Push & Pull factors leading migrants to South Africa

Gregory Fazio
Mentors: Dr. Jean Halley & Dr. Ron Nerio

Abstract
South Africa has long been a destination for migrants from other parts of the world. Post-apartheid South Africa is the primary destination for migrants in Africa, because it appeared institutionalized racism was declining and there would be more opportunities for migrants to find employment. During the early 1990’s the perception among potential migrants was that South African immigration policies were lenient, making it an easy place for migrants to find shelter and seek employment. During the post-apartheid era there has been an increase in migration trends, especially from across the African continent. Migrants experiencing poverty, famine, inflation and unemployment are in many ways forced to leave their country of origin in order to survive. In this project I review scholarly articles related to migration patterns driving migrants in and out of Johannesburg, South Africa. I examine the primary push and pull factors leading people to leave Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, the Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, focusing on ways in which some factors are similar across each of these countries and in cases in which they are specific to each country.

Introduction
• During the post-apartheid era (1990-present) we have seen a dramatic increase in migrants migrating to South Africa (Figure 1).
• South Africa is the most industrially, and economically developed country in Africa
• Migrants view South Africa as a land of economic opportunity (Crash)
• I will be examining the push and pull factors that influence migrant’s decisions to migrate to South Africa from their country of origin.
• The push factors are circumstances that lead migrants to leave their home countries for South Africa, or other destinations
• The pull factors can be viewed as the lure of South Africa, and what makes South Africa such an attractive country to migrate to
• By examining the push and pull factors, we can anticipate future migration trends which suggest a continued increase in migration to South Africa

Methods and Data Collection
Research methods used to determine the drivers of migration throughout Africa include:
• A literature review revealed multiple articles related to migration, I selected the articles that were the most directly related to migration push and pull factors from 1990-present
• Virtual interviews with social workers and researchers who work with migrants in Johannesburg, South Africa
• Listening to interviews with migrants conducted by my mentors
• Extracting information from both the scholarly articles and interviews, and organizing the information in order to recognize migration trends between various countries throughout Africa which supplies the majority of the 2.9 million migrants currently living in South Africa (McCord and 2012)

Results
• Post-apartheid South Africa became the primary destination for migrants, because it appeared institutionalized racism was declining and there would be more opportunities to find employment in the newly democratic nation of South Africa (Kefale)
• South Africa is viewed as a country with migrant friendly policies (Morris), although this is not true
• These migrant friendly policies, allowing migrants to live and work while they apply for asylum is a major pull factor attracting migrants from across Africa (Morris)
• Migrants across Africa are more likely to migrate to South Africa because migrating to other westernized countries including Europe and countries in the western hemisphere, is much more expensive and far more restricted
• Social networks among migrants make it easier for migrants to migrate to South Africa. These migrant networks consist of migrants from specific countries who provide food, shelter, and potential employment prospects to migrants migrating from their specific country of origin. Migrants migrate to South Africa more confidently knowing they have fellow migrants already in South Africa willing to help them out until they can support themselves. These migrant networks are another major pull factor (Crash)
• Remittances, any goods or money migrants make while working in their host country which is then sent back home, is another essential pull factor that attracts migrants to South Africa. These remittances are a major lifeline for many families across Africa who are living in poverty and are unwilling to migrate to South Africa. The remittances ion most cases are used for food, school fees, and basic human needs (Johnson)
• Smugglers transport migrants to South Africa play a pivotal role in migrants’ decision to migrate to South Africa. Smugglers have been known to manipulate potential migrants into migrating to South Africa by exaggerating the opportunity to create wealth in South Africa, thus creating another pull factor (Kefale)

Conclusion
• With continued instability across African countries, we can expect a continued rise in migrants flowing into South Africa seeking asylum and refuge status
• The push factors among these various countries may not all be the exactly same, but the pull factors including the potential for economic prosperity and opportunity in South Africa remains constant among all mentioned countries
• The most common push factor driving migrants to South Africa is living in poverty and escaping a country with dangerous political violence, followed by high unemployment rates, erratic weather conditions, and finally famine, food and water scarcity.

Discussion
• Covid 19 has dramatically impacted the lives of migrants living in South Africa
• Due to an increase in erratic weather conditions influenced by climate change such as more frequent droughts and floods in Sub-Saharan Africa many countries who rely on rain fed agriculture will continue to migrate to urban areas in South Africa in search of food, water, work, and an opportunity to live a stable life (Menon)
• It is important to note that migrants in South Africa arriving with the notion that the migration policies will enable them to receive documents is fake
• Majority of South African migrants live their lives undocumented
• Migrants struggle to find stable employment, experience xenophobia, and endure unsanitary living conditions but still do not drive migrants back to their country of origin(Morris)
• Tanzanians was not included in the results of the project due to lack of information related to external migration, but internally there has been increased urbanization due to erratic weather conditions interfering with pastoralist and farmers livelihoods(Kedi)
• There was insufficient data regarding migration trends in the Republic of Congo to complete he survey

References
• https://migrationdataportal.org/regional-data-overview/southern-africa
• Simonsen-2016-Review_of_African_Political_Economy-AM.pdf (cam.ac.uk)
• https://www.proquest.com/docview/1490613873?accountid=13911 (Crash)

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Figure 1: South African Immigration Statistics 1960-2015

Table 1: Migration Push Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Push Factors</th>
<th>Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia, Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather disaster</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil War and its</td>
<td>Mozambique, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Republic of Congo</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Violence</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Mozambique, Somalia, Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Famine, Food &amp; Water</td>
<td>Malawi, Somalia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: South African Immigration Statistics 1960-2015

Migration to South Africa has dramatically increasing over the last 55 years