of Zimbabwe because of poverty as a result of economic exploitation and lack of meaningful opportunities.

### **Feminisation of poverty**

Feminisation of poverty continues to be on the rise as an increasing number of households now depend solely on women for survival. According to the data of this study, some participants indicated that they have a responsibility to provide for their families. Some mentioned that most of the families in Zimbabwe depend on women for survival. Young Zimbabwean female immigrants indicated that they were pushed to migrate to Johannesburg because of poverty, economic hardships, the death or unemployment of the husband, or divorce and the uncaring attitude of their husbands. This is aptly captured in the following words by the participants:

*Some of these women are sole breadwinners, so they come to make money here so that they can send to their families back home. If you check every day the majority of the people who arrive in buses from Zimbabwe are usually women. That says a lot. A woman cannot just sit around and wait for her family to die of hunger. Some men run away after seeing that they cannot provide for the family. But a woman tries*

*by all means to make sure that the family is secure (Participant H, quote 9:27.)*

*I came to South Africa because I wanted a job to take care of my children. This was after my husband had divorced me and left me with my two children to take care of. I started selling fruit back in Zimbabwe, but the money I was making was too little. That is when I decided to leave my kids with my mom and travel to South Africa (Participant L, quote 13:18).*

*I came here many years ago because I was failing to cope with the hardships I was experiencing. I have two children out of wedlock. Their father was not even supporting me with anything so I had to come to South Africa (Participant J, quote 11:13).*

The information provided by the participants gives a hint as to why these young women migrated. They had to make a painful decision to leave their homes and migrate so that they could have a better lifestyle for themselves and their families as the sole breadwinners in their families. This correlates with a study of migrant women from Zimbabwe that found that some women who were single, divorced or widowed were motivated to migrate owing to the absence of a supportive partner, plus their difficult economic circumstances (McDuff, 2015; Ryle, 2015). This means that some women are left with no choice but to migrate as the main providers of their families. The above also indicates the caring attitudes of the young female immigrants in Johannesburg that due to the economic hardships in the country they could not just sit and watch their families suffering.

The study also indicated that some men who migrate to Johannesburg without their families end up forgetting to take care of them. As a result, some young women end up migrating in order to take care of their families. The above argument can be traced in the following statements made by two of the participants:

*Nowadays you cannot depend on men, especially those men who come to South Africa and leave their families behind, they get carried away and even start new families until they even forget to send money for their children. Women therefore have to travel to work in other countries or even do cross-border trade so that the family survives (Participant D, quote 2:45).*

*Some of the husbands in South Africa are not supportive of their families at home. They get carried away with the party life here in Johannesburg, and forget their families. So some women come to follow their husbands, to check what they are doing. Then they end up opting to stay and make a living here, and support their children at home (Participant B, quote 5:37).*

The above extracts highlight that some men who migrate to South Africa without their families sometimes become fail to provide for their families back at home. This might be due to the fact that they get carried away with the party life in Johannesburg. Some of these men start new families there and others do not find proper jobs to support their families. This is in line with a study by Crush and Tevera (2010) whereby households in the country of origin could no longer depend on the breadwinner husband because some of the men in Johannesburg were no longer sending money to their dependants. This pushed women to migrate so that they can have means to sustain their families. Some migrated to check what their husbands were doing. When they find job opportunities while there, they end up also settling there to work in order to sustain their families.

### **Political factors**

Political freedom and the fair treatment of people from different ethnic groups are fundamental reflections of a nation that safeguards and gives access to human rights to its citizens. In cases where people cannot exercise their political rights, and are persecuted for what they believe in, they can be pushed to flee to other countries. This is the result of their not wanting to submit to ideas they do not believe in, and a means to protect themselves from persecution. According to the push-pull theory, political persecutions and wars are some of the push factors that contribute to the immediate migration of people (Lee, 1966; Chang et al., 2014). In this study the participants indicated that political instability and tribalism has contributed to their migration to South Africa. Some of the participants put it in this manner:

*The political unrest dates back to the 2008 era, when many people from the opposition party were being beaten and killed for supporting the opposition. The ruling party, which was Zanu-PF was beating up people because they had lost the elections, so they had to torture people in order to get back the votes. The targeted people, especially those who*



*were very active in the opposition parties did not have an option but to migrate (Participant H, quote 9:2).*

*I think I was not given a job because I am Ndebele. Shona people could come to my place (Bulawayo) and get jobs which we were qualified for. That made me quit looking for a job and come to South Africa, since my forefathers were here before (laughing). So because I need to provide for my kids I am here (Participant F, quote 7:9).*

*The Mugabe regime has really displaced us (Participant E, quote 6:10).*

The above responses indicate how some young Zimbabwean female immigrants have been forced to migrate as a result of political factors. From the 1980s the ruling party, Zanu-PF has always tried to maintain a one-party state. Before Zimbabwe achieved its independence there were two main African parties: the Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU), led by Robert Mugabe, and the Zimbabwean African People's Union (ZAPU), led by Joshua Nkomo (Orner & Holmes, 2010; Mlamba, 2014; McDuff, 2015). In 1980 there were independence elections in Zimbabwe, and ZANU won, which made Mugabe the Prime Minister. However, ZANU kept on feeling threatened by ZAPU, who were considered to be so powerful. Therefore, from 1982 to 1987 Mugabe sought to make a one-party state by massacring people in Matabeleland in a campaign called the Gukurahundi campaign. About 20 000 residents of Matabeleland were massacred, and others fled to South Africa. In 1987, to end this conflict between the two parties, the two leaders, Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo, signed an agreement called the Unity Accord. This united ZANU-PF and ZAPU into one party called the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) (Orner & Holmes, 2010; Mlamba, 2014; McDuff, 2015). However, one participant indicated that this injustice towards the people of Matabeleland is still continuing as evidenced by the unequal access to opportunities as compared to the people in Mashonaland. This is because the governing party is still dominated by the Shona tribe, and Shonas are regarded as the superior tribe. Therefore, people from other tribes are unfairly not given the same opportunities as Shonas. This injustice forced her to migrate to South Africa.

Participants indicated that the political persecutions of the MDC supporters by the ruling party have been one of the persistent factors which have led to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. When the MDC emerged in the late 1990s, it was seen as a threat by Zanu-PF, because it was opposed to the expropriation of the land without compensation, during which some white and black farmers were killed (McGregor &

Primorac, 2010; McDuff, 2015). In response to this, the US government imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe which worsened the already existing economic crisis. The Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act was passed in 2001 by the United States Congress. It instructed international financial institutions to stop extending loans, credit or guarantees to the government of Zimbabwe and to refuse to cancel their debt (Tendi, 2012 in McDuff, 2015: 14). Hence the MDC was seen as an enemy by Zanu-PF and MDC supporters were persecuted. To some migration was the only way to flee from the persecution which led to the death of many Zimbabweans. In the 2008 elections Zanu-PF had 43,2% and the MDC 47,9%, so because neither party had reached 50%, there had to be a rerun. During this period, many Zimbabweans who supported the MDC were beaten or tortured, and some were abducted and killed (McDuff, 2015). Such a scenario fuelled the resolve to migrate by most of the people who were being politically persecuted. Young energetic women from the opposition party, especially those who were frustrated by the ruling party for not providing jobs for them left the country. The political findings of this study relate to the findings of a study by McDuff (2015) which support the above reference to political persecutions as the reason behind the migration of some Zimbabwean women. The study indicated that although the political persecution did not directly affect them, it affected members of their immediate family, like their husbands. Therefore, they were pushed to migrate with their families for their protection. According to the push-pull theory, migration occurs when a reason for emigrating (push factor) has a solution in the destination country (Parkins, 2010; Avasakar, 2012). In the case of this study the female immigrants were pushed to migrate because of political persecutions in their country to South Africa, which was considered to be more politically stable.

### **Main finding of the theme push factors**

The major finding of the first theme that emerged from the study, namely the push factors contributing to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg, showed that their migration was influenced by both political and economic factors. The majority of the participants attributed migration to economic conditions in Zimbabwe; but although the majority of the participants did not directly link their migration to political influence, the economic conditions of Zimbabwe are strongly linked to the political instability in the country. Much of the economic instability can be linked to the failures of the ESAP and the stance taken by the government to take control of the social and economic policy which led to the loss of investors, closing down of

industries, collapse of the agricultural sector, and deterioration of the infrastructure, skyrocketing inflation, sanctions and unemployment, amongst other crises. Other studies concur that to separate political and economic factors as contributory to the migration of people from Zimbabwe is rather problematic, because the root causes of hyperinflation and unemployment were clearly political (Crush et al., 2012; Crush et al., 2015; McDuff, 2015; de Villiers & Wedza, 2017). Therefore, it can be clearly concluded that the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg is a result of the economic crisis and the political instability in Zimbabwe. Both continue to result in high unemployment, poverty, economic exploitation, cash shortages and political persecution.

### 5.3.2 Pull factors

According to this study, there are some positive factors that attracted the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg. According to the push-pull theory, perceived gains provided them with a motive to migrate and overcome some migration barriers (Faist, 2012; Jansen, 2016). In order to discuss these positive factors, the theme on pull factors was developed (see Figure 11: Pull factors below). Under the theme on pull factors the following subthemes are discussed: economic opportunities, social connection, cultural diversity and status, and geographical proximity.

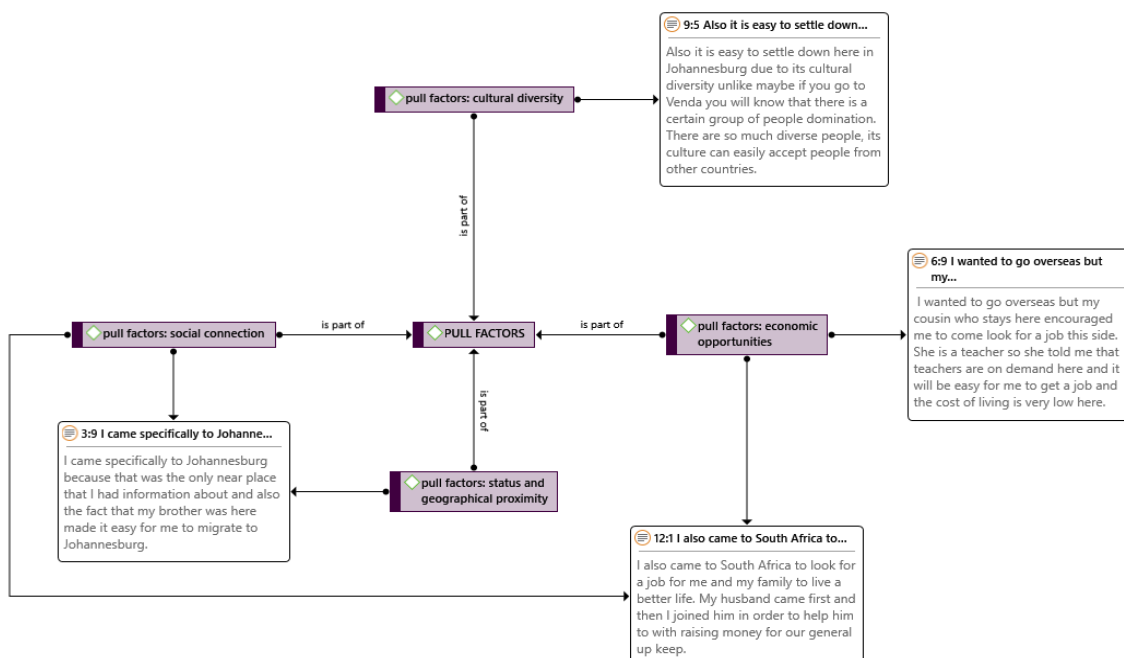


FIGURE 11: PULL FACTORS

Source: Atlas.ti

## Economic opportunities

Johannesburg is one of the major economic centres in Southern Africa. Many young immigrants from across Africa and other provinces in South Africa migrate to the city in search of better economic opportunities. According to the Human Sciences Research Council (2013), Johannesburg contributes immensely to the economy of both Gauteng province and South Africa. As a result of the various development initiatives and industrial expansions which create opportunities for employment, people are attracted to Johannesburg. According to the participants in this study, Johannesburg provides an opportunity either to start a business or to get employed in both the formal and informal sectors. The participants explained how economic opportunities in Johannesburg pulled them to the area in this manner:

*They are migrating here because it is believed that it is easier to get money in Johannesburg than in Zimbabwe and other parts of South Africa. Johannesburg is the heart of South Africa, so there are many opportunities available. Someone from Zimbabwe who has a degree working at Pick 'n Pay supermarket will be getting better pay than someone who is in a formal job in Zimbabwe (Participant H, quote 9:4).*

*I came here in 2002 with my mother when she came to look for work. I did my studies in South Africa, so the situation at home and the better opportunities this side just made me stay here instead and look for a job (Participant T, quote 21:2).*

*I wanted to go overseas, but my cousin who stays here encouraged me to come look for a job this side. She is a teacher, so she told me that teachers are in demand here, and it will be easy for me to get a job, and the cost of living is very low here (Participant E, quote 6:9).*

From the above responses it is evident that one of the major factors that attracted the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg was the availability of economic opportunities. According to Lee's push and pull theory, economic opportunities pull immigrants to an area (Lee, 1966; Kurekova, 2011). Owing to Zimbabwe's economic collapse, which has resulted in unemployment and low wages, many people are repelled from the area towards regions of greater economic activity. The largest number of migrants in the world are economic migrants. According to Crush et al. (2012), almost half the immigrants in their study stated that they were motivated to come to South Africa

because they were searching for employment. One of the participants in the present study described the better economy of South Africa as reflected in the remittances in the form of groceries which many people in Zimbabwe are unable to afford.

*The other reason why so many women from Zimbabwe come here is that they see their neighbours receiving a lot of groceries from their relatives here. So they are motivated to come and make a living so that they can also send groceries to their families back home (Participant B quote 2:8).*

According to the above view by the participant the remittances sent back to Zimbabwe by the people living in the diaspora indicate better economic opportunities. Therefore, when some people see these remittances in form of money and groceries which are not affordable in Zimbabwe they are motivated to migrate also in order to send remittances to their families back home. This is supported by other studies in which sending remittances back home was the primary motivation to migrate (Castles & Miller, 2008; Raham & Fee, 2012; Ullah & Alkaff, 2018). In this study, the availability of opportunities to work and send remittances back home attracts the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg.

### **Social connection**

The study indicated that having a relative, spouse, friend or neighbour whom one knows in the destination country influences one's decision to migrate. According to Lee's push and pull theory, social connection in the destination country encourages migration (Lee, 1966; Arango, 2017). Almost all the participants indicated that they migrated to Johannesburg because they had a person they knew who lived there, and facilitated their movement to the place. The participants indicated how social connections contributed to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants as follows:

*I came specifically to Johannesburg because that was the only near place that I had information about, and the fact that my brother was here made it easy for me to migrate to Johannesburg. I was struggling with paying my rent and other things. So I told my brother, who was already here in Johannesburg, about my experiences, and he encouraged me to migrate because there were some job opportunities here in Johannesburg. He also supported me in the whole movement process (Participant C, quote 3:8).*

*After travelling I had a lot of arguments with my ex-husband, so I was always frustrated. So I told my pastor, who was now staying in Johannesburg. He encouraged me to come to Johannesburg and look for some work there (Participant D, quote 5:10).*

*I had a friend in Cape Town. She is the one who helped me with migration. I did not initially come to Johannesburg; Cape Town was the first destination. Then things were not going well in Cape Town after four months, so I came into contact with someone in Pretoria who promised me a job as a caregiver (Participant A, quote 1:11).*

According to the above responses, there are many Zimbabweans in Johannesburg who play a vital role in providing information and housing to other prospective immigrants. Friends, relatives and other social connections helped the young Zimbabwean female immigrants with information about opportunities in Johannesburg. Some of them provided moral and financial support. Migration networks assist in the migration period and reduce the financial and psychological costs associated with the migration (Samers, 2010; King, 2012; Castles et al. 2014; Arango, 2017). For instance, the availability of someone in a destination country can lessen the burden of not having a place to stay as soon as you arrive. The presence of friends and family can also help one to cope with the new environment. This means that the social networks can provide a support base for the new migrants. The availability of information makes migration easier and safer.

Although social networks aid in the migration process, some of the connections were indicated not to be reliable, because some young female immigrants are abandoned on arrival by their relatives or friends, some of whom might be having economic challenges, so they might not be able to take care of the new immigrants. Consequently, some immigrants end up on the streets of Johannesburg, vulnerable to all sorts of abuses and challenges. This is evident in the quotation below from one participant:

*Here in Johannesburg there are a lot of Zimbabweans from all over Zimbabwe. You either have a relative, neighbour or a friend who lives here. Usually we get our information from them and they might even invite you to come stay with them. But the most unfortunate thing is that these people usually cannot take care of you for a long time because life here is tough. So if you do not find a job quickly you end up being destitute. (Participant K quote 12:2).*

The above response confirms that there are social connections which aid with the migration of young female immigrants to Johannesburg. Some of them provide a place to stay for these immigrants. But due to the economic hardships in Johannesburg the social networks that might have initially helped with migration can later on reject the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This is in line with the study by Hungwe (2013) where the participants talked about being excluded from their families as a result of family hardships. This forced them to stay in parks and other inhospitable places.

The presence of migration agents known as *malaichas* (a word used for people who aid illegal migrants to cross the border) is another social connection that pulls young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg. South Africa is well-known for its porous borders. As a result, it can be easily accessed through illegal channels by immigrants without legal documentation to be in South Africa. The *malaichas* help transport young female immigrants without documentation to South Africa at a certain fee. Lack of documentation is one well-known barrier to migration which can make it difficult for those who want to migrate to a certain area. In cases where the female immigrants do not have any money they are supposed to make a plan to repay the *malaichas*. The migration experts explained the migration of young female immigrants using the *malaichas* as the social connection in this way:

*Passports also take long to come out so some people seek help from malaichas who are people who aid them to cross the border illegally. In the process some do not make it because they drown in the Limpopo River and others are attacked by wild animals. Some are subjected to sexual abuse by the malaichas because they are fully dependent on them (Participant B, quote 2:14).*

*We should not forget the role played by malaichas who also act as agents. Some women from Zimbabwe actually travel with their assistance, especially when they do not have someone they know this side. They give you transport, provide accommodation and job connections for a certain fee. But some of them are actually dangerous because if you do not find a job quickly they end up sexually exploiting the young female immigrants as a reward for their effort in taking care of them (Participant J, quote 11:4).*

*Usually people come here because they have friends, relatives or just distant people who they know. The Zimbabwean population here in*



*Johannesburg is so big that sometimes you would think that there is no longer anyone left in Zimbabwe. So people just connect with each other, and provide a place to stay for a few days. Sometimes there are people called malaichas who transport people, provide information about opportunities here, and a place to stay for some payment. The problem with the malaichas is that they can be actually dangerous sometimes. If you fail to pay their dues they can abuse you sexually or force you into sex with other people for money. You can become their slave (Participant T, quote 21:5).*

The sentiments above show the close relationship between the *malaichas* and human trafficking. The study revealed that some of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants end up being slaves and sexually exploited by the *malaichas* because they have no one else to turn to, and they feel that they owe them. And since these young Zimbabwean female immigrants transported by the *malaichas* do not have documents they might be scared to report such abuses because they fear deportation. The use of these dangerous social networks supports the contention in the push-pull theory that sometimes the push factors to migration in the sending country might be so strong that people try by all means to overcome any barrier to migration (Bernstein, 2011). In this study the female immigrants had to overcome not having passports and permits by resorting to illegal and dangerous ways to migrate

### **Cultural diversity**

Johannesburg is well known for its rich cultural diversity. The city is home to many people from different cultural backgrounds, owing to its multiple economic activities that attract both internal and international migrants in search of better economic opportunities. According to one of the participants, some young female immigrants are attracted to Johannesburg because it is full of people from different cultures, and that makes it easy for them to adapt, unlike in other areas. One of the participants described the process in this manner:

*It is easy to settle down here in Johannesburg owing to its cultural diversity, unlike maybe if you go to Venda you will know that there is a certain group of people dominating. There are so many different people, its culture can easily accept people from other countries. (Participant H, quote 9:5).*

The diversity helps young female immigrants to quickly integrate into the way of life in the city without being easily identified as immigrants, especially those who speak native languages. When people migrate to an area that is dominated by a single culture, Integration becomes difficult. Johannesburg is South Africa's chief economic hub, so internal immigrants from different provinces as well as immigrants from across Africa are concentrated there (Meny-Gibert & Chumia, 2016; Theodore et al., 2018). This finding confirms the hypothesis in Lee's push and pull model that migration is likely to occur where there are diverse people (Lee, 1966). Rich cultural diversity also makes both immigrants and the local people not feel threatened because no one culture will be dominating the other.

### **Status and geographical proximity**

The study also indicated that Johannesburg's popularity pulls immigrants to the city. One of the participants indicated that Johannesburg is so popular with Zimbabweans that most people think that it is the only place that immigrants migrate to when they come to South Africa. Therefore many people want to migrate there whenever they think of migrating to South Africa. One of the participants indicated as much in this manner:

*The other issue is the status given to Johannesburg. When anyone goes to South Africa people just say she went to 'Joni', which means she went to Johannesburg whatever the place she has migrated to. That status or popularity of the place makes Zimbabwean women attracted to it. When I came here I thought that is the only place to go (Participant S, quote 20:2)*

The above response indicate that the prestigious status given to Johannesburg makes it very popular to the young Zimbabwean female immigrants that they desire to migrate to the city. This highlights the fact that Johannesburg is a major industrial centre, with both formal and informal opportunities (HSRC, 2013; Theodore, 2018). According to Crush (2012), some migrants initially settle in other provinces, but later on move to Johannesburg.

The geographical proximity of South Africa to Zimbabwe is one of the factors that is contributing immensely to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg. Johannesburg is about seven hours' drive from the Beitbridge border post. Near places are much easier to migrate to than distant places, because transport there is cheaper, and one might find a relative, friend or some other person there from

one's home country. The presence of people that one knows in the host country makes it easier for one to settle. One participant explained how Johannesburg's closeness to Zimbabwe influenced her movement:

*I came specifically to Johannesburg because that was the only near place that I had information about, and the fact that my brother was here made it easy for me to migrate to Johannesburg (Participant C, quote 21:2).*

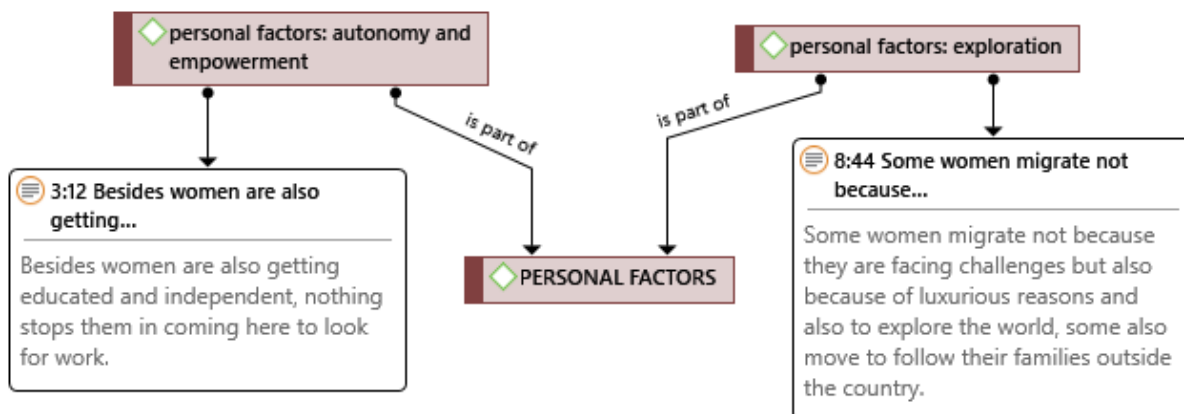
The proximity of Johannesburg to Zimbabwe lessens the burden of travelling because of the minimal costs that are needed to travel there as well as back to Zimbabwe whenever there is need. Many young female immigrants have family responsibilities, and so they travel to places nearer to their home country in order to visit their relatives often.

### **Main finding of theme on pull factors**

The major finding of the theme on pull factors contributing to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg was that most of these immigrants were attracted to Johannesburg because of the economic opportunities in the city, contrasted with the high unemployment and the lack of business opportunities in Zimbabwe. It is important to note that some of the factors like social connection, cultural diversity, status and geographical proximity of Johannesburg also pulled the participants to migrate to it. According to the study, these other factors do not outweigh the availability of economic opportunities as the major factor contributing to their migration.

### **5.3.3 Personal factors**

The study indicated that factors like a person's need for autonomy, level of empowerment and the urge to explore contributed to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Although much migration can be attributed to economic factors, some young female immigrants indicated that there were those who migrated to search for environments where they could exercise their own freedom, while others stated that they are migrating because they are empowered. For others the love of exploration drove them to migrate to Johannesburg. The subthemes that emerged from the main theme of personal factors which led to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants are discussed hereunder (see Figure 12 below).



**FIGURE 12: PERSONAL FACTORS**

**Source:** Atlas.ti

### **Autonomy and empowerment**

The study showed that some young Zimbabwean females are pushed to migrate because of the need for autonomy or freedom, especially when they feel abused. Migration becomes the only way to run away from any kind of gender-based oppression including spousal abuse. Hereunder is a statement made by one of the participants on how the need for autonomy encouraged her to migrate:

*After travelling I had a lot of arguments with my ex-husband. He abused me, and so I was always frustrated. So I had to migrate because I wanted my independence (Participant D, quote 5:10).*

The above quotation reveals that migration can result from one's need to flee or to move away from being treated unfairly. Some women recognise that they are in abusive situations, and they migrate in order to realise their freedom.

According to the study, the increased empowerment of women is one of the factors leading to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg. The gender revolution has seen many efforts by different governments to educate women and girls (Friedman, 2015). This enables them to be competent in the job market as well as to seek for jobs internationally. Some of the participants indicated the role played by the empowerment of women in the migration of young women from Zimbabwe in this way:

*There is more access to economic resources for Zimbabwean women than there was before. Women are getting more involved in education,*

*political issues and leadership. This makes them more powerful and independent, so it makes it possible for them to migrate. If you are educated you stand a better chance of getting a job anywhere. We even see Zimbabwean women migrating not only to South Africa but also to countries as far as Australia, America, Asia and the UK (Participant G, quote 8:5).*

*Women are becoming educated and independent, nothing stops them from coming here to look for work (Participant C, quote 3:12).*

These responses show that women are overcoming the traditional gender beliefs by getting educated and participating in the public sphere. The increased empowerment of women is a result of global and national initiatives to achieve gender parity. For example, in Zimbabwe the increased educational initiatives for the girl children have increased their chances of working outside their homes, and their chance of migrating (Grepin & Bharadwaj, 2015). According to the study, women's increased participation in the public sphere and their greater independence are resulting in the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to South Africa. This migration of women as a result of empowerment has led to the emergence of the term "feminisation of migration".

### **Exploration**

The findings of the study indicated that some young female immigrants migrated to Johannesburg because they wanted to explore the area. Young people are energetic, and so they want to experience and learn new things. This motivates some of them to travel to other countries. Some of the participants indicated how their need for exploration is one of the factors that contributed to their migration. This sentiment is captured as follows:

*Some women migrate not because they are facing challenges but because of luxurious reasons and to explore the world.... (Participant G, quote 8:3).*

*When I came to Johannesburg I was a teenager and I wanted to explore. Johannesburg was the place to be, so I just told myself as a young person that I will just stay here and learn more about the city. If I had a job, it was going to be better (Laughing). Later on I saw that I could actually make a living here, I looked for a job and guess what – I am still here! (Participant F, quote 7:11).*

Immigrants who are motivated to migrate in order to explore are usually short-term immigrants who later move to other new places. Some young Zimbabwean female immigrants may migrate to explore, but after learning more about Johannesburg and the economic opportunities available they choose to settle there and make a living.

### **Main finding of theme on personal factors**

The main finding of this theme is that owing to the empowerment of women many young women are migrating to seek better economic opportunities for themselves in Johannesburg. Some young Zimbabwean female immigrants who have the power and resources choose to migrate to Johannesburg to explore, and later on decide to settle there for a longer period.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter presented and analysed the biographical information of the participants as well as the factors contributing to the migration of young Zimbabwean females to Johannesburg. The study indicated that there are three major factors that have contributed to this migration. These are push, pull and personal factors, but push factors, notably economic ones, were seen to be the major contributors to the migration of young Zimbabwean females to Johannesburg. Many participants linked their migration to the economic conditions of Zimbabwe although these have their roots in political issues. The economic deterioration of Zimbabwe has resulted in the loss of investors, closing down of industries, collapse of the agricultural sector, deterioration of infrastructure, inflation, sanctions and unemployment, amongst other crises. This left many young Zimbabwean female immigrants hopeless and in deep poverty, and some of them were breadwinners. Therefore, they had to migrate to Johannesburg in search of better economic opportunities. Other factors like Johannesburg's nearness to Zimbabwe, and its cultural diversity, also attracted them to the big city. But the root cause of their migration is the economic crisis that Zimbabwe is experiencing. Social connections have also been seen as another factor that led to the migration of Zimbabwean females, although not to the same extent as economic factors. Most of the immigrants indicated that the presence of a friend or family member facilitated their migration to Johannesburg.

## **CHAPTER 6: THE VULNERABILITY OF YOUNG ZIMBABWEAN FEMALE IMMIGRANTS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a continuation of the data presentation and analysis. It describes the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. This is achieved by presenting and analysing the data on the challenges they face, and highlighting the factors that contribute to their vulnerability.

### **6.2 Challenges faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants**

As pointed out in the introductory chapter of this thesis, one of the objectives sought to examine the challenges faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. From the data collected, six major themes emerged to explain the challenges they are facing. These are abuse, discrimination, economic challenges, poor health, social challenges and xenophobia. These are discussed in detail below.

#### **6.2.1 Abuse**

The study has indicated that one of the challenges that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to is abuse. According to the responses, these immigrants face abuse in different contexts: in the workplace, in their homes, in societies they live in, and in their day-to-day economic and social interactions with their employers and the other people in the society they live and work in. Under the main theme of abuse different subthemes emerged: economic exploitation, verbal abuse, spousal abuse, and sexual abuse and exploitation. Figure 13 highlights the theme of abuse and its subthemes, as well as other factors which make the young Zimbabwean female immigrants vulnerable to abuse.



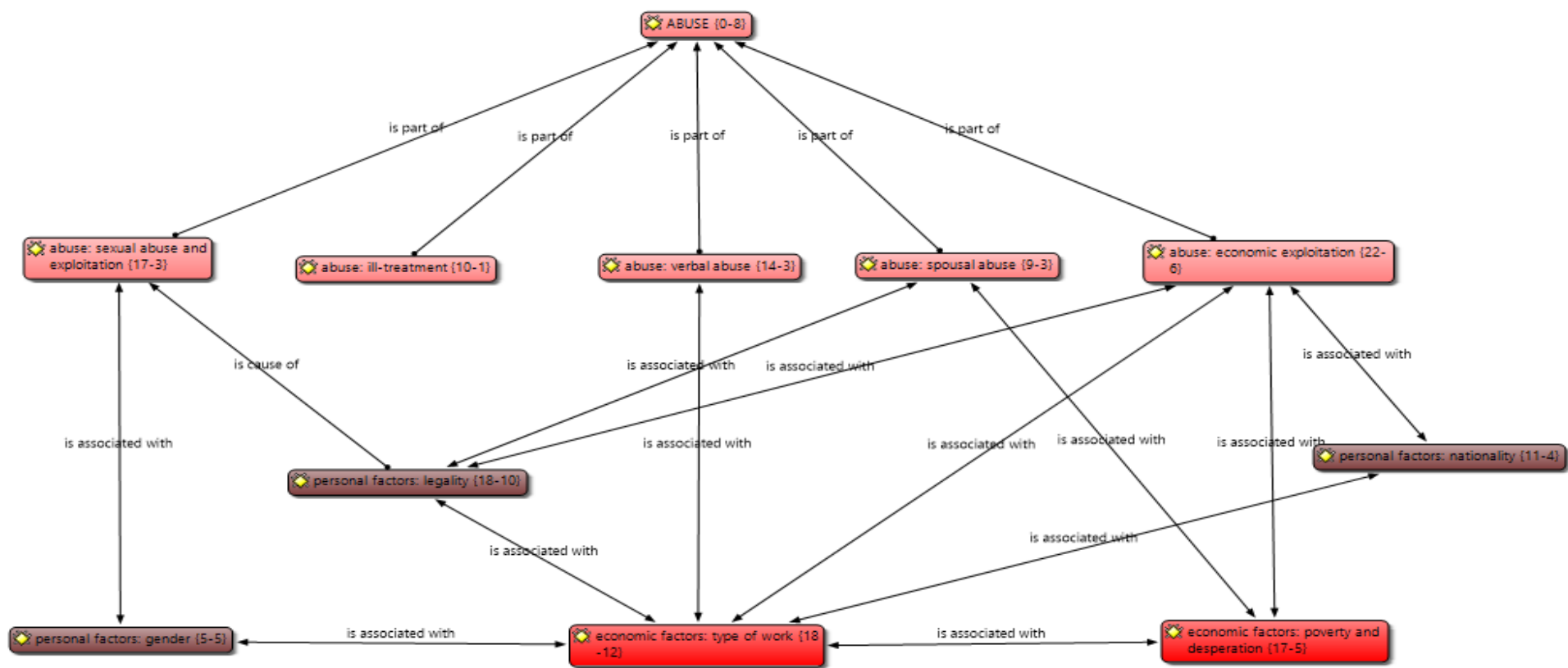


FIGURE 13: ABUSE

Source: Atlas.ti

## Economic exploitation

The study has indicated that economic exploitation is one of the major challenges that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are not immune to. The participants explained that they experienced abuse from their employers in the form of being underpaid, or in some cases not receiving any salary that was due to them. Some of the young female immigrants reported to have the same or even higher qualifications than their South African counterparts, but although they were doing the same type of job, the young female immigrants received lower salaries. Some of the participants explained this as follows:

*I feel that the wages that I get do not match my skills and level of education. I feel so exploited. I am employed by the school, not by the government, so I earn half the wages of the teachers paid by the government. I have never tried to report this because it's a waste of time and I do not think that something will improve. After all, who listens to a foreigner? So I'm just trying to look for another job. I do not want to be here anymore (Participant E, quote 6:12).*

*I am paid less because I am a foreigner, and I use a study permit. Though this is not fair I do not complain; at least I am managing to take care of myself (Participant R, quote 19:5).*

These responses show that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are economically exploited in the workplace by being paid less than other people who have the same qualifications as them and doing the same type of work. Participant E a teacher, testified to being paid half of what the other teachers employed by the government are getting. Participant E's complaint supports Manik's (2014) findings that Zimbabwean teachers were not being paid the same salary as South African teachers, because some of them were temporary, and therefore school governing bodies determined and paid their salaries. However, they performed the same duties as permanent teachers but at a reduced salary. The response confirms the findings of other studies that usually female immigrants who are overqualified often experience de-skilling in their destination areas, and financial extortion by their employers (Crush et al., 2017; Motus, 2017). However, in spite of that they indicated that they just suffer in silence because they are foreigners. They do not have the right to complain about their situation since they risk losing their jobs, and not being listened to. From Participant B's response, it can be noted that she

is not satisfied, but she consoles herself in saying that she has a job to provide for herself and her family. This indicates that the economic benefits that these young Zimbabwean female immigrants are getting are much better than those in Zimbabwe. Therefore, they find the strength to continue with the jobs.

Some of the participants revealed that they were being overworked, with no breaks, and no overtime wages. The participants had this to say about being overworked as a problem being faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants:

*I got a job in a saloon as a saloon manager. I used to do everything from managing the books, doing people's hair and cleaning the saloon on the same salary. I worked for 12 hours, even at weekends, without a break, I was paid less, and there was never any pension (Participant C, quote 3:17).*

*I have worked as a domestic worker where I was subjected to both verbal and physical abuse. I would work for over 12 hours per day, and was paid R3 000 per month. The work was just too much (Participant L, quote 13:7).*

These responses indicate that some employers do not stick to the code of ethics as set out in the South Africa's Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Act (No. 20 of 2013). The Act's basic conditions stipulate that the immigrants must be remunerated and employed fairly in the same way as the local people. It guards against the overworking of workers unless agreed and paid for (Department of Labour, 2018). However, most of the young female immigrants, especially those who are undocumented, are concentrated in the informal economy, where they have limited access to government protections, and are exposed to substandard workplace conditions (Theodore et al., 2018). The limited access to government protections exposes them to abuse and exploitation by their employers.

The young female immigrants also indicated that the employers abuse them by not giving them their agreed wages at the end of the month. The employers take advantage of some of the young women because they are foreigners, and do not have the required documents. Some of the participants argued:

*I have lost count of incidents that I have been abused because I am a foreigner. I once worked in a certain home, and at the end of the month the employer refused to pay me. I reported the issue to the police, but it*

*was a waste of time. They showed no interest in what I was saying. I just had to let it go and look for another job (Participant A, quote 1:30).*

*I am not happy with the working conditions, my boss does not stick to the professional code of ethics. Now I have not been receiving my commission that I have been supposed to get for the past three months. If I had a better option I was going to leave this job (Participant C, quote 3:43).*

As most of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg are desperate for employment, they sometimes take work without any formal agreement in writing, then at the end of the month they are not given their wages. Employers take advantage of the young women because they know that they can easily abuse them by not giving them wages without facing any consequence, because some of them are reluctant to report the abuse for fear of being identified as undocumented foreigners. The authorities do not act in their favour (Theodore et al., 2018). With no available avenues to contest not getting wages that they are entitled to, some just end up leaving their jobs. Others just endure the suffering because they do not have anywhere else to go. The intersectionality theory confirms that young female immigrants can face multiple challenges such as not being given wages, and also being sidelined by the police (Scott et al., 2017).

### **Verbal abuse**

According to almost all the participants, verbal abuse was a common problem faced by the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Name calling has become one of the most common types of verbal abuse experienced by these immigrants. The participants reported being called names just to degrade them, and sometimes being ridiculed for no reason. They explained how they are vulnerable to verbal abuse in this manner:

*Verbal abuse is so common here. I am staying in a place called Turffontein. It's like you are in hell, it's not a good place at all. Immigrants are not treated well and we were called names like kwerekweres (Participant C, quote 3:15.)*

*Whenever I talk to the taxi drivers in English some of them become very cruel, and start calling me names. This makes me feel bad and guilty (Participant E, quote 6:36).*

*Young Zimbabwean female immigrants are also exposed to xenophobic comments in the places where they live, in the streets and in their work-places. For most women xenophobia is psychological, but for men it becomes physical. It's difficult to see a woman being beaten during xenophobia. Some of these comments are based on the perception that local people maintain that these young women are here to take their jobs. So just being a foreigner makes them vulnerable to verbal abuse. (Participant H, quote 9:16)*

The above quotations by the participants indicate that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to constant verbal abuse more than physical abuse by the society. Mostly, male migrants are subjected to physical abuse by the society. The participants indicated that being a foreigner makes them treated in an unfair manner by being called names. This signifies the anti-immigrant sentiments that the society holds against the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The abuse of foreigners might be caused by competition over resources, and to sharing space in high density areas where they have everyday encounters with the local people. For example, Participant E above stays in a high density area in Turffontein where she is exposed to verbal abuse every day. The inability to speak a local language, especially in public spaces like taxis exposed some of the female immigrants to verbal abuse. A study by Hungwe (2013) captures the social exclusion that immigrants receive whenever they try to speak their vernacular. Hence, in order to avoid this they keep silent. The participants mentioned that immigrants from other countries also ridicule them.

*We are treated in a bad manner because we are regarded as destitute, with nothing. Even some foreigners from other countries ridicule us because of where we are coming from..... (Participant A, quote 1:52).*

The above participant argued that they are verbally abused also by other immigrants from other countries. The Zimbabwean economy is one of the poorest in the SADC. Therefore, immigrants from countries with better economies harbour negative attitudes against the large numbers of young, desperate and vulnerable Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. According to the intersectionality theory, immigrants from privileged countries may oppress vulnerable immigrants from other countries because they perceive themselves to be superior, with power to abuse the immigrants from poor countries (Ryle, 2015).

The participants also indicated that they are verbally abused by the authorities or the people who are supposed to be providing services to them. For example, when the immigrants are applying for their permits at the Home Affairs office they are met with anti-immigrant sentiments. These were experienced from the security guards who control the queues, and the people who served them. One of the participants revealed:

*The officers where we fix our asylum permits are a problem. They verbally abuse us and most of the time they are rude. They are mostly the people in the offices and the security guards. They tell us to go back to our country. Even if they are helping you they say all sorts of things. The others are nice, but if you meet the ones who are not nice you just keep quiet and pretend as if you can't hear the insults until you get what you want (Participant P, quote 17:3).*

*You know it's so painful. It's not that I do not want to have a document too. When I tried to apply for asylum the treatment I received from the people who work there was very bad, and they want a lot of money for bribes to fast-track the applications (Participant S, quote 20:6).*

The quotations above indicate that the personnel in the organisations that have a mandate of helping the immigrants also abuse the young female immigrants verbally. Some of the officials are used to getting bribes from people who want their migration documents processed, and they get very angry with people who use lawful means to do so. A study of immigrants from Congo in South Africa showed that the Home Affairs officials mistreat and get frustrated by immigrants who are trying to get their documents by lawful means, because they are used to getting money through illicit transactions (Alfaro-Velcamp, McLaughlin, Brogneri, Skade, & Shaw, 2017). In their frustration from not getting bribes, they end up verbally abusing the young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

This discussion shows the verbal abuse of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants from different dimensions as supported by the intersectionality theory (Hill Collins, 2000; Hesse, 2014). These include verbal abuse at an interpersonal level by the taxi drivers and other local people who the immigrants have day-to-day interactions with, and at a disciplinary level when people in institutions, like service care providers, abuse them.

## Spousal abuse

Spousal abuse or sexual partner abuse has been seen as one of the challenges that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to. Some of the young female immigrants from Zimbabwe come as accompanying spouses, some come and get married to local men, and get their documentation through that. Some of the immigrants depend on their South African boyfriends for survival. Some of the participants testified to spousal abuse thus:

*Most of the time I have arguments with my boyfriend and sometimes he physically abuses me. I just hang in there because I do not have a job and he takes care of me and my kids. If I leave him it means that my kids will suffer. It's difficult for me to live here in South Africa without him because I do not have documents, which makes me unable to find work easily (Participant D, quote 5:11).*

*Some women, especially the married ones who are accompanying their spouses, or those who are married to South African men are prone to domestic violence. This is because men take advantage of these women's being far away from home, and treat them badly. You should also know that these people who have spousal permits are not allowed to look for jobs here even if you have the necessary qualifications. So some men become so frustrated at becoming the breadwinner, and things are not adding up so they are sometimes angry with their partners, and abuse them both verbally and physically. Some try to report this abuse, but some just keep quiet because they want to stay in the country, and their partner is the one providing (Participant E, quote 6:16).*

*When I came here I faced abuse by the man who I called my husband. He started cheating and every time I would ask him he became so violent to the extent that he would beat me. I would spend days in the house because I had bruises on my face. He once beat me to the extent that I ended up in hospital. After I was discharged I went to stay at my friend's place. He started not sending school fees and groceries for the children at home. I then joined my friend in prostitution so that I could have money to take care of my children (Participant S, quote 20:3).*



These responses reveal that the relationships of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are sources of their oppression and abuse. The immigrants were mostly vulnerable to spousal abuse because they depended on their spouses for provisions. The men took advantage of their situation and abused their partners physically and verbally. If the migrant is dependent on the abuser, she might be reluctant to report abuse, thus increasing the risk of its being repeated (Fleury, 2016). As in the statement made by Participant E, since some women, especially those who hold spousal accompanying permits, are not allowed to look for work, their husbands end up being frustrated by being the breadwinners, and end up beating their wives. According to IOM (2013a), stress faced by husbands in the destination areas as a result of failure to find a suitable job that enables them to provide for their families results in intimate partner violence. The intersectionality theory states that gender-based violence can be structured by other differentials (Mohantry, 2013). In this case, the young Zimbabweans face the challenges of being unemployed, which also makes some of them liable to be abused because they do not contribute anything to their households. Because some of them are undocumented, they cannot find work easily, and they cannot report such abuse. Instead they tolerate, and the perpetrators get away with it. It is also important to note that much of the physical violence was inflicted by their intimate partners. No participant linked any physical violence to the larger society.

### **Sexual abuse and exploitation**

Sexual abuse and exploitation have become very common for the young female immigrants. Although both male and female immigrants might face the same challenges of discrimination, economic exploitation and other types of abuse, for women it is unique that their challenges extend to sexual abuse and exploitation. Some young Zimbabwean female immigrants are coerced into sex by their employers in order to be employed; the employer finds other grounds for abusing them like lack of documentation. The abuse is confirmed by the following responses from the study:

*There are also some cases of sexual harassment in the workplaces, especially by their male bosses because these young Zimbabwean female immigrants cannot report because they are warned: 'Remember you do not have documents, so I can get you deported' (Participant H, quote 9:19).*

*Some young people engage in sex work in order to get employed. They sleep with the bosses because it is an easy way to get money. I was once offered a cleaning job by an old man, then one day he told me that I should touch his genitals as part of the job. The next day I never went back to that place (Participant A, quote 1:51).*

The above extracts show that young female immigrants in Johannesburg are vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation in the work place by their bosses. Bosses ask for sexual favours in order for the female immigrants' jobs to be secure, and so the desperate young women end up being abused in silence because they need their jobs. Some end up looking for other avenues to get some income, which include prostitution. Many young women prefer prostitution because they are mostly their own bosses, and this also gives them much freedom; but they are vulnerable to being abused by other people who see them as deviants, and raping them is a way of punishing them for their immoral behaviour. One of the participants revealed sexual abuse as a problem being faced by the immigrants in this manner:

*Some end up in prostitution in order to supplement their income, making them vulnerable to diseases, being raped and abused by men. Men see them as people with loose morals so they take advantage of that. It's not just South African men, but men from Zimbabwe and other countries (Participant B, quote 2:34).*

The above response by Participant B indicates that some young female immigrants end up in prostitution as a result of the economic pressures. As they engage in sex work for a living both local and foreign men see them as people with loose morals leading them to abuse them and even rape them. This highlights some form of gender based violence that these young female immigrants are subjected to. According to Walker and Oliveira (2015), the criminalised nature of sexual work opens migrant women to intersections of gender-based and structural violence. Structural violence is meted out by the police who sexually abuse the young women. The participants also indicated that the authorities, specifically the police officers, sexually abuse them whenever they try to report abuse. This discourages them from reporting abuse.

*The only unique aspect is that for us women it ends up in sexual abuse or exploitation. When you report any form of abuse to the police they start proposing love. This is more abuse because I came to be helped, not to find love. Sometimes I even tell them that I am here not to be*

*abused by you again. I have my friend who ended up dating a police officer for her issue to be heard (Participant E, quote 6:14).*

*There is no one to tell. Even if you go to the police and indicate to them that you have been raped they are going to rape you again. They are going to pretend to help you and at the end of the day they ask for something in return (Participant F, quote 7:32).*

The above quotations show that the police also abuse the young female immigrants sexually. These young female immigrants sometimes run to the police for protection but the police further exploit them by asking for sexual favours instead of helping them. The above response by Participant F highlights that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants end up being hopeless and end up not reporting their perpetrators for the crimes they have committed. This also shows the intersecting challenges that the young female immigrants face. That is, they engage in prostitution because they want to make ends meet, but in prostitution they are abused sexually and also when they report this abuse to the police the police do not protect them or listen to their issues.

### **Ill-treatment**

The young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg revealed that they are being ill-treated by people in various structures of the society. They used words such as being treated like dogs, badly, cruelly, and others indicated that it is a problem staying in South Africa. The treatment they experienced was inhuman.

*I was once abused where I worked as a domestic worker. I was called a monkey. I was fed in a special cup and plate which was specifically meant for destitutes. I was treated as dirt and as a swine, but I never reported that to anyone because I still wanted the job. (Participant A, quote 1:31).*

*Being here is not because we want to be; we are suffering. The police can just take the passports to fix you so that you become undocumented (Participant D, quote 5:31).*

*I was once caught by the police and they found me without a document. They did not want any explanations, they just said I should call someone to bring the passport. The experience was bad: I was treated as if I had killed someone. They called me names prevented me from going to the*

*toilet, and I was so hungry. They drove around with me in their van from 4pm until around 10pm (Participant F, quote 7:28).*

*It's a problem staying in South Africa. Sometimes I ask myself why we are treated like dogs. We do not even have privacy in our homes especially here in a ghetto like Hillbrow. At any time they just come and start searching our houses and asking for documents without even showing us search warrants (Participant I, quote 10:9).*

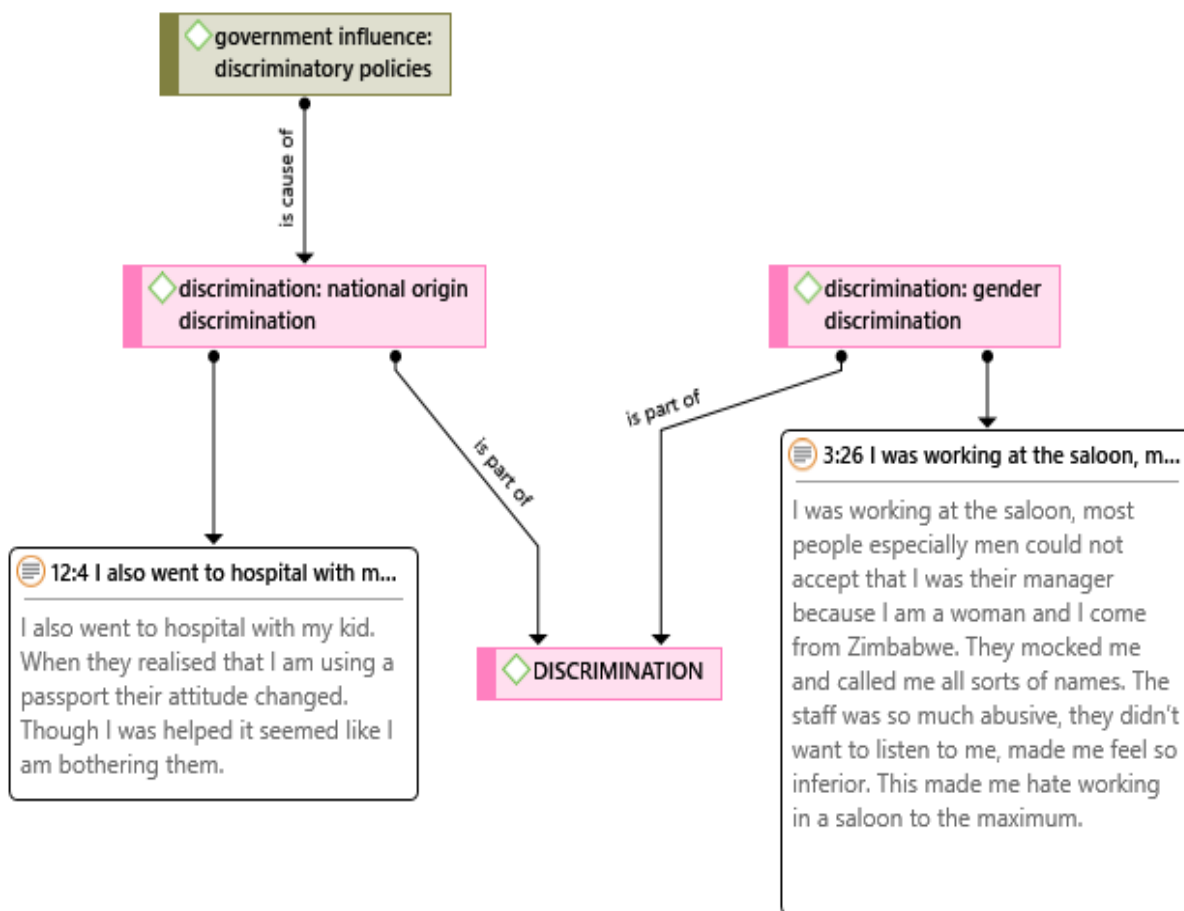
It is generally agreed by the participants that they are treated in a heartless manner by some people in the society and the police. One of the migrants signified that she was treated like a 'dirt and swine' to show the cruel treatment she got from the employer. In some cases, the young female immigrants reported human rights violations by the police including ill-treatment upon being caught without documents, confiscation of documents just to fix the immigrants and also budging into and searching their houses at any time without search warrants. Such behaviour by the police is a violation of human rights and an abuse of authority.

### **Main finding of theme on abuse**

This theme was based on abuse as one of the major challenges that young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to in Johannesburg. The major finding of this theme was that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to multiple forms of abuse – economic, verbal, sexual and spousal. Much of the physical abuse was reported to have been perpetrated more by the partners or the spouses of the young women than by members of the broader society. The findings of this theme also showed that the police used their authority to exploit the young women, which meant they had no one to turn to for help.

#### **6.2.2 Discrimination**

This section describes discrimination as one of the themes that were found on the challenges being faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. The study indicated that the young women are vulnerable to being treated differently from the local men and women as well as other immigrants. They indicated that they are vulnerable to gender discrimination and national origin discrimination (see Figure 14 below). These types of discrimination are discussed in detail below.



**FIGURE 14: DISCRIMINATION**

**Source:** Atlas.ti

### Gender discrimination

Gender discrimination is common in most societies. Men have specific roles considered masculine which are quite different to women's. Women were and continue to be the disadvantaged sex, discriminated against in many areas because men want to maintain their position as the superior sex (Shastri, 2014). Female immigrants experience gender discrimination in their destination area, and it is worse because it often intersects with other types of like national origin discrimination. Although male and female immigrants can both face discrimination in the destination area, for women it becomes gendered. The study revealed that young Zimbabwean female immigrants face gender discrimination in Johannesburg. Participant C described how she was discriminated against in the work place because of her gender:

*I was working at the saloon, where most people, especially men, could not accept that I was their manager because I am a woman, and I come from Zimbabwe. They mocked me and called me all sorts of names. The staff was so abusive, they didn't want to listen to me, and made me feel so inferior. This made me hate working in a saloon to the maximum (Participant C, quote 3:26).*

The above participant indicated that she experienced abuse and a lot of intolerance at the work place. This is because she was a superior working with the local women and also men. Men also found it difficult to accept her as their superior because she was a woman and she was a foreigner. This made them less intolerant and jealousy of Participant C. That jeopardized the participant from being treated well by her colleagues. Such treatment resulted in the participant feeling inferior and uncomfortable to work in that place. This response reveals the role played by the patriarchal ideology, which dictates that women should not have managerial positions. Men try to maintain their dominance in the workplace by obstructing the young female immigrants so that they themselves can get the senior positions. The situation is worsened by the fact of being an immigrant.

### **National origin discrimination**

The study showed that young female immigrants are vulnerable to national origin discrimination. This involves treating people unfavourably because they are from a particular country (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2003; Carle, 2012). The participants reported incidents of being unfavourably treated as a result of being foreigners from Zimbabwe. They reported that they were denied access to employment and permanent positions at the workplace because they were passport holders, not South African identity card holders. Some of the participants told how they were being affected by national origin discrimination in the following manner:

*I feel very disturbed with the unfair treatment that I am given in the work-place. Just because I am a foreigner I am made valueless. I am regarded as if I am not a human being just because of the mere fact that I am an immigrant. I once worked in the mall – it was really tough, a part-time position. The local people who got employed after me got permanent positions (Participant C, quote 3: 26).*

*For most stable positions that are advertised it is indicated that they only need South African citizens and the permanent resident permit holders. But when it comes to low jobs like domestic work they do not even check if you have a passport. That puts us at risk of being poor (Participant D, quote 5:25).*

The young female immigrants pointed out that they experience national origin discrimination through being excluded from getting formal employment and permanent positions. This jeopardizes their chances of progressing in their careers and getting jobs that suit their qualifications, and ultimately makes them vulnerable to poverty because they end up occupying only those jobs which are at the lower end of the employment scale, which do not have strict employment conditions foreigners. But in these jobs young Zimbabwean female immigrants are further vulnerable to national origin discrimination through ill-treatment by their employers. Such are the interlocking disadvantages faced by the young female immigrants. They face discrimination because of their origin, which limits them to menial jobs where they are ill-treated and underpaid; so they remain poor. In hospitals, also, the young women were excluded because they were not South Africans. Some of the participants pointed out the kind of treatment they experienced when they went to hospital:

*I went to a hospital which I will not mention by name. When the health care workers realised that I am not South African they started making funny comments that were not necessary. This made me become afraid to go for treatment. So the fact that because I am not South African the authorities treat me in a different way makes me so vulnerable (Participant E, quote 6:21).*

*I went to hospital with my kid. When they realised that I use a passport their attitude changed. Though I was helped, it seemed as if I was bothering them (Participant K, quote 12:4).*

The above responses indicate national origin discrimination in the health care workers' treatment towards young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This is evidenced by the change in their attitude when they realised that they were attending to a non-South African citizen. Such discrimination makes these young female immigrants uncomfortable and reluctant to go for treatment. According to other studies, institutions tend to exclude immigrants by refusing to attend to them, some call them names and sometimes they are denied medication. This leads them to opt for private doctors and



over-the-counter medicine for fear of being discriminated against (Crush & Tawodzerwa, 2011; Hungwe, 2013).

### **Main finding of the theme on discrimination**

The major finding of this theme is that young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to gender discrimination and national origin discrimination. This is evidenced by their unfair treatment in the workplace by their male colleagues, especially when they hold more senior positions than them. Furthermore, the limited access to opportunities for the young Zimbabwean female immigrants based on nationality also reflects the national origin discrimination. It is also important to note that the above shows the intersecting discrimination between gender and national origin discrimination that plays a role in the lives of young Zimbabwean female immigrants at the same time causing them to be further vulnerable than their male counterparts.

#### **6.2.3 Poor health**

The study found that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg are vulnerable to poor health. They do not have access to health care, especially the undocumented ones, who are afraid to go to hospitals and clinics because they believe that they will be caught and deported back to their countries. Access to health care in South Africa is open for all the people in the country, including undocumented immigrants (*Mail & Guardian*, 2009), but some undocumented female immigrants are afraid to go to hospitals because they fear that they will be reported to the authorities, and sent back home. Participants also pointed out that at times they are denied treatment by the health care providers because they do not have documentation. Others mentioned that the comments made by the health care providers whilst treating them make them uncomfortable and afraid to get treatment.

*When documents are not up to date they are afraid to get medication because they think that they will be caught and sent back home. The system does not require that you get arrested for not having up-to-date documents in the hospitals, but they do it anyway (Participant G, quote 8:11).*

*The nurses and the staff in the hospitals around here do not treat us well. I once went to the hospital and I was denied treatment because I did not*

*have any documents. I was told that I should go back to my country and get helped there (Participant L, quote 13:9).*

*I went to a hospital which I will not mention by name. When the health care workers realised that I am not South African they started making funny comments that were not necessary. This made me afraid to go for treatment (Participant E, quote 6:22).*

*It is worse when you do not have documents: you have to pay 1 500 rands to get treated, which you won't have, so some of them just die on the streets (Participant C, quote 6:22).*

The above quotations indicate that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to poor health because they are scared to get treatment knowing that they are undocumented. The fear of being deported is evident when these young female immigrants shun hospitals and other medical facilities in the times when they desperately need them. The attitude of the health care providers towards the young female immigrants led them not to access medical care. Their comments make them uncomfortable and afraid to go to hospitals or clinics. Even if some of the immigrants have not directly experienced such treatment, the message is easily transmitted to others, who become afraid of applying for medical care. Some with money end up going to private doctors and hospitals, and buying their medication in pharmacies (Hungwe, 2013). For those without money end up just suffering, and some of them die, because in public hospitals, which are supposed to be free, they are required to pay large sums of money to get treated. This shows that the socio-economic status of the immigrants combined with their illegal status makes them unable to access health care (Thomas & Gideon, 2013).

In addition, due to the employment shortages and the need to survive, some young Zimbabwean female immigrants end up engaging in high risk occupations such as prostitution. This makes them vulnerable to diseases because some of their clients require that they have unprotected sex, but as immigrants they are denied health care.

*Because they do not have any means to get money they end up being lured into prostitution because that is the only means for their survival. Some of the clients require them to have unprotected sex for increased pleasure. So they end up getting sick and when they go to the hospital they are denied health care (Participant R quote 19:7).*

The above quotation shows that some of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants especially those who are engaged in prostitution are vulnerable to poor health. This is because of the nature of the job that they are engaging in that exposes them to different kinds of sicknesses. This is further exacerbated by being denied resources to protect themselves from being ill. This is in line with literature that female immigrants are often unable to access to health care (OHCHR, 2017; Cortina, 2015).

Some participants specified that their way of life exposed them to the risk of being sick. Being overworked and separated from their families, they end up contracting diseases such as diabetes. According to participant C, not having enough breaks in her work made her diabetic.

*I worked for 12 hours and even on weekends without a break, I was paid less and also there was never any pension. This job strained me until I was diagnosed with diabetes because of stress related to the unhealthy job, and no time to eat healthy food. I was overworked, and spent less time with my family (Participant C, quote 3:18).*

Young Zimbabwean female immigrants are exposed to intersecting challenges. Because they are not from South Africa, they find it difficult to be employed. When they come to Johannesburg most of them will be very poor and desperate to find a job. Therefore, they end up taking any job even if the working conditions are bad. In these jobs they are overworked without any breaks or leave days, and they are badly paid, so some of them end up getting sick.

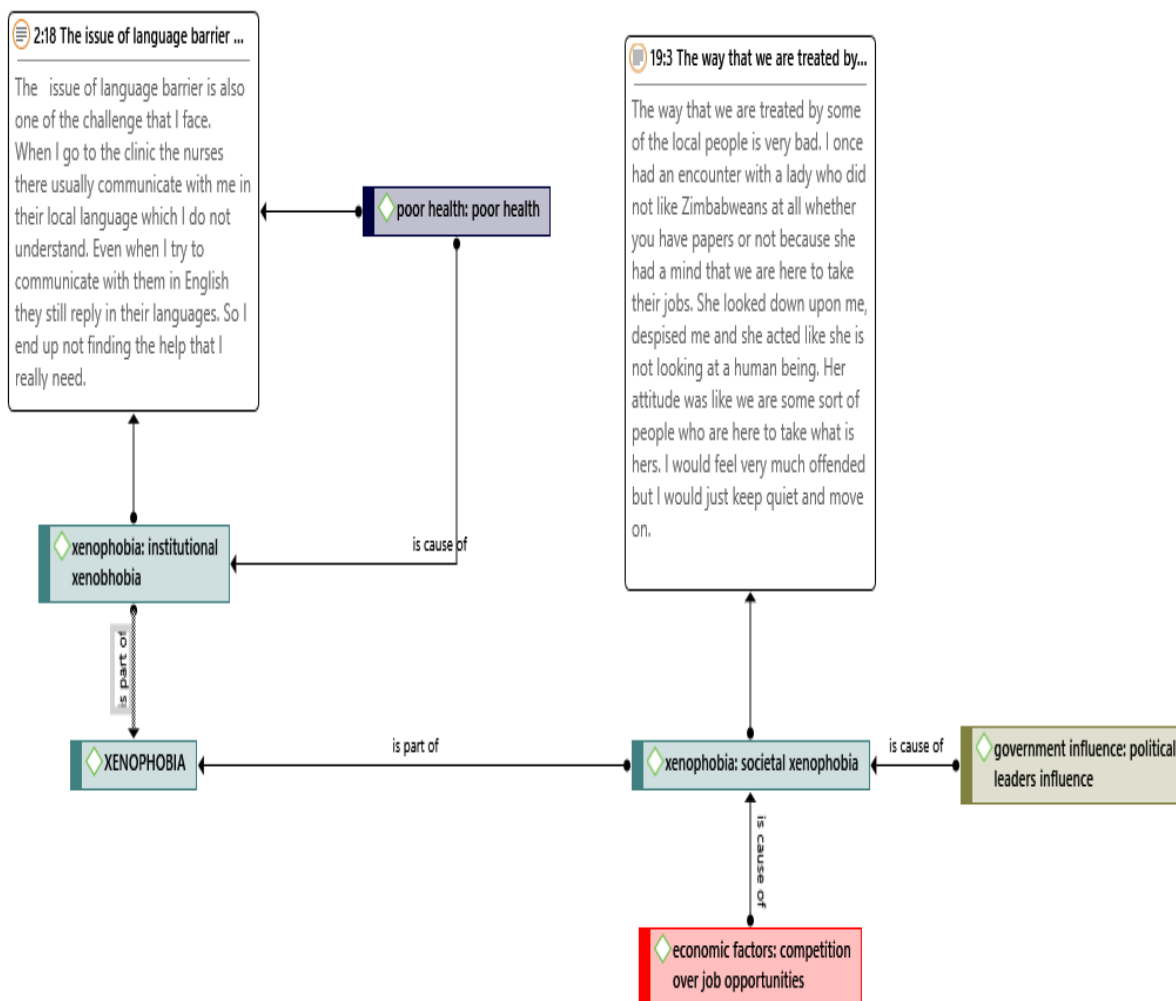
### **Main finding of the theme on poor health**

The study highlighted that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg are vulnerable to poor health. This is because some of them are denied access to free health care by the health care professionals. It becomes worse because most of them cannot find proper jobs. This leads them to engage in prostitution, which is a high risk occupation and others do jobs in which they are overworked. These types of jobs affect their health, yet still they are denied access to health care.

#### **6.2.4 Xenophobia**

According to this study xenophobia is one of the challenges that young women in Johannesburg are facing. South Africa is well-known for its xenophobic violence towards immigrants, specifically immigrants from other African countries (Crush, 2008). This

study found that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are experiencing xenophobia. South Africa's xenophobic violence is often targeted towards male migrants, but it indirectly affects women who are sometimes the dependants of these men. The study found that xenophobia is experienced both in the society and in its institutions (See Figure 15 below), and so the subthemes under xenophobia as a problem are institutional and societal xenophobia. These are discussed below.



**FIGURE 15: XENOPHOBIA**

**Source:** Atlas.ti

### **Institutional xenophobia**

The study revealed that female immigrants face xenophobic comments and treatment in institutions which provide services to them. Much of the institutional xenophobia, according to the participants, is experienced in the health care centres, the SAPS and

the Department of Home Affairs. Young Zimbabwean female immigrants stated that they are always harassed and treated badly by the officials and health professionals from government departments, hospitals and clinics.

*When I go to the clinic the nurses there usually communicate with me in their local language, which I do not understand. Even when I try to communicate with them in English they still reply in their languages. So I end up not finding the help that I really need. (Participant B, quote 2:18)*

*It hurts very much at government clinics when we are always told by the nurses that we should go back to Mugabe. (Participant O, quote 16:6)*

*I have been treated badly by the officials where we get permits. Instead of helping me they showed that they are not even willing to help me, and make degrading comments. (Participant P, quote 17:3)*

*The police are not 100% fair. Sometimes you report an incident and if they notice that you are a foreigner they don't get back to you. It's so funny and painful at the same time, because they can even tell you to go and report the crime in your own country. Honestly, how can I report a crime committed here in Zimbabwe? So we just end up keeping quiet even if we are abused. (Participant C, quote 3:31)*

The responses reveal the medical xenophobia in South Africa, in that the attitudes and practices of health care workers towards immigrants are purely based on the latter's identity as non-South Africans (Crush & Tawodzera, 2013). The young female Zimbabwean immigrants also disclosed that they are facing institutionalised xenophobia from the police, who are not willing to help them when they want to report cases of abuse. Instead they are told to report in their own country. This leaves them vulnerable to continuous abuse. The findings of this study are supported by Misago, Freemantle and Landau (2015), who cited that in South Africa there is evidence of immigrants facing xenophobia at the hands of the citizens, government officials, police and organisations. The sad reality is that these officials are the ones contracted to provide services to the general public, including the young female immigrants living in South Africa; but they promote institutional xenophobia by treating the young female immigrants callously, and withholding services.

## Societal xenophobia

The study found that young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg are facing xenophobia in the society that they live and work in. Young female immigrants are seen by many local people as a threat to the country's economy including employment. One young female immigrant explained how she experienced xenophobia from a lady who she stayed with:

*I once had an encounter with a lady who did not like Zimbabweans at all, whether you had papers or not, because she thought that we are here to take their jobs. She looked down upon me, despised me and she acted as if she was not looking at a human being. Her attitude was that we are some sort of people who are here to take what is hers. (Participant R, quote 19:3)*

According to the above responses, some of the young female immigrants experience xenophobia in their everyday interaction with people. Dislike of the female immigrants, according to the above statement, is because some of the local people see them as a threat to the resources that are available, so when they see foreigners they start to hate them, and try by all means to degrade them. This finding correlates with the findings from studies in South Africa in which immigrants experienced xenophobia in different forms owing to unemployment, crime, lack of housing, and diseases which have all been blamed on immigrants (Nord & Assubuji, 2008; Gordon, 2018). Immigrants in South Africa have been the scapegoat as they are blamed for the social ills in the country, which they have no control over. Even though the Bill of Rights confers the rights to equality, human dignity, the right to life, freedom and security of the person, and the right not to be subject to slavery, servitude or forced labour for everyone in South Africa, the immigrants' rights are still violated (Nord & Assubuji, 2008; Mashele, 2015). The young female immigrants are treated inhumanely, and they are not fully integrated into the society, makes them subject to societal xenophobia.

Young Zimbabwean female immigrants in business stated that they also face xenophobic threats from other local business competitors. They are threatened by local business people who claim that they are taking away their customers. One of the participants who is a lecturer demonstrated how she was subjected to xenophobia when she was running a business:

*I had a shop in Soweto, but I had to close it because some local business people kept on coming to me threatening that if I did not close the shop they would burn me alive. I was blamed for taking away their customers. People here are too xenophobic and willing to kill you if ever they feel any competition. (Participant R, quote 19:4).*

Most young female immigrants are in the informal economy, some as entrepreneurs. Even though they are trying to make a living and create employment for themselves in an area with high unemployment, they are faced with xenophobia from the local entrepreneurs with similar businesses. Therefore some end up quitting their businesses in fear of being killed. This finding is in line with the literature which indicated that in South Africa starting a business is hazardous for immigrants as some South African competitors have increasingly adopted the use of violence to intimidate and drive away immigrants who own businesses from their areas (Crush & Chikanda, 2015; Crush & Ramachandran, 2017). This indicates the intersectionality of the challenges that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants face. Since their chances of employment are limited in the destination area, some start their own businesses and in these they are met with hostility from competitors. This results to some of them closing down their businesses which makes them unemployed and poor.

### **Main finding of theme on xenophobia**

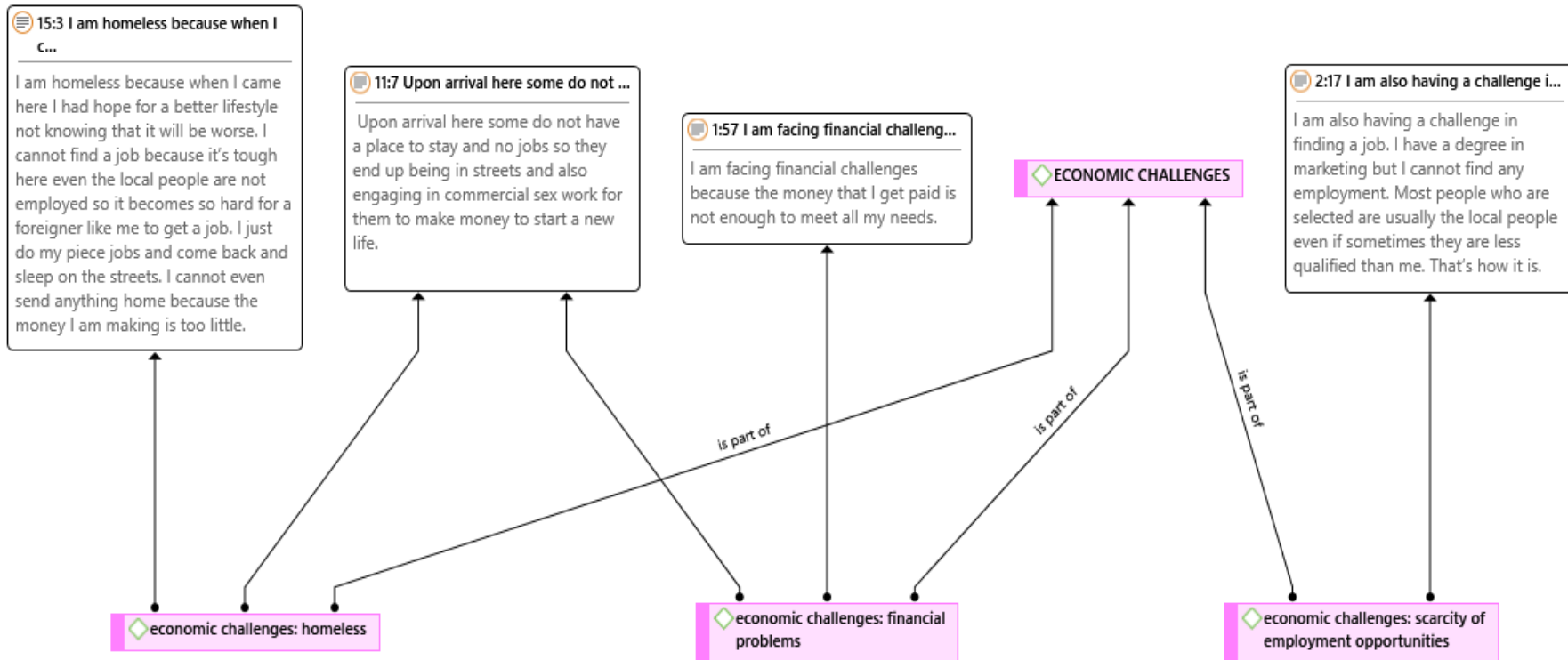
The main finding of this theme is that young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to the problem of both institutional and societal xenophobia, because of the hostility that both ordinary people and government officials have towards these immigrants. Their attitude arises from the view that these female immigrants in Johannesburg take what rightfully belongs to South Africans. The intolerance shown towards the young immigrants is a way of telling them that they are not welcome in Johannesburg.

#### **6.2.5 Economic challenges**

From the study it can be concluded that economic challenges are one of the major themes of the challenges being faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. Economic challenges not unique to Zimbabweans. This means that South Africans also face economic challenges, but they are worse for the immigrants. Some young Zimbabwean female immigrants find it very difficult to get access to opportunities because of the intersecting factors that disadvantage them, including their



status as immigrants, nationality, gender, legality, poverty and desperation – a situation that makes them much susceptible to economic challenges. The subthemes discussed under the theme of economic challenges are scarcity of employment opportunities, financial challenges and homelessness (see Figure 16 below).



**FIGURE 16: ECONOMIC CHALLENGES**

Source: Atlas.ti

## Scarcity of employment opportunities

Johannesburg is a centre of industry and commerce in South Africa, which attracts both internal and international migrants to the city. As a result, the resources cannot adequately cater for the growing population in the city. This study revealed that one of the challenges that is being faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants is scarcity of employment opportunities. Most of the young people migrated from Zimbabwe in the hope of finding better employment opportunities in wealthy Johannesburg. But many of them cannot find a job. The participants narrated this as follows:

*I am also having a problem in finding a job. I have a degree in marketing, but I cannot find any employment. Most people who are selected are usually the local people, even if sometimes they are less qualified than me. That's how it is. (Participant B, quote 2:17)*

*Currently I am not working because there is scarcity of job opportunities, so my boyfriend provides everything for me. (Participant D, quote 5:21)*

*There are a lot of young ladies from Zimbabwe who are sex workers because they cannot find work. So some even sleep with a man for as little as 20 to 50 rands per round in order to buy food. (Participant C, quote 3:24)*

*In South Africa there is no longer that opportunity that you can just get a job easily. Firstly, the unemployment rate in the country, including that of the locals, is very high, and you come in as a foreigner in a country which is very xenophobic. If you expect to get a proper job, you will not get it that easily. (Participant G, quote 8:6)*

These statements indicate that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are struggling to be employed in Johannesburg. Owing to the city's large population, the competition for jobs has become very tight. Therefore, because of the various policies that regulate employment of people in different institutions, these young female immigrants often find themselves at more of a disadvantage than the local people. The case of participant B indicates how she is limited in finding a proper job because she is an immigrant. Less qualified local people find it much easier to be employed than she does. This reveals a disciplinary dimension according to the intersectionality theory whereby institutions play

a role in limiting a certain group of women from getting proper employment (Hill Collins, 2000; Hiessse, 2014). Employers favour the locals by law, and if they do not they are sanctioned by the law. Such a situation shatters the hope for proper employment of some of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants, and some of them end up in prostitution in order to make a living, and are thereby exposed to other multiple intersecting disadvantages like being abused and falling sick. Then, because they are prostitutes, they are denied health care by the medical profession.

### **Financial challenges**

One of the most common challenges experienced by both young Zimbabwean female immigrants and the local people is financial, but it is worse for the immigrants because they are mostly employed at the lower ends of the employment hierarchy. Since they are desperate they take whatever is on the table even if they are underpaid.

*The other issue is that we really know the poverty which we ran away from in Zimbabwe, so we need to take care of our families. That makes us take whatever comes our way, even if it is so little. [We get so] little pay that sometimes it's not possible to cover rent, food and school fees. The financial problem is so common for all of us here. (Participant K, quote 12:3)*

*I am facing financial challenges because the money that I get paid is not enough to meet all my needs. (Participant P, quote 17:6)*

The above extracts indicate that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are in poverty because the money that they earn is not enough to take care of themselves and their families. Some of them, owing to gender inequalities which intersect with nationality, poverty and desperation, educational status, migration status and competition over job opportunities, end up occupying low income jobs. As a result, the money they get is not able to take care of all their needs considering that some of them will be providing for two families – the family members in Johannesburg, and those in Zimbabwe who for various reasons cannot join them. This is in line with findings in a study by Garrett (2006), which indicated that the new immigrants in America faced financial challenges because of being employed in low paying jobs for various reasons, including language difficulties, lack of education, and sheer desperation.

## Homelessness

Being homeless is one of the challenges that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are faced with in Johannesburg. Participant N, a homeless young immigrant staying in the streets of Johannesburg, explained how she was unable to find a proper job. Since she could not find employment, she did not have money. Therefore she could not afford the rent, and then her landlord chased her away. This forced her to stay in the streets of Johannesburg.

*I am homeless because when I came here I hoped for a better lifestyle, not knowing that it would be worse. I cannot find a job because it's tough here. Even the local people are not employed, so it becomes so hard for a foreigner like me to get a job. I just do my piece jobs and come back and sleep in the streets. I cannot even send anything home because the money I am making is too little. (Participant N, quote 15:3)*

*...I could not afford to pay rent. Then my landlord had to chase me away, so now I am homeless. (Participant N, quote 15:4)*

Many immigrants come to Johannesburg in the hope of a better lifestyle. However, for some it might not be the issue as they end up not finding work in Johannesburg, and are left in a desperate condition. Their situation pushes them to stay inhospitable locations, and some end up in the streets of Johannesburg because they cannot afford to pay any rent. Abandonment by relatives has been mentioned as one of the causes of homelessness. One of the participants said:

*Many young women from Zimbabwe come after being promised work by their relatives and friends. Upon arrival the phones of their friends and relatives will be unreachable, and those people will be nowhere to be found. The young women end up being homeless in the streets of Johannesburg. Some of them end up in prostitution and doing drugs in order to cope with the challenges of being homeless. (Participant B, quote 2:12)*

Relatives and friends in Johannesburg abandon the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Some of them completely abandon them after promising them work in Johannesburg before they travelled to Johannesburg. When they arrive the relatives are nowhere to be found. Therefore, without money and someone to turn to they end up homeless. The findings of this study align with a study conducted by Hungwe (2013),

which found that immigrants faced the harsh reality of abandonment by their relatives in Johannesburg for reasons such as coming without alerting them to prepare to take care of another person, poverty and overcrowding. This study found that some of the young female immigrants are abandoned by their partners after they have migrated to join them in Johannesburg.

*Some young women here come to join their husbands, but because of the pressures of life in Johannesburg, their husbands abandon them and they end up in the streets taking nyaope, and others are raped in the street because they have no proper place to live. (Participant B, quote 2:19)*

Some young female immigrants travel using spousal accompanying permits which prevent them from working in the destination country. This makes the husband the sole breadwinner. Such a situation may frustrate some of the breadwinners, especially those who cannot find work or those who are earning little. This ultimately leads to the husbands abandoning their wives either through divorce or running away from the home, leaving their wives with no other option but to move into the streets of Johannesburg. Once there they are vulnerable to other challenges like harsh weather, especially in cold and rainy seasons. They are also at risk of being raped and taking drugs in order to cope with being abandoned to living in the streets.

### **Main finding of theme on economic challenges**

The main finding of the theme on economic challenges is that young Zimbabwean female immigrants travel to Johannesburg in search of a better life, and especially decent work. Upon arrival their hope is shattered owing to the scarcity of jobs in Johannesburg, which is often worsened by the fact that they are immigrants. This makes them unable to compete at the same level with the local people. Those who do find employment are paid too low a wage because they have no choice but to accept the job, and because they are foreigners. This ultimately leads them to have financial challenges, and for some, being homeless. Some young Zimbabwean female immigrants are abandoned by their relatives and friends who have economic pressures, and this leaves them homeless.

#### **6.2.6 Social challenges**

According to this study, some young Zimbabwean female immigrants face social challenges, particularly the lack of freedom and peace of mind. They articulated that they

lack freedom to express themselves and to contribute their ideas in work environments. According to information from Participants E and R, they are afraid to make valuable contributions for the betterment of the organisations they work for, because some of their colleagues undermine their views because of their nationality. The participants argued that they were also undermined because they were seen as a threat to the job security of those above them. This means that the locals undermine the views of the immigrants because they think that if they value those views the immigrants may be promoted. Therefore, immigrants tend to keep their views to themselves in order not to be viewed as a threat to the job security of the locals. Some participants stated:

*Colleagues at school undermine my decisions because I'm a foreigner. I feel too inferior to contribute even if I have some good ideas. (Participant E, quote 6:44)*

*I cannot make valuable contributions because the environment I work in is not friendly: people see me as a threat to their jobs. So I just act as if I do not know some of the things so that I can work properly. (Participant R quote 19:6)*

These responses show that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants do not have the freedom to express themselves as part of a team in the work environment, because some of them are seen, especially those who are more educated than their superiors, as a threat to their jobs. The locals try to make immigrants feel inferior by undermining their decisions. Other female immigrants just choose to keep their ideas to themselves because the environment they are working in is not conducive to sharing them. This prevents organisations from benefiting from the ideas of people from other countries since they are not valued by the local people.

This study also shows that some young female immigrants lack peace of mind, because they are always scared and running away from the police. The police are always in search of people without proper documentation, always making visits in areas where they suspect that some undocumented immigrants are staying. One participant described her lack of peace of mind as follows:

*It makes me to be always running away in the streets. I do not even have peace because I will be running away from the police. They can even come to our houses to just check, especially when you are living in the areas where most immigrants. (Participant F, quote 7:26).*



It is the duty of the South African police to be always on the watch for undocumented immigrants who overstay their allotted time, and those who enter the country without passports. Police patrols and searches for undocumented immigrants are done in order to detain and deport them in a dignified manner. However, for some undocumented young Zimbabwean female immigrants this makes them always worried and on the run. This finding is supported by Garrett (2006), who reported that undocumented immigrants are always looking for ways to avoid the police. Those who are documented are also at the risk of privacy violation because the police can come to their houses at any time to check on their documentation. Even if one is documented the status of being an immigrant makes for other human rights violations. This is supported by the intersectionality theory, which says that a person may be privileged in relation to one aspect of life but oppressed in relation to another (Ryle, 2015). For instance, in this study the immigrants who are documented are privileged in terms of documentation, but they are oppressed because they are immigrants. This results in their lacking peace of mind.

### **Main finding of theme on social challenges**

The above theme on social challenges revealed that young people are vulnerable to the lack of freedom and peace as a result of being isolated and undermined especially at the workplace. This is because some local people see them as a threat to their jobs. Therefore in order for them to avoid any conflicts they choose to keep their ideas to themselves. The theme also indicates that young female immigrants lack peace of mind because the police are always after them whether undocumented or not.

### **6.3 Factors contributing to vulnerability**

This section seeks to address the research question concerning the factors that are contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. From the data collected and analysed different themes emerged to address this research question. These themes include economic factors, government influence, lack of protection and personal factors. Most of the factors highlighted in the themes intersect in disadvantaging the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. For example, most of the young women are vulnerable because of their nationality. However, there are also other factors that put them at risk: for example, their gender, legality and educational status. This section will show in detail the factors that contribute to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The linkage (intersectionality) of

these factors will also be highlighted in the discussion. There follows discussion of the themes in the factors contributing to the vulnerability.

### 6.3.1 Economic factors

The following is a discussion of the theme on economic factors that lead to the vulnerability of young female immigrants to abuse, discrimination, xenophobia, and economic and social challenges. The subthemes under this major theme include competition over job opportunities, poverty, desperation, and the type of work that they are involved in (see Figure 17 below). Below follows the discussion of these subthemes.

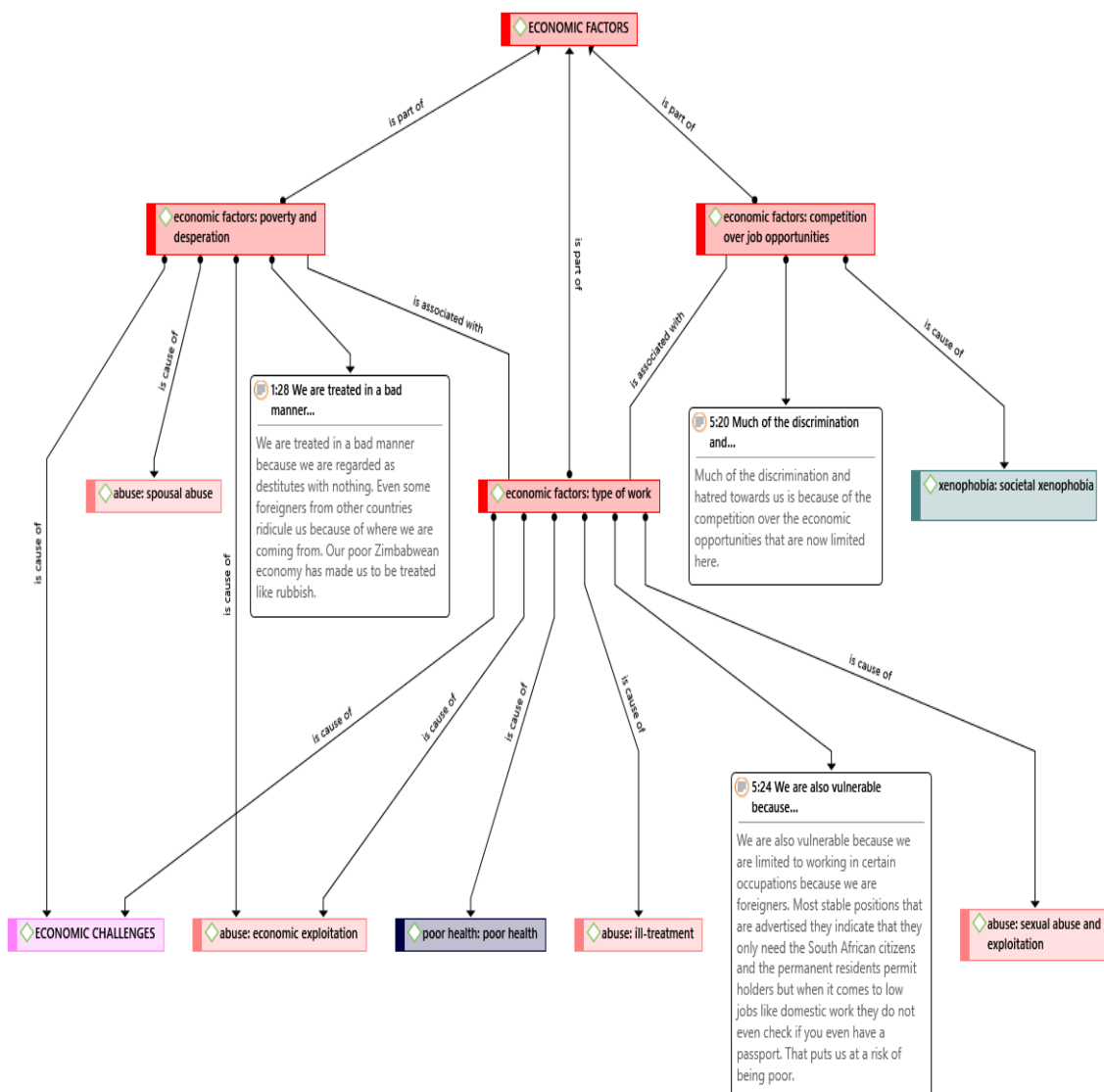


FIGURE 17: ECONOMIC FACTORS

Source: Atlas.ti

## Competition over job opportunities

Competition over job opportunities between the locals and the immigrants is one of the most persistent issues in migration. Immigrants are often accused of taking jobs that belong to the local people. This is usually the case in countries that are facing high unemployment rates (ILO, 2016; Zanamwe & Devillard 2010). Around the world the largest group of migrants are economic migrants. Even though some travel as forced migrants or family unification migrants they end up joining the group of economic migrants by looking for work in the destination area. As a result of this, there are clashes over jobs between the local people and the immigrants as they are considered to be in the country to take jobs away from the local people.

*Much of the discrimination and hatred towards us is because of the competition over the economic opportunities that are now limited here. (Respondent D, quote 5:20)*

*Foreigners add to the burden that already exists. The country is already trying to curb unemployment in the country. Therefore this becomes a problem for the immigrants because they need jobs, so they end up feeling frustrated. It also adds to the burden of unemployment in the country. (Participant G, quote 8:14)*

*Mostly this kind of treatment and hatred is a result of job competition. (Participant F, quote 7:19)*

These statements indicate that in South Africa there is very serious competition over jobs between the local people and the immigrants. This is due to the high unemployment rate, and limited industrial expansion in relation to the growing population. South Africa already has a very serious unemployment problem with the rate of unemployment at around 27,7% (Blustein et al., 2017; Statistics South Africa, 2017). Hence some of the local people end up being frustrated, especially when they see young female immigrants being employed, but they are not. Much of the xenophobic violence and hatred towards foreigners in South Africa has been explained to be as a result of competition over resources, notably employment. In 2008 xenophobia mostly erupted in areas characterised by high unemployment (Chiumbu & Moyo, 2018). Young Zimbabwean female immigrants become vulnerable to being mistreated because of the competition over jobs in Johannesburg.

## Poverty and desperation

The study indicates that the exploitation and abuse of young female immigrants is a result of their economic status and their desperation. Many young Zimbabwean female immigrants were pushed to migrate from Zimbabwe to South Africa because they could not find any economic opportunities in their home country. Hence they were drowning in poverty. So when they come to Johannesburg, most of them are desperate to survive and find employment. It has become an acceptable phenomenon in Johannesburg that most of the Zimbabweans are poor and willing to do anything for lower wages. This makes it easy for employers to exploit them.

*Because they [Zimbabwean immigrants] are victims of some sort they accept anything that comes their way, even if most of them are exploited. They see that it's a blessing to them that at least they are employed. (Participant H, quote 7:22)*

*Young female immigrants are also vulnerable to xenophobia and violence by the society because they take whatever is on the table; they take jobs with low pay and no proper working conditions. (Participant G, quote 8:26)*

The participants maintained that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to hatred, xenophobia and exploitation because of their economic background. This makes them take whatever offer is available as long as they can get money to survive. According to research by Hungwe (2013), the participants reported that the employers preferred Zimbabweans because they are desperate, thus they can be easily exploited them without any financial or legal implications. Such a scenario makes the young Zimbabwean female immigrants less accepted by the local people and immigrants from other countries. Some of the participants argued:

*We are treated badly because we are regarded as destitutes with nothing. Even some foreigners from other countries ridicule us because of where we are coming from. Our poor Zimbabwean economy has made us treated like rubbish. (Participant A, quote 1:28)*

*This affects the process for negotiating and fighting for good working conditions and proper salaries. The employers will not listen to the people who will be trying to advocate against paying less money to their*

*employees. So the young female immigrants are easily targeted as bad people. (Participant G, quote 8:26)*

These comments show the willingness of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to accept any conditions, even if they are exploitative and dangerous, because they have no other options, and their economy is so bad that they cannot go back home. Such a situation greatly angers the local people and immigrants from other countries because it limits their chances of success when they try to complain against unfair labour practices. When they complain they can be fired, and the employer can easily get other desperate young female immigrants who are hungry for work.

Poverty and desperation make the young Zimbabwean female immigrants cling to their partners even if they abuse them, because they have no other livelihood strategy other than depending on their partners. Therefore, they remain in abusive relationships because they and their children need money to survive.

*My husband abuses me because I solely depend on him. (Participant D, quote 5:23)*

*I just hang in there because I do not have a job, and he takes care of me and my kids. If I leave him it means that my kids will suffer. (Participant D, quote 5:13)*

The above statements show that some of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants were vulnerable to abuse because they were poor and depended on their partners. This gave these men the power to manipulate them as heads of their households. Women assume a submissive role, and cannot challenge the decision of their partners because they are the breadwinners. Literature also shows that some female immigrants who migrate as accompanying spouses become victims of abuse, but they are not likely to report the abuse for fear of deportation, as their migration rights are tied to their partners, and fear of poverty, as some of them are not allowed to work in destination areas (Cortina et al., 2014; International Commission of Jurists, 2014).

### **Type of work**

Influenced by intersectional factors like competition over job opportunities, poverty and desperation, nationality, migration status, gender and level of education, young Zimbabwean female immigrants are forced to work in sectors where they are overworked and underpaid (see Figure 13 on page 159). Most young Zimbabwean female immigrants

in Johannesburg have been reported to be mostly concentrated in domestic work, saloons, cleaning, restaurants and shops. The participants of this study reported how their type of work made them vulnerable:

*Many young female immigrants are doing work that does not match their skills some because some are not documented, and it's just difficult to find a job here. So many of us are found in saloons, restaurants and shops, These jobs also have no significant benefits like a pension or medical cover, and you can't even get a loan. So you will remain poor forever. (Participant C, quote 3:20)*

*Most stable positions that are advertised indicate that they only need South African citizens and permanent residence permit holders, but when it comes to low-level jobs like domestic work they do not even check if you have a passport. That puts us at risk of being poor. (Participant D, quote 5:24)*

The above quotations show the intersection between nationality and the type of work that many young Zimbabwean female immigrants are involved in. They are limited from entering into certain sectors and positions because they are not South Africa citizens, and some of them are not documented. As a result, they end up in informal sectors where they do not require identity documents as a prerequisite to getting a position. The influence of gender is also seen whereby in contrast their male counterparts are mostly concentrated in mining, motor and security industries, information and technology, in hospitality as drivers, and a few as waiters (Hungwe, 2013; O'Neil, Fleury & Foresti, 2016). This shows how gendered the South African labour market is by restricting women to certain occupations which reinforce their traditional gendered roles (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014). In the types of work that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are involved in there are limited or no benefits. This is supported by findings from another study in South Africa where migrant workers were found in large numbers in certain labour sectors where they could be easily exploited because they were not protected by various political parties and unions like the local people (Zondo, 2008 in de Villiers & Wedza, 2017). This study also reveals that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants were made to work for long hours with one or no off day per week, and the pay was too little. This made them vulnerable to poverty and ill-health.

The type of work that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg were involved in also opened room for their exploitation and abuse. Since some young

female immigrants could not find employment they became vulnerable to abuse, discrimination and xenophobia. The quotation below shows how the employers fail to abide by expected ethical standards because of the concentration of some young Zimbabwean female immigrants in prostitution:

*Because a lot of young Zimbabwean female immigrants are in prostitution that makes our employers not hear our voices, because whenever we complain they ask why we don't resort to what our fellow Zimbabweans are doing, because on the streets there are no laws, so if you feel as if we are not abiding you can go to the street where there is no abuse nor a boss. (Participant F, quote 7:22)*

This quotation indicates that some employers ignore the grievances of some immigrants as they perceive their complaining against bad working conditions as unnecessary. Hence, they start verbally abusing the young Zimbabwean female immigrants by mocking them by telling them to join their counterparts who are sex workers. This is because in prostitution they have no rules and they are their own bosses.

Some young female immigrants are involved in prostitution because they cannot get another job. This makes them judged, discriminated against and unacceptable to the society because they are considered to be engaging in something immoral. Some of the participants had this to say about the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants as a result of working as prostitutes:

*Zimbabweans in places like Yeoville, Hillbrow and other townships have been seen as people who come to the country to practise sex work. That makes them hated by the society because they are seen as making the society dirty. (Participant G, quote 8:32)*

*When I was raped the police and the nurses refused to help me because I am a sex worker and I am Zimbabwean. They blamed me for coming into this country to do immoral things in their country. (Participant M, quotation 14:4)*

*Being a sex worker can expose you to many dangers. Almost every day there is a young Zimbabwean female immigrant who is abused in our industry by men, both locals and foreigners. (Participant S, quote 20:5)*



Sex work in South Africa is criminalised and morally unacceptable. Therefore, most people despise those who engage in it. It is worse because these young people are seen as coming from their countries to practice what is not allowed. This makes them despised by the society and even discriminated against by the authorities, especially the police and health care providers. Their work exposes them to gender-based violence like being raped thus making them vulnerable to sickness. To make matters worse for them, they are even denied risk reduction material by the health care providers. These sentiments are supported by data from studies conducted in South Africa which indicated that the criminalisation of sex work for foreigners results in increased vulnerabilities. These include gender-based and structural violence in the form of client brutality or police brutality (Vearey, Ritcher, Nunez, & Moyo, 2011; Richter, Luchters, Ndlovu, Temmerman, & Chersich, 2012; Walker & Oliveira, 2015).

### **Main finding of theme on economic factors**

The theme on the economic factors contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants demonstrated that some of these young women are poor and desperate to earn a living. Therefore, they take whatever job comes their way. Their employers know that they are desperate, so they abuse them. Owing to the shortage of economic opportunities, they are often labelled as bad people by the locals. They are accused of coming to take their jobs, and engage in prostitution, which is considered to be socially unacceptable.

#### **6.3.2 Personal factors**

The study has shown that there are various personal factors that contribute to the vulnerability of young female immigrants in Johannesburg, including educational status, gender, language difficulties, legality of presence in South Africa, and nationality (see Figure 18 below). The study also revealed that the individual attitudes of South Africans towards the young Zimbabwean women play a role in the latter's vulnerability. The subthemes under personal factors are discussed below.

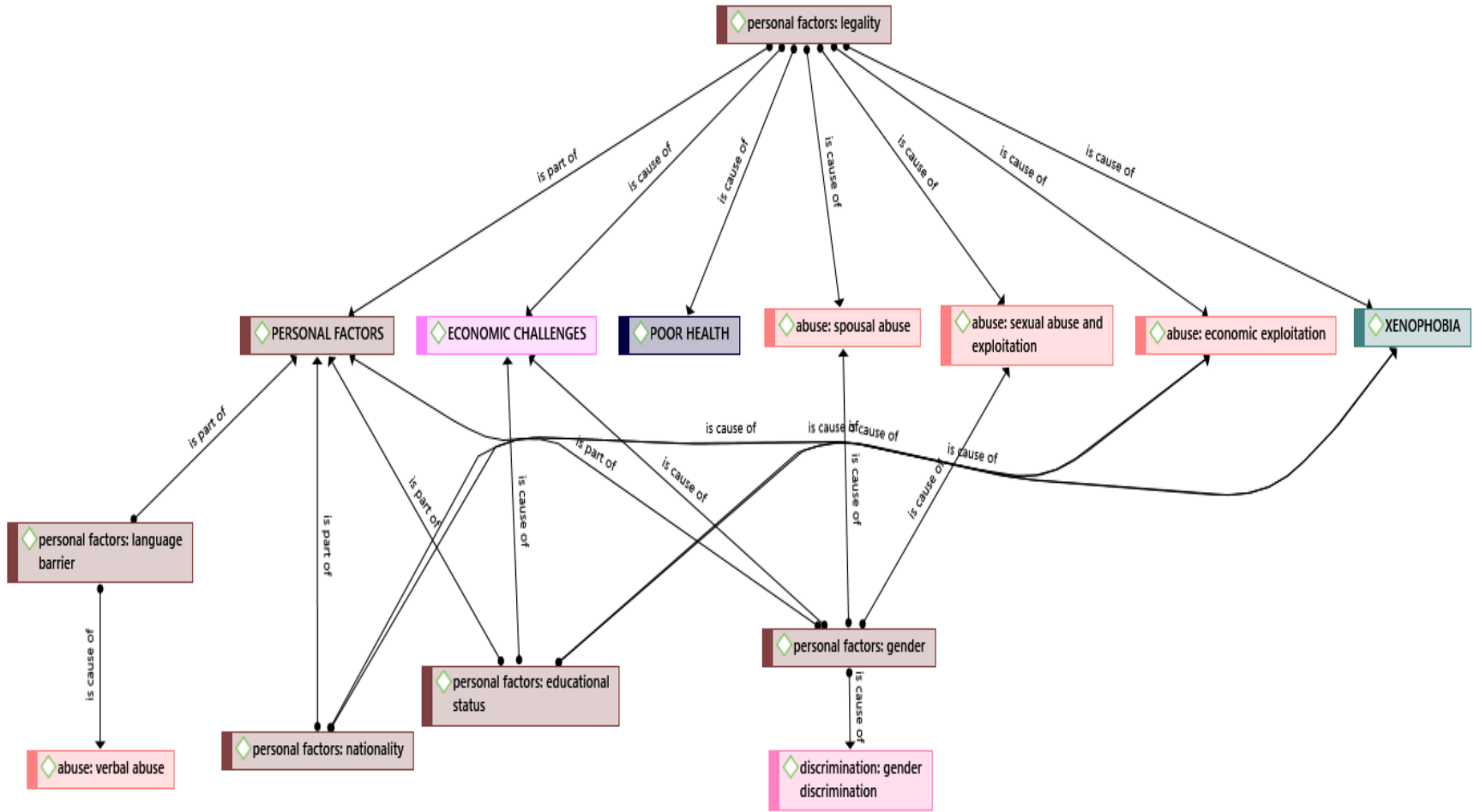


FIGURE 18: PERSONAL FACTORS

Source: Atlas.ti

## Educational status

Studies have highlighted that a person's level of education determines their decision to migrate to another country (Dugbazar, 2007; Fleury, 2016). This means that people with higher educational qualifications are more likely to move than those without any educational qualifications. This might be because they feel that the incentives in the home country do not meet their level of education. They therefore choose to move to countries where incentives are high.

The migration of Zimbabweans to South Africa is mixed. It consists of both the educated and the uneducated. Even though South Africa prefers migrants who are highly skilled and educated, those without skills can easily find their way into the country. Although this study showed that the educated young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to discrimination and abuse because of intersecting factors such as nationality, gender, poverty and desperation, and competition over jobs, it is much worse for the uneducated ones. This is because some of the educated workers' can easily get work permits or scarce skills permits, and these enables them to find better jobs than their uneducated counterparts. The participants of this study reported how lack of educational qualifications contributes to the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants as follows:

*We are not treated fairly, especially us the less educated ones. They can emotionally blackmail us because they see us as worthless. Some just take out their personal frustrations on us. We cannot all be engineers or doctors. We are normal people who use our hands to survive, but we are looked down upon. (Participant P, quote 17:4)*

*They are in these positions because most of them are not educated. They just have O levels, and others have A levels, so it is difficult for them to have formal jobs. (Participant H, quote 9:9)*

*Some of my fellows are exploited more because they are not educated. So some employers rush for them, especially in restaurants and shops, because they know that they can manipulate them easily by paying them low wages. (Participant E, quote 6:15)*

From the above quotations it can be deduced that the local people prefer young, skilled, female immigrants, because they recognise that they are beneficial to the society by covering the critical skills gap in South Africa. The government, through its Immigration

Act, gives preference to people with critical and businesses skills (DHA, 2017). According to this study, such a situation makes other young female immigrants who are not educated, or who do not have critical skills, considered worthless. This is evidenced by the xenophobic attacks which usually target the poor immigrants who are blamed for the crime and other social ills in the country (Heleta, 2018). Owing to their lack of proper educational qualifications the young Zimbabwean female immigrants end up being exposed to other interlocking disadvantages. These include being employed in informal jobs and jobs that are at the lower end of the employment hierarchy, which are characterised by abuse and exploitation. The employers in Johannesburg even prefer to recruit the young women because they are uneducated, desperate since they cannot find good jobs, and thus vulnerable to abuse and exploit them.

Notably, the level of education of South Africans influences how they treat the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This study showed that the less educated people are, the more likely it is that they will treat the young women badly.

*The local people's individual perceptions, their level of education and the place where you are staying determines how vulnerable you are. People who are educated treat us in a much better way than those who are not. (Participant D, quote 5:35)*

*I used to live in the ghetto, where most of the uneducated people were the ones who treated me badly. (Participant E, quote 6:34)..*

These responses show that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants can be at an increased risk of being treated badly because of the characteristics of the local population. This might be because uneducated local people tend to be less open-minded. They therefore do not see the contribution that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants make towards the growth of the economy, but see them as destructive and as job takers, thus making them vulnerable to discrimination, abuse and xenophobia. According to Hafner (2016), educated citizens are more likely to see immigrants as contributors to economic growth, and less as a threat, because they are more knowledgeable of the contribution made by the immigrants for the economic growth of the host country, which makes them more welcoming to them.

### **Gender**

Gender is one of the most significant causes of non-equitable outcomes in the whole migration process. Female immigrants in the destination country are limited by their

gender from being employed in traditionally male occupations (ILO, 2015b; Crush et al., 2017). They are mostly employed in sectors that are related to their traditional gender roles as hairdressers, domestic workers, waitresses and cleaners. This makes them vulnerable to many challenges since in these types of job they are at risk of being underpaid and abused, and this type of abuse amounts sometimes to sexual abuse. The participants indicated how gender makes them more vulnerable than their male counterparts in the following manner:

*As young female immigrants we are more vulnerable than our fellow countrymen because as women we are limited to certain types of occupation. Men can do a whole lot of things like work as miners, construction workers, drivers and some can do crooked deals like selling drugs, which is difficult for us. (Participant A, quote 1:29)*

The above statement indicates that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are more at a disadvantage than their male counterparts because they are female. They have a limited opportunity to work in certain types of occupations which are considered to be masculine. This pushes them to be employed in occupations that are linked to their traditional gender roles. In their gendered jobs, the young Zimbabwean women earn less, work for long hours and are subjected to abuse (Boyd & Grieco, 2003; Cortina et al., 2014; Fillippen, 2016). This is because their type of work is not given much attention by the authorities, and leads them to be discriminated against rather than protected. It is even worse for those who do not have documents as they cannot approach the authorities because of their fear that these authorities might arrest and deport them as well as sexually abuse them.

Some of the young female immigrants might have the skills and the ability to do the work that is traditionally considered to be that of men, but they are sometimes discouraged from occupying traditionally male occupations as they are considered to be defying social expectations. Participant E is one of the young female immigrants who is limited by gender to fully practice her skills. She said:

*In the saloon where I work during the weekend I have been abused just because I am a woman. When I start doing the services that are considered to be for men such as shaving male clients, both men and women who work in the saloon start undermining and mocking me, and this makes me feel uncomfortable. (Participant E, quote 6:13)*

Owing to the patriarchal nature of the society both traditional men and women believe that the female immigrants should be limited to the work that is naturally feminine. According to Wilson (2017), in most societies women work in low income jobs and in roles that are associated with their traditional gender roles. In highly traditional settings women are segregated and discouraged from working in previously male-dominated types of work. This is because of gender, and prejudicial expectations (Wilson, 2017). In this study the need to maintain power and masculinity was evidenced by the verbal abuse by the immigrants' male counterparts to discourage them from doing jobs that were traditionally regarded as male. This might be because these men are scared that they will lose their masculinity and the power associated with it. Through verbally abusing the women they vent their frustration in not dominating the work place.

Being women resulted in the abuse of some of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants by their partners. According to this study, the young women were vulnerable to all forms of abuse because of their gender. One participant indicated that:

*Also when women get into relationships with the local men they get all forms of abuse because they cannot report anywhere, and some are reluctant to report. (Participant H, quote 9:10)*

From the above it can be noted that the young female immigrants are abused by their partners. This abuse might occur because local men perceive the young Zimbabwean women as their commodities whom they can control. The male belief that they are the superior gender continues to make women in most societies abused (Mngoma, Fegus, & Jolly, 2017), and the abuse is worsened for the young Zimbabweans by the intersection of gender with other factors like migration rights being tied to their partners, lack of documentation, poverty and desperation, and lack of protection. This makes abuse as a result of gender persistent in the lives of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Erez and Harper (2018) state that there are many factors, including gender, which intersect in exacerbating the experiences of the female immigrants. These factors should therefore be given the same attention as gender to fully address the challenges faced by women.

### **Language barrier**

The failure to speak one or more of the South African local languages is one factor that is contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Most young people who are of Shona descent are usually unable to learn South African languages quickly, especially the Nguni languages. On the other hand, the Ndebele people find it

very easy to speak other South African languages. As a result, they are less easily identified and victimised by the local people. Some of the participants told how the language problem has led them to be verbally abused in public spaces, especially in taxis:

*The Ndebeles' language is related to the languages spoken here, so it's easy for them to be unnoticed. But it's very difficult for me to communicate, especially in public spaces like taxis. Whenever I talk to the taxi drivers in English some of them become very cruel and start calling me names. (Participant E, quote 6:35).*

*I have been insulted a number of times because I could not speak a South African language (Participant O quote 16:7.).*

*At some point one lady tried to talk to me in Afrikaans but, I did not reply to her because I did not understand the language. She started ridiculing me and even started to ask me why foreigners keep on coming to this place. (Participant A, quote 1:17)*

As these responses make clear, some young female immigrants are vulnerable because they are unable to speak the local languages. This makes them easily identified as not South African, thus causing them to be discriminated against and insulted. This makes some young female immigrants avoid speaking when they are in public places, especially taxis, because they are afraid that they will be identified and targeted. This goes against their right to freedom of expression as specified in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. According to the Constitution, in the Bill of Rights, section 2, 16 (1b), everyone in the country should have the freedom to receive and impart information (The Government of South Africa, 1996). However, young Zimbabwean female immigrants are denied the opportunity to express themselves.

### **Legality in South Africa**

The study revealed that the vulnerability of young female immigrants in Johannesburg is influenced by their legal status, that is, whether they are documented or not, and the type of permits they are using. South Africa has a large number of undocumented Zimbabwean immigrants (SAPS, 2009; Hammerstad, 2012). According to this study, undocumented immigrants are vulnerable to all sorts of disadvantage. Firstly, in the employment sector, they are limited to informal jobs because highly formal jobs require



work permits. Therefore, they end up in informal sectors mainly as domestic workers, and in these sectors they are abused.

*If you are an undocumented immigrant, no matter how educated or skilled you are its difficult to get a job in a big company or any formal company. You just have to work in homes. In these homes you are treated badly and you cannot complain. If you complain they can frame an issue for you so that you can be arrested. (Participant A, quote 1:55)*

*I could not even complain to anyone nor negotiate the wage because I was undocumented. (Participant D, quote 5:15)*

*They experience so much injustice but they cannot report because they are afraid that they are going to be caught because they do not have documents, and get deported. So it's actually a difficult situation for them. (Participant H, quote 9:22)*

The above extracts recount the experiences of young Zimbabwean female immigrants who are not documented. Their legal status makes them more vulnerable to a matrix of disadvantages (see Figure 18). According to the intersectionality theory, a number of challenges can be experienced by an individual simultaneously due to a certain factor (Ryle, 2015). Being undocumented means some of the young women will be employed mostly in the informal sector, where they are abused by their employers. It is much worse because they mostly have to live with the abuse for fear that if they report it to the police they will be arrested and deported, as Cortina et al. (2015) mentioned. Furthermore, they try by all means to avoid being known by the police because instead of helping them with their cases they start threatening to deport them. They milk money from the undocumented female immigrants by blackmailing them.

*The police are always on their back sucking money from them. So they have to stay with money all the time. The police use their authority to blackmail the undocumented immigrants. (Participant P, quote 17:5)*

This shows that the undocumented female immigrants lack protection from any kind of abuse. The authorities due to their status even further victimise them by using the situation of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The police also take advantage of the undocumented female immigrants' situation t for personal gain by demanding bribes from them. This study shows that because they lack documentation, young female immigrants are also denied access to health care.

*Some of our counterparts who are undocumented are vulnerable to ill health because they are denied access to health care (Participant T quote 21:7).*

*Some of them end up getting sick, and it is worse when you do not have documents. You have to pay 1 500 rands to get treated, which you won't have, so some of them just die in the street. (Participant C, quote 3:25)*

It can be inferred that lack of documentation also exposes these young female immigrants to poor health. This is because they are at times denied access to health care. In some hospitals they are told to pay exorbitant prices for them to be treated. These prices are usually beyond what they can afford because they are employed in jobs where they are underpaid. According to Thomas & Gideon (2013), the socio-economic status of the migrants combined with their illegal status make them more vulnerable as they are even denied access to health care. This shows that being undocumented makes some young Zimbabwean female immigrants more vulnerable than their documented counterparts. Although they face almost the same challenges, the situation of the undocumented young Zimbabwean female immigrants is even worse. This is supported by UN (2017) which highlighted that undocumented immigrants are mostly vulnerable to being discriminated against than other types of migrants.

Although some female immigrants are documented, the type of permits they hold makes them vulnerable. According to this study, some young Zimbabwean female immigrants who have accompanying spouse permits, or who hold permanent residence permits through marriage with South African men, are vulnerable to spousal abuse. Their partners take advantage of the fact that the migration rights of these female immigrants are tied to theirs.

*Some women, especially those with accompanying spouse permits, or who are married to South African men, are prone to domestic violence. Those with spousal permits are not allowed to look for jobs even if they have the necessary qualifications. (Participant E, quote 16:17)*

Those female immigrants who have spousal accompanying visas are not only prone to domestic violence. They are also prevented from working in the country as stipulated by the South African Migration Act (No.13 of 2002) because they do not possess work permits which allow them to work in South Africa (DHA, 2017). The International Commission of Jurists (2014) states that when a person gets married, he or she becomes

entitled to a spousal accompanying permit or visa. However, any disagreement with the spouse which results in divorce cuts the permit entitlement, thus leading to the deportation of the female immigrant. A young female immigrant may stay in an abusive marital relationship for fear of deportation because her migration rights are tied to her husband's.

### Nationality

Nationality is another factor contributing to the vulnerability of immigrants. Immigrants from more economically stable countries are much preferred to those from poor countries. In South Africa black immigrants are treated badly and the preferred white immigrants are treated better (Crush, 2008; *Daily Dispatch*, 2015). Interestingly, among the black immigrant population in Johannesburg, African immigrants are preferred to others. The study also brought to light that immigrants from Zimbabwe are less wanted than those from other countries, specifically Botswana and Namibia. One of the participants said:

*The hatred towards them specifically is also based on the ideology that immigrants from Zimbabwe are seen as a threat to the country because they take whatever comes. All they are interested in it's the income, not the type of job. But someone from Namibia, Botswana and South Africa is interested in the type of job. This is because the migrants from Botswana and Namibia are regarded as desirable, therefore things are much easier for them than people from other SADC countries. (Participant G, quote 8:28).*

The young Zimbabwean female immigrants are disliked by the locals because they are Zimbabwean, and take whatever is available. This discourages the locals from complaining against unfair labour practices because employers can easily dismiss them, and take the poor and desperate young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This makes them less wanted by the locals than immigrants from Namibia and Botswana, who come from better economies, and are less likely to take positions in which they are exploited. This finding is also in line with those from national attitudinal surveys by the Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP) which found out that migrant entrepreneurs from Zimbabwe and Somalia are treated less favourably than those from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Therefore, they are much more prone to harsh treatment by the locals (Crush & Ramachandran, 2017).

### Main finding of theme on personal factors

The major findings of the theme on personal factors showed that there are multiple sources of vulnerability for young female immigrants. These include educational status, gender, language difficulties, legal status in South Africa, and nationality. For some young female immigrants all these personal factors intersect in causing their vulnerability. According to the intersectionality theory, it is important to act upon all these vulnerabilities in order for the disadvantages of these female immigrants to be reduced (Ryle, 2015). Not having documents puts some of the young female Zimbabwean immigrants more at a disadvantage than those with documents.

#### 6.3.3 Lack of protection

The other theme that was developed to answer to the research question on the factors contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants is lack of protection. This means that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants are not protected from unfair practices, discrimination and abuse. Different subthemes that were derived from the major theme of lack of protection include fear, lack of implementation of laws and lack of support (see Figure 19 below). Their contribution to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants is discussed below.

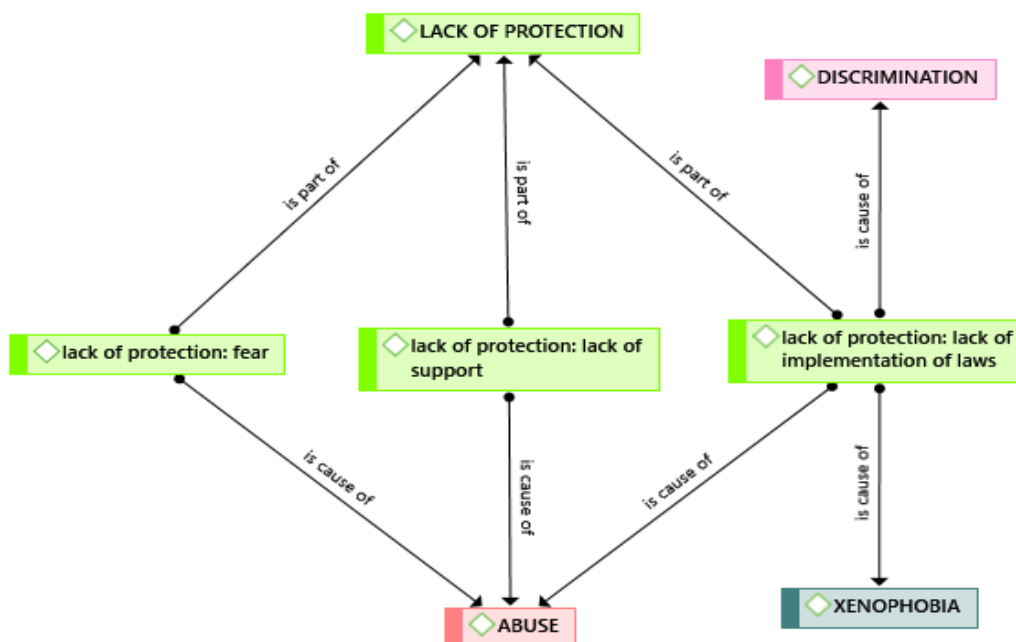


FIGURE 19: LACK OF PROTECTION

Source: Atlas.ti

## Fear

The findings of the study reveal that young female immigrants fear to approach the police when their rights have been violated. They, especially the undocumented ones, do not believe that they can get any help from the police. They are scared that they can be identified as being undocumented, and arrested.

*I do not know of any and I do not want even to approach them if there are any because once they know where I am working they will come for me, so it's better that I keep quiet and leave it like that since I am not documented. I feel that I do not have any rights because this is not my country, so I am not supposed to be here, so who am I to stand up and say you are abusing me? (Participant F, quote 7:30)*

*Large numbers of these female immigrants are undocumented, so they experience so much injustice, but they cannot report it, because they are afraid that they are going to be caught for not having documents, and get deported. So it's actually a difficult situation for them. (Participant H, quote 9:22).*

These responses make clear that some migrants, especially those who are undocumented, consider it a waste of time to report bad treatment due to fear of arrest and deportation. This leaves them unprotected from any type of abuse in the destination country. A number of sources confirm this finding that female immigrants who are undocumented were afraid to report domestic abuse even if they were urged to report by the authorities (Medina, 2017; Engelbrecht, 2018). This caused them to be continually abused by the perpetrators.

### Lack of implementation of laws

Implementation of stipulated laws remains a very serious problem in South Africa for the authorities, service providers and the general public. Although various instruments stipulate that migrants should be treated with dignity, given access to their basic rights, dignified work and proper remuneration, these requirements are not implemented (Mashele, 2015; Brown, 2016; DHA, 2017; Department of Labour, 2018). According to the participants in this study, the authorities do not implement and the general public do observe what is proposed or stipulated by the government as the law. This exposes young female immigrants to discrimination.

*I do not think that the government of South Africa can do much to protect us because even if the government says something the authorities who implement do the opposite things. For example, the SAPS: even if we report that we are facing any kind of abuse we are told that we are not in Zimbabwe, (Participant A, quote 1:39)*

*The policies that protect immigrants in South Africa are there but the implementation is the major problem. (Participant G, quote 8:40)*

From the above quotations by the participants it can be noted that the implementation of different laws and regulations that directly impact the young Zimbabwean female immigrants is problematic. This is because the law enforcement agencies are reluctant to practise or to act according to the law. The participants attribute the reluctance of law enforcement agencies to implement laws to their personal attitudes towards the immigrants. Instead of treating the immigrants fairly they allow their personal attitudes towards the immigrants influence how they treat the young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

### **Lack of support**

The study indicated that young female immigrants do not have any support whatsoever from different organisations or structures. Some of them pointed out that they have to deal with their own issues because they do not have anyone to talk to. Lack of social support renders them vulnerable because people can easily take advantage of them knowing that they cannot do anything. These young Zimbabwean female immigrants lack support because they are not aware of the organisations which are available to provide it for immigrants in Johannesburg. The interviewed migration experts specified that there are many organisations in Johannesburg for immigrants, but immigrants do not know where they are, or they do not approach them. Some of the young immigrants were positive that there were no such organisations in Johannesburg.

*We are located in Yeoville just after Hillbrow and near Berea. There are organisations there which deal directly with immigrants because that is where most immigrants are. But what I have seen is that most people do not go there because when they left Zimbabwe they intended to find jobs. Psychosocial counselling will not give them jobs, so they would rather not waste time going there. (Participant H, quote 9:25)*

*Organisations are there, but they depend on the government's cooperation in order for their strategies to work. (Participant G, quote 8:34)*

*No, there is no support at all. We just have to deal with our own situation on our own. You just have to be strong because you are not in your country. I can't expect to be babysat here, I just have to work. (Participant A, quote 1:38)*

*There is no support from anyone. Everyone just has their own way to deal with whatever they are facing. (Participant E, quote 6:39)*

The above shows the contradictory responses between the migration experts and the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. According to the experts, there are many organisations which help immigrants, but the immigrants do not know about them. This might be because those organisations are not known to the young immigrants, or they are reluctant to go there for fear of being deported. The responses also show that the immigrants do not consult some of these organisations because they consider them to be ineffective and not responsive to their real needs, as Participant H made clear. This is because most of the immigrants came to look for employment in South Africa, which makes their support system limited, thus exposing them to many challenges. The study indicated that the most common type of support available was the police, but almost all the participants pointed out that they disregard them, because they consider them to be unfair towards them by abusing and blackmailing them, and taking bribes.

*Even if you go to the police and report your husband for abuse they can just say that you foreigners are a problem. You just have to go back and sort things out on your own. (Participant F, quote 7:13)*

*The police are our worst nightmare. Whether you are documented or not, if you just have an encounter with them you will have something to say. They are always asking for bribes or sexual favours whenever you report something, or you are caught on the wrong side of the law. (Participant E, quote 6:39)*

*The other problem is that when we report our issues to the police they do not help. If the perpetrator has money they are just given a bribe and they just tell you to go back to your home or work and talk to the perpetrator in order to resolve the issue. (Participant D, quote 15:9)*



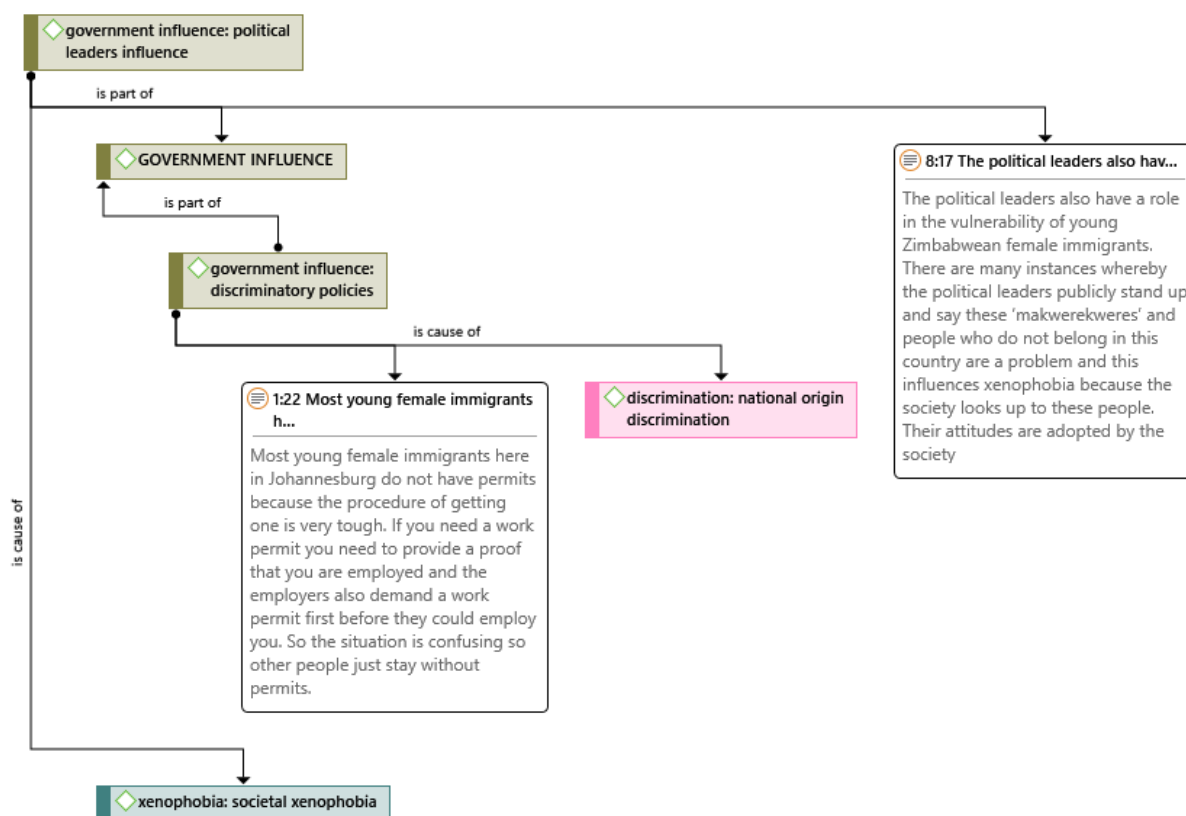
The police officers are the most common source of social support that is available for the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. But even though this is the case the young Zimbabwean female immigrants try by all means to avoid them due to the fact that the police are mostly of no help. At times, instead of protecting some of the young female immigrants, they end up abusing them further by denying them justice, asking for sexual favours and bribes. The police are not trusted because they can easily be bribed. Therefore, their chances of doing their job in a fair manner is limited. The migrants end up not getting protected because they do not see the police as a source of protection for them. Previous studies have revealed that immigrants distrust the police. Some of the reasons given include their reluctance to deal with cases concerning immigrants, harassing them, and corruption (Manson & Misago, 2009; Hungwe, 2013). This resulted in their not believing in the police's protection. Such a situation shows the intersectionality of factors in the lives of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants – that they are vulnerable to other factors such as abuse and exploitation, but when they try to report this they are not assisted. Therefore, such abuse and exploitation continues because they have no one to go to for assistance.

#### **Main finding of theme on lack of legal protection**

The above theme revealed that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg are vulnerable to a diverse range of challenges because they are not protected. Although there are different legal instruments to protect them, these are poorly implemented or not at all, and there is lack of cooperation by the authorities and the general public. The SAPS is one of the institutions which are perpetuating abuse of female immigrants. Therefore the young immigrants see them more as a threat than as law enforcers. Being unaware of the availability of different organisations, and afraid to approach them were also identified as factors that make the young women vulnerable.

#### **6.3.4 Government influence**

In this section government influence as a factor contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants is discussed. This includes the influence of government policies and political leaders (see Figure 20 below). Government policies and political leaders' contribution to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants is discussed below.



**FIGURE 20: GOVERNMENT INFLUENCE**

Source: Atlas.ti

### Government policies

The study indicated that government policies, specifically the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002), play a role in the discrimination faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in South Africa. This is mostly evidenced when the immigrants are applying for their work permits. They are required to provide proof of employment, and in order to get work the employers require them to have a work permit. One of the participants had this to say about how difficult it is to have a permit to work in South Africa:

*Most young female immigrants here in Johannesburg do not have permits because the procedure of getting one is very tough. If you need a work permit you need to provide proof that you are employed, and the employers demand a work permit first before they can employ you. The situation is confusing, so some people just stay without permits. (Participant A, quote 1:22)*

The strict requirements for the work permit by the DHA makes some young Zimbabwean female immigrants travel without it as undocumented immigrants. According to the DHA (2016), for applicants to be given permits they should provide proof of employment as well as other documents that justify why they were chosen, and not a South African citizen or a permanent resident. Most of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants do not have such proof of employment because they search for work upon arrival in Johannesburg. Such a situation makes them very vulnerable because in order to find formal jobs which have a stable salary they are required to have a permit which allows them to work in South Africa. Some of the immigrants travel to work in the informal sector as vendors. This makes it difficult for them to get permits because the South African immigration system gives preference to the migration of highly skilled personnel and business people into the country. This makes immigrants travel without the proper documents, which later on makes them vulnerable. Walker and Oliveira (2015) contend that globally nations are tightening their immigration laws, thus making it difficult for non-nationals, especially the informal and lower skilled workers, to legally enter, reside and work in another country. The above argument also shows the intersectionality of how strict government policies lead to migrants travelling without documentation which also exposes them to multiple forms of disadvantage (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013).

One of the participants explained that South African migration policy influences how young Zimbabwean female immigrants, and immigrants from other African countries are treated,

*Policies today try to make sure that colonisation is maintained and continued. The post-apartheid policies maintain the ideology that foreigners do not belong and Africa is not united. Although some organisations like the AU try to maintain unity, the states have a major role in the challenges that are faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants because the state acts in a divisive manner that says you are not part of South Africa so you have to carry a certain document or permit that will separate you from the people of South Africa, (Participant G, quote 8:16)*

The African Union and its member states continue to concentrate on the migration of people as resources for economic development. According to the mandate of the AU (AU, 2016), this should be done by adopting policies that encourage migration for the development of the whole of Africa, and for the upholding of the rights of migrants. Even

though some regions in Africa have managed to put this into action by initiating the free movement of people within their regions, the SADC still lags behind (AU, 2016). South African migration policy requires people from other African countries to carry documents when coming to South Africa. This shows the lack of continental and regional cooperation in integrating African immigrants. Owing to the legal conditions of migration in South Africa, immigrants are not fully integrated as part of South Africa. Therefore this creates more avenues for discrimination against non-South Africans.

### **Political influence**

The hostile and xenophobic statements made by public figures and politicians are also some of the factors that are contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This is because some of these public figures have charismatic influence, hence their followers tend to be motivated to act in relation to their statements. The participants of the study pointed out that the views of public figures, usually the political leaders, directly generate xenophobic attacks. One of the participants described how political leaders influence the society to be xenophobic through their public statements:

*There are many instances where political leaders publicly stand up and say these 'makwerekweres' and people who do not belong in this country are a problem, and this influences xenophobia because the society looks up to these people. Their attitudes are adopted by the society. (Participant G, quote 8:17)*

The comment shows that political leaders have a great influence in making young Zimbabwean female immigrants vulnerable to xenophobic attitudes, because they publicly speak against immigrants and blame them for all the social ills. Their followers therefore tend to adopt the same attitudes, and end up acting on those attitudes. Evidence of xenophobic incidents fuelled by public leaders exists in South Africa. For example, anti-immigrant sentiments expressed by King Zwelithini, the Zulu king, in 2015, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the former Minister of Home Affairs in 1998, and Joe Modise, the former Defence Minister in 1997 contributed to some of xenophobic incidents which flared up in South Africa following their statements (SAHO, 2015; Harris, 2001). According to Savo (2018), politicians claim that foreigners are flooding South Africa and undermining the country's security, stability and prosperity. Foreigners are blamed for high crime rates. They are also blamed for the hardships experienced by poor South Africans, and for overrunning South Africa's cities. For example, in 2017, South Africa's

Deputy Police Minister claimed that the city of Johannesburg had been taken over by foreigners, and in the future the foreigners would take over the country, including the high positions in Parliament. Such statements fuel strong anti-immigrant feelings among some locals. As a result, local people may go on a rampage, attacking immigrants and looting their belongings. According to Crush and Ramachandran (2017), the opinions of politicians and officials reinforce the hostility of the local people towards immigrants.

### **Main finding of theme on government influence**

The findings showed that the government has a major role to play in the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Government policies and laws are structured in a way that limits the integration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants into South Africa, as a result of the anti-immigration policies which provide strict requirements for foreigners coming into South Africa. This induces some immigrants to travel without documents, making them more vulnerable to abuses related to their lack of them. Furthermore, the anti-immigrant sentiments of charismatic political leaders make the young Zimbabwean female immigrants more vulnerable to abuse by their followers.

## **6.4 Conclusion**

This chapter presented and analysed the data on the challenges faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa, and the contributory factors to their vulnerability. These include abuse, social and economic challenges, discrimination, poor health and xenophobia. According to this study, the challenges faced by immigrants are the result of multiple factors which at times intersect to cause their vulnerability. These include their educational status, gender, language challenges, legal status and nationality. The study highlighted that gender and nationality were two common intersecting factors contributing to the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to economic exploitation, sexual abuse and exploitation, spousal abuse, discrimination and xenophobia. The educational status of these immigrants has been identified as intersecting with their legal status and their type of work. For example, the uneducated female immigrants find it difficult to acquire work permits which mostly require special skills. Consequently the young women without skills travel without documentation, and this results in their being employed in the informal sector, or in menial positions which make them vulnerable to exploitation and economic challenges. The undocumented immigrants can be abused, discriminated against, denied health care and proper work and working conditions.

This chapter highlighted the economic factors which contribute to the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. These are competition over job opportunities, poverty and its associated desperation, and types of available work. Poverty and desperation were alluded to as reasons for exploitation and abuse by their employers and their breadwinning spouses. These women cannot report their abuse because they need their jobs, some solely depend on their partners, and others are undocumented so they fear deportation. Furthermore, most of these immigrants came to look for work and are thereby exposed to xenophobia due to the competition over jobs. The study explained that the female immigrants are also vulnerable because they are not protected by the law or the police. Government policies and influential political leaders expose the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to xenophobia, abuse and financial challenges.

## **CHAPTER 7: COPING STRATEGIES AND A STRATEGY TO MINIMISE VULNERABILITY**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to give an outline of the various mechanisms used by the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to minimise their vulnerability. Various coping mechanisms have been identified both at individual and community levels to help them to be resilient despite of the challenges that they are facing. The aim of the study was to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg in order to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise their vulnerability. Therefore, the information provided by the participants was merged with the ideas proposed by the researcher and other scholars to come up with such a strategy. It is discussed in the last part of this chapter.

### **7.2 Coping strategies**

This section gives a broad outline of the various strategies that are used by young Zimbabwean immigrants in Johannesburg to cope with their vulnerability. It also interrogates the reasons why young Zimbabwean immigrants continue to be in Johannesburg besides all the challenges that they are facing. For the purpose of this study, the data on the coping mechanisms used by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg was categorized into two major themes, which are individual strategies and communal strategies. These are discussed in detail hereunder.

#### **7.2.1 Individual coping strategies**

Individual coping strategies are those coping mechanisms that an individual uses to deal with his or her own challenges without involving others. Young Zimbabwean female immigrants have identified a number of such strategies. They can differ from one person to another, and they can also depend on the type of a problem one is encountering. For the young female immigrants, their coping strategies included avoiding unhealthy relationships or interactions, being content with their situation, learning to endure, avoiding crime and deviance, having multiple jobs, hiding identity, remaining hopeful and courageous, and trusting in prayer. These coping strategies are discussed below as subthemes to the theme on individual coping strategies.



## Avoidance and compromise

The participants highlighted that they try by all means to avoid encounters with the people who abuse them. This keeps them from being victimized further. One of the participants who was verbally abused daily by her housemates until she had to move from the house in order to avoid further abuse said the following:

*I ended up just moving out of that house. I never thought of reporting them because the police are not fair towards us as they always take bribes (Participant E, quote 6:25).*

The statement indicates that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants are the ones to give in because they know that they are not protected. The police are considered to be unfair by taking bribes. Therefore, the young Zimbabwean female immigrants end up doing anything that can help them to avoid any kind of conflict with the local people. In the workplace, young female immigrants use compromise in order not to be treated in a xenophobic manner. One participant said that:

*I just keep quiet for the sake of peace. I just don't want anything to trigger xenophobia in the workplace. Even if there are arguments I am always the one who compromises because I am not a citizen I do not want trouble. (Participant E, quote 6:26)*

In workspaces avoiding getting involved in arguments is one of the coping mechanisms that keep the young Zimbabwean female immigrants from being subjected to xenophobic comments. This social exclusion involved keeping their views to themselves and taking the fall for everything. Such made them seem like people with less power. This makes the local people abuse them less because they do not see them as a threat in the workplace. Tillett and French (2010) maintain that at times compromise or give and take is necessary in order to avoid conflict and live in harmony. Hence, the young female immigrants mostly take a compromising position in order to live in harmony with the locals

## Contentment

Happiness and satisfaction with the situation makes the young female immigrants keep going despite the challenges that they are facing. Participant B, an unemployed graduate, who cannot find a job because she is using a spousal accompanying permit, explained how she has accepted her fate:

*For me I could say that I have accepted my situation and knowing that I am with my husband and my children makes me keep on going. At least my husband is working as a driver at Pick n Pay so we do not sleep on empty stomachs, (Participant B, quote 2:33)*

From the above it can be concluded that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants see their situation as permanent. This makes them to learn to find happiness in whatever situation they find themselves. Family support and having a working partner also makes life much easier, because they are assured that at least they have their most basic needs. According to a study by Connor (2016), some immigrants used contentment as a way of not stressing about their challenges. This made them at peace with their situation.

### **Endurance**

The study demonstrated that most young female immigrants have a strong ability to withstand the challenges that they are facing. This shows the resilience of these immigrants who, despite their vulnerability, keep on moving forward and finding means to survive in Johannesburg. According to van Niekerk and Hay (2009), resilience is the ability to endure or adapt in the face of challenges. The participants described that knowing their economic situation and also the current economic situation in their country gives them the strength to endure and keep going.

*Here you need to be strong. I know I have a family at home so if I just go back there, they won't have enough for basic needs so I just need to be strong. (Participant Q, quote 18:6)*

*The situation that you left behind forces you to be strong because you will tell yourself that if I quit and go home who is going to provide for me and my kids? I have no choice because at home they are expecting a bag full of money, (Participant F, quote 7:37)*

*I think just being strong and understanding the situation that I ran away from back at home gives me strength. I just have to be here so that I can make my family back at home survive. (Participant D, quote 5:27)*

*Endurance and acceptance in times of vulnerability keeps me strong. Remember it's not my country, I cannot compete with South Africans. (Participant T, quote 21:9)*

According to these responses the bleak economic environment of Zimbabwe which remains unchanged gives most of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants the strength to endure in Johannesburg. This is because they know that if they give up and go back to Zimbabwe it will be worse because they will not even find any economic opportunities. As such they just bear the hardships knowing that they have basic needs and they can provide for their dependants at home. The above argument also shows that the fact that they are not from South Africa means they have to endure all the disadvantage.

### **Crime and Deviance**

The study stated that some young female immigrants engage in criminal and immoral behaviour in order to deal with the challenges related to unemployment, exploitation in the workplace, lack of documentation and abuse by the police and partners. These criminal activities include faking permits and South African identity books, paying bribes, shoplifting, substance abuse and prostitution.

#### ***Faking permits and South African identity books (“khupa ufake”)***

One of the popular strategies used for survival in Johannesburg by immigrants’ is to use fake documents. These can either be fake work permits or South African identity books. One of the participants specified how some immigrants take identity documents of someone who is dead and put their own photos in them and start using them as their own. This was described as “*khupa ufake*”, a term which means removing somebody’s identity photo and inserting one’s own. Some of the young female immigrants attested to using fake permits in order to survive and work in South Africa. These documents are mostly used to find jobs and also to show the police when they ask for identification.

*Not having proper documents makes some of my fellows to be too vulnerable to challenges. So they try by all means to get documentation. Therefore they engage in what is called “khupa ufake” whereby a person takes an identity document of someone who is dead and puts in it her own picture. The person then uses that document to find work and when approached by the police. (Participant B, quote 2:41)*

*They want a South African identity document for you to get a proper job. That is why some people end up having fake South African documents and fake permanent residence permits. (Participant I, quote 10:7)*

*Fake permits are also common here because we use these to look for work and to show the policemen. (Participant J, quote 11:11)*

The above statements by Participants B, I and J show that in order for some young Zimbabwean female immigrants to deal with lack of documentation and its effects, they opt to have fake identity documents and permits. A study by Hungwe (2013) has shown that faking documents is prevalent in South Africa. It reveals that some immigrants would buy identity documents or permits, some would get them from their employers, and others from the DHA for a cost from 4 000 to 10 000 rands (Hungwe, 2013). False documentation is extremely easy to obtain in South Africa through the corruption of the DHA officials. This is confirmed by Crush and Peberdy (2018), who state that forged documents are easily available on the streets in South Africa. This shows how simple it is to get a forged document in South Africa if an immigrant has the money to buy one.

### ***Paying bribes***

Paying bribes is also one of the strategies used by young Zimbabwean undocumented female immigrants to avoid being arrested, sexually abused by the police, and deported. One undocumented immigrant reported that there were only two choices for young female immigrants to get released when they were arrested by the police. They either had to pay a bribe or have sexual intercourse with them. Therefore she preferred paying a bribe. This shows that sometimes the young female immigrants try by all means to avoid defiling themselves through having sex with men who are not their partners.

*I think for me the only way I can avoid being sexually exploited by the police is to pay bribes, otherwise if I don't I will have no option but to sleep with them in order to avoid deportation, (Participant F, quote 7:41)*

*My sister-in-law does not have any documentation, so she is always in trouble with the police, and has to pay bribes, (Participant C, quote 3:30)*

*When we reached the police station it was so full in the cells, the police and the home affairs people were tired, and they wanted to sleep. So they left us in the van, my friend brought some money for a bribe. That's how I managed to be released. (Participant F, quote 7:29)*

The above statements show that the undocumented immigrants always need to have money to pay bribes for them not to be deported back to their country of origin. The police walk around for a long time with the undocumented immigrants after they have caught them so that they can have an opportunity to get bribes and release their prisoners before

they get to the police station. According to Crush and Peberdy (2018), there is considerable evidence of corruption amongst the SAPS police who deal with the arrest and deportations of immigrants. They demand bribes as a remuneration in exchange for the immigrants' protection and release from custody.

### **Shoplifting**

One of the coping strategies used by young Zimbabwean female immigrants to deal with not finding employment is shoplifting. Some of them steal clothes and sell them cheaply in order to get some money for basic necessities.

*Some young women from Zimbabwe are well known “marobani”, which means thieves. Because they cannot find any jobs they end up stealing from shops like Edgars, Foschini, Ackerman’s and shops in China Mall where some Zimbabweans work. Then they sell the clothes at half price.  
(Participant B, quote 2:42)*

This statement shows that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants engage in shoplifting as a way to cope with unemployment. A concept was used to describe them as “marobani” which literary means thieves or robbers. Young Zimbabwean female immigrants are mostly involved in petty criminal activities. But Maphosa (2011) found that men engaged in serious criminal activities which gave them a lot of money, even to establish businesses back in Zimbabwe. From this it can be noted that there is a gender difference when it comes to the types of theft committed by desperate immigrants for their survival. Men involve themselves in big deals which can give them a lot of money whilst women involve themselves in shoplifting which only gives them money which is just enough for their survival.

### **Substance abuse**

Substance abuse is one of the ways some young Zimbabwean female immigrants have to deal with the poverty and desperation they are vulnerable to. It helps them to forget that their challenges exist. Substance abuse is mostly linked to those immigrants living on the street and are in prostitution. It helps them endure the cold and rain and sleeping with many men for money, which is against their conscience. Some participants said that:

*I take drugs because they help me through all the suffering and pain.  
Sleeping in the rain and cold is tough when sometimes men come and*

*take advantage of you. Some women from Zimbabwe help me with food.  
(Participant N, quote 15: 6)*

*Most of these young women who are sex workers and staying on the streets end up abusing drugs in order to cope with the stress. (Participant C, quote 3:22)*

The above quotations show that some of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants engage in high risk behaviours like substance abuse in order to cope with their vulnerability. The coping strategies the women use expose them to dangerous health risks and possibly death. Literature indicates that substance abuse exposes an individual to many illnesses (Hall, 2014; WHO, 2014). This worsens the situation of undocumented young women who are often denied health care.

### ***Prostitution***

Young female immigrants are reported to be concentrated in the commercial sex industry. This is seen to be the easiest way to make money by those female immigrants who are undocumented, uneducated and cannot find work in Johannesburg. Some of the participants indicated that in sex work you are your own boss; there is no strict requirement, which makes it easy to be involved in it. In this study two sex workers were interviewed. The first one pointed out that she had divorced her husband, who was the breadwinner, so she had to do something to take care of her children. The second one is also engaging in prostitution because she needs to supplement her income so that she can take care of her family at home.

*After I ran away from my husband who was abusing me, he started to not send school fees and groceries for the children at home. That is when I joined my friend in prostitution so that I could have money to take care of my children. (Participant S, quote 20:8)*

*During the day I sell things, and during the night I do sex work. Having two jobs helps me to cope and also to take care of my family, some of whom cannot find jobs at home. So I have to work very hard since they depend on me. (Participant M, quote 14:5)*

*In order to cope with the lack of basic necessities, some young female immigrants engage in prostitution, especially those who are too lazy to work as domestic workers. They prefer to get money for sex because*

*they are their own boss and their skills in bed always get them customers. (Participant B, quote 2:39).*

Participant B saw prostitution as a sign of laziness for some of the immigrants. This confirms a finding from a study by Hungwe (2013) in which the participants indicated that the immigrant women who were sex workers were considered to be lazy. This is because they did not want to do domestic work, which was considered to be more demanding than prostitution.

### **Having multiple jobs**

Immigrants are well-known for engaging in multiple activities in order to supplement their income. Some of them in low income jobs usually take another job in order to have money for all their basic needs. In this study about five immigrants attested to having an extra job in order to cope financially.

*The money is just not enough, so sometimes I look for a night job just to make things balance. (Participant A, quote 1:19)*

The money the immigrants get from a single job is not enough because most of them are in low-paid jobs, and they have to take care of their families in Zimbabwe. It means they have to provide for more than one household, and this can become overwhelming for the immigrants, so to ease the pressure they sometimes look for another job. A study by Datta et al. (2007) showed that immigrants in London engaged in what they referred to as tactics to cope with their low income. They worked overtime and in more than one jobs in order to supplement their income.

### **Hiding identity**

The study showed that young Zimbabwean female immigrants conceal their identity in order not to be discriminated against or treated badly in public spaces. They stated that at times they would avoid speaking in public places, and others quickly learnt the local languages so as not to be identified as immigrants. Participant R indicated that the verbal abuse she has been experiencing made her hide her true identity by learning to speak the local languages. She said:

*I had to learn how to speak almost all the languages here so that when I communicate with the local people they cannot easily identify that I am a foreigner. (Participant R, quote 19:8)*



For undocumented immigrants learning the local languages keeps police away because they will think that the young women are South Africans. The findings of this study only identified hiding identity through learning a new language as a way of not being identified as non-South African. However, another study by Hungwe (2013) mentioned that Zimbabwean immigrants also hide their identity through dressing like South Africans.

### **Prayer and hope**

A number of young Zimbabwean female immigrants indicated that they find their strength in prayer to cope with every problem that they are vulnerable to. According to them prayer gives them hope, peace and strength to do their everyday chores in order to take care of their families. The participants stated that:

*I am a very prayerful woman; everything that I do or experience I take to God. I am not a vocal person, and I just find my peace in God. When something happens I just keep quiet and just pray about it. Even if I am not treated well, and the police can't help me. My peace and hope is in God, He has a purpose and a bright future for me. (Participant C, quote 3:33)*

*I pray at all times for God to give me strength to continue to work for my kids. (Participant L, quote 13:14)*

The analysis of the above statements uttered by Participants C and L indicate that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants seek for guidance from God in the absence of protection and support from the authorities and the society. This is done in the form of prayer which gives them hope that the future will be brighter since there is a higher power which is in control of everything. In another study, Filipino immigrant nurses sought relief by resorting to religion. They believed that prayer enabled them to get through their difficult times (Connor, 2016).

### **Main finding of theme on individual strategies**

The major finding of the theme on individual coping strategies is that young Zimbabwean female immigrants have distinctive ways of dealing with their challenges. This is because they cannot go back to their country of origin because some of the things that led them to migrate persist. They therefore choose to adopt various coping mechanisms, both lawful and unlawful, in order to survive despite the challenges they are faced with.

## 7.2.2 Communal strategies

The study showed that there are communal strategies which the young Zimbabwean female immigrants use to cope with their vulnerability. These require them to collaborate with other immigrants in order to have social support, ideas and means to deal with the challenges they are faced with. Under the theme of communal strategies only one sub-theme was derived from the data. This is social support, which includes support from friends, family, church and stokvels. This is discussed hereunder in detail.

### Social support

Social support is one of the coping strategies that have been identified as helping the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to be resilient. Social support is often given by friends, family, church and groups in which they support each other financially. Some young Zimbabwean female immigrants reported that they have friends and family who help them in times of need with basic commodities, and with a sense of belonging and love through having conversations. Some of the participants said:

*I have family members who help here and there mostly with food items whenever things are tough. Mostly during the weekends I go to their places and just talk to them and laugh. That makes me feel better. (Participant D, quote 5:28)*

*I have a friend who stays nearby. Whenever I am in need I always contact her and she comes to my aid. (Participant A, quote 1:37)*

From the examination of the above quotes, it can be noted that social ties in the form of friends and family provides the immigrants with social support. This is so because they help them with some of their needs as well as socialise with them. This improves their well-being and also makes them forget about the discrimination they encounter on their everyday lives. Studies have shown that female immigrants turned to each other for advice and emotional and social support. For those who did not have family their friends became their family, giving them a sense of belonging and support (Hinos, 2013; Connor, 2016; Straiton et al., 2017).

The study pointed out that some of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants belonged to a church. The participants turned to church for prayer and social support. Churches gave them a place where they could find kindness and friendship. For some immigrants the church provided support with prayers, food and accommodation.

*Xenophobic comments are part of my almost everyday life, so I turn to church, pray for strength and I also hang around people from church who are friendly and tolerant towards immigrants. (Participant E, quote 6:38)*

*The people at my church are friendly; they support me in my difficult circumstances. (Participant C, quote 3:34)*

From the above quotations it can be seen that the immigrants turned to church for prayers so that they can have strength to deal with their challenges. Also in these churches they made positive friendships for support in their difficult circumstances. This shows the important role that the church plays in giving support to immigrants that they do not find from the communities that they live. According Hungwe (2015), religious networks in communities have been viewed as lessening social exclusion by emphasising Christian universalism. The church community gave these immigrants a sense of belonging and meaningful social relationships.

The immigrants also testified that they dealt with their financial challenges through forming small groups in which they contribute money, rotate in sharing the money and lend people money at interest. This helps them to save make money to meet their basic needs.

*One other thing is that we do stokvels with some women from home so we rotate in giving each other money. Whenever I get money I make sure that I buy something tangible for my house. (Participant B, quote 2:37)*

From the above extract, it can be noted that female immigrants use different tactics in order for them to cope with whatever the challenges that they are facing. To deal with the financial challenges, some women engaged in stokvels. Stokvels help the young female immigrants to save their money and share it so that they use it to buy some of the things that they wish to have. Studies indicate that stokvels are one of the strategies that are used in South Africa to help people to cope with poverty and unemployment (Matuku & Kaseke, 2014; Ngcobo & Chisasa, 2018). Stokvels are adopted by immigrants to provide them with the opportunity to save, invest and ultimately accumulate property (Matuku & Kaseke, 2014). They also provide some form of empowerment to female immigrants, because women lead the participation in stokvels more than men. The money they make helps them to provide for their families without depending on their

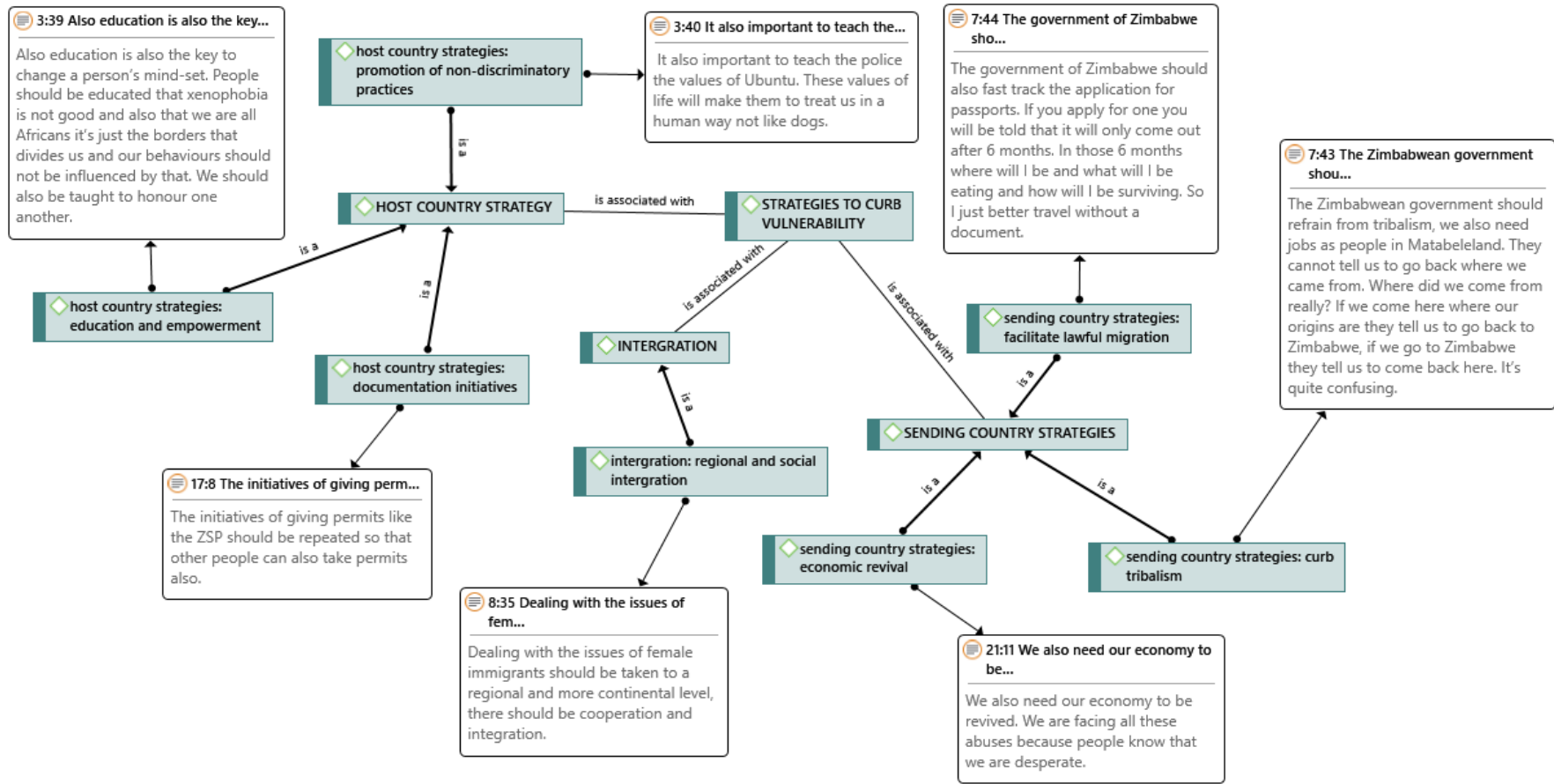
husbands (Matuku & Kseke, 2014; Tengeh & Nkem, 2017), and avoid being abused as a result.

### **Main finding of the theme on communal strategies**

The theme on communal strategies showed that social support assisted the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to cope with their challenges. This was done through emotional, financial, spiritual and physical support from friends, family, church and stokvels groups. With such support they managed to be resilient in a difficult time.

### **7.3 Strategies to minimise vulnerability**

The other objective of this study is to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The participants were asked to give their views on how this can be done. The information they provided is combined with the information from the researcher and other scholars to develop a comprehensive strategy to limit the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This is discussed in the last section of this chapter. In this section, various strategies pointed out by the participants are presented, analysed and interpreted. Three major themes were derived from the information given by the participants. These are sending country strategies, host country strategies, and integration strategies (see figure 21).



**FIGURE 21: STRATEGIES TO MINIMISE VULNERABILITY**

Source: Atlas.ti

### 7.3.1 Sending country strategies

Sending country strategies are strategies which the participants mentioned could emanate from their country of origin, (i.e. Zimbabwe) in order to limit their vulnerability. These strategies include curbing tribalism, encouraging economic revival, and facilitating lawful migration. These could help to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants since through the implementation of these strategies some of the issues that pushed them to migrate to Johannesburg could be resolved. Some young immigrants could opt to go back to their country, and the continual emigration of Zimbabweans could be minimised. This could also limit the number of people competing for resources with the locals, and the hatred and xenophobia that arise as a result of competition over resources. The subthemes under the sending country strategies are discussed in detail below.

#### Curbing tribalism

The study noted that one of the reasons why people migrate from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg is political, specifically tribalism. One of the participants pointed to the fact that in Zimbabwe the Ndebele people are not given equal opportunities with the Shona people. This leads to the migration of some young Zimbabwean females from Matabeleland. According to this study, as indicated by the participants' statements, the Zimbabwean government should take measures to combat tribalism in order to stop the migration of some young Zimbabwean women to Johannesburg as a result of tribalism. This can be done by integrating the Ndebeles and awarding them their rights as citizens despite their ethnic origins.

*The Zimbabwean government should refrain from tribalism. We also need jobs in Matabeleland. They cannot tell us to go back where we came from. Where did we come from really? If we come here where our origins are they tell us to go back to Zimbabwe, if we go to Zimbabwe they tell us to come back here. It's quite confusing. (Participant F, quote 7:43)*

It is essential for the government of Zimbabwe to ensure that there is equal treatment of all the people in Zimbabwe in order for them to equally benefit from public resources. Such a strategy can reduce the migration of some young Zimbabwean women from Matabeleland, lessen the flow of immigrants from Zimbabwe into South Africa, and thus counter xenophobia, discrimination, abuse and hatred against them.

## Economic revival

The participants contended that the revival and stability of the Zimbabwean economy can help to minimise their vulnerability, because with this there can be access to employment in their home country. Thus, with opportunities in their country they can eventually leave Johannesburg and go back to Zimbabwe. Almost all the participants confirmed that they do not like to be in South Africa, but they are here because 'it's a better evil than their country'. However, the abuse, discrimination and xenophobia they experience make it unfavourable for them. Therefore, most of them confirmed that if the Zimbabwean economy improves they will go back to Zimbabwe.

*I want to go back to Zimbabwe but I cannot go if things are not okay yet. I think it is important for the government to seek for investors and bring back those that they chased away so that they can revive our industries and we can go back to our country. We are treated like trash here, it's very painful. (Participant B, quote 2:44)*

*I think it is important that our government creates jobs so that people do not move to other countries to look for jobs. What we just need is peace and stability, basic necessities and food on the table. Being here is not what we want; we are suffering. (Participant D, quote 5:30)*

*We need our economy to be revived. We are facing all these abuses because people know that we are desperate. (Participant T, quote 21:11).*

According to most of the participants, the revival of the Zimbabwean economy is one of most important strategies that can be adopted to alleviate their plight. This is crucial as it will provide a stimulus for most of them to go back to Zimbabwe because they will be confident of a better lifestyle and access to jobs. According to the DHA (2015b), economic revival is essential in sending countries, because as long as the sending countries are poor, people will migrate to countries with better economies to seek for work. Therefore, the female immigrant participants believe that the economic revival of Zimbabwe will help in dealing with the challenges they have. Furthermore, if the economy of the sending country is revived and stabilised, the host country's people will value the immigrants that come to the country, and the immigrants will be less vulnerable to discrimination, abuse and xenophobia.



## Facilitating lawful migration

The study pointed out that the government of Zimbabwe should fast-track the passport application time. According to the participants, the processing of passports takes a very long time, and some of them end up travelling without passports as undocumented immigrants, which exposes them to multiple vulnerabilities.

*The government of Zimbabwe should fast-track the applications for passports. If you apply for one you will be told that it will only come out after 6 months. In those 6 months where will I be, and what will I be eating, and how will I be surviving. So I just better travel without a document. (Participant F, quote 7:44)*

From the analysis of the above quote it can be noted that some young Zimbabwean female immigrants travel to Johannesburg without passports because the issuing of passports takes too long. Some of the people do not have any other means of survival while waiting for their passports. As a result, they opt to just travel without the documents. Facilitating the quick issuing of passports is of utmost importance for the government of Zimbabwe. This would enable it to protect its people, who are vulnerable to all sorts of disadvantages when travelling without passports as a result of delays in the passport processing.

### Main finding of theme on sending country strategies

The main finding of the theme is that the Zimbabwean government should take measures to reduce the emigration of young Zimbabwean females, and facilitate lawful migration by fast-tracking the issuing of passports. Reducing immigration can be done by reviving the economy, creating employment, and giving fair opportunities to all the people in Zimbabwe despite their ethnicity. This will reduce the migration to look for opportunities that are not available in Zimbabwe, thus also reducing competition over job opportunities with the host country's citizens. This ultimately reduces the hostility towards these immigrants in being taken as destitutes, which usually results in discriminatory behaviours, hatred and xenophobia.

#### 7.3.2 Host country strategies

The participants to the study indicated that South Africa has a huge role to play when it comes to minimising the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in

Johannesburg, and safeguarding their rights. The government and civil society should initiate programmes to help these vulnerable young women. The emerging subthemes under the host country strategies included, among others, documentation initiatives, education and empowerment, and the promotion of non-discriminatory practices. These are discussed in the following section.

### **Documentation initiatives**

Young Zimbabwean female immigrants who are undocumented are more vulnerable to challenges than their documented counterparts. Owing to their migrant status and other factors they face many challenges which intersect in making them more vulnerable. The participants stressed that in order to counter this, the South African government needs to embark on an initiative to issue permits to undocumented immigrants.

*The initiative of giving permits like the ZSP should be repeated so that other people can also have permits. (Participant P, quotation 17:8)*

*Everyone should be given permits like what they did with the ZSP. That helps us not to be abused, especially by the police. (Participant K, quote 12:5)*

The above quotes indicate that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants feel that documentation strategies will curb abuse of those that are undocumented. This will enable them to practice their rights freely and also get protected from abuse. The participants proposed that the repetition of the issuing of the ZSP will be beneficial to minimise the vulnerability of those who are undocumented. The ZSP resulted from the Dispensation of Zimbabweans Project (DZP), initiated by the South African government to give documentation to those immigrants who were living in South Africa illegally, and provide amnesty to the Zimbabweans who had obtained documents fraudulently. At first people were given permits under the DZP project in 2010, and these were valid for four years. In 2014 when the DZP permits were expiring people were told to renew them. But they were now known as ZSPs. Even though this initiative was considered a success, only 17% (250 000) of an estimated 1,5 million undocumented migrants from Zimbabwe were documented during the regularisation processes (Bimha, 2017; Thebe, 2017). Most of the Zimbabwean immigrants who were undocumented did not benefit from this. This makes them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Therefore, there is a need by the South African government to embark on similar initiatives to document the

undocumented immigrants in the country as this will go a long way in minimising the vulnerability of the immigrants.

The study also indicated that the requirements of the work permit should be relaxed to include other informal jobs in which many young female immigrants are involved. This will ensure that some undocumented immigrants also qualify to get a work permit. This will enable them to find better jobs and end their ill-treatment as a result of being undocumented.

*The other thing which should be done by the policy and law makers is that they should make the requirements of the work permit lenient and favourable for everyone. This is important because there will be fewer undocumented people and more people will find better jobs. This also would reduce crime and prostitution involving immigrants. (Participant, C quote 3:37).*

The passage indicates that it is essential for the government of South Africa to revisit its' immigration policy in order to make it more welcoming to immigrants through having laws that promote the documentation of immigrants with other skills. This will prevent them from being abused because of lack of documentation, and give them better chances of being employed in more dignified positions.

### **Education and empowerment**

The study also highlighted that educating the general public about the effects of xenophobia as well as abuse of immigrants is another essential tool towards minimising the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The participants mentioned that there has to be education at all levels of the community to promote peaceful coexistence between the South African local people and the immigrants. Most of the people interviewed emphasised educating the local people about the benefits of immigrants as well promoting the spirit of oneness as a human race will help to mitigate the vulnerability of immigrants.

*Educational campaigns for all people from a society level to an institutional level are essential so that the local people can be taught how to live peacefully with people from other countries. (Participant T, quote 21:10)*

*The South African government should educate its people that you cannot survive on your own, there is no country with no immigrants. Even in Zimbabwe, as poor as it is, we have immigrants. Hillbrow is infested with immigrants. If all these immigrants would go who would pay there? So people should be educated that as much as they cry that we are taking their jobs, we are also boosting their economy. (Participant F, quote 7:42)*

*Education is the key to changing a person's mindset. People should be educated that xenophobia is not good, and also that we are all Africans. It's just the borders that divide us. We should not be influenced by that. We should be taught to honour one another. (Participant C, quote 3:39)*

These statements show that there is a need for education for all South Africans in both formal and informal settings. Education should focus on the peaceful co-existence of the local people and the immigrants, and on the value of human dignity (*Ubuntu*). The local people should be educated to move away from the perception that the immigrants are in South Africa to take what is theirs. Instead they should appreciate the role played by the immigrants in boosting their economy. The local people should unite with the people from the rest of Africa since they are all Africans, and ignore national borders, which were brought about by colonisation.

The study pointed out that empowerment of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants is also important to mitigate their vulnerability. According to the participants, this should be done by equipping them with ways to be self-sufficient economically, and educating them on their rights and how to safeguard them. This helps them not to be abused by men who they depend on, their employers who exploit them, and other people who violate their rights.

*For those that are documented it is essential for organisations to come up with different activities to empower the young female immigrants economically so that they can survive in the society, and teach them their rights so that they will not be abused and exploited. (Participant H, quote 9:26)*

*I think it is important for organisations to be created in order to teach women their value, build their worth and teach them not to fear anything. We live in a world in which we depend on men for their protection, but it*

*is high time that we as women stood up for ourselves, because some of these men in authority are the ones abusing us. (Participant C, quote 3:42)*

*There should be NGOs that deal with the challenges that immigrants are facing. If they are already there, they should be made visible through adverts, banners and awareness campaigns in the communities where we live. Contact numbers and addresses of where NGOs can be found should be made available, even in public spaces. (Participant E, quote 6:42)*

The participants urge that there should be organisations that will empower young female immigrants to support themselves and know their rights. They will help minimise abuse by their partners, by employers and by the community. It is also essential that the various Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that safeguard the rights of immigrants are made visible through methods like awareness campaigns, banners and advertisements, and various media platforms. This would enable the immigrants to know where to find them so that they can get assistance to be less vulnerable.

### **Promoting non-discriminatory practices**

The participants indicated that there is a need to promote non-discriminatory practices as stipulated by the supreme law of South Africa, which is the Constitution. The participants proposed that measures should be taken to ensure that the service providers, especially the police and health care workers, do not discriminate against the young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

*Firstly, health care workers and service providers, especially the police, need to be trained on how to deal effectively with all people, including us immigrants, without any discrimination. Their discrimination and abuse puts us in a more vulnerable position. (Participant E, quote 6:41)*

*We need access to health care. The government should ensure that we are not denied access to health care because we are foreigners. (Participant C, quote 3:36)*

*It is important to teach the police the values of Ubuntu. These values will make them treat us in a human way, not like dogs. (Participant C, quote 3:40)*

The participants expect service providers to change their conduct towards the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. They should act in non-discriminatory ways towards them, safeguard their rights, and treat them fairly as stipulated in various international instruments such as the UDHR, ICRMW, CEDAW and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (UNHR Office of the High Commissioner, 2014; Brown, 2016; Mashele, 2017; UN Women, 2017). Service providers should stick to their code of conduct and abide by human rights laws. This will minimise the abuse of and discrimination against young Zimbabwean female immigrants at the hands of service providers, especially the police and health care workers.

### **Main finding of the theme on host country strategies**

The main finding of this theme is that there is a need for the South African government and various civil society organisations to cooperate in minimising the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This can be achieved through efforts to document all the illegal immigrants in South Africa who end up being abused because of their foreign status. Efforts have to be made to educate the local people on peaceful coexistence with immigrants. The South African government should also take strict measures to ensure that the service providers stick to their codes of conduct and refrain from discriminating against foreigners.

#### **7.3.3 Integration**

Information from some of the participants showed that there is a need for integrated efforts by various stakeholders to tackle the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. According to the participants, various parties in the SADC region should cooperate to curb the vulnerability of the young women.

*Both the Zimbabwean government and the South African government should talk and come up with some form of agreement on how to best help us in the situation we are facing. (Participant R, quote 19:9)*

From the above it can be noted that there is a need for integration between the Zimbabwean government and the South African government in order to solve the vulnerability of these immigrants. The government of Zimbabwe contributes to the vulnerability of Zimbabwean immigrants because it is unable to create jobs for its people, and does not facilitate their documentation. Some people migrate without documents to look for jobs somewhere. South Africa's strict migration policy also leads some young

Zimbabwean female immigrants to travel without documents. This makes them vulnerable to both economic and social ills. Both governments should therefore come up with initiatives for documenting the people to facilitate lawful migration which will minimise the vulnerability of these immigrants. Although such initiatives have been taken, the majority of the undocumented Zimbabweans did not benefit (Bimha, 2017; Thebe, 2017). There is a need for a more concerted effort to ensure bilateral cooperation and agreement between the two governments to ensure that the vulnerability of Zimbabwean female immigrants is effectively curbed.

One of the migration experts interviewed stated that the migration issues should be managed from both a continental and a regional perspective. Then integration is possible, and the challenges that are faced by young Zimbabwean women can be properly dealt with.

*Organisations such as the SADC need to stand up firmly and strongly to ensure the security of the human rights of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. Transformation can only happen if we integrate or work together as a continent. (Participant G, quote 8:48)*

There is a need for governments to come together in order to come up with ways to ensure that immigrants are treated in a dignified manner in the destination countries. They should agree on specific measures, and monitor them to see if they are being implemented properly. Although this can be a strenuous activity, evidence from Europe has shown that regional integration can be a valuable step towards dealing with migration issues. In order to deal with the refugee crisis in Europe, which was mostly affecting countries on the Mediterranean, the European leaders agreed to share the burden of migration by taking rescued migrants and providing centres to process their asylum claims (BBC News, 2018; CITI NEWSROOM, 2018). Various initiatives have been taken by the SADC to deal with migration issues, for example, the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa. But the implementation of its strategies remain a problem as evidenced by the persistent vulnerability of immigrants in the destination country (IOM, 2015a). There is therefore a need for effective regional strategies to minimise the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in the destination country.

According to the study, there is also a need for social integration in order to help the young immigrant women in Johannesburg. Social integration is about including the immigrants in the destination community and uniting them with the local people. This



helps the immigrants to be part of the society, and the local people to accept them as such.

*Integration within the society includes law makers, law enforcers, the police and other relevant people like the nurses. These are exactly the same people that go after immigrants in the country, and these are the people that hold back services that young women need. (Participant G, quote 8:45)*

*These are the very same people who build the society that these young female immigrants are living in. If the police understood immigrants as people in their community, there would not be a change when they put on their uniform. (Participant G, quote 8:46)*

The analysis of the above shows that societal integration is important in minimising the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The authorities such as the law makers and law enforcers, health care providers and other people who discriminate against the immigrants should also associate with the immigrants in the society. This can make them understand that immigrants are also social beings like them. This will also make them to treat immigrants in a human manner even when they are providing professional services to them.

### **Main findings of the theme on integration**

The main conclusion of the theme on integration is that there has to be cooperation by the various stakeholders on the continental level, the regional level and the local level to deal with the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Regional initiatives need to be developed and effectively implemented to deal with the experiences of migrants in transit as well as in the destination countries. A well-managed migration system will promote migration for development and the rights of migrants. Social integration promotes good relations between local people and immigrants, thus cutting down various kinds of abuse, discrimination, xenophobia and other hostile treatment.

### **7.4 Development of a migration strategy**

The aim of this research is to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg in order to develop a comprehensive migrant strategy to minimise their vulnerability. The previous sections have looked at the factors contributing to the migration of these young women, their vulnerability in a man's world, their coping

strategies, and the strategies that can be used to minimise their vulnerability. In this section the researcher has developed a comprehensive strategy to help the young Zimbabwean women in particular and other immigrants to South Africa in general. The strategy is named the Multistakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy (MCMS).

The SADC region has managed to come up with a number of regional strategies to manage migration. The problem with some of these is that they are not comprehensive in dealing with migration issues as a result of lack of collaboration among all the stakeholders in tackling them. For example, the Regional Strategy for Southern Africa mostly focuses on the humanitarian needs related to migration and on developmental opportunities. It also focuses on the need to tackle migration challenges from a regional rather than a national, community and individual approach (IOM, 2018). This study therefore attempts to develop a Multistakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy which focuses on the collaboration of all stakeholders from an individual to a regional level to protect the rights of immigrants. This supports the statement by the former UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, in 2009, who stated that there is a need for co-operation between governments, NGOs, civil societies and migrants themselves in ensuring that human rights are implemented, and migrants are aware of their rights and entitlements (Global Migration Group, 2018). This was supported by the former DHA minister, Malusi Gigaba, who indicated that for South Africa to effectively manage migration there is a need to harness multistakeholder involvement (DHA, 2015b).

#### **7.4.1 Multistakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy (MCMS)**

In order to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants, there is a need of a multistakeholder comprehensive migration strategy. This is because different factors as well as parties play a role in exacerbating the vulnerability of the young women. It is therefore essential for their vulnerability to be addressed by all parties at an individual, communal, structural, bilateral and regional level. An MCMS should involve all the sectors of society in addressing this specific problem. Its primary objective is to minimise the vulnerability of the immigrants through consolidating efforts from key stakeholders, including individuals (immigrants and the local people), community, civil society, government (both sending and receiving) and the regional community. These stakeholders should collaborate in conducting various intersecting initiatives to minimise vulnerability. The MCMS concentrates on the role of the stakeholders and their collaboration in activities (facilitative efforts) aimed at minimising the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This MCMS begins with a discussion of the role

of stakeholders (from an individual to a regional level) in minimising vulnerability. Then it enjoins stakeholders to collaborate in efforts to minimise the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants as depicted in Figure 22 below which shows the MCMS in a model form. Hereunder follows the discussion of the role of the stakeholders from individual to regional levels.

### **Interventions at individual level**

Strengthening individual migrant's initiatives in minimising vulnerability is key in building their resilience and their ability to solve the challenges they encounter as immigrants. Individuals should be informed and educated about their rights by the non-governmental and governmental organisations in Johannesburg. This would help them to be able to identify as well as report any abuse. Organisations like the Lawyers for Human Rights and the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) should work with individual immigrants to deal with abuse, including abuse by the SAPS. Individuals' strategies should be strengthened through support by stakeholders in order for the vulnerability of female immigrants to be minimised. Support should be given to the immigrants themselves to be firm and stand up against abuse and discrimination. This strategy also advocates for individual immigrants with positive strategies to deal with their vulnerability to be agents of social change for other immigrants through equipping them with knowledge and skills. This can be done through immigrant meetings and dialogue.

### **Interventions at communal level**

Actions to facilitate communal strategies are also important. These should strengthen the already existing communal strategies that the young female immigrants use to cope. The community members from all backgrounds and nationalities should come together with the local people for mutual support and benefit. This creates unity and cooperation among people of different nationalities to minimise the vulnerability of immigrants at a community level. Zero tolerance of discrimination, xenophobia and gender-based violence should be enforced at community level.

To achieve this there is a need for a structure in the community to deal with the challenges faced by immigrants. This can be a network group which consists of immigrants and the local people who come together and develop programmes to deal with the challenges facing immigrants. In order for such networks to be accepted and effective, it is also important to collaborate with leaders in the community who have the

power to influence other people in the society against discrimination, xenophobia and abuse.

Immigrants should also form groups and integrate them into the host country society by being part of social change. Immigrants can form part of the community policing forums to help minimise crime in their communities. Immigrants with unique skills should impart them to the local people and come up with innovative measures to develop and improve the community's resources. This will help them to be embraced by the community as active contributors to their development, thus minimising their vulnerability.

### **Interventions at civil society level**

Civil society organisations or institutions also need to play a role in minimising the vulnerability of the young female immigrants. These organisations should be developed to uphold the interests of the immigrants. Civil society should effectively protect the rights of immigrants through standing up against the abuse they suffer, educating them about their rights and entitlements in the destination area. This strategy also requires civil society to promote behavioural change by educating local people about peaceful co-existence with people from other countries in order to reduce xenophobia. The organisations should have social gatherings to bring together immigrants and the local people for them to mix and integrate.

This should be done through emphasising the gains in having immigrants in the society, and ways to live harmoniously with immigrants. Steps should be taken by civil society to minimise gender inequalities, gender-based violence and other forms of abuse which often put the female immigrants at a disadvantage.

Organisations that deal with female immigrants like Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA), IOM and Lawyers for Human Rights, to mention only a few, should replicate themselves at the lower levels of society where these immigrants are found. Their presence in the society helps to have direct interaction and impact in the community. These organisations should work with the individual stakeholders, the community and the government in initiatives to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Civil society organisations in the community should have structures that educate immigrants on their rights and what to do when their rights are being violated.

### **Interventions at structural (government) level**

There should be interventions at the structural level where governments have a role to play in policy and legislation, and in mandating organisational change. Both the sending and the host country have an important role to play towards minimising the vulnerability of the young female immigrants.

In order to promote migration that is humane and orderly the host countries have a role in developing migration policies that are gender-sensitive and responsive to migration trends. South Africa should take a proactive approach to migration by harnessing it in order to promote its socio-economic benefits rather than trying to combat it. The South African government should harness the involvement of multistakeholders in managing migration as a potential for development while taking into consideration national security concerns (DHA, 2015b). The government should also embark on the documentation of people travelling to be employed in the informal and low-skilled sectors as contributors to the development of the country. This is because some of them have special skills in certain areas and they cover the skills gap in some sectors. They should be issued with work permits in order to travel legally. Furthermore, their skills can be transferred to the local population through the government working with the immigrants in equipping the locals with the knowledge and skills that some of the immigrants possess. Migration policies should also cater for the documentation of people who come to the country to look for work. Failure to do so often leads the immigrants to travel and work without the necessary documentation. The host country's government should embark on documentation initiatives for immigrants who are already in the country without documentation in order to deal with the vulnerability of female immigrants with no documents. This can be done through initiatives like the DZP and ZSP, by which thousands of Zimbabweans were documented (Bimha, 2017; Thebe, 2017).

Female immigrants are vulnerable in the workplace owing to the type of work they do, their status as migrants (and for some their illegal status), and the influence of gender, which continues to disadvantage them. There is a need for the host country to embark on initiatives to protect the rights of female migrants, empower them, and promote gender equality. This will help to realise the goals of the African Common Position on Migration and Development on safeguarding the rights of female immigrants (AU, 2006; Kalvert, 2011).

There is a need for adequate approaches to enforce organisational behavioural change. This can be done by challenging discrimination and harassment by police, Home Affairs officials and health care workers. Strategies have to be implemented to ensure that the

immigrants have rights to protection by the police, rights to health care, fair treatment by the Home Affairs officials, and the right to fair employment opportunities. The government, in collaboration with civil society, could take measures to eliminate all barriers to the realisation of immigrants' rights.

The host country's government, as part of ensuring a well-managed immigration system, should also embark on research initiatives in collaboration with civil society and migration centres like the African Centre for Migration and Society, CoRMSA, IOM and the Centre for Human Rights. This is essential in order for them to know the current migration needs, and find ways to address them. Research initiatives on migration by the government should also focus on issues of gender in migration so as to have a comprehensive view of migration issues as well as recommendations and strategies to address the imbalances in migration.

Strategies to minimise the vulnerability of the young female immigrants should not be limited to the country of destination, but extend to the country of origin. The government of the immigrants' home country should embark on serious political stabilisation and economic revival to provide decent and sustainable livelihoods. Such opportunities will undoubtedly ensure that fewer desperate women are pushed out of their country. This will also help the destination country not to have a huge burden of desperate immigrants which often results in xenophobia owing to competition over jobs. Facilitating a quick documentation programme by the sending country's government enables the emigrants to migrate lawfully. This reduces their abuse as a result of their lack of documentation. The sending country should embark on documentation initiatives, and collaborate with the host country in giving documents to the undocumented female immigrants already in the country.

### **Interventions at binational level**

The South African and Zimbabwean governments should cooperate and develop bilateral agreements as well as strengthen the already existing bilateral agreements and policies in managing the flow of people between these two countries. These agreements should also govern the employment of Zimbabweans in South Africa. This can be done through having a Zimbabwean government labour office in South Africa which focuses on the employment conditions of Zimbabweans, tax payment, remittances and documentation.

The two nations should collaborate in documenting migrants, researching their migration needs and promoting gender equality in migration. This is all essential in managing migration and promoting the rights of the migrants.

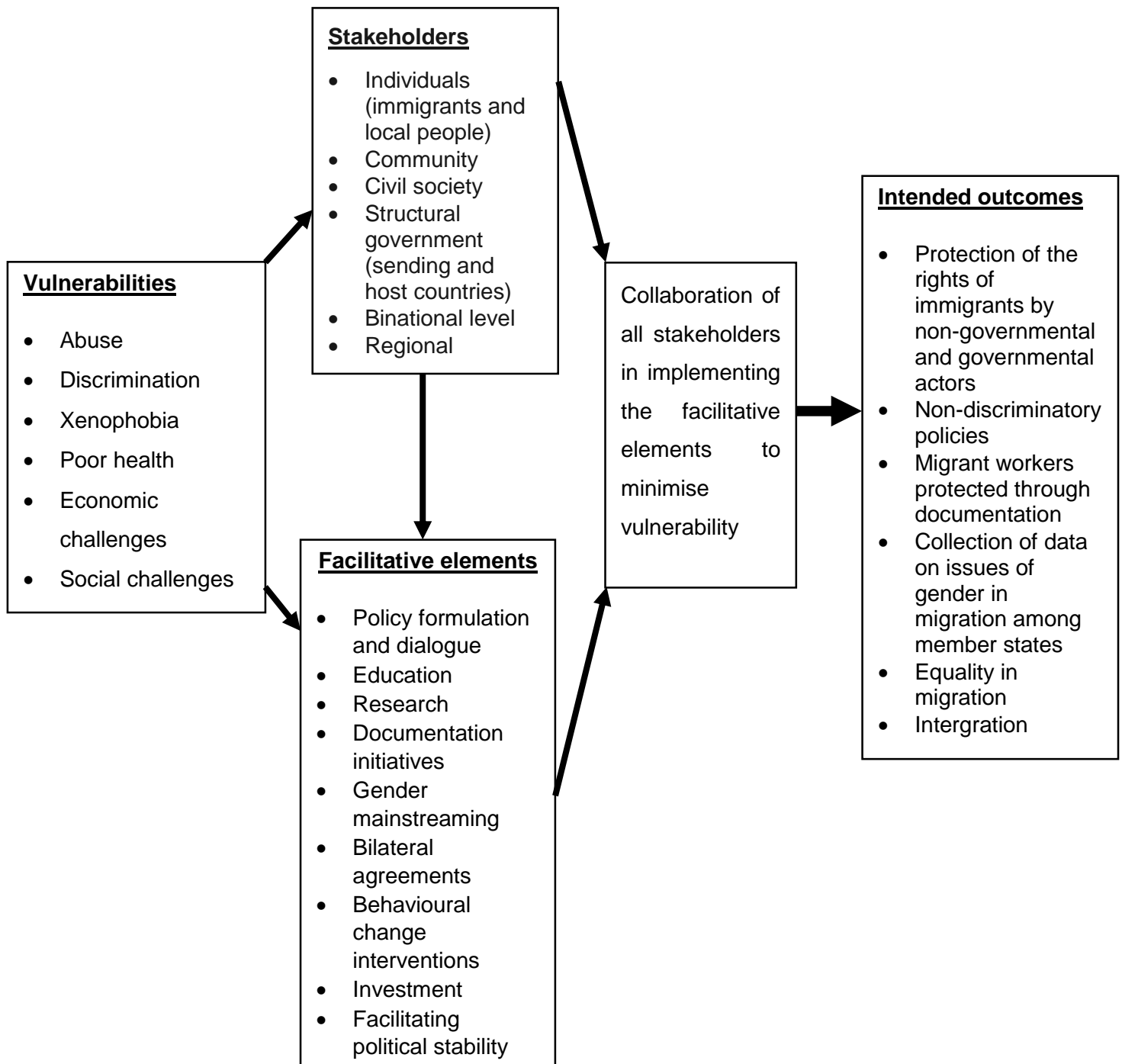
### **Interventions at regional level**

The regional communities should facilitate the formulation of effective regional migration policies which promote legal and orderly migration of people. The countries' representatives should come together to share ideas as well as create regional migration policies that are not gender-biased. This will help the region to have common migration standards as well as mechanisms to protect the rights of the migrants. There is also a need for an effective regional migration policy or bilateral policies to create opportunities for labour migration within the region and promote the documentation of the undocumented immigrants in the region. This is supported by various scholars who indicated that SADC still lags behind in developing effective regional migration laws and regulations for managing migration linked to regional development. There is a need for multiple stakeholders in the region to take part in developing an effective regional migration policy (DHA, 2015b, Kumalo, 2014: CoRMSA & SADC, 2018). This will promote the migration of people for development of the whole region and minimise abuse and exploitation of immigrants.

The regional leaders should come together to solve the migration crisis in South Africa. This is important because South Africa hosts large numbers of immigrants from other SADC countries. According to the DHA (2015b), no country in the world with a rich economy managed to effectively exclude migrants from its poor neighbouring countries coming to look for work. This means that South Africa, owing to its economic dominance in the region, will continue to receive immigrants from its economically unstable neighbours. As a result, it should cooperate with its neighbours, other countries in the SADC, NGOs and donors in helping with economic recovery and measures for political stability. The SADC countries should come together, and develop and implement measures to promote political stability in the region so as to make the environment safe for investors. This will reduce the economic inequalities between countries, which is one of the leading factors contributing to migration. Countries with unstable economies should be supported by boosting investment in those countries so as to support the socio-economic transformation of the whole of the SADC. The region should learn from European leaders' cooperation in solving the migration crisis in Europe by increasing investment in North African countries so as to reduce migration from North Africa to



Europe. The European leaders also agreed to take shared responsibility in rescuing migrants and providing centres to process their asylum claims so that the load of immigrants does not only affect the European countries near the coast (BBC News, 2018; CITI NEWSROOM, 2018).



**FIGURE 22: MULTISTAKEHOLDER COMPREHENSIVE MIGRATION STRATEGY (MCMS)**

**Source:** Developed for the study by the researcher

## **Collaboration of stakeholders**

A sound migration strategy needs the cooperation of all the stakeholders promoting the safe migration as well as the protection of migrants in the host country as depicted in Figure 22 above. The figure shows the MCMS in the form of a model that there have to be stakeholders, facilitative elements (activities to minimise vulnerability) and the collaboration of all stakeholders to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This strategy therefore requires the cooperation of the individual migrants, communities, civil society, governments as well as regional bodies to combat the abuse, discrimination and xenophobia which are targeted towards immigrants. This is done through cooperation in developing and providing resources for the implementation of various initiatives (facilitative elements) aimed at minimising this kind of vulnerability. The intersectionality of these initiatives should also be considered. Different parties can collectively embark on many activities at the same time to minimise vulnerability. At civil society, structural and regional levels there should be a joint commitment to research issues related to migration. This is essential to identify the challenges associated with migration and strategies to address these challenges. Migration experts as well as researchers should actively collaborate in researching migration. Cooperation from all stakeholders makes the issues of migration a common agenda, and this is important for addressing the vulnerability of young female immigrants, and in helping to solve the causes and the effects of migration. The stakeholders should also prioritise gender equality and women's empowerment for the young female immigrants not to be abused as a result of gender differentials.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted the coping strategies used by the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to deal with their vulnerability. They used both individual and communal strategies to cope with their vulnerability. The chapter also looked at some of the strategies that the participants proposed to help minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. These were significant in developing a Multi-Stakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy by the researcher to deal with the vulnerability of the female immigrants. This strategy calls for concerted efforts by stakeholders and their collaboration in implementing intersectional initiatives in order to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg.

## **CHAPTER 8: OVERVIEW, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The major aim of this chapter is to provide a summary of the study, present the summary of findings, highlight the contribution of the study and make recommendations based on its findings. These recommendations, which also include the proposed Multistakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy, will assist in dealing with the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. The chapter begins with an overview of the study, a summary of the findings, their contribution to scholarship, recommendations, and the conclusion.

### **8.2 Overview of the study**

Female migration has always been sidelined in migration literature, policies and debates. This is due to the point that young immigrants were considered as dependants of the male breadwinner in the whole migration process. Much literature focused on male migrants and policies and theories were formulated with a male migrant perspective in mind. Even though female immigrants are migrating at almost the same rate as male migrants, their migration is still being given less attention, thus making them vulnerable to multiple disadvantages. With this in mind, the study sought to add a gender perspective on migration studies by focusing on the female immigrants. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg in order to develop a comprehensive migration strategy to minimise their vulnerability.

The objectives of the study were to first identify contributory factors to the migration of young females from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg; and secondly, to examine the challenges faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. In order to determine the multiple sources of oppression for these female immigrants, a third objective was to determine the factors contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The other objectives were to explore the strategies used by the young women to cope with vulnerability, and to develop a comprehensive migration strategy to minimise the vulnerability of young female immigrants in Johannesburg, all the set objectives were accomplished.

The push-pull theory and the intersectionality approach were used to interrogate and explain the phenomenon under study. The push-pull theory provided a comprehensive explanation of the causes of migration. Therefore, guided by these factors, the push-pull theory helped to explain the first objective of identifying the contributory factors to migration. In order to address other objectives that cover the vulnerability of young female immigrants, the intersectionality approach was used. Based on the premise that for women's issues to be addressed, there is a need to look at the multiple sources of their oppression, the intersectionality approach assisted in looking at the various issues that point to the vulnerability of young female immigrants.

The study employed a qualitative approach and a case study research design. Snowball and purposive sampling techniques were used to select participants from a population of young Zimbabwean female immigrants and migration experts. Eighteen young Zimbabwean female immigrants and two migration experts were included in the study.

In order to determine the vulnerability of the young immigrants, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews were used to gather data. Data were analysed through the use of the Atlas.ti software, and presented and discussed in themes that emerged from the study. The data were then supported with literature and linked with the theories which guided the study.

### **8.3 Summary of findings**

The study identified a number of findings. These are presented according to the objectives as stated in Chapter 1.

#### **8.3.1 Findings pertaining to Objective 1**

Objective 1 was to identify the contributory factors to the migration of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg. Data indicated that the migration of the young women was mainly attributed to the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy. This left many Zimbabweans with no hope for survival in the country: they were pushed out of the country by necessity rather than choice. For most of the female immigrants, unemployment, feminisation of poverty and their role as breadwinners pushed them to migrate to Johannesburg in search of economic opportunities. The study also indicated that these female immigrants were pulled to Johannesburg because of the availability of opportunities, its geographical proximity, cultural diversity and the availability of social

connections. It is also important to note that these immigrants were driven mostly by economic conditions.

### **8.3.2 Findings pertaining to Objective 2**

The second objective was to examine the challenges faced by the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. This study explained that the young women are vulnerable to multiple challenges. Abuse was common for many of them, and it came in many forms, including economic exploitation, whereby they were not paid, or underpaid, and overworked. It also came in the form of ill-treatment: some of the women said it was inhuman. There was also spousal abuse, because their migration rights were tied to their partners'. The findings of this study show that the young female immigrants were vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation by their employers, the police, and for those who worked as prostitutes, their customers. Verbal abuse was also found to be common, especially in public spaces.

The study indicated that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants faced challenges such as inability to find a job, homelessness and financial challenges. This made them desperate, and vulnerable to other challenges like poor health and ill-treatment as a result of the type of work they ended up in. The study concluded that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants were vulnerable to national origin discrimination whereby they were discriminated against on the basis that they came from Zimbabwe, especially by the service providers, notably the police, health care workers and the home affairs officials. They also faced gender-based discrimination by their male colleagues in form of verbal abuse and intolerant attitude.

The study found that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg were vulnerable to poor health because some of them were denied access to free health care by the health care professionals. This has been found to be a huge problem because some immigrants were engaging in prostitution which is a high-risk occupation. One major finding of this objective is that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants were vulnerable to both institutional and society xenophobia, owing to the competition over scarce resources in Johannesburg.

This study found that these immigrants were vulnerable to social challenges which included the lack of freedom and peace of mind as a result of being isolated and demoralised, especially in the workplace. This was because some of the local people saw them as a threat to their job security. Therefore, in order for them to avoid any

conflicts they chose to keep their ideas to themselves. The study revealed that the young female immigrants also lacked peace of mind because the police were always harassing them, whether undocumented or documented.

### **8.3.3 Findings pertaining to Objective 3**

Objective 3 was to determine the factors contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The study pointed out that there were multiple factors: that contributed to the vulnerability of these immigrants to abuse, discrimination, xenophobia, poor health, economic and social challenges. The study revealed that not being educated made some female immigrants vulnerable to being employed in the informal sector and the lower end of formal employment, in which they were subjected to all kinds of abuse. The study also found out that being uneducated made some young female immigrants travel without documentation because the immigration system of South Africa gives preference to skilled immigrants. This shows the intersection between the level of education, type of employment and documentation as factors which act to disadvantage these immigrants. Being undocumented exposed the young female immigrants to almost all the challenges because they were considered as illegal. As a result, they were treated as if they had no rights in the host country by being abused and discriminated against, especially by the police and the health care providers.

The study also showed that competition over job opportunities, poverty and the despair it engenders, and types of work led to the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. Poverty and desperation exposed them to exploitation and abuse by their employers, and by their spouses, who resented having to be relied upon as the breadwinner. These women could not report their abuse to the police because they needed their jobs. Some solely depended on their partners, and others were undocumented, so they feared deportation. Another problem was that owing to the competition over jobs, the female immigrants were exposed to societal xenophobia.

According to the study, the female immigrants were vulnerable because they were not adequately protected by the law because of lack of support from various organizations and, notoriously, the police. Some of these immigrants, especially those who were undocumented, stated that they feared to approach relevant organisations for help and report their issues to the police because of their fear of being arrested, detained and deported. The study found that abuse by the authorities was rife. These immigrants were therefore reluctant to report abuse for fear of further abuse, especially from the police,

who wanted bribes, or sexual favours, or both in return for leniency. The authorities did not implement the laws for the protection of immigrants, thus increasing their vulnerability to abuse.

The study indicated that anti-immigrant government policies, and the unfriendly influence of political leaders were also seen to be exposing the young Zimbabwean female immigrants to xenophobia, abuse and other challenges.

#### **8.3.4 Findings pertaining to Objective 4**

Objective 4 was to explore strategies used by young Zimbabwean female immigrants to cope with their vulnerability. Findings from this objective brought to light that these immigrants had individual and communal strategies, which did not, however, provide them with permanent solutions to their challenges; but they helped them to stay strong during their time in Johannesburg. The findings of this study underlined the need to strengthen these individual and communal strategies, and advocate for collaboration with other stakeholders to help these immigrants to cope with their vulnerability.

#### **8.3.5 Findings pertaining to Objective 5**

The last objective was to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise the vulnerability of young female immigrants in Johannesburg. The participants mentioned that there was a need for the host country and the sending country to cooperate in minimising the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This study also indicated that there was a need for regional collaboration as well as social integration in order to holistically deal with the immigrants' issues. In order to address this objective a Multistakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy was developed. This strategy calls for the collaboration of different parties from various levels – individual, communal, civil society, structural and regional – to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

### **8.4 Contribution of the study**

Doctoral studies place emphasis on knowledge production or discovery and its application through research. This study on the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants has contributed to four types of scholarship as posited by Boyer (1990). These include the scholarship of discovery, scholarship of application,



scholarship of integration, and scholarship of teaching. Below follows the discussion of how the study has contributed to these types of scholarship.

#### **8.4.1 Scholarship of discovery**

The scholarship of discovery has to do with the contribution of the research to the production of knowledge (Boyer, 1996; Austin & McDaniels, 2006). This study has contributed to knowledge production by contributing to evidence-based knowledge on the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg. The study also discovered some of the coping strategies used by the female immigrants, and the proposed strategies to deal with their challenges. The discovered knowledge enabled the researcher to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

#### **8.4.2 Scholarship on integration**

The scholarship of integration is about making new connections within and among different disciplines (Austin & McDaniels, 2006). When interdisciplinary knowledge is synthesised, interpreted and connected new insights on issues are brought to light (Braxton, Luckey, & Hellard, 2002). This study has brought insight to the issues of gender in migration, and contributed to the scholarship of integration through making use of an integrated theoretical framework. For the purpose of this study both the push-pull theory and the intersectionality approach were used. The use of a hybrid theoretical framework contributed to integration of theories across disciplines. This implies that the push-pull theory from the migration discipline and also the intersectionality theory from a gender discipline were used. The two theories were applied to explain and understand the vulnerability of young female immigrants in Johannesburg.

#### **8.4.3 Scholarship of application**

The scholarship of application is also known as the scholarship of outreach and engagement (Boyer, 1996; Austin & McDaniels, 2006). It involves the use of scholars' knowledge to address challenges through engaging with different stakeholders (Boyer, 1996; Austin & McDaniels, 2006). The study engaged with the female immigrants themselves and the migration experts through individual interviews and focus group discussions. In these engagements the challenges and the contributory factors to the vulnerability of young female immigrants were established, and the strategies to

minimise their vulnerability were highlighted. These strategies aided in the development of a multi-stakeholder comprehensive migration strategy to minimise vulnerability. This study advocates the application of this strategy in order to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

#### **8.4.4 Scholarship of practice**

The scholarship of teaching is also known as the scholarship of practice. It has to do with allowing for information sharing, application and evaluation by others (Boyers, 1990; Austin & McDaniels, 2006). The scholarship of practice or teaching gives a high form of understanding of the processes of knowledge production and understanding the knowledge produced. This research provided knowledge on the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The study also provided a bottom-up approach for the generation of data and strategy to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. This was done through collecting and analysing the data through the use of Atlas.ti to come up with themes. These themes were later presented and interpreted to determine the major findings of the study, and develop a comprehensive migration strategy. From this bottom-up approach other researchers may learn, and implement it in their studies.

#### **8.5 Recommendations**

The study has highlighted the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean immigrants, which warrants urgent attention to their plight. South Africa should therefore come up with an effective way to integrate the immigrants into the country. This is important because immigrants are part of the society, and their rights have to be protected in order for them to fully contribute to the development of their personal lives, that of the host country and of their country of origin. With this in mind, the government as well as the political leaders should be more supportive to immigrants so as to limit both societal and institutional xenophobia.

South Africa should formulate and implement a comprehensive migration policy which is not gender-biased. A new migration policy should move away from the highly gendered notions of a normative migrant, a male breadwinner who would migrate with females as dependants. There is therefore a need for a comprehensive migration policy that regulates the migration of both female and male immigrants in South Africa. Many women who migrate as accompanying spouses are restricted from working, but many of

them have skills that they can use to work as well as contribute in the development of the country. South Africa's migration policy should therefore be reviewed to allow immigrants with skills who have accompanying visas to be given work visas so that they can participate in the labour market. This will also reduce their abuse as a result of depending on their partners.

There should be proper management of institutions, to include monitoring the service providers, especially the SAPS, Home Affairs and the health care workers who were described as insensitive to immigrants. These are some of the people who are supposed to provide protection and services to the immigrants, but they play a big role in discriminating against, abusing, and denying services to them. There should be zero tolerance of the service providers who do not implement laws to protect immigrants because of their hostile attitude to people of other nationalities. There should be strict measures against these service providers using their powers to undermine the international laws which protect migrants, and the South African Constitution, which is the supreme national law, and gives everyone in the country the right to equality and human dignity.

The host country's government and institutions should promote freedom of expression for the migrants, who are often silenced in their workplaces by their colleagues. The young female immigrants should also be given an opportunity to contribute their views in line with the growth and the development of the organisations they work for.

Bilateral agreements and cooperation between the Zimbabwean government and the South African government are necessary for the protection of the migrant workers against abuse and exploitation in the labour market. Some migrants are not employed in jobs which meet their skills and level of education. There should therefore be cooperation between these two countries to ensure that the immigrants are properly employed, and there are legal avenues for the employment of migrants. These bilateral agreements should ensure the protection the migrant workers. There is a need for the development of bilateral trade unions and cooperation between trade unions in Zimbabwe and those in South Africa to help to protect the rights of the migrant workers. Zimbabwe and South Africa can learn from the Arab states' bilateral cooperation agreements, and from the bilateral agreements between trade unions in Sri-Lanka, Bahrain, Jordan and Kuwait (ILO, 2015c).

There should be proper documentation of Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa by both the Zimbabwean and the South African governments through providing passports

and permits. This is important in protecting the rights of some young Zimbabwean female immigrants who are often victimised because they are undocumented.

Cooperation between the Zimbabwean and the South African governments is essential in coming up with a database of all the immigrants and facilitating their meaningful employment. This is important to both the destination country and the host country since with meaningful employment and a proper database they will be able to trace these immigrants and ensure that they pay tax; and those people with meaningful employment are able to remit their pay back to the sending country, which is a form of foreign currency for them.

The government of Zimbabwe should take measures to revive its economy and create jobs. This is essential for the vast majority of Zimbabweans who were pushed to migrate to South Africa because they were desperate for work. The recovery of the Zimbabwean economy will serve as a motive for most of the Zimbabweans to move back to Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean government and the private sector should also raise the salaries of the workers who are underpaid so that they are not pushed to migrate to other countries.

The government of Zimbabwe should consider investing in the education of women both in their own country and in South Africa so that they can get proper qualifications. This will also help them to be competent in the labour market, and combat the vulnerability of being uneducated.

There is also a need to strengthen individual and communal coping strategies as well as include the migrants themselves and the community as active participants in coming up with solutions to their own challenges. All the stakeholders – individuals, the community, civil society, and government at the regional, national and binational levels – should come together in order to collectively minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The study proposes the use of the Multistakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy developed by the researcher in the previous chapter.

Educational and awareness campaigns should be embarked on to conscientise the community about the existence and effects of both societal and institutional xenophobia. People should be educated on how to peacefully coexist with people from other countries. Service providers should adhere to their professional codes of conduct by not letting their own attitudes influence their work by denying the immigrants services.

There is also a need for more research on the issues of gender and migration. Much focus should be on the influence of state institutions in ignoring gender inequalities.

## 8.6 General conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in order to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise their vulnerability. A literature review indicated a gap in the body of knowledge in regard to the issues of gender in migration, and the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants. The literature review also indicated that there is no comprehensive regional strategy to minimise the vulnerability of female immigrants in the destination area. A qualitative approach was used to collect and analyse data.

This study revealed that the migration of young Zimbabwean females is mainly attributed to the economic crisis in the country. This shows that most of the migrants migrated to South Africa because they were attracted by the better economic conditions that are not available in Zimbabwe. The study also found that the young Zimbabwean female immigrants are vulnerable to multiple challenges such as abuse of various kinds, exploitation, discrimination, xenophobia, economic and social challenges, and poor health. In many instances the young Zimbabwean female immigrants reported that they were exploited and abused economically, sexually and verbally. They were also discriminated against by being denied health care, protection by the police, and other essential services like processing migration documents. Their vulnerability was pointed out to be the result of multiple intersecting factors, including the status of being a migrant, type of work, educational status, gender, and their economic status, all of which opened them up to hate, abuse, xenophobia, discrimination, poor health and economic exploitation. This was much worse for those immigrants who were illegal or those whose migration rights were tied to their spouses. The young Zimbabwean female immigrants were exposed to all kinds of disadvantage, from being exploited by their employers, employed at the lower end of the employment hierarchy, or being unemployed, to being abused by the authorities and their partners, and denied protection by the police and care by the health care providers.

In order to minimise the vulnerability of the young Zimbabwean female immigrants, the study developed a Multistakeholder Comprehensive Migration Strategy. This strategy emphasises the supreme importance of involving the various stakeholders and their collaboration in minimising the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants.

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## APPENDICIES

### Appendix A: Letter of informed consent

My name is **Rachel Chinyakata**. I am a PhD student at the University of Venda registered for the Doctor of Philosophy in Gender Studies Degree (PhDGS). My research focuses on **Investigating the Vulnerability of Young Zimbabwean Female Immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa**. I am inviting you to participate in this study. Please note that any information you will provide will be treated as confidential and therefore will not be divulged to anyone without your consent. Note that your participation is voluntary, meaning to say you are free to pull out at any time should you feel uncomfortable during the course of the study.

Signature of researcher..... Date.....

I ..... Have read and understood the contents and terms of this invitation to participate in this study. I hereby declare that I am voluntarily participating in this research.

Participant signature..... Date.....

## Appendix B: Interview guide for in-depth interviews

1. How old are you?
2. What is your marital status?
3. What is your migration status and type of permit if you are documented?
4. What is your employment status and type of occupation if you are employed?
5. What is your highest level of education?
6. What were the factors that led you to migrate from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg?
7. What may be the reason behind the increase in the migration of women from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg?
8. Were there any challenges encountered in the process of making a decision to move and also when you were migrating?
9. What challenges do you face as a female immigrant in Johannesburg?
10. What are the factors contributing to your vulnerability as a young Zimbabwean female immigrants?
11. Are there any laws/policies/structures/organisations that protect young Zimbabwean female immigrants from abusive practices?
12. What are the coping strategies you use to cope with the challenges you face as an immigrant and as a woman?
13. What strategies can be used to address the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants?



## Appendix C: Focus group discussion guide

1. What are the factors leading to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg?
2. Which factors contribute to the increase in the migration of women from Zimbabwe to Johannesburg?
3. Are there any social connections or information sources that help young Zimbabwean female immigrants with the information about opportunities in Johannesburg?
4. Are there challenges encountered by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in the process of moving to Johannesburg, South Africa? (Elaborate)
5. What are the challenges faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg (in the workplace, community and household)? (Explain)
6. What are the factors contributing to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg?
7. Are there any laws/policies/structures/organisations that protect young Zimbabwean female immigrants from abusive practices? (Explain)
8. Which coping mechanisms are used by young Zimbabwean female immigrants to cope with their vulnerable situation? (Explain).
9. What are the strategies that can be used to address the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants? (Elaborate)

## **Appendix D: In-depth interview guide for the migration experts**

1. Which company/organization are you representing?
2. What is your occupation?
3. What is your marital status?
4. How old are you?
5. How many years have you been involved in migration issues?
6. In your own opinion what are the factors contributing to the migration of young Zimbabwean female immigrants to Johannesburg?
7. What are the challenges faced by young Zimbabwean female immigrants?
8. What are the factors that contribute to the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants in Johannesburg?
9. Are there any laws/policies/structures/organisations that protect young Zimbabwean female immigrants from abusive practices?
10. What is your organization doing in order to minimise the vulnerability by young Zimbabwean female immigrants?
11. What strategies can be used to address the vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female immigrants?

**Appendix E: Ethical clearance letter**

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

**NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:  
Ms R Chinyakata**

**Student No:  
11605723**

**PROJECT TITLE: An investigation of the  
vulnerability of young Zimbabwean female  
immigrants in Johannesburg, South Africa.**

**PROJECT NO: SHS/17/GYS/07/1906**

**SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS**

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Dr NR Raselekoane	University of Venda	Promoter
Dr TJ Mudau	University of Venda	Co- Promoter
Ms R Chinyakata	University of Venda	Investigator – Student

**ISSUED BY:  
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Date Considered: June 2017

Decision by Ethical Clearance Committee Granted

Signature of Chairperson of the Committee: 

Name of the Chairperson of the Committee: Prof. G.E. Ekosse



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