

Zimbabwean teachers in South Africa: their needs and advice to prospective migrant teachers

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Abstract

Migrants consider South Africa to be a country of greener pastures in a sub-region blighted by political and economic instability. In South Africa's education system, Zimbabwean teachers constitute the largest group of migrant teachers. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the social and professional needs of migrant Zimbabwean teachers, and their advice to prospective migrant teachers. Fifteen migrant Zimbabwean teachers in public high schools or combined schools (private schools) took part in semi-structured, face-to-face interviews. The data were analysed qualitatively using open coding. The findings of the study revealed that these migrant teachers need support to overcome difficulties in classroom management, in acquiring legal documentation, and in dealing with the issues of safety and xenophobia. The findings also revealed that the teachers were in need of induction, professional development, and social and financial support. In spite of their many needs, the migrant teachers' advice to prospective migrant teachers was that they should try their luck in South Africa.

Key words: Immigrants, migration, mobility, South Africa, Zimbabwean teachers

Introduction

In sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa is a popular choice for migrant workers from the region. However, this is not a new phenomenon as South Africa has attracted migrant workers since the late 19th century when it recruited unskilled mine and farm workers from neighbouring countries (Campbell 2010). Later, and especially in its post-apartheid era (post-1994), South Africa began to attract a diversity of workers, including highly skilled workers from a wide range of African and Eastern European countries (Adepoju 2010). Hence, Crush and Tevera (2010) comment that post-apartheid South Africa is highly attractive to all classes of migrant workers, and that migrants consider South Africa as a country of 'greener pastures' in a sub-region blighted by wars, political and economic instability. The close geographical proximity

of Zimbabwe to South Africa, with its nascent democracy, relative wealth, as well as its relative political and economic stability makes it an obvious choice for migration.

Sub-Saharan African countries alone would need to be recruit more than two million teachers in total to maintain today's teaching forces, and to make the extra effort to meet the goal of universal primary education. South Africa has been experiencing a severe teacher shortage (Keevy, Green and Manik 2014), which is confined to specific subjects, phases (De Villiers 2007), and regions (Ministerial Committee on Rural Education Report, 2005). In order to address these shortages, many countries are actively recruiting teachers, in many cases from vulnerable, small, developing states (Lederer 2010; Manik 2010). In an attempt to counter the problem of a shortage of mathematics and science teachers in South Africa, the Council of Education Ministers recruited teachers from African countries such as Zimbabwe (De Villiers 2007). According to the South African Council for Education (2011), temporary migration could be useful in giving national education systems an opportunity to return balance to the demand and supply of teachers. The current gap between teacher supply and demand in South Africa is one pull factor that encourages migrant teachers to seek employment in South African schools (Green 2014).

Zimbabwe has experienced socio-economic and political turmoil since the mid-2000s, which has led to an exodus of Zimbabwean citizens (Rutherford and Addison 2007; Worby 2010). The majority of the migrant Zimbabwean teachers arrived in South Africa between 2007 and 2009 at the peak of the Zimbabwean economic crisis in 2008. South Africa officially started recruiting Zimbabwean mathematics and science teachers around the same period, which partly contributed to the influx of Zimbabwean teachers during this period (Ranga 2013). Ranga (2013, 207) poignantly makes the point that if the South Africa education system had not accepted these teachers, 'the effects of the crisis in Zimbabwe could have had more devastating effects including the loss of lives due to hunger.' Derman and Kaarhuis (2013), and Makina (2012) recount that Zimbabwean migrants have been forced into temporary circular migration and will return for good once the crisis in Zimbabwe is resolved. In contrast, Crush, Chikanda and Tawodzera (2015) clearly state that Zimbabweans no longer see South Africa as a place of temporary economic opportunity for survival, but rather as a longer-term destination – a place to try and build a new life for themselves and their families.

Problem statement

Although Zimbabwean teachers have become an integral part of the South African education system, no research directed at their social and professional needs has been carried out. Their role in the chain migration of other Zimbabwean teachers is also under-researched. Therefore, it became imperative to carry out a study that sought to answer the following questions:

- (b) What needs do migrant Zimbabwean teachers have in their social and professional lives in South Africa?
- (a) What advice would migrant Zimbabwean teachers offer their compatriots who are considering teaching in South Africa?

The choice of Zimbabwean teachers as participants in this study was motivated by the fact that they constitute the largest percentage of migrant teachers working in South Africa's education system.

We commence this article with a discussion of the extent of the Zimbabwean diaspora in South Africa. We then briefly sketch the motivational factors underlying Zimbabwean teachers' migration to South Africa. This is followed by a brief exposition of the theoretical framework that underpinned this study, and the methodology employed in this research. The findings are presented and are subsequently analysed and discussed. The article culminates with recommendations and a conclusion.

The Zimbabwean diaspora in South Africa

Globally, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2010) estimates that about a quarter of Zimbabwe's population (three to four million) is living outside of their home country. Following the 2013 Zimbabwean elections, the country slid further backwards and failed to halt the migration tide (De Jager and Musuvu 2016). Zimbabweans living in Africa are estimated to constitute at least 2.25 million (83%) of the total Zimbabwean diaspora. Those living in Africa particularly circulate between home and neighbouring countries, including South Africa, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Mozambique. Further afield, Zimbabweans have settled in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, among others (UNDP 2010). Although Zimbabweans are to be found in almost every country across the globe, their most favoured destination is neighbouring

South Africa. South Africa alone houses an estimated two-thirds (2.12 million) of the total of migrant Zimbabweans (Makina 2012).

Trade unions in Zimbabwe have estimated that around 45 000 teachers have left the country since the beginning of the political and economic crisis (Chagonda 2012). Zimbabwean teachers arguably constitute the largest group of migrant teachers in South Africa (Campbell 2010; Crush and Tawodzera 2013; Ranga 2015). According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2013), the top five countries supplying migrant teachers to South Africa in 2010 were: Zimbabwe (61%), Ghana (9%), Nigeria (7%), Lesotho (5%), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (4%), (Daniels and Green 2014). Manik (2014) estimates the average exit figures of teachers from Zimbabwe in the period between 2000 and 2006, as given by the Progressive Teacher Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ), to arrive at a figure slightly above 40 000 Zimbabwean teachers in South Africa as of 2013. Crush, Chikanda and Tawodzera (2012) mention that up to 47% of the migrant Zimbabwean teachers in South Africa end up working in other sectors that are not education related due to non-requisite qualifications, or a lack of papers to secure employment in the education sector.

Zimbabwean teachers' motivation for migration

Professionals, including teachers, have left the Zimbabwean cauldron in large numbers since 2000. Zimbabwean teachers migrate to South Africa to escape the harsh socio-economic conditions (Chagonda 2012; Crush and Tevera 2010; Ranga 2015) prevailing in their country, triggered by what is now known as the Zimbabwean economic crisis in the years 2000 to 2008, which reached a peak in 2008 (Chagonda 2012; Ranga 2013). Makina (2010) observes that the majority of Zimbabweans who arrived in South Africa before 2001 cited economic reasons as the push factors in their migration; those arriving between 2002 and 2005 cited political persecution, and from 2005 onwards economic reasons were once again dominant.

The South African Council of Educators (SACE) (2011) states that Zimbabwean teachers are migrating to South Africa to escape from their country's political and economic woes, and are drawn to South Africa due to the country's political stability, economic prosperity, and promises of better income and working conditions. SACE (2011) further argues that migrant Zimbabwean teachers are in

South Africa because they need to feed their families back in their home country, and therefore lead transnational lives characterised by regular remittances and frequent visits to their home country.

On the one hand, Manik's (2013) qualitative study of 13 immigrant Zimbabwean teachers in South Africa reveals that these teachers were economic migrants who were motivated by a desire to maximise their earning potential. On the other hand, Weda (2013), as well as Weda and Lemmer (2014) report that the Zimbabwean teachers were motivated to migrate by their need to maintain working conditions, standard of living, and social prestige that teachers as professionals expect as normative. Therefore, their motivation for migration to South Africa was to maintain and/or to regain a standard of living and a level of social prestige that they deemed they deserved but could not accomplish without migrating. Ranga's (2015) quantitative study of Zimbabwean teachers in South Africa reveals that economic reasons (i.e. inadequate salaries) superseded political reasons (i.e. political violence or repression) in the following three periods – arrival before 2008, in the year 2008, and after 2008. Although political reasons were the second most mentioned motivation for the teachers' migration to South Africa, he argues that the underlying cause of the Zimbabwean crisis is political, even though it has economic, political, and social ramifications.

Theoretical framework

This research used the Transnational Theory as the theoretical framework, and drew support from a study of migration networks. Migration is viewed as a process in which migrants build, reinforce, and maintain multiple linkages with their country of origin, transit, and destination. According to the Transnationalism Theory, migrants maintain ties with their homeland and may migrate between national borders and across different social systems and cultures. The migrants are therefore neither uprooted from their source country, nor are they moored in any state (Brettell 2008). A transnational community is a system of institutions, networks, and relations that connect people (migrants and non-migrants) in both the host and source countries. These connections may include shared ideas, long lasting and stable ties based on solidarity, as well as beliefs and symbols (Heisler 2008). Leading multi-sited, transnational lives means that interactions and exchanges across borders are a regular

part of migrants' realities and activities. These exchanges may take the form of values, practices, and political and economic contributions (International Organization for Migration 2010).

Networks comprise the connections maintained by migrants with both their communities of origin and their new communities of residence. A migration network can be defined as a composite, interpersonal web of relations in which migrants interact with their family and/or friends (Haug 2008). Social networks provide a foundation for the dissemination of information, as well as for patronage or assistance. Therefore, while pioneering migrants usually have to overcome exceptionally high costs and greater risks involved in migration because they do not have migration networks to count on, later, cohorts of migrants face far fewer challenges in comparison. Informal networks help migrants to finance their travel, to find a job, or even accommodation (Haug 2015).

The networks of personal relations between migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin, transit and destination countries increase the probability of international labour migration, which promotes circular migration and chain migration (Boyd 1989). In chain or sequential migration, previous migrants send back information, knowledge, and resources to would-be migrants to assist them with migration costs (Harzig et al. 2009). Chain migration is important because it encourages more migration and highlights how current migration is dependent on the past history of migration (Wegge 2009). Past migration flows usually have long term effects on the decision of future migrants to migrate.

Research design and methodology

A qualitative research approach within an interpretive paradigm was used to explore the two research questions that were posed.

The sample and participants: The population of this study comprised 15 migrant Zimbabwean teachers teaching in Gauteng (a province in South Africa) schools. Convenient and purposive sampling was used to select the teachers in this Province. The province of Gauteng was selected because it has the highest amount of Zimbabwean teachers. The sampling was convenient as the teachers were chosen from schools in Gauteng that were easily accessible and relatively near the researchers' place of employment. The purposive selection criteria were that the

teachers should have at least one year's teaching experience in South African schools; at the time of the study be teaching at a public secondary (high) school or combined (private) school (anywhere in Grades 8 to 12); and that they should be foreign teachers trained in Zimbabwe. Another criterion was to include a more or less equal number of men and women to achieve heterogeneity. Snowball sampling (chain referral sampling) was also followed where successive participants were named by a preceding individual (Nieuwenhuis 2009), but were difficult to locate (Castillo 2009).

The research instrument and data collection: The teachers took part in in-depth, semi-structured, face-to-face phenomenological interviews that helped to gain insight into their social and professional needs, as well as the advice that they would give to prospective migrant teachers. Semi-structured interviews have the advantage of allowing the researcher to obtain detailed responses from the participants through probing (Cresswell 2008). The benefits of the in-depth phenomenological approach are the richness and the depth of insight gained to answer the research questions that are being investigated (Koopman 2013).

The interview schedule consisted of open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questions were developed to solicit the teachers' demographic information (gender, age, marital status, qualifications, and years of teaching experience in South Africa, Zimbabwe and other countries, positions within the schools, subjects that they were teaching); the teachers' advice to others considering teaching in South Africa; and the migrant teachers' needs in terms of professional, social, financial and induction support. The length of the single interviews ranged from 32 to 60 minutes per participant. The research complied with the ethical guidelines laid down by the researchers' universities for educational research, including voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, trust, and safety in participation.

The data analysis procedure: The audio-taped interviews were transcribed verbatim, where after the data were analysed qualitatively through open coding. Concepts were grouped together into categories and themes, and inductive codes emerged from the data (Nieuwenhuis 2008).

Validity and reliability: The participants were not known to the researchers. The research instrument was validated by two experts in the field and piloted before it was used in the main study. Based on the feedback from the pilot study, the interview questions were revised. Redundancies and ambiguities were removed to improve

clarity in the formulation of the questions in the interview schedule. To ensure trustworthiness, the interviews were recorded with an audio-recorder in order to obtain accurate and relatively complete records (Rule and John 2011). The transcriptions were then also checked by the participants.

Findings and discussion

Profile of the Zimbabwean teachers

Most of the Zimbabwean teachers who participated in this study arrived in South Africa more or less when the economic crisis in Zimbabwe was at its peak, around 2008 (Ranga 2013). Six teachers arrived in 2007, followed by three teachers in 2006, and two teachers in 2008 and 2010 respectively. Two teachers arrived in 2005 and 2009 respectively.

Fifteen teachers, seven males and eight females, were interviewed in this study. Thirteen of the participants were married, one was widowed, and one was divorced. Their ages ranged from 35-58, and 11 of the teachers were in their 40s. The majority of the teachers (14) indicated that they were parents.

Twelve teachers who migrated to South Africa did so as part of their first emigration experience, while three teachers had previously migrated to other countries. Most of the participants were well-qualified as a professional profile of the teachers indicated that ten of them had Bachelor's degrees, two had Master's degrees, and three had Doctoral degrees as their highest academic qualification. Fourteen teachers also held a Diploma in Education. The teachers' qualifications were mainly obtained from universities in Zimbabwe, with a few from South Africa and Cuba.

Ten teachers were teaching in public secondary schools, and five in combined (private) schools at the time of this study. Ten of the teachers were temporarily employed. This mirrors an earlier observation by the Department of Higher Education (DHET, 2013) report, which indicates that only 9% of migrant teachers in South Africa are employed in a permanent capacity. Green (2014) speculates that this

Table 1. Profile of the participating migrant Zimbabwean teachers

Pseudonyms of teachers	Gender	Age	Type of school currently teaching in	Teaching experience in SA* schools (Years)	Number of SA schools participants have taught in
Mlamuleli	Male	53	Public	10	1
Anacleta	Female	35-40	Public	8	5
Chipo	Female	45-50	Combined	6	1
Mandlenkosi	Male	42	Public	8	1
Simba	Male	40	Public	5	4
Collins	Male	40	Combined	8	2
Themba	Male	42	Public	10	5
Maria	Female	42	Public	4	5
Langa	Female	43	Public	7	1
Gamuchirai	Female	47	Combined	10	4
Gladys	Female	40	Public	8	5
Munyaradzi	Male	44	Combined	8	1
Sithembile	Female	51	Public	5	3
Nomsa	Female	40-45	Combined	7	2
Tongai	Male	58	Public	8	3

*: South African

scenario is due to the consequences of the temporary residence status or temporary work permits that migrant teachers may hold.

The majority of the participants were experienced teachers as the number of years taught in South African schools ranged from four to ten years, and on average, each teacher had taught in three different schools. At the time of the interviews, eleven of the teachers had more years of teaching experience in Zimbabwe than in South Africa (see Table 1). According to the DHET (2013) report, the subjects listed most frequently as teaching specialisations of employed migrant teachers in public schools include English, mathematics, Afrikaans, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences and geography. The majority of the migrant teachers (14) were teaching mathematics and science related subjects (Life Sciences, Physical Sciences and Natural Sciences) at the time of this study. These teachers indicated that they could teach more than one subject, while 13 teachers indicated that they were teaching the subjects that they were trained to teach.

Zimbabwean teachers' advice to other prospective migrant teachers

To come or not to come?

On whether the participants would advise other migrant teachers to consider teaching in South African schools, their responses fell into three categories: positive, negative, and neutral.

The majority of the teachers (9) responded positively. The Zimbabwean teachers' main reasons as to why they would advise other teachers to consider teaching in South Africa included pull factors such as the opportunity for professional development, higher salaries, the similarity of the subjects and the content of the curricula, and better living conditions in South Africa. One of the participants, Collins, would advise other foreign teachers to migrate to South Africa only if they had the relevant qualifications and skills. He said, 'It depends on the qualification of that person [...] if he doesn't have that special skills, then it will be a mountain to climb, especially today considering the unemployment rate [...] and the economy of South Africa is going down.' Nomsa would advise them to migrate to South Africa at their own risk 'because situations are not anymore the same as in 2008' when there was an urgent need for migrant teachers.

Only two teachers, Mlamuleli and Themba, responded negatively. Mlamuleli explained that his advice was based on the fact that he sometimes got a feeling of insecurity and that he was not wanted in his job. According to him, few foreign teachers' are employed on a permanent contract. Themba, basing his advice on his experiences, explained that getting a job and establishing oneself as a migrant teacher in South Africa was 'not a stroll in the park'.

Four teachers' responses were neutral. Maria said 'Yes' because there are some benefits to migration. Alternatively, she also said 'No' because she considered the system to be rigid, and according to her, it does not accommodate foreign teachers so easily. She further explained that it was easier to get a job in a private school than in a public school, but then most private schools were bent on exploiting these migrant teachers. Sithembile found it difficult to say if other foreign teachers should migrate or not, but she would definitely inform them that the salaries are better than in Zimbabwe. Mandlenkosi said that besides informing them about what the positions available, he would not encourage or discourage them from migrating as other teachers might think that 'I'm closing the doors for them and want to enjoy the fruits of South Africa for myself'. Gladys said she would advise foreign teachers to think twice before migrating to South Africa. According to her, the whole migration process involves a lot of work, a lot of money, and many frustrations. She had experienced rejection as a foreigner several times when looking for a job eight years previously, and thus explained, 'You would suffer a lot if you come to South Africa now [...] but it is still a greener pasture'.

Practical advice to prospective and new migrant teachers

The teachers were asked what practical advice concerning teaching in South African schools they would give to prospective migrant teachers/newly arrived migrant teachers before and once they have arrived in South Africa. There were numerous aspects that fell within the realm of the migrant teachers' advice to other teachers, for example: classroom management, legal documentation, safety and xenophobia. Other minor advisory matters included particularity, work ethics, education systems and curricula, accommodation, pension, privacy, and cultural diversity. This section will focus on three categories shared by most of the teachers.

Classroom management

The majority of the teachers felt disempowered in dealing with a lack of discipline in South African classroom. Ten teachers experienced the same discipline problems in the classrooms of public schools. Their advice to prospective migrant teachers was therefore that 'Learners are not as disciplined as those in Zimbabwe'. The teachers described the learners as 'disruptive', 'ill-disciplined', 'difficult to control', 'disrespectful', 'rude', 'awkward behaviour' and 'undermining the authority of teachers'. Langa, whose first-year teaching experience was quite a shock to her - to the extent that it seriously affected her health, advised prospective teachers to be patient with the learners and to show them love. She advised them to understand that the learners could be mean and disrespectful to migrant teachers, as she once experienced. She gave an anecdote in which a boy asked her in class: 'Is it true when you go to buy a loaf of bread, you have to put the money in a wheelbarrow?' The learners knew the Zimbabwean dollar was worth nothing and they all start laughing, which disrupted the lesson.

The participants also advised that learners in South Africa are more familiar with their teachers and there is a much closer social distance between the teacher and the learner. In contrast, the learners in Zimbabwe always want to maintain a space between the teacher and themselves. Themba put it as follows: 'There is a very clear line of demarcation even in interaction'.

The advice from Simba was that teachers in Zimbabwe believe that 'discipline and academic success go hand in glove, but this does not exist in South Africa'. Prospective migrants were warned that the learners and teachers in South Africa do not seem to appreciate the need for discipline in achieving academic success. Therefore, according to the participants, discipline is valued much less in South Africa than in Zimbabwe. In relation to this, Langa stated that while the learners in Zimbabwe are very motivated and teachers 'don't have to force or beg them to do their homework', in South Africa, it is different – South African learners have to be begged and cajoled into doing their work.

Chipo issued a warning to prospective migrant teachers to be tougher with the learners than they would be in Zimbabwe, but to be even more careful to uphold the rights of the learners in South Africa. These pieces of advice on classroom management seemed to be aimed at preparing prospective teachers for a great lack of discipline in South Africa. This resonates with the findings of a qualitative study

carried out by Vandeyar, Vandeyar and Elufisan (2014), which reported that learners in South Africa were disrespectful not only to migrant teachers, but to all teachers.

Legal documentation

A common experience among the participants was the struggle to acquire and renew the necessary legal documentation to stay and work in South Africa. Maria warned other teachers to ‘start legally, and make sure you have all your papers.’ Nomsa advised prospective migrant teachers to have all the necessary documents so as to avoid being exploited. She explained, ‘Try and get a job in public schools because it is better than private schools.’ Sisulu, Moyo and Tshuma (2007) also contend that most of the migrant teachers in South Africa are in extremely exploitative circumstances in private schools, either in receiving low salaries with little recourse for legal action (as they lack legal status), or not being paid at all. The same negative experience of migrant teachers is corroborated by Manik (2014). Hungwe (2013) indicates that almost 26% of Zimbabwean migrants are illegally living and working in South Africa, 50% of whom entered South Africa illegally the first time.

Safety and xenophobia

Xenophobia and safety were challenges in the participants’ stay in South Africa. The participants advised that xenophobia in South Africa is real and is something the prospective teachers must always keep in mind in order to be safe. Tongai and Chipso warned prospective migrant teachers to keep themselves safe and to avoid places where there is crime and xenophobia. The majority of the participants lived in constant fear of the next flare up of xenophobic violence, which affected the forms of public transport that they used and their choice of residence and work. Gamuchirai’s fear was visible when she mentioned, ‘You don’t know if you would survive the next xenophobic attack’. For safety reasons, some of the migrant teachers who participated in this study were not willing to be classified as Zimbabwean. This is in keeping with Hungwe’s (2013) contention that the Zimbabweans feel motivated to conceal their identities as Zimbabweans still face xenophobia on a daily basis (Crush and Tawodzera, 2011).

The participants also warned prospective migrant teachers to expect xenophobia, even within schools since they had experienced xenophobic slurs from both their colleagues and learners. Once the learners knew that the teachers were

migrants, they intentionally called them ‘kwerekwere¹’ which is an antagonistic label. Vandeyar, Vandeyar and Elufisan (2014) report that migrant Zimbabwean teachers are often ascribed the group labelling of ‘kwerekwere’. Similarly, Manik (2013) reveals that Zimbabwean immigrant teachers experience xenophobic attitudes and behaviour in schools in South Africa and in society at large. One reason for these xenophobic attacks is that many South Africans perceive migrants from African countries as competitors for resources and available jobs (Hassim, Kupe and Worby 2008). There is a tendency for locals in various countries to blame migrants for ‘job-snatching’ (Kalitanyi and Visser 2010), which is also the case in South Africa. The Southern African Immigration Project (2008) reported that 85% of the participants believed that migrants were stealing their jobs. The warning to prepare for xenophobia is therefore a valid and important one.

Zimbabwean teachers’ needs

Professional development support

Although the schools provided these migrant teachers with professional development workshops from time to time, ten of the teachers in the present study indicated that they rather prefer professional support in terms of topics such as new trends in education, assessment, leadership and curriculum issues. Chipso, Simba and Mlamuleli felt that they needed to be trained in the new curricula. Simba explained ‘for us coming from another system into a new system, I think it is necessary’. Both Themba and Collins considered the teaching profession to be a dynamic job that requires continuous training. Collins said, ‘The system is always changing. Training will be an ongoing process, but it doesn’t have to be over exaggerated.’ Gladys explained that she needed professional development support in terms of collegiality with the people around her. Munyaradzi did not see himself growing in his under-resourced school; he therefore preferred a technologically advanced school to the one that he taught at. Vandeyar, Vandeyar and Elufisan (2014) echo the urgent need for professional development support programmes that are especially designed to help migrant teachers with the successful reconstruction of their professional identities.

Social support

The participants expressed the need for social support in their integration into the communities where they lived and worked, for example, they found it difficult to make new friends with South African colleagues. Gamuchirai indicated that she had friends outside the school, but not necessarily at the school. Gladys said that she had friends at work and church, but they were not ‘real friends’. She found it difficult to associate with people who were strangers, and ‘would like people who share the same passions and cultures’. Tongai, alternatively, had more South African friends than Zimbabwean friends.

Mlamuleli expressed that he had no social life because he felt that it was better to stay at home and be safe. He said that he felt harassed every time he went to Johannesburg to do shopping as he was stopped by the police and searched or asked for identification. This shows that the migrant teachers’ feelings regarding safety played an important role in their ability to make friends and integrate properly into South African society. In terms of transport, Sithembile contented, ‘You are only safe in your own car; you do not use public transport.’ Foreign teachers’ safety is not guaranteed, and ‘is a worry’ for Simba.

Many migrant teachers do not fully know what their rights are as employees in South Africa, and feel an urgent need to have union representation. ‘When you get a real problem you don’t know where to go’ said Nomsa, who also argued that migrant teachers should also be integrated into South African teacher unions. Mlamuleli explained that no one is standing up for the rights of foreign teachers. According to Munyaradzi, there is an urgent need for somebody to look into the welfare of migrants in terms of salaries. The Zimbabwean immigrant teachers felt that they were not being paid the same salary as South African teachers as their experience in Zimbabwe was not recognised and they were prone to exploitation. The expertise and high qualifications of immigrant Zimbabwean teachers was not rewarded as far as they were concerned. Tongai explained that migrant teachers feel that all foreign teachers should be rewarded for their qualifications and experience, ‘You are employed on the basis of your first degree. No experience is taken into consideration’ he explained. Sithembile mirrored these views and added that in private schools, the discrimination was even worse. Manik (2014) states that migrant teachers’ salaries are not the same as those of South African teachers because the former mostly occupy temporary and not permanent positions at schools.

Zimbabweans have also had problems accessing health facilities (Hungwe 2013). The majority of Zimbabwean teachers who were appointed on a temporary basis did not belong to any medical scheme. Munyaradzi described her treatment at a hospital as unfair. She explained that, ‘Sometimes when you go to a hospital you as a foreigner must pay, but the person next to you don’t pay’.

Financial support

The migrant teachers also had a need for bursaries to continue to study and advance their qualifications. However, as Simba stated, it is very difficult for them as migrants who are mainly employed in temporary contracts to obtain bursaries. Simba had always wanted to enrol for a Master’s degree, but due to financial constraints, he kept postponing it. Mlamuleli’s intention was to develop himself further in terms of study and therefore began to pursue a Doctorate, but financially struggled and therefore did not pursue it further. The results of the current study show that the majority of the teachers (12) were busy with further studies or were interested in further studies. Mandlenkosi was working towards his second Doctorate, and believed that education was the only legitimate way to the top. Maria decided to improve her qualifications because ‘it is not easy to be promoted as a foreigner’. Chipo would have loved to study further, but she was not financially stable because she was raising two boys on her own. She also clearly stated that it was difficult for migrants to get bursaries.

Most of the participants felt the need for support to get loans from banks in order to pursue capital projects. In general, it was difficult for the teachers to successfully apply for car or home loans. In the case of Munyaradzi, the bank would not help him and informed him that ‘he will run away with the car’. Gladys’ bank refused the allocation of a 100% home loan to her and therefore she could not afford to buy a house with her salary. Furthermore, saving was difficult for the migrant teachers since many of them indicated that they had to send money to their family back in Zimbabwe. This is in keeping with the findings of Crush, Chikanda and Tawdzera (2012), who state that the vast majority of migrants’ remittances are sent to Zimbabwe for everyday household expenses.

Induction support

Nine of the participants indicated that their schools offered no induction programmes when they arrived for the first time. They expressed a dire need for proper induction

into the South African education system and into the culture of the individual schools where they were engaged. Some participants, like Chipo, considered the lack of induction programmes as the main reason for migrant teachers 'struggling' in South African schools. The narratives from some of the participants were as follows: 'You are thrown into the deep end and you learn to swim' (Mlamuleli); 'I was just thrown in the deep end and left to find my own foot on my own' (Mandlenkosi); 'It's swim or drown, so you learn really fast' (Chipo); and 'I was thrown in the deep end and I had to swim on my own. Someone in a new environment needs induction' (Collins). In South Africa, Vandeyar et al. (2014) have recommend induction programmes for migrant teachers that focus on knowledge and pedagogy of the South African landscape. Peeler and Jane (2003) also emphasise that the needs of migrant teachers and beginner teachers are very different.

Conclusion and recommendations

This paper discussed migrant Zimbabwean teachers' professional and social needs, and their advice to other migrants considering teaching in South Africa. The migrant teachers mostly needed professional support in assessment, leadership, new trends in education, and school curriculum issues. Furthermore, they needed support with regard to mechanisms to enhance their social life, in areas of safety, their rights as a transnational migrants, and medical insurance. They also needed financial support concerning bursaries for further studies, bank loans, and pleaded for the same salary as those of local South African teachers. Teacher unions have an important role to play in addressing migrant teachers' needs such as higher salaries and permanent positions. According to the migrant teachers they have been disappointingly silent on this matter. Currently teacher unions prefer addressing South African trained teachers' challenges and needs.

It is apparent from this study that Zimbabwean teachers are thrown into the deep end across countries, cultures and curricula. They were expected to start teaching almost as soon as they arrived in South Africa, without any induction programme. The majority of the teachers therefore found it difficult to cope in South African schools. We concur with Manik (2014) that South Africa must realise that Zimbabwean migrant teachers are filling a critical skills gap. Therefore, both the

South African government and the Department of Education should affirm migrant teachers' value.

Despite these needs, most of the participants in this study considered South Africa to be a 'greener pasture' in comparison to Zimbabwe. South Africa offers them excellent opportunities for higher salaries, similar curricula content and subjects, as well as better living conditions. It is not surprising, therefore, that the main thrust of their advice to prospective migrant teachers is that they should try their luck in South Africa. The participants, however, alerted prospective migrant teachers to challenges like classroom management, legal documentation frustration, a lack of safety, and the xenophobia that they are likely to face. They also gave them some advice on how to face these challenges.

The next cohort of migrant teachers to South Africa could be greatly influenced by the experiences and advice that they receive from the present group of migrant teachers. The participants in this research were part of a migrant cohort that migrated from Zimbabwe to South Africa in the past decade (2001-2010). As migrant teachers already in South Africa, they were prepared to share valuable information with members of their migration networks. In accordance with Haug's (2015) view, this information, once shared, could lower the cost of migration and could reduce its risks for prospective migrant teachers. With this information, prospective migrant teachers could thus make better informed decisions and weigh the cost-benefit of migration more accurately.

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Notes

1. Kwerekwere: is the derogatory term used by Black South Africans to describe non-South African blacks. It refers to Black immigrants from the rest of Africa.

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