

# Enhancing Development Potential of Diaspora Communities, Experiences of Zimbabweans Living in Botswana

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**Abstract:** The study examined the development potential of the Zimbabwean diaspora communities living in Botswana. The current study sought to fill a gap in the interrogation of the willingness and capacity of Zimbabweans living in Botswana to participate in development projects in Zimbabwe. The research was carried out in Botswana using mail and electronic questionnaires, in depth interviews and ethnographic data. Fifty mail survey respondents, 7 electronic survey respondents and 12 in depth study respondents were used in the current study. The mixed method approach used yielded data that could not have been obtained with one method only. Using the transnational capability framework, the research established the existence of both skilled and unskilled Diaspora in Botswana. The study observed that the Zimbabwean community in Botswana is actively involved in transnational activities. The study established that there is willingness to participate in the advancement of their families and communities in Zimbabwe. There are some challenges that hinder the full participation of the Diaspora community that were noted in the study. The shorter periods covered by permits affect the migrants' capacity to access loans from banks or engage in long term planning as they risk non-renewal of permits. On the Zimbabwean side the economic and political uncertainty affect the commitment by some Zimbabweans in the diaspora to invest in Zimbabwe. The possibility of engagement between Zimbabweans in the diaspora is affected by lack of trust between the current government and the citizens in the Diaspora. The study recommended that the government of Zimbabwe should create a database of Zimbabweans living in Botswana to determine and tap the available skills base for capacity building. The Governments of Botswana and Zimbabwe are recommended to discuss extension of permits and granting of dual citizens to Zimbabwean applicants for the benefit of both countries. There is also need for the Zimbabwean Government to reduce duty on capital goods to allow the Diaspora community to bring productive capital for investment.

**Key Words:** development potential; diaspora communities; transnationalism; transnational capability framework; capabilities; development partners.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Mobility is one of the features that have characterised Human societies since pre-historic times. The United

Nations (2009) noted that about 3.1 percent of the world population lived and worked outside their country of birth in 2008. In Zimbabwe, about 3- 4 million citizens are said to be living outside the country (United Nations Development Programme, 2010). This means that about a quarter of Zimbabweans are living in the diaspora. The bulk of the Zimbabwean emigrants are found in South Africa and the United Kingdom. The word "diaspora" is defined, at its simplest, as the dispersal of a people from its original homeland. Until relatively recently, the term was mostly closely associated with the dispersion of the Jewish people, although there are also extensive historiographies of the Armenian, Greek, and African diasporas (Butler, 2001). Butler (2001) further notes that communities that scholars had once labelled as immigrant, nomadic, or exile also began to be called diasporas. Some refer to refugees as diaspora population. Page and Mercer (n.d.) share similar sentiments when they refer to the Jewish people as "thou shalt be a diaspora in all kingdoms of the earth" (Deuteronomy 28:25). Using the above understanding of diaspora Zimbabweans that left their homeland after the violent land invasions of 2000 fit to be called diasporas.

In the past migration was viewed in negative terms as a cause of brain drain. Migration is now recognized as developmental in the academic world due to the realization of the contribution of migrants through remittances, investment, philanthropic contributions, tourism in their home countries, capital market investment, technology transfer and return of human capital (Davies, 2007; Bloch, 2005, IOM and MPI , 2012). Studies have noted that countries like China, India , Mexico and Philippines have benefited from the capital of their diaspora (Eversole, 2008; De Hass, 2010; IOM, 2009; Davies, 2007). The role of the African Diasporas in countries like Ghana and Rwanda has been documented (Davies, 2007).

### 1.1 Statement of the problem

The link between migration and development is one of the key subjects of academic and policy debates. Migration is now recognized as developmental in the academic world due to the

realization of the contribution of migrants through remittances, investment, philanthropic contributions, tourism in their home countries, capital market investment, technology transfer and return of human capital (Newland, 2003; Bloch, 2005; Davies, 2007; Chikanda et al, 2016). Zimbabwe is one of the countries that experienced mass-exodus of her citizens in the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The political impasse between the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union -Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) after the violent 2000 elections worsened the situation leading to the flooding of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa and Botswana. The current study sought to explore other developmental areas where diasporas can participate besides financial remittances. The current study utilized the transnational capability approach that was used by Bloch (2005). The approach aims to use interrogate other values than capital such as time, affiliation, respect and identity.

### 1.2 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- What is the available human capital of Zimbabweans in Botswana?
- What are the transnational social, political and economic activities carried out by Zimbabweans in Botswana?
- What are the social contacts and affiliations that are maintained by Zimbabweans in Botswana?
- What are the future roles that Zimbabweans wish to play to develop their immediate families and community in Zimbabwe?
- What are the challenges faced by Zimbabweans living in Botswana, which militate against their full participation in development activities?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the studies of the migration-development nexus in Zimbabwe refer to the diaspora in the developed North or South Africa (Crush et al, 2016; Chikanda and Crush, 2018). Botswana is one of the major destinations of Zimbabwean migrants that are ignored by studies. The activities of Zimbabweans based in the United Kingdom and South Africa have been widely covered by scholars like Bloch (2005); Pasura (2008); Mbiba (2005); McGregor and Pasura (2010) and Mupakati (2012) among others. Few studies on the Zimbabwean diaspora in Botswana have been carried out (Dillon, 2013; Mutsindikwa and Gelderblom, 2014) but a gap in the detailed study of the role of Zimbabweans living in Botswana is evident in academia. Mutsindikwa and Gelderblom (2014) focused on the social networks of undocumented immigrants, while Dillon (2013) primarily focused on financial remittances. The study sought to explore the human capital of the Zimbabweans living in Botswana. The study hypothesized that some highly qualified Zimbabweans would seek opportunities in Botswana due to its proximity to Zimbabwe.

### 2.1 Historiography of the Migration-Development nexus

The development paradigms guided the migration-development nexus and the migration policy frame work of the different epochs. This section outlines the different phases of the Migration-development nexus scholarship in order to contextualise the paradigm adopted by the present study.

The first phase of the Migration-development scholarship was from the 1950s to the 1970s. Policy makers and researchers viewed migration as beneficial to both the sending country and the host country (Chikanda, 2010; De Hass, 2007; Hennings, 2013). The optimistic position of scholars was influenced by the modernisation paradigm. The modernisation theory held that for developing countries to achieve progress they needed capital injection and adoption of progressive values and attitudes (Kindleberger, 1967 cited in Hennings, 2013). This implies that migrants from the third world countries were to acquire skills and capital in the developed world that would initiate development on their return. It was argued that the reverse flow of money and ideas would compensate for the brain drain (De Hass, 2010). Thus academia before the 1970s linked development to return migration.

The period between 1970 and 1980 witnessed a paradigm shift to a postulation of a negative relationship between migration and development. Both the academic and the policy field maintained that migration led to underdevelopment of the third world through brain drain (De Hass, 2010). Brain drain meant that the human resources were siphoned from the African countries to develop the metropolis in Europe (Cussons, 2015). This was influenced by the dependency paradigm and the world systems theory, which maintained that development in the west was parasitic as it robbed Africa of its human resources and natural resources. Thus the exodus of Zimbabwean professionals to countries like Botswana and other countries have been linked to brain drain by scholars like Abel Chikanda.

The 1990s ushered in a period of empirical studies which shifted the perspective to theorisation of the agency of migrants. New theories such as the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) emerged which held that the decision to migrate was a household strategy to diversify income rather than an individual decision (Chikanda, 2010; De Hass 2010). Thus it can be argued that the NELM meant that migrants have an obligation to the remaining family members. The theories of transnationalism, which postulate interaction between the migrants and their countries of origin emerged (De Hass, 2010). The current study borrows from the theory of transnationalism as it seeks to identify the economic, social and political interaction between the Zimbabwean community in Botswana and their native country.

The fourth phase in the migration and development scholarship commenced in 2001. This period was marked by resurgence in optimism of the link between migration and development due to a focus on remittances (De Hass, 2007;

Hennings, 2013). It should be noted that the scholarship during this period shifted from the position of the Modernisation paradigm which linked development to return migration. The diaspora was viewed as a source of brain gain rather than a source of brain drain (Brown, 2009; Kaplan, 1997 cited in Pellerin and Mulling, 2013). The role of remittances in development was influenced by the examples of China, India and Taiwan (Pellerin and Mulling, 2013). Thus migrants could be mobilized to be agents of development in their home countries while residing in the host country. The current study explores the possibilities of the mobilisation of the Zimbabwe diaspora community in Botswana to contribute to the recovery of Zimbabwe.

While the scholarship of the previous decades had a unidirectional relationship between migration and development, recent scholarship championed by De Haas (2010), has postulated that migration has heterogeneous impacts on development. De Haas (2010) proposed a Migration Transition theory, which emphasised that migration and development had a non-linear relationship since the country passed through various stages of transitions. The current study is anchored on a theoretical framework that acknowledges the diversity of the impacts of the diaspora on development.

## 2.2 Theoretical and conceptual framework

The current study deploys the Transnational Capability approach as a theoretical framework to analyse the development potential of Zimbabweans living in Botswana. The transnational Capabilities framework was used by Bloch (2005) to analyse the development potential of 500 Zimbabweans living in the United Kingdom. The theory is derived from transnationalism and the capability approach of Amartya Sen. This section traces the theories of Migration and Development that are linked to the theoretical framework of the current study. The present section outlines Mohan's classification of the relationship between development and the diaspora.

### 2.2.1 Development in the Diaspora

According to Mohan (2002) development in the diaspora refers to the use of connections with other diaspora within the host country to secure a livelihood benefit. This refers to Migrant collaboration to develop themselves in the host country (Chikanda, 2010). The current study investigates intra-migrant connections within Botswana in order to explore the social capital at the disposal of the diaspora community in Botswana. It should be noted that the current study is focused on the impact of the migrants in the home country rather than the host.

### 2.2.2 Development by the diaspora

Development by the diaspora involves 'diasporic flows and connections' facilitating development in the country of origin (Mohan, 2002; Cussons, 2015). In the current study the

question of the developmental role of remittances (finance and commodities sent by the migrant to the family, friends and institutions in the home country) is the subject of development by the diaspora. Chikanda (2010) noted that the capacity of the diaspora to facilitate development is dependent on the degree of integration in the host- country.

### 2.2.3 Transnationalism

The transnational lens was introduced in migration studies by sociologists and anthropologists in the 1990s. The term transnationalism is defined by Glick-Schiller (1992:1) as "*The process by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement.*"

The above definition presupposes a binary relationship that links the diaspora with their country of origin. This is further elucidated by Vertovec (2001:274) as migrants' maintenance of "*attachment to the families, traditions and causes outside the nation-state to which they have moved*". This includes the interactions with other Diasporas and organisations in other countries besides the host country. The term attachment means that there must be a continuity of interactions between the migrant and people in the country of origin or the other diaspora (Dunn, 2005).

Portes and others (1999) identified 3 forms of transnational linkages, which are social, political and economic forms. Transnationalism is further divided into the binary of Transnationalism from above and Transnationalism from below (Smith & Guarzino, 1998). Transnationalism from above refers to the activities or interconnections of groups, while Transnationalism from below refers to the activities and interconnections of individuals.

Mupakati (2012) argued that the transnational framework can be useful in Diasporic studies. He highlighted the role of the framework in recognising the multi-sightedness of the lives and activities of the migrants. The model privileges social capital, remittances and circulation as key components.

The transnational framework is not immune from critics just like other theories. The following criticisms have been advanced by scholars like Forner (1997) and Waldinger and Fitzgerald (2004): it is not a new phenomenon; it is trans local as it sometimes links neighbouring villages or towns across the national boundaries; dual loyalty is not possible since migrants may be viewed with suspicion in both countries.

The current study notes that while transnationalism refers to old practices, there have been some changes owing to the advances in communication, technology and globalisation. The transnational framework is nevertheless useful in analysing the activities of Zimbabwean Migrants in Botswana.

### 2.2.4 Capability Approach

The capability approach introduced a human centred dimension in the development debate. Prior to the 1990s, development was conceptualised in terms of deliberate effort

towards progressive change (Thomas, 1996). Thus measures of development in economic terms such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) were influenced by this conceptualisation which emanated from the modernisation paradigm. Sen (1999) conceptualised development as the expansion of people's freedoms. This means the expansion of people's capabilities. Capabilities refer to "what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead" (Sen, 1987:36).

Thus the capability approach addresses people's choices and freedoms to improve their wellbeing. This includes being well-fed, healthy life, good education, happy family life, political and civil liberties (Sen, 1999). Participation of people in the development process is an imperative in the capabilities approach. This study borrows from the capabilities approach in the conceptualisation of development as well as the theoretical framework of transnational capabilities.

### 2.2.5 Transnational Capability

The transnational capability framework refers to the willingness and ability of Migrant groups to engage in activities that transcend national boundaries (Al Ali et al, 2001). The transnational capability framework was used by Alice Bloch to analyse the transnational activities of 500 Zimbabweans living in the United Kingdom (Bloch, 2008). The theory was also used by the IOM to analyse the Salvadoran refugees in Australia (Merle, 2012).

Transnational capabilities differ from transnational activities since the latter are observable actions such as the sending of remittances, communication and frequent visits to the home country (Al Ali et al, 2001). Bloch (2008) noted that transnational capability is determined by identification with the social, economic and political processes in one's country of origin. It is also influenced by both the home country and host country institutions. For example the ability to acquire a job and a residents' permit in Botswana will influence one's ability to visit home and send remittances to Zimbabwe.

Merle (2012) observed that transnational capability is influenced by mobility, communication, social relations, time allocation, education and knowledge as well as access to paid work. It should be noted that factors influencing capabilities are context specific. Bloch (2008) noted that in the United Kingdom, the Zimbabwean migrants' capabilities were affected by the immigration status, intention to return and possession of property in Zimbabwe. The current study will determine the other factors that influence the transnational capabilities of Zimbabweans living in Botswana.

### 2.2.6 Utility of the Transnational Capability approach as a theoretical Framework

The transnational capability framework uses a broader picture of wellbeing and not just the money flows (Gasper and Truong, 2012). This means that the framework studies the diaspora contributions holistically and not just in terms of their monetary contributions.

The current study can observe broader opportunities and constraints of Diasporas not just in economic terms. Gasper and Truong (2012) observed that the perspective counters the capital and nation centred perspectives. A transnational capability is people centred and therefore is useful in researching vulnerable groups like undocumented and despised migrants in a foreign land. It will be useful in capturing the concerns of the vulnerable groups.

### 2.3 Leveraging the Diaspora for Development: World Examples

China, India, Philippines and Taiwan among other countries have benefited tremendously from their Diasporas. This section seeks to explore the role of the diaspora in some of these countries in order to place the potential role of the Zimbabwe Diaspora in a wider context.

The Philippines Government have set up an online portal 'Ban link Bayan' for diaspora engagement (Global Migration Group [GMG], 2013). This offers Diasporas information on business, investment and volunteer opportunities at home. Thus if the diaspora is informed and given opportunities to participate in the development of the country, they are bound to work in partnership with their government.

India was reeling under the crippling economic sanctions after its nuclear test of 1998. The country therefore adopted a policy of leveraging investments from its citizen's abroad (UNDP, 2010). This was done through selling bonds with an interest rate 2% higher than the prevailing United States market. The Indian diaspora was given a choice to redeem the bonds in either the US Dollars or the Germany Mark (UNDP, 2010). Thus through such incentives the Indian diaspora would have an added incentive besides patriotism to buy the Government Bonds.

The Chinese government is presiding over a populous state with many of its citizens in the Diaspora. In its 'Diaspora option' the Chinese Government encourages foreign direct investment and philanthropy from its citizen's abroad (UNDP, 2010). The government set up the Overseas Chinese office to administer the Chinese Diaspora (Xing & Opoku-Mensah, 2008). The government further ensures that the businesses of the Chinese abroad are legally protected. The Chinese Government offers multi-entry visas for those Chinese who are no longer Citizens (Plaza, 2010). The strategy of the Chinese Government therefore is to encourage investment and foreign direct investment.

The policies of the governments of China, Taiwan, Philippines and India have varying degrees of success. The Taiwan brain trust model, owing to its incentives, attracted about 5000 returning Scientists in the year 2000 (Saxenian, 2002). This was due to the incentives of upgrading infrastructure and competitive salaries for the returnees. Plaza (2012) observes that return programmes usually attract the less successful in the Diaspora, since the brightest tend to stay.



In the case of India and China the policies of attracting investments from the Diaspora seem to achieve some degree of success as evidenced by income from the Diaspora entrepreneurs. Pellerin and Mulling (2013) noted that in the 1990s about one third of the businesses in the Silicon Valley were from India and China. These businesses were investing more than 1 Billion US dollars in China and India respectively. These countries managed to encourage diaspora investment at home. This resulted in the Indian Software business boom. The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) (2008) argued that there are less remittances going directly to the families of Diaspora members. The Indian Diaspora also purchased £2, 3 Billion of government bonds in just over 2 weeks in 1998 (MPI, 2004; UNDP, 2010). Thus it is argued that the poor may benefit from employment creation by these entrepreneurs (MPI, 2010).

Thus the government of Zimbabwe will have to cultivate a positive relationship with its Diasporas if it is to follow the footsteps of the above countries. But so far, this has not happened.

#### *2.4 The role of the Diaspora in Development: African Case study*

The role of the government partnering with the diaspora in order to promote development is exemplified by the case of Ghana. It should be noted that Ghana is one of the countries that experienced mass exodus of its human capital under the military regime from 1981 to 1985 (African Diaspora Policy Centre, 2011). The Ghanaian situation can be comparable to the post-2000 situation in Zimbabwe in terms of the flight of human capital. Thus Ghana would provide a good model for the comparative study for leveraging the Diaspora for economic development.

The Government of Ghana took an initiative to attract the diaspora contributions through a number of policies that entailed the participation of the Diaspora in the economic, social and political processes. The Government created the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora relations to oversee and draft policies for the Diaspora issues (Ankomah et al, 2012). This means that the Government of Ghana officially recognised the existence and the role of the Diaspora in national issues. The Government of Ghana also granted the Diasporas dual citizenship in 2001 as well as the voting rights in 2006 (Ankomah et al, 2012). This means that they were recognised as full citizens with a voice in the governance of the country. Thus participation leads to ownership and sustainability.

The Government of Ghana also organises events such as home coming summit, the Joseph project and Ghana Expos in the destination Countries in order to reconnect the diaspora with Ghana (Ankomah et al, 2013; Davies, 2011; MPI, 2004). These events update the Ghanaians about developments at home as well as the needs to be addressed by the Diasporas.

While the policies of Ghana have improved remittances and some development projects, there are some constraints in the policy framework of Ghana. The Change of Governments has affected continuity of some of the initiatives. For example voting could not be done in 2009 due to logistical problems (MPI, 2004). The case of Ghana therefore can provide an insight to the Government of Zimbabwe in leveraging financial and human capital from the Botswana.

#### *2.5 Government of Zimbabwe efforts towards leveraging the diaspora remittances*

The Government of Zimbabwe realised the importance of Zimbabweans living outside the country in sending remittances. This resulted in a deliberate effort to harness the diaspora remittances through the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ). A team led by the late economist Eric Bloch visited United Kingdom, United States and South Africa to engage the Zimbabwean Diaspora (UNDP, 2010). It can be noted that Botswana was excluded in the visits since the Government expected the Diaspora in the developed world to be better skilled and therefore have more disposable income than the Diaspora in third world countries.

The Diaspora engagement initiative resulted in the setting up of Home link, which was an RBZ initiative for harvesting foreign currency (UNDP, 2010). Home link had a package of Money Transfer Services, a Diaspora foreign currency bond and a Housing scheme for Zimbabweans abroad (UNDP, 2010; IOM, 2009; Muzondidja, 2011). The Foreign Currency Bond had an attractive interest rate of 12 percent. In the Housing Scheme, the diasporas were to pay in foreign currency while the RBZ would pay the building societies and estate agencies in local currency (Herald, 16 June 2004, cited in Muzondidja, 2011:130). The Money Transfer Agencies (MTAs) were licensed to buy foreign currency and exchange it for Zimbabwean dollars. However, the Home link scheme failed because of several reasons including lack of trust between Zimbabweans living abroad and the Government.

Several attempts were made by the Government of Zimbabwe before, during and after the GNU to involve the diasporas in the reconstruction of the country but these attempts failed to produce positive results.

#### *2.6 Transnational Activities of the Diaspora Communities*

Transnationalism has been viewed as attachment to families, communities' traditions and causes outside the migrant's country of settlement (Vertovec, 2001). This means that transnational activities that link different countries. These economic activities imply the existence of networks linking both the country of origin and the destination countries.

##### *2.6.1 Transnational activities of Zimbabweans in the diaspora*

Most studies noted that Zimbabweans in the diaspora are actively involved transnationally, through the sending of remittances. Researchers on remittances noted that most families in Zimbabwe depended on remittances for their

survival during the crisis (Maphosa, 2007). The country did not have social services and there was shortage of commodities in the post 2000 era. Thus remittances in the form of cash and food stuffs were a source of livelihood for many Zimbabwean families (Muzondidja, 2011). Bloch (2008) lists some of the gifts sent by the Diaspora from Britain. These included clothes, books, electrical goods, medicines and used cars among other items. Other activities of the Zimbabwean Diaspora communities included donations to charities, building of schools, churches and hospitals (Maphosa, 2007). Most schools are said to have benefited books and other technological devices from their former students in the diaspora. This means that some diaspora made collective donations that are typical of Home Town Associations formed by the diaspora groups such as the Mexicans in the United States of America.

#### 2.6.2 Remittance-development nexus

In case of Zimbabwe during the Crisis, the remittances were the main means of survival for most families. During the crisis period, remittances played a crucial role in the alleviation of poverty where the state was incapacitated. Bloch (2008) noted that since remittances were mostly used for basics that include housing, they played a developmental role as they helped to improve health, reduce diseases and improve nutrition and housing. This concurs with the argument by Tevera and Chikanda (2009) that meeting the immediate needs of the families like housing, food, education and health care are important investments in human capital. Thus, through sending money to pay fees for their children, the Diaspora can contribute to the reversal of brain drain.

Mudungwe (2009) noted that remittances in Zimbabwe have the potential to revive the industry if they are properly channelled as lines of credit to revive the production capacity of the industry. The remittances also act as a source of foreign currency in a country like Zimbabwe where international balance of payment support has dried up (Mudungwe, 2009). Therefore remittances have a developmental role, especially if they are sent through the formal channels.

#### 2.6.3 Transnational Socio-cultural activities

*“Socio-cultural transnationalism concerns the emergence of practices of sociability, mutual help and public rituals rooted in cultural understandings that pertains to the sense of belonging and social obligations of immigrants”* (Itzigsohn & Giorguli-Saucedo, 2002 cited in Schunck, 2014:50). Transnational social activities are dichotomised into those with a home country focus and activities with a host country focus (Bloch, 2008). Activities with a home country focus include visits to families and friends in the country of origin, contributions to newspapers and cultural events. Activities with a host-country focus include membership of clubs, religious groups and cultural gatherings (Bloch, 2008). Studies noted that most Zimbabweans frequently communicate with their relatives in Zimbabwe. The research by Bloch (2008) revealed that 70 % of the Diaspora members

were in contact with their families at least once a week. The studies by Mupakati (2010) also confirmed that there is regular communication between Migrants in South Africa and United Kingdom with their relatives in Zimbabwe. The medium of communication by Zimbabweans in UK and South Africa included telephone, short message services, email, and letters (Mupakati, 2012). The Internet and its related social media is a new addition.

The social bonds between Diaspora members and their families and relatives are also maintained by frequent visits to the country of origin. Bloch (2005, 2008) noted that Zimbabweans in the Diaspora frequently visited their home country. The other social link that connects Zimbabweans to their home is food. Zimbabweans in the UK buy staple food products from Zimbabwe (Mupakati, 2012).

#### 2.6.4 Transnational political activities of the Zimbabwe Diaspora Communities.

Schunck (2014) maintained that transnational political activities entail electoral and non-electoral activities that are aimed at influencing decisions in the sending country. Political activities involve membership of a political organisation in the country of origin or participation in politics related to the country of origin (Schunck, 2014:49). This means that there is political transnationalism when a Diaspora member maintains connection with a political party, organisation or causes related the home country situation. Transnational political activities could also involve activities that are aimed at improving the condition of the Diaspora in the host country if the cause gains assistance from the sending Country (Kuhlmann, 2010). For example, if the diaspora community demonstrates against Xenophobia in South Africa with the support of the Zimbabwean government, then it becomes transnational political activity. Zimbabweans in the diaspora engage in political activities on a variable degree.

The Zimbabwean diaspora have formed many organisations that deal with the Zimbabwean cause. Major political parties like MDC, ZANU PF and ZAPU have branches in countries like South Africa and the UK. Zimbabwean Diaspora has variable engagement with the home government. Diaspora activities include human rights and opposition support, support for the government, secessionist activism and Rhodesian lobby (Kuhlmann, 2010). The activities of the diaspora political activists in London included lobbying against ZANUPF and the military in Zimbabwe. The Diaspora activists lobbied for the extension of sanctions against President Mugabe and some members of ZANU PF and the army (Mbiba, 2010).

#### 2.7 Return Migration

Return migration has been a subject to scholarly and policy debates. A study by Logan (1992) revealed that Zimbabweans who were returning from the United States of America were in the forefront in setting up businesses in Zimbabwe. This concurs with Wanba (2015) who noted that return migration is

beneficial since migrants who have accumulated wealth can set up businesses.

Studies investigating the return intentions of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora noted that the majority of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora indicated that they would want to return in the near future (Bloch,2005, Makina,2012; Mupakati,2012). The conditions for return included accumulation of wealth, change of Government, improvement of the economic and political situation (Bloch, 2005; Makina,2012).

### 2.7.1 Barriers to return migration

The conditions in the home country as well as opportunities in the host country may be a hindrance to return migration. Khonje (2015) noted that return may be deferred until children complete schooling. This could be true of the post 2000 episode that involved the migration of whole families. Decision to return means that the returnee would encounter with the society that has changed radically from what they were familiar with (Mandiyani, 2014). Similarly, Makina (2012) noted that migrants who left after 2000 were more likely to return than those who left before. The medical system of Zimbabwe is said to be less favourable compared to the countries where Zimbabweans live (Mandiyani, 2014). The conditions cannot lure the Diaspora members to return as they feel insecure. The health workers also lamented the exorbitant registration fees, which are not commensurate with their salaries upon their return (Mandiyani, 2014).

## III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The researchers used the mixed methods approach that combines both the qualitative and quantitative techniques in collecting and analysing data. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2007 cited in Holstein, 2014:4) define mixed methods approach as the “*type of research in which a researcher or a team of researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches for the purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration.*” The research used the quantitative techniques through distribution of questionnaires that yielded quantitative data. The survey was combined with ethnography and in-depth interviews that utilised qualitative techniques resulting in qualitative data. The use of mixed methods enabled the researchers to have a deeper insight into the life experiences of Zimbabweans living in Botswana who are dispersed throughout the country.

Use of both the survey method and the qualitative methods of ethnography and in-depth interview was selected in order to offset the weaknesses of both the quantitative and the qualitative methods (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2011). The qualitative method is criticised for its arbitrary selection of respondents. The quantitative method on the other hand ignores the social context in which the actors attribute meaning to their actions (Holstein, 2014). Thus the current design had the advantage of mixing the two methods for the triangulation of data.

### 3.1 Sampling techniques

The research was carried out in Botswana. The study population comprised all Zimbabweans legally and illegally residing in Botswana. Zimbabweans living in major cities of Gaborone and Francistown and those residing in major cities and villages of Lobatse, Palapye, Molepolole, Thamaga and Kanye were the target population of the study. The researchers targeted seventy (70) Zimbabweans and received 57 responses. The current study used the snowball technique to recruit subjects for the research. Tshabalala (2001, cited in Bloch, 2004) refers to snowball sampling as a processes of onward referral. In the current study, the researcher used every day contacts through church, workmates, former workmates, friends, workmates of friends, relatives and other service providers like mechanics and insurance agents. The absence of a sampling frame and the sensitivity of the data being collected meant that respondents had to gain some trust in the researcher for them to freely give away information. The research used purposive sampling in order to select different classes of the Diaspora in order to capture the diversity of the group. The researchers selected 15 respondents for in-depth interviews and managed to interview 12 of them because of their schedules.

### 3.2 Data Analysis and Presentation

This section covers data analysis and presentation. Quantitative information from the structured questionnaire was converted into tables and subjected to the SSP software in order to generate graphs and charts. The qualitative information from open ended questions of the Questionnaire and In-depth interviews was grouped under themes and then analysed using literature and the theoretical framework. The data from in-depth interviews, ethnography and primary data from statistics Botswana was analysed qualitatively together with the survey data.

## IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This section presents the results of the study focusing on the major themes of the study as guided by research questions.

### 4.1 Human Capital of Zimbabweans living in Botswana.

In this subsection the researchers present and analyse data under the topics that deal with Educational qualifications, Occupation, Work experience, skills gain and skill loss.

#### 4.1.1 Educational Qualifications of respondents

The survey results indicated that 15.79% (n=9) of the respondents had ordinary level education. Twenty-four percent (28.1 %, n=16) of the respondents indicated that they have attained Diploma or Certificate level of Education. The highest number (45.6%, n=26) of respondents had attained a Bachelors' Degree. The respondents who had attained a Masters level of Education comprised 5.26% (n=3) of the total number of respondents. Five percent (5.3 %, n =3) of the respondents indicated 'other' as the highest qualification. This

included an Honours Degree, a Higher National Diploma, and a PhD candidate with the University of South Africa.

The in-depth interviews and personal observations revealed that others have done short courses such as Computer courses that include International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL). Fundile Nyoni (pseudo name), who is a farm worker, revealed that he has done many courses which are freely offered by the Animal health services department. Some have done early childhood education courses in Botswana.

#### 4.1.2 Pursuit of Studies in Botswana

The survey results indicated that 45.6 % (n=26) of the respondents did not pursue further studies during their stay in Botswana. This could mean that they did not manage to pursue further studies due to their work commitments or lack of funds. One of the respondents wrote *'The Government of Botswana should reduce the fees for foreigners who wish to study in their tertiary institutions'*. The tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe were also said to be out of reach for many Zimbabweans who wished to pursue further studies from Botswana.

There were 19.3 % (n=11) of respondents who indicated that they were currently pursuing further studies in Botswana. The remaining 35.1% (n=20) indicated that they had undergone further studies while in Botswana. According to the capability approach (Sen, 1999); pursuit of further studies increases one's chances of employment and thus increasing one's exchange capability.

Jeka Fuzane (pseudo name), an insurance broker noted that for one to acquire a permit in insurance there is need for one to attain relevant qualifications. The same sentiments were echoed by Sakhile Ndlovu (pseudo name), a midwife, who noted that the government used the point system in issuing them work permits. She noted that pursuit of further courses or attendance of staff development workshop increased one's points.

This means that a significant number of Zimbabweans living in Botswana have pursued further studies and thus increasing the human capital in the Diaspora. This dovetails with other studies that have noted that Zimbabweans in Britain have increased their level of Education (Bloch, 2008; Mupakathi, 2010).

#### 4.1.3 Occupation of Respondents.

The results of the survey indicate that the majority of the respondents are in the professional and Business occupations. There were 63.2 % (n=36) of the respondents in Education and training. This includes teachers from Primary schools up to tertiary level. Seven percent (n=4) of the respondents are Business persons while 5.3% (n=3) are company Directors. The construction industry is occupied by 3.5 % (n=3) of the respondents. The self-employed occupy seven percent (n=4) while 5.3% (n=3) are in the domestic industry. A paltry 1.75

% (n=1) is occupied by health workforce and the respondent indicated that she is an animal health specialist.

The 'other' category was occupied by 5.3% (n=3) of the respondents. One respondent indicated that he is a business person specialising in the distribution of laboratory and medical supplies. The other respondent is an investment manager and the last respondent is a student at the University of Botswana. This confirms the observation by other scholars that the Zimbabwean diaspora after 2000 is composed of a large pool of both the skilled and non-skilled workers (Muzondidja, 2011, Pasura 2009).

#### 4.1.5 Skills gain

The survey questionnaire asked respondents about whether their work environment presented opportunities for professional growth and skills gain. The results of the survey revealed that 54.4 % (n=31) of the respondents claimed that they had gained skills. Across the spectrum of occupations, respondents expressed that they had gained skills. According to Khethani Moyo (pseudo name), an insurance broker, he had gained much in terms of skills as he has trained more than 80 Batswana. He also noted that in general Zimbabweans do apply themselves fully in their work, in order to secure the renewal of contracts. Other studies also confirmed the experience of skills gain by Zimbabweans in the diaspora (Bloch, 2008).

#### 4.1.6 Skills loss

Skills loss or skills decay occurs when people do not utilise the skills for which they were trained. Survey results showed that 38, 6% (n=22) of the respondents had underutilised their skills in Botswana. Seven percent (n=4) of the respondents were not sure whether they gained skills or underutilised their skills. This included those occupations which are less demanding in terms of skills e.g. domestic workers.

Other highly educated Individuals like subject specialist graduates who were teaching in Primary school felt that their skills were underutilised. Thandiwe (pseudo name), who is a primary school teacher, had this to say; *"when I arrived in 2007, I had to work as a domestic worker for two months before I could be absorbed in the teaching field."* This corresponds with studies by Mbiba (2012), who noted that Zimbabwean asylum seekers in the United Kingdom experienced de-skilling since they could not be employed because of their immigration status.

The research concludes that Botswana abounds with a diverse human capital that can be deployed for the reconstruction of Zimbabwe. The study confirms the assertion by other scholars that Zimbabweans are comparatively highly educated than other nationals (Bloch, 2006; McGregor, 2008). Most of the professionals have acquired good work ethics as they seek to impress their employers in order to renew the contracts. There is evidence of continuous learning in order to keep them competitive. Even some who were not skilled in Zimbabwe have gained experience in technical areas like landscaping,



information technology and construction (Mutsindikwa, 2012). Some have undergone some studies in tertiary institutions in Botswana. The study also notes that some of the skills have been underutilised as individuals could not access the relevant jobs or opt for entrepreneurship.

4.2 Transnational activities of Zimbabweans living in Botswana

The respondents revealed that they have a sense of obligation towards the development of their communities. The transnational links analysed under the topics of obligation, communication, remittances and political involvement.

4.2.1 Sense of obligation by the Diaspora members

Table 1: I have an obligation to participate in the development of my community

Option	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Strongly Agree	20	35.1%	35.1%
Agree	32	56.1%	91.2%
Neutral	5	8.8%	100%
Disagree	0	0%	
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	
Total	57	100%	

The survey revealed that 35.1% (n=20) of the respondents strongly agreed that they have a sense of obligation to the development of their communities. There were 56.1% (n=32) who agreed that they have a sense of obligation to participate in the development of their communities. Only 8.8% (n=5) of the respondents were neutral. This means that the bulk of the respondents are willing to be agents and partners in development (Mbiba, 2005). No one completely rejected the obligation to participate in the development of their community. Bloch (2008) notes that transnational capability is determined first by the willingness on the part of the Diaspora to engage in activities that transcend borders.

4.2.2 Communication

The survey revealed that the respondents communicate regularly with those remaining in Zimbabwe as well as their relatives and friends in other countries. Sixty-six point seven percent (66.7%, n=38) of the respondents noted that they communicate weekly while 8.8% (n=5) noted that they communicate monthly, the other 8.8% (n=5) sometimes communicates while 15.8% (n=9) percent indicated the other category. Others indicated that they communicated when need arose.

The findings of the study also noted that respondents use different media for communication that include mobile phones, whatsapp, email and social media as well as Skype. The writers observed that most of Zimbabweans living in Botswana subscribe to Bemobile which they say has cheaper rates for communicating outside the country.

4.2.3 Financial and non-cash remittances

The findings of the study noted that Zimbabweans are regular remitters. An 89.5% (n=51) response rate of the survey indicated that they remit cash to Zimbabwe. There were 10.5% (n=6) of the respondents that did not send remittances. Those that did not remit included those with financial constraints and those who did not have dependents in Zimbabwe. The amounts remitted depended on the needs of the recipients as well as the financial endowments of the remitters. The most common range of remittances sent is between BWP 3000 to BWP 10 000 per year with 41.2% (n=21) of the respondents. There was 21.6% (n=11) who indicated that they remitted over 20 000 per year.

The uses of money included daily expenses with 94% of the respondents selecting that option. The next popular option was education with 80% of the respondents selecting it. The research interviews revealed that some of the respondents were paying fees for their children who were studying in countries like Russia, China, Ukraine and South Africa. Investment in development properties and savings was also mentioned by 18% of the respondents. Other respondents indicated that they were investing in urban houses hence they indicated that they also send building materials. Other respondents mentioned that they invest in Agriculture. There were 3.9% of the respondents that indicated that they remitted farm implements.

The respondents stated a variety of other uses of remittances. These included medical fees, items for resale, tithes and various needs of the recipients. The common remittances in kind included clothes, groceries, electrical gadgets, household property like refrigerators. This means that most of those items are cheaper in Botswana.

4.2.4 Political involvement

Table 2 below shows the nature and level of transnational political involvement by the Zimbabwe Diaspora Community.

Table 2: Attitudes towards Zimbabwean Politics

Political Attitude	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
have no interest in politics	34	59.6%	59.6%
Fear state agents	8	14%	73.6%
Actively participates in demonstrations, and protests	0	0%	73.6%
Participates through internet	2	3.5%	77.1%
Travel to Zimbabwe to vote in national elections	3	5.4%	82.5%
Contribute to Newspapers and/ or comments on radio.	2	3.5%	86%
Other (Specify)	8	14%	100%
.....			
Total	57	100%	

The responses to the survey indicate that 59.6% (n=34) of the respondents claimed that they had no interest in politics.

These could include what Pasura (2010) call dormant members, who do not participate in politics because of time constraints due to work and business commitments. One of the respondents indicated that he lost interest in politics because of political violence. The survey also revealed that 14 % (n=8) of the respondents feared state agents. It is interesting to note that 5.4 % (n=3) of the respondents indicated that they travel to Zimbabwe to vote in national elections. Three percent (3.5%) (n=2) of the respondents are members who participate in politics through the internet. Another 3.5% contributes to newspapers and/or comments on radio. The other 14 % (n=8) indicated that they had other preferences. These included keeping themselves informed but not participating actively.

One of the respondents informed the researchers that there are quite a number of political and civic organisations based in Matabeleland. These included Inkundla, Umhlahlo, Matebeleland Liberation Front and others. He said the only organisation that is absent is the more radical South African 'imbokodo'.

The study established that the majority of Zimbabweans maintained communication with Zimbabwe. The majority had dependents in Zimbabwe which included spouses, children, parents and extended families. The majority of Zimbabweans were proud of their identity as Zimbabweans. The majority of the respondents accepted the obligation to assist in the development of their communities. Zimbabweans also frequently visit Zimbabwe with some going every month. The research findings revealed that Zimbabweans remit regularly in cash and in kind. The research also established that Zimbabweans held some cultural days in which they invited delegates from Zimbabwe and South Africa. Masiyephambili Cultural Association, an organisation representing the Ndebeles living in Botswana have organised these cultural days each year from 2012 to 2019.

The study concludes that there is willingness on the part of Zimbabweans living in Botswana to participate in the development of their communities. The proximity of Botswana to Zimbabwe also renders this diaspora community a potential vehicle for development partnership as they have closer contact with the issues in Zimbabwe and can easily visit more frequently than other Diasporas overseas. The study notes that the migrants in Botswana are diverse and fragmented as noted by other scholars (Mupakati, 2010). The current study confirmed the existence of different classes of diaspora proposed by Mupakati (2010) and Pasura (2010).

#### *4.3 Social contacts and affiliations maintained by Zimbabweans in Botswana*

The survey responses indicate that the church and work are the most dominant arenas where migrants interact with the locals with 82% interacting through the church and 80% interacting at work. The church is one of the institutions that play a significant role in integrating the Zimbabwean migrant to the mainstream society in Botswana (Hungwe, 2013). The

writers observed that many Zimbabweans are affiliated to churches. Zimbabweans are active in churches like the Seventh Day Adventist, the apostolic sect and others where some of them occupy positions of responsibility in the church. Church members provide spiritual and financial help in times of need or crisis.

The other popular area of social interaction between Zimbabwean diaspora and the locals is social clubs with 48% indicating that they interact with locals in social clubs. Thirty-four percent of the respondents interact with locals through business. It can be noted that those who are self-employed provide services mainly to Botswana. Eight percent of the respondents indicated that they relate to Botswana through marriage. One of the female respondent noted that her husband and daughter had successfully applied for Botswana citizenship. The respondents also indicated that they related with other foreign nationals like Basotho, Indians and Ghanaians. The main factor cementing the relationship was that they were all foreigners. Eight percent of the respondents indicated that they were affiliated to organisations addressing socio development issues.

The study concludes that Zimbabweans living in Botswana have established strong connections with the locals, through church, marriage, business and social clubs. The presence of Botswana with a Zimbabwean background such as the Ndebele and Kalanga of the North and Bazezuru of the apostolic sect also helps to integrate the migrants from Zimbabwe. These connections can assist in investing in Zimbabwe or mobilising other Botswana for business and tourism.

#### *4.4 Future role in developing immediate families and communities in Zimbabwe*

The survey established that 45% of the survey respondents intended to relocate to Zimbabwe. Some indicated that they were relocating at the expiry of their permits. Others indicated that they would relocate when conditions improved. A small number of respondents indicated that they would only return after a change of government. There are some who indicated that they would consider relocating to Zimbabwe after saving and acquiring productive capital. This also confirms the studies of return migration by scholars like Makina (2010), who established similar observations. The findings also revealed that some Zimbabweans, especially the professionals, intended to further relocate to other countries in Africa. The possible countries of destination were South Africa and Namibia. A smaller fraction of respondents indicated that they intend to relocate to a country outside Africa. The other options indicated by the migrants included establishing businesses in Botswana. Some also indicated that they intended to acquire permanent residency or Botswana citizenship. These included those who are married to Botswana nationals.

The research further concludes that not all migrants in Botswana will return to Zimbabwe. There are some who have

acquired citizenship, while some are processing permanent residence permits and citizenship. Some have relocated with their entire families and are more comfortable with the services and infrastructure in Botswana. These cannot easily return but need to be mobilised to contribute from the diaspora. The same applies to those who will relocate to other countries.

#### 4.5 Challenges faced by Zimbabweans living in Botswana

The following were the major challenges:

- Acquiring work permits;
- Shorter periods covered by work permits, which affected their capacity to get loans from banks;
- Poor working conditions, lack of advancement, finding a job, xenophobia and accommodation;
- On the Zimbabwean government, the Zimbabwean diaspora indicated lack of employment, corruption, and economic mismanagement;
- The police and Zimbabwe Revenue Authority were a constant threat when they travel to Zimbabwe.

#### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing from the foregoing conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations:

- The government of Zimbabwe should create a database of Zimbabweans living in Botswana to determine the available skills base.
- There is need for the government of Zimbabwe to tap the skills of the diaspora community through arrangement for the visits of skilled professionals for capacity building.
- The Government of Zimbabwe should recognise the qualifications and skills acquired in Botswana for the returnees. There may be need for testing and validating some of the skills and qualifications acquired in Botswana.
- The government of Zimbabwe needs to engage Zimbabweans living abroad in drafting the Migration policy so that they have an input on the conditions under which they can assist the development processes in Zimbabwe.
- There is need for Zimbabweans living in Botswana to form a vibrant organisation which can represent their issues and give them a voice in negotiating with the government of Botswana and the Government of Zimbabwe.
- Zimbabweans living abroad should form Home Town Associations that can assist in them in partnering and sourcing development aid for their communities.
- There is need for the Government of Botswana and Zimbabwe to discuss about extension of permits and granting of dual citizens to Zimbabwean applicants for the benefit of both countries.
- Organisations such as the International Office of Migration (IOM) can assist in capacity building for

diaspora members and matching skills for brain exchange with Zimbabwe.

- There is need to grant dual citizenship for those who decide to naturalise as citizens of Botswana.
- There is need for the Government to reduce duty on capital goods to allow the Diaspora community to bring productive capital for investment.

#### 5.1 Suggested areas for future research

The study proposes the following study areas for future research:

- a) The Zimbabwean diaspora who have naturalised as citizens in Botswana and their connection to Zimbabwe, the case of Nswazi and Bazezuru.
- b) How the citizens of Botswana view the Zimbabwean immigrants.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

The research sought to determine the development potential of Zimbabweans living in Botswana. The study established that there is willingness to participate in the advancement of their families and communities in Zimbabwe. The study noted that the capabilities of Zimbabweans living in Botswana are affected by the conditions in both the host country and their country of origin. The study recommended that both governments of Botswana and Zimbabwe should engage the Zimbabwean diaspora communities as development partners. Some policy recommendations such as the implementation of dual citizenship need to be considered to cater for the dual lives of the diaspora communities.

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