

REVERSE XENOPHOBIA: IMMIGRANTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS CITIZENS IN
BOTSWANA

A Paper presented at the African Migrations Workshop: Understanding Migration Dynamics in
the Continent at the Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana,
September 18th – 21st 2007

By

Gwen N. Lesetedi
Department of Sociology
University of Botswana
Private Bag UB 00705
Gaborone - Botswana
E-mail: lesetedi@mopipi.ub.bw
Tel: (267) 3552763 (W)
Fax: (267) 3554196

&

Tirelo Modie-Moroka
Department of Social Work
University of Botswana
Private Bag UB 00705
Gaborone – Botswana
E mail: Modiet@mopipi.ub.bw
Tel: (267) 3552383
Fax: (267) 3956591

ABSTRACT

The concept of Xenophobia is typically used to describe fear or dislike of foreigners or in general, people different from one's self. Xenophobia is generally, the dislike or intolerance of foreigners. This fear or dislike may be attributed to competition for scarce resources, employment, housing, services, facilities and even simple physical space. This can result in violence, resentment, hostility and abuse both verbally and physically of the foreigners by the locals. The current politico-social and economic situation in some parts of Africa has resulted in large numbers of citizens leaving in search of greener pastures. This situation has particularly been worse for Zimbabwe, from which many people have migrated over the years to South Africa, Botswana and Namibia and the rest of the world. Due to proximity to Zimbabwe, SADC countries have become hosts to these fleeing immigrants. The immigrants in the initial stages are welcome but as the influx increases they are met with a lot of hostility. Past studies in Southern Africa generally have established that most locals tend to be usually intolerant of outsiders, at times accusing them of contributing to the escalating crime rate and spreading diseases. These feelings are spread over the local community and they cut across age education, gender and economic status. Immigrants both legal and illegal have been accused of taking the jobs of locals and contributing to the lowering of wages. These sentiments are not only expressed by the members of the public but also at senior government levels and at times are even reflected in official documents.

Very few studies, however, have explored how the immigrants in turn perceive their hosts –the locals. This paper explores xenophobia from the view point of Zimbabweans and how they perceive the local communities. Based on a quantitative as well as a qualitative study conducted in Botswana, this paper examines the attitudes of the Zimbabweans towards Botswana. In depth interviews and focus-group discussions were conducted amongst immigrants and mainly among the Zimbabweans. The results of the study reveals that most of the immigrants do display some form of reverse xenophobia.

Introduction

It is common for locals in a community to view foreigners with suspicion. However, when this feeling turns into unreasonable fear and dislike of foreigners or strangers, it is referred to as xenophobia. The concept is typically used to describe fear or dislike of foreigners or in general of people different from one's self. The word is also used to define an intense dislike or fear of foreigners or strangers. Xenophobia can also be seen as negative attitude towards individuals or groups that are in some sense different from oneself or the group which one belongs (Shindondola, 2003). It is a concept closely linked to migration i.e. foreigners coming in from outside the country and living in a community. It is generally defined as the dislike or intolerance of foreigners. This fear or dislike can be attributed to competition for scarce resources, employment, housing, services, facilities and even simple physical space. This can result in violence, resentment, hostility and abuse both verbally and physically of the foreigners by the locals.

Currently, Botswana is faced with an influx of migrants from Zimbabwe due to the economic and political situation in that country. The influx of Zimbabwean immigrants has inevitably stretched the resources in neighboring countries, resulting in negative energy between both locals and foreigners. Botswana, on one hand, have blamed Zimbabwean for taking the jobs reserved for locals and contributing to the lowering of wages, since they are willing for work for low pay. Some Botswana have even accused immigrants of contributing to the escalating crime rate. These sentiments are not only expressed by the members of the public, but have also been expressed at senior government levels, and at times are even reflected in official documents (Morapedi, 2003). Some work in this area, has focused on the negative attitudes towards Zimbabweans, but little, so far is known about how Zimbabwean immigrants perceive Botswana. These feelings, which have been perceived as negative, are spread over the local community and they cut across age across age, education, gender and economic status.

The focus of this paper is to explore the perceptions of foreigners towards the local Botswana population. Most studies conducted on xenophobia have been one-sided in that they explore Botswana feelings towards foreigners. Past studies in Southern Africa generally have established that locals are usually intolerant of outsiders (Campbell and Oucho,2003; MacDonald

and Jacobs, 2005; Nyamnjoh, 2004). There have been very few studies on how the foreigners perceive the locals. Based on a quantitative and qualitative study, this paper presents results compiled by interviewing the Zimbabwean immigrants on their perceptions of Batswana. In-depth interviews and focus-group discussions were conducted amongst Zimbabwean immigrants. The paper is divided in four sections. The first section serves as the introduction and also points out the layout of the discussion. The second section gives an overview of xenophobia and also discusses xenophobia in the Botswana context while the third section provides the empirical information of the study. The fourth section is the discussion and conclusion to the study.

Xenophobia-An Overview

MacDonald & Jacobs (2005) define xenophobia as specifically referring to a “deep dislike of foreigners.”(p, 295). According to them the definition describes a discrete set of attitudes that manifest themselves in the behaviours of governments, the general public and the media. They further explain that as a term, xenophobia cannot be separated from violence and physical abuse, but rather, it should be framed so that it includes the word “practice,” since it is not only an attitude, but also an activity. It is not just a dislike of foreigners, but this dislike, extends to violent practices that may result in bodily harm and damage (MacDonald and Jacobs, 2005). Xenophobia can also be understood as a bitter outcome of the exertion of collective identity. This identity is characterized by the dominant ethnic, religious, economic, political and cultural demands (Shindondola, 2003)

Xenophobia is encountered in many contemporary societies. Its targets are different across countries and nations. In 1997, the European Union carried out a study on xenophobia in all member states. It was found that almost 33 percent of the people interviewed were quite xenophobic or very xenophobic. Most of the responses revealed that the reasons for being xenophobic could be dissatisfaction with their life circumstances, fear of unemployment, insecurity about the future and low self-confidence in the way public authorities and the political establishment worked in their country (Shindondola, 2003)).

Xenophobia in Southern Africa -An Overview

Studies have revealed the existence of xenophobia among several southern Africans, especially South Africans, Botswana, and Namibians. These countries are the main destinations for immigrants in the region with Zimbabweans making up most of the migrants. The political unrest in Zimbabwe has led to the mass exodus of Zimbabweans into neighboring African countries and in most cases, Zimbabweans have often been reported as being on the receiving side of xenophobia. While Zimbabweans seem to be among victims of xenophobia in South Africa and Botswana, they have also been accused of expressing xenophobic attitudes toward non-citizens in their home country.

In South Africa, the rise in the number of immigrants has been accompanied by an increase in acts of xenophobia against non-South Africans, particularly those from other African countries. The problem of xenophobia in South Africa threatens the lives of foreign African nationals. This is damaging to South Africa's international reputation and undermines the whole concept of an African renaissance. It is also reported on how local hawkers despise the foreign hawkers, 'they do not want foreigners on the streets of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Foreign workers repeatedly suffer as targets of violent protests, beatings and other forms of intimidation by local competitors and ordinary criminals. Local traders had organized unruly marches during which foreign competitors were physically assaulted and ransacked (Shindondola, 2003). Palmary (2001) indicates that Xenophobic attitudes have turned into violent attacks on foreigners in South Africa. In Cape Town, the Cape Town Refugee Centre (CTRC) identified a number of serious attacks on foreigners.

Immigrants also suffer harassment at the hands of government officials. A recent survey of municipal police trainees and officers in the City of Johannesburg showed that 30% of the municipal police officers surveyed believed that 'foreigners cause crime'. Another 23% felt that 'overcrowding' caused crime. The survey also indicated that municipal police officers had a very poor understanding of the different kinds of foreigners described in South African legislation e.g. migrant workers, refugees or undocumented migrants. As municipal police officers take on extended policing functions, their attitudes towards non-nationals and knowledge of the relevant legislation becomes increasingly important; as they will also be responsible for ensuring the safety of migrant communities (Harris, 2002). They will also come into increasing contact with

migrant communities in the course of by-law enforcement, as migrant communities (particularly refugee groupings) are often placed in a position whereby they are forced to rely on informal work and housing in the cities, thus engaging in activities which are regulated by city by-laws (Palmary 2001).

In the post 1994-era there was a massive inflow from all parts of Africa. The new government welcomed nationals from countries such as Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe and Zambia as they had backed the now ruling African National Congress during its long struggle against white minority rule (Harris, 2002). That has now changed. Xenophobia is on the rise in and foreigners are increasingly being blamed for spiraling crime and growing unemployment, thereby damaging the country's credentials overseas. South Africa's alarming crime rate-one of the worlds highest-is blamed by many on foreigners but excluding those who came from Europe due to the classic apartheid stereotyping which saw whites as people who bring in skills, money and investment and the others as threats. The common myth is that Nigerians are into drugs and prostitution; Zimbabweans are responsible for cash heists while Mozambicans stage housebreaks. But official records show that only three percent of South Africa's prisons are occupied by non-nationals.

In Lesotho foreigners are believed to bring in and increase crime. Many criminal activities have involved immigrants, especially crimes of money laundering, drug trafficking, the possession of fraudulent documents, and immigrants have gained national and international bad reputation. Nigerians are looked upon with suspicion and mistrust for drug peddling, fraudulent deals and cunning business dealings. Eighteen Nigerian nationals were ordered out of the country between January and December 2002, mainly for fraudulent acquisition of Lesotho passports with which to enter the United States, the United Kingdom and other European countries (Akokpari, 2005:94). Besides Nigerians there are also the Chinese who have also been known to engage in fraudulent business deals. Four Chinese were deported for overstaying their visas. Chinese in Lesotho have acquired a reputation as exploitative, arrogant and disrespectful of the rights and comfort of their local employees (Akokpari, 2005).

Historically, Botswana has always been a migrant sending country, especially to the South African mines and farms. With a change in its economic prosperity after independence saw the country becoming a migrant receiving country. Due to its lack of manpower, the government adopted an open approach to migration policy making it possible for unrestricted entry of immigrants in Botswana. The immigrants included visitors, tourists and job seekers (both skilled and unskilled). The consequence of this open door policy has been an influx of immigrants resulting in the shift in policy to a more restrictive approach to immigrants. In the past decade, Botswana has seen the entry of large numbers of migrants, most of whom are illegal. By far, most of the cross-border migrants are from Zimbabwe, although some come from other African countries and some Asian countries. No one knows how many cross-border migrants have reached Botswana. It is estimated that 20 per cent of the Zimbabwean population have left their homes to seek job security and wages in neighbouring lands.

More than 36 000 Zimbabweans are deported each year from Botswana, even though the numbers could be higher as they keep coming back. As the crisis in Zimbabwe has worsened, the illegal immigrant situation in Botswana has become steadily worse. Botswana might have as many as 200,000 illegal immigrants from Zimbabwe. Newspapers have reported that immigrants are being severely assaulted by some natives of the country, who accuse them of taking their jobs, "stealing their wives" and spreading HIV/AIDS (Daily News, 17/12, 2003).

Reports indicate that Botswana is experiencing an upsurge in crime. In December, 2003, for instance the Francistown police arrested about 2 000 Zimbabweans for various offences. These included over staying and staying in the country illegally. In order to curb the rise in crime the police intensified their border patrols and also implemented combined patrols, comprising of the Department of Immigration, wildlife, customs, Botswana Defence Force (BDF) and police. Despite deportations, the police were fighting a losing battle against illegal immigrants. A senior local police officer said, "We deport them, but they come back the same day," Most illegal immigrants claim they fled their country to escape starvation or persecution for involvement in politics (Daily News, 17/12/03).

The influx of Zimbabwean nationals, specifically, is the biggest immigration problem since Botswana's independence. According to the Department of Immigration in Botswana, close to 26,717 Zimbabwean illegal migrants were apprehended and repatriated from Botswana in 2002 and since then, many migrants have come to Botswana and are undocumented. It is therefore difficult to determine the exact number in the country. Migrants have spread thinly across the country, but have tended to congregate in large cities and dormitory villages. On the whole, their undocumented status makes it difficult for them to access health care services, should they desire to do so. As such, they may be more prone to poor health than the documented migrants and the local population. Records held by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship in Botswana show that the number of Zimbabwean illegal immigrants deported back home increased from 25 511 in 2001 to 26 585 in 2002. The following table shows the number of illegal detainees in Botswana over a period of three years.

Table 1: Immigration Detainees held in Botswana prisons from 2001-2003.

Sex	Year of detention		
	2001	2002	2003
Females	1196	6414	11195
Males	3270	15603	27217
Total	4466	22017	38412
Total number ever detained since 2001: 64 895			

(Source: Prisons Annual Reports 2001-2003).

According to newspaper reports, crime statistics suggest that in 2003 alone, about 26, 214 Zimbabwean nationals were involved in crime in the country and that 681 were being held in Botswana's prisons. Trading between Zimbabwe and Botswana dates back to almost three decades, but recently, the deteriorating economic situation in Zimbabwe has attracted thousands, both skilled and unskilled, to Botswana's cities, towns and mines in search of jobs and a higher standard of living. From their side, Zimbabwe nationals complain that getting a passport in Zimbabwe is expensive; and that the rules for obtaining them are stringent, resulting in more Zimbabweans entering Botswana illegally along secret paths, often referred to as border jumping. Those arrested are taken to the Centre for Illegal Immigrants in Francistown, where

they are kept for a short period before some of them were deported. In 2005 alone, Botswana deported at least 2 500 Zimbabweans every week. Gaborone and its environs alone dispatch a minimum of four truckloads of illegal immigrants to the Francistown Centre for Illegal Immigrants (FCII). These four weekly trips translate to about 300 deportees a week, excluding those who are caught daily in other areas such as Francistown, Lobatse, Maun, Phikwe and Kasane and are transported to FCII separately (Mmegi, 15/12/03).

Most immigrants are fleeing the harsh economic realities back home. They flock to Botswana in the hope of getting menial jobs. Although some of them are qualified, they cannot be absorbed into the labour force back home. They end up being hired in Botswana engaging in jobs which are shunned by Batswana (Mmegi, 15/12/03). Politicians in Botswana have expressed fears of the impact this influx has on the country's economy. These fears have been used to explain why the governments of some of these countries do not wish to take a tougher stand against Zimbabwe or why they do not support the imposition of sanctions against their neighbour. It has been estimated that between 60,000 to 800,000 Zimbabweans have entered Botswana illegally (Mmegi, 12/12/03). This is against a background of 1.7 million people in Botswana. A study conducted by Campbell and Oucho (2003) on the changing attitudes to immigration and refugee policy in Botswana, shows that urban Batswana have high levels of interaction with non-citizens. No significant gender differences were observed. After a fellow citizen, the greatest interaction is with South Africans. From Campbell's (2003) explanation, this is not surprising, considering the ties that two nations have geographically, historically and culturally.

In Botswana, xenophobia has been largely shown through the extensive dislike of black foreigners. The xenophobic attitude of Batswana especially towards Zimbabweans has become more extensive. The attitude has been shown by the fact that upon learning of a certain crime, especially house breaking and theft, the most immediate response by many Batswana is that, " *e a bo ele ma-Zimbabwe*" (*it must be Zimbabweans*), (Morapedi,2003). In Botswana the 2001 national census reveals that the population of documented foreigners is 32,506 (17,930 males, 14 576 females), with most of them residing in Gaborone and Francistown. Of this, 98.1% originate from SADC states, 12 from other African states. The flow in the politics of difference and claims to recognition and representation among Batswana as individuals and groups has coincided with

an increased awareness of the distinction between “locals” and “foreigners.” This awareness is deeply informed by concerns regarding the opportunity and economic entitlements under the diamond boom that has attracted a number of immigrants in to the country.

Among the immigrant, Zimbabweans are those whose presence is most contested and most devalued by locals, who perceived them as monsters taking over Botswana jobs and depriving them of the right of enjoying the comfort of their wealth, even if they are appreciated by employers for their hard work, competence and commitment (Nyamnjoh, 2004). In March 2001 a Botswana government lorry was transporting illegal Zimbabwean immigrants for deportation and had an accident and fifteen of the fifty passengers died. The reported in the media criticized illegal immigration with less concern with the loss of human life (Nyamnjoh, 2004).

The Study Findings

Methodology

The data was collected through exploratory/descriptive research in order to explore the perceptions of Zimbabweans as immigrants of Botswana as their hosts. A questionnaire was used to gather data through closed and open-ended questions with cross-border migrants. A review of reports and documents was also done to establish the extent of the problem. Babbie (2001) indicates that exploratory studies are very valuable in social scientific research, they are essential whenever a researcher is breaking new ground and they can almost always yield new insights into a topic for research.

The Target Population

The target population were Zimbabwean cross-border migrants living in Botswana. For the purposes of this study, a crossborder migrant was defined as a person who has moved from his/her country [in this case Zimbabwe], to another country other than that of his/her usual residence [in this case Botswana]. In addition the person should have resided in the host country for a period of at least 3 months, but planned to visit “home” regularly on a month end basis. For

the purposes of this study, only migrants who were in Botswana in search of work, were traders, or had found temporary work in agriculture, construction, domestic work or any types of piece job-piecework, but often return home to their families for the weekend were included in the study. This definition excludes people who came to Botswana by invitation and for permanent jobs. These migrants may be either be in the country legally or illegally. The major research sites included Francistown, Gaborone and some of the dormitory villages along the border with Zimbabwe. These are ideal sites for this investigation due to the presence of a large number of Zimbabwean migrants in these areas. The questionnaire included questions on demographics (e.g. age, gender, length of stay), and on attitudes towards the Batswana and the health care system in Botswana. It was necessary to focus on the health care system because, it is a critical. Foreigners are expected to pay more than Batswana if they want to access public health care. University students were recruited to conduct the interviews. Intensive training and close supervision was provided to these interviewers to increase inter-interviewer reliability.

The Sample Population

The unit of analysis comprised of cross border migrants who were in Botswana to seek jobs and were currently not permanently employed. This population included domestic workers, those looking for piece jobs or was engaged in part-time work in Botswana. Participants were recruited to complete an anonymous survey. A participant who met the inclusion criteria and agreed to participate through their informed consent was selected for this study.

Sample design

This study used a non-probability sampling design. Purposive sampling and snowballing are considered the appropriate type of non-probability sampling design for this study. Purposive sampling restricts the sample population to a very specific population. The choice of the method for selecting respondents is justified by the following points:

- Collection of data is exploratory
- The population for the study is highly unique
- The study intended to study the lived experience of a specific population of migrants.

No sampling frame exists for the cross border migrants and such, a truly random sample could not be selected. As a result, a “snowball sampling” approach was used where identifying

participants suitable for research and then asking those initial participants to refer the researcher to additional participants. It would have been impossible to select a statistically representative sample since neither the exact numbers of crossborder migrants is known by area of residence. The selection criterion was that respondents should be recruited from both sexes and from the areas where a significant number of the migrants live.

Research assistants attended training in the following domains: face-to-face interview techniques; confidentiality and respect for privacy; the aims of the study; ethical issues in survey research; the research protocol; and on the elements of the questionnaire. For the purpose of standardization, the research assistants were also trained on how to read the items and responses in the questionnaire in a standardized way to minimize errors in interpretation and in social desirability.

Findings

- Characteristics of the Sample

Participants were asked to indicate their age, marital status, employment, immigration status, and educational status, to name a few. The sample consisted of 139 respondents. Respondents ranged in age from 17 to 47years. The mean age of the total sample was 24.4 (SD= 6.2). Most of the respondents were females (56%, N = 78) compared to men (42%, N=59). Three percent of the respondents did not indicate their sex. Table shows the immigration status of the respondent tabulated by sex. Majority of respondents were legal passport holders (55.4%, N= 77), with 20.1% as non passport holders, 11.5% were temporary residents, while a low 7.9% as permanent residents. (See table 2)

Table2: Immigration Status by Sex of respondent

Immigration status	Sex of respondent		Total
	Male	Female	Male
Non passport holder	12 (8.8%)	15(10.9%)	27(19.7%)
Legal passport holder	38(27.7%)	39(28.5%)	77(55.4%)
Temporary resident	6(4.4%)	10(7.3%)	16(11.7%)
Other	3(2.0%)	5(3.6%)	7(5.1%)

Total	59(43.1%)	78(56.9%)	137(100.0%)
-------	-----------	-----------	-------------

Out of the 139 respondents who indicated their marital status, the largest group was divorced (30.9%, N= 43), others were currently married (26.6%), cohabiting (14.4%), separated (9.4%), single and never married (8.6%) or widowed (9.4%).

Respondents were asked to indicate their reason for coming to Botswana. A majority of them came seeking for employment (92.7%, N= 102), with a few indicating that they came to pursue tertiary education, visiting or joining family (see Table 4). The reasons did not differ much between the male and female respondents

Table 4: Reason for coming to Botswana by Sex of respondent

Reason for coming to Botswana	Sex of respondent		Total
	Male	Female	
Seeking employment	43(39.1%)	59(53.6%)	102(92.7%)
Visiting	2(1.8%)	1(.9%)	3(2.7%)
pursue tertiary education	1(.9%)	1(.9%)	2(1.8%)
joining family	1(.9%)	2(1.8%)	3(2.7%)
Total	47(42.7%)	63(57.3%)	110(100.0%)

Most respondents had stayed in Botswana for more than 2 years (44.5%, N= 61), while 32.1% had stayed for a period of 0-9 months. Only 9.5% of respondents stayed for 7months-1 year. The category of length of stay is presented in Table 5

Table 5: Category of length of stay by Sex of respondent

Category of length of stay	Sex of respondent		Total
	Male	Female	
0-6 months	18 (13.1%)	26(19.0%)	44(32.1%)
7months - 1 year	7(5.1%)	6(4.4%)	13(9.5%)
13months - 2years	9(6.6%)	10(7.3%)	19(13.9%)
2.1years+	25(18.2%)	36(26.3%)	61(44.5%)
Total	59(43.1%)	78(56.9%)	137(100.0%)

With reference to education, a majority of respondents had been to secondary school (63.3%, N= 88), while 21.6% had been to a Technical/Vocational training school, 9.4% had been to Primary school with only 2.2% never been to school. Most of the 139 respondents indicated other post secondary education as the highest level of education that they had (28.8%, N= 40). About 25% hold a Diploma with only 3.6% holding Bachelors degree.

Although 63.3% of the respondents, had a job at their home country, most of them said they were here in Botswana to look for job. In table 3 the employment status of the respondents is recorded. Most of the respondents are working permanently for pay (37.8%, N= 51) and this applied to both males and females. While 20.0% of the respondents were working in order to take care of their families. About 8.9% were unemployed but doing erratic jobs (piece jobs), a significant number of them were looking for work (33.3%, N= 45).

Table 6: Current job in Botswana by Sex of respondent

Current job in Botswana	Sex of respondent		Total
	Male	Female	Male
Working in Botswana in order to take care for family	11(8.1%)	16(11.9%)	27(20.0%)
Working permanently for pay	26(19.3%)	25(18.5%)	51(37.8%)
Looking for work	17(12.6%)	28(20.7%)	45(33.3%)
Unemployed but doing piece jobs	5(3.7%)	7(5.2%)	12(8.9%)
Total	59(43.7%)	76(56.3%)	135(100.0%)

Respondents were further asked if they had worked for pay in the last 12 months. A significant number of the respondents have worked for pay in the last 12 months (60.4%, N= 84) while 38.1% have not worked for pay in the past 12 months. Most of the respondents indicated other reasons as responsible for them not working in the past 12 months (48.2%, N= 67). Others were due to labour disputes (10.1%), own illness and disability accounted for 2.2%, 8.6% of them could not work due to pregnancy, 7.9% had to care for children and elderly, while 6.5% were on temporary layoffs due to seasonal reasons. Relatively lower percentages were recorded for those not working due to their own illness or disability, non- seasonal temporary layoffs and permanent layoffs (2.2% and below).

Out of 139 respondents, 61.2% had been hospitalized while 38.8% had never been hospitalized. Almost all respondents have been hospitalized, with the highest having been hospitalized once (23.7%, N= 33), 7.2% account to twice and 3 times and hospitalized. 5% had been hospitalized four times, while 2.9% were hospitalized many times. Relatively lower percentages were recorded for other lengths of hospitalization including occasionally and 10 times and every month. Though respondents have been hospitalized, all most all of them wait before seeking medical help. The majority of them had waited for 2 days after sickness (9.4%, N= 13), followed by those who waited for three days (3.6%, N = 5). About 2.9% wait until after a week.

Respondents Perceptions and Attitudes towards Locals

Dislike and contempt of the locals

Based on the interviews, most of the respondents displayed views consistent with xenophobia. Batswana were portrayed as lazy, stupid and at times even mentally retarded suggesting a dislike and contempt of the locals. Asked about their attitudes towards Batswana, one respondent stated:

Batswana are people with conservative attitude. This attitude affects me at work, because I keep on thinking about the fact that my contract could be terminated before I am ready to leave the country. This is because I find it difficult to be secure at work, and rather stressing the living conditions I am in are good because I just pay rent for a house I can afford. When I start having problems with my land lord I would just find another house where I would be accepted.

They also experienced stigma and discrimination when they tried to access services especially health care. Below are narratives from the respondents: Almost every respondent highlighted that Batswana were rude to them. Some of the respondents felt that Batswana are lazy, like in these cases:

I came to Botswana by rail road, and I have realized that people here in Botswana do not want to work for themselves and do some easy jobs such as cleaning and washing can be easily found. They believe that Zimbabweans are coming to do those jobs. The bad experience is that they don't want to pay. Batswana are not sympathetic, they won't give one food for free, they also don't want to pay for the work you have done for them.

One respondent expressed the view that

Batswana are a timid nation; they are not open to new people and challenges. They resist anything new.

Stigma and discrimination

One of the emerging themes from the study was the negative attitudes that Zimbabweans had about Batswana. During focus group discussions and one to one interviews, the issue of migrating as a result of political and economic strife in country of origin was mentioned as the driving force for coming to Botswana. Cross-border migrants stated that they left their country of origin due to security issues, Asked about their experiences in Botswana, one of the respondents also said:

We leave our countries not because we like it, but because of political instability or unrest back home. Other reasons are political repression of other political parties, and lack of freedom of expression. There is also devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar leading to high price of goods. There is no life there. There is hunger....There is generally a serious lack of jobs with many people who are technically qualified so all the jobs are exhausted. So we have to move here in order to find jobs. There is severe poverty at home. The poor get poorer and the rich get richer. The main reason for migration is the economic factor, nothing else because if we had a choice we would not come here to suffer. Zimbabwe is far more beautiful than Botswana actually.

Asked about their experiences in Botswana, a respondent stated:

There is a lot of ill-treatment in the host country, name calling, and the names being used on us are very offensive, such as Makwerekwere which means dogs or hyenas. We are forced to do jobs we do not want to but because we are suffering, and there is nothing we can do. Batswana cheat us when it comes to negotiating for payment on piece jobs. The Batswana don't pay us the agreed amount. They always change the price when you have finished doing the job. It is always less and never more.

The local authorities also take advantage of us. When we are arrested, we are released immediately on condition that we give them money or do some piece jobs for them. Despite this ill-treatment, we manage to get money to support our families and educate our children....I prefer to suffer here than to let my family back home suffer. So I send most of the money I earn and suffer with the little that remains.

Another also stated:

Batswana are very rude to Zimbabweans. The way they treat us, if you talk to them in English they respond in their own language which we do not understand.

Mobility is often a sign of poverty, with people traveling out of their home areas looking for fresh opportunities. One man stated:

I have been coming across the border regularly for two years now...We get a few days' permission to be here, but despite police harassment, we all stay to look for work because a little bit of money here in Botswana is more than we can hope for in Zimbabwe. The police catch us and stick us in the trucks that take us back over the border, but after a few days we come back. It does not help to deport us. They are wasting their time and money. Our family members are suffering back home and we have to stand for them. I would rather suffer that to let my family go hungry.

Cross-border migrants complained that they may produce cheap labour, in the cities and cattle posts. Often, they often run the risk of being abused and not paid their salaries. One respondent stated:

Batswana are very bad people. They use insulting language at us and call us Makwerekwere. We live in fear because the police are always coming after us, irrespective of whether one has a passport or not. We are beaten for no reason, which is not a solution to the problem at all. As immigrants, we are unable to report the case because the people [referring to police and SSGs] who are helping are the ones who make matters worse through beatings and rape.

Another respondent added:

The police don't differentiate between who holds an official permit and who does not. They just harass everyone including those with passports and residents permits. Even if your passport is at home, they will tell you that someone will have to bring it to the holding cell. It's totally unfair.

Most of the Zimbabwean respondent being blamed the high HIV/AIDS prevalence in Botswana on the Batswana, but they think actually the Batswana brought it upon themselves. One respondent stated:

Young ladies in Botswana dress very badly and end up being raped because they attract males. They don't care about what they dress, who touches them and how they touch them. We Zimbabwean men are very jealous and you cannot touch my woman in my presence. Batswana men too, they don't seem to care when their women are snatched around and talked to by everyone in the bar. The dress code by Botswana girls also tempts Zimbabwean males to have unprotected sex with them. You feel that you cannot have protected sex with such a beautiful woman. It is like you are not appreciating her.

Another respondent added that:

The Batswana youth are too modernized and they end up sleeping with older men to get cash and cell phones..

Another one also stated that:

People in Botswana drink too much especially the ladies, Aah! There are more women in bars than men and those women don't have money. You buy them drink and then they run away from you. They call you "spoko" That is why there is so much HIV and AIDS here.

When asked about how these will impart their behavior, they said:

Zimbabweans seem to adapt undesirable behaviour of Batswana. Everyone should try to maintain their culture.

Attitudes towards the health care system

Respondents stated that the health care system in host countries, such as Botswana, ignores the health needs of cross-border migrants. That latter also acknowledged being at high risk of HIV as a result of their isolation and insecurity and limited access to sexual and reproductive health services. Migrants may not seek or access health services unless they have symptoms of a major illness. Of the 139 respondents, 77.7% indicate that no nurse or doctor has ever refused to help them, only 14.4% had been refused help. 0.7% of the respondents were refused assistance because they were foreign. Others did not have valid, legal passport documents, for some it was the issue of money. They could not afford the service provided, About 11.5% of the respondents have been referred to another practitioner by a nurse or doctor, while 69.8% were not referred. One of the respondents pointed out that:

Health care is very expensive here in Botswana. You pay P20-00 for consultation fee at a community health centre compared to Batswana who pay P2-00. When you are admitted, you pay P60-00 per night and the pay for medication.

Health care costs in the host country are unaffordable, and on the same, the cross-border migrants often do not have money to cater for their own health care needs in the host country, when other priorities are considered such as food, shelter, and needs of family members "back home.

Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, respondents did display a dislike of the locals. They also tended to have negative feelings about Batswana. Most respondents found Batswana to be very rude to foreigners especially Zimbabweans. The Zimbabweans complained that if you spoke to Batswana in English they would respond in Setswana. In addition to this ill treatment, there is a lot of derogatory name calling. The word *Makwerekwere* is used to describe foreigners. This promoted a lot of hostility and suspicion between the locals and the foreigners. The migrants perceived the locals as *very lazy* –that is why they ended up doing jobs which the locals looked down upon. Despite this they are still ill treated and at times they are not even paid for their labour or they are paid less the agreed amount. To compound the problem even further, those in authority who are supposed to uphold the law also take advantage of them. An incident is related when during police raids against illegal migrants, even though with permits to work in Botswana are also arrested. At times they ended up paying the officers in order for them to be released from custody.

When it came to the crucial issue of health, most migrants felt that they were socially excluded from accessing healthcare. In order to get medical attention from a government hospital, foreigners pay slightly more than locals. In addition there are services which they are excluded from accessing. For instance foreigners unlike citizens do not have free access from government institutions to antiretroviral (ARVs) drugs which are medications for the treatment of HIV/AIDS related infections. Fear was also a determining factor in accessing these resources. This situation was further made worse by the fact that illegal immigrants feared being arrested as they did not have legal travel documents. Those who were in the country legally also expressed reluctance to access health services as they were intimidated by health workers which was made worse by the language barrier.

Socially excluded groups such as migrants face major barriers to successful integration into host countries at any level. Cross-border migrants face the “simultaneity of effects” of their citizenship, socioeconomic class and often gender-based discrimination. Respondents stated that had difficult problems getting medical attention in Botswana. Majority of them indicated lack of

money was the main problem hindering their access to health care. A significant number stated they could not get medical attention because of fear. Most of them feared being sent back home since they did not have legal passports or referred back to the police and immigration department. Some of them faced discrimination, including ill treatment and harassment by staff members as well as language barrier. Problems encountered by respondents affected them differently. A greater portion was afraid, demoralized, and reluctant to go to the clinic or delayed in seeking medical attention. Most of them indicate that they ended up becoming very sick and unhealthy. Some of the respondents pointed out that if they do not have money they would rather die than go to the hospital, while others indicated that the problem had led them not to change their behaviour though it pains them. A few preferred buying tablets from the pharmacy.

All in all the attitudes and perceptions expressed by the respondents are consistent with the concept of “identifying with the aggressor”. This is a situation where the victim tends to identify with the oppressor and misdirect their anger at other systems. Even though the respondents did acknowledge the fact that the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe drove them to come to Botswana they did not hold their government accountable and responsible for their plight. Instead they expected more from the host country even at the expense of the locals in issues of employment and access to health care. Throughout the interviews they felt that those who were in authority here were not doing enough for them. What also came out of the study is that none of the respondents had anything positive to say about the host country and its citizens.

The Zimbabwean immigrants experienced xenophobic attitudes towards them, both from the ordinary citizens and the officials. This had implications for the respondents in accessing services in particular health services. These xenophobic tendencies can be traced to a certain extent to economic as well as political factors. When Botswana became an attractive migrant destination because of its economic prosperity, the government had adopted an open door migration policy as there was a critical manpower shortage to drive the booming economy. The economic growth slowed down and the demand for manpower was not as high and therefore it was now imperative for the Botswana government to tighten its migration policy. At the same time the unstable political situation in Zimbabwe has resulted in an influx of migrants seeking

for greener pastures in the neighbouring countries. A middle ground should be found to regulate the influx of immigrants to the country.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Akokpari J (2005) “Strangers in a strange land Citizenship and the Immigration Debate in Lesotho,” *Journal of Development Southern Africa*, 22(1), Routledge: New York

Babbie, E. (2001) *The Practice of Social Research*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Botswana Prisons Service, *Prisons Annual Reports 2001-200*, Gaborone

Campbell E. K and Oucho J. O (2003) *Changing Attitudes to Immigration and Refugee Policy in Botswana*, Southern African Migration Project (SAMP): Cape Town

Harris B (2002) “Xenophobia: A new pathology for a new South Africa” in Hook D & Eagle G (eds) *Psychopathology and Social Prejudice*, pp 169-184, University Of Cape Town Press: Cape Town

MacDonald D.O and Jacobs S (2005) “(Re) Writing Xenophobia: Understanding Press Coverage Of Cross- Border Migration in Southern Africa.” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 23(3): 297-325

Morapedi W.G (2003) *Post Liberation Xenophobia and the African Renaissance: The Case of the Influx of undocumented Zimbabwean Immigrants in to Botswana c 1995-2003*, University of Botswana (History Department): Gaborone

Nyamnjoh F.B. (2004) “Reconciling the rhetoric of rights with competing notions of personhood and agency in Botswana” in Englund H & Nyamnjoh F.B (eds) *Rights and the Politics of Recognition in Africa* pp33-63, ZED Books: New York & London

Palmay I (2001) *Refugees, Safety and Xenophobia in South African cities: The Role of Local Government*, Centre for the study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVr): Braamfontein

Shindondola H, (2003) *Xenophobia in South Africa and Beyond*, Phd Research Proposal, Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg

Newspaper Articles

Arresting and deporting illegal immigrants (Daily News, 17/12/03)

2,000 Zimbabweans arrested (Daily News, 19/12/03)

Zimbabweans Immigrants Have Nowhere to go to, (Mmegi, 15/12/03)

Attitude of Botswana/South Africa to Zimbabweans migrants (Mmegi, 12/12/03)