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Challenges of socio-economic mobility for international migrants in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Migration is reputed to have development prospects for the sending and host countries as well as migrants. Therefore, an effective migration governance system must be put in place to achieve this triple-win developmental aspiration. This paper, however, argues that when they migrate, migrants have their own subjective well-being in mind, and not some common national development objectives. The other developmental outcomes depend on this self-interestedness of migrants. As such, the institutional provisions for migration governance must be put in place to achieve migrant well-being, as a precondition for positive macro-developmental prospects for both the receiving and sending countries. The paper explored this objective in South Africa. The Migration Governance Framework (MiGoF) and the subjective well-being framework proposed by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) were used to assess the assumptions of this objective. Reviewing literature of surveys conducted with immigrants in three cities (Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg), it was found that while South Africa has one of the most mature and developed migration governance infrastructure, it has not been sufficiently translated into realising migrant well-being. Despite all the attractive pull factors and opportunities, most immigrants in South Africa live in socio-economic misery and political uncertainty.

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KEYWORDS

Migrant well-being; migration-development nexus; South Africa; migration-substitution development; migration-led development

Background

Recent international migration practices have re-focused global attention to the possible costs and benefits of migration processes (Collier, 2015; UN DESA, 2017; De Haas, 2012; IOM, 2018; OECD, 2017; Sørensen, 2012). On the one hand, it has been argued that the ‘floods’ and ‘waves’ (De Haas, 2007, p. 4) of immigrants lead to unprecedented array of security threats (socio-cultural; terrorism; religious; economic, and even aesthetic) to the effective social models of host countries (Collier, 2015). On the other, there is emergent realisation that recent migration trends are part of an age-old natural human phenomenon, and if properly managed could have multi-level development potential for all involved (Brønden, 2012; EIU, 2016; OECD., 2011). This

paradoxical complexity is captured in the 2018 World Migration Report (IOM, 2018, p. 1):

International migration is a complex phenomenon that touches on a multiplicity of economic, social and security aspects affecting our daily lives in an increasingly interconnected world ... [I]tis intertwined with geopolitics, trade and cultural exchange, and provides opportunities for States, businesses and communities to benefit enormously.

However, there is consensus that for migration to maximise benefits and minimise costs there is need, not only for proper management, but for more comprehensive migration governance (Betts, 2008; Collier, 2015; Dodson & Crush, 2015; EIU, 2016; IOM, 2018). Poorly managed migration processes have shown to lead to all sorts of social and security challenges (human trafficking, deaths, smuggling, xenophobia, social and health challenges) (De Haas, 2007, p. 5).

The development prospects of migration have been captured by many theoretical traditions of migration who argue that human mobility (except for forced migration) can, to a greater extent, be explained through a utility-maximisation framework: people move driven by desire for greater happiness, prosperity, and well-being for themselves and their families (IOM, 2013, p. 23). In this case, people move away from absolute deprivation to places where their lives can achieve marginal improvement (Castles & Miller, 2009). Apart from prospects of net increase in absolute income (or utility) as proposed by neoclassical economics, the new economic of labour migration (NELM) contend that households will also engage in international migration to minimise relative utility deprivation, with reference to a comparative community (Massey et al., 1998, p. 438). It would therefore seem that, unless forced into migration, many migrants move from one place to another due to their socio-economic aspirations.

The assumption of migration as a socio-economic mobility has been posited within the migration-development nexus studies, and extensively studied for cases where people move from low-middle income countries (South) to high-income countries (North) (IOM, 2013, p. 31). These studies argue that this South-North migration pathway results in the expansion of a range of opportunities and freedoms that people would have never gained had they stayed in their home countries (Brønden, 2012; Collier, 2015; Sørensen et al., 2002). However, while it has been easy to imagine socio-economic mobility due to South-North migration pathway, the prospects and dynamics of development in cases of South-South migration has not been explicitly studied (IOM, 2013, p. 31).

In addition, migration-development nexus studies have also largely focused on the macro levels; exploring potential developmental benefits of the sending and receiving countries because of international migration (Brønden, 2012; OECD/ILO, 2018). The socio-economic mobility of migrants has not been sufficiently explored (IOM, 2013). This paper, then, focuses on the development fate of migrants within host countries in the South. This intentional focus is also based on the argument that the other two development prospects (of sending country and host country) depend on the well-being of migrants in the host country. If migration does not lead to the advancement of migrant's socio-economic well-being, it may be challenging for either result to be achieved. It is, therefore, from migrant's own self-interestedness that migration can yield any positive prospects for receiving and sending countries. Both have to put institutions in place that ensure that migrants' well-being is guaranteed and sustained.

The present paper assesses the prospects of migrant development (well-being) within a South-South migration pathway. It assesses whether the institutional framework of migration governance in South Africa leads to development outcomes, especially for the immigrants in the country. The paper attempts to, explicitly, answer two questions: (i) What institutional framework for migration governance does South Africa possess? (ii) Does migration governance as practiced increase migrants' well-being?

Understanding the migration-development nexus

International migration is defined as transborder movement, in which a person leaves his/her country of residence, for a period of more than 12 months, to stay in another country (IOM, 2018, p. 299). These transnational movements are classified according to their adherence to legal statutes, their cause and/or their purpose. A regular (legal) migrant is a person whose movement is done in accordance with legal frameworks of home and destination countries, while 'movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries' is termed irregular migration (IOM, 2018, p. 300). Due to the causes of migration, migrants are either *forced migrants* (refugees or asylum seekers) or *'voluntary'* (labor/economic and educational). Usually, many countries will have people leaving or entering their territory for diverse reasons, a phenomenon described as *mixed migration flows* (IOM, 2018, p. 306). This paper's reference to immigrants or migrants encompasses all the above categories.

Ideological assumptions

The theoretical foundations of migration policy and literature on the dynamics of migration flows project an assumption of the relationship between migration processes and development (Brønden, 2012). According to this assumption migration and development have a positive correlation, however the direction of this relationship is in dispute. On the one hand, migration is said to result from development/underdevelopment differential. This position is taken by many economic theories of migration (Castles & Miller, 2009), who argue that the development status of a place act as either a pull or push factor for international migration. For neoclassical economics proponents (Collier, 2015) there is an opportunity gradient for economic returns created at the different ends of the development spectrum that spur human mobility, internally or trans-border. According to these theorists, people move from less-developed countries to more developed ones, and this flow continues, unidirectional, until some form of equilibrium in development outcomes has been realised (Collier, 2015).

On the other hand, development is seen as a consequence of migration. Many scholars have argued that migration (be it internal or international) provides outcomes (financial and social remittances) that can be used as inputs in development processes. Through remittances (monetary and social) migrants become 'transnational agents of development' in their home countries (Brønden, 2012, p. 2). This assumption is also based in the notion of circular or temporary labour migration, in that when migrants eventually return home, the skills they would have gained in developed countries will lead to positive gains in their home countries in the form of investments and technological transfer (Sørensen,

2012; Sørensen et al., 2002). Sørensen et al. (2002) termed the debate, at academic and policy levels, *migration-development nexus*.

These two positions of the migration-development nexus have led to different migration policies (Brønden, 2012; Clemens, 2014; De Haas, 2007, 2012; Schiller, 2012). The first assumption, that sees development and underdevelopment as the cause of migration, has often led to *migration-substitution development* policies. According to De Haas (2007), this assumption understands migration in almost pathological terms, as a symptom of an economically sick society. The solution is not to treat the symptom but rather to tend to the 'root causes' – economic stagnation, poverty and unemployment – in sending countries, through boosting economic growth, trade, aid and foreign direct investment. This is aimed in ensuring that 'potential poverty migrants stay at home' (De Haas, 2007, p. 11).

The second assumption that sees development as a consequence of migration tend to encourage *migration-driven development* policies (De Haas, 2007). According to these, temporary and circular migrations are preferable to permanent and one-way. In addition, migrant-sending and receiving countries should facilitate ease of remittance by migrants, as well as return migration programmes (De Haas, 2007). Through this 'migration-driven development', the assumption is that the urge to migrate will eventually die out, and 'migration would have become the medicine against migration' (De Haas, 2007, p. 12). While some have raised suspicion on relevancy of the nexus (De Haas, 2012; Sørensen, 2012), many still believe that effective management of migration systems can generate 'win-win-win situations', in which the migrant, sending and receiving countries all realise positive development returns (Brønden, 2012, p. 3).

Development as migrant well-being

While there is growing appreciation that migration-substitution development is a myth (De Haas, 2007), the broad and aggregate socio-economic impact of migration on sending and receiving countries is generally acknowledged (Brønden, 2012; OECD/ILO, 2018). However, in the quest of providing tools for ideological debates, of whether migration is useful or harmful, these disembodied socio-economic analyses tend to ignore the aspirations and experiences of migrants themselves (IOM, 2013, p. 24). Migration-driven development (De Haas, 2007) is therefore discussed in terms of changes (or improvements) within macro-economic and social indicators. While this is relevant, it misses the point of the fact that when they migrate, most migrants aspire of changing their own subjective well-being for the better (IOM, 2013, p. 24). As such, measuring development outcomes as a function of migrants' well-being is an essential aspect in the migration-development nexus. This entails assessing primarily, not the flow of labour, skills or remittances (financial or social) but, 'what migrants have gained or lost through migration' (IOM, 2013, p. 25).

The concept of well-being captures the human dimension of development and moves away from macro-structural conceptions usually associated with (neo)-classical economics and neoliberal development theories. Amartya Sen has argued that while income, or material opulence, is generally regarded as a metric for assessing development, it is just a means of achieving the essence of development; individual wellbeing (Sen, 1999). To operationalise the concept of well-being, Sen came up with the theory of capabilities.

Capabilities are a set of freedoms (or functionings), substantial and instrumental, that determine a person's ability to choose 'things they may value doing or being' (Sen, 1999, p. 75). As such, the extent of capabilities an individual has will determine the level of agency they have to choose the life they have reason to value. Accordingly, expansion of individual freedoms is the means and end of development (Sen, 1999, p. xii). These freedoms include '... economic opportunities, political freedoms, social facilities, transparency guarantees and protective security' (Sen, 1999, p. xii). Conceiving development in terms of capability freedoms gets around the many parametric factors that intervene between people's incomes and wellbeing – the notion that while two people can have the same income, the utility they get from it depends on their individual circumstances (De Herdt & Bastiaensen, 2008, p. 340).

The centrality of freedoms in the development process has two reasons:

(1) *the evaluative reason*: assessment of progress has to be done primarily in terms of whether freedoms that people have are enhanced; (2) *the effectiveness reason*: achievement of development is thoroughly dependent on the free agency of people. (Sen, 1999, p. 4)

In the first instance, it is possible to objectively assess whether people are entitled to certain freedoms by merely conducting an institutional policy analysis; taking stock of the available migration governance infrastructure. In the second instance however, the extent to which freedom-provision leads to individual agency can only be subjectively assessed. However, while the individual agency enables a person to choose the beings and doings they have reason to value, the effectiveness of that agency must be provided for within the contextual structure (institutional framework) and in relationship with other agents (De Herdt & Bastiaensen, 2008).

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has used this conception of wellbeing to operationalise an evaluative framework of migrant wellbeing. As argued by Sen (1999), these elements consist of a capability set for migrants. Figure 1 below, provides a version of the elements as adapted from the IOM.

As argued above these elements must be provided for within the broader institutional context of migration governance. As Figure 1 indicates, the elements is inspired by the broader conception of development, going beyond economic or financial well-being.

The case of South Africa

South Africa is one of the attractive destinations for international immigrants globally, and particularly among the African context (UN DESA, 2017; Dodson & Crush, 2015; IOM, 2018). In 2017 the global stock on international migration was 258 million, 3.4% of the global population (UN DESA, 2017). A total of 146 million (57%) of migrants live in the Global North, while 112 (43%) million are distributed among the South regions. 24.7 million (9.57%) live in Africa, and 4 million (1.55% of global migrant stock) are resident in South Africa (UN DESA, 2017). South Africa is home to a heterogenous group of international migrants, of various migration status. Of the African migrant's stock, almost 17% reside on South Africa (UN DESA, 2017). Compared with only 900 000 emigrants, most of whom emigrate to Europe and North America, South Africa is a significant destination for international migrants. In fact, according to the *World*

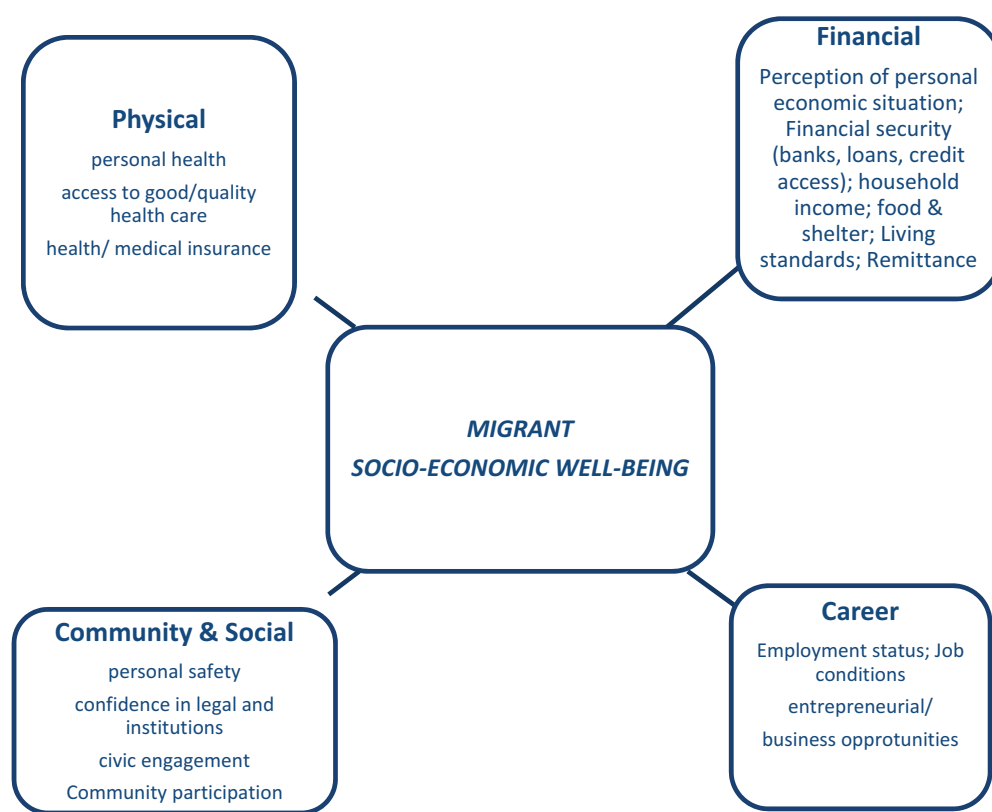


Figure 1. Elements of Wellbeing.

Source: Adapted from Gallup's *Five Essential Elements of Well-being* (IOM, 2013, p. 112).

Migration Report 2018, South Africa is the only African country in the top 20 popular migration destinations in the world, at number 17 (IOM, 2018, p. 19).

South Africa's 4 million migrant residents make up 7.1% of its population (IOM, 2018), which is significant by many standards. Its upper-middle income economic status and its relatively functional democratic regimes makes it the hub of continental and intra-regional migration (Dodson & Crush, 2015). While most of immigrants come as far as the West Africa (Nigeria and Ghana), most migration corridors are from neighbouring regions (East Africa, Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Somalia)) and countries (Malawi, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe) (IOM, 2018, p. 46). Most of the immigrants are products of socio-economic challenges (food insecurity, drought), conflict and political instability (Chipasula & Miti, 1991; Crush & Tawodzera, 2017; Dodson & Crush, 2015; IOM, 2018). As a result, the South African migration system consists of mixed migration flows: labour migrants; students; asylum seekers; refugees, and political exiles (Dodson & Crush, 2015). The mixed flows consist of a combination of legal, regular and clandestine immigration practices (Dodson & Crush, 2015).

In addition to contending with multiple flows of migrants from the region and abroad, South Africa has socio-economic challenges of its own. Poverty, inequality and

unemployment are amongst the most daunting challenges in South Africa. According to Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force Survey (2019), the national unemployment rate increased from 27.2% in the second quarter of 2018 (April–June) to 29% in the same quarter in 2019 (StatsSA, 2019, p. 7). Youth unemployment went up to 40.3% in the same period. The total unemployment keeps increasing with a year-to-year average of 1.8% (StatsSA, 2019, p. 1). South Africa's problem of structural unemployment mostly affects people with limited education and skills, and those living in more marginalised and rural communities (Van der Westhuizen & Swart, 2015). According to the Department of Statistics (Stats SA), millions of these South Africans have given up on the search for ways of generating income and they live in abject poverty.¹

The complex relationship between unemployment and poverty has been evident in most South African communities, as in many other countries. According to the StatsSA's Living Conditions Survey (LCS) (2019), almost half (49.2%) of the population lives below the upper-bound poverty line (UBPL), which currently (in 2019) stands at R1,277 per person per month (StatsSA, 2019). These conditions are most pronounced in a country of great economic contradictions; where plenty co-exists with penury. In the 2018 World Inequality Report, South Africa was regarded as the world's most unequal country among 216 countries, with the world's highest top 10% income share (World Inequality Report 2018, p. 150). According to the Report, the top 10% of the highest income earners receive over 67% of the total national income. This means that the remaining 90% of the population only shares 33% of the national income.

According to the Report, the top 10% of the highest income earners receive over 67% of the total national income, while the top 1% receive almost 20% of the total income share. This means that the remaining 90% of the population only shares 33% of the national income. The World Bank² also ranks South Africa as the world's most unequal country.³ The World Inequality Lab links the extreme inequality in South Africa to the historical legacy of the apartheid regime, which was fully abolished only in 1994, but still seen today in the country's dualistic economy and society.⁴

It is therefore within such a socio-economic context that South Africa attempts to manage streams of mixed migrants, through different legislative and institutional arrangements.

Institutional Migration Framework

Nationally, migration policy consists of the 1999 White Paper on International Migration,⁵ Refugees Act, 130 of 1998, and; Immigration Act, 13 of 2002. The two legislations were predated by the Aliens Control Act (ACA), which was a transitional migration law from 1991 to 2002. The Immigration Act (13 of 2002), replaced ACA, with objectives of offering a safe, secure and beneficial migration governance. The Preamble of the Act includes national security, regional integration and economic development as some of the objectives that inform the contemporary migration policy. The Act intends to increase the immigration of skilled migrants, while still discouraging illegal immigration (Boynton, 2015).

In addition to regulating entry and departure of international migrants, migration governance includes the interrelationship of key sectoral policies in ensuring that immigrants are integrated in economic and social dimensions of the country. The integration and development migration policies are incorporated within the two key legislations

(Refugees and Immigration Acts), while White Paper ensures that national aspirations of migration are captured in policy development activities of key sectoral policies like labour, income tax, education, and health. As a result, different categories of immigrants (temporary, permanent, asylum seekers, refugees) have right to access public and social services like health and education (Refugees Act, 1998; Immigration Act, 2002). Several sectoral legislations (Labor Relations Act, 1995; South Africa Qualifications Authority Act, 1995; Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1992; Civil Union Act, 2006) make provisions for the incorporation of immigrants.

South African institutional framework for migration governance (Table 1) consists of several national, regional and international legislation, organisations and an array of multi-actor arrangements. The country is party to several regional and international agreements relevant to migration governance. The Bill of Rights in the national Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) provides an inclusive legal framework for all residents, irrespective of nationality (Department of Home Affairs, 2017; Dodson & Crush, 2015). The institutional capacity (legislation and organisations) is further expanded through the intergovernmental cooperation framework used in most public service provision (Department of Home Affairs, 2017), see Table 2.

Through international conventions, South African has committed to observance of migrants' rights, orderly and secure migration, as well as assurance of the protection of right to employment for immigrants (Dodson & Crush, 2015, p. 12). The South African government has also entered into several bilateral immigration arrangements with its neighbours (Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique) to facilitate smooth and regular labour and education-related immigration. In addition, the country participates in several international and regional forums for migration dialogue and better protection for human mobility (i.e. MIDSA). For this positive institutional development, *The Economist Intelligence Unit* ranked South Africa as having a 'mature' and 'developed' migration governance (EIU, 2016, p. 19).

Migration Governance and migrant well-being in South Africa

Regardless of the positive legislative environment, many (Dodson & Crush, 2015; Musuva, 2015) have argued that the apparent institutional capacity in South Africa has not been used for effective migration governance. The post-apartheid migration policy has been overly restrictive and anti-immigration (Dodson & Crush, 2015). South Africa legislators

Table 1. Intergovernmental relations in Migration Governance.

Department	Migration Governance Domain
Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (Army, Police, Courts)	Entry and Departures (Border Management System) and Security (Anti-Human Trafficking)
Department of Social Development/ Department of Health	Social Security/Social Assistance for Refugees and Asylum seekers
Department of Trade and Industry/Department of Labour	Investments, Labour migration rights
Department of Higher Education and Training/South African Qualifications Authority	Student permits National Scarce Skills (critical skills) List

Source: Author

Table 2. South Africa Migration Governance Framework.

MGI DOMAIN 1: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY					
1.1 Institutional Framework	1.2 Migration Strategy	1.3. Legal framework	1.4 Data gathering and information availability	Statistics South Africa (StatsSA)	● Annual Reports
● White Paper on International Migration for South Africa (1999, 2017)	White Paper on International Migration for South Africa (1999, 2017)	Immigration Act (13 of 2002); Refugee Act (1998)	Refugee Act (1998)	Refugee Act (1998)	● Annual Reports
MGI DOMAIN 2: MIGRANT RIGHTS	2.2 Family rights	2.3. Right to work	2.4 Long term residency and path to citizenship	Immigration Act (13 of 2002)	South African Citizenship Act, 1995
2.1 Access to basic social services and social security	2.2 Family rights	Immigration Act (13 of 2002)	Labour Relations Act (1995)	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa	
Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1992	White Paper on International Migration (2017)				
White Paper on International Migration (2017)					
MGI DOMAIN 3: SAFE AND ORDERLY MIGRATION	3.2 Admission and eligibility criteria	3.3 Re-integration policies	3.4 Measures to human trafficking	Immigration Act (13 of 2002)	Preventing and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2013
3.1 Border control and enforcement	Immigration Act (13 of 2002)	Department of International Relations and Coordination	Department of International Relations and Coordination	Immigration Act (13 of 2002)	Preventing and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2013
South African Revenue Authority (SARS) Act	Border Control Operational Coordinating Committee				
MGI DOMAIN 4: LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT	4.2 Skills and qualification recognition	4.3 Student migration	4.4 Bilateral labor Agreements	Zimbabwe Special Permit (ZSP, 2009)	Lesotho Special Permit (LSP, 2009)
4.1 Labour migration management	Immigration Act (13 of 2002)	Immigration Act (13 of 2002)	SADC Protocol on Education and Training	SADC Protocol on Employment and Labour	SADC Protocol on Employment and Labour
Immigration Act (13 of 2002)	Immigration Directive 36 of 2014	South Africa Qualifications Authority Act, 1995			
Labour Relations Act, 1995					
MGI DOMAIN 5: REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AND OTHER PARTNERSHIPS	5.2 Regional cooperation	5.3 Bilateral agreements	5.4 Other partnerships	VFS Global Group – visa facilitation	Southern African Migration Project (SAMPM)
5.1 Global Cooperation	United Nations Commission on Human Rights (CHR)	SADC Treaty/AU Refugee Convention	SADC Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons	SADC Protocol on Education and Training	ILO Convention on Domestic Workers
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)			
ILO Convention on Domestic Workers					

have been accused of harbouring strong anti-immigration sentiments; viewing international migrants as economic and socio-cultural threats. To substantiate this negative assessment, many studies have captured the lives, livelihoods strategies and well-being of different categories of immigrants in South Africa under the current legislative framework. These are summarised below using the IOM migrant well-being elements.

Financial well-being

According to many studies, international migrants in South Africa have a very low financial well-being, captured in their struggles to afford basic shelter and food (IOM, 2013, b.). Surveys done in three major cities (Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg) concluded that, immigrants regardless of their immigration status have lower financial well-being compared to their South African counterparts (Northcote, 2015; Tshishonga, 2015; UNHCR, 2006; Women's Refugee Commission, 2011). The UNHCR (2006), conducted a survey among Congolese refugees in Durban and concluded that while most of the refugees are skilled, they depend largely on multiple sources of income, between informal economy, loan from friends and family, as well as aid from religious institutions. As a result, most immigrants were found to be living in poor accommodation; usually crowded multifamily dwelling, where they share a single room with more than five relatives and/or friends (UNHCR, 2006).

These results were corroborated by two surveys in Johannesburg; the Women's Refugees Commission (WRC) (2011) and the Economic Research Southern Africa (ERSA) (2015). The WRC noted that while most South African banks formally allow access by refugees, asylum seekers, or holders of business permits, many banks still have discretion to refuse services to immigrants (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011). Many migrants 'resort a complex system of borrowing and saving', which involves 'shopkeeper credits, loans from friends and family, and gifts from religious institutions' (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011, p. 14). In addition, those with entrepreneurial aspirations turn to informal credit schemes to finance their business start-ups (ERSA, 2015). Most immigrants are found in poor townships, where shelter and sanitation are of poor conditions. The constant harassment by law enforcement (arbitrary evictions, police raids, exploitative landlords) make most of these accommodation arrangements temporary (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011, p. 14). As a result, the 'expected well-being' coveted by many migrants is not realised in Johannesburg, due to a lot of structural challenges to financial well-being (ERSA, 2015).

In Cape Town, Northcote's dissertation research found that strong anti-immigrant attitudes among local employers make access to regular employment a challenge to many immigrants, as such most of them have resorted to alternative sources of income (Northcote, 2015). These alternative livelihood strategies range from self-employment and trading (side-walk stalls and *spaza* shops), artisanal work (hair saloons), to financial literacy, smart strategies for banking, pyramid schemes and group savings (Northcote, 2015).

Career well-being

The IOM found that migrants in South Africa have high employment rate compared with local nationals (IOM, 2013, b.). South African legislation allows different groups of migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, students, permanent residents) different conditions of employment, mostly related to their migration status (Immigration Act, 2002).

According to Statistics South Africa, most immigrants have education levels higher than secondary school, and most of them have professional training from their own countries (see Figure 2) (StatsSA, 2015). However, the same report notes that most of the immigrants are low-income earners (28.7%) or below (23%) (Table 3).

As shown in Figure 3 above, most international immigrants to South Africa have above secondary school education. With the exception of SADC, migrants from other regions have significantly higher proportions of higher education. While this government survey paints a gloomy picture as far as migrants' career well-being is concerned, independent studies argue that the reality is even more desperate, when taking into consideration the plight of irregular and non-documented migrants. A survey carried by the International Organisation for Migration in 2010 showed that most international migrants in South Africa are under-employed; they are 'unable to get jobs commensurate with their qualifications and experience, ending up working in lower-paid jobs' (IOM, 2013, b., p. 28). This is partly due to the anti-immigration attitude displayed by many South African employers, but also due to challenges of regularising their immigration status due to backlogs and corruption (LHR/ACMS, 2015; Northcote, 2015). As a result, lacking a similar safety net as local nationals, immigrants are willing to take jobs below their education and experience levels (IOM, 2013, b.).

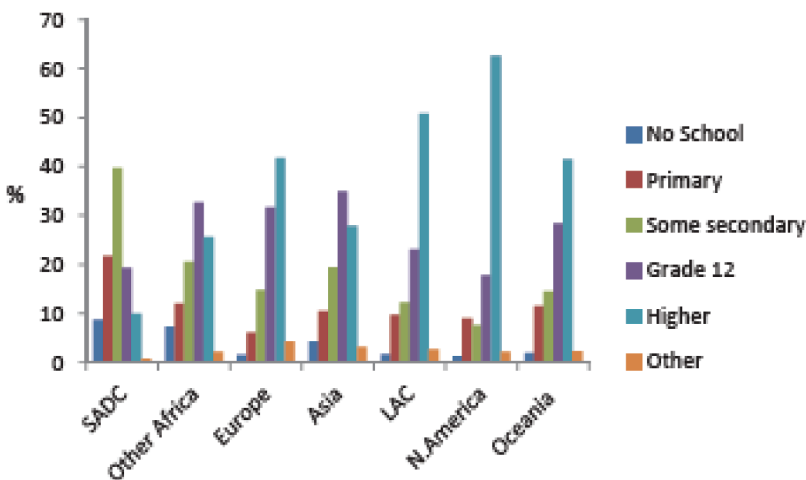


Figure 2. Education level of international migrants.

Source: (StatsSA, 2015, p. 142)

Table 3. Annual income among international migrants.

Category	Number	Percentage(%)
National poverty	464 601	23,0
Low earners	581 498	28,7
Middle income earners	697 124	34,5
High income earners	265 260	13,1
Highest earners	13 825	0,7
Total	2 022 309	100,0

Source: (StatsSA, 2015, p. 142)

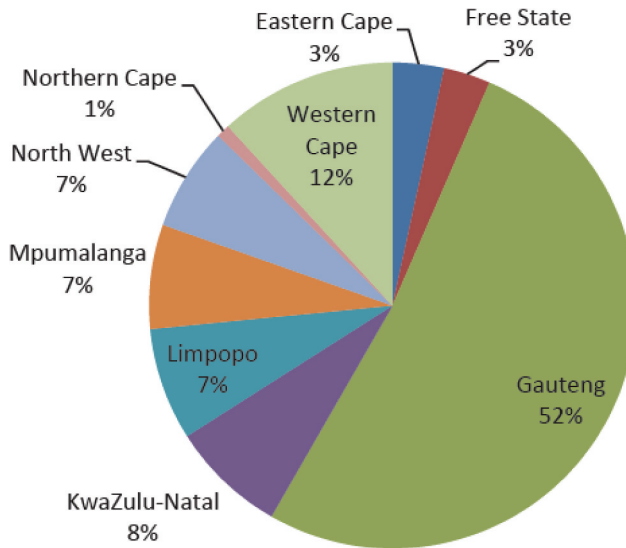


Figure 3. Regional distribution of international migrants.

Source: (StatsSA, 2015, p. 138)

According to surveys done in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg, most immigrants also face challenges in entering the formal job market, due to institutionalised xenophobia, as well as priority given to local nationals (Corruption Watch, 2017; Crush & Tawodzera, 2017; ERSA, 2015; LHR/ACMS, 2015). As such, most immigrants turn to the informal economy, and engage in several entrepreneurial activities (Northcote, 2015; Tshishonga, 2015). However, this has not given them employment security either since most small business owners suffer violent attacks from local business counterparts (as witnessed in 2008, 2015 and 2019 Xenophobic violence in Johannesburg and Durban) (Tshishonga, 2015).

Community and social well-being

Most international immigrants live in Gauteng (52%), KwaZulu-Natal (8%) and Western Cape (12%), as shown below (StatsSA, 2015, p. 138). The regional distribution international migrants is shown in Figure 3 below. While this may be a function of the location of different diaspora groups (Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town), who facilitate the movement of new immigrants, it also correlates with economic vibrancy in the country (ERSA, 2015). As a result, many migrants target these places for ease of securing employment, entrepreneurial activities or engaging in productive informal economy. These areas are also accessible through major transport networks, reducing migration costs for many migrants (StatsSA, 2015).

However, being economic hubs of the country, these three provinces (and cities) also are attractive to internal migrants (StatsSA, 2015), which often leads to violent competition over resources between international and internal migrants (IOM, 2013bb). This is not helped by the endemic anti-immigrant sentiments displayed by public officials, like Home

Affairs and law-enforcement officers, who see immigrants as associated with criminality, diseases and pressures on public services (IOM, 2013, b., p. 17).

The IOM also found that most immigrants do not have confidence in public institutions, and do not feel that the law protects them equally with local nationals (IOM, 2013bb). This is further exacerbated by many reports of ethnic profiling and harassment by police on the road or in places work and residence (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011). Many immigrants, report having money extorted from them either during their immigration process, when applying for documentation, or seeking employment (IOM, 2013, b.; LHR/ACMS, 2015; Corruption Watch, 2017). As such, most feel unsafe and insecure within places of residence, public transport systems, and work places.

Female immigrants have reported high incidence of sexual violence perpetrated against them in work, public and residence places, with no legal recourse (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011). However, the IOM survey noted that sexual crimes against women are generally high in South Africa, regardless of one's nationality or migration status. They argue that violence against women is correlated with poor residential and work arrangements; with most migrant women staying in poor neighbourhoods and working in farms or mines gender-based abuses are bound to be high (IOM, 2013bb.). Gender-based violence has also reported during the immigration process; with women always at risk of being raped by immigration officials, border patrol officials, human smugglers, truckers and taxi drivers (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011).

All these sources of insecurity have led to many immigrants having low community and social well-being in South Africa, compared with local nationals. The prevalent and institutionalised anti-immigrant sentiments frustrate many integration prospects, resulting in mono-cultural social networks; with immigrants socialising, doing business, worshipping, and marrying among their own group, with low levels of participation in formal or informal community gatherings (IOM, 2013bb., p. 21).

Physical well-being

The South African Constitution gives right to access to basic health care to all residents, regardless of nationality or the legality of the residence (IOM, 2013, b.). This covers basic primary health care (PHC), HIV treatment, and emergency services (IOM, 2013, b.). However, the Immigration Act (2002) mandates all immigrants to secure health insurance as a prerequisite for acquiring residence permits (temporary or permanent). Nonetheless, the physical well-being of many migrants is reportedly lower than those of local nationals due to the anti-immigrant sentiments of many public health practitioners, who always feel that they need to give priority to South African nationals (Alfaro-Velcamp, 2017). The physical well-being is also correlated with the migration status, with many irregular and undocumented migrants afraid to access, or being refused access to public health facilities due to lack of 'proper' documents (IOM, 2013, b., p. 23).

Maternal health of female immigrants is reportedly low, with many immigrant women being refused ante – or post-natal care in many public health facilities, in spite of the favourable policy environment (Women's Refugee Commission, 2011; IOM, 2013, b.;

Alfaro-Velcamp, 2017). Alfaro-Velcamp (2017, p. 54) has succinctly summarised the physical well-being of migrants in South Africa:

Despite an international human rights discourse embedded in the 1996 South African Constitution, South African statutes and regulations diverge from the Constitution with respect to healthcare access for immigrants.

According to Alfaro-Velcamp (2017), this disjuncture between law and practice is a function of preferential treatment of South African nationals at the expense of other residents, mainly to over-compensate for the discrimination they suffered under the apartheid administration. Whatever the reason, this dislocation entails that the physical well-being of migrants, regardless of their status, cannot be guaranteed, even given the South African favourable institutional framework.

Conclusion

This paper has assessed the assumption whether the institutional framework used for migration governance in South Africa is enough to achieve migrant well-being. The results, deducible from the previous section suggest that the answer is largely negative. Despite a favourable and 'mature' institutional framework of migration governance, migrants in South Africa seem to have less well-being compared with their South African counterparts. This is true regardless of the socio-economic status of the groups; in essence being a migrant seems to be an intervening factor in one's socio-economic mobility. They seem to be generally financial insecure, under-employed, socially and physically insecure and primary victims of violence emanating from institutionalised anti-immigrant sentiments. However, when considering the socio-economic context, it may also be realised that the vast majority of South Africans may also be facing similar challenges, although most do have relief in the social security systems and intermittent mass action.

With this realisation, the paper concludes that while South Africa receive a lot of migrants from the international community, and from the region (75%), all looking for socio-economic development and a more secure life, they largely do not find this relief South Africa. Instead, they have their well-being reduced through lack of integration and unequal opportunities. For most migration to South Africa, has become a move to misery and insecurity; even though to most this is still better than their home countries. However, this paper hopes that should South African government invest in awareness and immigrant integration programmes, and other social cohesion strategies, migrants' objective of a socio-economic mobility can be mitigated. It is only through such intentional actions that the extant favourable policy environment can realise positive development prospects, even for the migrants, whose main objective for migrating is the desire for greater happiness, prosperity and well-being for self and/or family members.

Notes

1. <http://www.capetalk.co.za/articles/313607/stats-sa-over-6-million-people-are-jobless-in-south-africa> (accessed 20.09.19)
2. <https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=SI.POV.GINI&country=> (accessed 16.09.19)

3. See <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/07/africa/south-africa-elections-inequality-intl/index.html> (accessed 16.09.19)
4. <https://wir2018.wid.world/part-2.html>(accessed 16.09.19)
5. Which is currently being replaced by the 2017 White Paper on International Migration for South Africa.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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