CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF EMIGRATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE 2000-2008 ZIMBABWEAN SITUATION

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ABSTRACT
The world is experiencing high rates of migration as people leave their countries of birth to reside in foreign countries. The study reveals that people cannot just migrate without specific reasons and therefore it explores several economic and social constraints which are forcing people to emigrate from their countries placing major focus on the Zimbabwean situation. The paper further points out that migration generate both positive and negative implications to the migrants, their families at home and the country as a whole. Thus the author appreciates the benefits of this process especially taking into consideration the fact that a lot of people in Zimbabwe were served by their relatives and friends who were outside the country through remittances during the 2008 era when the country was in economic shambles. However, the research also goes on to elucidate that migration has also some negative repercussions to families as well as the nation at large. Major notable disadvantages in economic and social terms include brain drain which hinders economic development, disruption of family life, cultural erosion among others. The study therefore recommends that governments of individual nations should take positive steps to ensure that their citizens remain in their countries as this poses serious economic and social disruptions.

KEYWORDS: Migration, Emigration, Diaspora, Remittances, Brain Drain

INTRODUCTION
The period between 2000 and 2008 saw a massive exodus of Zimbabweans into diaspora, notably in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, United Kingdom and USA. It is important to note that emigration in Zimbabwe during the aforementioned period was not a new phenomenon as it can be dated back to the colonial period and even pre-colonial period. What seems to be unique is the sharp increase in the number of emigrants and it is not an exaggeration that this was the era when Zimbabwe experienced a highest number of emigrants in its History. It is therefore the purpose of this paper to explore several reasons which might have caused this scenario as well as to exhibit the various socio-economic
implications that arose from this phenomenon. Some of these effects especially the negative ones will go a long way unless effective measures are implemented.

Emigration stems from the word migration which means crossing of an administrative boundary, such as between countries or states (Kuby et al 2004:85). People who migrate from their countries into other countries are therefore called emigrants. Kuby et al (2004:85) postulate that each year, more people become international emigrants and currently 175 million people reside outside of the country of their birth. It is generally believed that poor countries often are the ones with highest numbers of emigrants. Makumbe (2009:1) notes that Zimbabwe has an estimated population of 13 million people, with some three or more residing outside the country.

**Major causes of emigration in Zimbabwe**

Before looking at the effects of migration during this era, it is also important to have a glimpse on what exactly triggers the mass exodus of Zimbabweans into diaspora during the period in question. As purported by Joly (2000:25), one useful approach to understand the effects of migration on sending and receiving countries is to relate the consequences of migration to its causes. Durkheim cited by Joly (2000:26) proposes to first seek out the causes of a phenomenon before trying to determine its effects because as the first question is answered, will often help to answer the second. He also argues that the effects can doubtless not exist without its cause, but the latter in turn needs its effect and that it is from the cause that the effect draws its energy. Therefore the paper shall start by having a glance at several factors which might have prompted migration in Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2008.

It should be noted that the emigration of Zimbabweans into diaspora was not a new phenomenon during the period under discussion since many decades before people especially (men) migrated to neighbouring countries in search of work during the colonial period. What appears to be different between the two migration periods is that the recent one was characterised by large numbers of both sexes and of many age groups, hence the reason to explain why the situation was like this. There are several reasons which explain why the number of emigrants increased during the aforementioned period. Green and Pick( 2006:172) argue that the economic situations at the migrant’s origin and destination are crucial to decisions about moving. People often move from undesirable places to desirable ones. Thus, emigrations in most cases are a result of a combination of push and pull factors. Push factors are conditions that are unfavourable about an area while pull factors are conditions that are
favourable and that attract one to live his or her own country into another country. Both factors played a pivotal role in as far as the emigration of Zimbabweans into Diaspora between 2000 and 2008 was concerned. Push factors in Zimbabwe can be summarised in a monolithic bloc namely, economic constraints. Although social crisis also played a role, it is important to note that these culminated from economic crisis. It should also be noted that political instability also worsened the economic situation; hence economic crisis was the prime mover of emigration in Zimbabwe during the first decade of the second millennium.

The history of Zimbabwe’s economic crisis
Zimbabwe experienced a plethora of socio-economic crisis since the beginning of the year 2000. However, what is important to note is that these crisis took a gradual move starting from the second decade after independence that is from early 1990s into the first decade of the new millennium (the period from year 2000 onwards). According to Sachikonye (2002) the 1990s has been perceived by some scholars as a wasted decade because it was a decade opened up with a much vaunted and flaunted five year Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which left the economy in a weaker state. Sachikonye further argues that the situation was worsened by the fact that the Robert Mugabe regime authorised huge unbudgeted pay-offs above five billion Zimbabwe Dollars for war veterans who sought a pay-back for their role in the liberation struggle. He also states that this was further exacerbated by Zimbabwe’s military intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo civil war in the mid 1998. Because of this and other factors, there was hyper inflation which climbed 110% in the first quarter of 2002 and this was exacerbated by the 2000 fast track land reform programme which took place in 2000. According to Makumbe (2009:7), the so called fast track land reform process caused the eviction of experienced and committed white commercial farmers from the land and the ultimate result was 50% reduction in agricultural production. Because of this, the agricultural sector collapsed and resulted in a chronic of food crisis. Makumbe (2009:7) also notes that in the period between 2000 and 2007, the Zimbabwean economy declined sharply, to the extent that 80 percent of the nation’s manufacturing companies witnessed a decline in output volumes. This caused severe retrenchment among workers while others could spend up to six months or more without payment.

The aforementioned economic crisis acted as push factors for those who emigrated into diaspora especially between 2000 and 2008. In short, there were high levels of
unemployment due to closure of industries; hence people emigrated in search of jobs. Those who were employed also suffered the same fate because they could not buy anything due to hyperinflation. Coupled with the shortage of basic food supplies due to decline of the agricultural sector, this also led to social crisis. Thus, the proportion of people who were below the international poverty line increased. Above this Makumbe (2009:8) posits that the minister of finance noted in 2006 that there were erratic fuel supplies, interruptions to electricity supply as well as corruption. Hence, because of this, life in Zimbabwe was now pathetic to the effect that a large number of people left the country in search of better living conditions.

The social sector was not spared from these crises. In the health sector, there were inadequate health facilities due to shortage of drugs as well as experienced personnel such as doctors and nurses as many of them left the country into diaspora especially overseas. In some cases, the services that were provided by nurses and doctors were very poor as they worked as if they were being forced, this was nicknamed as being on go slow. These conditions, coupled with poor diet led to the deterioration of people’s health. Some people died due to hunger/poor diet, for example in Gutu, a certain man committed suicide after spending a week in search of food, when he returned home with a 50kg bag of maize, all his family that is 3 children and wife were dead due to hunger and because of that, he committed suicide.

A lot of people especially in rural areas scrambled and fought for control of wild fruit trees like mihacha/michakata and mitamba especially in 2008. In the event of domestic animals eating those fruits especially donkeys eating chakata, the owner would be reported to the village headman where he or she was heavily fined for failure to control his or her livestock over those few fruits. The majority of people were no longer affording three meals per day. Many could spend two to three days without food while those who were better could only afford one meal per day either in the evening or at lunch. This scenario was given a nickname (zero, zero, one) or (zero, one, zero).

The education sector was also heavily affected. Due to harsh economic conditions, a lot of skilled personnel left the country. Teachers, and lecturers were part and parcel of these people. Many teachers crossed the border into neighbouring countries like South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. While some lecturers also went into these countries, some went as far as overseas into America, United Kingdom and Australia among others. This posed a negative impact on the education sector as most tertiary institutions were closed especially state owned universities. All of them were closed from around June 2008 and were opened
around March 2009. Life at higher institutions was worsened by food crises. Sadza and boiled cabbage or beans without cooking oil or soup and sometimes without salt was now the order of the day for students. Therefore given that scenario, life at higher institutions was now dismal and this facilitated the closure of colleges. Students as well migrated into diaspora especially in South Africa and Botswana, many as illegal migrants (border jumpers) and some of them never returned back to school after the situation normalised in Zimbabwe.

The same situation also applied to primary and secondary schools. Nothing meaningful was done during the year 2008. Some schools closed because a lot of teachers had fled into diaspora while those who remained were no longer reporting for duty. For those schools that remained opened, few pupils were going but lessons were not carried out properly and this situation was rampant in rural areas. In urban areas the issue of extra/private lessons became prominent during this period and those who could afford sent their pupils for extra lessons.

The transport sector was also affected. It was now difficult to travel in Zimbabwe as many public as well as private vehicles were affected by fuel crisis. Just a few bus companies remained operating and two of them were Tanda Tavarura and Sons (Mhunga) and the government owned buses that is the Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO).

Because of this, people could stand in long queues for long hours waiting for those few buses to come and ferry them to their respective destinations.

The issue of queues was not limited to the transport sector only, even in banks and grocery shops people were standing for long hours waiting to collect money or to buy basic commodities like sugar, mealie-meal, cooking oil or flour. This went to an extent whereby people could just rush into queues before they knew what was being sold. They could ask after securing a place in those queues. Therefore life in Zimbabwe especially in 2008 was characterised by queues.

Given the whole scenario of the economic crisis faced by Zimbabwe during the first decade of the second millennium, quite a notable number of Zimbabweans migrated into neighbouring countries as well as overseas. This was not only limited to skilled personnel but to all people, comprised of all age groups and all sexes. The whole idea was to try and find a remedy to these economic problems. However, every move or activity has its own positive and negative repercussions and these are examined below.
Positive socio-economic effects of emigration

Drinkwater et al (2003:1) are of the opinion that emigration can have a major economic impact on the source country and these effects can either be positive or negative. Katseli et al (2006:43) posit that the diaspora can play a number of important roles in helping development of the home economy especially by remitting to the home country. Remittances comprise of money transfers from abroad, gifts in kind sent by migrants, and both money and gifts brought home by returning migrants. Thus, remittances acted as a remedy to Zimbabwe’s crisis as most of the people who went into diaspora were sending money back home through both formal and informal ways. The formal ways include money transfer agencies such as Western Union and Money Gram. These were mainly used by those who had formal travelling documents and work permits and for those who did not have these documents, Mukuru.com was the most common alternative especially for those who were residing in South Africa.

Informal ways include giving parcels to cross boarder bus drivers or other friends and relatives from diaspora. However, whether formal or informal, what is important to note is that the Diasporas were helping their families and the country as a whole. Asch (1994:14) argues that emigrants often send money home, enhancing their families’ standards of living and thereby contributing both to the home economy and the nation’s trade balance. Sharing the same view are Docquire and Rapoport (2007:18) who hold the view that remittances often make a significant contribution to Gross National Product and are a major source of income in many developing countries. Therefore, remittances present a primary route through which non-migrants benefit from migration process.

Apart from the issue of remittances, emigration also helps in decreasing the labour pool, in the sending country as well as alleviating unemployment (Asch 1994:14, Dayton et al 2007:67) In Zimbabwe, as many skilled personnel emigrated abroad, this helped those who were unemployed to be employed and some to be promoted. Joly (2000:26) also shares the same view arguing that sending countries that have a surplus population relative to the level of economic development export it thereby being alleviated from the potential social and economic problems this situation might entail.

Another positive impact of emigration to sending countries is that when the emigrants return home, they can bring new and advanced ideas which they acquired in diaspora. They can also bring new technologies and new business ideas which they came across during their stay in diaspora. A lot of businesses in Zimbabwe are owned by those who had been or who are still
living in diaspora. Hence, migration plays a big role as far as skill acquisition is concerned, thereby enhancing development in less developed countries.

Apart from bringing new business ideas and technology to their mother countries, migration also helps the emigrants to acquire savings during their stay in diaspora. In line with that, Docquier and Rapoport (2007:20) are of the opinion that instead of sending remittances to relatives at home, migrants may return after they have accumulated savings abroad and use such savings to promote investment projects generally small businesses and that there is much evidence that low-skill workers migrate with the aim of accumulating enough savings to access self employment and entrepreneurship. In Zimbabwe this can be evidenced by the increase in the number of several small businesses like boutiques, groceries shops, take away, hair salons, flea markets and small hardware shops among others. Although these existed before the period under discussion, it is important to note that they increased during and after the period when many Zimbabweans were in diaspora. Hence, this also helped to boost the economy of Zimbabwe through reducing unemployment and increasing the base of tax revenue.

What is also important to note is that the country also benefited economically through the flow of foreign currency as well as the revenue obtained from duty payments on imported goods especially those sent by or coming with the diasporas. Duty payment is one way in which developing countries get money to pay their civil servants, hence Zimbabwe as a country benefited from this scenario.

What should also be put into cognisance is that the improvement of economic conditions also meant improvement in social conditions. Katseli et al (2006:44) posit that although the economic effects of migration have been extensively studied, the social effects have received less attention. These social effects are very important and often closely linked with much more studied economic effects of migration. Through remittances, the living conditions of the families with relatives in diaspora improved. They could now have plenty of food on the table especially through groceries sent from abroad since some of the basic commodities were no longer available on the market. Migrants were able to sent food staffs such as mealie meal, cooking oil, rice, flour, sugar among others thereby improving the diet of their relatives at home. Migration, through remittances increases household income which may lead to the reduction of child labour and increase educational attainment since some families were now able to pay their children’s school fees. Therefore emigration played a pivotal role in changing the socio- economic status of families.
Negative socio-economic effects of emigration

Economic effects

Every coin has two sides, thereby making it a crucial issue to have a glance at both sides. Although the emigration of Zimbabweans into diaspora helped as much to alleviate most of the economic and social problems faced by the country, it should be put into consideration that this also created some problems in a way. Hence some economists have put forward the view that this phenomenon often produce considerable disruption in the sending country.

One negative consequence caused by this scenario was that of brain drain. A lot of skilled personnel left Zimbabwe during the era of economic crisis for example doctors, nurses, teachers and lecturers. Thus Hanson (2008:1) was correct when he argued that in most of the developing world, the more skilled have the highest propensity to migrate. This negatively affected the health and education sectors as these sectors were left with shortage of staff, thereby worsening the situation. In support of this, Joly (2000:26) asserts that if skilled labour moves from poor to rich countries, it may reduce the economic potential of poor countries while receiving countries appear to have found a solution to their need of labour. As such, the gap between poor sending countries and rich receiving countries could be increased by migration.

Closely connected to the issue mentioned above is the fact that brain drain can hinder the economic development of a country through reduction in tax base. As many skilled personnel in Zimbabwe left the country between 2000 and 2008, this also means that there was a reduction in the number of people who were supposed to be taxed by the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) especially the payee (pay as you earn) tax. Taxation is important to every government especially in developing countries because that is where a greater percentage of the salaries of civil servants come from. Besides that, taxation also helps governments to fund public projects like infrastructural development such as road and dam constructions. It can also be used for the provision of social services such as funding health and educational facilities, for example building of schools and hospitals as well as buying of medical facilities, textbooks, school furniture and funding welfare programmes. Taxation also helps the government to get money for subsidies, which will in turn help the nation especially the poor. Therefore, the emigration of skilled people from their countries hinders the economic development as well as posing a threat to the social sector.
Social effects

Migration can have serious social implications to families as well as to the countries involved. Dayton et al (2007:67) are of the opinion that migration disrupt family life and social relations. In Zimbabwe, many households were left child headed as parents migrated into diaspora to look for employment and contract jobs while others embarked on cross borderer trading and they spent two weeks or more out of the country without their children. This impacted on children’s school performance because of lack of parental attention. The presence of parents is crucial as far as children’s performance is concerned because parents encourages their children to read, to do their home work, as well making sure that they avoid unnecessary absenteeism from school.

In some incidents children were left with a single parent especially mothers. This also impacted children’s well being. Katseli et al (2006:44) postulate that children in migrant’s families often grow up in a single parent family and are confronted with problems of family disintegration and family stress. This was also a common phenomenon in Zimbabwe especially between 2006 and 2008. Data from interviews carried with several teachers shows that most pupils who were affected especially by the 2008 crisis have never fully recovered in their performance.

Lack of parental attention can also affect the morals of children especially those in the migrant families. A lot of children whose parents were in diaspora often indulged into several bad activities such as teenage sexual intercourse and drug abuse during the absence of their parents. Thus, the absence of parents can change behaviour of children to the effect that some of them become wild. Some of the major causes of teenage robbers and prostitutes emanates from this scenario where children grow up in child headed families without parental guidance.

It is important to note that some of the negative effects caused by emigration during the 2008 crisis go a long way and some are still causing misery among the citizens of Zimbabwe even among those who never went into Diaspora. One notable effect is the rate at which criminal cases increased since 2009 up to now. Zimbabwe is experiencing a lot of horrific and mysterious events that had never existed prior to the era of crisis and it is generally believed that some of these activities are ‘exports’ from neighbouring countries especially South Africa. The Sunday mail In-Depth of November 10-16 2013 records two incidents of tax drivers from Borrowdale and Kuwadzana who were found dead, the former’s copse was laid at the back seat of his car and the later was found hanged on a tree. It also reported that movie
style shoots out that involve police and armed criminals are now becoming the order of the day. Some people have claimed that deported convicts who had been implicated in sophisticated robbery raids while in South Africa had ‘imported’ foreign methods of crime. It is now very risky to travel in Harare as robbers are using several forms of transport in order to achieve their goals. These include private cars as well as commuter omnibuses and a lot of people have fallen under trap in Harare. Thus the emigration of Zimbabweans into diaspora exacerbated the crime rates in Zimbabwe.

There were also cases of juju and mysterious things especially between 2009 and 2012 some of these cases include people being killed for ritual purposes. This was rampant among travellers who used private transport. A lot of people were beheaded especially along Harare Beitbridge road. There are general suggestions that these people were killed for ritual purposes that would in turn bring wealth to some people. This era also saw cases of female rapists increasing. One incident in connection to this was when a group of women were caught with a box of used condoms. These were suspected to be used for ritual purposes for some people to get money. Cases of goblins also increased especially in urban areas. The general consensus behind all these things is that they were/are done by those people who had been/still in diaspora. The whole idea was that of getting money in an easy and quick way. Therefore, emigration can pose negative consequences to the sending country.

The other social impact of emigration is that of family disintegration. Asch (1994:13) argues that most emigrants are young male and married, so there can be a destabilizing effect on the family. This was a common phenomenon in Zimbabwe as couples were separated from each other by emigration of husbands or wives. In most cases where situations would compel one parent to go, it was usually husbands. A lot of husbands who left their wives could spend six months up to a year or more before coming back to their families. Some of them even went on to marry South African wives thereby neglecting their families. Some of the women who went into countries like South Africa and Botswana for peace jobs ended up embarking on prostitution, some with truck drivers for free transport and some with men from the hosting countries. Among these women were married women who had left their husbands in Zimbabwe. Thus, the major detrimental effect of this scenario was the spread of diseases especially HIV/AIDS, thereby increasing the number of people infected by HIV/AIDS in the country. This poses both economic and social challenges to families of the victims as well as to the country as a whole. To the family it means that money which was supposed to be used for the family is spent on buying medical facilities. Similarly, the country is affected because
the number of people suffering from HIV/AIDS will increase thereby also increasing the
government expenditure on medical facilities for people who suffer from HIV/AIDS.

Conclusions and Recommendations
The economic crisis faced by Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2008 forced a lot of people to
leave the country going into diaspora in order to seek a remedy. Because of this, the majority
of people who remained behind were able to benefit from their relatives and friends who had
gone into the diaspora especially through remittances that were sent by their relatives from
abroad. These came in monetary form as well as groceries and clothes. This improved the
status of living for the generality of Zimbabweans and the country as a whole especially
when taking into consideration the flow of foreign currency notably South African Rand and
the US dollar. The country also benefited from new entrepreneurship ideas and technology
brought by those who went into diaspora, not forgetting new businesses that emerged during
and after the period in question through some of the emigrants who went into diaspora to
acquire savings so as to come back and make investments in their mother countries.
However, despite its benefits to the rest of Zimbabweans, the emigration of the local people
also posed some challenges to the country such as loss of skilled labour, cultural erosion,
family disintegration and the spread of diseases especially Sexually Transmitted Infections.
Thus, the paper recommends that the best way to prevent the negative effects of a
phenomenon is to first address the causes of that phenomenon. As such in order to prevent
the negative implications of emigration, it is crucial to start by addressing the causes of
emigration in that particular country or society. Since economic constraints are the prime-
mover of migration in most developing countries, the study recommends that the ruling elites
should try by all means to prevent situations that might cause people to emigrate into other
countries. Thus, activities that might lead to closure of industries as well as those that can
cause hyperinflation should be avoided if governments want their people to remain in their
countries. In addition to that, civil servants are supposed to be given adequate salaries that
suits regional requirements so that they can afford to live a decent life. Social welfare
programmes should be provided to the poor as well as the elderly so that they can afford to
meet basic needs such as food, adequate shelter, health facilities, education facilities and
clothes. If those things are provided, it will help to reduce the number of emigrants in the
country. However those who migrate for the sake of acquiring education should not be
discouraged as they can bring new skills and ideas that can be used to develop the country.
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