



TOWARDS A PERSPECTIVE FOR UNDERSTANDING ANALYSIS OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION OF FEMALE LABOUR FROM ZIMBABWE TO SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract: *The main objective of this paper was to give a broader perspective of irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa. The paper is premised on a broader study carried out on three provinces of Zimbabwe, namely Masvingo, Manicaland and Matabeleland. Employing a qualitative approach, the paper shows the multidimensional perspectives of migration in general and the specific perspectives relating to irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa.. The paper shows how irregular migration can be understood as a flow process. Furthermore, we come up with a Ten Ideas Matrix for defining and understanding irregular migration. In the paper, we also develop a comprehensive framework which is an amalgamation of GIS, theoretical as well as empirical literature to help us to hypothesize probable drivers of irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Labour migration is old as humankind and there are more than 100 million migrant workers living and working around the globe.¹ Zimbabwe is no exception to this trend with labour migrants located in more than 122 countries around the world (Chikanda and Crush, 2018). The

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/labour-migration-and-inclusive-development-setting-course-success>



most preferred destination remains South Africa with approximately 3 to 5 million Zimbabwean migrants (IOM, 2020). In fact, Zimbabweans migration² into South Africa dates back to early 1850s when the plantations in Natal, the diamond mines in Kimberly and the gold mines in the Witwatersrand, were attractive job markets for Zimbabweans (Mlambo, 2010). One interesting characteristic of cross-border migration between Zimbabwe and South Africa is that it has historically been only a male activity because of mainly two factors. First, prior to independence women travelling on their own to South Africa was regarded as risky and dangerous expedition. Secondly, migration was rigorously regulated by the requirements of the South African mines for labour from north of the Limpopo River.³

However the 21st century started seeing the upsurge of female migrants to South Africa. For instance by 2005 women represented 44 percent of total Zimbabwean migrants (Crush et al. 2012). This is also corroborated by Lefko Everett (2007). The rising feminization of Zimbabwean migration is the result of two main factors. First since 1990 there has been an overall increase in international migration from Zimbabwe due to “an economy in free-fall, soaring inflation and unemployment, the collapse of public services, political oppression, and deepening poverty” (Crush and Tevera 2010). Second, in the last two decades, the role of Zimbabwean women has evolved to that of a breadwinner and the need for additional income for family survival dissipated the fear of leaving families and children behind to travel outside of Zimbabwe. In brief, migration to South Africa emerged as one of the coping strategies to deal with the economic hardships for several women in Zimbabwe.

Another worth-noting aspect of Zimbabwe migration to South Africa is that a substantial part of it takes the form of irregular migration. Irregular migration nomenclature is broad. To have an understanding of what irregular migration is, it is prudent to be acquainted with several ways to irregularity, Uehling (2004 as will be highlighted in the next section. Besides this, there is also a tendency of circularity in the irregular migration patterns which is largely unregulated among the female labour migrants. However, this subject remains under researched.

² There is also transit migration in South Africa through Zimbabwe, but this type of migration is not under the scope of this proposal.

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<https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1121&context=samp>



For this paper the definition for irregular migrants with respect to female labour will encompass part of ideas from Jordan and Düvell (2002:15). They define illegal migrant as someone ‘crossing borders without proper authority, or violating conditions for entering another country’. This study will look at those female labour who skipped the border into South Africa without proper authority or violating conditions of entering South Africa as pointed by Jordan and Düvell (2002). Furthermore, routes to irregularity highlighted by Uehling (2004) will also be used to define irregular migrants. Thus the working definition of ‘irregular migrants’ the study will adopt is also consistent with definition used by Chappell et al (2011) in an IPPR background paper to ETUC as it captures the points we just indicated.

Though irregular migration is common among both male and female labour migrants, due to factors like the complexity of immigration laws, lack of passports and bureaucratic difficulties characterising the migration process and social networks irregular female migrants are more vulnerable to abuse such as extortion, abandonment, theft, physical violence, gender-based violence during the transit phase, at arrival as well as during their stay in the foreign country (Araia, 2009). Mawadza (2008) in a study of migration to South Africa by Zimbabweans explores in detail vulnerabilities of undocumented migrants.

Several studies have reiterated that irregular female migrants are more vulnerable to hardships in the form of sexual abuse, human rights abuses and violations, exclusion from the formal labour market in the destination countries so that they are confined to low status, low paid and/or isolated work which increases their vulnerability to HIV&AIDS. Brummer (2002), in a study for Ghana corroborates this point of view.

Despite the high vulnerability and risk experienced, the penchant for irregular migration by Zimbabwean women is insatiable. Whilst there is an acknowledgement of growing numbers of women participating in migration as some of the researches above indicate, a gap however exists in explaining what really motivates Zimbabwean irregular female migrant to travel to South Africa as well as what are the socio-economic consequences of such migration, at the household level.



1.1 Objectives of the study

This paper is part of a broader main study titled, ‘*Socio-economic drivers and impact of irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa.*’ The main objective of the paper is to give a broader perspective of irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa. Besides, it also seeks to;

- Develop a comprehensive framework on the probable drivers of irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa.
- Analyse the importance of Geographic Information System (GIS), theoretical as well as empirical perspectives in helping us conjecture probable drivers of irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

In trying to understand the phenomena of irregular migration there is no single school of thought. Instead there are many motivated by different circumstances and persuasions which try to aid our understanding of this complex social phenomena. The theories we will examine under this section help us to conceptualise the role different factors have in an attempt to explain irregular migration dynamics. In turn, these help us to understand the irregular female labour migrants from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

2.1.1 The Gap Hypothesis

The origin of the Gap Hypothesis is attributable to the works of Cornelius et al (1994). There are also other seminal contributions to the Gap Hypotheses as cited in Echeverria (2020, p.42). These include; Castles 2004; Cornelius and Rosenblum 2005; Joppke 1998; Zolberg 2000 among other authorities. These contributions offer either diverging or converging views to the gap hypotheses. From the authors, irregular migration is premised on the mismatch between national goals of immigration policy on one hand and the resulting outcomes of these policies. Thus for the authors, irregular migration is thus a product of weak state capabilities to deal with issues such as administration, political, economic and others. These failures then create fertile ground for clandestine migration to also take place.

Gaps often cited in literature relating to the Gap Hypotheses include;



- the discursive gap
- implementation gap
- efficacy gap
- epistemological gap

2.1.2 Irregular Migration as a result of State Failure

This school of thought submits that irregular migration occurs due to failures evidenced in the state to manage the phenomena of migration making it imperative for people to opt for irregular migration as a means to cope. Thus in terms of controlling as well as experiences states differ in their capacities across economies. This has also led to different outcomes in different spaces. Besides, the controlling capacities states have different political systems which in turn influences also the capacity to be able to manage the phenomena of migration. They are three approaches to explaining irregular migration due to failure by the state.

Firstly it may be due to intrinsic limitations of states and policies. Quite a number of scholars highlight some of the reasons to the failures by the state due to this. These include lack of accurate knowledge so as to act appropriately (Bommes and Kolb 2002; Freeman 1995; Scott 1998, 2008 cited in Echeverria (2020, p.48). They are also reasons why the state fails. Under the same reasons also, issues of material and financial resources to properly manage migration pressures also lead to state failure. For instance, huge financial plans were made during Trump's administration so as to build wall on the Mexico border. The same could also be said of South Africa which has made efforts to erect a fence along border with Zimbabwe. The fence to date has been tampered with.

The second view of the failure of the state comes from factors which are external and are beyond control of the state. These include phenomena of globalization and its dimensions including economic as well political among others. For instance, globalization has led to societies becoming much more connected resulting in the ease of demand for labour as well as its mobility to where it is required. For instance, a country such as Bangladesh is known to a source of cheap labour to countries such as those in Middle East, Mauritius among others. Owing to globalization, these nationalities have been able to migrate to these regions.



The third view is looks at factors such as role of the informal economy, role of migration agency as well as internal social constraints. Informal economy has existed for long in different economies. It has been easier for irregular migrants to seek refuge in this sector as it offers more flexibility to migrants of an irregular status. Furthermore, informal sector is an easier avenue for irregular migrants to be able to also network better with others of a similar status than the formal economy. On the other hand, migration agency looks at the view that migrants actually partake in irregular migration consciously. To be able to do this, they devise several means and strategies to be able to survive. Engbersen (2001) highlights some of the strategies including crime, dubious marriages, social capital and others.

Internal constraints focuses on existing local conditions which render control policies ineffective, encouraging irregular migration in the process through creating loopholes in enforcement. For example law enforcers can become compassionate to irregular migrants so that they can exercise leniency towards them. This behavior encourages irregular migration at the end of the day.

2.1.3 Irregular Migration as a result of State Choice

Proponents of this school of thought have a much positive view of the state in its capacities to control migration of people. The hypotheses is aligned to ideas of Marxism on migration in the 1970s. Much work on this hypotheses was popularized in the 1990s. Authorities in support of this school of thought include; Caplan and Torpey (2001); Freeman (1995); Joppke (1998) among others. Thus the main line of thinking is that states are in charge and at some point allow some degree of irregular migration. There are several perspectives to irregular migration under this including, state imperatives, governmentality techniques as well as social demands emanating from society.

For instance, when the state is viewed as a broker of societies' demands , the understanding is that the state plays a key role of balancing interests from several groups of the society who are mostly voters, groups and state actors as highlighted by Freeman (1995). It is also important to note that different political systems also influence by the end of the day how government will respond to interests of different groups in the society.



On the other hand, the governmentality techniques looks at how governments apply different strategies so as to be able to instill discipline in mobility of populations across borders. This results in different statuses in migrants, duties and responsibilities as well as categorization of migrants (Chavez, 2007; Inda, 2006; Vasta, 2011) due to use of various laws and controls (techniques) by the government.

2.1.4 Critical Analysis of Theoretical Literature on Irregular Migration

Theories we have explored give us the basis upon which we understand and appreciate irregular migration. However, to what extent can they help us understand irregular migration by female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa ? To what extent do they explain reality obtaining for the phenomena we are studying as well as the context? Real irregular migration experiences do they conform to the theoretical underpinnings of these models? In this section, we carry out a critique of the main models explored above.

The hypotheses explored above are very important in aiding us have a picture of dynamics of irregular migration. Most importantly we are able to partially relate to our context of study whereby we are exploring female labour irregular from Zimbabwe to South Africa. For example, the hypotheses of State Failure as a trigger for irregular migration is very applicable to Zimbabwe. Most often, the state has struggled to be able to provide for its inhabitants. Failure has manifested in terms of deteriorating economic conditions often characterised by high inflation, deindustrialisation, high unemployment as well as growing poverty in the masses. State failure hypotheses relates well to Zimbabwe, in fact migrating Zimbabweans are under what authorities such as Crush et al (2015) call ‘Migrants in Countries in Crises’. The crisis resonates well with failure by the Zimbabwean state to offer livelihoods to Zimbabweans forcing migration in the process. Furthermore, the on -going crisis has actually diminished the state’s capacity to deal with problems in the domestic economy, triggering state failure. Crush et al (2015) is also corroborated by van de Klauuw (2009) and Linde (2011). They further indicate that Zimbabwe case study has become a template for studying mixed migration hence making it a special case. As a result using the above hypotheses only to fully understand irregular migration will not be enough.



The hypotheses of irregular migration as Choice of State should be treated with a grain of salt. To us, there is *over inflation* of the role and capacity of the state with respect to managing migration flows. The hypotheses gives us a picture of capabilities of the state to be able to manage migration flows. So the fact that irregular migration exists itself is a slap on the face for this theoretical supposition. Existence of irregular migration lays bare indirectly limitations of the state, hence it cannot be a choice. Irregular migration from a source to a destination often does not portray a good picture about the sending country. It often gives a picture of a government which has failed its people and hence it cannot be said to be a Choice of the State. No rational State can choose to fail.

Irregular migration is not a recent phenomenon, it has been in existence for long. The body of theoretical literature we have examined gained much prominence in the 2000s. The literature is evolving with dynamism of this social phenomena and hence still growing. On the other side of the coin, irregular migration has been there for long. This raises an important question. Can the theories suffice to adequately annotate for contemporary irregular migration flows both in size and volume as those evident in Zimbabwe or other contexts? This creates another ‘Gap’ again which needs to be understood. Trying to properly fit these *fresh* theories to this old phenomena is akin to attempting to *squaring* a circle. Not much justice will be done.

In line with the above, thus the theories of irregular migration cannot be used in isolation to help us understand irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa. They do not suffice. On their own, they lack a *completeness* to give us a full understanding and comprehension of irregular migration. Irregular migration is a complex social phenomena. It becomes more complex if we confine it to a given geographical space with its own dynamics. It gets further complicated if we explore its gendered dynamics. For example, factors which might stimulate Haitians to migrate to Canada might not necessarily be similar to the ones which may motivate Venezuelans to migrate to Colombia or Ecuador. Relying thus on the above hypotheses will only give us a myopic view of this complex phenomena.

To add on to the above, if we explore irregular migration of Zimbabwe as our context with the lenses of the above hypotheses alone it will not be enough. Migration patterns in particular of an irregular dimension are getting mixed up. This has given rise to the term ‘*mixed migration*’. International Organisation for Migration (IOM) defines mixed migration as;



‘A movement in which a number of people are travelling together, generally in an irregular manner, using the same routes and means of transport, but for different reasons.

Our target population- irregular female labour thus cannot be understood by the hypotheses we covered alone. We need at least an all-encompassing or broad framework to help us to be able really partial out the real causes of the irregular migration flows since mixed migration patterns are escalating.

Another point of contention against the hypotheses we explored is with regards to their reliability and generalisability to different contexts. The theories are simplistic in nature, yet they are trying to explain a complex social phenomenon and have often been labelled as over ambitious by scholars such as Echeverria (2020).

On balance, the theories which we explored in trying to examine irregular migration help us to have a starting point in our study. If we look at the gendered dimension of this social phenomena, it becomes even more complex to study as it is still under researched as an area. Nevertheless these theories offer a good springboard for us to understand partial dynamics of irregular migration. To this end, we supplement the above theories with the traditional theories of migration. We give a brief summary of these theories below. These capture perspectives which will be crucial to help us understand the phenomena under study.

**Overview of mainstream theories of migration****Table 1: Summary of Theories on Migration**

Theory	Key Tenets of the Theory
Neo Classical Economics Theory	Offers a micro view of migration at individual level. Wage differentials across origin and destination countries cause outward migration towards high wages until wage parity is realised between the destinations.
New Economics of Migration Theory	Cost benefit analysis is key to determining migration at household level. Market failures at home acts as a push outwards. Relative deprivation important as households compare themselves to a reference group.
Dual Labour Market Theory	Inherent / Inbuilt structures within the economies of developed countries make them naturally attract migrants especially labour for low paying secondary sectors.
World Systems Theory	Capital development into poorer regions cause migrations especially of labour to those areas
Network Theory	Friendships, kinship ties as the basis for migration. Social capital lowers risks and costs of migration from country of origin to destination.
Cumulative Causations Theory	Social networks as well as institutions cause migration to be sustainable overtime. Migration will actually cause migration over time and space.

Source: Authors' compilation**2.1.5 Synopsis of the mainstream theories of migration**

Push Pull model of factors remain integral in helping us understand underlying traditional drivers of migration in general. This theory is important in that it helps us understand the development of empirical literature on migration such as Schmeidl (1997) as cited in Kuhnt (2019). It gives us a broad or general view of migration. It has acted as a standard template for



explaining migration flows. The framework puts emphasis on push factors as triggers of migration. Chief among the factors are economic causes which lead people to migrate to other places. Evidence is abound in support of this in many contexts in support of this school of thought. For instance, economic factors remain the basis of migration movements of people in many contexts. For example, studies by Ozkul et al (2012) examine migration movements contexts such as Asia, Africa, Europe, Middle East as well as America which are chiefly motivated by economic factors. On the other hand, Loschmann et al (2021) analyse in depth movements of Afghans to other countries due to a dearth in economic opportunities.

Neo Classical models underscore the importance of wage differentials as the basis of migration between the destination and origin countries. The theory compliments Push Pull model of migration to a large extent. The main difference however is that the former stresses much on one aspect i.e. the economic dimension in terms of wages than the later. The latter is more comprehensive in its deeper examination of the broader factors which stimulate migration.

One of the cornerstones of the Neo Classical Model is its emphasis on wage equalisation across the origin and destination as the basis upon which migration between the two points will stop. Once wages are equilibrated, then migration movements will in turn stop as there is no need to migrate. This makes the theory too simplistic. The process of migration is complex, movements by humans across frontiers is dynamic and is informed by many factors beyond wages. There are a number of other intervening factors and not necessarily wages which strongly influence migration. For example, the migration movements which occur between regions such as some parts of Mozambique bordering South Africa besides Mozambicans (Northern Province) looking for employment, the people have long standing social ties and have thus been separated by the physical borders but nevertheless remain one people (Waller, 2006). Empirical studies on Mexico for instance by McKenzie and Rapoport (2007) tendency by Mexicans to move in droves to the USA so as to link up with families. Young people including 12-18 year olds who are barely of the legal working class were most likely not to complete high school education as they make the journey to join other family members.

Despite this, Neo Classical school of thought remains important in explaining migration movements especially by expatriates , a phenomena prevalent to this day. For instance, countries such as those in Europe following Brexit, there are a lot of dynamics in the UK labour



market triggering migration movements. On the other hand, Neo Classical theories may not offer much understanding in countries where they are high levels of unemployment. For example in the case of Zimbabwe where unemployment is over 40 %, even if people have no wage, they still migrate with the hope of trying their luck in a second country . With limited options in the country of origin, individuals can still migrate without reading much on the wage disparities.

Stark and Bloom's New Economics of Migration theory stresses on the issue of cost and benefit analysis in the migration arguments at household level. Most importantly, the desire by households to insulate themselves against risks which come in life. In the theory for example, the assumption is that there are settings whereby there certain markets to help people counteract risk are not developed , so the desire is to be in those settings where at least one is insulated against those risks. However, the challenge with this theory is that migrants do not always enjoy the said markets in the destination countries. In most cases, for example Gulf States there is a lot of exploitation of migrants such that they have minimal access to the desired markets to insulate them against risk they may be running away from at home. Nevertheless migrants still migrate fully aware that they are bound to face tough times ahead.

The Network Theory explains the importance of social ties for migration to take place with less difficulty. This has been applicable to many contexts in empirical literature on migration . Empirical studies on sources of origin such as Zimbabwe, Mexico, Nigeria, Morocco and others underline the importance of existing social ties as the basis for migration. In particular past relations such as colonial ties have made mobility easier across borders. Studies on Zimbabweans include; Madebwe 2014; Dumba and Chirisa 2010; Munyoka 2020; Matose et al 2022 among others. All these studies conform to the predictions of the Network Theory.

On the other hand, Waller (2006) covers extensively migrations to South Africa from all over the world. Migrants are mixed with some from the developed world including Zimbabwe topping the least, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, Zambia and many other developing states. The author shows other migrants from countries like UK, Canada, America, China and many more. Reasons for these movements mainly include existing cultural ties which is in conformity to the Network Theory.



The Institutions Theory school of thought stresses on the role various entities play so as to address the needs of various migrants. Key functions of the institutions being to disseminate information to migrants, to provide shelter and safety as well as other needs to facilitate migration. For example, information has proven useful to migrants who embark on irregular migration via clandestine routes. This theory has been vindicated as we witness these movements for example across places such as the dreaded Mediterranean Sea, Coast of Sicily with both of these allowing migrants to access Europe. The same also applies to North Africa where migrants especially from West Africa brave the desert to access North Africa. In Southern Africa, Limpopo River is a popular route among Zimbabwean migrants who travel to South Africa clandestinely. So in all these routes, people smugglers have become well established institutions unto themselves which facilitate these dangerous journeys. Hungwe (2017) studies a sample of 58 Zimbabweans who make clandestine crossing to South Africa using the Limpopo. In the study the author pinpoints clearly the role of smugglers and human traffickers in the human smuggling value chain.

Wallerstein's (1974) World Systems Theory is important in emphasising on the existence of the core and periphery hierarchical arrangements among developing and developed countries. The key to migration in the framework being the role played by globalisation to allow migration to then take place. This theory is much more applicable to early transformation of the developed world against the undeveloped Global South. Presently, the world is becoming one global village and bringing close cooperation to take place among countries. States which were formerly the periphery are also advancing to also become stronger and powerful challenging the predictive power of the model.



2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Since, the phenomena under study itself is complex, we juxtapose literature capturing irregular as well as regular migration as we have done for the theoretical literature.

There is a massive body of empirical literature on irregular migration owing to its escalation over time and space. Some has focused on the drivers, whilst others has been preoccupied with consequences both at sending as well as receiving regions. International Organisation of Migration (2010) estimates that 10-15 % of the world's migrants are irregular. UNDP 2009 cited in Loschmann et al (2012), indicates that one third of irregular migrants are in developing countries. In addition, the study of irregular migration has thus taken a multidisciplinary approach, Echeverria, (2020).

In general, there are basically two approaches to explaining the determinants of migration as shown by Kuhnt (2019). The author indicates that there is a traditional framework for exploring determinants of migration by Schmeidl (1997). This focuses on (a) root causes which are basically the long standing push factors. Most economic factors fall under this category, (b) proximate causes, relate to mostly politically related factors and (c) looks at intervening factors, these relate to those factors that hinder or promotes migration e.g. networks. The second approach is the one used by Timmerman et al (2010) as a systematic approach to helping us understand the determinants of migration, Kuhnt (2019). These are macro, meso as well as micro level factors.

In a thesis titled *Husband Immobility and the International Migration of Married Women from Zimbabwe*, Madebwe (2014) studied outward migration of married women from Zimbabwe to destinations such as United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa among others. The study was carried out in Gweru, a city located centrally in Zimbabwe. Among outcomes of the study is the importance of social network of women as a vital trigger of migration. Furthermore, the author concluded that the married women were migrating solely as a survival strategy. In the study also, Madebwe highlights the importance of remittances sent by migrant women back home. They are used for economic and social development for instance paying fees, buying assets and household upkeep. However some women have not visited their families for a while becoming a source of conjugal friction straining relationships.



Lunga et al (2015) studied irregular migration by Zimbabweans into South Africa. Employing a qualitative approach involving document study, interviews with officials as well as illegal migrants, the study concluded that the issue of difficulty in accessing documentation has become a big argument for Zimbabwean migrants. Among other factors stimulating the outward migration by Zimbabweans the authors cite political strife, corruption and poverty as key also.

In a more recent study, using a case study research design approach Munyoka (2020) sought to investigate the triggers of contemporaneous migration of people from Mwenezi a district in Zimbabwe situated on the highway to Beitbridge the main point of entry to South Africa. The study made use of a sample of 10 respondents who undertook irregular migration to South Africa. Outcome of the study showed that key among factors leading to this migration included poverty, human rights violations, environmental factors and inaccessibility of travelling passports.

In a study for Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP), Waller (2006) explores a number of factors attracting migrants to migrate to South Africa. In the project, focus is on illegal migration and how it has posed problems to South Africa. Populations flocking into South Africa highlighted in the study including even those from well to do nations. Despite regional counterparts such as Mozambique (normally ranking first), Zimbabwe (ranked second), Lesotho, Zambians, migrants are coming from Nigeria, Senegal among others. From affluent countries they include Canada, Switzerland, China, UK and others. Waller (2006) notes a number of factors attracting people into South include; historic cultural ties (e.g. the Northern Province was demarcated without taking cognisance of existing ties between Mozambicans and the locals. As such there is constant movement as people try to link up with their kith and kin). Another pull factor is the issue of improved information communication technology which has allowed ease of communication among migrants. The author shows that a study by International Security Studies (ISS) of 2002 showed that 70 % of Nigerians interviewed in Hilbrow at least had some information prior to their coming. Essential information they will be armed with include about employment as well as chances of being apprehended by law enforcers.

In addition to the above, the author also highlights that scores of migrants to South Africa also get attracted to because of their desire to get employed in various sectors of the economy. The author highlights that a SAMP survey of (2007) highlights that nationalities from Zimbabwe,



Mozambique and Lesotho revealed during the survey that they were mostly attracted to South Africa by chances of getting employed. Employment is predominantly in sectors such as agriculture, hoteling, construction as well as domestic work.

In a more recent study about irregular migration among Zimbabwean women, Matose et al (2022) explores the driving factors of these women to Botswana. The study explores how Covid 19 itself has exacerbated the plight of women partaking in these journeys. The authors found that women are very vulnerable to attacks such as robbery, violence and all other forms of abuse. In the research, the authors call for support from stakeholders such as government so as to ensure safe migration is promoted among women.

Bloch (2006) in a research titled *Emigration from Zimbabwe: Migrant Perspectives* looks at migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa and the United Kingdom (UK). Of importance, the paper focuses on the diversity of migration patterns from Zimbabwe. According to her, migration from Zimbabwe is basically in a number of dimensions;

- Political and economic factors as well as the desire to study abroad.
- The author also cites the importance of skills mix of Zimbabweans as also an important factor as highlighted by Zinyama (2002). Zinyama observes that skills of Zimbabweans are diverse, ranging from skilled to unskilled. Skills enhance chances for migration.
- Bloch also notes that migration from Zimbabwe is also existing as irregular. Most of it being through overstaying, or rejection of asylum status.

In the migration pattern, Bloch (2006) also indicates that the phenomena is now being used by Zimbabweans as a coping strategy amongst other means for survival at household level as noted in Tevera and Zinyama (2002). In the study, Bloch (2006) uses non-probability sampling technique encompassing snowballing, advertising as well as outcropping to generate the sampling frame for the study following the recommendations of Lee (1993).

One of the findings of the research underscored the importance of educational qualifications among Zimbabweans. Bloch reveals that Zimbabweans were found to be highly qualified than most migrants during the time of the study. This finding also corroborates with studies by Chetsanga and Muchenje (2003) as well as Kirk (2004).



Furthermore, Bloch looks at the importance of ‘managed migration agenda’ as crucial for policy making. This, she argues that it helps at policy makers to be able to look at their policies in a way that is able to make migrants realise their capabilities.

Crush et al (2015) indicate that migration of Zimbabwe is mixed and is divided into three distinct phases. Most importantly is the third wave of migration which started from 2005 to date. The authors emphasise that the migration wave from Zimbabwe is *mixed* due to the fact that it is easy to separate between refugees and economic migrants in a single migration stream as well as tailoring policy responses to address this. Crush et al (2015) further indicate that van de Klauuw (2009) and Linde (2011) highlight that mixed migration streams from one country to another are not the same and hence differ from other forms of movements which happen across national frontiers. To this end, the authors thus affirm that Zimbabwe’s migration has thus become a standard case study for studying mixed migration owing to a number of factors. These include; economic and political crisis and other long standing factors. According to the authors, this is also shared by Chan and Primorac (2007); Crush and Tevera (2010); Chiumba and Musemwa (2012) and Dermon and Kaarhuis (2013).

The authors also indicate the centrality of education among Zimbabwean migrants resulting in better skills triggering migration flows by Zimbabweans to destinations such as Australia, US, Canada and others. Further, Crush et al (2015) show that particularly the third wave was triggered by the total economic collapse of 2005 onwards. Of importance in the paper, is the fact that the authors highlight that migration of Zimbabweans is also coming in as circular migration especially when it comes to South Africa as a destination. Thus the authors show that prior to the third wave of migration, Zimbabweans would normally go to South Africa and come back frequently. However, since the onset of the wave, the authors argue that 2/3 of the migrants after 2005 intend to stay longer in South Africa.

In a conference paper titled, *Of crocodiles, Magumagumas, Hyenas and Malayitshas: Zimbabweans crossing the Limpopo in Search of a Better Life in South Africa* Hungwe (2017), focuses on undocumented Zimbabweans as they brave the difficult journey to South Africa. Using a qualitative in-depth research design of 58 Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg, the author looks also at the modus operandi used by undocumented migrants in trying to get to South Africa exposing the precarious nature of the undocumented migrants. Noteworthy is also



in the paper, the author indicates that the insecurities faced by migrants at home stimulate outward migration. The outcome is to further cause insecurity of the migrants as they try to negotiate their way to South Africa. This can be in the hands of different state and non-state actors, the latter which includes human smugglers.

Hungwe (2017) argues that Zimbabwe's migration has to be understood within two approaches. Firstly, the displacement economies approach propounded by Hammar (2014). Displacement is seen by Hammar as the enforced changes across space and conditions which intermittently result in forced movement of people. Secondly, it could be understood in the framework of the New Economics of Labour Theory. In both approaches, Hungwe underscores the importance of networks in creation and sustaining of the migration movements.

A Forced Migration Program report by Kiwanka and Monson (2009) looks into migration of Zimbabweans into the greater Southern Africa. The authors try to expand knowledge about migration patterns from Zimbabwe to places such as Botswana, Malawi, Zambia as well as Mozambique. In the report, Zimbabwean migration is seen as mixed, differentiated. Besides it is also seen as occurring as circular migration and the report acknowledges growing number of women taking part in migration despite males dominating.

3. TAXONOMY OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION

There is a raging debate of unprecedented intellectual ferment as to what irregular migration actually means and constitutes. Much ink has been spilled in any attempt to understand this fascinating phenomena by humans. Thus acres of academic space have been written in trying to really understand the concept. The European Commission notes on its website that there is no definition of the phenomena which is universally acceptable, rather it depends on the origin or destination country.⁴

European Commission highlights that for the country of origin *irregularity* can be taken to mean entering into another country without valid documents. On the other hand, for the destination country *irregularity* can be thought of in terms of '... entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorisation or documents required under immigration regulations.' For

⁴ Available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/glossary/irregular-migration_en



example according to Atanackovic et al (date unavailable) irregular migration they denote as ‘illegal migration’ in Canada is viewed as, ‘... an end result of the mismatch between labour shortage in Canadian economy and skilled workers who are selected to come to Canada according to the point system.’

International Organisation for Migration (2019) defines irregular migration as movement of people usually against existing laws, regulations governing these movements either in going into a place or out of a place of origin, transit or even destination⁵. European Commission shares the same view as IOM (2019) about the absence of a universally acceptable definition of the term irregular migration.

Canadian Association for Refugees and Forced Migrations (CARFMS) on its portal includes a number of insightful definitions on the phenomena of irregular migration cited from a number of authorities.⁶ For instance they capture Newcombe (2005) who defines irregular migration as a movement that:

‘Includes a variety of movements and statuses that conflict with migration laws in both migrant-transit and migrant-receiving countries and, taken in its broadest definition, encompasses illegal entry, overstaying visas, remaining as a rejected asylum-seeker and engaging in prohibited work.’

On the other hand, another authority cited by CARFMS, Straßmayr (2012) defines irregular migration as:

”...a form of migration in which the rules of entry or residence have been disregarded at some point during the migration process. Migrants can acquire an irregular status by birth, illegal entry, and overstaying or status withdrawal.’

The term ‘irregular migration’ is often used interchangeably with the term ‘illegal migration’. Waller (2006) notes this in her definition. Waller (2006) defines irregular migrant by citing South Africa’s Immigration Act of 2002. It defines irregular migrant as follows:

⁵ Available at iom.int/key-migration-terms

⁶ Available at <http://rfmsot.apps01.yorku.ca/glossary-of-terms/irregular-migration/>



‘An illegal migrant is a foreigner who is in South Africa in contravention of the Act. Accordingly, a foreigner who has entered South Africa without proper authorisation or by fraudulent means, or who remains in South Africa beyond the date imposed by his or her visa or permit, or who engages in activities beyond the scope of what is duly authorised by his or her permit, is an illegal migrant.’

Waller goes on to further say that ‘irregular migrant’ is the term consistent with United Nations nomenclature. So in some sections ‘irregular migration’ can be understood as ‘illegal migration’. From the definition given by Waller derived from the Immigration Act of South Africa (2002) we can thus conjecture that in South Africa the process then of irregular migration is seen as, ‘entering South Africa without proper authorisation or by fraudulent means, or remaining in South Africa beyond the date imposed by your visa or permit, or engaging in activities beyond the scope of what is duly authorised by your permit.’

On the other hand, according to European Commission, Resolution 1509 of (2006) of the European Council of Parliamentary Assembly distinguished between the terms irregular and illegal migration. Thus irregular is used when denoting a ‘person’ whereas illegal is used to refer to ‘a status or process.’⁷

Crush and Williams (2001) give us further insights as well into this problem of properly defining irregular migration. They focus on explaining what an irregular migrant is. The authors argue that people are considered undocumented migrants when they cross borders without papers, by overstaying, their permits or enter with false papers.

⁷ Available at : https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/glossary/irregular-migration_en

*Several Ways to Irregularity*

Thus it can be seen that irregular migration nomenclature is overly broad. To have an understanding of what it is, it is prudent to be acquainted with several ways to irregularity, Uehling (2004). The author submits that there are three main routes to irregularity. It can be by:

- Clandestine entry or with fraudulent documents.
- Individuals entering with authority, but overstaying their authority;
- Individuals deliberately utilising the asylum system.

For this paper, the definition for irregular migrants with respect to female labour will encompass part of ideas from Jordan and Düvell (2002:15). They define illegal migrant as someone ‘crossing borders without proper authority, or violating conditions for entering another country’. This study will look at those female labour who skipped the border into South Africa without proper authority or violating conditions of entering South Africa as pointed by Jordan and Düvell (2002). Furthermore, routes to irregularity highlighted by Uehling (2004) will also be used to define irregular migrants. Thus the working definition of ‘irregular migrants’ the study will adopt is also consistent with definition used by Chappell et al (2011) in an IPPR background paper to ETUC as it captures the points we just indicated.

Synopsis of Definitions and Ideas on Irregular Migration

Armed with the above ideas and thoughts about irregular migration, briefly we carry out a synopsis of ‘irregular migration’ concept. The following table summarises ten ideas surrounding/associated with the concept which the study has identified in trying to properly understand irregular migration as well as features surrounding the concept.

**Table 2 : Summary of Ideas around ‘Irregular Migration Concept’ and Features**

Authority (Source)	Features
Atanackovic et al (date unavailable)	1. People
Chappell et al (2011)	2. Documentation
Crush and Williams (2001)	3. Movement
South Africa Immigration Act (2002)	4. Place of origin
European Commission (2006)	5. International border
International Organisation for Migration	6. Destination
Jordan and Düvell (2002)	7. Laws
Newcombe (2005)	8. Authority
Straßmayr (2012)	9. Process
Waller (2006)	10. Status

Source: Authors’ Compilation



3.1 Framework for Defining and Understanding Irregular Migration : The Ten Ideas Matrix

Building on the above definitions and ideas we therefore conjecture a matrix for defining and understanding irregular migration. We call it the ‘Ten Ideas Matrix’. It is given below;

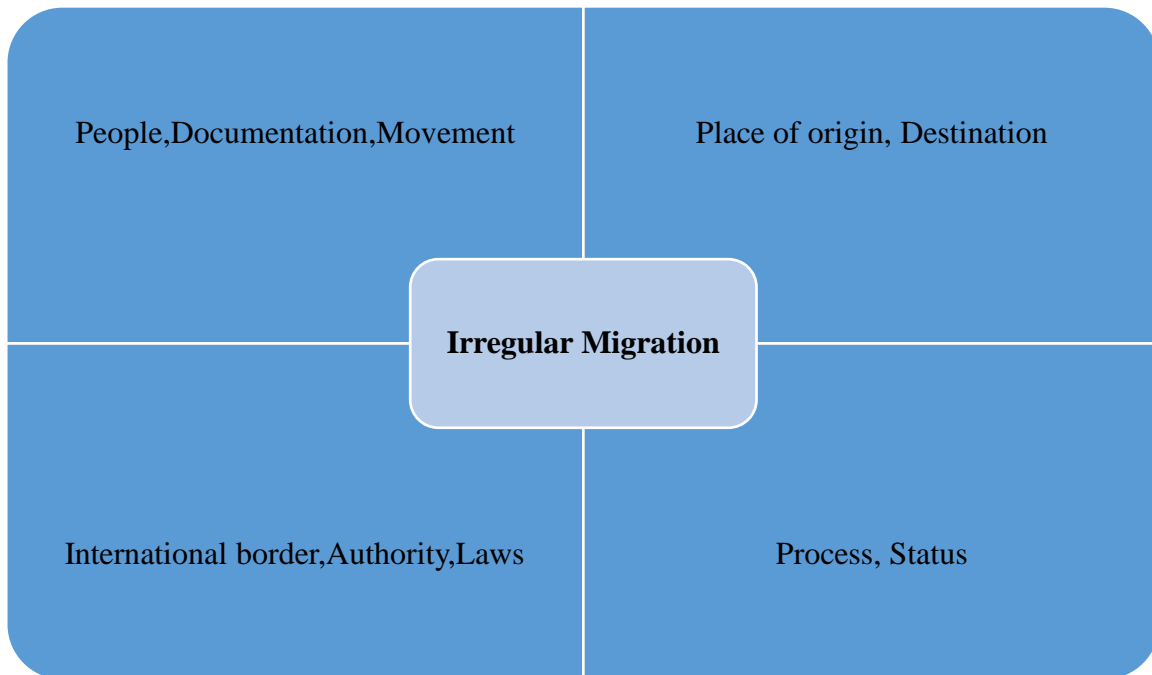


Fig 1: Ten Ideas Matrix

Source: Authors

Importance of the Ten Ideas Framework

The importance of the framework developed above is thus four fold;

Firstly, by harnessing all the numerous ideas and concepts together as Figure 2.1 shows, the matrix can therefore help in understanding the whole process of irregular migration as a flow concept as shown in Figure 2 below.

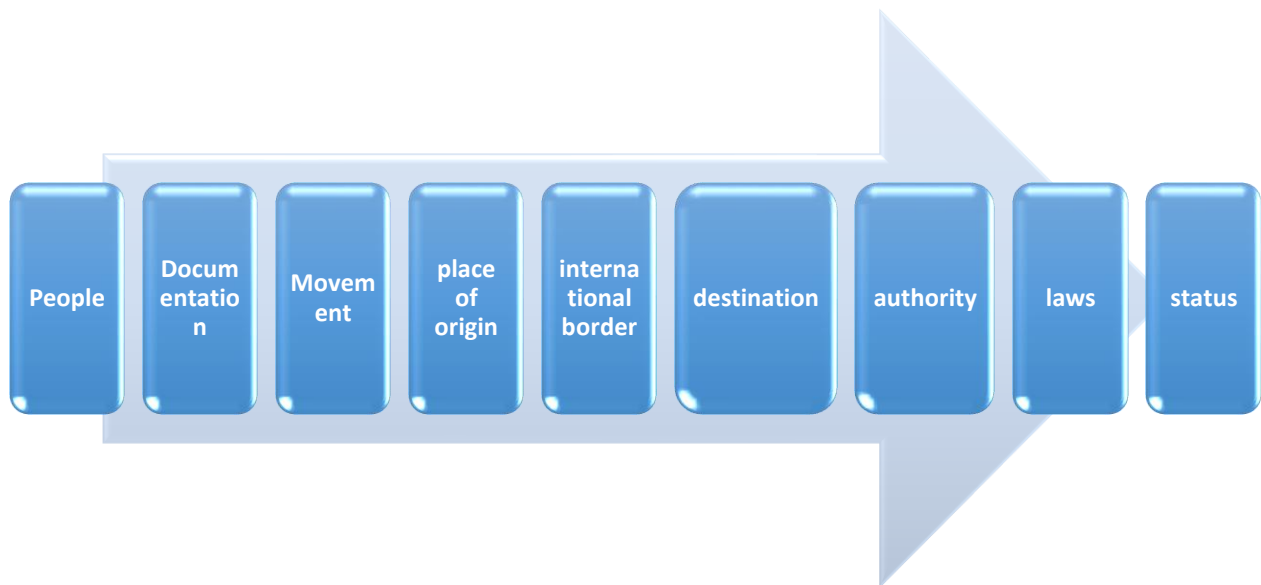


Fig 2: Irregular Migration as a Flow Process

Source: Authors

Figure 2 aptly summarises irregular migration using the ten ideas matrix in Figure 1. For the *Process* of migration to start there has to be *People* who depending on whether they have *documentation* or not decide on *Movement* from some *Place of Origin* via some *International Border* to a *Destination*. At the destination there is *Authority* which ensures *Laws* regulating their movement and eventually designate to them a *Status* as to whether they are in compliance or not. Checking closely the above figure we are talking of a ten ideas process, the term *Process* is not included as a separate section. The whole illustration depicts irregular migration as a ‘process’ itself, that is how process as a tenth idea is indirectly shown.

Secondly, the framework developed above helps us in understanding and appreciating better the complex dimension of irregular migration as alluded to earlier on. For example knowing the kind of *People* embarking on a particular migration pattern is very important. Are they women? children? men? youth? amongst other demographics of the population under study. This helps us in trying to figure out as much as possible *why* they are moving and the impacts of the movements thereof.

Documentation is central to migration journeys. Requisite and appropriate travel documents allow migrants to cross international borders with much ease and comfort. Besides aspects such



as overstaying, forged travel documents among other related aspects are crucial as they will eventually determine as to whether one becomes an irregular migrant or not. Besides all this, on documentation we can then interrogate aspects such as ability to access documentation, turnaround time required to have travel documents after application etc. The ease or difficulty of these processes at times determine whether one will have an appetite to partake in irregular migration or not.

The same applies also for *Movement*. Movement entails mobility of the people. It is of interest because with zero mobility then we cannot talk of migration at all. The concept of movement is also important in that it also helps us to know migration corridors through which the migration is concentrated. Migration corridors are understood as those routes which migrants follow or use as they connect from a place of origin to a destination. Also knowing about the movement helps to know about the modes of transportation dominant in the respective corridors to access the desired destinations.

Place of origin is also crucial in the flow diagram. The place of origin mostly gives an idea of the likelihood of push factors at source. These are the triggers of migration journeys. Relatedly, *destination* gives an idea of the pull factors in the receiving country. Thus migrants at times before they embark on their journeys will weigh the costs and benefits of place of origin alongside the final destination. All this is a function of the push and pull factors.

International border is a physical space which separates one country from another. It acts as a conduit linking the country of origin and destination. Two countries can be within the proximity of each other yet standards of living among the two can be worlds apart. Dynamics which happen at this physical space we call the international border are thus pivotal to our understanding of irregular migration. Border aspects such as ease of access, border controls, border security, ills like corruption by officials and related aspects can also determine as to whether it will be easy to be an irregular migrant or not. Related to international borders is *authority* at ports of entry or exit are very important to migrants. Mostly the function of authority is to make sure that *laws* in the respective country are followed, not only is authority important at entry or exit but also during stay in the destination country. Authority also can randomly check if migrants are using proper documentation during their stay as is required by



laws of the land. Once all *processes* are aligned then a migrant *status* can then be ascertained as to whether they are in compliance or not.

Thirdly, by depicting irregular migration as a flow process above (Figure 2.1), we are showing the dynamic nature of the phenomena. Migration in general is never static, rather it is time contingent. For example as will be discussed in later sections migration in the contemporary is becoming feminised which was not the case long ago.

Lastly, the framework developed above helps us to understand irregular migration. Moreover it will also serve as an important tool informing how to come up with actionable policies which can be used to deal with this problem. This is because it emphasizes on the significance of variables such as people, documentation, laws among the others indicated above.

3.2 Geographic Information System (GIS) of the Area of Study

This paper submits that thorough understanding of Geographic Information System of the area under study is fundamental in that it helps inter alia to depict likely patterns, trends, factors unique to each province. These in turn will determine/influence the resulting migration flows and directions. The volume of movements and the resulting outcomes will be largely influenced by GIS of each province. This study is based on the GIS of three provinces from Zimbabwe.

The country is divided into ten administrative provinces. These are; Harare Metropolitan Province, Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Midlands, Masvingo and Manicaland. Below we present the political map of Zimbabwe.

This paper is based on a study which examines three provinces from Zimbabwe. These are Masvingo, Manicaland and Matabeleland South provinces. Recent data from the International Organisation of Migration (IOM, 2020) notes that most of the Zimbabwean deportees from South Africa originate from Masvingo province (27.9%) followed by Manicaland (19.4%) and Matabeleland South Province (13.2%) as shown in the map of Zimbabwe below.

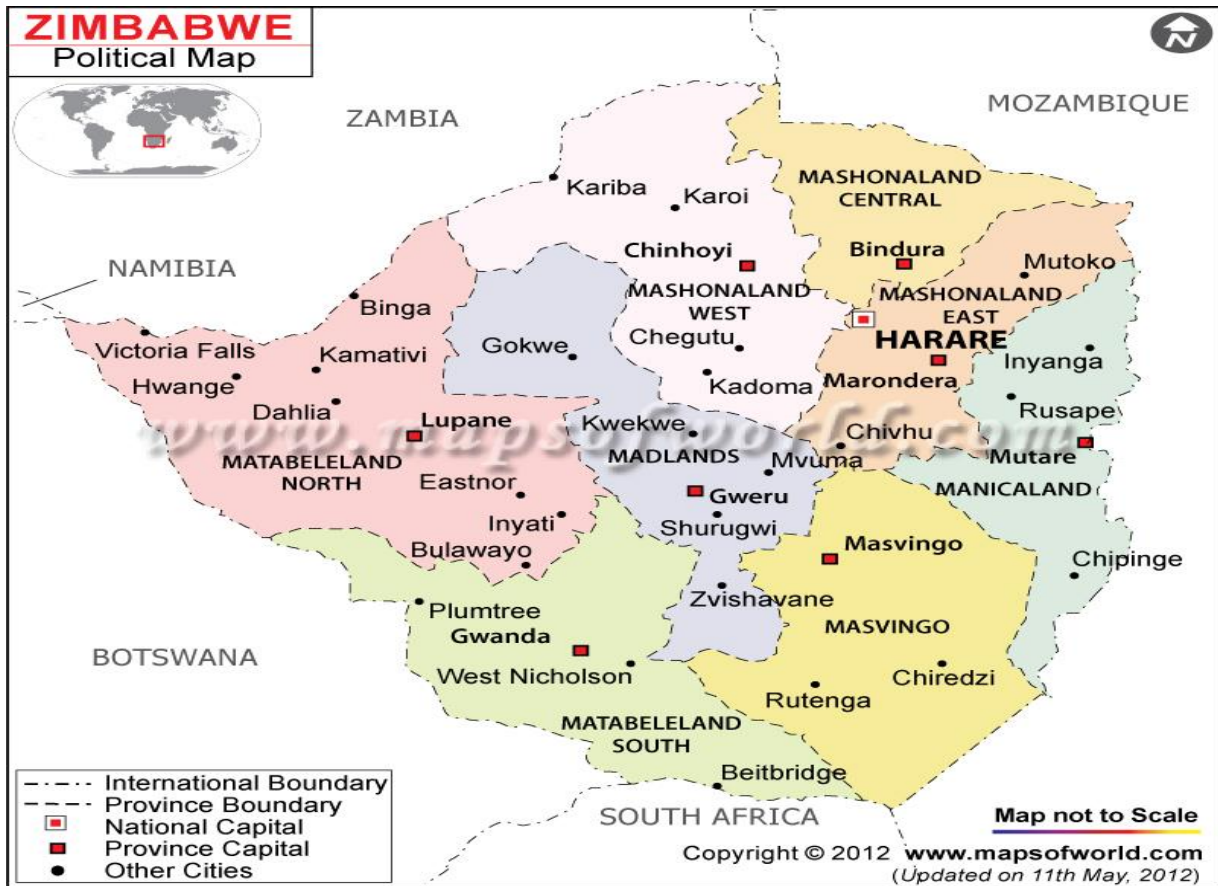


Fig 3 : Map of Zimbabwe

Source: International Organisation for Migration

As can be seen from the figure, the different provinces are located uniquely such that each province has some proximity to a given border area with the exception of Harare and Bulawayo Metropolitan Provinces. The proximities have created special migration corridors over the years. In fact, IOM⁸ shows that for instance, the number of day trippers from Zimbabwe to neighbouring states mostly for shopping has been witnessed as the economy keeps on declining. IOM also shows that these border proximities have also been a source for circular migration flows (known as *day trippers*). These involve movement of Zimbabweans into the neighbouring countries passing legally via the designated crossing points. They are given temporary documentation valid for a day. Thus, the more economic conditions deteriorated internally the

⁸ See IOM available at; [mp_zimbabwe.pdf\(iom.int\)](http://mp_zimbabwe.pdf(iom.int))



more the migration corridors have remained active as they offer a lifeline to Zimbabweans trying to cushion themselves against harsh socio economic as well a political conditions.

The paper is also based on a study based on migration into South Africa as a destination of choice for Zimbabweans. Statistics show that most Zimbabweans over the years having been flocking to South Africa. The table below shows location of Zimbabwean migrants in countries bordering Zimbabwe.

Table 3: Location of Zimbabwean Migrants

Country	Percentage of Zimbabwean Migrants (%)
South Africa	54.8
Mozambique	16.7
Zambia	15.7
Botswana	1.5
Namibia	< 0.1

Source: Author Compilation, Statistics adapted from Crush and Tevera (2010)

For instance, Masvingo Province is located in such a way that it acts as a key transit corridor linking southern and northern Zimbabwe. As such there is massive movement of human and vehicular traffic. This acts as a huge boost for migration movements, either regular or irregular. In this study, we will discuss three key elements relevant to GIS to help us understand choice of each study area. These are place, local economy and demography as shown in the figure below;

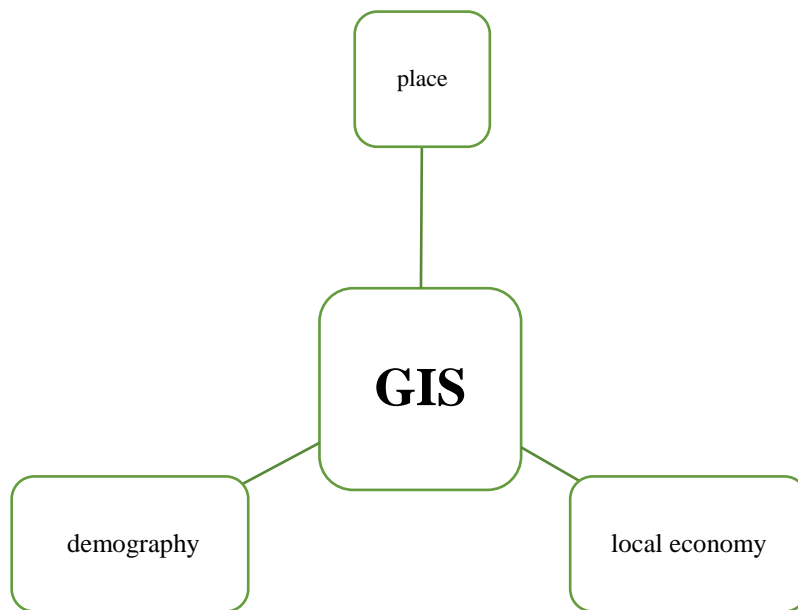


Fig 4: Geographic Information System factor representation

Source: Authors

It is important to display spatial data especially for this particular study given the heterogeneity of the provinces dotted across the length and breadth of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe borders with, Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique, Botswana and Namibia.

3.2.1 Overview of Geographic Information System of Masvingo, Manicaland and Matabeleland South Provinces

In this section, we explore the GIS of the three provinces in detail. We start with Masvingo followed by Manicaland and then Matabeleland South (Mat. South). Thereafter we will conclude the section by a summary. The three provinces exist as heterogeneous geographic locations. Each province has its own peculiarities for example in terms of location as well general economic activities which in turn may influence migration in one way or the other. Long standing traditions about migration within each location will also play a part in migration dynamics which result. Furthermore, this in turn acts to shape the migration patterns which will result.

Masvingo Province

International Organisation for Migration (2020) shows that Masvingo has a huge number of deportees from South Africa at 27.9%. This makes the province a key destination as well as source for migrants either irregular or regular. Figure 5 shows the map of Zimbabwe. To the South-East of Zimbabwe, we find the province of Masvingo as shown. The province is made up of various districts. These are Chiredzi, Masvingo, Bikita, Zaka, Gutu, Mwenezi and Chivi.

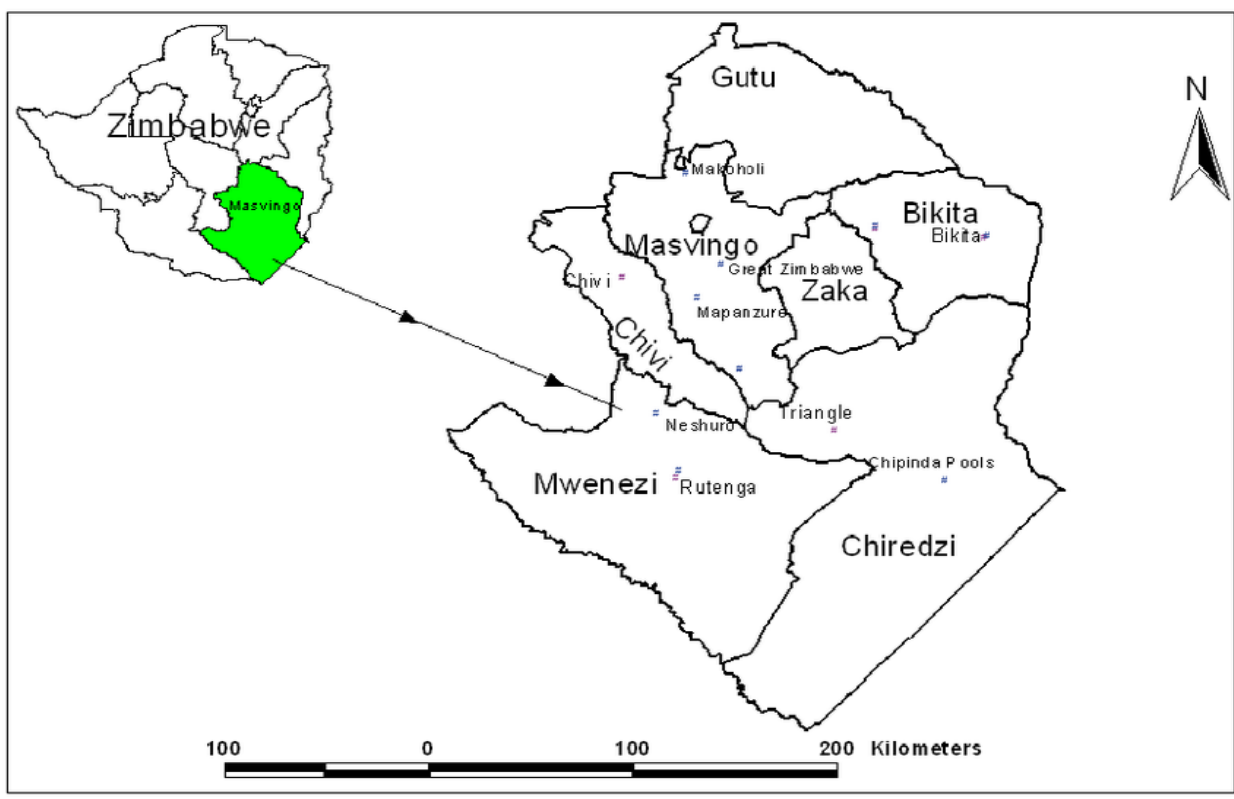


Fig 5 : Masvingo Province map

Source : Research Gate⁹

Masvingo province has a population slightly above 1.5 million people. Masvingo is the oldest town in Zimbabwe. The province houses Great Zimbabwe ruins upon which the country derives

⁹ Available at : [Map showing Masvingo Province districts. Available from:... | Download Scientific Diagram \(researchgate.net\)](#)



its name from. The province has high skills derived from the presence of learning institutions shown in the table below;

Table 4 : Main Learning Institutions in Masvingo

Universities	Teacher Training Colleges	Polytechnic colleges	Vocational Training Centres
Great Zimbabwe University	Masvingo Teacher’s College	Masvingo Polytechnic	Mushagashe Training Centre
Reformed Church University	Bondolfi Teachers’ College		Great Zimbabwe College
Zimbabwe Open University			

Source: Author Compilation

Place, Demography and Local Economy

A market study by Chingarande et al (2020) shows richness of Masvingo in activities such as ranching due to the arid conditions, cross border trading (due to the ease of connectivity of the province-along Harare Beitbridge highway).The authors also highlight the historical significance of Masvingo as a place of origin of migrants who go to South Africa for livelihoods. Further, they indicate that with deteriorating economic conditions, migration which used to be a preserve for males in the region has seen women also taking part. Thus shifting responsibilities across genders have been evident due to failing economy.

The sugar industry of the Lowveld is one of the activities of the province. Masvingo Province is home to main sugar production of Zimbabwe which occurs in Chiredzi district. As a result, the Lowveld is one of the biggest employers in the country. Chiredzi thus draws labour from all the other districts of the country and beyond. Masvingo province has second biggest national cattle herd in the country. Cattle are an emblem of wealth in the country. Besides this, they are also used as a token for bride price-a very important socio cultural practice of people the greater part of Zimbabwe. It is common practice for migrants coming from various districts of the province to prioritise buying cattle especially when remitting funds back home, this becomes



part of home improvement as a key activity also. Giving increasing women taking also the responsibility to raise the family, they also acquire cattle as contribution at the home.

Mining has been part of survival of people of Masvingo especially on a small scale and artisanal mining is sustaining livelihoods. The province also used to be home of asbestos production taking place in the town of Mashava. However, due to declining economy, the mine shut down plunging thousands of people into unemployment.

Farming at peasant level characterize most districts of Masvingo Province. Places such as Bikita, Gutu , Zaka produce substantial food crops to sustain people at household level. Much drier regions such as Chiredzi and Mwenezi do not favour crop production. Instead they thrive on cattle as well as small livestock. Due to variability of rains and frequency of droughts, food insecurity is becoming a reality for most households. Besides this, outbreaks of diseases affecting cattle has also been a big blow for most families affecting directly livelihoods. All these factors alongside a doddering economy have combined to trigger quite a number of young man and women to migrate so as to cushion their families.

In communities such as Mwenezi which lies along the Harare Beitbridge highway, it is normally easier to connect to South Africa via Beitbridge border post. Whilst the causes of migration to South Africa may be diverse, socio economic pressures remain key factors as shown by studies such as that of Lunga (2020). Non-Governmental Organisations such as Plan International working with communities in Chiredzi have often reported increasing poverty at household level as drivers of migration from such as areas of the district as Chikombedzi, Save among others.

The economic landscape of Masvingo province has changed a lot over the years. A number of companies have struggled with some eventually folding. In the process, scores of people have been rendered jobless. Some have resorted to the informal sector for respite. Despite a substantial supply of graduates escalating labour supply against a shrinking employment base, depressed wages and general economic malaise, one viable option has been mostly for the young to migrate to neighbouring countries with South Africa as a choice for most people.

At household level, there have been a lot of changes. Most of them have been influenced by the ever rough economic terrain. It has resulted in transformation and interchanging of roles and

responsibilities. Women are now partaking even in tasks formerly done by men. The main motivation has been the need to also insulate the family at household level from risks such as biting economic challenges, increasing incidents of crop failures among others shaping migration patterns in the process.

Matabeleland South Province

International Organisation for Migration (2020) shows that Mat. South Province accounts for 13.2% deportees coming from South Africa. Figure 6 shows the map of Zimbabwe. Mat. South is situated to the South West of Zimbabwe as the map shows. Insiza, Bulilima, Mangwe, Matobo, Gwanda and Umzingwane are the administrative districts of Mat. South.

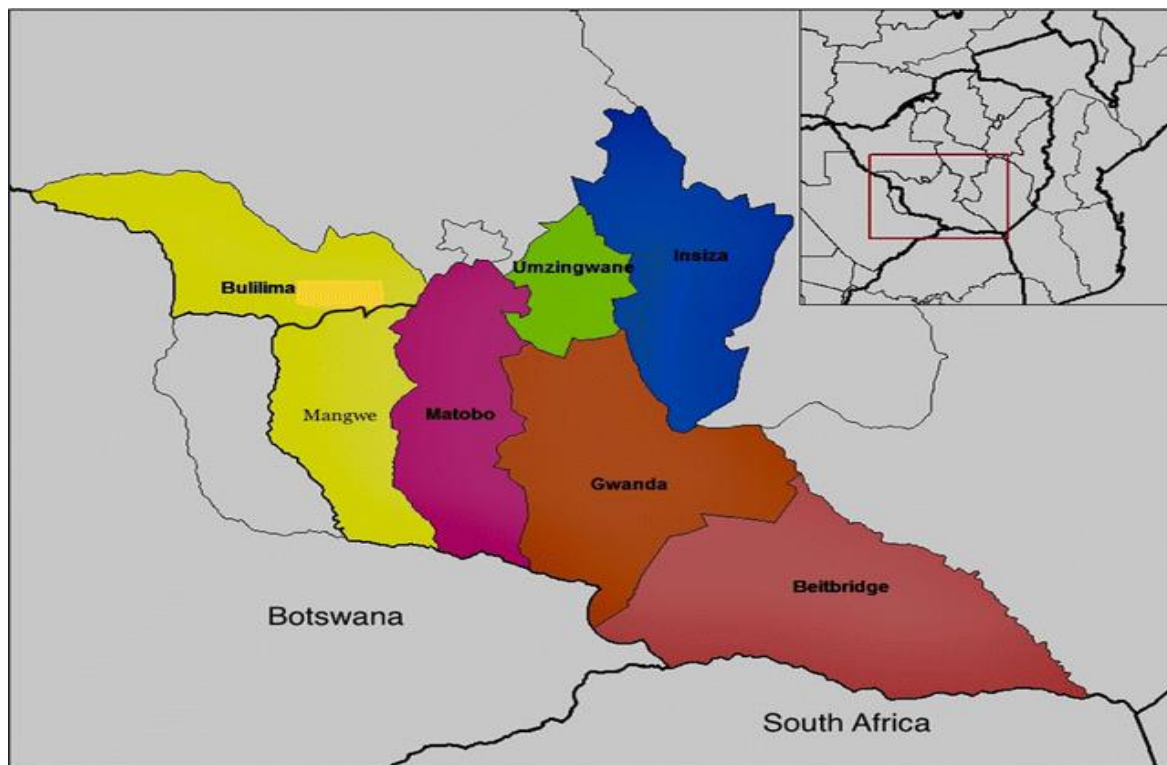


Fig 6 : Matabeleland South Province map

Source: Research Gate ¹⁰

¹⁰ Available at : [Map showing Matabeleland South Province districts. Available from:... | Download Scientific Diagram \(researchgate.net\)](#)



Matabeleland South Province has a number of learning of institutions. These include table below shows some of the main ones;

Table 5 : Main Learning Institutions in Matabeleland South Province

Universities	Teacher Training Colleges	Polytechnic colleges	Vocational Training Centres
Gwanda State University	Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Polytechnic ¹¹	Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Polytechnic	Guyu Vocational Training Centre
Solusi University			
Zimbabwe Open University			

Source: Author compilation

Place, Demography and Local Economy

Mat. South is located to the southern part of Zimbabwe and it borders partly Botswana and South Africa for the greater part. Furthermore, the province has Beitbridge Town which has the Beitbridge Border post. This acts as a key corridor to South Africa. As a result there is huge volume of human and vehicular traffic in this region. It makes it a key economic route of not only Zimbabwe, but Southern Africa. The population of Mat. South is around 700000 people. The province is located between climatic regions 4 and 5, as a result it normally receives low rainfall and is usually dry¹². Due to this, the key agricultural activity of the region is livestock production. Small grain production is also common due to their resilience to dry conditions.

The dry conditions of the province often favour nutritious grasslands and vegetation which is good for production of livestock including cattle and goats. Furthermore, annually people from all over Zimbabwe flock to all the districts of the province to harvest Mopane worms, a delicacy

¹¹ Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Polytechnic offers Teacher training as well as Technical training

¹² Available at : [Matabeleland South \(zim.gov.zw\)](http://Matabeleland South (zim.gov.zw))



in Zimbabwe and neighbouring states such as South Africa. This activity has also to define the local economy of Mat. South cascading to other provinces and outside the country.

The protein rich mopane worms are important for the provincial economy. They have helped to sustain families at household level. Trade in the worms is still mostly informal and is estimated to contribute USD 500000-USD 600000 (Mopane Worms Enterprises, 2020)¹³. Mopane harvesting is thus an important annual economic jamboree which attracts people from all parts of Zimbabwe. They erect temporary camps for several weeks to harvest and dry the worms. Once they complete they take the harvest to their respective paces. Some is sold locally, whereas some to countries such as Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and others. Climate change is however threatening production of mopane worms like in other economic activities. When rains are good for example as in year 2020, bountiful harvests also boost mopane harvests. However, erratic rains over the years means decline in mopane production. This has also become a threat to livelihoods at household level. The threat has been severe on already vulnerable families. One way to absorb the risk of poverty due to this has been to look outside the province, thus migration has become an alternative especially for the age group 19-39 years (Zimstat, 2022).

Mat. South province has a lot of untapped resources including wildlife, mineral resources restricting economic activity. Thus on top of this, the dry conditions and often low rainfall has increased poverty at household levels causing widespread outward migrations.

It is also worth noting that Mat. South province is made up of different ethnic groups. These include the Nguni (Mtombeni and Matiza, 2021). Nguni people have strong historical links with other ethnics in South Africa making migration easier. These long standing historical ties have also helped to reduce cost of cross border migration whether regular or irregular.

Manicaland Province

The province is located in the Eastern part of Zimbabwe. Mostly borders Mozambique. Below we show the map of the province and key districts. These are Mutare (provincial capital), Mutasa, Nyanga, Rusape, Buhera, Makoni, Chimanimani and Chipinge.

¹³ Newsday, available at : [Can mopane worms save us? -Newsday Zimbabwe](#)

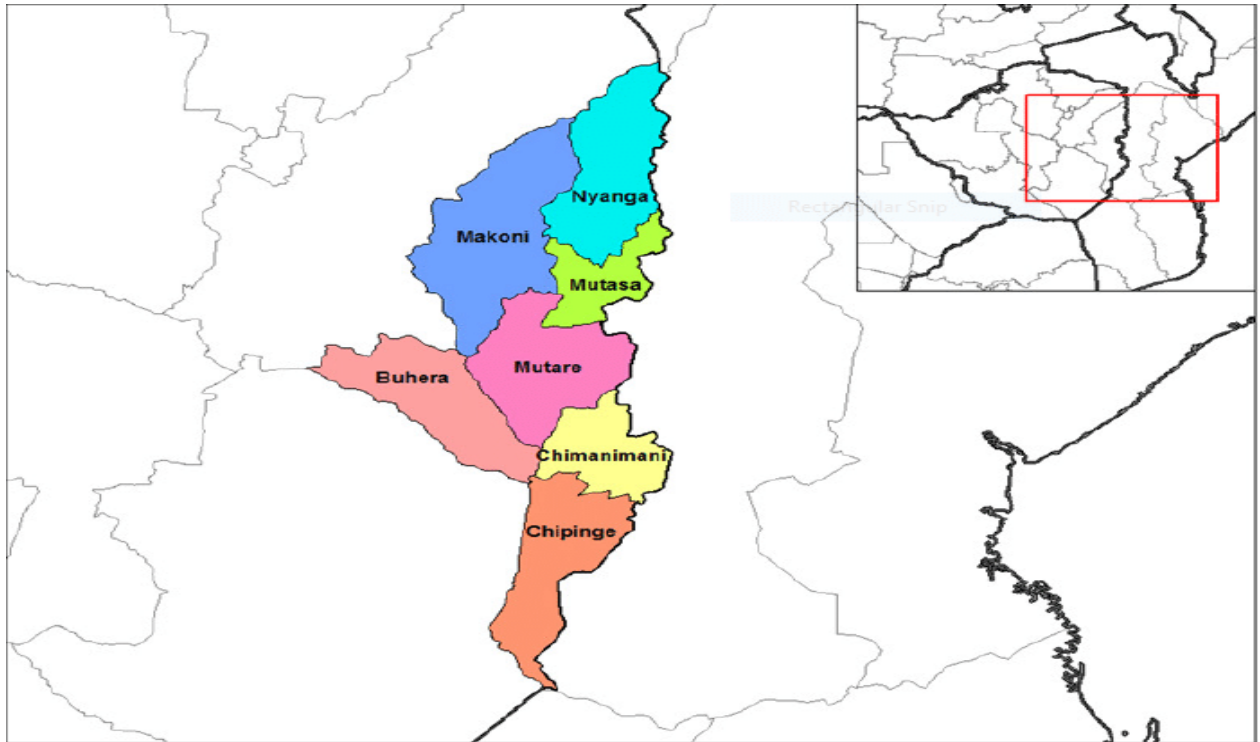


Fig 7 : Manicaland Province map

Source: Research Gate ¹⁴

¹⁴ Available at: [Map of Manicaland Province \(Source: Dube and Guveya \[201\]\). | Download Scientific Diagram \(researchgate.net\)](#)



There are a number of institutions of learning and training which have defined the province of Manicaland. We present some of them in the table below;

Table 6 : Main Learning Institutions in Manicaland Province

Universities	Teacher Training Colleges	Polytechnic colleges	Vocational Training Centres
Africa University	Marymount Teachers' College	Mutare Polytechnic	Magamba Training Centre
Manicaland State University of Applied Sciences	Mutare Teacher's College		
Zimbabwe Open University			
Catholic University			

Source: Authors compilation

Place, Demography and Local Economy

Manicaland Province is has a population of 1.8 million people. Unique to the province of Manicaland is the fact that it has all the five ecological regions of Zimbabwe. As such there are districts which receive high rainfalls whereas others receive little rains. Low lying western areas are faced with droughts. On the other hand, areas such as Nyanga and much of the eastern highlands are privileged with high rain falls. Evidence of migration is plenty within Manicaland. Internal migration is triggered by environmental factors such as increasing unreliability on the western areas. This has seen scores of people invading wetlands and other areas perceived fertile and better.

Plantations have also been subjected to invasions by settlers from within the province and others outside. This alongside general deforestation activities has affected ecological balance of other parts of the province. This is contributing to droughts here and there resulting in some forced migrations outside. Mozambique is one destination for migrations. However, other people also



explore South Africa. As shown in the table presented on training institutions, the province has high skills set. This has also prompted migrations to South Africa and other countries for better life.

Role of Education in the Economy of Zimbabwe

Over the years, education has been central to the economy of Zimbabwe. After independence in 1980, the government tried to focus on developing a developmental model in which human resources were at the heart of the whole process. This saw the government and the private sector actively participating in the delivery of education and training for the people. For example, government has been instrumental in provision of public schools as well as government run training centres such as polytechnics, hospitals, vocational centres, teacher training centres amongst a host of other training platforms.

The private sector has also complemented the government through the same, for instance mission schools and training centres have flourished over the years in Zimbabwe. All these efforts have allowed development of a very enlightened population. Zimbabwe is famed for high level of literacy when compared to most of African states. World Atlas (2022)¹⁵ statistics below show that Zimbabwe ranks in top five in terms of literacy in Africa at 87 %.

¹⁵ See World Atlas at : [worldatlas.com/articles/the-10-most-literate-countries-of-africa.html](https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-10-most-literate-countries-of-africa.html)

**Table 7: Top 10 most literate countries in Africa by ranking in Percentages**

Ranking	Country	Adult Literacy Rate (both sexes, 15+years)
1	Seychelles	95
1	Equatorial Guinea	95
1	South Africa	95
2	Sao Tome	92
3	Libya	91
3	Namibia	91
3	Mauritius	91
4	Cape Verde	88
4	Botswana	88
5	Swaziland, Zimbabwe	87

Source: World Atlas

Furthermore, World Atlas shows that literacy of Zimbabwe has been growing at an average of 3.79 % annually. Thus gains in education have been an important milestone in the lives of Zimbabweans. The three provinces which make up the study area of this research as we have shown are endowed with training centers to help improve skills of people. Literacy has allowed Zimbabweans to acquire important skills as well as improve on productivity. Education creates a differentiated individual, this enhances chances of their employability on the labour market. This has in fact buoyed Zimbabweans to also migrate in droves in search of markets where rewards for labour have been better than locally. As such, Zimbabweans due to their productivity owing to their skills are one of the most sought after skilled people in especially in Southern Africa.

From the years 2000s onwards, the economy of Zimbabwe has been declining. Due to this the country has been performing badly in a number of fronts till this day. Quite a number of industries struggled forcing company closure. Masses were rendered jobless. The economy has also been taking a battering from climate change, causing crop failures. This has not been good for the largely an agrarian society.



Company closures, weakening currency, frequent droughts, rising inflation, unemployment, depressed wages, shortages of basic commodities and general economic down turn have been the features of the years 2000s going forward. With little option in the domestic economy, thousands of Zimbabweans have sought refuge in neighbouring states. The crisis in the domestic economy simply meant that Zimbabweans would join the rest of migrants globally who run away from crisis, a phenomena, Crush and Williams (2018) call ‘Migrants in Countries in Crisis’.

However, obtaining the necessary papers to travel has always been another hurdle to maneuver. Given the urgency of the situation when survival is at stake, some people will simply opt to skip the border using any means despite the many risks it poses. The skills and literacy one has will buoy one to try their luck elsewhere with the hope of surviving. With some skills set in possession, a migrant will become differentiated from the rest. This gives them a better chance of getting employed. To this end, we expect education to be also a big argument in explaining migration flows from Zimbabwe.



4 COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING MIGRATION FLOWS FLOWS

The GIS, theoretical and empirical literature on migration covered thus helps us to come up with a comprehensive framework for understanding migration flows in general as we present below.

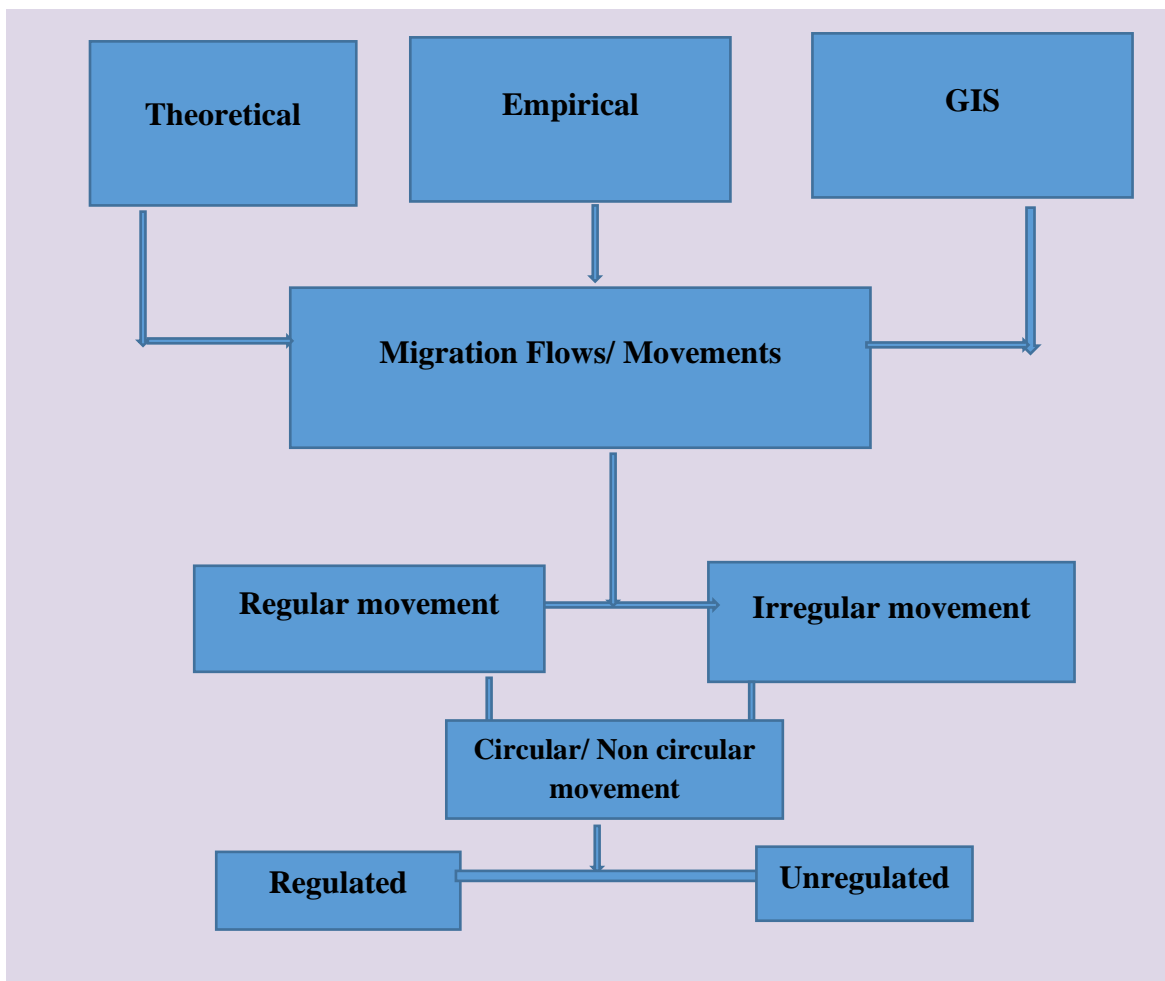


Fig 8: Conceptual Framework to Understand to Migration Flows/Movements

Source: Authors



4.1 Importance of the framework in giving insights about probable explanation(s) for migration drivers across the provinces under study

Given the above framework, we can thus conceptualize that migration flows (either regular or irregular) are therefore a function of GIS, theoretical as well as empirical explanations. The framework emphasizes on the centrality of these three features which help us to understand migration flows in general. This helps our understanding of migration flows/movements in general. Specifically this will also help us as we try to relate irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

Furthermore, this conceptual framework is also important in that it also acts as a reference point to develop the main survey questionnaire tool for the main theses to be administered to the target population as we try to understand the drivers of irregular migration of female labour from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

In addition, the dissection of the flows into regular and irregular is also important. The framework also shows that the regular/irregular flows can also be thought of in two dimensions, i.e. circular or non-circular movement which can either be regulated or unregulated. This analysis will also help development of a separate chapter later as the theses unfolds on why there is recidivism of unregulated circular migration.

Furthermore by focusing on an aspect such as GIS, the paper helps to enlighten us on the dynamics of Masvingo, Manicaland and Matabeleland South provinces, the areas of study. Of importance is how these dynamics interplay to drive migration in general and how they will eventually contribute to irregular migration by female labour into South Africa. This is the primary focus of the main study on which this paper is based.



CONCLUSION

To sum up, the paper analysed the various perspectives on definitions as well as ways to irregular migration as these open our eyes into the multi-dimensional aspects of the phenomena of migration. Numerous theories which exist to date have been shown, an overview of selected empirical literature testing the applicability of the theories with respect to Zimbabwe was covered in the paper also. Amalgamating GIS, theoretical as well as empirical literature the paper has shown an important framework which can be modelled to give a comprehensive framework of the phenomena under study.

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