

Editorial

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At the turn of the century, Vertovec (2002) cautioned about the use of the word “migration” to describe the movement of the highly skilled, given that the phenomenon “migration” carries connotations of extended periods of stay when the mobility of the highly skilled was also inclined towards temporary and sporadic stays in selected destinations. Nevertheless, the word “migration” today remains a popular word still coupled with the movement of the highly skilled and in this theme issue we continue this trend with the acknowledgement that the duration of migration can be of varying time periods. Another concept of debate emanates from the term “highly skilled”. Chaloff and Lemaitre (2009: 10) in an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) document on highly skilled migration state that “the implicit definition of a highly skilled migrant is one with a university degree”; nevertheless, they note that there are three definitions in the literature on what is conceptualized as the highly skilled, and in their document they draw on all three understandings as being relevant. These constitute high levels of education and wages in addition to specific occupations (due to particular sets of skills being in demand). Thus, the highly skilled are understood to be a designated group who have particular attributes that are highly sought after internationally. These include, but are not limited, to the following sectors: health (e.g. doctors, nurses), education (e.g. teachers), scientists, technologists and engineers.

It is understood that nation states, which invest vast sums of their education budget do so to increase their production of home-grown professionals in selected fields with the foresight that such individuals will strengthen and add to the development of the state (Lowell and Findlay, 2001) in multiple ways, upon acquiring their skills. However, this linear trajectory from investment in education to skills production and then to reaping the rewards of the investment is catapulted into disruption when there is an exodus of the highly skilled from their home countries. The exact numbers of highly skilled migrants exiting developing countries for destinations in the developed world in the early 2000s were largely unknown, but now statistics released by Dumont, Spielvogel and Widmaier (2010: 8) from an OECD study, using data from the year 2000, reveal more precise estimates that “the magnitude of the global emigration rate of highly skilled persons from

Africa” was 10.6% (9.7% for migration to OECD countries) in comparison “to other regions of origin and the world average of 5.4% (4.3% to OECD countries)”. Clearly, the emigration of the highly skilled from Africa was twice the world emigration average, accounting for alarm bells.

The current highly skilled migration trends of Africans (here used to mean people born in African countries and not necessary belonging to the racial categorization of African) show a variety of migration trajectories (South-South and South-North as evidenced in some of the articles in this issue) which have generated national and global debates on brain drain, gain and circulation. Also, there is evidence contrary to Vertovec’s (2002) early assertion that discourse on the highly skilled no longer centres on binary migration concepts of drain and gain and that it now focuses on a workforce that is globally mobile. I would argue that current discourse of the highly skilled notes the international fluidity of highly skilled movements and in particularly South-North migration discussions, there is a relentless articulation of concerns infused with fears relating to brain drain and gain. This view of a multifocal discourse is substantiated by evidence in several international studies published in the early 2000s and which maintain the same emphasis in later publications. Reference can be made to international documents by organisations such as the International Labour Office (ILO) (see Lowell and Findlay, 2001), the Commonwealth (see Ochs, 2003; Degazon-Johnson, 2008), and the OECD (see Dumont, Spielvogel and Widmaier, 2010). For example, the Commonwealth document produced by COMSEC in Education titled “Teaching at Risk” (Ochs, 2003) revealed deep anxieties about the migration of the highly skilled within the education sector from developing countries. This document was the result of concerns raised by developing countries in the global South within the Commonwealth at that specific time. Feelings expressed were centered on highly skilled teachers being poached by developed countries in the global North. The Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (2004) was then crafted on two pillars: to protect the rights of teachers to migrate internationally in addition to protecting nation states from huge teacher losses. A few years later, the fears had still not abated and the Commonwealth chose to hone in on two particular professions to provide more insights and discussion into migration in two highly skilled areas (education and medical): namely that of the migration of teachers and nurses (Degazon-Johnson, 2008). By large, both these cohorts of highly skilled professionals were being aggressively recruited by agencies to meet labour shortages in the developed countries

of Canada and the United Kingdom. They were being offered attractive packages abroad. The source countries were largely developing countries of the Caribbean and in Africa, South Africa.

However, source countries are not always relegated to a deficit discourse related to migration and an important “feedback” of skilled migration is remittances (Lowell and Findlay, 2001: 4) and Vertovec (2002) agrees when he succinctly states that “remittances are a form of transnationalism”. When migrants move across borders, family and friends are not forgotten. It has been recognized that migrants very rarely cut off their ties with their home country. Indeed, migrants are noted for maintaining contact with their friends and relatives in the home country and the concept of “transnationalism” is very relevant to cohorts of highly skilled migrants, living “dual lives” (Vertovec, 2002: 4) and maintaining financial flows across borders. Thus the concept of “duality” is very relevant in the migration of the highly skilled.

This theme issue has a focus on the migration of the highly skilled from Africa in the 2000s given the above discussions on the highly skilled. The papers centre on South-South migration and South-North migration trajectories. The papers revolve around migration discussions related to the following African countries: Ghana, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa. The developed countries included as part of the discussions are numerous and include the United States of America, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Australia and Canada amongst others. South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe are neighbouring countries, and Dumont, Spielvogel and Widmaier (2010) assert that the majority of migrants are known to move to destination countries in the same region as their home country (about 85% in Africa). They note that the rates of emigration of the highly skilled were underestimated for Zimbabwe and South Africa, and this theme issue does place prominence on migration of the highly skilled in the contexts of South Africa and Zimbabwe. Interestingly, Lowell and Findlay (2001) had long ago highlighted the view in an ILO study that a few developing countries were being targeted for their highly skilled migrants and in Africa, South Africa was one of those countries. Concurrently Chaloff and Lemaitre (2009) revealed that numerous developed countries in Europe (from 1995 to 2006) had greatly increased their intake of highly skilled migrants, but by 2006, employment statistics in host countries were indicating that migrants were experiencing placement challenges including a struggle to locate jobs equivalent to their qualifications, qualification recognition and language use.

Historically, the search for economic prosperity and social acknowledgement has long been accepted as reasons for emigration (Portes, 1997) but new triggers centring on the political (Rutherford, 2010) and environmental conditions in sub Saharan Africa are now awakening in tandem with socio-economic factors (Adepoju, 2006). The papers do centre on politics married to socio-economic conditions in Africa as propelling the emigration of the highly skilled. For example, Zimbabwean teachers have been leaving for neighbouring countries given the socio-economic repercussions of political mayhem and hyperinflation on the daily lives of Zimbabweans in the early part of the century (Kriger, 2010; Worby, 2010). Three of the papers deal with emigration and immigration of multiple sectors of the highly skilled in post-apartheid South Africa (SA). It's well known that SA's borders have become more porous with the end of apartheid and the attractiveness of SA to Africans in sub Saharan Africa began to spiral (Polzer, 2007; Brown, 2008). Likewise, in the early years of democracy there was hope for a better future for all South Africa's citizens within her borders given the warmth of President Nelson Mandela and his articulations that South Africa is for all who live in it. But 20 years down the line, hope for an improved future for all South African citizens has suffered blows, not only by affirmative action policies which has cultivated some "black diamonds" at the expense of the African majority, but also by several social pathologies such as spiraling crime and state corruption. Similarly, xenophobic outbreaks since 2008, targeting African immigrants has also negatively impacted on perceptions of South Africa (Manik, 2013; Tevera, 2013) as being welcoming to migrants.

SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES

Daniel Tevera earmarks the South-South migration of teachers as a new and emerging trend worthy of examination. He focuses on Zimbabwean teachers in the neighbouring country of Swaziland. In his paper he explores, through the use of data gleaned from in-depth interviews in 2012, their livelihood strategies and expectations, how migrant teachers remake their livelihoods in a foreign country and "adjust" as they encounter several challenges related to their "compromised citizenship" and remittance flows. An interesting finding in his study is Zimbabwean migrant teachers' maintenance of a "virtual presence" in Zimbabwe through several internet tools.

Sadhana Manik, in a similar vein to Daniel Tevera, explores the nuanced experiences of the highly skilled in South-South migration. Her analysis

is on Zimbabwean immigrant teachers located in the coastal province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Zimbabwean teachers are the largest cohort of foreign teachers in neighbouring South Africa who have been driven out from their home country by the poor socio-economic and political climate. She reports on a constellation of their experiences and frustrations in attempting to acquire documentation to legally enter South Africa's labour market, their difficulties in acquiring job security, xenophobic attitudes by local Africans and workplace exploitation. She hones in on their vulnerability, which is evident in their attempts to meet their family responsibilities in the household and the complexities of living transnational lives.

The next paper shifts the focus to South-North migration but retains the strand of remittances. Ntokozo Nzama and Brij Maharaj explore the reasoning provided by generations of Ghanaian emigrants living in the Netherlands about their ongoing practice of regular remittances. A perceived inability to fluently use the local language and a lack of recognition of their qualifications and work experience (deskilling) influences emigrants' job prospects and quality of life in the Netherlands. The authors further examine how remitting impacts on the living standards of these emigrants due to their "dual commitments" to support their immediate family in the Netherlands and their extended families in Ghana.

Gerelene Jagganath explores the South-North migration behaviour of three separate cohorts of highly skilled Indian professionals, across an eight year period: 2006 – 2014. Drawing on multiple sources of qualitative data, she engages with emigrant data to present six case studies. These exemplify current trends, common strands and differences in the migration of a diversity of Indian professionals from the following sectors: engineering, hospitality, brand management and medical who have exited South Africa to the following destinations: Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, Dubai, Switzerland and South Korea.

Keeping with the thread of the migration of highly skilled from minority groups in South Africa, Anand Singh takes an anthropological lens to the migration of Indian medical professionals. His sample consists of a cohort of medical specialists and practitioners who have emigrated from South Africa to the United States and another cohort who choose to remain in the local profession. His location for discussion is KwaZulu-Natal, a province with the largest number of Indians outside of India, where he sets the scene of dissonance in what was an Indian area during apartheid and has now become desegregated with growing political tensions. He creates narratives of

dissatisfied Indian medical professionals who embrace professional opportunities, fame and fortune in developed countries where they are welcomed for their expert skills and not judged on the basis of their race.

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