

**INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR OF  
AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS LIVING IN  
CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**

**By**

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**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR in  
the Department of Library and Information  
Science, University of the Western Cape**

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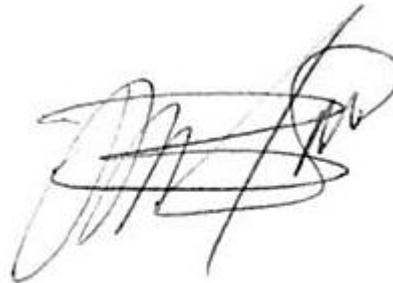
## DECLARATION

**“I declare that *INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR OF AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS LIVING IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or assessment in any other university, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references”.**



**16 March 2018**

UNIVERSITY of the

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. A. ...'.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my dear wife Aimerance Kungwa Muhambe and my two daughters Sigrid Mapendo Muhambe and Silkya Olame Muhambe. I love you all.



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WESTERN CAPE

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

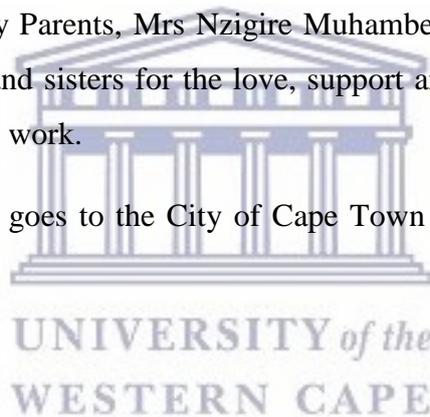
Firstly, I thank God Almighty, who gave me good health and straight throughout the duration of my study.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor Dr GAVIN R DAVIS for his patience, kindness and for being available when I needed him. Without his advices, encouragement and support, this dissertation could not be accomplished.

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## KEYWORDS

African immigrant

Cape Town

Information

Information access

Information barrier

Information behaviour

Information needs

Information seeking

Information seeking behaviour

Information world

Small world



## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABSA	Amalgamated Banks of South Africa
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
CD	Compact discs
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DVD	Digital Video Discs
FMSP	Forced Migration Studies Programme
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
ID	Identity Document
NGO	Non - Governmental Organisations
P1 to P25	Participants
PhD	Philosophiae doctor
Q	Questions
RE	Researcher
SAQUA	South African Qualifications Authority
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UCT	University of Cape Town
UK	United Kingdom
UWC	University of the Western Cape

## ABSTRACT

The study investigated the information seeking behaviour of African immigrants who live in the City of Cape Town, South Africa. The key objectives of the study were to identify information needs and information seeking patterns of African immigrants in the City of Cape Town; to identify barriers between information and these immigrants; and to form strategies or suggestions for overcoming these barriers so that the organisations that serve immigrant communities may better address these information needs. The study applied a mixed methods approach, which included both quantitative and qualitative methods. The two methods were used as a combination in this research so as to take advantage of the strengths of the two approaches.

The data collection tools were an administered questionnaire for quantitative data and semi-structured interviews for qualitative data. Pre-testing of research tools, evaluation of research methods, and consideration of ethical issues were discussed to ensure validity and reliability of research findings. The quantitative data were analysed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel, while the qualitative data were analysed using thematic content analysis. The overall response rate was 95% (228 out of 240 sample size). The study was informed by Gary Burnett and Paul T. Jaeger's (2011) Theory of Information Worlds.

The study revealed that, upon African immigrants' arrival in South Africa, they search for basic information to survive, such as information about jobs, accommodation and a means of self-improvement, including training and learning English. These needs continuously persist as human beings always seek for improvement in life.

Over time the need for other types of information, such as information about driving and recreation, including gymnasium training, and services, including health services, also becomes prominent. Therefore, time is one of the factors that influences African immigrants' information needs. As they become established over time, some of their information needs change.

The majority of participants who lived in the City of Cape Town for a long period of time indicated that overall, they found information they needed from different formal sources, including government offices, Non - Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the internet, while those who were relatively new in the Cape Town area mainly consulted friends and relatives for information.

The findings of the study highlighted certain issues that African immigrants experience when searching for information. These issues hampered them to not fully access information in order to satisfy their needs. It included the inability to speak English, lack of connections, policies and procedures, discrimination, racism and xenophobia, and a sense of social exclusion, to name a few.

The study further revealed that interpersonal information seeking behaviour played a critical role in the lives of African immigrants, not only because of the language barrier, which does not enable them to connect with the outside world, but also because of credibility and trustworthy networking.

It was discovered that most African immigrants do not come to South Africa with the whole family straight away without knowing someone already living here in South Africa. Men first come alone, as it is easier for men to survive all kinds of surprises of the journey, to live anywhere with friends while trying to save money, and to make sure they become comfortable with the new surroundings before bringing the family.

In this regard, they build information connections with other fellow African immigrants at work, at church and in the area where they live. These new friends become their primary sources of information. Having friends who look like them, share similar backgrounds or speak the same language builds trustworthiness and credibility in African immigrants' information seeking behaviour. This network kept on growing as African immigrants meet new people throughout their lives in Cape Town.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that government; public libraries in the City of Cape Town and NGOs that serve African immigrants take the English language barrier into consideration and create as many facilities as possible where African immigrants can easily learn English at minimum cost. It is

also recommended that government institutions, banks and other institutions that might interact with African immigrants create an environment that will be free of all kinds of discrimination when providing information in order for African immigrants to feel welcome and socially included.



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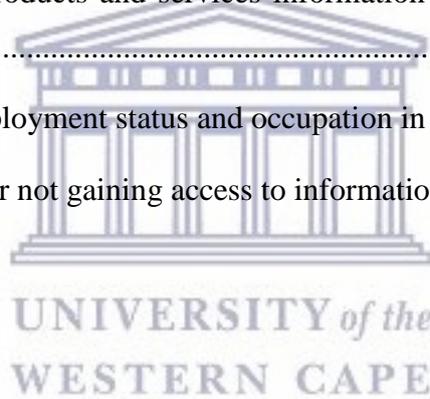
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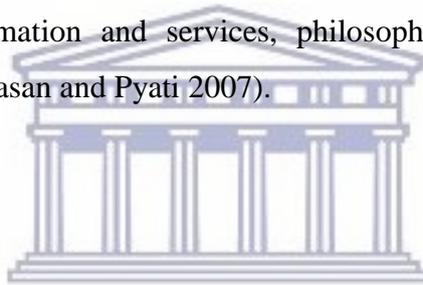


# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCING THE STUDY

## 1.1 Introduction

The present era in which we live is called the “information era”, meaning that information has become one of the most important elements for progress in any society. To succeed and even to survive in this modern era, one needs a variety of information regardless of one’s position, skills or profession. With the overflow of available information everyone needs information of an increasing variety.

Immigrants, especially from underdeveloped countries, are generally perceived to be information poor, and they face challenges with finding and using significantly needed information for their everyday lives (Fisher 2004). They lack effective communication because of barriers such as language, conceptual awareness of places to find information and services, philosophy of education and more (Hanken 1995; Srinivasan and Pyati 2007).



## 1.2 Background

Immigration can be defined as a movement of people into a different country in order to settle there. The terms “immigration” and “migration” are sometimes confused, though both refer to the movement of people between countries, but these terms are both subtly different. The term “migration” is used to describe the movement of people, or even animals, between countries or states. Kalitanyi and Visser (2010) define migration with a nuance to mean the movement of people across country (and state) lines for the purpose of establishing a new place or seeking peace and stability.

Migration is the umbrella term that covers both immigration and emigration. The difference between immigration and emigration is that to immigrate means that someone has moved to a new country from his/her native country; therefore, he/she is called an immigrant, while the term “emigration” refers to the movement from someone’s country (people immigrate to a new country and emigrate from their native country). Migration can be permanent or temporary and it can also be

national or international (across borders), but immigration is usually referred to as permanently moving to a new country (Roberts 2009).

When looking at migration as an umbrella term, one will come across much discussion about legal and illegal immigration. Basically, a legal immigrant is any person holding a valid visa or permit, a refugee or asylum seeker in a foreign country, while illegal immigration is the migration of people across national borders in a way that violates the immigration laws of the destination country. Illegal immigrants are sometimes known as undocumented immigrants.

The term “immigrant” is mostly based on people’s status upon entering a new country, including refugees, student visa holders, visiting or non-immigrant visa holders, and holders of immigrant visas. This status changes sometimes. Those who enter as students may decide to stay and secure permanent positions in the new country, while non-immigrant visa holders may also change their status to permanent residents. Those who enter a new country as transnationals may also stay and seek asylum if social and political disruption erupt in their home countries (Clark 2006).

For this reason and for this study, African immigrants refer to those self-declared men and women who were born in any African country outside of South Africa, coming into South Africa as refugees (even if they hoped to return home in the future), those holding both non-immigrant and immigrant visas, as well as those who are illegal immigrants (as being legal or illegal is not a requirement to participate in this study).

The term “immigrant” is used interchangeably with the term “African migrant” regardless of whether the immigrant/migrant is documented or not.

Immigration can be caused by many reasons, including economic, temperature, political and family reunification reasons, poverty, natural disasters or the wish to change one’s surroundings voluntarily. Immigration includes the movement of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people as well as economic migrants.

There are different forms of immigration that can be distinguished according to the motives, including economic and family reunion reasons, and refugees with

legal status such as irregular immigration, controlled immigration and free immigration of those concerned (United Nations 2005).

According to the United Nations Population Division, the number of immigrants in the world increased from 75 million people in 1965 to 84 million by 1975. In 1985, the estimated number of immigrants was 105 million, while an estimate of 120 million was recorded in 1990. The immigration rate continued to grow until it was estimated to have reached 150 million by 2000 (Clark 2006).

The phenomenon of immigration from African countries to the rest of the world to search for a better quality of life is not new. Existing literature has revealed that there are several causes of African immigration. These causes include political instability, violent conflict, economic problems, educational opportunities and reuniting with family members (Clark 2006).

South Africa has experienced immigration for many years; it has been a destination for immigrants from neighbouring countries, other African countries, Europe and elsewhere (Crush and Williams 2005). South Africa is one of the countries with high levels of immigration movement. There have been widespread instabilities in the trends of immigration into South Africa since 1975. Statistics South Africa (2003) reports that there were two noticeable peaks. One peak occurred between 1973 and 1975 when the number of immigrants from the United Kingdom (UK) doubled and to some extent, immigration from Mozambique, after the country gained independence in 1975. Another peak was in 1982 due to immigration to South Africa from the UK, Portugal and China. In 2003, the number of documented immigrants to South Africa was 10 578, an increase of 61, 6% as compared to the 2002 figure of 6 545 (Statistics South Africa 2003).

There was a significant number of white immigrations from Europe to South Africa until the end of apartheid in 1994. Since then, there has been a change in the migration pattern to South Africa. The numbers of European immigrants into South Africa have decreased while the number of African immigrants have increased due to the increase of economic difficulties, especially in the underdeveloped African countries (Mohammed 2008: 23).

South Africa is an attractive international immigration destination of choice to African immigrants, as it is a country rich with promise and it flourishes with opportunities for advancement in comparison to other African countries (Hunter and Skinner 2003). According to the South African Info Reporter (2004), the majority of African immigrants in South Africa fled conflict areas and persecution from their home countries such as Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Rwanda and Zimbabwe.

The Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP) of the University of the Witwatersrand estimates its projections based on national census data (FMSP 2010):

- Recognised refugees: cumulative since 1994: 47 596 (at end 2009)
- Recognised asylum seekers: new applicants in 2009: 223 324. Of these, 4 567 were approved, 46 055 were rejected and 172 702 were added to the backlog of unprocessed cases
- Economic migrants issued with individual work permits (not including corporate permits): 32 344 in 2007/8 (more recent data not available)
- People deported: 312 733 in 2007/8. More recent data is not publicly available, although overall deportation numbers are likely to have diminished significantly after the moratorium on deportation of Zimbabweans was introduced in April 2009.
- Total foreign population (including documented and undocumented): Based on the FMSP's extrapolations from census data, the overall foreign population is likely to be between 1.6 and 2 million or 3-4% of the total national population. The figure is also lower than many receiving countries within Africa and elsewhere in the world.

Based on the South African Department of Home Affairs' most recently released statistics report (2014) on asylum seekers and refugees, 71 914 new asylum seekers were received from January to December 2014 in the whole of South

Africa. According to Census 2011, there are 100 623 African immigrants in Cape Town (see the table below).

**Table 1. African migrants in Cape Town by geography and region of birth by gender and age groups (Statistics South Africa 2011)**

<b>African immigrants in Cape Town</b>				
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age group</b>	<b>Southern African Development Community (SADC)</b>	<b>Rest of Africa</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	0-9	2 838	783	3 621
	10-19	2 211	1 449	3 660
	20-29	16 209	7 194	23 403
	30-39	13 566	6 210	19 776
	40-49	4 446	2 013	6 459
	50-59	2 361	486	2 847
	60-69	1 101	213	1 314
	70-79	519	87	606
	80+	240	42	282
<b>Female</b>	0-9	2 670	720	3 390
	10-19	2 223	924	3 147
	20-29	11 808	2 760	14 568
	30-39	6 501	1 956	8 457
	40-49	3 243	480	3 723
	50-59	2 598	273	2 871
	60-69	1 239	186	1 425
	70-79	609	90	699
	80+	309	66	375
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>74 691</b>	<b>25 932</b>	<b>100 623</b>

### **1.3 Reflexivity**

As an African immigrant who has lived in South Africa for over ten years and as a public librarian, the researcher has personal knowledge of the experiences of other African immigrants within the community with regard to the problems and difficulties they encounter daily in their effort to find information. As he reflects on his own experiences and those of other African immigrants, he recognises that certain adjustment difficulties in finding information are unique to his experience due to certain cultural, psychological and social factors. He was aware of bias that could creep in, given the fact that he was writing from the perspective of an African immigrant, but he tried as much as possible to minimise bias.

Exploring the information needs, problems faced and helping to make the information gathering process for African immigrants a little easier, was, therefore, the motivation for undertaking this study.

### **1.4 The research problem**

Information is a resource that is obviously needed in all human activities, very crucial to the development of a society, without which there would be no society. Consequently, it is now commonly observed that the material success of a nation is directly linked to its information wealth. Every person is faced with decision-making situations or problem-solving situations or questions. These may either be abstract or cognitive. They may be mental or physical or both.

Everyone is affected by the environment in which they live; arguably there would be problems or situations related to a new environment in particular that require a timely decision-making process to overcome those problems. For the immigrants, as they come from different countries with different cultures and different educational backgrounds, who arrive in the City of Cape Town for the first time, the situation was a new one. It is inevitable that these immigrants faced with problem-solving and decision-making situations.

Furthermore, numerous studies have been conducted in the field of information seeking behaviour of immigrants around the world, including South Africa but limited studies have been conducted on information seeking behaviour of

immigrants by applying the theory of information worlds. Thus, this study investigates the information seeking behaviour of African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town.

### **1.5 Research objectives**

This study investigated the information seeking behaviour of African immigrants who live in the City of Cape Town, South Africa. The study aimed to provide a more comprehensive study in terms of identifying the information needs and information seeking behaviour of African immigrants. Hopefully the outcomes of this study will be beneficial to organisations that serve immigrants to meet their information needs. In this regard, the findings should enable decision makers (Government, and NGOs) to improve and update their policies and services established with the aim of accommodating African immigrants more effectively. Furthermore, the findings emanating from this study should also assist to add to the growing body of knowledge in this area of research by filling gaps in the literature. Also this study will inform theory, policy and practice relating to information seeking behaviour of African immigrants. Following were the objectives of the study:

- To identify information needs and information seeking patterns of African immigrants in the City of Cape Town
- To identify barriers (if any) between information and these immigrants and
- To form strategies or suggestions for overcoming these barriers so that the organisations that serve the immigrant community may better address these information needs
- To find out the importance of various information resources for immigrants' everyday lives
- To study their information gathering activities
- To investigate the methods and sources used by immigrants to acquire the required information

## 1.6 Key research questions

Given the above problem, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

- What are the information needs of immigrants, and what influences their needs?
- What are the information grounds and channels that they use to get information they need?
- What role does interpersonal information seeking behaviour play in their lives and family?
- What major problems do immigrants experience when seeking information?
- What are the pull factors of African immigration into the City of Cape Town?
- What are the factors that push African immigrants to leave their home countries?
- What is the nature of African immigrants' links with big public spheres, and how do these ties affect their information seeking behaviour?
- What is the nature of contact among different African immigrant communities, and among immigrants and the local population?

## 1.7 Delimitations

The present study includes only one city in South Africa. Its findings might not be generalised to other geographic areas or the whole of South Africa. The present study explores only the views of African immigrants who live in the City of Cape Town. The reason why the researcher preferred to use only the City of Cape Town is because it is one of the big cities of South Africa with high levels of

immigration movement. Due the multitude of population groups that participated on this study such as students, professionals, unemployed, House wives, males, females and age groups, the findings of the study are reported collectively. The findings are not presented based on population groups.

## **1.8 Theoretical framework**

The study adopted the theory of information worlds. This theory was developed by Burnett and Jaeger (2011), combining concepts drawn from the theories of Chatman (1991) and Habermas (1992). The theory of information worlds examines the role of information, information seeking behaviours and perceived values of information across social contexts of large and small worlds. In other words, it is a framework for investigating the full range of social influences on information and on the behaviours associated with information.

Chatman defines “small worlds” as the social environments in which an interconnected group of individuals live, work and bond together by common interests, behaviour, expectations, and often by economic status and geographic relatedness. Thus “a small world, whether it is geographically and economically constrained or enjoys access to a wealth of information resources, is small in the sense that its day-to-day activities and interests are structured and defined by a recognizable set of social norms and behaviour that are specific to the localized context of the world itself” (Burnett and Jaeger 2011: 163).

Unlike Chatman’s concept of the small world that is focused strictly on a localised small scale, the theory of lifeworld focuses almost exclusively on the social world and its information resources in a much broader context. Habermas’s concept of lifeworld is wide, reaching across a broad binding of a culture when he states that “members of a social collective normally share a lifeworld” (Habermas 1992: 109). Thus, Habermas defines a lifeworld as “collective information and a social environment that weave together the diverse information resources, voices and perspectives of all of the members of a society” (Burnett and Jaeger 2011: 166).

Chatman (small worlds) does not consider whatever is outside of a specific small world, nor the impact of the broader social context within which a small world

exists, or even when those multiple worlds interact with one another. Habermas (lifeworld), on the contrary, does not investigate how the broader lifeworld might be instantiated within or might interact with localised contexts and specific communities (Burnett and Jaeger 2008). By combining concepts drawn from small worlds and lifeworlds, the theory of information worlds thus examines the role of information, information behaviours and perceived values of information across social contexts of large and small worlds.

## **1.9 Definition of key terms**

### **1.9.1 Information**

Information does not have one common agreed upon definition, and different scholars have tried many times to attribute a meaningful definition for the term “information” but the common idea behind its definition depends on the specific work for which it is being used. According to Kaniki (2001: 191), information equals facts, ideas, imaginative works of the mind, and data of value, potentially useful in problem-solving and decision-making. It leads to a state of knowing.

The conceptualisation of “information” always brings an allusion to “knowledge” and “data”. Machlup (1983: 647) examines the issue of whether information is synonymous with data and knowledge, stating that there has been a tradition to treat the three as a hierarchy, with data at the bottom and knowledge at the top. However, he concludes that there is neither precedent nor need to establish a hierarchy between data and information on one side, and information and knowledge on the other side. Generally, information is known as data that has been gathered, processed and analysed to provide a useful result called “information”.

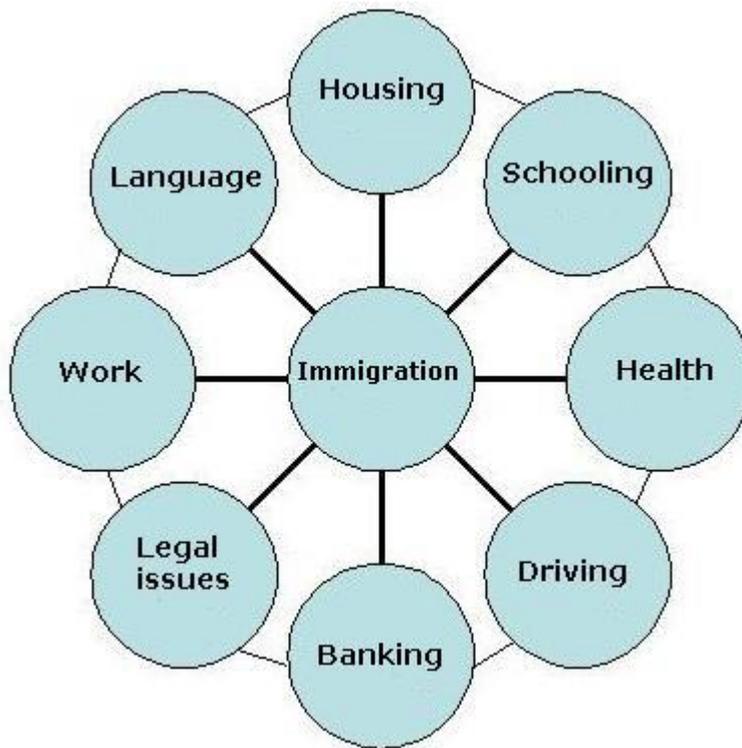
Choo, Detlor and Turnbull (2000: 29) state that “information depends on a collection of data, and knowledge is based on accumulation of experience; transformation of information to knowledge refers to the output of two complementary dynamics: the structuring of data and information that enforces order and design; the human acting on data and information that attributes sense”.

Thus, the coherence of information to knowledge interaction is based on the fact that information becomes knowledge once a human being forms justified and true beliefs about the world.

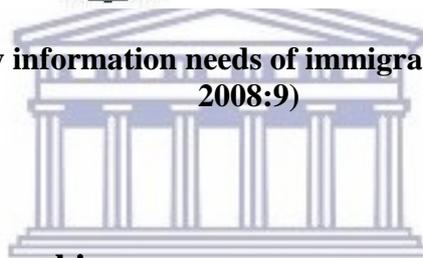
### **1.9.2 Information needs**

Feather and Sturges (1997:216) define “information needs” as the expression used in a variety of ways to refer to any context where information is required, and it includes all forms of information seeking. Continuously, the needs vary within a society and individuals and needs keep on changing over time. Wilson (1999: 250) indicates that information-using behaviour consists of the physical and mental acts involved in integrating the information found in the person’s existing knowledge base. Therefore, it may involve physical acts such as marking sections in a text to note their significance or importance, as well as mental acts that involve, for instance, comparison of new information with existing knowledge.

Shoham and Strauss (2008: 9) understand an information need as a situation where there is a gap that needs to be filled. According to them, a gap is where the individual begins asking questions to try to make sense of his/her situation. For an immigrant’s situation, the notion of immigration is the main category of information need or the gap. The questions that then start forming to try to fill in the gap shape the sub-needs that must be answered to help make sense of the immigrant’s new reality. These sub-needs include the categories of housing, health, education, work, transportation, language, etc. Within each of those sub-needs lie many other information needs (see Figure 1. below).



**Figure 1. Primary information needs of immigrants (Shoham & Strauss 2008:9)**



### **1.9.3 Information seeking**

Case (2002: 5) defines “information seeking” as “a conscious effort to acquire information in response to a need or a gap in your knowledge”. Whenever the person realises that there is an information gap in his/her state of mind, the willing point of bridging that gap comes in and it may lead to looking for information from various sources. According to Ikojo-Odongo and Mostert (2006), information seekers may take personal responsibility for their own processes or otherwise they decide to work through an intermediary.

After the stage of obtaining the valued information needed, the following stage refers to the ability of matching it with the existing knowledge in order to be able to track on and solve the problem.

### **1.9.4 Information seeking behaviour**

Seyama (2009: 10) quotes Davis (2000) who defines information seeking behaviour as “an activity of an individual that is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need”. In other words, information seeking behaviour describes those activities in which people engage when identifying their own needs for information, searching for such information in every way possible and using or transforming that information (Wilson 1999). Then there are many ways in which people can obtain information, such as the internet, television, radio, books, journals, newspapers, relatives, and so on. It is in this regard that the terms “information need” and “information seeking behaviour” have played a vital role during the whole process of this research.

### **1.9.5 Information behaviour**

Wilson (1999: 49) defines information behaviour as “the totality of human behaviour in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information-seeking and information use”. According to Case (2002), information behaviour is not only about intentional information seeking but also encompasses unintentional information encounters. The concept of information behaviour traces its roots to the concept of “information needs and uses” that arose in the 1960s (Case 2006: 294).

Information behaviour is a sub-discipline within the field of library and information science. It describes how people need, seek, manage, share and use information in different contexts; it may also be described as information seeking behaviour or human information behaviour (Savolainen 2007: 112). Thus, Case (2007: 81) considered information behaviour as an umbrella term predominantly used in the library and information science field. Stilwell (2010: 3) indicates that “information behaviour refers to a broader term that covers information seeking behaviour, information needs, information searching and information use”.

### 1.9.6 Information access

Information access is a multi-faceted and complex concept. Burnett, Jaeger and Thompson (2008), in their study of normative behaviour and information, suggest that, in order to understand the dynamics of information access, it is important to understand the components of access, including physical, intellectual and social access. Jaeger (2007: 843) is of the opinion that, without access to information, there can be no exchange, collection, use or management of information. McCreddie and Rice (1999: 2) place more emphasis on the representations or artefacts of knowledge, technology, communication, control, goods/commodities and participation (see table 2 below).

**Table 2: Conceptualisations of access to information (McCreddie and Rice 1999: 2)**

	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Implications</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	Message sent, information flow; Observations, visual sources, evidence; Documents, books, periodicals, numerical or digital data, databases, citations; Analysis, advice, interpretation, debate, answers, education	Can lead to decision-making; control over information flow; quality of life; quality of work life; power; influence; socioeconomic opportunities such as equity, funds, legal advantage, participation in democratic society and citizenship activities
<b>Technology</b>	Range of technologies and media: computer, telephone, movies, books, newspapers, magazines, music, television, etc.; Information delivery systems, systems that generate, store and create information; Interface or command language, software, programming  Use of systems; Linking technologies: interactive, communication,	Assumes that access to technologies leads to access to information; Assumes an infrastructure of support; Assumes knowledge of how to use; Can lead to access to multiple data sources, automatic methods of surveillance, increased control and creativity  Compounding effect: Access to one technology can increase future access, experience and

	networking technologies	advantage
<b>Communication</b>	<p>Making sense of things: content, comprehension, retention, explanation;</p> <p>Making use of information: accuracy, relevance, format, level, decision-making;</p> <p>Connectivity;</p> <p>Communication competence</p>	<p>Assumes communication competence; Requires broader meaning of relevance; Can lead to social, political participation with implications for democracy, equity, power relations; Compounding effect: Access likely to lead to greater competence, access</p>
<b>Control</b>	<p>Over who has access to what to whose advantage;</p> <p>Over the agenda, terms of debate, content, organisation, design, programme;</p> <p>Over processes and flows of information;</p> <p>Over production of culture</p>	<p>Assumes that power and control are associated with information and knowledge;</p> <p>Compounding effect: Those who control access are more likely to decide and design in favour of others most like them.</p>
<b>Goods/ Commodities</b>	<p>Information as a social, economic good with value, costs, benefits;</p> <p>Distribution of control capacities, availability of resources; New markets for information industry</p>	<p>Assumes potential for public good, social value; Value not known until used;</p> <p>Compounding effect: potential for economic barriers and paths to be reinforced by social dynamics</p>
<b>Participation</b>	<p>Services: governmental, communication, information; Advocacy; Privacy</p>	<p>Can influence right to participate as citizen;</p> <p>Compounding effect: Those most in need are often least likely to obtain services.</p>

## **1.10 Research design and methodology**

The selection of the participants was based on the following criteria: only African immigrants (regardless of race) living in the City of Cape Town aged 18 years and upward; both female and male participants were selected. The study did not include any person under 18 years because they might lack the decision-making capacity to decide whether or not to participate in research.

Qualitative and quantitative methodologies were the two basic paradigms of research (Kothari 2004). This study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. For the quantitative approach, the survey research method was used because the objective was to measure, describe, compare, classify, analyse and interpret the information seeking behaviour of immigrants. For a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were used. The purpose of using qualitative research, according to Glesne and Peshkin (1992: 7), is to contextualise and interpret results using induction to derive possible explanations based on observed phenomena. On the other hand, the quantitative approach generalises and predicts findings based on the use of formal instruments such as questionnaires; it also allows for gathering data in a short span of time – an important consideration for this study (Bertram 2010).

The research instrument also consisted of a series of questions and other prompts like suggestions to participants to hear about the improvements needed in information services. Actually, the purpose was to gather complete and reliable information from participants.

### **1.10.1 Population**

Based on Census 2011, there are 100 623 African immigrants in Cape Town. The majority of them come from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Lesotho, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique and Cameroon. Based on the suggestions of Terre Blanche, Terre Blanche, Durkheim and Painter (2006) on sampling ratios and sample size, from a large population of approximately 100 000, a sampling ratio of 1% should be selected (Terre Blanche, Terre Blanche, Durkheim and Painter 2006). Thus, 1 000

participants should have been included in the present research but due to difficulties to reach these participants, time and budget constraints, the sample comprised of 240 African immigrants (approximately 0, 25% of the population), including students, employed and unemployed immigrants, business owners, housewives, and both newly arrived and those who have lived in the city for a considerable time.

### **1.10.2 Data collection instruments and procedures**

Interviews provide a useful tool for collecting accurate information from different participants. In the present study, interviews were more facilitative and a quick channel of communication between the researcher and participants. With the aim of carrying out a successful and complete research study, interview guide was used as instrument to collect information from key informant (those individuals who were identified first through organisations as well as business owners/managers).

Bertram (2010) indicates that a questionnaire is a list of questions that the respondents answer; it can contain either closed-ended or open-ended questions. Both closed- and open-ended questions were used for rich data in this study. The questionnaire guaranteed anonymity, and it also saved time for both the researcher and participants. While questionnaires were completed by participants independently, the researcher was available to answer any questions related to the questionnaire. The questionnaires were available in two languages, English and French, and participants were given a choice of language. Questionnaires were distributed to participants who were identified by key informant.

### **1.10.3 Data analysis**

A quantitative data analysis technique was used. Statistical analysis, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), was used to analyse and interpret study findings (Babbie and Mouton 2001). Before analysing the raw data, each completed case (questionnaire) was evaluated to check for missing

data, ambiguity and errors. The questionnaire responses were then coded and entered into the computer for cleaning to identify inconsistencies and outliers. The study used both figures and tables in order to make the research findings more understandable and easier to interpret. Figures and tables were clearly meaningful and understandable for data analysis and they made discussion of findings easier.

Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis and it led to the development of relevant themes within the present study. The data generated from interviews was analysed through thematic content analysis. This technique had made the data analysis journey more accurate and understandable.

### **1.11 Ethical considerations**

The researcher obtained informed consent from participants. The covering letter attached to each data collection instrument helped to comprehensively explain the purpose of the study with the aim of seeking voluntary informed consent from participants. The permission was notably requested from interviewed participants before starting to record interviews. The anonymity, privacy and confidentiality were assured and maintained throughout.

The survey questionnaires were accorded codes and captured by systematically following the numerical order. The interview discussions were recorded, using a voice recorder and the researcher's laptop, with each participant's interview coded according to the order of interviews (P1 to P25) and no-one had access to the data except the researcher.

### **1.12 Thesis structure**

#### **Chapter One: Introducing the study**

This chapter introduces the research and provides an overview of the study. It provides the background, outlines the research problem and objectives of the study, research questions underpinning the study and significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study, as well as definitions of key terms. The chapter

also briefly covers the theoretical framework and the methodology used in the study.

### **Chapter Two: Information behaviour of immigrants: theoretical framework**

This chapter discusses the theory used for the study. It also covers literature on the theory of information worlds. It explains the theory and justifies its applicability to the present study.

### **Chapter Three: African immigration: literature review**

This chapter provides a review of the literature related to the study. It mainly includes all related studies previously done in relation to the information behaviour of immigrants. It then focuses on identifying the push and pull factors of African immigrants, their information needs, information grounds, and reviews their information seeking behaviour. The chapter also determines the main barriers or challenges they are facing while they are acquiring information.

### **Chapter Four: Research design and methodology**

This chapter describes the research design and methodology. It identifies the population and sampling techniques applied in the study. It further discusses the approach adopted, the data collection procedures and instruments used, and the data analysis process.

### **Chapter Five: Presentation of results**

This chapter presents the data collected from all data collection tools used for the purpose of the study. These included data from questionnaires and data collected from interviews. Research data are presented in the form of tables and figures. Frequencies and percentages facilitate the proper presentation and understanding of the research data for further discussion purposes.

### **Chapter Six: Discussion and interpretation of findings**

This chapter presents a discussion and interpretation of the research findings as presented in Chapter Five in light of the literature review and the research questions. In addition, the findings of previous related literature on information behaviour reviewed in Chapter Three of this study are further compared with the

findings of the study in order to gain insight into the information seeking behaviour of the African immigrants.

### **Chapter Seven: Summary, conclusion and recommendations**

This chapter includes the summary of findings and provides answers to the research questions underpinning the study. In this chapter, the conclusion is based on the summary of findings and then leads to the formulation of relevant recommendations with suggestions for further studies.

#### **1.13 Summary of the chapter**

Chapter One introduces the entire study and it reveals the problem statement of the study. It outlines research objectives and research questions underpinning the study, and it briefly describes the research methodology. The research applies mixed methods, which involves both a qualitative and quantitative approach. The chapter briefly indicates the population of the study, data collection process and data analysis techniques. The significance of the study, scope and limitations are also highlighted in this chapter, the key terms are defined and an outline of the structure of the thesis is presented.

This chapter is followed by Chapter Two which discusses the theoretical framework of the study.

# CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the background and motivation of the study as well as the research problem, key questions and limitations. This chapter discusses information behaviour models, the concept of information worlds theory, and the suitability of the theory of information worlds to the study information seeking behaviour of African immigrants. The three big components of the information worlds theory are made up of two theoretical concepts, namely the small worlds theory and the lifeworld theory, which is discussed in this chapter.

## 2.2 Information behaviour models

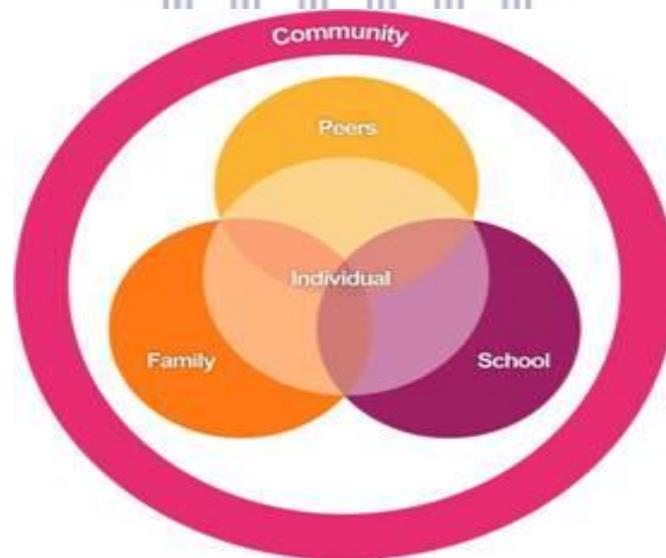
Information behaviour assists in understanding the way people search for relevant information that can be used in different contexts (Savolainen 2007: 112). Bates (2005: 3) perceived that “models are most useful at the description and prediction stages of understanding a phenomenon”. However, not all the models that have been developed by information behaviour researchers are necessarily applicable to all user groups (Du Preez (2008: 29). Many models are derived from theories, according to Kelly (1963: 18) “a theory provides a basis for an active approach to life”. Busha and Harter (1980:13) define theory as “assumptions, definitions, and propositions which explain a group of observed facts or phenomena in a field or discipline”.

Although there is a large number of information behaviour models generally reviewed, it is still a core task of a researcher to identify and apply the most appropriate model reviewed that can be used. Even though it is not necessary to discuss every model in detail it is important to acknowledge that there are other models of information seeking behaviour. In terms of the aims of the present study, Information Worlds Theory was used.

### **2.3 The concept of the small worlds theory: Elfreda Chatman (1991)**

Chatman defines “small worlds” as the social environments in which an interconnected group of individuals live, work and bond by common interests, behaviour, expectations, and often by economic status and geographic relatedness. Thus “a small world, whether it is geographically and economically constrained or enjoy access to a wealth of information resources, is small in the sense that its day-to-day activities and interests are structured and defined by a recognizable set of social norms and behaviour that are specific to the localized context of the world itself” (Burnett and Jaeger 2011: 163).

A common characteristic about the people living in a small world is a strong emphasis on family and kin relationships, which explains standards of behaviour and suitable approaches to future goal-setting. In relation to the present study, the literature shows that immigrants prefer to seek information from interpersonal sources such as friends, relatives or co-workers rather than from institutions or organisations (Fisher, Durrance and Hinton 2004).



**Figure 2 Reflection of the small worlds theory (Fisher, Durrance and Hinton 2004)**

The theory further explains that within each small world, everyday activities, including activities related to information, are not seriously considered and are

frequently taken for granted as being standard across all small worlds regardless of their uniqueness to a specific group.

Rincon and Associates (2000) support the theory, finding that immigrants' activities related to information seeking were not given priority. Their research shows that almost 60% of immigrants surveyed in North Carolina had not been to the places where they were supposed to obtain information in the past year. Lack of time and lack of need or interest were some of their reasons. Within the concept of the small world theory, Rincon and Associates (2000) believe that immigrants prefer to rely on personalised, rather than institutionalised, sources of information.

Chatman's theoretical work is useful, firstly, in that it explicitly accounts for the diverse ways in which people engage with and behave in relation to information in the context of their social interactions, and secondly, in the ways it conceptualises the place of information within specific localised small worlds.

#### **2.4 The concept of lifeworld: Jurgen Habermas (1992)**

Unlike Chatman's concept of the small worlds that is strictly based on a localised small scale, the theory of lifeworld focuses almost exclusively on the social world and its information resources in a much broader context. Habermas's concept of lifeworld is wide. Reaching across a broad binding of a culture, members of a social collective normally share a lifeworld (Habermas 1992: 109). Thus, Habermas defines "a lifeworld" as collective information and social environments, which weave together the various information resources, perspectives and voices of all of the members of a society (Habermas 1992).

Central to Habermas's work are larger social influences, including public sphere institutions, media, technology and politics. The lifeworld theory explains that locales and communication channels of the public sphere, forums, the public press, school libraries and other settings play double roles in information behaviour. On the one hand, they make free discourse about political and social information possible, and on the other hand, they function as mediators between the rights of the individual and the power of the state in democratic societies.

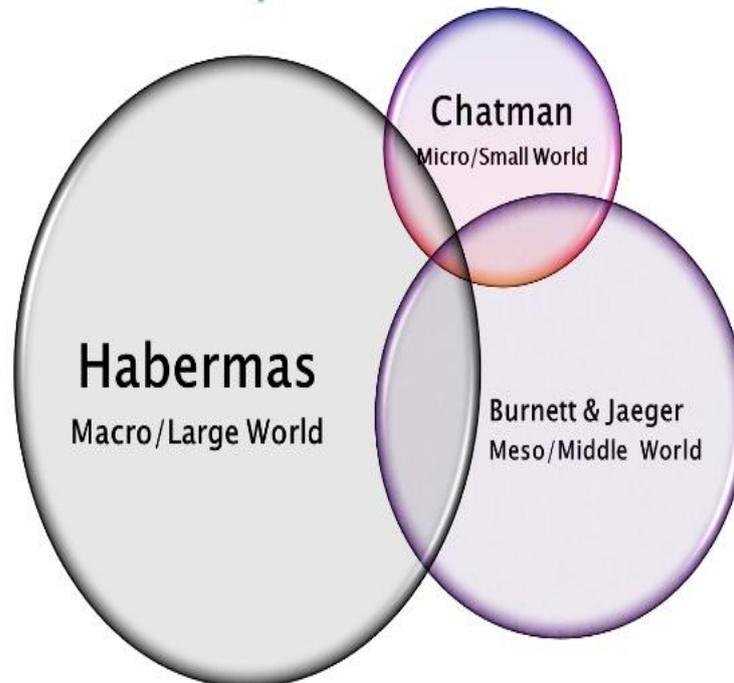
While the authority element of societies tends to try to impose a dominant or common culture, every society, arguably including immigrants living in the Cape Town community, is in fact made up of many different cultures, just as the lifeworld is comprised of many different small worlds. So, as long as societies contain a range of cultures, a range of small worlds, the public sphere will be a viable concept.

## **2.5 Information worlds: Gary Burnett and Paul T. Jaeger (2011)**

Chatman (small worlds) does not consider whatever is outside of a specific small world, nor the impact of the broader social context within which a small world exists or even when those multiple worlds interact with one another; Habermas (lifeworld), on the contrary, does not investigate how the broader lifeworld might be instantiated within or might interact with localised contexts and specific communities (Burnett and Jaeger 2008). By combining concepts drawn from small worlds and lifeworlds, the theory of information worlds thus examines the role of information, information seeking behaviours and perceived values of information across social contexts of large and small worlds.

While the theory of information worlds draws its conception from small worlds and broader lifeworlds, it also acknowledges that there are intermediate worlds, which can mediate or intervene between the macro and micro worlds (Burnett and Jaeger 2011). The theory further suggests that there are interactions between all these levels, as small worlds exist within a broader lifeworld context, which influences them, just as the lifeworlds can be influenced by specific small worlds and the intermediate levels can interact with both (see figure 3 below).

## The Theory of Information Worlds



**Figure 3 Reflection of the information worlds theory**

Chu's (1999) study on immigrant information behaviour is a prominent study that includes work on immigrant child mediators, explaining how two or multiple small worlds interact. Chu's study explains how immigrant children can serve as linguistic, cultural and information intermediaries for their immigrant parents (Chu 1999).

Globalisation and online environments are also important instruments, which easily serve to link different small worlds. Pyati (2009) understands globalisation as a fundamental factor concerned with the increasing interconnectedness of social, economic, political and cultural relations in the world. According to Pyati (2009), the diaspora as a framework for understanding the information needs and behaviours of certain ethnic groups is important and cannot be discussed without reference to globalisation.

The information worlds theory argues that there are three levels of access to information and information technology: physical access, intellectual access and social access.

- Physical access to information: The ability of a user to get to information and to employ information to accomplish particular goals
- Intellectual access: The ability to understand the information
- Social access: The ability to communicate and use the information in social contexts

There is limited research that has been conducted to discover how these levels of access to information have been applied in the study of information behaviour of immigrants.

## 2.6 Key concepts of the theory of information worlds

- Social norms: Shared understanding of rightness and wrongness in observable social behaviours
- Social types: Shared perceptions of individuals' roles in context
- Information value: Shared understanding of what is worth paying attention to and what information is meaningful
- Information behaviour: Full range of normative behaviours related to information
- Boundaries: Interfaces between worlds are points at which worlds come into contact with one another

The theory of information worlds emphasises that human information behaviour is shaped simultaneously by both immediate influences, including friends, family, co-workers and trusted information sources from the small world in which the individual lives, and larger social influences, such as public sphere institutions, media, technology and politics. These levels, though separate, do not function in

isolation, and to ignore any level in examining information behaviour results in an incomplete picture of the social contexts of the information (Burnett and Jaeger 2011: 171).

## **2.7 African immigrants' access to information**

Much research and theories have proven that immigrants prefer to look for information first from people who share the world with them such as family and friends (micro level), and then from public sphere institutions, media, technology and politics and mass media (macro level). Because the small worlds exist within the broader lifeworld, the theory of information worlds acknowledges that there are intermediate worlds (meso), which can mediate or intervene between the macro and micro worlds.

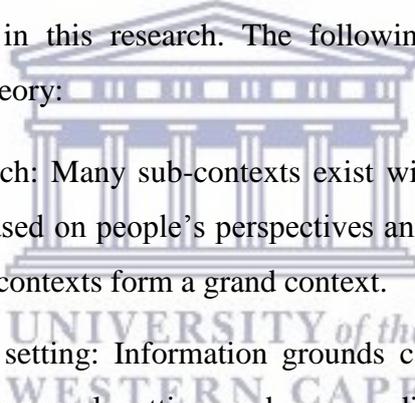
### **2.7.1 Micro level**

Given the barriers attached to immigrants' everyday needs such as language, cultural and economic barrier needs, one should understand that they would rely on interpersonal information sources, especially those of close family members and friends. From the literature review, it seems that immigrants' primary sources of information are existing friends, family members or acquaintances who have lived in the area for some time, church members, co-workers and other people introduced by family and friends. This supports Harris and Dewdney's (1994: 24) fourth principle of information behaviour that stipulates that people "frequently review their own experience first, then turn to people like themselves, including their friends and family".

The concept of "small worlds" draws attention to the social environments in which people live and work, linked by a set of common interests and expectations, as well as a common set of information needs and behaviour, and more often, even by geographic proximity and similar economic situation. The theory further argues that in these small worlds, most daily activities, including those related to the exchange of information and access to information are often taken for granted and considered part of "the way things are".

The theory of “information grounds” is a prominent study on immigrant information behaviour. This theory has been used by many researchers in the field of information behaviour, as well as in the study of immigration (Fisher, Durrance, and Hinton 2004). According to Fisher, Durrance and Hinton (2004: 811), information grounds are “environment(s) temporarily created when people come together for a singular purpose but from whose behaviour emerges a social atmosphere that fosters the spontaneous and serendipitous sharing of information”. In their work on the theory of information grounds while using an outcome evaluation approach enriched by its focus on context to explore the use of need-based services by immigrants in New York City, Fisher, Durrance and Hinton et al (2004) found that immigrants had significant information needs for help with adjusting to life in their new country.

Beauty salons, bike shops, ballparks and tattoo parlours were identified as information grounds in this research. The following are the concepts of the information ground theory:

- 
- Context rich: Many sub-contexts exist within an information ground and are based on people’s perspectives and physical factors; together, these sub-contexts form a grand context.
  - Temporal setting: Information grounds can occur anywhere, in any type of temporal setting and are predicated on the presence of individuals.
  - Instrumental purpose: People gather at information grounds for a primary, instrumental purpose other than information-sharing.
  - Social types: Information grounds are attended by different social types. Most, if not all of these, play expected and important, albeit different roles in information flow.
  - Social interaction: Social interaction is a primary activity at information grounds, such that information flow is a by-product.
  - Informal and formal information-sharing: People engage in formal and informal information-sharing, and information flow occurs in many directions.

- Alternative forms of information use: People use information obtained at information grounds in alternative ways, and benefit along physical, social, affective and cognitive dimensions.

Caidi and Allard (2005), in their study on social inclusion of new immigrants in Canada, found that access to information for immigrants significantly contributed to the construction of the social capital of these communities. This means that access to information helps to develop a social organisation with norms, social trust and networks that facilitate connection, cooperation and coordination for mutual benefit. Since small worlds are made up by a common set of needs and interests, information exchange becomes a fundamental part of daily activities and behaviours of immigrants, and therefore part of the basic fabric of social interaction in small worlds.

In order to discover the information needs, information seeking patterns and sources of information of immigrants living in New York City, Flythe (2001) interviewed two groups of people (38 representatives of different public service agencies, which serve the immigrant community in New York City, and 100 recently arrived immigrants), as well as organisations like churches, ethnic civic centres and educational centres, which teach English as a second language. The data suggested that newcomers relied on information from friends and family, as they were often not aware of public services available to them. According to the researcher, perhaps preferring personalised methods of gathering information were more familiar to them than the institutionalised formal methods or sources of information. Based on these findings, the research further concluded that “in general, while Hispanics tended to be active information seekers, their information seeking patterns were inadequate to properly inform themselves of existing services and resources” (Flythe 2001: 10).

### 2.7.2 Macro level

Access to information on the macro level is well explained by Habermas (1992) with the concept of lifeworlds. According to him, locals and communication channels of the public sphere, such as public libraries, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), media and other settings play an important role in information behaviour; not only by making free discourse about political and social information possible but also in their function as mediators between the rights of the individual and the power of the state.

Savolainen (2009) emphasises that everyday life information needs and information seeking are affected by a number of cognitive, emotional, cultural and situational factors. According to him, everyday life information seeking has two major modes (Savolainen 2009). On the one hand, people seek for orienting information by monitoring daily events through the media such as newspapers, television and the internet. On the other hand, they may seek for problem-specific information. This may include information related to health issues, housing, consumer problems and various kinds of hobbies.

The following are some of the public spheres to gather information:

- Broadcast media
- Television
- Radio
- Public libraries
- Restaurants
- Hair salons
- Buses
- Medical offices
- Grocery store queues
- Social networking and other ICT sources

### **2.7.3 Meso level**

Since the immigrant society as a whole is composed of a large and diverse range of small worlds, and because the success or failure of a society depends largely on the possibility of an open interaction between these worlds, it is necessary to define not only their own little worlds, but also interconnect concepts of information access and exchange of information between these little worlds. However, in a complex society such as an immigrant community, information exchange takes place not only within small regular worlds but also across and between several smaller worlds.

People who are members of several small worlds in their work and living environments can act as conduits or channels, transmitters of information from one context to another. Through such processes (small interconnected worlds) small worlds can both maintain their own integrity through their ability to express their beliefs and values if they choose to do, and to learn about and inform other small worlds. This active exchange between small worlds is essential for creating and maintaining a population informed and knowledgeable in which support for information exchange work hand in hand with strong support for access to information.

Srinivasan and Pyati (2007: 1737), in their study on bridging local and global information sources, emphasised that, as much as local environments are important, immigrants' information behaviour is not merely limited to local contexts. Srinivasan and Pyati's (2007) study showed that Somali refugee communities in Boston were not isolated, because the online environments provided them with a space that kept them in constant communication with immigrants in other parts of the United States, Kenya, and Italy.

## **2.8 Immigrants push factor theories**

Immigration theories are classified in terms of the level of analysis on which they focus. Theories which explain the causes of migration are classified at macro and micro levels, and those which explain the causes and perpetuation of immigration are classified at a meso level.

- **Micro-level theories**

Micro theories explain the launch of immigration on individual and family level rather than collective decisions. Micro theories explain immigration on the level of rational decisions made by individuals, mainly based on the cost benefit analysis of their situation (Boswell 2002: 14). The theories argue that individuals or their families make rational choices to maximise the expected benefits. This means that they decide to immigrate in the hope of a positive return immigration. Thus, based on the participation of the whole family on the immigration decision, expected returns are not only for the person who will immigrate, but for the whole family. In other words, this means that people decide not to immigrate to places blindly; instead, they migrate to places where the net return is higher than the migration costs.



- **Macro-level theories**

Macro theories trait international immigration on the level of economic conditions between the most developed countries and underdeveloped countries. According to Boswell (2002: 1; 3), international immigration is called the structural conditions and collective goals for immigration. These conditions can act as thrust and traction factors of immigration.

- **Meso-level theories**

While micro theories focus on the process of decision-making, individual migration and macro theories on global change migration meso theories are to fill the gaps left by the micro and macro theories. These social-relational theories focus on how migration is initiated and coordinated by families or groups of people, not individuals on their own. Meso-based theories focus on the causes and perpetuation of immigration at the household or community level.

## **2.9 Summary of the chapter**

The present study adopts the theory of Information worlds. This chapter has explained the origins of the concept of information worlds. Being considered as small worlds, this chapter has outlined how the concept of African immigrant communities can be used to analyse the information behaviour of African Immigrants living in Cape Town.

This theory is suitable for the study of information behaviour of African immigrants as it eventually provides a framework for understanding the multiple interactions between information and the many different social contexts within which it exists, from the macro (the lifeworld) to the meso (intermediate) to the micro (small worlds).

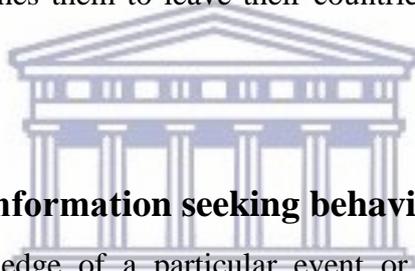
It has also been argued in this chapter that, though the theory of information worlds draws its conception from small worlds and broader lifeworlds, it also acknowledges that there are intermediate (meso) worlds, which can mediate or intervene between the macro and micro. The chapter highlighted some literature that has been written about immigrants' information behaviour and that supports the use of the information worlds theory to explain the information behaviour of immigrants.

The chapter ends by outlining and explaining the important conceptual analysis and theoretical framework, which can be used to understand the study of information behaviour of immigrants.

# CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

## 3.1 Introduction

Even though the theory of information worlds draws its conception from old theories (small worlds 1991 and broader lifeworld 1992), limited studies have been conducted on information behaviour of immigrants applying the present theory. The literature review of the present study focuses on an overview of the studies that have been done on the information behaviour of African immigrants around the world, and in South Africa. The first part of the literature review discusses the immigrants' information behaviour, their information needs, and their barriers and access to information on all three levels, namely the micro, meso and macro levels. The second part of the literature discusses the typology of immigrants, what pushes them to leave their countries and what pulls them into Cape Town.



## 3.2 Immigrants' information seeking behaviour

Information is knowledge of a particular event or situation. This knowledge becomes information when it is communicated by others or obtained through investigation; it can also be defined as knowledge communicated or received, or any knowledge gained through communication (Losee 1990). Wilson (1999: 249) states that "information behaviour describes those activities a person may engage in when identifying his or her own needs for information, searching for such information in any way, and using or transforming that information".

People obtain information in many ways, for example from relatives, workshops, the internet, a library, television, newspapers, radio, books and journals. All these various ways are known as information sources and channels of communication.

Everyone needs information to survive but it becomes critical for immigrants due to their unfamiliarity to the new area to which they have migrated. Many research studies have been conducted worldwide to investigate the information needs of immigrants.

According to Flythe (2001), in her research on identifying information needs of newly arrived Latino immigrants in Durham County, North Carolina, information and recreation needs of immigrant patrons are basically no different than those of local people. Both immigrants and local people need information about jobs, resources for schoolwork, a means of self-improvement and cultural enlightenment.

In addition to this information, Cuesta (1990: 27) confirms that new immigrants have special interests in areas such as learning English, use of dictionaries, obtaining information about food, jobs, housing, medical and legal matters, especially immigration policy.

Cuesta (1990) further argues that newly arrived immigrants have more basic, survival-related information needs, while settled immigrants have more needs in areas such as leisure or pleasure reading. Therefore, the manner in which public service agencies, which serve an immigrant community, are used by these two types of immigrants cannot be the same.

Pointing out the different information needs among immigrant groups, Pyati (2009) notes that information needs and behaviour among immigrant groups depend on variations in their economic status and communities. Information needs range from basic living skills in the new country to Basic English literacy information, to information about maintaining cultural ties to the home country.

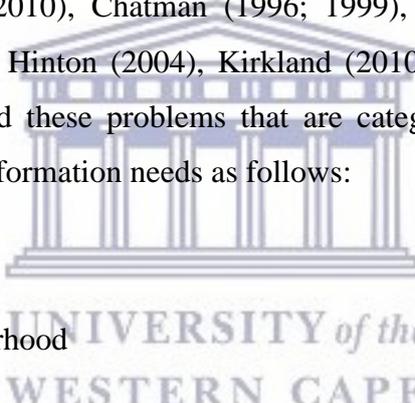
Machet and Govender (2012: 2) suggest that “understanding the stages of immigrants’ adaptation to the host country, their differing environments and the situations they face can elicit findings about how and whom they approach in order to find information to solve their everyday problems and to meet their needs”.

Rincon and Associates (2000) conducted a study where they interviewed two groups of people in New York City: representatives of different public service agencies, which serve immigrant communities and recently arrived immigrants. Rincon’s study confirmed that learning English as a second language, housing and employment were the three immediate information needs. After evaluating all interview data, they created a new easy-to-read, illustrated welcoming guide with

public service agency information compiled in one book and distributed copies to numerous public places.

Some of the reasons why information needs and behaviour of new immigrants differ from those who have been in the country for longer are because new immigrants may not yet have a fully developed social network on their arrival into the new country, or as emphasised by Machet and Govender (2012: 26), they “may have one that is not adequate in size, density and strength to help facilitate their transition”. As immigrants become established over time, their information needs and behaviour change, their social network characteristics may develop and change as well, reflecting their interactions with the environment (Machet and Govender 2012).

From both levels of immigrants (new and old), many researchers such as Caidi, Allard and Quirke (2010), Chatman (1996; 1999), Childers and Post (1975), Fisher, Durrance and Hinton (2004), Kirkland (2010) and Srinivasen and Pyati (2007) have identified these problems that are categorised into problem areas, indicating the daily information needs as follows:

- 
- Language
  - Neighbourhood
  - Consumer habits
  - Housing and household maintenance
  - Crime and safety
  - Education
  - Information about training, translation and interpretation services
  - Job-searching skills and special services to the foreign-trained
  - Information about making connections in the community (including connections to professional associations, volunteer opportunities, mentoring and community organisations)

- Employment
- Transportation
- Health
- Recreation
- Financial matters
- Legal problems
- Public assistance

### **3.3 Barriers to access information**

#### **3.3.1 Information poverty and social exclusion**

The inability of people to develop effective information practices which enable access to quality information can lead to information poverty and is partly associated with class distinction. The information is subjective to poverty status of outsiders who refuse privileged access to information, which leads to social exclusion. Cultural behaviour which creates barriers to access to information by restricting social participation may also result from information poverty. The poor information is a class that is shaped by social and economic exclusion. People who are defined as information poor perceive themselves as being free of all sources which could help them.

Social exclusion can be understood as a failure to develop effective information practices which are connected to passivity, making available all the information of the day that set the landscape elements of information that need to be accessed, and understand to participate in their adopted community (Hungwe 2013). Lack of information and social exclusion are important factors which help to understand the barriers of complex disadvantages and inequalities which a variety of groups, including migrants, face in modern society in their access to information.

Peace (2001) identifies more than ten categories of people who may be socially excluded. These include women, persons belonging to certain religious and linguistic groups, refugees and migrant workers, the long-term or recurrent unemployed, lonely persons, people who earn low wages, the poor, the disabled, the landless, working children, the mentally ill, politically marginalised, those who need but are not eligible for public assistance, persons without friends or family, persons on public assistance, people with criminal records, and finally drug addicts.

It is evident that limited information access and associated limited information skills in turn can easily limit the capacity of individuals, especially immigrants, to fully participate in society and to make informed decisions. Over time this reduced capacity can impact on abilities such as extending social networks, maintaining health, gaining employment and improving one's education, thus creating a disconnection from mainstream society, continued marginalisation and exclusion of certain sectors of the community. According to Hungwe (2013), continuing social exclusion can put immigrants at greater risk of remaining information poor, resulting in their being excluded from participation in democratic processes, lacking opportunity and feeling a lack of inclusion in the broader community.

Chatman's (1992) study on the information world of retired women provided an understanding of the role "outsiders" can play in poverty of information. The result of this study showed how participants (retired women) were highly concerned about maintaining their heritage and traditional values in the retirement community. In the process of learning to live among strangers, they applied their traditional roles of mother, wife and neighbour. Leaving one's house and going to live with strangers fed the perception of these retired women to survive socially, to keep problems to themselves, to seem as normal as possible and to be extremely selective in the type of persons they could choose to cultivate as a neighbour or friend.

### 3.3.2 Other barriers

The following are barriers associated with access to information by immigrants, as identified by two researchers in the literature reviewed (Flythe 2001; Hanken 1995):

- Institutional barriers, including availability of information service centres, staff attitudes, rules and regulations, and opening hours
- Personal and social barriers, including basic literacy skills, low income and low self-esteem
- Environmental barriers, including physical access, remote areas and isolation
- Perception barriers, including a sense of isolation, educational disadvantages, relevance of public information centres to one's need
- Lack of knowledge about existing facilities and services

While the above may be considered as barriers to access to information, it is important to determine whether they impact on immigrants and their willingness and ability to look for information in order to meet their information needs. As the theory of information worlds argues the "social types", Chatman (1996) supports this theory by saying that immigrants share perceptions of the relevance of the available public information centres. Their social norms may become barriers in themselves as Chatman has shown in his study of a small information worldview of the working poor in which he argues that poor people do not view themselves as being in a position to improve themselves (Chatman 1996: 193).

Hungwe (2013), in his study about Zimbabweans' integration into new societies in Johannesburg, indicates that the need for information and the ability to understand how information is situated and made accessible are primary drivers for immigrants to succeed in social inclusion.

### 3.4 African immigrants

The movement of human populations around the world, as well as the phenomenon of immigrants from African countries in search of a better quality of life is certainly not new; however, the mass movement of people both voluntary and forced has taken place through African centuries for many decades now.

The increase of African immigrants was better understood, following the deteriorating economic conditions, violent conflict and political issues taking place in African countries. Immigration from parts of Africa is characterised by different types of immigration. West Africa, which suffers from labour and irregular migration in East Africa, is characterised by movement of refugees, particularly in the areas of the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes, while that kind of labour migration is common in the Southern African region (Mohammed 2008).

#### 3.4.1 Typology of African immigrants

The typology of the immigration of Africans varies greatly over time; there are as many different kinds of immigration as there are sedentary lifestyles (Jordan and Duvell 2003: 62). Immigrants themselves display varied characteristics, motivations and behaviours. Researchers Akokpari (2001: 3), Campbell (2007: 11), El-Khawas (2004: 41), Martell (2010: 106) and Weda (2012) have highlighted the following as different types of immigration:

- *Forced or involuntary immigration and voluntary immigration:* Forced immigration in the cases where people have to travel for reasons beyond their control, as in the movement of refugees and exiles and others who leave because of political, ethnic, gender or other forms of persecution. Immigrants are also forced victims of human trafficking, slaves or they flee natural disasters. This is one of the leading types of immigration in Africa due to war and incessant conflicts ravaging the continent. Otherwise, voluntary immigration takes place when people move for economic and other reasons that are not beyond their control.

- *Permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term and seasonal immigration:* This is usually determined by the time an immigrant spends away from his/her country of origin. Temporary immigrants are those who go to places for a brief period of time to earn income and then return to their homelands. They generally include international students, tourists and business people. Permanent immigration raises questions of citizenship and the development of identity.
- *Labour immigration:* This category differs from other forms of immigration, because it is labour immigration instead of people whose intention is not that of securing jobs in some of the remote workforces. Labour immigration involves people looking for work or better economic conditions, or those recruited by international employment agencies. Labour immigration is sometimes divided into skilled immigration and unskilled labour where every person with training or education above high school level is considered qualified.
- *Regular and irregular immigrants:* Regular immigrants are those who win entry, stay and work in a foreign country through legitimate means. Irregular immigrants may be deprived of access to residence and work in a given country, but use illegitimate means to obtain entry anyway.
- *Legal and illegal immigration:* Legal immigrants are those who enter a country legally with valid documentation, while illegal immigrants are those who illegally enter a country without official documents.

### **3.4.2 Gender and status in African Immigration**

The issue of gender is much discussed in immigration literature. It seems that before the 1960s and early 1970s not much research on women migration has been conducted, as Boyd and Grieco (2003) stated that the phrase “migrants and their families” was a code for male migrants and their wives and children. Thus, the role that women had played in the household could not put them in a position

to be perceived as women migrants. Only in the 1970s did research begin to include women but did not cause a dramatic shift in thinking about who can immigrate in the family or the likely consequences thereof. Gradually, gender as a variable approach appeared in more and more research.

“Social construction”, as the feminist view of gender, has raised two issues which have driven much of the research in the study of gender and migration over the last decade. The first issue relates to the hierarchies of power, control and domination of men over women. The second issue focuses on the interpersonal relationships between men and women. This raises the question of how women’s relationships to family members, including spouses, change with migration (Boyd and Grieco 2003).

Based on societal factors, including community norms and cultural values, women seem not to be in the position where they can decide whether they can migrate and, if they can, how (i.e., for labour or family reunifications) and with whom (alone or with family). This means that for many societies it is the culture that determines the likelihood of women migration.

The perception of dependency status that views men as independent and women as dependent is another issue that has influenced immigration laws and regulations of many countries of destination. Boyd and Grieco (2003) further argue that immigration policies of many immigration destination countries place women in a family role rather than a market role. This, in turn, can reinforce some of the factors responsible for the social vulnerability of immigrant women.

Burnett, Subramaniam and Gibson (2009) conducted research on how successful immigrant women of Latin American IT professionals had constructed and reconstructed their conceptions of gender before, during and after contact with the world of the IT industry in the United States of America. Four concepts of the information worlds theory, namely social norms, social types, information value and information behaviour, were used as framework to examine the influence of gender on immigrant women’s decision to participate in IT education and employment. The outcome of this article reports four trends in the perceptions of these immigrant women dealing with the relationship between gender and success

in IT. These trends were experience with negative gender stereotyping in relationship with IT participation, minimal computer experience prior to college, choice to pursue a technical degree in college and positive social network support related to critical incidents.

The status of immigrants in the host country is usually defined by a specific legal status, for example, foreigner or non-citizen. Immigrants' visibility compounds the issue further. As they often come from communities with different socio-political and religious beliefs, customs and cultural practices they may also slightly be visibly different in the ways in which they dress, the food they eat, physical characters, and so on.

### **3.4.3 African immigrants in South Africa**

Crush (2001: 8) notes that, before the 1990s, African migrants did not perceive South Africa as an ideal migration destination. This changed after the end of the era of apartheid in 1994. The new political climate in the country and new migratory movements associated with globalisation increased dramatically and changed the situation. Due to its economic stability comparatively to other African countries, South Africa has become an attractive country for the destination of African migrants and a potential springboard to other destinations.

- **Push factors**

The neoclassic economic theory is one of the popular migration theories, mostly used to understand the push and pull factors in an attempt to understand the decisions of international immigrants (Harzig and Hoerder 2009). The neoclassic economic theory emphasises the economic factor in immigration, as it views immigration as “an economic phenomenon in which migrants weigh the cost and returns of current and future employment opportunities” (Harzig and Hoerder 2009: 62). In other ways, the neoclassic economic theory proposes that low salaries and poor standards of living in less developed economic countries push away workers while higher wages and better standards of living in the more developed countries pull them in (see push factor theories Section 2.8).

There are many factors which motivate the need for a geographical change of location. For some it may be a natural need for progression in life as the neoclassic economic theory proposes, whereas for others it may be a sudden decision flickered by serious conflict and violence in their own countries (Valji 2003).

Studies conducted by De Blij (1993) and Vaccarro (1998) suggest that international migrants form groups in various destinations for reasons such as:

- ❖ A search for better economic opportunities
- ❖ A more peaceful and politically stable environment
- ❖ Versatile cultural settings
- ❖ Poverty
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Famine
- ❖ Environmental degradation
- ❖ Drought
- ❖ Economic instability
- ❖ Political conflict
- ❖ Violations of human rights
- ❖ Persecution in their own countries



- **Pull factors**

Hunter and Skinner (2003) state that South Africa is an attractive immigration destination of choice in comparison to other African countries, as it is a country ripe with promise and flourishes with opportunities for advancement. McDonald, Zinyama, Gay, de Vletter, and Mattes (2000) are of the opinion that Africans from other countries are attracted to South Africa by the country's advanced economic, social and political climate.

Research by Harzig and Hoerder (2009), Hunter and Skinner (2003) and Valji (2003) has included the following as push and pull factors of immigration:

- ❖ A search for better economic opportunities
- ❖ A more peaceful and politically stable environment
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Freedom
- ❖ Democracy
- ❖ Better access to basic services like health care and water

Cape Town is one of the most populated and multicultural cities of South Africa; it is also one of the Africa's most popular tourist destination. Based on Statistics South Africa's census of 2011, the total population of the City of Cape Town is 3.74 million; about 2.7% (100623) are African immigrants. As found in the literature review, much research has been conducted on the different aspects of lives of African immigrants living in Cape Town, such as immigrants and HIV/AIDS, job creator or job taker, and their experience of xenophobia to name a few, but not much is recorded in terms of their information behaviour and what pull them into Cape Town.

### **3.5 Appraisal and critique of the literature**

The literature is very important for an academic research; it basically provides an in-depth understanding of key terms which were briefly highlighted in Chapter One (section 1.10). Key studies relating to the information behaviour of immigrants in general and African immigrants in particular were reviewed. The literature particularly revealed the studies available on the information needs of immigrants and highlighted the challenges or barriers they face in terms of satisfying their information needs. There were some gaps in the literature reviewed including inadequate reviews emanating from empirical studies focussing on African immigrants and the lack of an information behaviour theory specifically promoting information services for African immigrants.

### **3.6 Summary of the chapter**

The purpose of this chapter was to gain an understanding of the information behaviour among African immigrants, while also discussing the forms of African immigrants in South Africa. The first part of this chapter described various needs of information for immigrants and explained how and whom they approach in order to find information to solve their everyday problems and to meet their needs. The concept of theory of information worlds was used to understand the means to access this information by immigrants at different levels, namely at macro, meso and micro levels. The literature supported the theory of information worlds, which confirmed that immigrants' main sources of information are people who share the same worlds with them. The roles of public libraries and ICTs in facilitating access to information for immigrants, as well as the concepts of information poverty and social exclusion as barriers to access to information were also emphasised.

The second part of this chapter discussed African immigration to South Africa, the different categories of African immigrants, and finally the push and pull factors of immigration to South Africa.



# CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

## 4.1 Introduction

When planning any research, it is important for the researcher to highlight the specific objectives that will allow her/him to select the most appropriate way of collecting data. This chapter describes the research design and methods that were used to collect the data for the present research. It also describes the reasons for employing the methods, a review of the qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods, the selection of the population sample and project area or the places in which the research has taken place, ethical issues and the analysis of the data.

## 4.2 Research design

A research design may be described as a blueprint or detailed plan for conducting a research study (Thyer 1993). A research design is thus an argument for the logical steps which need to be taken to link research questions to data collection, analysis and interpretation in an intelligible way (Hartley 2004). Birks and Mills (2011) understand research design as a mechanism which must be used to identify the methodological and philosophical positions that are to be engaged in the research in order to reach the set objectives.

The present research, as an explorative study, sought to find the issues involved in identifying, gathering and using information by African immigrants in the City of Cape Town. The purpose of this research was to provide insight into African immigrants' information needs and the problems they face, with the intention of helping to make the information gathering process for African immigrants a little easier if the findings revealed that there were problems.

In accordance with the research objectives of the present study, a mixed research methodology, which combines the quantitative and qualitative approaches, was adopted. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004: 17) define a mixed methods research design as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines qualitative

and quantitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or languages into a single study. A semi-structured interview questionnaire was designed to capture qualitative data through interviews, and a self-administered questionnaire was designed to capture quantitative data by means of a survey.

### **4.3 Research approaches**

A research approach is a plan and procedure for research that spans the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, data analysis and data interpretation (Creswell 2012).

There are three research approaches, namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. The present study has adopted the mixed methods approach, as it incorporates elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. For a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were used, as the purpose was to contextualise and interpret results using induction to develop possible explanations based on experienced and observed phenomena. For the quantitative approach, the survey research method was used because the objective was to describe, compare, classify, analyse and interpret the information behaviour of African immigrants in the City of Cape Town.

#### **4.3.1 The qualitative research method**

Qualitative research can be understood as any kind of research which produces findings by other means than statistical procedures or any other means of quantification. The qualitative research approach allows participants to freely express their opinion. It allows for different views of the theme of study, as it allows the participants a more open-ended way of demonstrating their actions and expressing their views; thus, there is minimum manipulation of phenomena being researched (Golafshani 2003). According to Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest and Namey (2005), the qualitative approach provides information about behaviours, beliefs, emotions, opinions and relationships of individuals.

One of its major advantages is that it provides detailed accounts of issues. Therefore, it can produce more data to explain complex phenomena. The qualitative approach is suitable for the present study because it easily identifies intangible factors such as beliefs, opinions and behaviour.

There are many qualitative methods of data collection. These include participant observation, focus groups and interviews. The interview method of qualitative research is the one that was used to collect qualitative data in this research.

The qualitative method sought to explore and explain information behaviour of African immigrants. The questions in the interviews were semi-structured to allow the participants to say what they thought or knew in adequate profundity to allow more understanding of the problem.

In order to bring about more information, the researcher used probes and prompts. This approach involved the participants explaining their experiences of other people they knew, in addition to their own experiences and the researcher recording them. A tape recorder and a note book were used to record and take notes during the interviews. The researcher noted and transcribed the non-verbal communication expressed by the participants, which showed how the participants really felt about certain issues. Transcription was done soon after the interviews had been conducted.

Unlike the quantitative approach, one disadvantage of the qualitative approach is that it cannot generalise and predict findings.

### **4.3.2 The quantitative research methods**

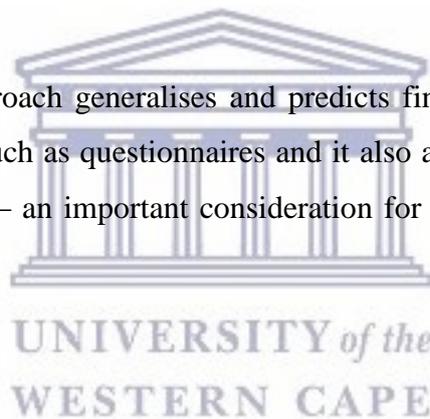
Burns and Grove (2001: 30) define a quantitative descriptive research approach as “an accurate portrayal or account of the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or group”. Therefore, the quantitative research method involves obtaining and analysing data in numerical form, providing values in statistical form. Results in quantitative research are illustrated and summarised by the use of charts and graphs.

Quantitative research techniques are concerned with measurements and patterns, while revealing its roots in positivism, causality and generalisation, as well as natural science approaches to the study of society.

Quantitative research allows the researcher to measure and analyses data. It ensures high levels of reliability of gathered data. Another advantage is that it requests a large sample of the population that must be studied; the larger the sample of people researched, the more statistically accurate the results will be. A third advantage of this research method is that it relies on its high reliability, as it is not subject to bias through subjective interpretations (Golafshani 2003).

The main disadvantage of quantitative research is that the context of the study or experiment is ignored, as it cannot provide information about the context of the situation, because it cannot control the environment and predetermined outcomes (Creswell 2012).

The quantitative approach generalises and predicts findings based on the use of formal instruments such as questionnaires and it also allows for gathering data in a short span of time – an important consideration for the present study (Bertram 2010).



#### **4.3.3 Differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches**

The differences between the qualitative and quantitative approaches to social research are clearly explained by Mack et al (2005). According to them, the key difference between these two approaches is their degree of flexibility. Generally, the qualitative method is more flexible than the quantitative method, as it allows greater freedom and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and the participant. Open-ended types of questions are a good example of the flexibility of the qualitative method. Participants are free to respond in their own words, and most of the time these responses are likely to be more complex than a simple “yes” or “no” answer.

Furthermore, the relationship between the researcher and the participant in the qualitative method is often less formal than in quantitative research. With the

quantitative method, the response categories from which participants may choose are fixed or closed-ended types of questions, unlike in the qualitative method where participants are given the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in more detail. While the quantitative method ensures that participants are asked exactly the same questions in the very same order, the qualitative method is interactive, and the questioning methods and order can be changed as the researcher comes across new enriched information. Therefore, the nature of the questions may improve as the research progresses.

In the process while using a qualitative approach, participants brought issues to the fore which the researcher has overlooked, and these issues were added to the questions iteratively. When using the qualitative approach, probing and prompting are allowed to obtain clarification of issues. Participants are allowed and given time to express themselves freely to open-ended questions. The quantitative method does not apply this method (Creswell 2012).

Qualitative research explains phenomena from the individual respondent's viewpoint while the quantitative research gives an accurate portrayal or account of the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or group (Burns and Grove 2001). Through classification of responses, general trends can be observed in qualitative research data even if the respondents' manner of answering may not be the same. The trends observed can be objective to a greater extent.

Quantitative research does not study things in a natural setting or discuss the meaning things have for different people as qualitative research does, but it rather looks at relationships between variables, and can establish cause and effect in highly controlled circumstances (Cohen and Manion 1994). The advantage of the inflexibility of the quantitative method is that it allows for meaningful comparison of responses across participants. Questions for the quantitative approach are closed-ended, and designed to test and validate already constructed theories about how and why phenomena occur. While quantitative methods are criticised as being too structured, they are also praised for their high reliability.

Qualitative methods use open-ended questions and the respondents are free to answer the questions in their own manner but within certain parameters. In

quantitative methods, data are captured in numerical form, while in the qualitative method data are captured, using instruments such as field notes, tape recorders and transcripts.

#### **4.3.4 Mixed-methods approach: Combination of the qualitative and quantitative methods**

The two methods were used as a combination in this research so as to take advantage of the strengths of the two approaches. This is in line with the mixed-methods approach. According to Creswell (2012: 535), “a mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting, analysing, and ‘mixing’ both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem”.

The mixed-methods approach was adopted for the present study because the basic assumption of this approach is that it uses both the qualitative and quantitative method in combination to provide a better understanding of the research questions and problems than either method by itself. The mixed methods study was also adopted because one type of research method would not be sufficient to address the research problem or answer the research questions. More data were needed to extend, elaborate on and explain in order to understand the information behaviour of African immigrants in the City of Cape Town.

Mixed-methods research is an appropriate design for the present study because, on the one hand, it seeks to build on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data, and on the other hand, the objective is to contextualise, interpret, understand, describe, compare, classify and analyse the information behaviour of African immigrants in the City of Cape Town. This can only be done by using the mixed-methods approach. This approach provides a key to the research, since it opens potential explanations locked in the shortness of the questionnaires, while it allows for the use of more sub-techniques to obtain more comprehensive data in the research.

Quantitative techniques are represented by the use of the questionnaires which involve short and direct answers which can be analysed statistically. This is because the answers to the questionnaires have certain options and numbers chosen for a particular response. This can produce results to assess the frequency and magnitude of trends, and can be counted and represented on charts and graphs.

However, since the answers to these questionnaires are categorically short, most of the information to explain the spur-of-the-moment answers from the questionnaires is obtained from the interviews. Thus, qualitative data obtained through open-ended interviews which provide the actual words of participants, offer many different perspectives on the study topic and provide a complex picture of the issue under study.

African immigrants are individuals and groups (small worlds). They are social actors with different experiences or similar experiences in their information search, which they themselves may view as dissimilar in some ways. Their experiences are largely subjective and may not be necessarily the same. Subjective explanations by individuals are critical to the transfer of meaning of certain situations, and generalisations can only be made after noting the values of increasing trends, which can be then quantified after noticing common trends in the experiences and interpretations of various participants.

#### **4.4 Data collection instruments and procedures**

Interviews provide a useful tool for collecting accurate information from different participants. Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2012: 111) noted that the process of using relevant research data to solve a research problem is known as 'instrumentation'. In the present study, interviews were more facilitative and a quick channel of communication between the researcher and participants. With the aim of carrying out a successful and complete research study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with key informers (those individuals who were identified first through organisations as well as business owners/managers).

Bertram (2010) indicates that a questionnaire is a list of questions that the respondents answer; it can contain either closed-ended or open-ended questions. Both closed- and open-ended questions were used for rich data in this study. The questionnaire guaranteed anonymity, and it also saved time for both the researcher and participants. While questionnaires were completed by participants independently, the researcher was available to answer any questions related to the questionnaire. The questionnaires were available in two languages, English and French, and participants were given a choice of language. Questionnaires were distributed to participants who were identified by key informers.

Quinlan (2011: 286) pointed out that interview is one of the main data collection instruments mainly used to collect qualitative data, while structured interview schedules or questionnaires are popular research tools for quantitative inquiry. The present study used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The questionnaires were hand delivered to some participants while an electronic copy was also sent to other via their personal emails. This was supplemented by semi-structured interviews conducted with the key informants.

#### **4.4.1 Interview schedule**

Face-to-face interviews were used to obtain more detailed information on the research topic. An interview is one of the key qualitative research tools. According to Kvale (1996: 27), a qualitative interview is an “attempt[s] to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of people’s experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations”. Boyce and Neale (2006) further argue that in-depth interviewing consists of conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of participants to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, situation or programme.

As snowball sampling was used to select research participants, key informants were identified by the researcher, others through organisations, as well as business owners/managers. Assurances of confidentiality were given and informed consent was sought before the interview. The length of the interviews was between 30 to

45 minutes. Participants were interviewed at their workplaces during lunch hours, at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) library and at the City of Cape Town central library.

The construction of the interview guide included some expected probes in areas where clarification was needed. The questions were translated into French in cases where participants were from French-speaking African countries.

Focus was on the use of open-ended questions to obtain detailed information. The researcher did not offer his opinion on any issues. The participants were free to express themselves and they did most of the talking. Follow-up questions were vital for obtaining full information. The participants were allowed to ask questions of their concern when the interviews came to a close.

#### **4.4.2 Administering questionnaires**

Administering questionnaires have advantages and disadvantages, depending on the nature of the study. Some of the advantages include their potential for reaching participants who are widely spread geographically, they offer anonymity, and participants can complete the questionnaire when it is convenient for them to do so.

The disadvantages include a low rate of return of the duly filled out questionnaires, a lack of validity, there is no way to tell how much thought participants have put into answering the questions, and control over questionnaires may be lost once they are sent out.

According to Neuman (2007), a self-administered questionnaire has the potential for reaching participants who live at widely dispersed places or even abroad, is the cheapest way of data collection, offers anonymity and gives participants a choice of completing it when it is convenient for them to do so.

Bertram (2010) indicates that a questionnaire is a list of questions which the participants have to answer. Questionnaires can contain either closed-ended or open-ended questions. Both closed-ended and open-ended questions were used for obtaining rich data, and for easier and clearer data analysis.

Therefore, a self-administered questionnaire was used because it was the best form of data collection for a survey design. The questionnaire used in this research study was designed according to the objectives of the study after consultation with and supervision by the research supervisor. The structured questionnaire, as a standardised instrument, was used as the main quantitative research tool to collect data for the present study.

The questionnaire guaranteed anonymity to ensure that the participants provide appropriate answers. To avoid the possibility of anything that may obtain data tainting, participants were asked similar questions in the same order. This uniformity made data analysis a lot easier.

The questionnaire was designed in such a way that it was precise and easy to complete, user-friendly and quick to complete, with several questions involving a choice of ticking or crossing boxes, with the minimum amount of written responses. Clarity of questions was one of the fundamental considerations in the construction of the questionnaire. There were simple and short instructions on how to answer the questions to cater for different language competency levels of potential participants.

The questionnaire was divided into four sub-sections: demographic information; immigrating to South Africa including push and pull factors or causes to immigrate to Cape Town, South Africa; channels and information worlds, including where, how and from whom immigrants find information; and finally, barriers to access information.

The length of the questionnaire was four (4) A4-pages and participants were able to complete it in 10 to 20 minutes. The questionnaire was distributed to participants by the researcher and three (3) research assistants. If possible, the researcher and his research assistants insisted on waiting for them to complete the questionnaire in order to ensure a good response rate.

## **4.5 Selection of research sample and project area**

### **4.5.1 Snowball sampling**

Sampling can be regarded as the process of selecting a representative from an entire population in order to draw conclusions about the entire population of a study. Snowball sampling is an appropriate method to use when members of the population are difficult to identify such as immigrants.

The selection of the participants for this study was based on the following criteria: only African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town participated, from the age of 18 upward. Female and male participants were selected. To ensure representativeness of all African immigrants, the snowball sampling method was used. The researcher contacted members of the population who could be identified from selected immigrant businesses such as hair salons, shops, from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and from seven organisations which provide services, support and advice to immigrants. These included the Cape Town Refugees Forum, Cape Town Central Library, Aresta Cape Town, Legal Resource Centre, Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town and the University of Cape Town (UCT) Legal Clinic. These organisations were asked to provide information to identify and locate other members of their worlds to participate in the research.

Twenty-five (25) individuals were identified, interviewed and considered as key informants. According to Werner and Bernard (1994), key informants are people who have a close relationship with and a deep understanding of the group, which a researcher is researching. The researcher and his assistants spent extra time with key informants, as they had to understand the kind of information the researcher needed. The key informants were resourceful in making recommendations for potential participants for the study from their own country and even from a different country. The researcher and his assistants furthermore asked the participants who were suggested by key informants to recommend others who were likely to participate in the research.

#### **4.5.2 Sample area**

The researcher divided the city of Cape Town into three areas (these did not necessarily match the municipal boundaries). The first area was the city centre. It comprised the Cape Town Refugees Forum, Department of Home Affairs, Cape Town Central Library, Scalabrini Centre and the Legal Resource Centre. The second area was the southern suburbs, namely UCT (University of Cape Town) Legal Clinic (Rondebosch) and Aresta Cape Town (Athlone). The third was the northern suburbs, referring to UWC (University of the Western Cape) students, shops and other immigrant businesses located in Goodwood, Parow and Bellville.





Figure 4 Map of the city of Cape Town ( ■ Suburbs, ○ Covered areas)  
 Source: www.sa-venues.com

## 4.6 Population

Based on Census 2011 (Statistics South Africa), there were 100 623 African immigrants in Cape Town. The majority of them came from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Lesotho, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique and Cameroon.

Based on the suggestion of Blanche et al (2006) on sampling ratios and sample size, from a large population of approximately 100 000, a sampling ratio of 1% should be selected (Blanche et al 2006). Thus, 1 000 participants should have been included in the present research but due to difficulties to reach this sample population in terms of time and budget constraints, the sample comprised 240 (approximately 0.25% of the population) African immigrants, including students, employed and unemployed immigrants, business owners, housewives, and both newly arrived and those who have lived in the city for a considerable time.

## 4.7 Ethical issues

Ethics can be defined as a set of widely accepted moral principles, which offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct code of conduct towards experimental subjects and participants (Strydom 2001: 24).

The research protocol was based on a number of key principles related to ethics and protection. Participation was voluntary. Even where information was not of a sensitive nature, consent was still sought. The questionnaires did not request the names of participants in line with this rationale. Information revealed in the survey was kept confidential; thus, no name or identifying feature of any participant was used in the study report.

Before distributing questionnaires, the researcher and research assistants clearly highlighted the purpose of the study, and indicated that the participants were not forced to share personal experiences with which they were uncomfortable. They were also told that the data derived from this study might be used by government and other stakeholders dealing directly with immigrants as guidelines for enhancing the information gathering process for African immigrants. Furthermore, the participants were informed that potential immigrants might also

use the findings to formulate appropriate policies and specific intervention strategies to address risks associated with immigrants' access to information.

#### **4.8 Pre-test: Pilot study**

A pre-test was done with 15 participants randomly chosen and who were not part of the proper study. These were selected from one of the places (sample area). These participants were selected to ensure that the wording used in the questionnaire was clear and understandable. The participants suggested changes in terms of using clear and precise terms, reducing the number of questions and using shorter sentences within the questionnaires. All necessary suggestions of the pre-test were considered and changes were made to the instruments. The pre-testing of the questionnaire was done to guarantee the validity and reliability of the main research tool used for data collection. These were all carefully corrected and adjusted before distribution of the final questionnaire for data collection purposes. In addition, it is important to note that the semi-structured interview schedule was also piloted with the two other participants randomly chosen who were also not parts of the proper study. Some changes were also suggested and adjusted accordingly.

Prior to using the questionnaire to collect data, the questionnaire was pre-tested and administered after the necessary corrections were completed. The purpose of the test was to make the questionnaire as easy and simple as possible so that participants would not have problems answering the final questions and giving the answers correctly. In addition, the pre-test enabled the researcher to obtain assessment of the validity of questions and the extent of the reliability of data collected. After pre-testing, a refinement process was undertaken and the final questionnaire was built without any inconsistencies.

## **4.9 Data analysis**

### **4.10.1 Quantitative data analysis**

The use of a statistical computer package namely Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) basically assists the researchers to quantitatively organise data and effectively analyse research findings. Bryman and Bell (2011: 360) indicated that SPSS should be useful for generating descriptive and frequency tables as a form of data presentation which the current study also used for presenting results. The researcher applied the latest version of SPSS at the time of data capturing and data analysis.

There are three main stages involved in preparation of data for ensuring accuracy analysis and these include coding, entering, and cleaning (Durrheim 2006a: 189). Before analysing the raw data, each completed case (questionnaire) was evaluated to check for missing data, ambiguity and errors. The questionnaire responses were then coded and entered into the computer for cleaning to identify inconsistencies and outliers. All questions were assigned numerical codes and it was possible for the researcher to systematically capture data and consistently perform the analysis. Importantly, each questionnaire was numbered at the time it was returned from the respondent before being entered into SPSS in order to detect any missing questionnaires.

The study used both figures and tables in order to make the research findings more understandable and easier to interpret. Figures and tables were clearly meaningful and understandable for data analysis and they made discussion of findings easier.

### **4.10.2 Qualitative data analysis**

Research data were first coded before being systematically analysed. Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Kelly (2006: 324) define coding as process of breaking up the data in analytically relevant ways; and according to Bryman and Bell (2011: 249) the core purpose of coding is to render the data in a form in which they may easily be presented and analysed. In order to avoid any omission of

important data, the key informants were interviewed and assigned codes directly after each interview. The transcription process was done on same day of each interview. Neuendorf (2002: 24-25) describes content analysis as the best approach to adopt in qualitative analysis. Kalof, Dan, and Dietz (2008: 105) also argued that “the main goal of content analysis is to systematically classify words, phrases, and other units of text into a series of meaningful categories”. Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis and it led to the development of relevant themes within the present study. The data generated from interviews was analysed through thematic content analysis. This technique had made the data analysis journey more accurate and understandable.

Finally, the researcher wrote the final research report by outlining the research process, interpreting the results, and providing conclusions and recommendations.

#### **4.11 Summary of the chapter**

In this chapter, the research approach of the study was discussed, the research design and the appropriate research methods used for data collection were specified and justified. The chapter explained both advantages and disadvantages of quantitative methods and of structured questionnaires. Issues of data analysis, ethical considerations as well as respondent confidentiality were explained in this chapter. Problems encountered were explained together with how pre-testing was used in ensuring good research questionnaires. However, in general using the chosen methodology was considered more relevant for the current study due to its straightness and possibility of obtaining a variety of information on the same issues and of using the strengths of each method in order to overcome the deficiencies of the other. One of the weaknesses of this methodology is it required enough time and sufficient resources to guarantee appropriate data collection and accurate data analysis. The following chapter presents the data collected.

# CHAPTER FIVE: DATA PRESENTATION

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the questionnaires and interviews. Both quantitative and qualitative data were arranged in six major headings, namely Demographic characteristic of participants, push and pull factors, information needs, information rounds and channels, interpersonal information behaviour, and Barriers to access information.

Demographic information includes participants' gender, age group, marital status, countries of origin, level of education, employment situation, their level of English comprehension, as well as length of period they have been staying in Cape Town and those who have lived somewhere else in South Africa before relocating to the City of Cape Town are also identified.

The second section includes the participants' responses and narratives about their decision to immigrate to South Africa, as well as factors that have pushed them to leave their countries and pulled them to immigrate to Cape Town.

The third section represents information needs of participants; this includes the type of information they needed upon arrival as well as their current information needs. The fourth section represents information about the places where participants go to look for information, their preferences in terms of channels and the format of sources of information.

The fifth section presents participants' relationships with family members back home, as well as with other immigrant societies are also presented in this section.

The last section of this chapter presents participants' responses and narratives about barriers to access information. This section includes their expectations when they arrived in Cape Town, their views of what they considered to be the main barrier to access information, as well as their overall life in Cape Town with regard to access to information.

The study covered three areas of the city which were Cape Town central, and the southern and northern suburbs. In total, 240 African immigrants were selected as

sample population for this research study of whom 228 responded and completed questionnaires. Among the 228 who completed the questionnaire, 25 participated in the interview process.

P1 to P25 were used to identify interviewed participants, RE was used to identify the researcher in the narration and Q was used to indicate the questions. The researcher was assisted by three research assistants.

## 5.2 Response rate of participants

**Table 3: Response rate**

Collection instruments	Expected participants	Actual participants	Percentage
Questionnaires	240	228	95
Interviews	30	25	83.3

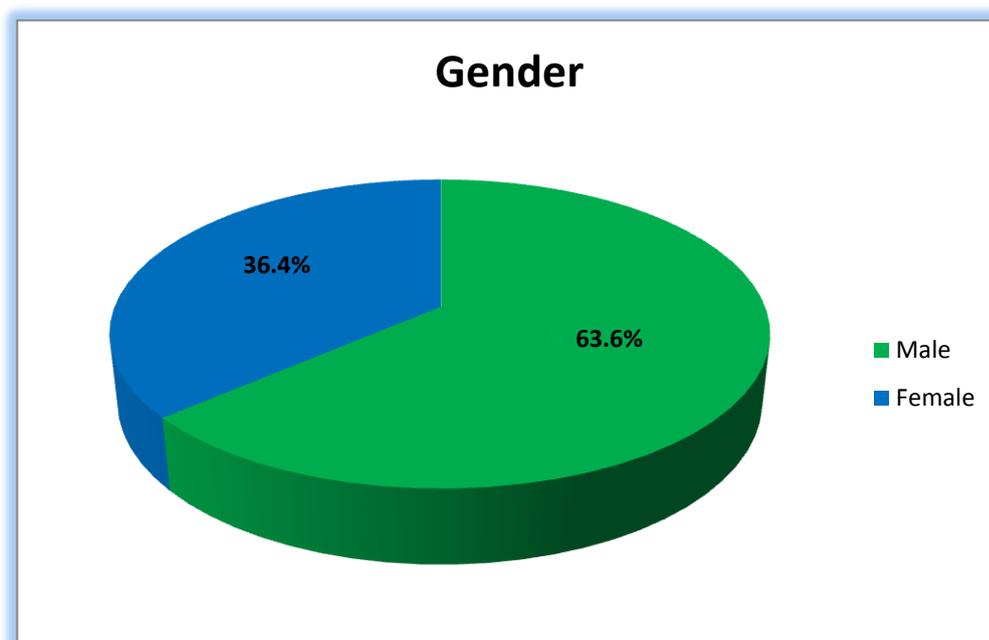
Table 3 indicates the overall response rate. A total of 240 participants were identified, selected and agreed to participate. Two-hundred-and-forty (240) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to African immigrants and the response rate was 228 (95%). So, there were 228 participants who completed questionnaires that were used for the purpose of this study. Of these 240 participants, 30 key informants were identified and agreed to be interviewed but only 25 (83.3%) of them pitched up for the interview sessions. Of the five key informants expected but who did not make it, one became sick two days before the date of the interview, and another one travelled and apologised for the inconvenience.

## 5.3 Data presentation

### 5.3.1 Section 1: demographic characteristic of participants (Profiling)

Data about demographic information from questionnaires were analysed, using the SPSS. Participants were requested to identify their gender, age group, country of origin, marital status, level of education, employment situation, and their level of English comprehension as well as length of period they have been staying in Cape Town. The following is the demographic information the participants provided.

#### Question 1: Gender of participants

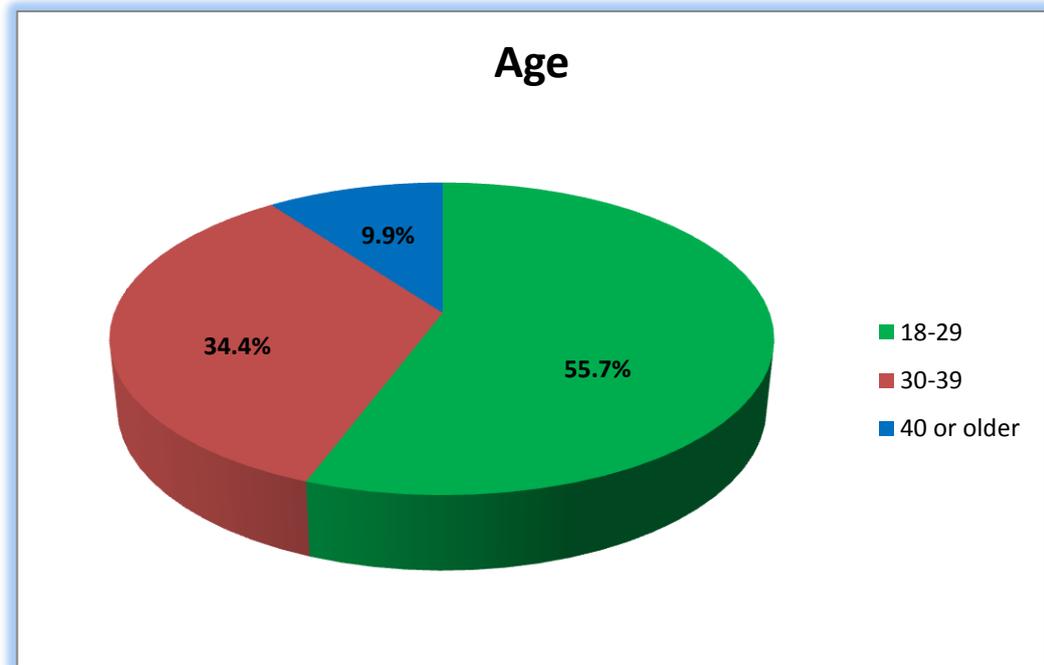


**Figure 5: Gender of participants**

The breakdown of the 228 research participants by gender was as follows: 145 (63.6%) males and 83 (36.4%) females.

The choice of representation of gender for both male and female immigrants in this research was considered important in order to give both a voice in terms of the examination of the different immigrant issues with which both genders had to contend.

## Question 2: Age of participants



**Figure 6 Age of participants**

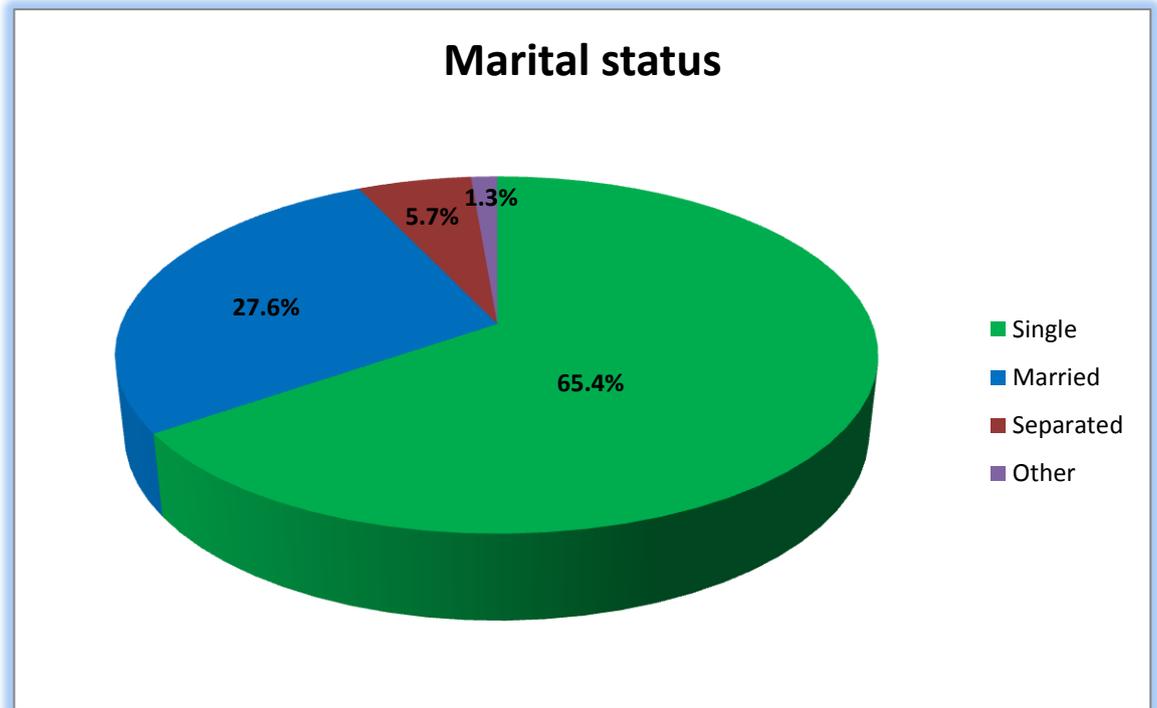
The age of participants was divided into three groups of whom 127 (55.7%) fell within the 18 – 29 age group, 78 (34.4%) were between 30 – 39 years of age and 23 (9.9%) were in the 40 or older age group. There were no participants under the age of 18. However, when the breakdown was done by gender 73 (50.3%) of the male and 57 (68.7%) of the female participants were within the 18 – 29 age group, while 51 (35.2%) males and 24 (28.9%) females were within the 30 – 39 and 21(14.5%) males and only 2 (2.4%) females were in the 40 or older age category (see table 7 in this regard).

**Table 4: Cross-tabulation of gender and age of participants**

<b>Gender and age cross-tabulation (N=228)</b>						
			<b>Age</b>			<b>Total</b>
			18-29	30-39	40 or older	
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	Count	73	51	21	145
		%	50.3	35.2	14.5	100
	<b>Fe-male</b>	Count	57	24	2	83
		%	68.7	28.9	2.4	100
<b>Total</b>		Count	130	75	23	228
		<b>% of total</b>	<b>57.0</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>



### Question 3: Marital status of participants



**Figure 7: Marital status of participants**

In response to the question of marital status, 149 (65.4%) of the participants stated that they were single, 63 (27.6%) were married and 13 (5.7%) stated that they were separated. On the questionnaires, three participants (1.3%) indicated the fourth option which was "Other" and did not specify. Although the question of children was not asked, eight married participants and one separated participant mentioned that they had children and the number of children ranged from one to four.

#### Question 4: Country of origin

**Table 5: Country of origin**  
**Country of origin (N=214)**

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
African countries where participants come from	DRC	57	26.6
	Gabon	9	4.2
	Congo Brazzaville	16	7.5
	Nigeria	19	8.9
	Angola	19	8.9
	Burundi	4	1.9
	Ethiopia	10	4.7
	Somalia	15	7.0
	Zimbabwe	39	18.2
	Malawi	6	2.8
	Mozambique	5	2.3
	Libya	3	1.4
	Ghana	4	1.9
	Zambia	2	0.9
	Cameroun	3	1.4
	Rwanda	3	1.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>214</b>	<b>100%</b>

With regard to the African countries from where the research participants originally immigrated to South Africa, sixteen countries were represented. Fourteen participants did not reveal their countries of origin.

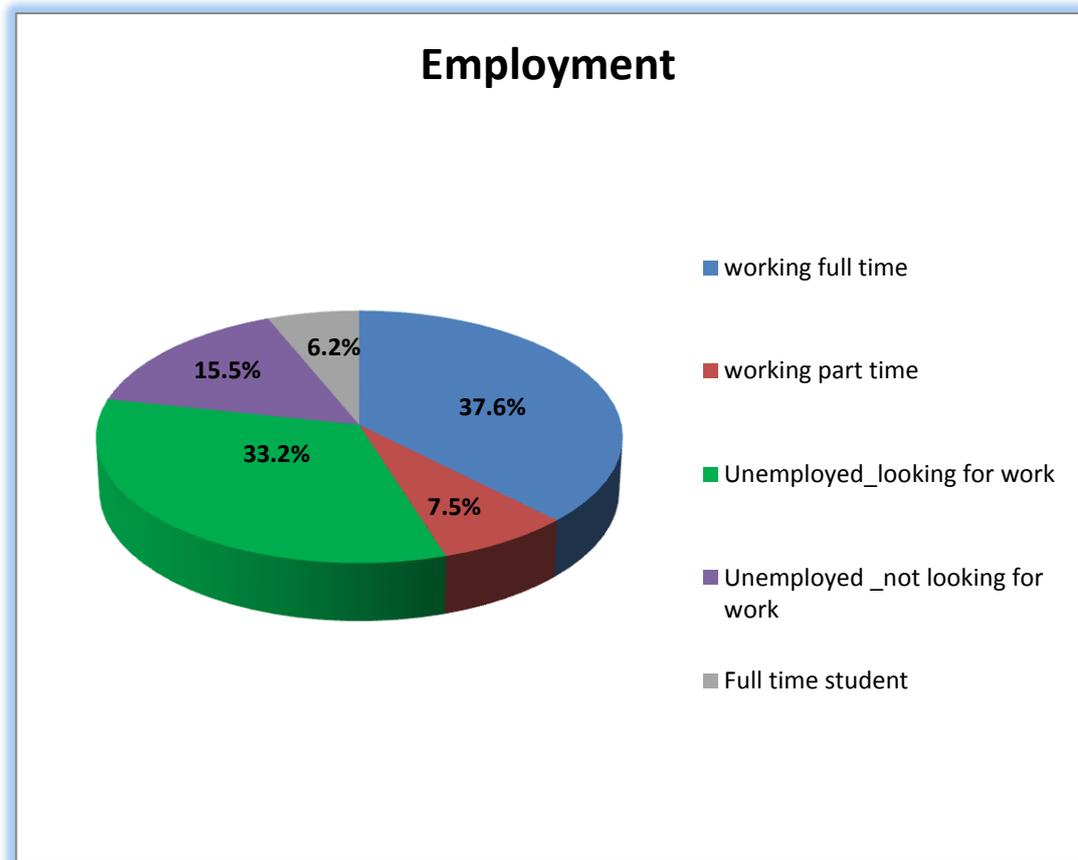
**Question 5: Level of education of participants**

**Table 6: Level of educational of participants**

Level of education (N=225)			
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Level of education</b>	Less than secondary school	4	1.8
	Secondary school	64	28.4
	Technical school	18	8.0
	College diploma	52	23.1
	Bachelor's degree	23	10.2
	Honours degree	24	10.7
	Master's degree	32	14.2
	Doctoral degree	4	1.8
	Other	4	1.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>225</b>	<b>100%</b>

Responding to the level of education of participants, the majority (138) of them indicated that they did not possess university degrees, 64 (28.4%) of the participants stated that they had completed secondary school, 18 (8%) had technical school diplomas and only four (1.8%) of them had less than secondary school education. Of the participants with university degrees, 32 (14.2%) had master's degrees and four (1.8%) had doctoral degrees (PhD). Three of the participants did not indicate their education level and four of them selected the "Other" option and did not specify.

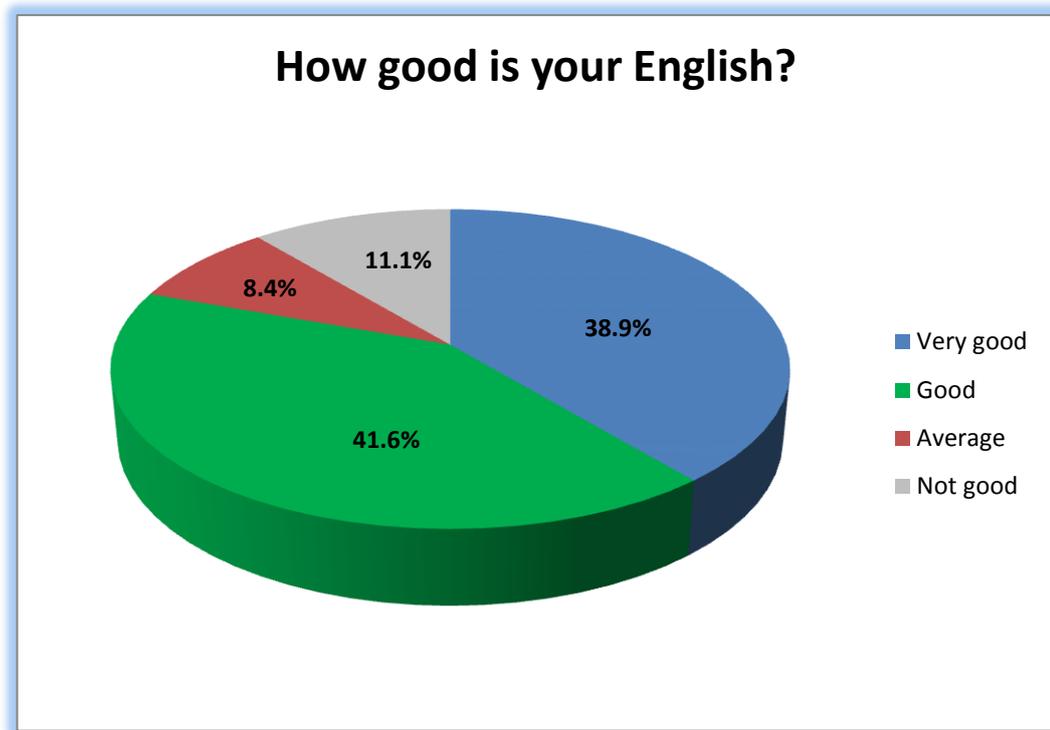
### Question 6: Employment status of participants



**Figure 8: Employment status of participants**

In response to the question about their work status, 85 (37.6%) of the participants responded that they had full-time jobs while 17 (7.5%) indicated they worked part-time. Of those who indicated that they were not employed, 75 (33.2%) were looking for jobs while 35 (15.5%) were not looking for jobs at all and 14 (6.2%) were full-time students. Two of the participants did not reveal their employment status.

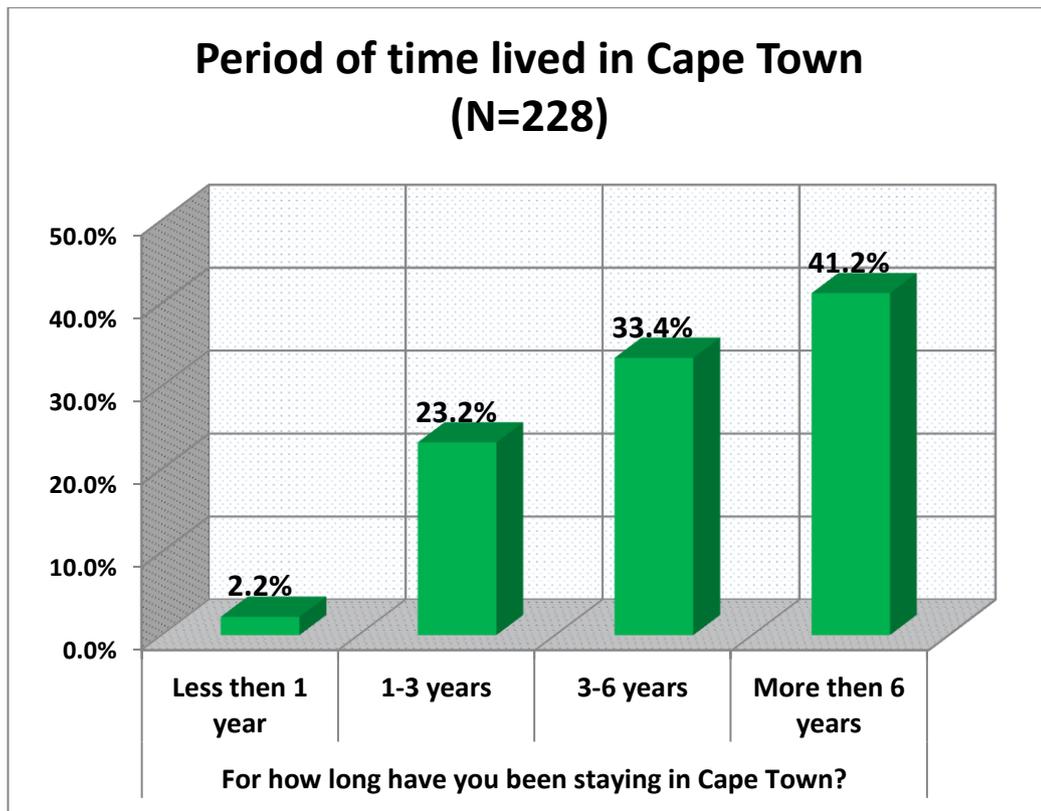
**Question 7: How good is your English?**



**Figure 9: Level of English comprehension**

Participants were asked to indicate their level of English comprehension. Based on the responses, 88 (38.9%) participants indicated that they understood English very well, 94 (41.6%) indicated that they understood the language well, 19 (8.4%) indicated that their level of English was average and 25 (11.1%) indicated that their English comprehension was not good. Two participants did not respond to this question.

**Question 8: For how long have you been staying in Cape Town?**



**Figure 10: Period of time lived in Cape Town**

The number of years' participants have lived in the City of Cape Town at the time of data collection of the present research was as follows: Five (2.2%) participants had lived here for less than a year, 53 (23.2%) have been living in Cape Town for between one to three years, 76 (33.3%) for between three to six years and 94 (41.2%) have lived in Cape Town for more than six years.

Interviewed participants were prompted with a question to discover whether they had come to Cape Town straight from their countries of origin or via another province in South Africa or via another country. Based on their responses, fewer than 50% (ten interviewed participants) have stayed in South Africa for less than five years. It is important to note that participants who indicated that they did not come to Cape Town straight from home stayed in other places, including Johannesburg, Durban, Bloemfontein, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe first before coming to Cape Town.

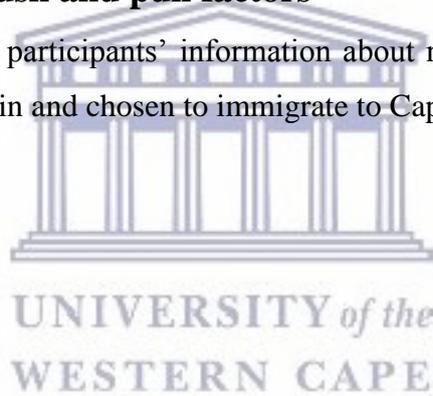
Here is the view of one of the participants who stayed in Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique before coming to South Africa:

**P10:** (Male participant from Angola): *“here ... in South Africa ... for nine years now.”*

**P10:** *“After completing my secondary school ... yea ... I spent about six years in different countries ... man ...Tanzania, Malawi ... Mozambique. Yea man ... I did not have enough money to pay a straight bus to South Africa. So I have to look for any job in these countries so I can get money ... slowly I managed to get to my destination.”*

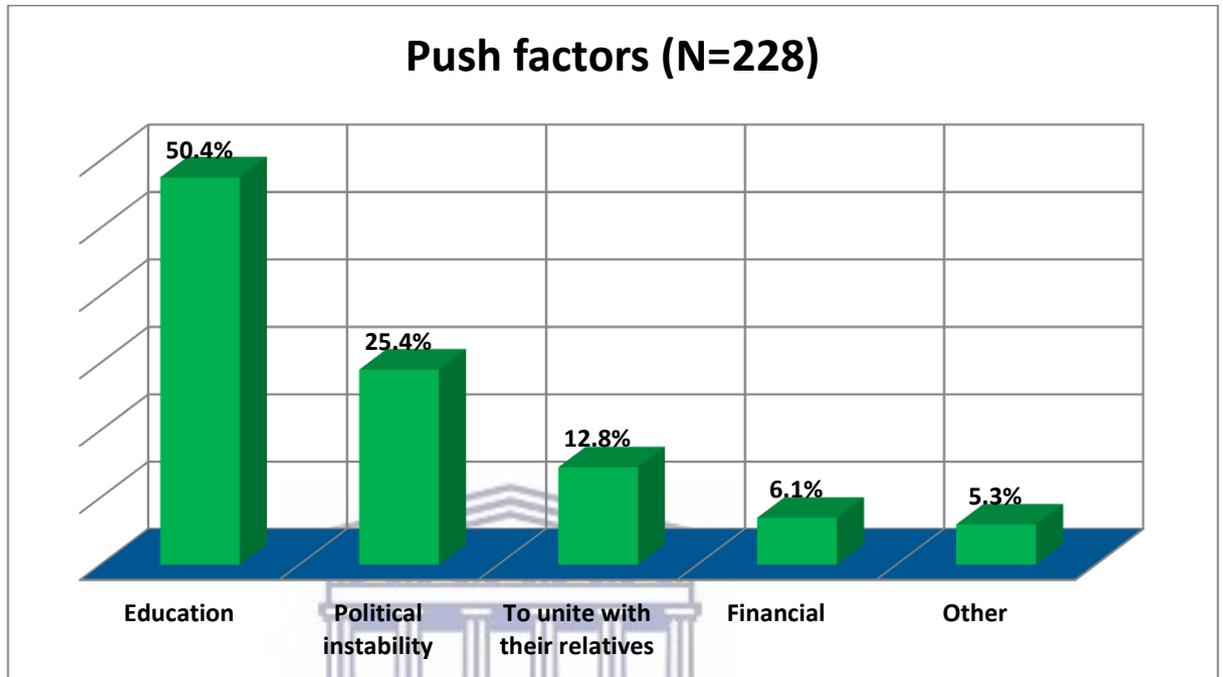
### **5.3.2 Section 2: Push and pull factors**

This section presents participants’ information about reasons why they have left their countries of origin and chosen to immigrate to Cape Town, South Africa.



**Question 9: What was the most important reason that pushed you to leave your country?**

Participants were asked to tick the most applicable reasons from the list: education, political, to unite with relatives, financial, religious and other (specify).



**Figure 11: Push factors**

With regard to factors that pushed participants to immigrate, 115 (50.4%) participants indicated that education was the reason to leave their countries, 58 (25.4%) mentioned political instability, 29 (12.8%) to unite with their relatives, while 14 (6.1%) indicated financial reasons and 12 (5.3%) ticked the “Other” option. One of the participants who chose the “Other” option specified that she came to South Africa to visit her relative then and ended up by settling.

African Immigrants from various class backgrounds and even different countries have similar memories of the declining economic fortunes of their families. A Congolese man explained how difficult it was to get a job in his home country after finishing his honours degree and, although he was happy at home and his family could buy him everything he needed, he realised that he had no future there:

**P16:** (Male participant from the DRC): “job problem ...”

**RE:** “What do you mean?”

**P16:** “The problem in my country is that there are very few jobs. You can study more and think your education will give [you] a job, which is not happening ... Some time you find a job but if you don’t have connection you can’t get it. I understand that sometimes ... I think because people who qualified are more than job available, so those who got connections must first put their relatives before giving it to other people. Even here in South Africa there is a problem to find a job of what you studied for but at least you do any other job.”

Similarly, for another Mozambican woman (**P8**), the death of her husband who was the breadwinner and the economic decline in Mozambique forced her to leave the country; she had two sons who were still at school. In order to support her unemployed mother and her sons, she had no other choice but to leave the country:

**P8:** “I came here because my husband had passed away and I had two sons to look after ... there at school now. So I just came here because as you know my country there the money you earn is not much ... so I decide to come here ... and I am working and I’m now able to look after my boys ... that’s it.”

**P22** (male participant from Zimbabwe) and **P17** (male participant from the DRC) came to South Africa, not to spend the rest of their lives in South Africa, but they planned to go back as soon as their economic situation improved:

**P22:** “As soon as things get better in Zimbabwe I’m going back home.”

**RE:** “So why did leave at the first place?”

**P22:** “The economy back home had changed. I was preparing to get married but I couldn’t afford it ... to buy thing for my house ... now tell me how will you get married if you can’t afford to buy stove or ...”

*Fridge ... and remember I was working ... so I decided to talk to my fiancé so that we can come here in South Africa.”*

**P17:** *“So as a man I could not stand and watch my family struggling ... I called my friends, one was in Durban and two were here in Cape Town ... they said that here is better even if I don’t have*

**P25:** *(female participant from Zimbabwe): “Being a teacher in Zimbabwe is a sham, teachers are the poorest person in Zimbabwe ...”*

**RE:** *“That’s bad...”*

**P25:** *“Yes ... I was ashamed to be called a teacher ... do you know that I was a teacher but I could not afford to pay my children school fees. Sometimes we don’t even have food in the house ... until my husband decided to move to South Africa where he got a job as truck driver ... he [husband] came to fetch us after a year.”*

Participants who mentioned escaping from war and insecurity are mostly participants from the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia. These are some of the narratives of African immigrants who were forced to leave to escape from political instability causing war and insecurity in their countries, and their experiences of death. One male participant from Rwanda (**P19**), who left the country at the time of the genocide in 1994, tells his story of how his family left the country:

**P19:** *“We left Rwanda in 1994 when the war started. I was with my dad, my mother and my two sisters ... we ran away. I was still young ... but not very young because I was sixteen. My big sister was already at university and my young sister was still young as well ... I remember I had two years left before I finished my school. I had big plan for my life but from that genocide, everything ... all plans just died in me just like that.”*

**RE:** *“How did you get here in South Africa then?”*

**P19:** *“We struggled too much ... yea to get here ... but at last we got here in 1999 ... We first stayed in Johannesburg then we moved to Cape Town. Now me and my big sister did not even think about going to school again after that ... only my young sister went back to school ... I will never forget how I saw my friends being killed in their own house ... it was very painful. Sometime I feel like I don’t want remember those stories but they keep coming back in my mind. I just pay God that I forget all.”*

Another similar story from a participant who narrates how she escaped war in the DRC is the following:

**P15:** *“I was coming from my uncle so I went back because soldiers were shooting at other side where my home ... is. Likely I found my uncle and his wife and babies preparing to run away as well ... we left to Burundi in the refugee camp then we went to ... Tanzania after two years we went to ... Johannesburg.”*

To unite with family, to escape abusive relationships and the absence of men in households were other reasons that pushed African immigrants, especially women, to leave their home countries. Here are some narratives from participants:

**P3** (female participant from the DRC): *“I had an abusive husband, so ... so it not easy to stay with him for the rest of my life. So my objective was to abandon him. I had friend who are already married here in South Africa, and whenever we chat on Facebook ... they created in me a good image about South Africa. So ... I wanted also to experiment life in another country ... you know, just myself without my husband yea.”*

**P2** (female participant from Ghana): *“After the death of my husband people in my community believed and started saying that my husband died of AIDS, they fabricated ... that I don’t know where it came from, although I knew it was not true but I was stressed. His family started saying that I killed their son ... I was so stressed ... I couldn’t take it anymore. I knew that I will never get a man again in that community*

*and I'm still so young and beautiful. So ... so I decided to leave with my son. My brother arranged us with everything we needed then we left. At least here I have peace."*

**P9** (female participant from Congo Brazzaville): *"I came in South Africa because my brother was already staying here since 2004; he paid everything for me including my flight ticket. So if it wasn't him I could not be here."*

Education, adventure and a desire to travel were also identified as push factors:

**P6** (male participant from Angola): *"I came to South Africa on 2010 under the request of my father, after finishing high school; my father wanted me to come here so that I can continue with my education ... back home my father was able to pay for me but ... you know, qualifications from home have no value. If you study out the country, special here in South Africa, you will get job quicker than your friend who did the same education back home."*

**P21**: *"Of because I do have bad experience in South Africa, but you know is part of life. I have learnt a lot since I left my family ... this is a big world. When I arrived in Johannesburg, it was tough, I even slept outside for couple days but here I am today very strong."*

**P12** (male participant from Nigeria): *"Yes, of course I came to South Africa to look for opportunities ... yes that I can't deny ... why should I deny that? One thing I was afraid of is to live and die in Nigeria. When we were still at school, most of my friends wanted at least one qualification from outside of Nigeria. So that was my ambitions as well, I wanted at least one degree from Europe, USA or at least South Africa ... that will show I have travelled in the world."*

There was one participant from Zimbabwe who left the country because he was running away from his responsibilities:

**P23** (male participant from Zimbabwe): *"I was staying with my girlfriend and my two kids, but by mistake I had impregnated another*

woman ... what could I do ... It was difficult because I had no a proper job to sustain myself, these two women and now these three kids. I left with no choice but to go ... I was running away from these responsibilities. I know it sound bad, it very irresponsible but I told myself that those [who] left in Zimbabwe will look after them (women and children), now I called my girlfriend and my two kid and ... I am in the process of calling the other kid from that woman I impregnated.”

Surveyed data from push factors were compared with participants’ genders (see table 7 below).

**Table 7: Gender and push factors: cross-tabulation**

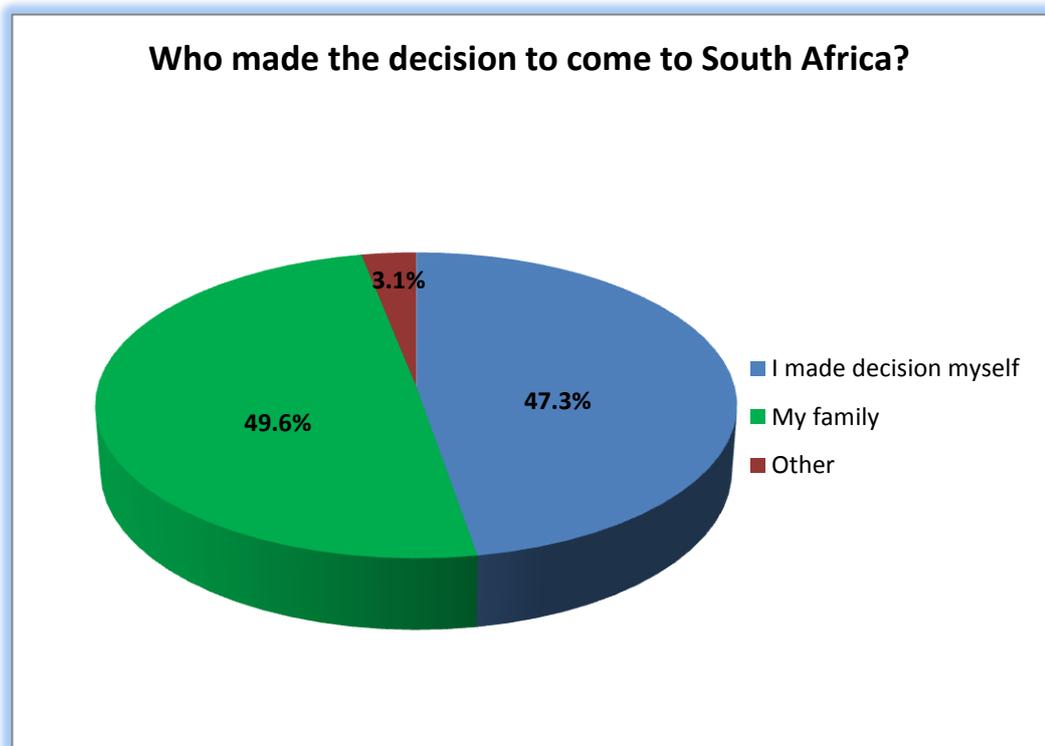
			Push factors					Total
			Education	Political	To unite with relatives	Financial	Other	
Gender	Male	Count	73	48	10	7	7	<b>145</b>
		%	50.3	33.1	6.9	4.8	4.8	<b>100.0</b>
	Female	Count	42	10	19	7	5	<b>83</b>
		%	50.6	12.0	22.9	8.4	6.0	<b>100.0</b>
Total		Count	<b>115</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>228</b>
		% gender	<b>50.4</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 7 shows participants’ gender and their motivation for leaving their home countries to come to South Africa. Most of the male participants (73 or 50.3%) left their countries because of education while only seven (4.8%) left because of

financial problems. On the female side, education was also the leading reason why 42 (50.6%) left their home countries, followed by family reunification (19 or 22.9%) and financial reasons (7 or 8.4%).

**Question 10: Who made the decision to come to South Africa?**

Participants were given three options to choose from: “I made the decision myself”; “My family (father, husband, wife, sister, brother)” or “Other”.



**Figure 12: Immigration decision-making**

In response to who made the decision to immigrate to South Africa, most participants (106 or 47.3%) indicated that they had made the decision themselves, 111 (49.6%) indicated that their family had made the decision and seven (3.1%) indicated “Other” but did not specify. Four participants did not answer this question.

Participants who made their own decision to come to South Africa were mostly males while family made the decision for most of the female participants.

Some narrations include the following:

**P10:** *“As you know yourself, back home in DRC, people have a different image of South Africa; they think is Europe ... Like a place where there are a lot of opportunities, because people who came here long time, they make money and send back home. It was the same for my family, so they looked for money for me to come here, so they decided. I was also happy to come but my family was happy because they know that I can become like the Moses to the family.”*

**P12:** *“Nobody was involved into my decision to leave my country. I decided myself. I was working back home but the money was not good ... but I had enough money to pay for my passport and everything I want in order to come to South Africa.”*

**P25:** *“My husband decided, I had no choice I had to come with him ... I’m glad he chose to ... you know.”*

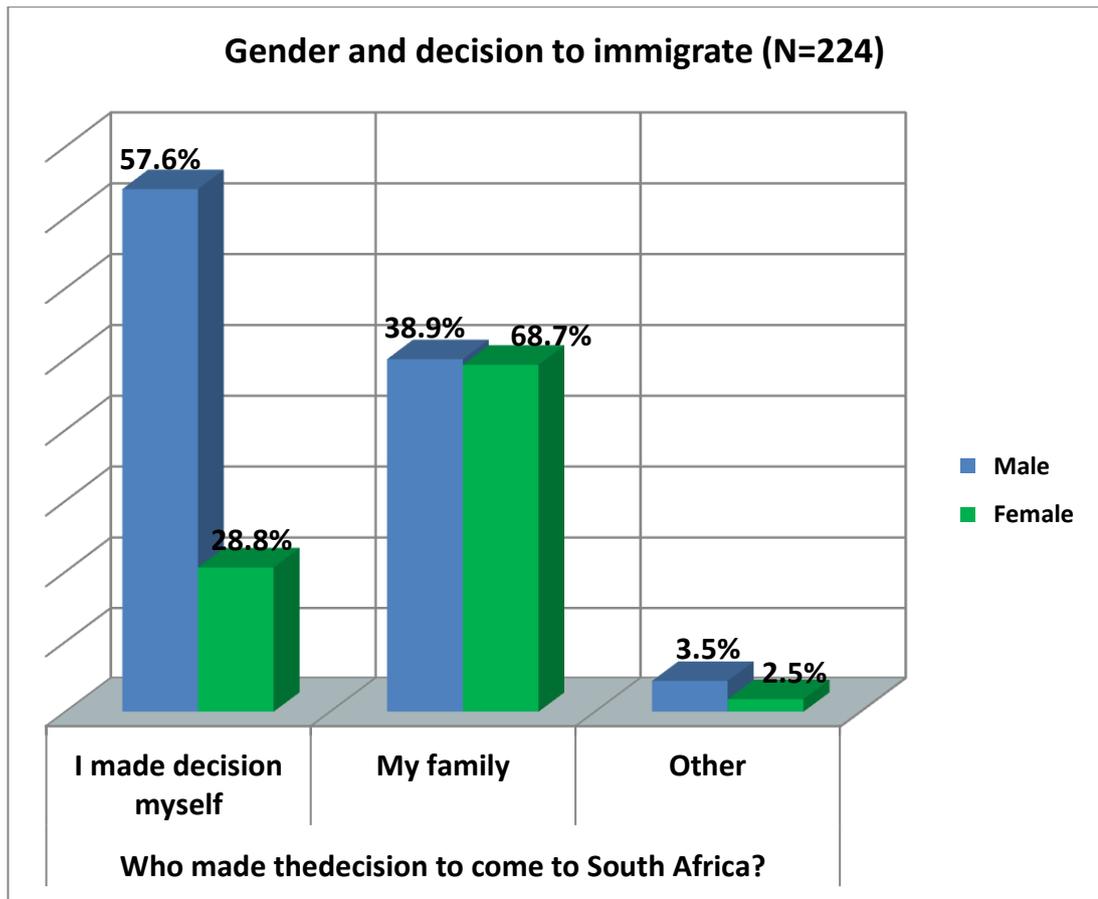
**P18:** *(female participant from Zimbabwe): “My husband family decided and putted the money together for me and my daughter to follow my husband, since he left home, he phoned us only few times, then he was nowhere to be found. After years, we heard that he now staying with a girlfriend ... a coloured woman. When his father got hold on him, he denied completely, so his father decided that I must come to South Africa to follow him. When I got to Johannesburg, we tried to phone him but he did not pick up his phone until he changed the phone number.”*

**P14** (male participant from Nigeria): *“I was big enough to take care of myself, so I decided to come to South Africa on my own. I wanted to come with my young brother but I decided to come first myself because I had no relative in South Africa ... I had some friends ... [but] I did not have their contacts. So I said that I will take first a risk myself ... [then] I can call my brother later on. I heard a lot of story that people run away from friend who come from home and that many people end up sleeping in the boxes. Looking at all these risks, I did not want my young brother to go through all these because [he] was still young and he won’t understand life.”*

**P1** (male participant from Zimbabwe): *“It was not up to me to choose ... I didn’t really choose to come. My sister who was already here facilitated everything. But what I knew at that time is that South Africa is a good country full of opportunities. So it was easy for me to agree.”*

**P4** (male participant from Zambia): *“Zambians who live out of the country used to send a lot of money to their families, and make a lot of contributions to improve their relative’s lives ... even build good houses back home. This was also the expectation of my own family ... seeing me improving the situation of my family with the money I will make in South Africa.”*

Figure 13 below presents the cross-tabulation of participants’ gender and who made the decision to immigrate to South Africa.

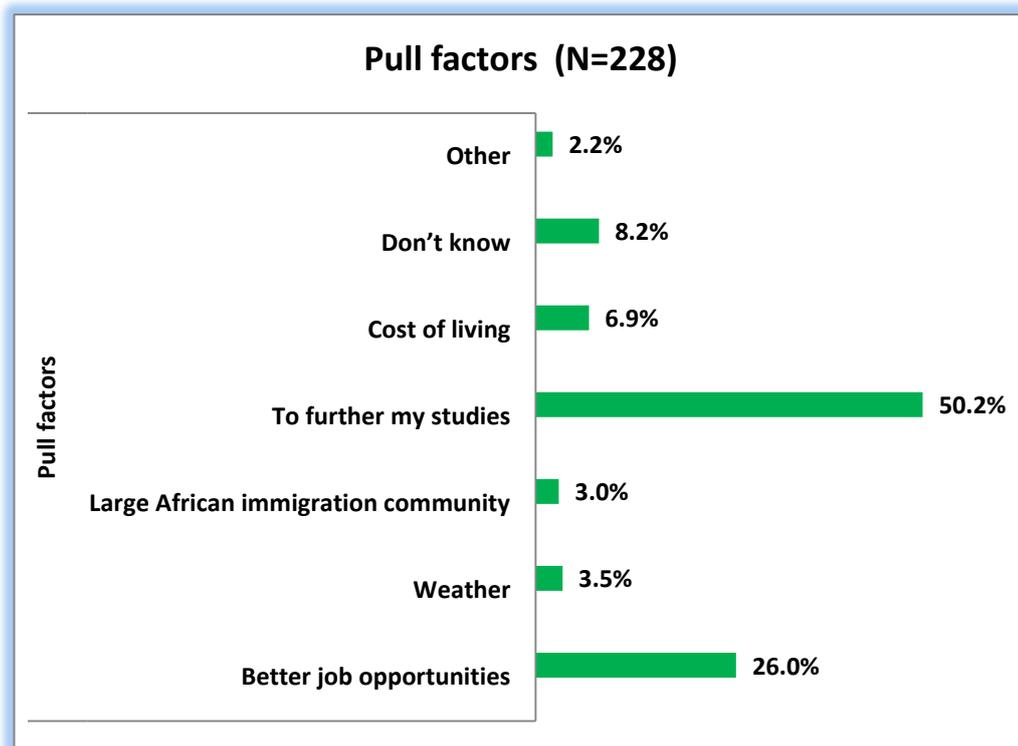


**Figure 13: Gender and decision to immigrate**

Of the 144 male participants, 83 (57.6%) made the decision themselves, 56 (38.9%) indicated that the family had made the decision for them and five (3.5%) indicated that other people had made the decision. Of the 80 female participants, 23 (28.8%) made the decision to immigrate themselves, 55 (68.7%) indicated that their family had made the decision and two (2.5%) indicated that other people had made the decision.

**Question 11: For what reason(s) did you choose to stay in Cape Town? (Tick all that apply.)**

Participants were asked to tick all applicable answers from the list: Better job opportunities, weather, the large African immigrant community, to further my studies, Cost of living, Don't know and Any other reason.



**Figure 14: Pull factors**

With regard to pull factors, most participants (116 or 50.2%) indicated that they had chosen to stay in Cape Town to further their studies, 60 (26%) for better job opportunities, 19 (8.2%) were not sure about the reason why they decided to stay, 16 (6.9%) for cost of living, eight (3.5%) for weather reasons and seven (3%) because of the large African immigrant community.

Participants who had lived in other provinces and towns in South Africa indicated that Cape Town offered more opportunities than those towns where they had lived before. Responses included better job opportunities, studies, security, better life stability and weather. On top of better life stability, **P25** emphasised the future of his children who were growing up in a good neighbourhood and attending good schools. The following are some of the other responses:

**P10:** *“Yes of cause, Cape Town is the only town where I feel a little freedom. What do we all look for in a life? Eeee ... First of all, you look for peace. I don't say there is not crime, but you can avoid it sometime. I have lived in Johannesburg, I didn't feel safe the way I feel here in Cape Town ... one thing I hurt about Johannesburg is the*

*police, they are so corrupt ... if they catch you in the street with no permit is a problem, even if you tell them you left it at home they don't understand, so you must pay them something."*

**P25:** *"The only thing ... or the most important thing that make me stay in Cape town is the school of my children, here you know that you are going to raise children in good condition ... I am sure that my children go to good school. That's a good thing which I never had when I was back home."*

**P17:** *"The only problem with here is ... there are jobs ... good jobs but they are not ready to give it out to people specially us who are not South African citizen. You cannot compare life in Congo and South Africa, standard of life ... if you want to talk about development and economic. There are a lot of opportunities in Cape Town. You can see that you have a better future if you are here, even if you don't have job for now but at least you have hope. But back at home you can't see that your future will be better, you just know you are living that all."*

**P22:** *"What surprised me the most was when I saw my uncles who is not even educated coming home back from Cape Town, full of pride ... and praising himself that he can feed me and my whole family for the full year with his one-month salary ... then only realise later that he is a security guard and he earn R2500. As you know in 2009, R2500 was not bad ... it was good money, it was far much more than what I was earning, and remember I was working in the office back home. My salary was 50 Dollars, something like R500 if you put in Rand equivalence."*

### 5.3.3 Section 3: Information needs

This section presents information about immigrants' information needs upon arrival in Cape Town and thereafter.

#### Question 13: What information did you need upon arrival in Cape Town?

Participants were asked to indicate which information they needed upon arriving in Cape Town. They were given an option to choose all that applied from the list: Accommodation, School, Health and social services, Language training, Employment or Other.

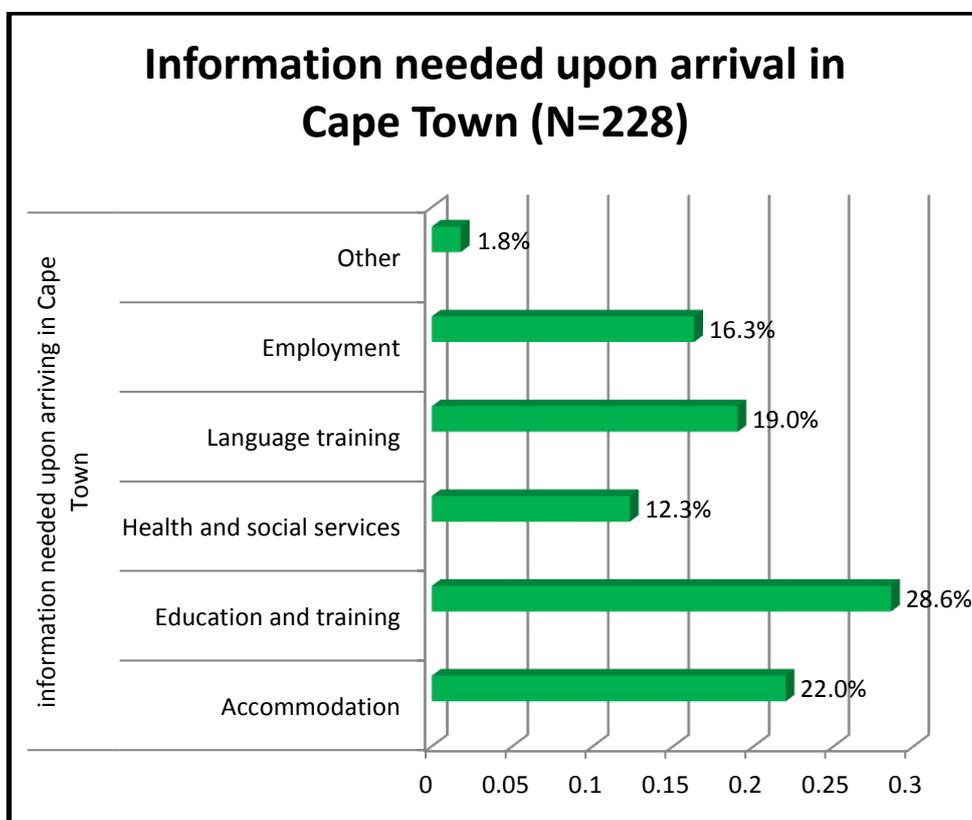


Figure 15: Information needed upon arrival in Cape Town

The need to find information about education and training with 95 responses (28.6%) was the information most needed, followed by accommodation with 73 responses (22%). The least important information need indicated was that of health and social services with 41 responses (12.3%). They were also six

responses (1.8%) indicating “Other” while one participant specified the need for telephone information.

Here is the story of one participant who was not concerned about information concerning health or health centres:

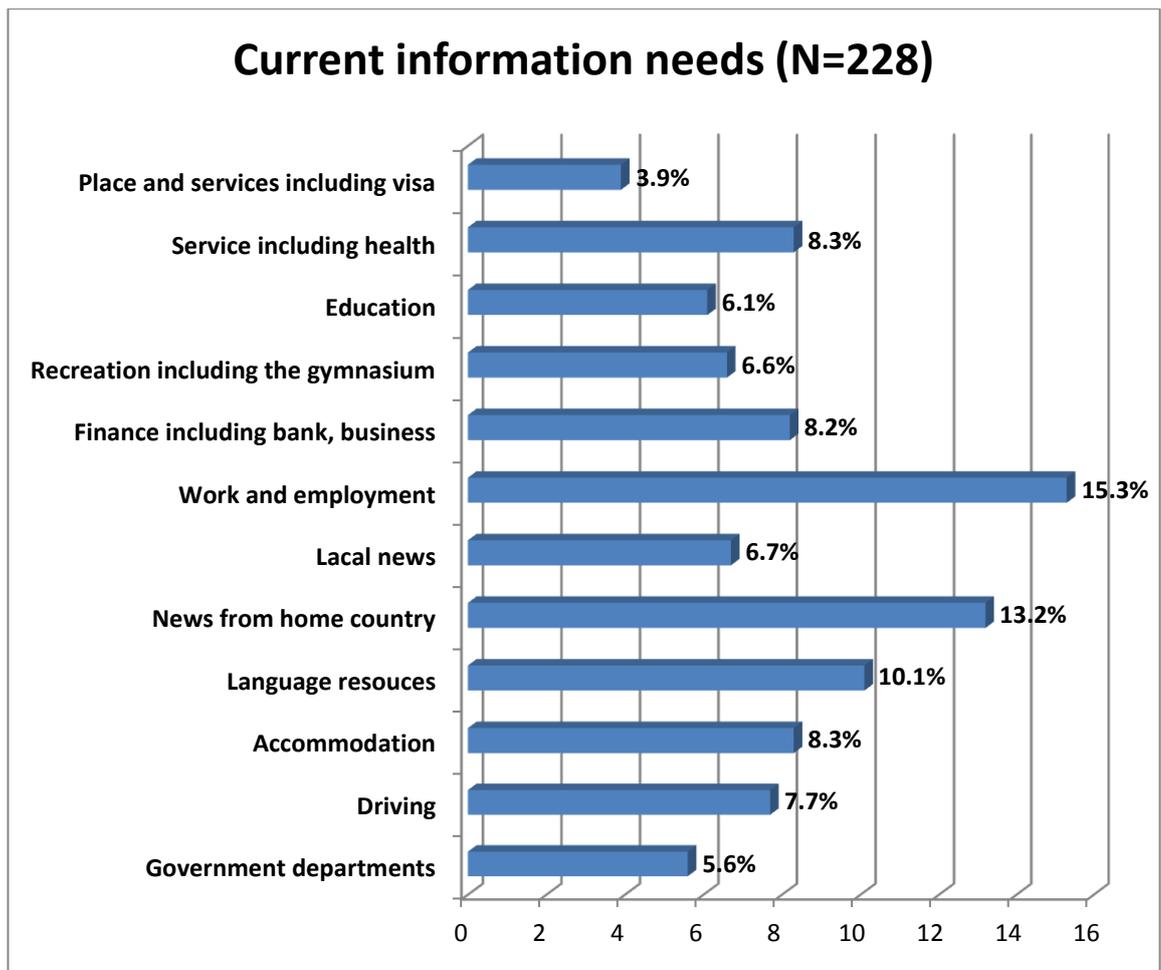
**P1:** *“In my mind I was not thinking about being sick or what so ever, all I need was job and place to put my head ... and God blessed me ... because for sometimes I did not get sick, I first went to the clinic in Wynberg after two years ... I think ... by then I knew already where to go.”*

One participant from the DRC was grateful for his friend who offered him accommodation and showed him a place to learn English:

**P20** *(male participant from the DRC): “My friend that received me when I come to South Africa, took me to a place in town ... that place is called Scalabrini, they teach English there for free ... yea ... many foreigners go there if they want to study English. I did that English there for Six months because you can’t get a job in South Africa if you don’t speak English. So I have to thank my friend because he helped me a lot, he spent his money ... his time.”*

**Question 14: For what type of information that you recently needed or currently need did you not look for upon your arrival in Cape Town? (Please tick all that apply.)**

A list of things was provided, which included types of services and products about which immigrants might want to find some information. Participants were asked to tick all that applied regarding their recent and current information needs. The purpose was to obtain information on the needs that participants recently had or currently were searching for.



**Figure 16: Current information needs**

Information including different types of services and products, which participants recently needed or currently need, is presented in Figure 18. Information about work and employment was the most needed with 136 responses (15.3%), followed by information about news from home that had 116 responses (13.2%). Places and services including visa information was the least indicated by participants, with only 35 responses (3.9%).

Interviewed participants were prompted to indicate the places they go or the sources they recently use which they could not use upon their arrival to find the particular information they needed then.

**P9:** *“By next year I will be done with my studies, so I am already applying for work ... I can’t wait because only few months left before I finish my Honours ... I use internet, I know most of jobs are advertised there. Maybe next year when I am ready I will walk around but for now I am using only internet.”*

Some participants had taken jobs that were not related to their skills and education; for example, the meter taxi driver, waiters and chefs in restaurants and hotels and a security guard had no option but to keep searching for better job opportunities:

**P7 (male from Zimbabwe):** *“This country has putted us down man, do you know that I have a honours degree from home, see now here I am working as waiter in a restaurant ... I go sometime to companies to drop my CV ... I am just hoping one day I will get a call from them.”*

**P16:** *“I am not pride of my job; I am a professional nurse. For now, I am doing security job because my paper still stacking at SAQUA [South African Qualifications Authority] I have faith that I will get the job of my qualification one day.”*

Buy and sell websites such as Gumtree and OLX were the popular internet sites visited by participants when they needed to sell or buy second-hand products such as home appliances:

**P21:** *“Yes, whenever I need stuff like Fridge or any stuff that maybe ... are sold in my area, I just go on Gumtree. All the information is there ... or even on OLX. So I don’t waste my time going around or ask people about stuff, because I know where to find them.”*

Participants who mentioned local newspapers as their sources of information about local news placed more emphasis on the classified section of the newspapers:

**P10:** *“The classified section is always my favourite part of the newspaper, as I told you, every Wednesday we receive this newspaper called ... the Burger something ... inside there you find stuff for sale, jobs and other information.”*

Participants further indicated that they used the internet to book and pay for their airline tickets instead of visiting travel agencies.

**P10:** *“These days we do not have to struggle a lot about buying a flight ticket, you can do everything on internet. When I went to Congo last year, I bought my ticket online ... I was so afraid though ... because it was my first time. I paid with my normal bank account and I received the ticket via email ... I don't go anymore to airport or to agents to buy the ticket.”*

When particularly asked about information to learn English, most participants mentioned refugee centres and mutual community groups also provided useful information on courses to improve their English. The use of other sources for learning English such as dictionaries and audio-visual learning instruction kits were also mentioned.

One parent who valued friendship and family more than anything found suitable information about schools for their children:

**P18:** *“Honestly speaking, I don't know what I can do without my brother in law. He is a professor at CPUT [Cape Peninsula University of Technology], that guy always come in help when we need anything about education of my two boys. Last year my first boy went to the university at CPUT ... my brother in law did everything for him. He is my friend at same time my brother in law, he know[s] how to do this things man, he [is] very sharp ... quick, so I always leave everything to him.”*

Other parents looked for information by visiting the schools themselves:

**P12:** *“I look for information myself about school of my children by reading the profile of the schools of Cape Town, especially of my*

*area ... This ... Southern Suburbs on their websites and visiting the schools myself.”*

Information about recreation and leisure such as gymnasiums, games or social networking was found by chatting to friends and family members, social networks at church, local newspapers, as well as visiting the internet, local libraries and campuses.

**P10:** *“Yes ... In that newspaper sometimes you find all the adverts of all concert and performance that happening in the area ... I make sure I get that newspaper because I am a good fan of music and other nice performances like comedy ... I go to watch sometimes if I have money.”*

**P17:** *“Yes, I love movies; I download a lot from internet. Every time I check on internet if there is nice new movie.”*

Financial information such as information about banking and saving was most commonly sought via visits to the bank, and internet banking.

**P19:** *“I trust no one about budgeting or saving, and you can't ask a friend or people from the bank, they will tell you the same thing. They don't know what my expenses ... my problems ... are. And again in this country you ask someone, he will think you have a lot of money ... So I plan myself. I only go to the bank when I need to sort out something there but not for advice.”*

Most of the time information about services provided by government departments was obtained via the internet, friends and family, government officers and phone calls.

**P17** indicated that he preferred to use the internet to obtain information he needed from government departments; he further elaborated by saying that sometimes he was neglected by officials or not even being received. Two participants who preferred to use the internet offered these as reasons:

**P17:** *“Before I used to go myself to offices like Home Affairs, but every day when I got there I don’t know if [I] was just not lucky, but I use to meet people [home affairs official] ... who will look at you as you are stinking. I don’t know what. And if you can’t speak Xhosa then it worse.”*

**P25:** *“I prefer to do what I can do online, because you will always find long queues to government offices, but sometime we don’t have choice, we have to go and things there ... yea ... if for information only I ask people or check it online.”*

The discussion regarding places where participants go to look information about housing and accommodation shows that participants who have been in Cape Town for longer are more familiar with more and reliable resources that may assist them to meet this information need, such as local housing agencies and the internet. Chatting with friends and family, looking at newspapers and advertisements for housing and rentals in public places has been mentioned by participants who are relatively new in Cape Town.

**P1:** *“You know what is the hardest information to find? There are many houses out there, but to get [them] is tough, owners of the houses and even agencies don’t want to rent out their houses to foreigners. I know people who have been looking for a place to stay for more than two years now ... They work; they have nice jobs but agencies don’t qualify them to get houses ... just because they are not South African.”*

**P22:** *“I rely on my connections to find a flat because I know I can’t qualify from the agents, they [housing agents] ask people to have a sustainable job and your salary must be ... am not sure but I think three times more than what you earn ... Yea ... So if I need a flat I ask my friend if he knows someone who has a flat available.”*

However, recent and current information about different types of products and services needed were compared with participants’ periods of stay in Cape Town (see table 8 below).

**Table 8: Types of products and services information needed and the periods of stay in Cape Town**

Types of products and services needed	Periods of stay in Cape Town			
	Less than 1 year (5 participants)	1-3 years (53 participants)	4-6 years (76 participants)	More than 6 Years (94 participants)
Places and services including visas	1	9	12	13
Services including health	1	20	16	37
Education	2	12	19	21
Finance including banks, business	2	15	27	29
Recreation including gym	1	8	24	25
Work and employment	4	32	47	53
Local news	2	15	22	20
News from home country	4	26	44	42
Language resources	3	23	33	31
Accommodation	2	17	24	31
Driving	0	17	24	27
Government departments	2	10	18	20

Need for work and employment and news from home country were the most popular information needs indicated by participants. Information about work and

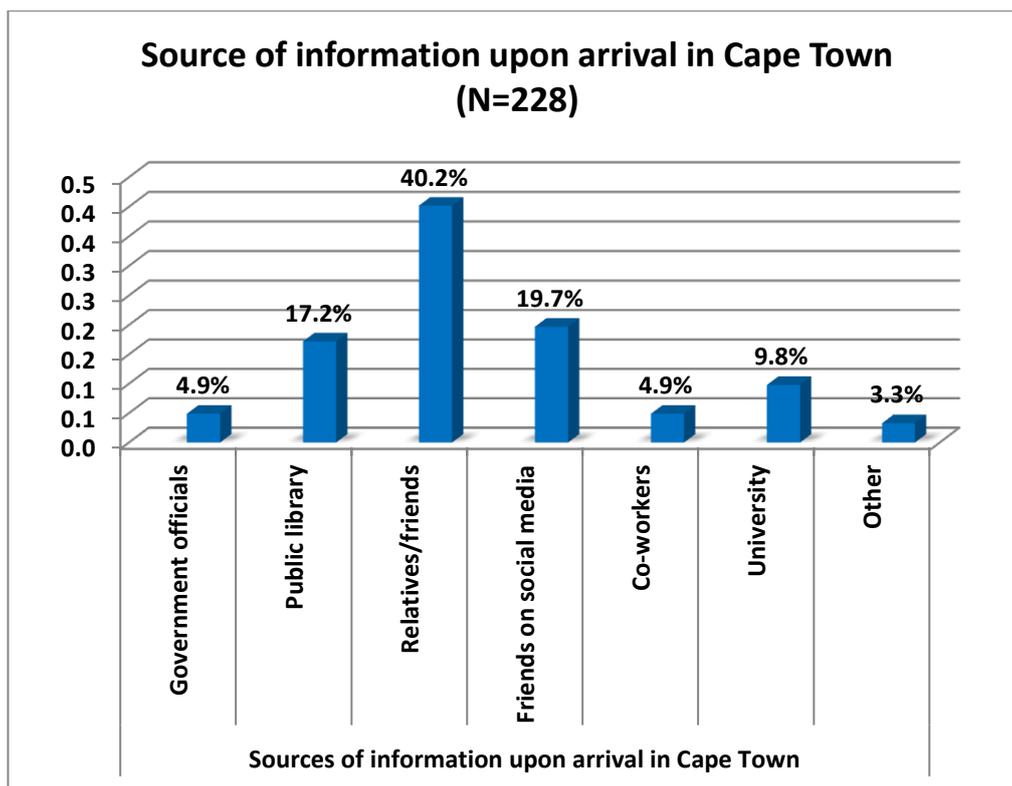
employment had four responses from five participants who stayed in Cape Town for less than one year, 32 responses from 53 participants who stayed for one to three years, 47 responses from 76 participants who stayed for four to six years. And 53 of 94 who stayed in Cape Town for more than six years. However, none of the participants who stayed in Cape Town for less than one year was interested in information about driving, and only thirteen of those who stayed for more than six years looked for information on places and services, including visa applications.

#### **5.3.4 Section 4: Information grounds and Channels**

This section presents information such as immigrants' source of information upon arrival in Cape Town, their preferred mode of communication when looking for information, as well as current information sources.

##### **Question 12: Upon arrival in Cape Town, to whom or where did you go to find information you needed?**

Participants were asked to indicate all the places they consulted to find information or people who helped them to find information. Government officials, Public libraries, Relatives/friends, Friends on social media, Co-workers, Universities and Other places were all options to choose from.



**Figure 17: Sources of information upon arrival in Cape Town**

With regard to places where participants went and people contacted to find information when they first arrived in Cape Town, the above table (Figure 16) shows that Relatives and friends with 49 (40.2%) were the sources of information with the highest frequency. Government officials and Co-workers were the least sources indicated by participants with only six (4.9%) responses for each.

**P17:** *“First of all, I was not speaking English ... so I can’t ask anyone. I can only ask those who understand my language ... I remember when I came in the bus from Johannesburg, people were talking to me ... eesh ... I just look as a fool, because I don’t understand what they are asking me. But now I’m sorted.”*

A woman from Congo Brazzaville who came to join her brother in order to further her studies was helped by her brother and sister-in-law:

**P9:** *“I was so lucky enough to have my brother and his wife already here ... I don’t know what I could have done without them, they are my hero. Everything I needed it was provided by them. My sister in*

*law took some day off from work so she can take me to home affairs for papers, she showed me everything ... we took a walk to town showing me nice stuff around.”*

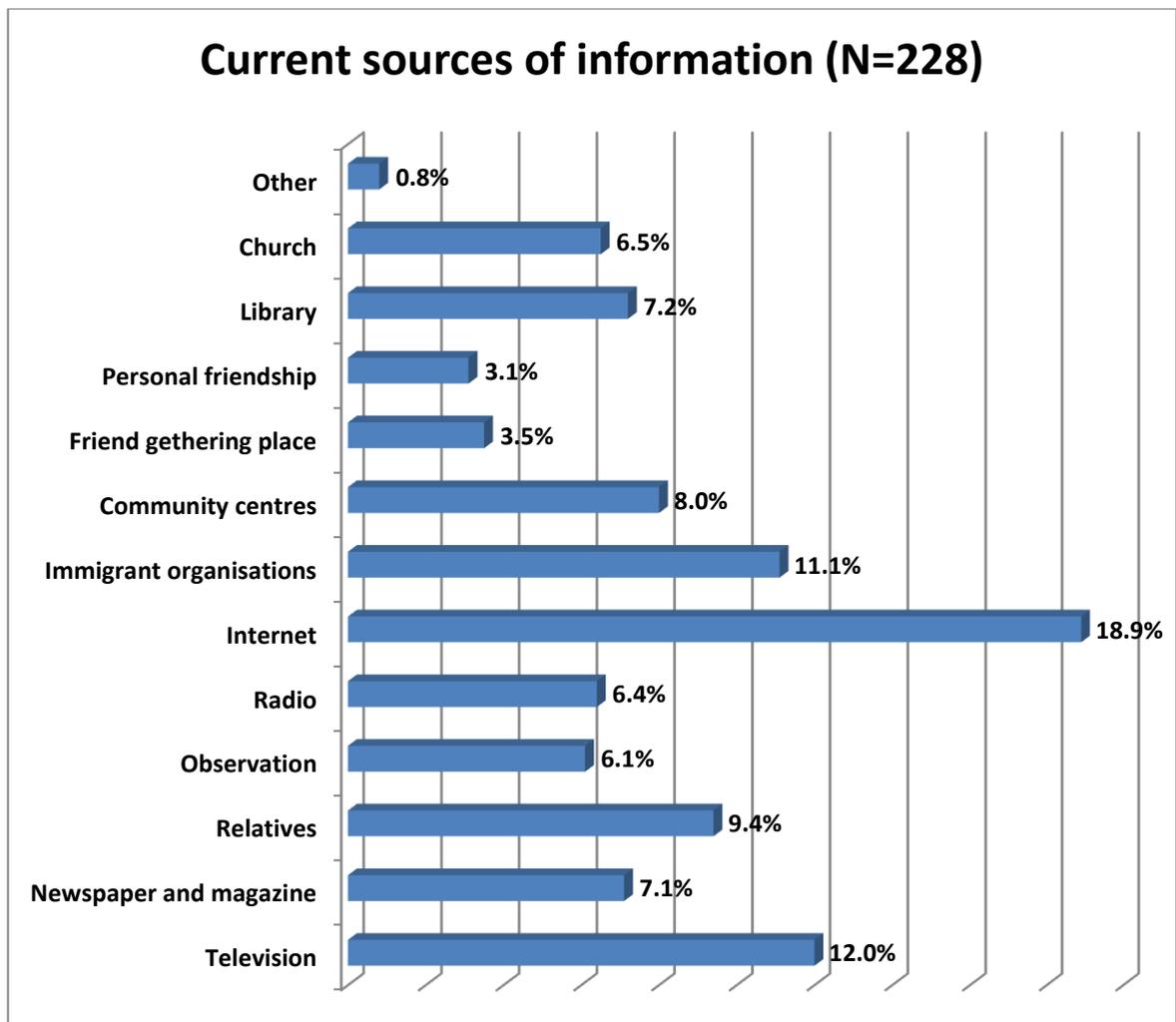
Two participants who came to South Africa for studies had similar stories. Their accommodation had already been arranged at the university residence before their arrival. They obtained most of the information they needed from university officials, colleagues and neighbours from the students’ residence.

**P6:** *“When I came to Cape Town, the first thing I did as I was alone, I started making friends ... I met another guy from Angola who was staying not far from my room. So I used to go to him if I need anything. I have to tell you that there was another guy from the international student office ... I think he is from Congo. He helped me a lot.”*

**P10:** *“Yea ... yea my friends from varsity and people who was working in international student office helped me, the registration process was a nightmare for me. I did know where to go and what to do, so I asked this other guy who told me to go international student office. From there I found other students who speak French ... yea that where I got help.”*

**Question 15: Please indicate your current major source(s) of information (Please tick all that apply.)**

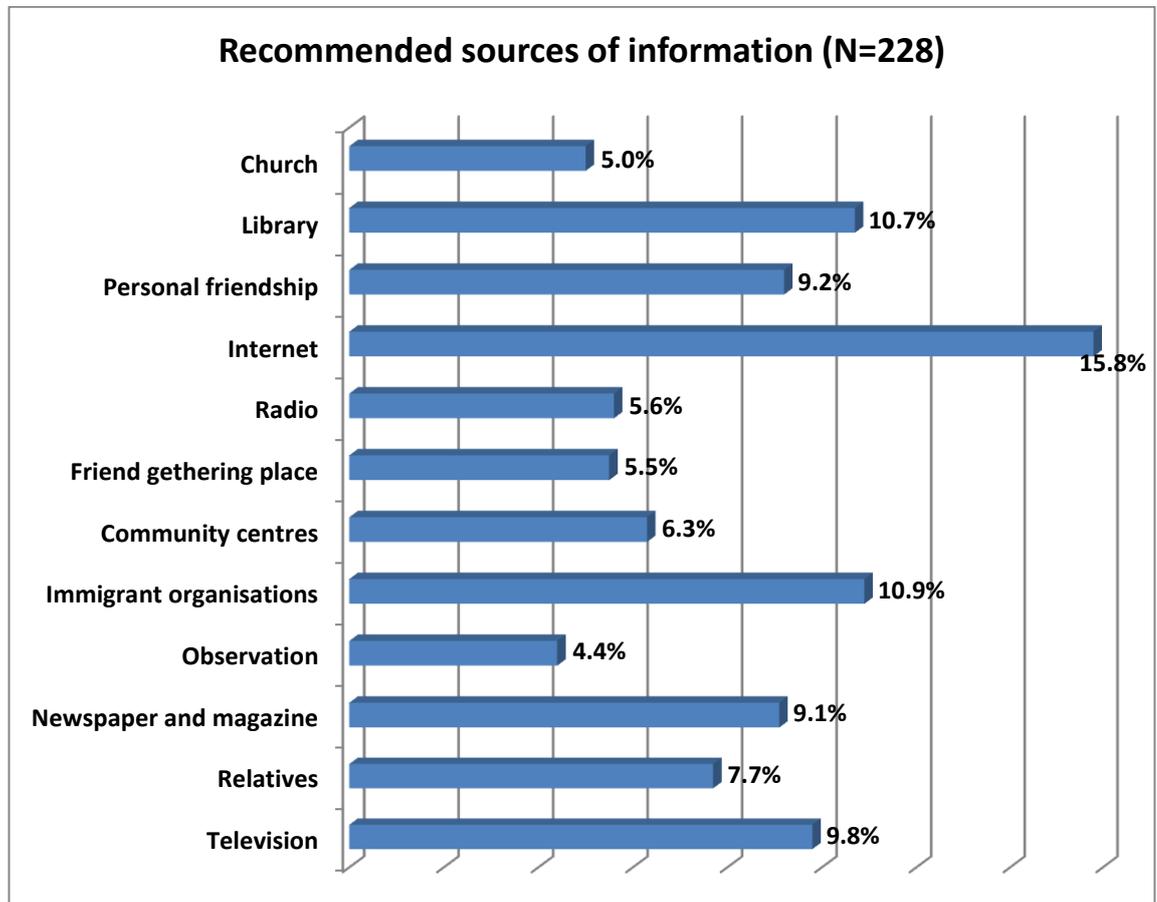
Participants were asked to indicate their current major source(s) of information. They were required to tick all the sources from the list that they had recently used, even if they did not have success.



**Figure 18: Current sources of information**

Based on the multiple responses received about the current major sources of information, the internet was the most used source of information with 173 responses (18.9%), and personal friendships was mentioned least by participants with 28 responses (3.5%).

**Question 16: Which places where information can be found can you recommend to African immigrants who have recently arrived in Cape Town? (Please tick all that apply.)**



**Figure 19: Recommended sources**

The most recommended source of information was the internet with 149 responses (15.8%), followed by immigrant organisations which had 103 (10.9%) responses, and the least recommended was observation with 42 (4.4%) responses:

**P2:** *“I think that information can be found in churches where he/she visits for prayer, because most foreigners go where many people from his or her country are.”*

**P10:** *“Ask any friend or relative from home, who have lived in Cape Town for quite long.”*

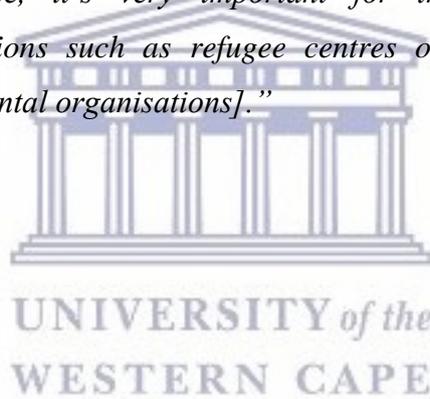
**P14:** *“Seek advice from institutions that help foreigners and new comers, refugees.”*

**P12:** *“In the library specially this one [central library of Cape Town] if there are books in all language that can her or he information in order to get help.”*

**P19:** *“Don’t be afraid of asking for information people are very helpful, anyone can help with information if they know.”*

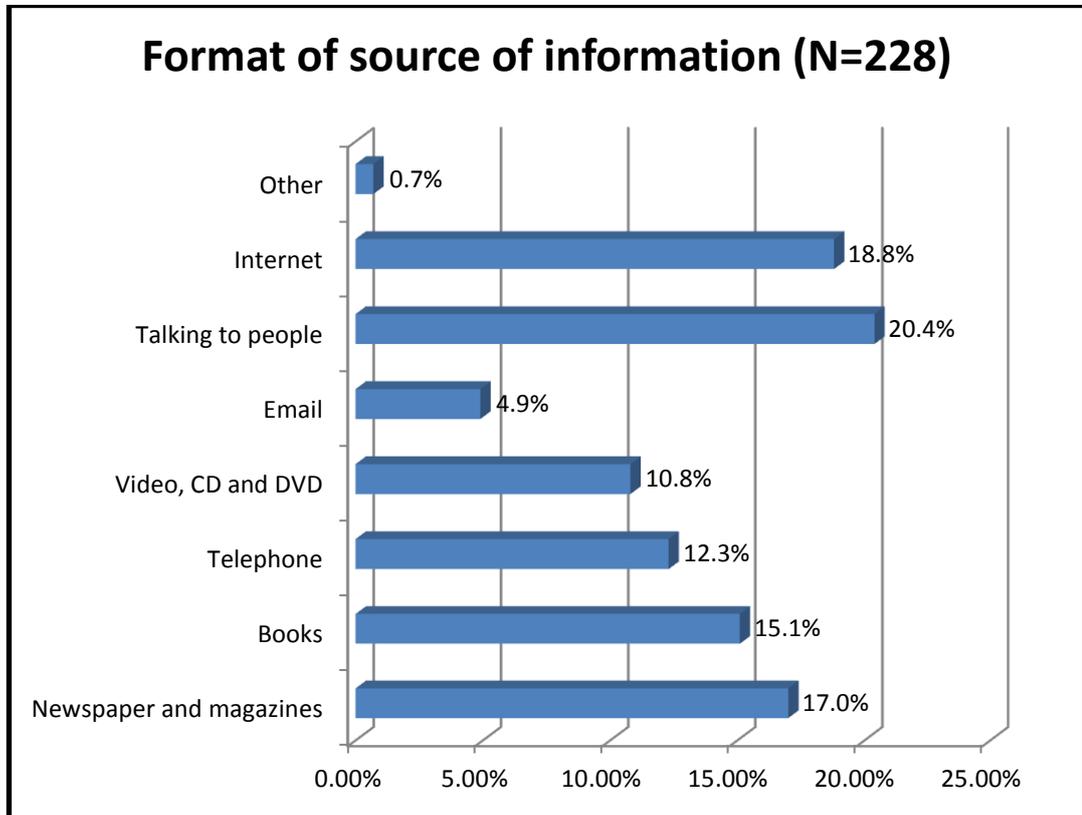
**P24:** *“I can advise people to visit offices where they speak their own language, so if the people don’t talk English they must go where they will get help in French or Portuguese.”*

**P22:** *“Since the newly comer don’t have much information about the new place, it’s very important for them to approach social organizations such as refugee centres or any other NGOs [non-governmental organisations].”*



**Question 17: When finding out about something, which of the following do you prefer to use? (Please tick all that apply.)**

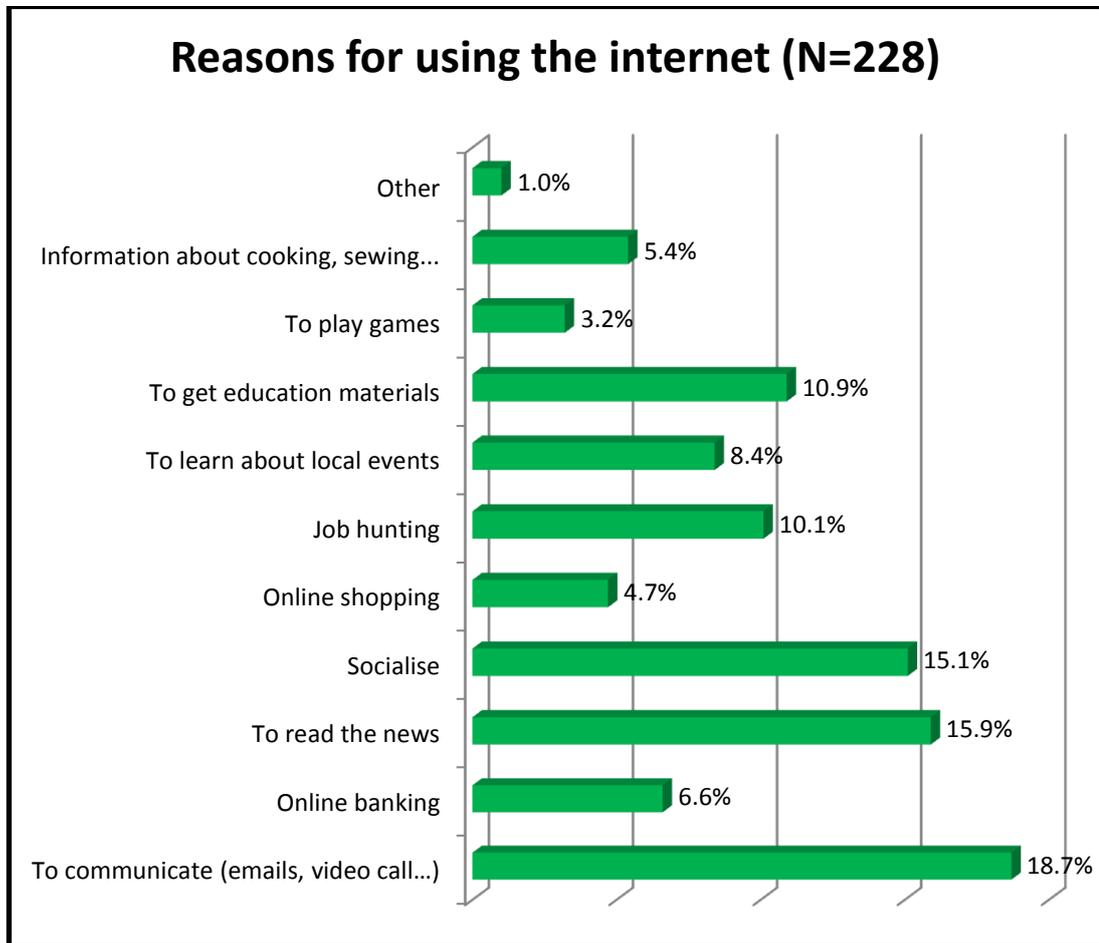
Participants were asked to indicate from the list their preferences in terms of mode of communication.



**Figure 20: Format of source of information**

Talking to people was definitely the most popular in terms of preferences of modes of communication by participants with 125 responses (20.4%), followed by the internet with 115 responses (18.8%), then newspapers and magazines with 104 responses (17%). Books with 93 responses (15.1%), telephone calls with 75 (12.3%) responses, videos, Compact discs (CD) and Digital Video Discs (DVD) with 66 (10.8%) responses and e-mails with 30 responses (4.9%) followed in descending order of popularity.

**Question 18: If you use the internet, for what reason(s) do you use it? (Please tick all that apply.)**



**Figure 21: Reasons for using the internet**

The percentages in figure 21 above show that most participants (185 or 18.7%) use the internet to communicate when they use it for e-mails or video calls. Playing games with 32 responses (3.2%) was the second least mentioned by participants.

**P10**, who answered that he used the internet to play games, said the following:

*“I think I am addicted to video games; I can’t spend a day without playing at least one or two games on internet ... yea man ... you know ... most of my data I use them on games. Sometime if can’t download the game I like; I will keep playing it online.”*

**P16**, who used the internet to communicate, said that he went to internet cafés every weekend to check his e-mails and to call his relatives on Skype:

*“Yes, I use internet every weekend because I am not connected at home, so I go to internet café every Saturday because I work half day [on Saturday]. I call my brother sometime I talk to everyone at home. We can see each other on skype if the network is good, or we can just talk without video ... the problem is to talk to them.”*

Responses from those who used the internet for job hunting included:

**P9:** *“The internet is very useful ... It very informative because it is updated every time and easy to apply just online.”*

**P23:** *“The internet is more reliable place to find information. Before arriving in Cape Town, I was in Pretoria, I used to check for jobs in Cape Town and that how I applied and got the job.”*

**P4:** *“These days a lot of companies don’t put their jobs in newspaper anymore, so if you are not connected you can’t find a proper job.”*

Responses from participants who consulted the internet to read news included:

**P6:** *“For news ... I feel comfortable using internet than newspaper or ... a book ... again, the internet gets new stuff every time.”*

**P15:** *“I noticed that there is more information about anything you need ... health care, education. Most of the stuff online, any think you need is there. You type anything you will get information.”*

Responses about use of the internet for social networks included:

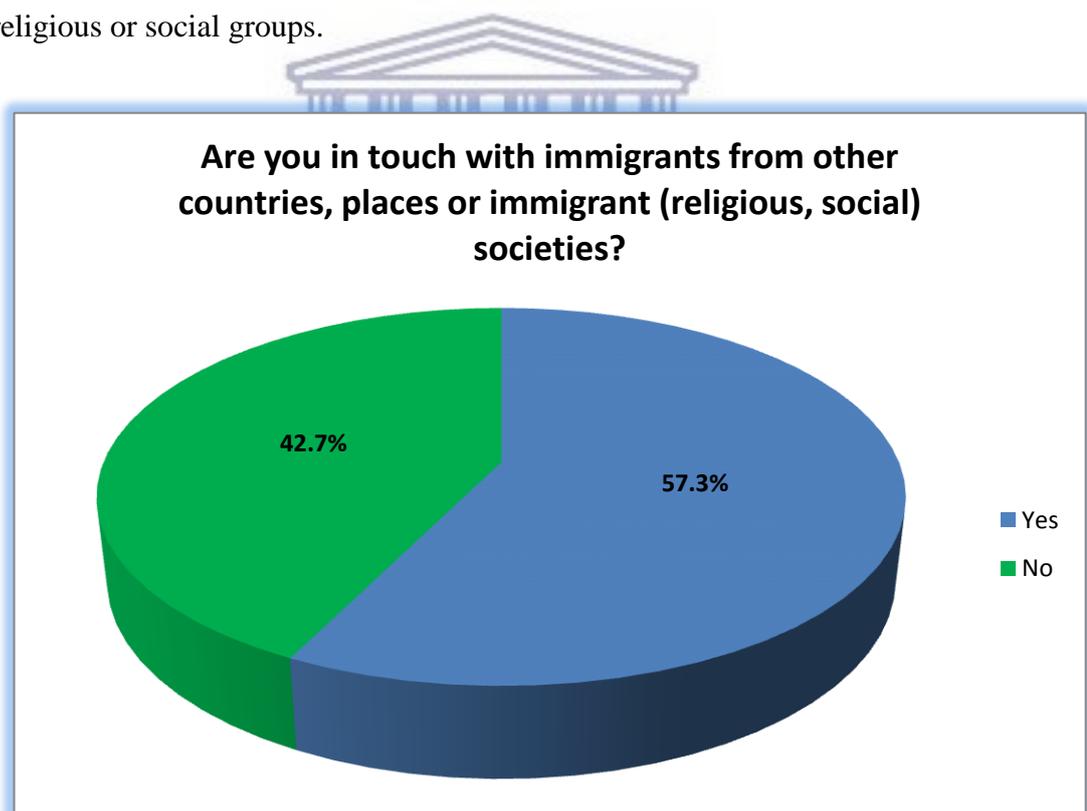
**P22:** *“I use internet for chatting with friends around the world, I am on Facebook, Tweeter, WhatsApp, Tango, of cause, and ... more.”*

### 5.3.5 Section 5: Interpersonal information behaviour

This section presents immigrants’ relationships with other immigrant social groups, as well as family and relatives from their home countries.

**Question 19: Are you in touch with immigrants from other countries, places or immigrant (religious, social) societies?**

Participants were asked to indicate whether they were in touch or associated with other immigrants from different places, countries or immigrant societies such as religious or social groups.



**Figure 22: Association with other countries or immigrant societies**

With regard to participants’ association with other immigrants or immigrant societies, 129 (57.3%) participants indicated that they were in touch with other immigrants or immigrant societies while 96 (42.7%) indicated that they were not

in touch. Three participants did not answer this question. Participants who indicated that they were in touch with other immigrants or immigrant societies were asked to specify.

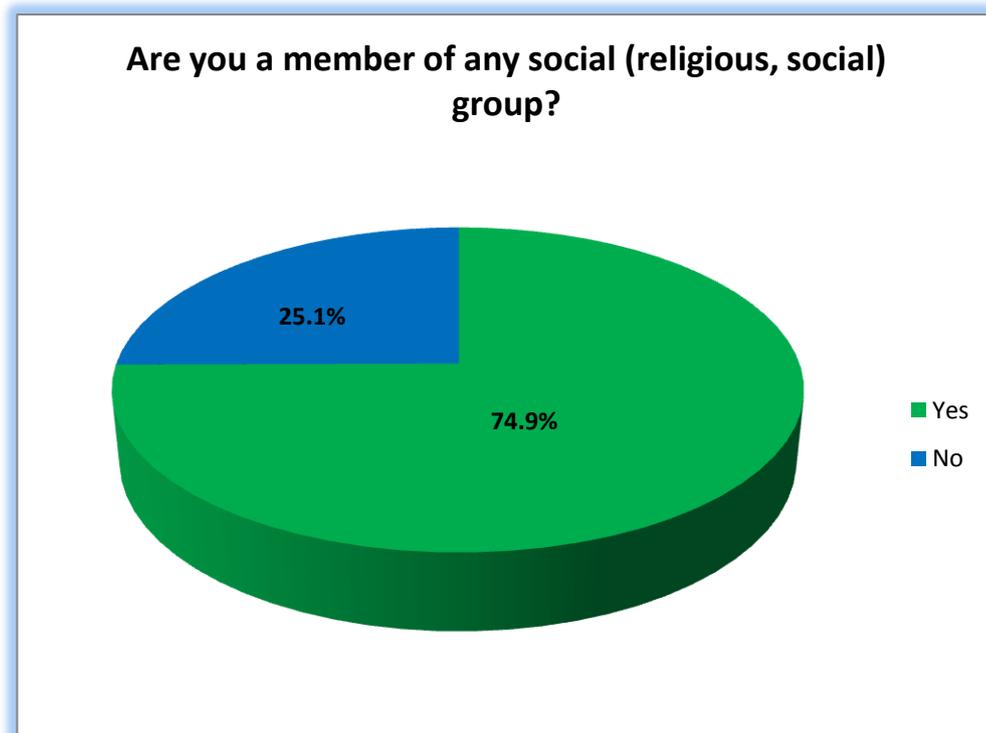
Most participants emphasised that they always made friends at work, church, and in their neighbourhoods and other places. Responses from this question included:

**P4:** *“Plenty of them, my best friend is from Tanzania, we meet where I used to work before ... beside that my ex-girlfriend was from Zim [Zimbabwe], through her I made a lot of friends from Zim [Zimbabwe], and we still in touch till now.”*

**P1:** *“As I told you I am a pastor, in my church I do have people from all over, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Congo, South African ... more ... there is no way I can stay away from them ... they are all my brother and sisters. We share everything, we talk about anything ... sometimes I go to their houses when they have something like a family thing ... as pastor I feel at home.”*

**Question 20: Are you a member of any social (religious, social) group?**

This question was to investigate participants' membership or association with social groups such as religious, social, political or any other groups.



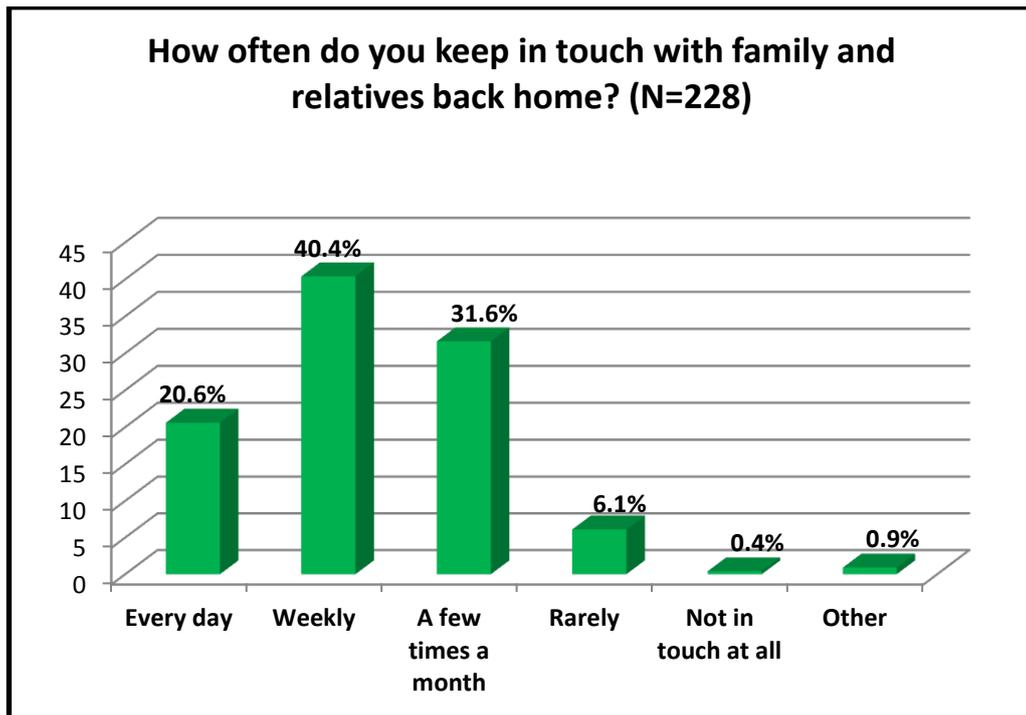
**Figure 23: Immigrant social group membership**

Percentages in figure 23 above showed that most of the participants (170 or 74.9%) were members of social groups, 57 (25.1%) of them were not and one participant did not answer this question. More than half of the participants (92) who were members of social groups specified that they were members of Cristian church groups, 22 participants stated that they belonged to mutual groups and the rest (56) did not specify.

Social groups mentioned by participants include mutual community groups such as the Nigerian Association in Cape Town and Amis BK, a mutual group of immigrants from the East DRC.

**Question 21: How often do you keep in touch with family and relatives back home?**

Participants were asked to indicate how often they communicated with their relatives/friends back home in their country of origin. Participants were given the following options: Every day; Weekly; A few times a month; Rarely; Not in touch at all, and Other



**Figure 24: Keeping in touch with family and relatives back home**

Weekly communication between participants and their family back home was the most popular with 92 participants (40.4%), while 72 participants (31.6%) indicated that they were in touch a few times a month; 47 (20.6%) participants indicated that they were in touch every day, while 14 (6.1%) indicated that they rarely communicated with their family, with only one (0.4%) participant indicating that he was not in touch at all and two (0.9%) ticked the “Other” option and did not specify.

**P15:** *“Of course I do call them, and sometimes they call me as well. When I was still new in South Africa ... I was calling like every day.”*

**RE:** *“What happened ... why not anymore?”*

**P15:** *“I think it happens to everyone ... like missing home, you feel like you want to talk to them every day. Now I call them when they say they need something or when I want to send them something.”*

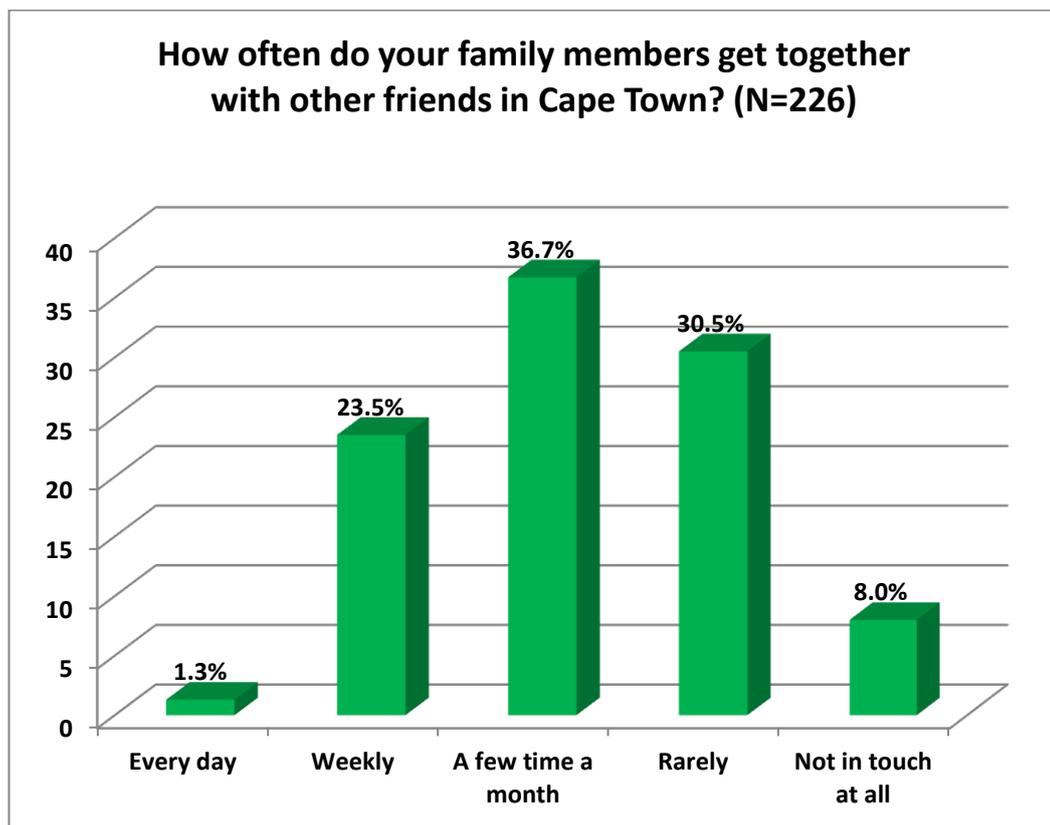
**P18:** *“I can say two times a month ... Last time I spoke to my family was last week, it was my young sister’s wedding ... so yea I ... I am in touch with my family ... that all I can say.”*

**P6:** *“Yes, let me put it in this way ... with my parents yes ... like two or three times a month. Because you know you have to call them or they call you. But with my brothers we chat everyday on Facebook ... WhatsApp. I miss them man, but I can’t just go home. I can go on December when we close school.”*



**Question 22: How often do your family members get together with other friends in Cape Town?**

Participants were asked to indicate how often they gather with other friends or family in Cape Town. They had to choose between: Weekly; Monthly; A few times a year; Rarely; Not in touch at all, or Other.



**Figure 25: Family and friends gatherings**

Figure 25 above shows that most participants (83 or 36.7%) come together with other friends or family members a few times a year, while 69 (30.5%) indicated that they rarely have get-togethers and 53 (23.5%) indicated that they gather monthly, with eighteen (8%) participants who indicated that they are not in touch at all and three (1.3%) participants who indicated that they gather every day. Two participants did not answer this question.

**P16** stated that the family meet whenever a need arises or when ceremonies such as births, birthdays, weddings, funerals and year-end parties take place. The following are some of the participants' statements:

**P16:** *“Most of the times on things like parties or funerals.”*

**P20:** *“Oh yea my group meet every last Sunday of the month.”*

**RE:** *“What group do you belong to? Name of the group?”*

**P20:** *“It called AMI BK ... from Congo.”*

**P12:** *“... there is no specific time or day. We can meet any day when we have something to inform all the members ... sometimes we use sms or Facebook.”*

**P13** (male participant from Ethiopia): *“These days people are busy man ... they can only show up when you call for party or again it ... Someone is getting married then everyone will get together.”*



### 5.3.6 Section 6: Barriers to access information

This section presents information relating to what the participants consider to be the barriers preventing them to gain access to the information they need.

#### Question 23: What was your occupation in your country of origin?

The question was asked in order to determine what occupations participants held in their home countries before coming to Cape Town. They were asked to select from the list: Formal employment in government, semi-autonomous or other; Informal employment such as artisan, farmer, trader, hawker or other; Never worked; Student and Other.

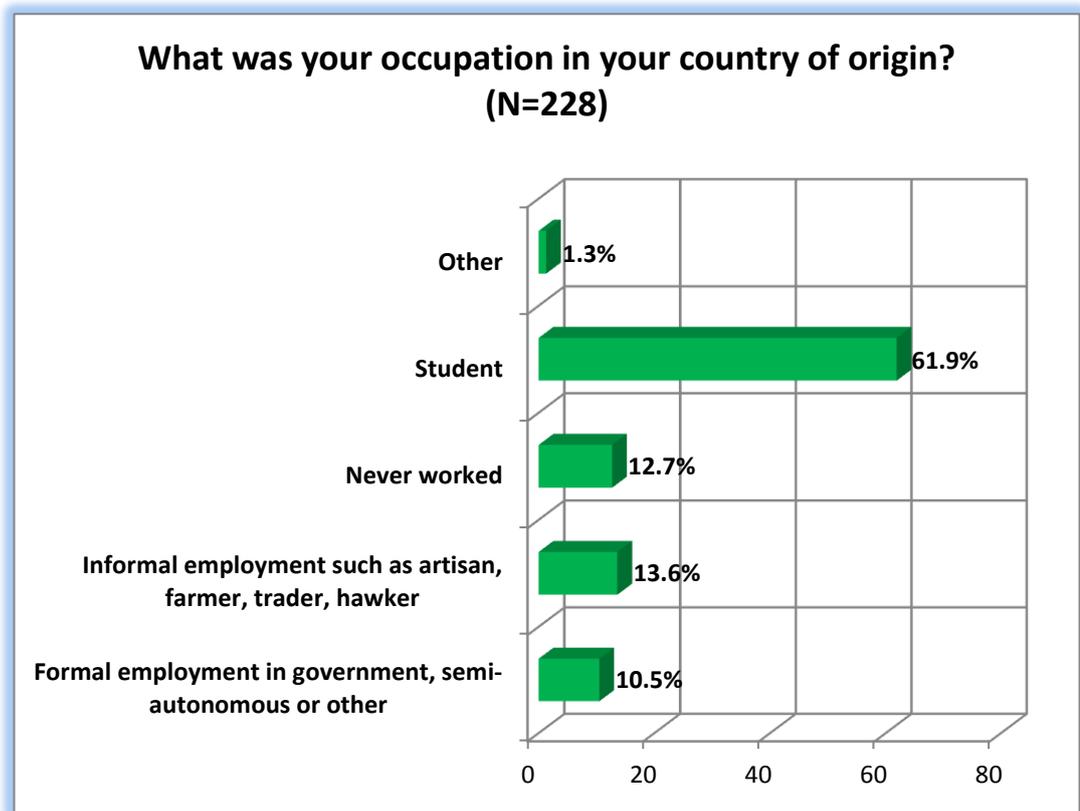


Figure 26: Participants' occupations in their country of origin

Responses from participants in terms of their occupations back home were that 24 (10.5%) participants indicated that they worked in formal employment in government, semi-autonomous or other institutions; 31 (13.6%) worked in the informal employment sector as artisans, farmers, traders and hawkers; 29 (12.7%) have never worked before; 141 (61.9%) of the participants indicated that they were students back home and three (1.3%) selected the “Other” option but did not specify.

Participants’ occupations in their countries of origin were compared with their current employment status (see table 9 below).



**Table 9: Current employment status and occupation in the country of origin**

**Cross tabulation of current employment status and occupation in home country (N=226)**

			Occupation in the country of origin					Total
			Formal employment in government, semi-autonomous or other	Informal employment such as artisan, farmer, trader, hawker	Never worked	Student	Other	
<b>Current employment status</b>	<b>Working full-time</b>	Count	9	22	7	44	3	85
		%	10.6	25.9	8.2	51.8	3.5	100
	<b>Working part-time</b>	Count	3	0	3	11	0	17
		%	17.6	0.0	17.6	64.7	0.0	100
	<b>Unemployed: looking for work</b>	Count	5	0	10	60	0	75
		%	6.7	0.0	13.3	80.0	0.0	100
	<b>Unemployed: not looking for work</b>	Count	5	6	7	17	0	35
		%	14.3	17.1	20.0	48.6	0.0	100
	<b>Full-time student</b>	Count	2	3	0	9	0	14
		%	14.3	21.4	0.0	64.3	0.0	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>226</b>
		<b>%</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>62.4</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in table 9 above show that nine of the 24 participants (10.6%) who had formal employment in government, semi-autonomous or other institutions back home are currently working full-time, three are working part-time, five are

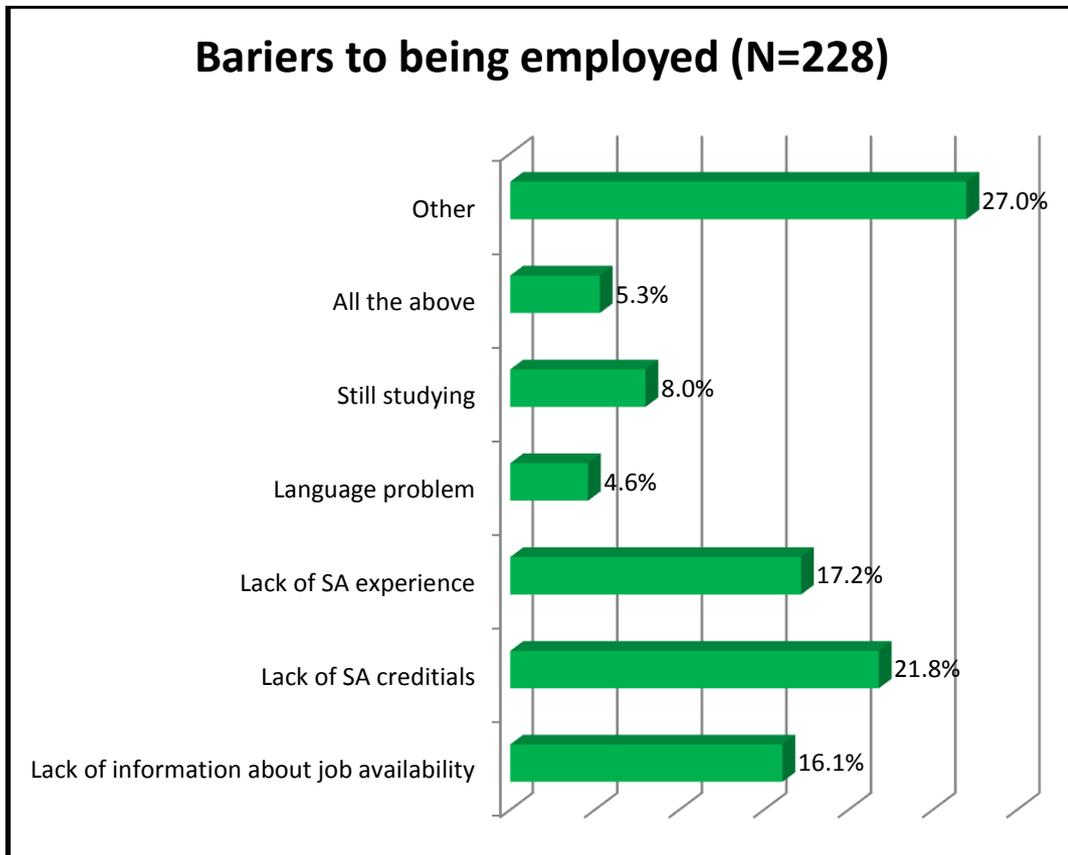
unemployed and looking for work, five are unemployed but are not looking for work, and two are currently full-time students.

Twenty-two of the 31 (13.7%) participants who have worked in the informal sector back home as artisans, farmers, traders or hawkers are currently working full-time, six are unemployed but not looking for work and three are currently full-time students. Of the 27 (11.9%) who never worked back home, seven are currently employed full-time, three are employed part-time, ten are still unemployed and looking for work, and seven are still unemployed but not looking for work. Forty-four of the 141 participants who were students back home are currently employed full-time, eleven are working part-time, 60 are unemployed and looking for work, 17 are not working but not looking for work, and nine are still full-time students, even here in Cape Town. Three participants who did not specify their work back home are currently employed full-time.



**Question 24: If you answered Question 6 as that you are not working, what do you consider to be the reason? (Please tick all that apply.)**

Participants who indicated at Question 23 that were not currently working, were asked to indicate what they considered the problem or barrier to be.



**Figure 27: Barriers to being employed**

Responses to the question about barriers to being employed were as follows: 28 respondents (16.1%) indicated a lack of information about job availability, 38 respondents (21.8%) indicated a lack of South African credentials, 30 respondents (17.2%) indicated a lack of experience in South Africa, eight respondents (4.6%) indicated language problems, eight respondents (5.3%) indicated that all the above were barriers to them being employed, fourteen respondents (8.0%) indicated they were still studying, and 47 respondents (27.0%) chose the “Other” option.

Among issues that came from participants who chose the “Other” option, strongly emphasised government policies against immigrants, racism and xenophobia as reasons:

**P18:** *“... it not easy these days to find a job if you are foreigner, I used to work before I got pregnant ... my maternity leave was like a way to fire me ... and that was all.”*

**RE:** *“Did you go back after giving birth?”*

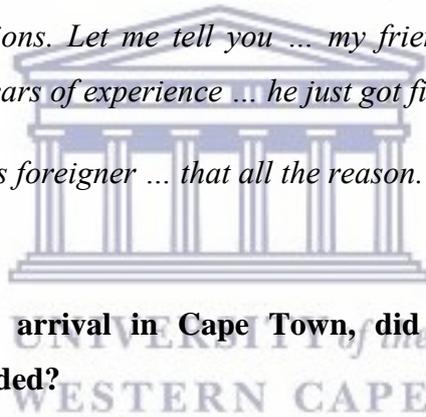
**P18:** *“Yes I did but I was replaced already by a South African ... and that was it.”*

**RE:** *“So what do you think was the reason for not taking you back?”*

**P18:** *“They did not want foreigners anymore ... even my Malawian friend who I left there ... she was fired.”*

**P7:** *“Eeeesh ... I think if you don't study here ... you don't have any paper from here ... it not easy to find a job. They don't recognise our qualifications. Let me tell you ... my friend in Durban was teacher with 10 years of experience ... he just got fired ... you know why?”*

**P7:** *“He is foreigner ... that all the reason.”*



**Question 25: Upon arrival in Cape Town, did you expect to find the information you needed?**

This question was about participants' expectations with regard to finding information upon their arrival in Cape Town. Participants who indicated that they expected to find all the information they needed upon their arrival in Cape Town were asked to specify the places or the sources where they expected to find this information and whether their expectations were met. Those who indicated that they did not expect to find information were asked to provide reasons:

**P6:** *“Yes ... [I] did have expectations, and all I can say is fine ... I got all information I needed ... at campus ... friends.”*

**P7:** *“In Cape Town if you don't have someone to help you to find information, you will struggle. You know when you still at home people are talking ... South Africa is like haven, is like you will find*

*everything you need easily ... for me I am telling you I [struggled]. I started working after five Months. It's not like I don't qualify but the problem is connection. That why I said you need someone to help you ... showing you around ... asking peoples about connections, you know what I mean."*

**P19:** *"There is definitely racism here in Cape Town but people don't just notice it, or maybe people don't want to face it. You know why ... you can ask someone maybe in the shop or other place, when they know that you are foreigner, they won't tell you anything ... now you look like stupid ... It was surprising to find the racism and arrogance against other Africans."*



**Question 26: What do you think are the main reasons which prevent African immigrants from accessing information?**

The following were the responses from surveyed participants:

**Table 10: Reasons for not gaining access to information**

<b>Reason for not gaining access to information (N=49)</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
People are unwilling to provide information	9
Problems with access to internet	3
A lot of policies and procedures to follow	2
Language problem	21
Things are always changes and public services are careless	1
Lack of media availability	1
Laziness	4
Lack of information online	1
Lack of money	1
Busy with work	2
Don't always have time	2
Lack of the right people to provide the right information	3
Sometimes information is restricted to some category of persons	1
Not in possession of SA credentials	1
All my friends also do not know	1
Lack of connectivity	1
People are not helpful	2
Too young and did not know where to go for information	1

Among the reasons that hinder access to information, as mentioned by the participants, the language problem was mentioned most (21 responses), followed by “People are unwilling to provide information” (nine responses):

**P20:** *“I think English is a big problem.”*

**RE:** *“Why?”*

**P20:** *“When people don’t speak English, they don’t even ask for information ... It happened to me as well.”*

**RE:** *“Okay.”*

**P20:** *“I remember one day I was looking for the train to go to Bellville ... I was coming from home affairs. So after I finish at home affairs ... I went to take the train. I knew I’m going to Parow ... right ... so I have to take the train that go to Bellville right ... so me now I thought all the train that go to Bellville ... they will stop to Parow. So I took the train ... I think ... now I know that I took the century city train. You know ... I read where they were writing Bellville ... that all I saw. I knew that it can be a wrong train because my cousin told me that trains that go to Bellville are on platform eight or ten ... the one I took was on platform ... 20 I think or 21. I doubted but because I can’t speak English that time, I can’t ask any question ... you see.”*

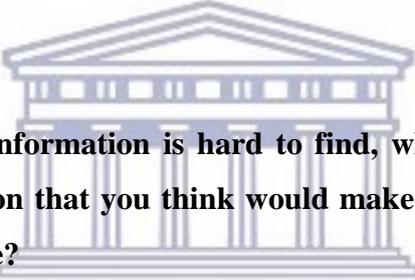
**P8:** *“Language problem ... everywhere in the world, if you can’t talk the local ... locale language you will always have problem, especially with finding information. Yes, I ... I thing and I can confirm you that the language is a big issue in this thing.”*

*Some responses from participants who emphasised the issues of discrimination, racism and xenophobia as main reasons for their not accessing information:*

**P13:** *“When I need information, I don’t go to government offices anymore, first there are long queues, then when is your turn they don’t*

*serve you with respect ... not at all they see as something ... not as people. But when a South African come especially if he is white, they will serve nice without problem ... that why I said racism will never finish.”*

**P20:** *“The system itself it discriminating foreigners ... do you know that you can’t open a [bank] account in Standard bank or Capitec ... even ABSA [Amalgamated Banks of South Africa] now if you don’t have a green ID[Identity Document]. I went one day to Capitec, I asked why I can’t open account with them ... eeeeh ... they had no clear reason. It’s just discrimination ... purely discrimination ... that how it is. I asked them for more info ... Because I wanted to know really why that. There was no clear information. They just say if you don’t have green ID we can’t help.”*



**Question 27: What information is hard to find, which you think should be available? Information that you think would make you reach your potential and improve your life?**

The respondents mentioned that information about places to rent, home loans, employment, including feedback from job applications, education and training, including English learning centres and bursaries, and requirements for asylum-seeking was hard to come by.

**P23** was one of the many participants who mentioned information about jobs and employment was hard to find. He was asked whether he was aware of job internet sites such as LinkedIn or Job Portal where companies advertised available jobs. He confirmed that he was aware of those sites and he did apply online but he never received any feedback. **P25** and **P16** mentioned information about housing was hard to find and they said that banks and housing agents did not waste their time giving full information about home loans or flats available to rent once they realised their clients did not have a green South African ID. Some responses regarding this question included:

**P16:** *“Information on apartment to rent and home loans and all the procedures to buy a house is generally difficult to find.”*

**P25:** *“Honestly speaking almost all information is so difficult to find ... from job search, to education and school fees, bursaries and so housing and other necessary information.”*

**P23:** *“It difficult to get any information or the feedback from companies where you applied job and sometimes you do interviews or test and then that all, you will never hear from them again ... if it was unsuccessful.”*

**P17:** *“I struggled to find information about places where I could go to study English, there were many places but the price was killing. So I needed information about where I could do it for free because there places like that or even cheaper.”*

**P16:** *“I think that more information on house bond would have been useful.”*

**P13:** *“Information on changing drivers licences.”*

**P23:** *“... more information on employment especially for people who don't have a green ID and related issues would have been useful.”*

**10:** *“It would have been very useful to have a marketing of existing immigrant groups that are operating hire in Cape Town, so that they can assist new immigrant with this basic information ... you know.”*

**P9:** *“Information about bursaries available at school and that everyone can apply for.”*

**P11:** *“Centres such as libraries or churches should have list of places where people can go to learn English.”*

**P22:** *“Information about employment for people with disability.”*

**P2:** *“I need information on business for sale.”*

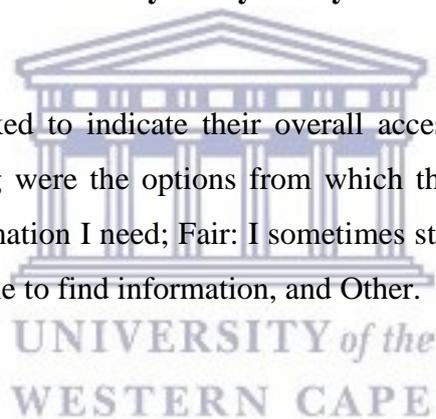
**P21:** *“Information to set up a business.”*

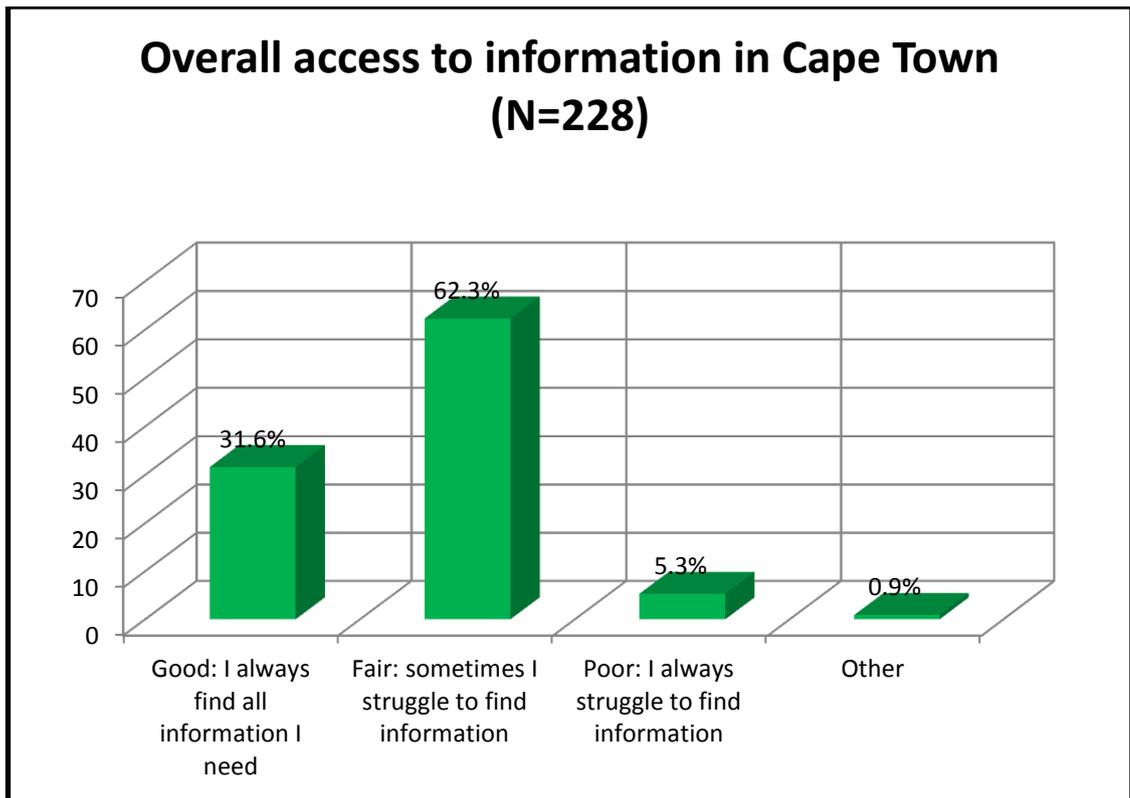
**P18:** *“I think it would have been more useful to talk to people who still back home [Zimbabwe] about the true life of immigrant experience here in South Africa ... I mean the whole truth about the job market so they can make a good decision before leaving the country.”*

**P17:** *“It would be a good idea, especially for those who come from French-speaking countries, that when they come they should be able to access language schools whereby they will learn the Basic English so that they go to look for work easily themselves.”*

**Question 28: What is your overall life in Cape Town like with regard of access to information? Would you say that you always find the information you need?**

Participants were asked to indicate their overall access to information in Cape Town. The following were the options from which they could choose: Good: I always find all information I need; Fair: I sometimes struggle to find information; Poor: I always struggle to find information, and Other.





**Figure 28: Overall access to information in Cape Town**

Most participants (142 or 62.3%) indicated that their overall access to information in Cape Town was fair, meaning that they sometimes struggled to find information, while 72 (31.6%) of participants indicated that their access to information was good, with 12 (5.2%) participants indicating it was poor and 2 (0.9%) participants selecting the “Other” option but they did not specify.

The following were the responses arranged in groups: People provide the wrong information, language problems, a lack of good internet connection, a lack of time, laziness, a lack of money, and a lack of accurate sources of information. Here is what some participants said:

**P2:** *“I would say no ... not always ... because sometimes I just don’t have time to go around, I know I can find it but time is a problem.”*

**P14:** *“Because everything cost money and time, for all information you need, you must call or go on internet ... all this is money.”*

**P8:** *“I say not always because I have struggled with some information as I told you before ... I didn’t know where to go ... all my friends also don’t know so it, it was tough.”*

**Question 29: Do you have any comments or additional information?**

The last question was meant to entice any comments or any additional information. Only a few participants commented and provided additional information. Here are the responses:

- *“South African should make immigrants more comfortable and stop the hatred.”*
- *“I am straggling to get a mentor to assist me starting my own company, need idea from someone already get involved, challenges they faced and advantages and disadvantages.”*
- *“The lack of information for me is due to money matter and not to the availability of tools of information (internet, television).”*
- *“The language is the big barrier to find information.”*
- *“People are very busy that is the reason why they don’t have information.”*
- *“I think because I’m lazy reason why I don’t have access to all information that I need.”*
- *“We need to have money in order to get access to all information.”*
- *“The better way to find information is to be in touch with this people.”*
- *“Lack of time makes us a problem to find information because we struggle with life.”*
- *“I can’t ask South African for information, if is black, she will look at me like rubbish.”*

- *“You can’t ask a question if you can’t speak English well.”*
- *“If you look for information and you ask anyone, he will know that you are a foreigner.”*
- *“Please try to help all immigrants by your research to be well accepted and help the refugee centre.”*
- *“Life is not easy in South Africa when you don’t have citizenship, you can’t even access information.”*
- *“Information access in Cape Town is better when comparing with Johannesburg.”*
- *“May this research bring change to our society.”*
- *“I’m so busy so I don’t have access to information.”*
- *“The government should also consider foreigner national for job opportunity, we are all human.”*
- *“The access to information is perfect in cape town.”*

Four participants provided research with their contact details, such as their e-mail addresses, and requested the searcher to send them a copy of the thesis when completed.

## **5.4 Summary of the chapter**

This chapter presented the results of the study. Research data were collected from two main sources, namely an administered questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with African immigrants who lived in the City of Cape Town. A total of 228 African immigrants completed and returned the questionnaire, and 25 were interviewed by the researcher. Both qualitative and quantitative data were presented in this chapter. The findings of the study are discussed in chapter 6.



# CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

## 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the information behaviour of African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town, South Africa. The study was guided by Burnett and Jaeger's (2011) theory of information worlds as a theoretical framework for the study. This chapter links the literature review components with the research results, and this process was guided by the research questions supporting the study and the selected theory used of the study.

This chapter further discusses and interprets the findings presented in chapter five. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the questionnaires administered to the African immigrants and analysed to address the research questions. Quantitative data were analysed by using SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Qualitative data was gathered through interviews with key informant who did not participate in the questionnaire. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic content analysis.

In order to ensure completeness of the discussion and interpretation of the findings, appropriate and relevant data presented in chapter five have also been reproduced in this chapter. The eight research questions were as follows:

- What are the information needs of immigrants, and what influences their needs?
- What are the information grounds and channels they use to get information they need?
- What role does interpersonal information seeking behaviour play in their lives and family?
- What major problems do immigrants experience when seeking information?

- What are the pull factors of African immigration into the City of Cape Town?
- What are the factors that push of African immigration to leave their home countries?
- What is the nature of African immigrants' links with big public spheres, and how do these ties affect their information behaviour?
- What is the nature of contact between different African immigrant communities?

## **6.2 Demographic profiles**

African immigrants who participated in the study were described generally based on gender, age range, marital status, county of origin, level of education, employment status, and level of English comprehension.

The total number of participants was 228. Great effort was made to include all age groups from 18 upward in order to obtain the different views of all ages. Having a large number (55.7%) of participants between 18 and 29 years of age (Figure 7), this suggests that most African immigrants who come to Cape Town are relatively young, and able to work and study.

With regard to the level of education which participants had attained, having only four out of the 228 participants with less than a secondary school qualification, one can confirm that African immigrants in Cape Town are relatively educated; therefore, they can potentially contribute to the country's economy if their information needs were met.

## **6.3 Immigrating to South Africa**

Different studies in connection with African immigration by Akokpari (2001: 3), Campbell (2007: 11), El-Khawas (2004: 41), Martell (2010: 106) and Weda (2012) have revealed that forced or involuntary immigration and voluntary immigration are the leading types of immigration in Africa due to war, incessant

conflicts, economic and other reasons ravaging the continent that are not beyond their control.

Forced immigration occur in the cases where people have to travel for reasons beyond their control such as in the movement of refugees and exiles, and others who leave because of political, ethnic, gender or other forms of persecution.

The findings of the study reveal that some Africans immigrate to South Africa voluntarily for various reasons, including studying or joining their families. Others leave involuntary due to war or economic instability in their home countries.

This section now discusses push and pulls factors of African immigrants living in Cape Town, South Africa.

### **6.3.1 Push factors**

According to Valji (2003), there are many factors which motivate the need for a geographical change of location. For some, it may be a natural need for progression in life as the neoclassic economic theory proposes, whereas for others, it may be a sudden decision flickered by the serious conflict and violence in their own countries.

With regard to factors which had pushed the surveyed participants to immigrate to South Africa (Figure 12). In terms of the responses given by interviewed participants, political and economic instability, education and joining family members were also strongly emphasised.

Similarly, this was revealed by the findings of two researchers in international immigration, namely De Blij (1993) and Vaccarro (1998) who grouped various factors influencing international immigration. These were poverty, education, economic or political instability and persecution in their own countries.

Furthermore, considering the major push factors of the study, the findings support Boswell (2002) who has argued that immigration tends to be an outcome of a combination of the macro or economic environment and micro or interpersonal

factors, such as the availability of information, encouragement from family members and the individual's own curiosity and aspirations to improve their lives. Likewise, these tend to be facilitating factors in the African immigration process.

Interviewed participants from various class backgrounds and even different countries have similar memories of the declining economic fortunes of their families. A Congolese man explained how difficult it was to get a job in his home country after finishing his honours degree and, although his family could provide for him for basic needs such as food and shelter, he had no hope to get employment and therefore he immigrated to South Africa in search of employment. Similarly, a Zimbabwean woman who was working as teacher but still could not provide for her family (P25)

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that Africans immigrate from poor underdeveloped countries with low standards of living, few job opportunities and low wages to South Africa where they expect better living conditions and better wages. Thus, these economic differences between South Africa and other African countries initiate desires for immigration. This finding supports the view of Boswell (2002: 14) who has stated that immigrants make rational choices to immigrate in order to maximise the expected benefits. According to Boswell, immigration is explained by the level of rational decisions taken by individuals, based on the cost-benefit analysis of their situations.

Education was the most important reason to immigrate. The findings of the study show that the unfavourable conditions including lack of access to quality higher education as well as lack of infrastructure in many African countries are the reasons for immigration of many African students to South Africa.

Voluntary types of immigration were to unite with family members and abusive relationships, as well as other factors which were found popular in African immigration to South Africa, especially for women. When comparing male and female reasons for immigration (Table 7), the survey findings of the study show that 10 (6.9%) males and 19 (22.9%) of females left their countries of origin in order to join their families in Cape Town. On one hand, the natural needs for progression in life and family reunification might motivate African immigration, as proposed by the neoclassic economic theory, and on the other hand, it may be a sudden decision caused by the serious conflict and violence in their own countries (Valji 2003).

Escaping from war and insecurity or political instability were the second and third popular push factors mentioned by participants. This was expected, having considered civil wars and political crises in countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Somalia and Burundi, and civil unrest in many African countries; certainly, these factors have fuelled African immigration to a more peaceful South Africa. Two interviewed participants (**P19** and **P15**) narrated that war in their countries underlie the trauma and fear of involuntary migration. They narrated how wars separated their families, disrupted their education and generally traumatised them.

It is important to note that, in some instances, both immigrants and their families make decisions to immigrate with great benefit expectations. The findings of the study reveal that sometimes Africans' decisions to immigrate are not made only by the individuals who immigrate, but rather by the whole family or household. Therefore, the expected return benefits cannot be only for the individual who immigrates but also for the whole family.

Data from surveyed participants shows that 83 (57.6%) of the 144 male participants made a decision to immigrate themselves, 56 (38.9%) indicated that the family made the decision for them. Of the 80 female participants, 23 (28.8%) made the decision to immigrate themselves and 55 (68.7%) indicated that their family had made the decision (Figure 14).

By comparing push factors and decisions to immigrate the surveyed data of the present study suggest that the proportion of female participants who come to unite with their families is higher than that of male participants. This suggests that, in African households, most of the time, women do not just decide to immigrate but the family decides for them while most males decide themselves.

Among male interviewed participants who stated that they made decisions themselves, some of them further argued that they were mostly influenced by their friends who were already in Cape Town.

One Zimbabwean woman was not given choices as she was married and her husband had to decide for her:

**P25:** *“My husband decided, I had no choice I had to come with him ... I’m glad he chose to ... you know.”*

Based on societal factors, including community norms and cultural values, not all African women seem to be in the position where they can decide whether they can immigrate or not. This means that for many societies it is the culture that determines the likelihood of women immigrating to South Africa.

Boswell’s (2002: 14) micro and macro theories explain the launch of immigration on individual and family levels, and on the level of rational decisions made by individuals mainly based on the cost-benefit analysis of their situation. This research study confirms that immigration decisions are either based on the participation of the whole family or individual decisions but the decisions are also influenced by friends or relatives already staying abroad.

It is evident that African immigrants’ responses are multiple, with overlapping reasons for immigrating. In this regard, it is important to note that, while some push factors are structural and objective, others are personal, relating to personal circumstances at the time when it is decided to immigrate.

### 6.3.2 Pull factors

Vaccarro's (1998) study has shown that international immigrants' destination choices are grouped into various reasons, such as a search for better economic opportunities, as well as a more peaceful and politically stable environment.

With regard to the pull factors of this study (Figure 15), Three of those who have lived in other provinces and towns of South Africa have further indicated that Cape Town offers more opportunities than those towns where they have lived before. Interviewed participants' choice of staying in Cape Town included job opportunities, studies, security, better life stability and weather. On top of better life stability, **P25** further emphasised the future of their children who are growing up in a good neighbourhood and attending nice schools.

*“The only thing ... or the most important thing that make me stay in Cape town is the school of my children, here you know that you are going to raise children in good condition ... I am sure that my children go to good school. That's a good thing which I never had when I was back home.”*

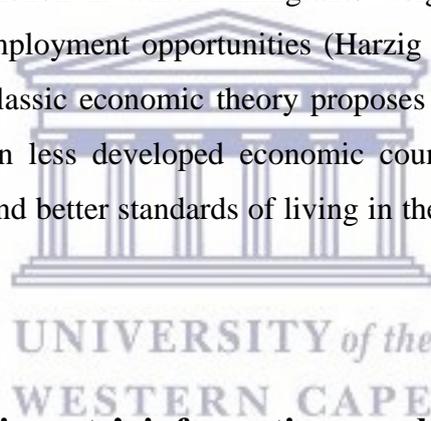
Based on the findings of the study, it is clearly seen that there is a perception that South Africa courses or degrees are better than those offered in other African countries. Some interviewed participants argued that they had decided to stay in Cape Town because of good quality education, the availability of education facilities with a wide choice of courses and employment opportunities after completion of study. This supported McDonald et al's (2000) study who were of the opinion that Africans from other countries were attracted to South Africa by the country's advanced economic, social and political climate.

South Africa seems to be one the most developed African countries when compared with other African countries, it has more job opportunities and better paying jobs than other African countries. Thus the difference in wages between South Africa and other African countries is one of the main pull factors.

Taking the history of South Africa into consideration, one should understand that before 1994 when South Africa was still under the apartheid regime, South Africa was not a good destination for Africans, based on the bad socio-political

relationship between South Africa and the rest of the continent. Things changed when late president Nelson Mandela took over and made significant changes to the economic and socio-political environments in South Africa, including cooperation between South Africa and the rest of Africa. This made it socio-politically possible for some Africans to come to South Africa. Thus, on the one hand, the combination of the economic crises and the political and civil unrest on the other side of the African continent, and on the other hand, the opening of South Africa's borders as well as the flourishing economy and better education system and job opportunities made it possible for African immigrants to consider South Africa as a potential destination.

In addition, the findings of the study support the neoclassic economic theory, which highlights the economic factor in immigration, as it views immigration as an economic phenomenon in which immigrants weigh the cost and returns of current and future employment opportunities (Harzig and Hoerder 2009: 62). In other ways, the neoclassic economic theory proposes that low salaries and poor standards of living in less developed economic countries push away workers, while higher wages and better standards of living in the more developed countries pull them in.



#### **6.4 African immigrants' information needs, grounds and small worlds**

This section discusses the findings regarding channels or grounds which African immigrants use to access information; their information needs; their information seeking behaviour on micro, macro and meso level; and challenges African immigrants face to access information.

##### **6.4.1 African immigrants' information needs**

This section discusses African immigrants' information needs in data that were presented in chapter five. Cuesta (1990) and Flythe (2001) postulated that new immigrants have different needs from those immigrants who had stayed in a

country for longer. Machet and Govender (2012: 2) suggest that “understanding the stages of immigrants’ adaptation to the host country, their differing environments and the situations they face can elicit findings about how and whom they approach in order to find information to solve their everyday problems and to meet their needs”.

In order to collect and interpret the data regarding the information needs of the participants, questions were asked to identify their information needs at the time they arrived in Cape Town, as well as their recent and current needs. In addition, Information needed was compared with participants’ periods of stay in Cape Town. Similar questions were asked to interviewed participants.

It was important to discuss the information needs of African immigrants when they first arrived in Cape Town in the study. African immigrants have to consider everyday life matters, while they live outside their home countries.

The information needs discussed in this section include information about places where they may obtain visas, services including healthcare and education, finances including banks, business opportunities, recreation including gymnasiums, work or employment, local news, news from home country, language resources, accommodation, driving schools and government departments. It is important to highlight that one surveyed participant has suggested that a need for telephone information must essentially be considered among information needs which African immigrants need upon arriving in Cape Town. Places regarding visa information and services were the least recent and current information needed as indicated by participants, with only 35 responses (3.9%) (Figure 18).

Among the interviewed participants, P10 was one of the participants who stayed in Cape Town for more than five years. He indicated that he had a need to travel and so he needed information about finding passports, visas and other travel-related information. He wanted to return to his home country and visit other countries around the world in order to visit family members and friends abroad.

Information about recreation and leisure concerning gymnasiums had 58 responses (6.5%) and 68 responses (7.7%) for information about driving schools.

However, when information needed was compared with participants' periods of stay in Cape Town (Table 8), there was one response for information about places and services (including visas), one response for information about recreation (including gymnasiums), and no response for information about driving schools from five surveyed participants who were relatively new in Cape Town.

Five participants stated that they had been living in the country for less than one year while 94 participants indicated that they had been living in Cape Town for more than six years. Thirteen (13) participants were searching for places and services (including for visas), 25 participants were searching for recreation including gymnasiums, and 27 participants were searching for information about driving schools. It is important to note that additional information about games, movies and football was also identified by interviewed participants.

The findings of this research study support the research done by Cuesta (1990) who argued that newly arrived immigrants have more basic, survival-related information needs, while settled immigrants have more needs in areas such as leisure or pleasure reading.

With regard to healthcare, it is important to note that even though health matters inevitably reflect a major life concern, it was revealed that participants, especially those who were relatively new in Cape Town, could only think about searching for such information when they were sick unlike other information needed such as work and learning English, which were considered to be the most important priorities upon arrival in Cape Town.

Needs for information about education and training were the most important information needed by surveyed participants, with 95 responses (28.6%) (Figure 17), while recent and current information needs gave rise to only 6.1% responses.

When comparing information needs about education and training with the period which participants had been living in Cape Town, there were two responses out of the five surveyed participants who had been living in Cape Town for less than one year, while 21 of the 94 participants who had been living in Cape Town for more than six years indicated that they needed information regarding education and training. As Feather and Sturges (1997) stated that the needs vary within societies

and among individuals, and keep on changing over time, this study confirms that African immigrants' information needs continuously change over time. Based on the educational backgrounds of the participants of this study, most of them are relatively educated. It is to be expected that information about education and training would be top priority for them.

There were 73 (8.2%) responses for recent and current information related to finances, including banking and business for two of five surveyed participants who had been living in Cape Town for less than a year. Twenty-eight (28) of the 94 participants who had been living in Cape Town for more than six years indicated that they had been looking for information about financial matters such as banking and business. Being relatively new to Cape Town or having lived there for some time shows that financial information is often needed. It may be critical to those who are relatively new to Cape Town, as they are still adjusting to life in a new city.

It is important to note that one of the interviewed participants (**P20**) who recently needed information about banking was disappointed, as he did not receive help from a certain bank.

Fisher, Durrance and Hinton (2004), in their work on the theory of information grounds while using an outcome evaluation approach enriched by its focus on context to explore the use of need-based services by immigrants in New York City, found that immigrants had significant information needs to help with adjusting to life in a new country.

Upon first arriving in Cape Town, African immigrants demonstrated a need for work and employment, which was indicated by 63 (16.3%) respondents, while it was also the most recent and currently needed information with 136 responses (15.3%). However, when information needed was compared with participants' periods of stay in Cape Town (Table 8), information about work and employment was the most needed from four of five surveyed participants who were relatively new to Cape Town, while 53 of 94 participants who had been living in Cape Town for more than six years needed information about work and employment (Table 8).

Some interviewed participants have shown their concerns and mentioned reasons why the search for employment was their top priority even if they had been living in Cape Town for more than six years. These participants had taken jobs that were not related to their skills and education; for example, the meter taxi driver, waiters and chefs in restaurants and hotels, as well as a security guard had no option but to keep searching for better job opportunities.

Upon their arrival in Cape Town, accommodation was the second most important priority for two of the five surveyed participants who had been living in Cape Town for less than one year, with 73 responses (22%) in total. It was placed in fourth place with 8.3% for recent and current information needs. Thirty-one (31) of the 94 participants who had been living in Cape Town for more than six years indicated that they needed information about accommodation.

Accommodation is one of the important information needed but it seems to be problematic for African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town. One interviewed participant (**P1**) classified information regarding accommodation as the hardest information to find.

Upon arrival in Cape Town, information about language resources was important for 12.3% of the surveyed participants who indicated that they needed this information, with another 10.1% participants indicated that they recently or currently needed information about language resources.

When data regarding information needed about language resources were compared with the period of time participants had been living in Cape Town, three of five surveyed participants living in Cape Town for less than a year needed this information, while 31 of the 94 participants living in Cape Town for more than six years also needed this information.

The study shares similar findings with those of Rincon and Associates (2000) in their study where they interviewed two groups of people in New York City, including representatives of different public service agencies which serve immigrant communities and recently arrived immigrants. Rincon and Associates' study has confirmed that learning English as a second language, housing and

employment were the three immediate information needs for recently arrived immigrants.

Since African immigrants do not live in isolation from local communities, it was important to hear from them about the need to obtain information about local news. Based on the data regarding recent and current information needs about local news, there were 59 responses (6.7%), with two of five surveyed participants who had been living in Cape Town for less than one year, and 20 responses of immigrants living in Cape Town for more than six years. All of these immigrants indicated that they needed information about local news.

Some interviewed participants added that they needed information about promotions from local supermarkets, as well as information about events taking place in the local libraries. As much as African immigrants need to be informed about what is happening in their surroundings; they also need to be informed about what is going on back home.

In his study on information needs and behaviours of diasporic populations in New York, Pyati (2009) noted that information needs of immigrants were not only limited to basic living skills in the new country or to basic English literacy but they also needed information about maintaining cultural ties to the home country. Chatman (1999) further emphasised that the need to stay in touch with family and friends in their home countries was one of the immigrants' information needs.

This study reveals that African immigrants significantly need information about news from their home countries. In this regard, information about news from home was the second highest ranked information need, with 116 responses (13.2%) after information about work and employment. It clearly seems that both new participants and those who have been living in Cape Town for a longer period of time valued information about news from home as one of the most needed kinds of information.

Information about services provided by government departments was the second lowest recent and current information needed by participants, with 50 responses (5.6%) after places and services, including visa centres. For those who were relatively new to Cape Town, two of the five participants indicated that they

needed information about government departments, while 20 of the 94 participants living in Cape Town for more than six years also needed information about government departments.

In summary, information needs, according to Feather and Sturges (1997: 216), continuously vary within societies and among individuals, as they keep on changing over time. While the study shows that information about education and training, news from home countries, as well as language training were the information most needed by new immigrants, there is no difference from the participants living in Cape Town for more than six years.

Though the information about driving training, recreation including gymnasiums, and services, including healthcare, was not top priority among participants, it was needed significantly by participants living in Cape Town for more than six years. The findings of this study support Cuesta's (1990: 27) study. He confirmed that new immigrants had special interests in areas such as learning English, the use of dictionaries, obtaining information about food, jobs, housing, medical and legal matters, especially immigration policies.

Therefore, based on the findings of this study, it is evident that, in some instances, there are no significant differences in the information needed most by both new and settled African immigrants in Cape Town. Both groups first need basic information to survive, such as information about jobs and a means of self-improvement, including training and learning English. These needs continuously persist as people look to improving their lives. The need for other types of information about driving training, recreation and services keeps on changing over time. As immigrants become established over time, some of their information needs change.

#### **6.4.2 African immigrants' information grounds**

If people did not have information needs, then libraries and other information systems would cease to exist, even basic interpersonal human communication would be altered (Chimah and Udo 2015).

Government offices and public libraries are the ideal institutions to visit when looking for information, especially information about government services. These facilities are useful sources of information for both immigrants and local communities, as one of the primary aims of their services is to provide information to whoever is in need of information.

In their survey of library needs for North Carolina immigrants, Rincon and Associates (2000) found that almost 60% of immigrants had not been to the public places such as public libraries where they were supposed to obtain information in the year before. A lack of time, problems with the location of these facilities, language problems and a lack of need or interest were provided as reasons.

Similar to their study, government offices and public libraries also seem to not be the preferred sources of information for African immigrants in Cape Town. The findings of this study show that, upon arrival in Cape Town (Figure 16), only six participants (4.9%) consulted government offices for information and 21 (17.2%) for public libraries.

In terms of current sources of information (Figure 19), 60 respondents (7.2%) indicated that they had visited public libraries but surprisingly they were recommended by 101 (10.7%) surveyed participants. One of the interviewed participants (**P12**) recommended the Cape Town Central Library for new immigrants, as there are books in different languages.

In addition, two other interviewed participants (**P14** and **P7**) who have been living in Cape Town for more than five years seemed to be familiar with the various government departments, and indicated that they preferred meeting government officials and interact with them face-to-face to ensure they are being understood in terms of their needs. It is important to note that speaking to family and friends, and using the internet and telephone about the services offered by government departments were also mentioned by interviewed participants.

The fact of not considering government offices and public libraries as major sources for information by African immigrants is explained by the theory of information worlds. The theory argues that everyday activities of people living in a small world, including activities related to information, are not considered

seriously and frequently taken for granted as being standard across all small worlds regardless of their uniqueness to a specific group. Moreover, “social type” is one of the key concepts of the theory of information worlds. This concept argues that people living in a small world share perceptions of individuals’ roles in context.

In addition, Chatman (1996) stated that immigrants shared perceptions of the relevance of the public information centres available. Talking to friends and family and checking online for information about services offered by government departments might be perceived as relevant by African immigrants rather than physically visiting government departments.

This study reveals that African immigrants use different media, including television, radio, newspapers and magazines as sources of information. As a current source of information, the data shows that television is the second most used source of information after the internet. There were 110 responses (12%) for television, 59 responses (6.3%) for radio and 65 responses (7.1%) for newspapers and magazines. Interviewed participants who use media for information said that they read newspapers and watch television as well.

The findings of the study correlate strongly with those of Savolainen (2009) who emphasised that everyday life information needs and information seeking behaviour are affected by a number of cognitive, emotional, cultural and situational factors. According to him, everyday life information seeking behaviour consists of two major modes. On the one hand, people search for orienting information by monitoring daily events through the media such as newspapers, television and the internet; on the other hand, they may search for problem-specific information.

However, discussions regarding places where participants go to look for information about housing and accommodation reveal that participants who had been in Cape Town for longer were more familiar with more and reliable resources such as local housing agencies and the internet, which might assist them to meet this information need. Chatting with friends and family, reading

newspapers and advertisements for housing and rental properties in public places were mentioned more by participants who were relatively new in Cape Town.

African immigrants who participated in the study further highlighted that they recently used the internet to meet their information needs regarding work and employment, healthcare, accommodation, education and finances. The internet was the source of information mentioned most, except for healthcare, for which participants said that they physically visited local clinics and public hospitals for information regarding their health.

In addition, interviewed participants stated that they used the internet for other reasons such as social networking, online banking, online shopping, to read the newspapers, to download movies and music, to play games, to communicate via e-mail and to video-call. For surveyed participants, the internet was the source of information they currently used most with 173 responses (18.9%). It was also the source of information recommended by most participants, with 147 responses (15.8%).

Initially, Habermas (1992) pointed out that locals and communication channels of the public sphere such as public libraries, the internet, media and other settings played an important role in information behaviour; not only by making free discourse about political and social information possible, but also in their function as mediators between the rights of the individual and the power of the state.

Immigrant organisations, including non-profit organisations which serve immigrants, identified immigrants' mutual community groups and meeting places with friends such as hair salons as other places participants visited for obtaining information. As far as current information sources used by participants were concerned, immigrant organisations were the third preferred source of information with 102 responses (11.1%) after the internet and television.

As a recommended source of information, immigrant organisations were the second most mentioned source with 103 responses (10.9%) again after the internet. Meeting places for friends was not as popular as immigrant organisations, with only 32 responses (3.5%) as a current source of information and with 52 responses (5.5%) as a recommended source of information.

Meeting places where African immigrants usually meet include clubs, pubs, hair salons and tuck shops. Normally they visit these places for various reasons such as having a haircut or just to pass the time. This confirms the findings of the study conducted by Fisher et al (2004: 811) who concluded that information grounds were environments temporarily created when people come together for a specific purpose but from whose behaviour emerged a social atmosphere that promoted the spontaneous and opportune sharing of information.

Some of interviewed participants also mentioned that refugee centres and mutual community groups provided useful information about courses to improve their English.

**P22:** *“Since the newly comer don’t have much information about the new place, it’s very important for them to approach social organizations such as refugee centres or any other NGOs [non-governmental organization].”*

Social groups mentioned by participants included mutual community groups such as the Nigerian Association in Cape Town and Amis BK, a mutual group of immigrants from the East DRC. Unlike meeting places for friends where African immigrants go not primarily for information purposes, this study revealed that NGOs which served immigrants were visited for information purposes such as information about English courses and legal matters, while immigrants’ social groups were visited for information purposes, including information about news from home.

### **6.4.3 African immigrants’ information seeking behaviour**

Wilson (1999: 249) states that “information behaviour describes those activities a person may engage in when identifying his or her own needs for information, searching for such information in any way, and using or transforming that information”. In addition, the theory of information worlds examines the role of information, information behaviours and perceived values of information across social contexts of large and small worlds.

The findings of this study show that African immigrants look for information from interpersonal sources such as friends or relatives, as well as from larger social influences, including public libraries, NGOs, the media and the internet. It is important to note that African immigrants living in the Cape Town community in fact come from many different cultures and therefore, they are comprised of many different small worlds. Participants engaged in this study come from sixteen countries in Africa. The theory of information worlds argues that as long as societies contain a range of cultures and thus a range of small worlds, the public sphere will be a viable concept.

This section covers African immigrants' information behaviour at the micro, macro and meso levels.

#### **6.4.3.1 Micro level**

The concept of “small worlds” draws attention to the social environments in which people live and work, linked by a set of common interests and expectations, as well as a common set of information needs and behaviours, and more often even by geographic proximity and similar economic situations. A common characteristic of people living in a small world is a strong emphasis on family and kin relationships which explains their standards of behaviour and suitable approaches to future goal-setting.

The literature review shows that immigrants prefer to seek information from interpersonal sources such as friends, relatives or co-workers rather than from institutions or organisations (Fisher et al 2004). Given the language, economic and cultural barriers attached to immigrants' everyday needs, it is clear that African immigrants would rely on interpersonal information sources, especially close relatives and friends rather than institutionalised sources of information.

The findings of this study showed that, upon arrival in Cape Town, relatives and friends were the sources of information most used by participants (Table 16). Friends and relatives were also the sources of information used most by the interviewed participants upon their arrival in Cape Town. It is still one of the most used recent sources of information when participants were looking for information

regarding employment, local news, news from their home countries, travel, health and education such as help with learning English, recreation, financial matters, government departments, accommodation and driving training.

Based on the findings, this study suggests that African immigrants depend on relatives and kin friendships for information, especially those immigrants who are relatively new in Cape Town due to a variety of factors, including ignorance or lack of awareness of other sources of information available to them and language barriers for those who cannot speak English.

The findings of this study also confirm the Flythe (2001) study on information needs, information seeking patterns and sources of information of immigrants living in New York City. It was discovered that new immigrants relied on information from friends and family, and were often not aware of public services available to them. According to Flythe, perhaps preferring personalised methods of gathering information was more familiar to new immigrants than the institutionalised formal methods or sources of information.

One interviewed participant arguably showed that he had no choice but to look for any information he needed from his relatives and friends who spoke and understood the same language as he did.

It is important to note that African immigrant information seeking behaviour changes over time as they become familiar with the environment in which they live and the nature of the information they need. This finding supports that of Machet and Govender (2012) who also recognised that immigrant information seeking behaviour changes over time. They suggested that “understanding the stages of immigrants’ adaptation to the host country, their differing environments and the situations they face can elicit findings about how and whom they approach in order to find information to solve their everyday problems and to meet their needs” (Machet and Govender 2012: 2).

Some of the reasons why information needs and behaviour of new immigrants differ from those who have been in the country for longer are because new immigrants may not have yet developed a social network upon their arrival in the new country, or as emphasised by Machet and Govender (2012: 26), they may

have a social network which is not adequate in size, density and strength to help facilitate their transition.

As African immigrants establish themselves over time, their information needs and behaviour change, their social network characteristics may develop and change as well, reflecting their interactions with the environment. Another reason might be that, when African immigrants interact with other immigrants, they fully understand one another and this may lead to easier access to information due to prompt feedback from their friends and/or relatives. According to Wilson (1999), this refers to the element of positive exchange of information that happens in most cases when people, arguably immigrants, find themselves on the same level of professionalism or in the same situations.

#### **6.4.3.2 Macro level**

Access to information on the macro level is explained by Habermas (1992) with his concept of lifeworlds. Habermas defines a lifeworld as collective information and a social environment that weaves together the various information resources, perspectives and voices of all of the members of a society. Central to Habermas' work are larger social influences, including public sphere institutions, media, technology and politics.

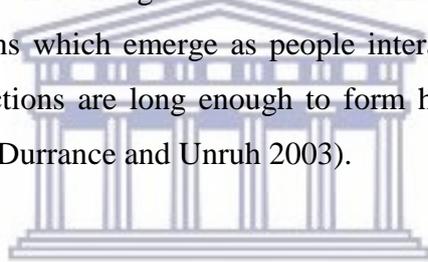
The findings of this study show that African immigrants in Cape Town do not only rely on relatives and friends for information, but also consult the internet, public libraries, NGOs, government officials, school officials and media including television, radio and newspapers. The internet was the source of information used most as both a current and a recommended source of information, followed by television, then immigrant organisations as both current and recommended sources of information.

Some interviewed participants (**P6, P14 and P17**) who mentioned that they used the internet to communicate with friends and relatives, further explained that they always visited news websites including television and radio websites from their home countries. It is important to note that Facebook, Skype and e-mailing friends

and family were other ways of communicating with those still in their home countries, as mentioned by interviewed participants **P1, P5, P3** and **P13**.

Based on the findings, it is evident that the internet has become a highly popular source of information globally, including for immigrant communities, largely due to the availability of search engines such as Google and social networking websites. Taking into consideration that technology is one of the elements that have influenced the theory of information worlds, much research has proven that ICT has played an important role in creating and maintaining the dispersion of people.

The internet has further facilitated the creation of effective information communities. Another important role that the internet has played in immigrant information seeking behaviour is the ability to create worlds and to connect people within these worlds through a virtual community. Virtual communities are the social aggregations which emerge as people interact over the internet. Such discussions or interactions are long enough to form human feelings or personal relationships (Fisher, Durrance and Unruh 2003).



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#### **6.4.3.3 Meso level**

Because the African immigrant society in Cape Town as a whole is composed of a large and diverse range of small worlds, and because the success or failure of a society depends largely on the possibility of an open interaction between these worlds, it is necessary to define not only their own little worlds, but also interconnect concepts of information access and exchange of information between these little worlds.

With regard to participants' association with other immigrants or immigrant societies (Figure 23), interviewed participants agreed that they had friends from other places or different countries. Most participants emphasised that they always made friends at work, church, and in neighbourhoods and other places.

In their study on bridging local and global information sources, Srinivasan and Pyati (2007: 1737) emphasised that as much as local environments are important, immigrants' information seeking behaviour is not merely limited to local contexts.

Similar to the findings of this study, Srinivasan and Pyati's (2007) study shows that Somali refugee communities in Boston were not isolated, as the online environments provided them with a space that kept them in constant communication with immigrants in other parts of the United States, Kenya and Italy.

This situation can also be understood with the concept of globalisation coming into play. Online environments are important instruments which serve as easy links to different small worlds. Pyati (2009) understands globalisation as a fundamental factor concerned with the increasing interconnectedness of social, economic, political and cultural relations in the world. According to Pyati, the diaspora, as a framework for understanding the information needs and behaviours of certain ethnic groups, is important and cannot be discussed without reference to globalisation.

African immigrants work and live in fellowship with other people from different places and countries, including local South Africans; thus, it is evident that African immigrants interact and exchange information with people from outside their small worlds. Chu's (1999) study on immigrant information behaviour showed how children can serve as linguistic, cultural and information intermediaries for their immigrant parents, and eventually brings connection between two or multiple small worlds.

Taking the importance of interpersonal networks and the use of intermediaries of immigrant information seeking behaviour into consideration, the findings of this study have shown that African immigrants do not live in isolation. Just as African immigrants use ICT-enabled technologies to communicate with their friends and relatives, Srinivasan and Pyati (2007) showed in their work how ICT-mediated diaspora also acknowledges that ICTs and ICT-enabled technologies play an important role in the process of maintaining and creating the diaspora.

## 6.5 Barriers

Barriers can relate to language, distance, cultural background, information poverty and social exclusion, discrimination or lack of accessibility to information. Many such problems have been outlined by African immigrants in relation to searching for information in their everyday lives. African immigrants come from different backgrounds, and they experience different needs and multiple problems in Cape Town. The findings of this study indicate that participants experience issues relating to language, information poverty and social exclusion. Some participants also experience other sorts of barriers related to racism and discrimination.

Language is an important part of people's cultural identity and the resources they use are affected by their language and culture. Language plays an important role in how participants search for information. For African immigrants who come from a non-English-speaking background, English proficiency is a basic requirement for communication.

In order to understand the participants' level of English comprehension, they were asked to indicate their level of English comprehension (Figure 10). When the paper survey forms were completed, the researcher observed difficulties among participants in understanding a number of the questions. In a number of cases, participants requested clarification of the meaning of questions before completing their responses or answering some of the questions. Some interviewed participants said that, as they could not speak English at all when they first arrived in Cape Town, they did not expect to find information upon their arrival in Cape Town.

In terms of accessing online information, it is important to note that beyond the financial considerations, a minimum amount of human capital is needed. The individual must first be able to understand the information presented by the medium. This requirement involves literacy, as well as language requirements. In South Africa, all the websites participants can visit for information, including the Department of Home Affairs and NGOs, use the English language; thus, African immigrants who do not speak English may be discouraged to visit these websites.

Among the reasons that hindered access to information, as mentioned by participants (Table 10), the language problem was the most important reason,

giving rise to 21 responses. It is also important to note that both surveyed and interviewed participants, who indicated that they did not expect to find information upon their arrival in Cape Town, stated that their problem with language was the most important barrier to access the information they needed at the time.

Immigrant communities consist of more than ten categories of groups who may be socially excluded, as identified by Peace (2001). While the findings of this study may indicate potential barriers being present because of the use of the English language, some participants had a good or excellent command of the English language but were still not able to gain access to information due to social exclusion. Hungwe (2013) understand social exclusion as a failure to develop effective information practices that connect to passivity, making available all the information of the day, which set the landscape elements of information that need to be accessed, and understand to participate in their adopted community.

Hungwe (2013), in his study on Zimbabweans' integration into new societies in Johannesburg, has indicated that continuing social exclusion can put immigrants at greater risk of remaining information poor, resulting in being excluded from participation in democratic processes, lacking opportunity and feeling a lack of inclusion in the broader community. Being denied access to certain services, such as opening a bank account, as indicated by one of the interviewed participants, can put African immigrants in a situation where they feel socially excluded, and therefore limited in their economic and social potential. The sense of feeling socially excluded was also remarkable when participants explained the reason why they thought they were not employed or were not appointed in appropriate jobs in accordance with their qualifications.

Based on the findings of this study (Figure 28) it is important to point out that issues such as government policies against immigrants like the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) system, racism and xenophobia were strongly emphasised by the surveyed participants as well as some interviewed participants who chose the "Other" option from the list provided in the questionnaire.

In terms of specific information needed which was hard to find, most of the participants agreed that there were certain types of information they needed but never had access to it. Information about specific medicines, work permits, bursaries, places to rent and home loans, employment including feedback from job applications, education and training including English learning centres, and requirements for asylum-seeking were mentioned as information which was hard to find. When asked what they thought the reasons could be for not having full access to such information, the inability to speak English, a lack of connections, too many policies and procedures, discrimination, racism and xenophobia, bad service delivery by public servants and a lack of money were mentioned by the participants.

The findings of this study correlate favourably with other research conducted in practice. Hanken (1995) and Flythe's (2001) studies identified institutional barriers, including staff attitudes, rules and regulations, personal and social barriers, including low self-esteem, perception barriers, including a sense of isolation, educational disadvantages and a lack of knowledge of existing facilities and services to be additional barriers associated with a lack of access to information by immigrants.

An example of an institutional barrier faced by African immigrants is emphasised by two interviewed participants (**P1** and **P16**). They mentioned that bankers and estate agents did not spend time providing them with full information about home loans or flats available to rent once they realised their client did not have a green South African ID.

Another interviewed participant decided to not physically visit the Department of Home Affairs anymore because of the poor attitude displayed by the staff members of that department.

## 6.6 Findings related to the theory of information worlds

The study was guided by the theory of information worlds, which combines concepts drawn from small worlds and the lifeworld. The theory of information worlds thus examines the role of information, information seeking behaviours and perceived values of information across social contexts of large and small worlds.

- **The concept of small worlds: macro level**

Chatman (1991) defines “small worlds” as the social environments in which an interconnected group of individuals live, work and bond together by common interests, behaviour, expectations, and often by economic status and geographic relatedness. A common characteristic of people living in a small world is a strong emphasis on family and kin relationships, which explains their standards of behaviour and suitable approaches to future goal-setting. In relation to the findings of the study, it has been proven that African immigrants, especially those who are relatively new in Cape Town, prefer to seek information from interpersonal sources such as friends, relatives, church members or co-workers rather than from institutions or organisations. However, this preference changes over time when they become more familiar with the environment in which they live.

- **The concept of lifeworld: micro level**

The concept of lifeworld focuses almost exclusively on the social world and its information resources in a much broader context; it is wide, reaching across a broad binding of a culture. Members of a social collective normally share a lifeworld. Lifeworld emphasises the larger social influences, including public sphere institutions, media, technology and politics. This study has revealed that there is a strong impact on the broader social context within which a small world exists. As African immigrants become familiar with the environments in which they live, their information seeking behaviour changes significantly, as they are influenced by big public spheres. They then tend to use the internet, public libraries, NGOs and media such as television, radio and newspapers much more often.

- **Intermediate worlds: meso level**

While the theory of information worlds draws its conception from small worlds and a broader lifeworld, it also acknowledges that there are intermediate worlds, which can mediate or intervene between the macro and micro worlds. The theory further suggests that, as small worlds exist within a broader lifeworld context, which influences them just as the lifeworld can be influenced by specific small worlds, the intermediate levels can interact with both.

The findings of this study confirm that African immigrant communities, though they comprise multiple small worlds, they do not live in isolation; they interact with one another on an individual and a group or communal level. The study shows that African immigrants upon arrival in Cape Town heavily rely on their friends and relatives who have been living in the country for longer for information. As they start to work, talk to church members, visiting libraries and NGOs, they connect with and exchange information with people from different places and countries, as well as with local South Africans.

## **6.7 Summary of the chapter**

This chapter further discussed and interpreted the findings of this study. The discussion comprehensively included the research results and literature review in alignment with the theory of information worlds which guided the study. One of the key findings of the study is that the majority of participants who have been living in the City of Cape Town for a long period of time have different information needs from those African immigrants who are relatively new in Cape Town

The study discussed information needs, information grounds and information seeking behaviour patterns of African immigrants involved in the study, as well as the challenges they face when searching for information. Like the theory of information worlds, this study also found that African immigrants' information seeking behaviour is shaped simultaneously by both immediate influences such as friends, family, co-workers and trusted information sources from the small world in which they live, and larger social influences such as public sphere institutions,

the media and the internet. In addition, this chapter highlighted the fact that the African community in Cape Town consisted of different small worlds, which, although separate, did not function in isolation, as they interacted with one another.

The following chapter provides a summary of the major findings by answering the research questions, reaching conclusions, as well as making recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

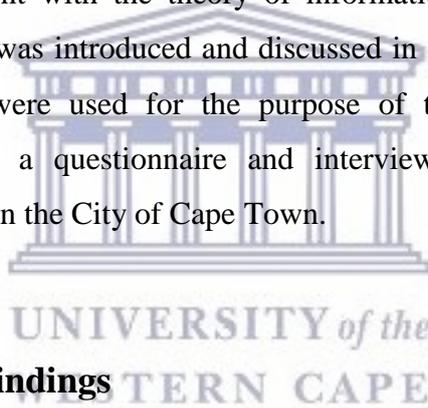


# CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of this study which investigated information seeking behaviour of African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town. It also contains conclusions as well as recommendations. The summary includes the overview findings based on the fundamental problem of the study, as well as answers to the eight research sub-questions.

The findings of the study were presented in chapter five and were further discussed and interpreted in chapter six. The findings were summarised and explained in alignment with the theory of information worlds by Burnett and Jaeger (2011) which was introduced and discussed in chapter two. Different data collection methods were used for the purpose of the study. These methods included the use of a questionnaire and interviews involving 228 African immigrants who live in the City of Cape Town.



## 7.2 Summary of findings

Results were presented in chapter five, systematically following the main sources of research data, which were administered questionnaires and interviews with African immigrants in the City of Cape Town. This was followed by intensive discussions and interpretations in chapter six by linking the research results with literature reviewed and the theory of information worlds.

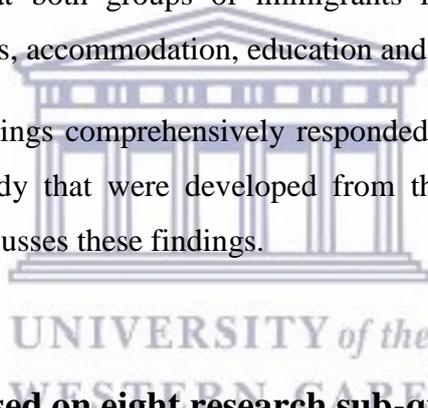
This summary section serves to link all related research outcomes under one umbrella for a better understanding of the research findings. Thus, this section is divided into two sub-sections: overview findings based on the research problem, and findings based on the eight sub-questions underpinning the study.

### **7.2.1 Overview findings based on the research problems**

The research problems of the study were (a) to identify information needs and information seeking patterns of African immigrants in the City of Cape Town; (b) to identify barriers between information and these immigrants; and (c) to form strategies or suggestions for overcoming these barriers so that the organisations which serve immigrant communities may better address their information needs.

The study found that the majority of participants who have been living in the City of Cape Town for a long period of time have different information needs from those African immigrants who are relatively new in Cape Town. The first group of participants indicated that, overall, they found information they needed from different formal sources, including government offices, NGOs and the internet, while the second group mainly consulted friends and relatives for information. The study found that both groups of immigrants looked for, among others, information about jobs, accommodation, education and training.

The summary of findings comprehensively responded to the eight sub-questions underpinning the study that were developed from the research problems. The following section discusses these findings.



### **7.2.2 Findings based on eight research sub-questions**

#### **7.2.2.1 What are the information needs of African immigrants, and what influences their needs?**

The study revealed that African immigrants who participated in the study had different information needs. These information needs involved information about places and services related to their life in Cape Town, starting from preliminary services, social adjustment to the new environment, to leisure and recreation. African immigrants' information needs included:

- Places and services, including visa- and other travel-related information
- Health-related information, including clinics, pharmacies and medication

- Education and language resources, especially English learning services and materials
- Finances, including banking and business
- Recreation, including gymnasiums and movies
- Work and employment
- Local news, including local events and information regarding shops and supermarket advertising for specials
- News from their home countries
- Accommodation, including houses and flats for rent and for sale, as well as home bonds
- Driving- and driving licence-related information
- Telephone
- Services offered by government departments

The study has further revealed that, when African immigrants first arrive in Cape Town, they search for basic information to survive, such as information about jobs, accommodation and a means of self-improvement including training and learning English. These needs continuously persist as people always look for improvement in life. Over time the needs for other types of information such as information about driving, recreation including gymnasiums, and services including healthcare, also become prominent. Therefore, time is one of the factors that influence African immigrants' information needs, as they become established over time some of their information needs change.

Furthermore, circumstances such as sickness or unemployment are other factors which influence African immigrants' information needs. Based on the results of the findings, it was revealed that participants, especially those who are relatively new in Cape Town, could only think about looking for such information when they are sick or unemployed, unlike other information needs such as work and

learning English, which are considered the most important priority upon arrival in Cape Town.

#### **7.2.2.2 What information grounds and channels do they use to obtain the information they need?**

The study indicated that African immigrants often consult multiple sources to satisfy their information needs during the information seeking process. These sources may involve digital or manual sources. Predominantly, the study revealed that the following sources of information were consulted by African immigrants who participated in the study:

- Television
- Newspapers and magazines, including local weekly newspapers
- Friends and relatives
- Radio
- Use of the internet, including social networking, and selling and buying websites such as Gumtree and OLX
- Immigrant organisations, including Amis BK and the Nigerian Association of Cape Town
- Community centres
- Meeting places for friends, including hair salons and shops
- Church members
- Government officials and the Department of Home Affairs
- Public libraries
- Friends on social media
- Co-workers

- University/school offices

It is important to note that communication with friends and family members was identified as the most common source of information when African immigrants arrived in Cape Town. The study revealed that, as they became familiar with the environment in which they lived, they tended to use the internet more as a tool to find the information they needed. These African immigrants indicated that they used the internet for various reasons, including:

- To communicate with relatives and friends around the world by means of e-mails, calls and video-calls
- To do online banking
- To read the newspapers
- To learn about local events
- To be updated with circumstances back home
- To socialise by using Facebook and Twitter
- To do online shopping through websites such as Gumtree and OLX
- To conduct job searches
- To get education materials
- To play games
- To obtain information about skills such as cooking and sewing

The majority of African immigrants who participated in the study indicated that they preferred talking to people face to face when searching for information; but surprisingly, most of participants recommended internet as source of information for those who recently arrive in Cape Town; while most of interviewed participants recommended Immigrants 'organizations and NGOs that serve immigrants.

### **7.2.2.3 What role does interpersonal information seeking behaviour play in the lives and family of African immigrants in Cape Town?**

This study shows that African immigrants had information needs that were met by using different channels, but their overall preference was interpersonal sources. Based on language and economic barriers, especially of those African immigrants who are relatively new in Cape Town, it is obvious that they relied on interpersonal information sources, namely people who speak same language as they do like close family members and friends. One participant said that he had no choice but to seek for any information he needed from his relatives and friends who spoke the same language as he did.

Other significant, interpersonal sources of information consist of church members, co-workers and other people introduced by family and friends. Through these referrals introduced by family and friends African immigrants learn about schools, NGOs which serve immigrants, African immigrant community groups, libraries, and other agencies and institutions.

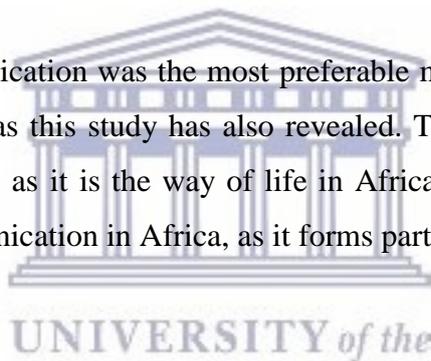
Interpersonal information seeking behaviour plays a critical role in the lives of African immigrants, not only because of the language barrier which does not allow them to connect with the outside world, but also because of its credibility and trustworthy networking. It has been discovered that most African immigrants do not come to Cape Town with the whole family straight away without knowing someone already living there. Men first come alone, as it is easier for them to survive all kinds of surprises along the journey and to live anywhere with friends while trying to save money, and to make sure they become comfortable with the new surroundings before bringing their families.

In doing this, they build information connections with fellow-African immigrants at work, at church and in the area where they live. These new friends become their primary sources of information. Having friends who look like them, share similar backgrounds or speak the same language, it builds trustworthy and credibility in African immigrant information seeking behaviour. This network kept growing as African immigrants meet new people throughout their lives. Thus, African men who first immigrate themselves can only call their families to join them after they have established this trustworthy and credible network.

Furthermore, taking into consideration the aspects of xenophobia and discrimination that were mentioned as barriers to access information, the larger world is considered relatively unfriendly and therefore, African immigrants tend to not trust others who are not from their small worlds.

Another role that interpersonal information seeking behaviour plays in African immigrants' lives is shown in influences of cultural backgrounds. Case (2002), in his survey on research on information seeking needs and behaviour, acknowledges that people use various channels in their information seeking process. However, the use of other channels than interpersonal seeking behaviour tends to be predicted by the social presence they offer. This means that it depends on how they are perceived as a face-to-face conversation with another person. In other words, it depends on the extent to which they expose the presence of other human interaction.

Face-to-face communication was the most preferable mode of communication by African immigrants, as this study has also revealed. This is strongly emphasised by many participants, as it is the way of life in Africa; it is the most commonly used mode of communication in Africa, as it forms part of the African culture.



#### **7.2.2.4 What major problems do immigrants experience when seeking information?**

The findings of the study indicated the following as issues that African immigrants experience when searching for information, as these issues hamper them to not fully access information in order to satisfy their needs:

- *Inability to speak English:* Most participants who came from countries where English was not one of the official languages reported to have problems with accessing the information they needed, as they could not communicate in English.
- *Lack of connections:* The study revealed that information, especially about jobs and employment and flats or houses to rent, was mostly obtained from interpersonal connections. This meant that the more the person was

connected with other people, the more chance he/she had to be informed. Obviously for those African immigrants who were relatively new in Cape Town and who had not yet fully developed networks with fellow-Africans, faced a lack of connection in their information seeking behaviour.

- *Policies and procedures:* It was reported that government policies such as the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) system works against immigrants when they looked for information. Many African immigrants argued that they did not even bother to look for information about work in government institutions because they knew that the BEE policy would reject them.
- *Discrimination, racism, xenophobia and a sense of social exclusion:* Some African immigrants said that they had been discriminated against, especially by government officials and certain banks. This was the case with one participant who felt socially excluded when he was denied access to open a bank account just because he had no green identity document (ID).
- *Bad service from public servants and staff attitudes:* One interviewed participant decided to not physically visit the Department of Home Affairs anymore because of the poor attitude displayed by the staff members of that department
- *Personal and social barriers:* Some African immigrants could not obtain all the information they needed because of a lack of basic literacy skills, including problems to access the internet, low self-esteem and a lack of money.
- *Laziness, lack of information online and lack of South African credentials:* These factors were also identified as barriers to access information.

#### **7.2.2.5 What are the pull factors for African immigration into the City of Cape Town?**

The search for better places to live in terms of peace, better job opportunities, good schools, lower cost of living, pleasant weather circumstances, as well as large African immigrant communities were identified as major factors which pulled African immigrants to come and stay in Cape Town.

Some African immigrants argued that, even if they had not secured their ideal jobs yet, at least they were working and earning some money to sustain them and their families, unlike the situation in the countries from where they had come. There they had finished their studies but could not be employed and had no hope of ever being employed.

As much as the search for good schools and universities was reported as one of the main push factors for African immigrants, the study showed that it remained the leading factor that pulled them into Cape Town. Most African immigrants who participated in the study, especially those who came for studies and those who were planning to study, emphasised that Cape Town universities were the best in Africa, and that was why they wanted to stay: to further their studies. In this regard, it was also noted that, after finishing their studies, most of these African immigrants did not want to return to their home countries; they preferred to stay and work in Cape Town.

#### **7.2.2.6 What are the factors which push African immigration to leave their home countries?**

With regard to factors which pushed participants to immigrate to South Africa and in particular to Cape Town the findings of this study show that some African immigrants voluntarily leave their home countries for various reasons, including studies, economic reasons and a desire to explore the world, while others are involuntarily forced to leave due to political instability such as a civil war or genocide.

The following were identified as the main push factors:

- *Education:* As most of African immigrants who participated in the study were young people between 18 and 29 of age, it was expected to hear from them that education was the most important factor which has pushed them to leave their countries. Most of interviewed participants who indicated that they had left their countries in search of a good education emphasised the perception that qualifications from developing countries such as South Africa were considered to be of more value than those obtained in their home countries.
- *Political instability:* This was the second most important push factor after education. Most participants who indicated that they had left their home countries because of political instability were from countries predominantly engulfed by civil war, genocide and other forms of economic and political instability. They were mostly from the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Zimbabwe and Somalia.
- *To reunite with relatives:* This study revealed that some African immigrants, especially women and children, had left their home countries in order to reunite with their relatives.
- *Financial reasons:* Financial deterioration in the households of some of these African immigrants was also identified as one of the push factors.
- *Adventure:* It was revealed that some African immigrants just wanted to explore other places around the world, regardless of their financial situation or the political circumstances in their home countries. They left their countries not for better opportunities or running from anything but just for a desire to explore.
- *Tourism:* It is important to note that some participants explained that they did not think or plan to leave their countries for long or for good. They have left their countries as tourists, visited relatives or the area, and then they ended up by settling in Cape Town.

Based on the findings of the study, it was found that education was the leading push factor for both men and women, followed by political instability only for men, while family reunification was the second leading push factor for females. It is important to note that when most women decided to immigrate, they did not

make the decision themselves, but instead the family decided for them, while most men decided for themselves.

#### **7.2.2.7 What is the nature of African immigrants' links with big public spheres? How do these ties affect their information seeking behaviour?**

Apart from interpersonal information behaviour, the findings of this study indicated that African immigrants in Cape Town also linked with big public spheres in their information seeking behaviour. They consulted the internet, public libraries, NGOs, government officials, school officials and the media, including television, radio, and newspapers when they were looking for information.

The internet was the source of information most consulted. It was mentioned that African immigrants used the internet to communicate with friends and relatives, and to visit news websites, television stations and radio websites from their home countries. Public libraries, especially the Cape Town Central Library because of its collections that included books in foreign languages such as French, was significantly used by African immigrants and even recommended to those who were relatively new in Cape Town and who could not speak fluent English. This study showed that NGOs, school officials and the media were used significantly by African immigrants.

Another factor that strengthened the link between African immigrants and big public spheres was the fact that most African immigrants who participated in the study were relatively young and educated. They were ambitious to know what was happening around the area where they lived and in the world around them. In this regard, the study showed that, although immigrants, especially those from non-developed countries, were generally perceived as information poor, as stated by Fisher (2004). Despite the barriers they had to face, the nature of African immigrants' links with big public spheres was strong and sustainable. It is important to note that the ability to use and connect with big public spheres, and the satisfaction derived from connecting with these big public spheres, positively affected their information seeking behaviour, it created a sense of independence to

the extent that they did not have to fully rely only on interpersonal sources for them to function properly in Cape Town.

#### **7.2.2.8 What is the nature of contact among different African immigrant communities, and among immigrants and the local population?**

Based on the fact that African immigrants work, live and share fellowship with other people from different places and countries, including local South Africans, it is evident that they formally or informally share information. The study has revealed that there are many African immigrant communities in Cape Town.

For the present study, African immigrants who participated in the study came from sixteen African countries. Most participants indicated that they always made friends at work, at church, in their neighbourhoods and in other places. These people were not necessarily from their home countries; they were members of social or ethnic groups. The participants emphasised that they were in touch and got along well with other immigrants or immigrant societies.

Therefore, African immigrants who live in the City of Cape Town do not live in isolation; they connect with fellow-African immigrants, African immigrant communities and with the local population.

It is important to take note of the significant and vital role that the internet plays in assisting these immigrants to overcome issues of distance. The internet has facilitated the creation of effective information communities. It has been found that African immigrants use Facebook and other social media, not only to keep in touch with people from their home countries, but also to create worlds and to connect people within these worlds through virtual communities.

### 7.3 Conclusions

This study presented the summary of findings based on the research problems, and analytically addressed all eight sub-questions. The discussion also linked the findings and related literature. The theory of information worlds provided the theoretical framework for the study and guided the discussion of the findings.

The study highlighted key and major information needs of African immigrants. In this regard, the study has found that, when African immigrants first arrive in Cape Town, they search for basic information to survive, such as information about jobs, accommodation and a means of self-improvement, including training and learning English. These needs continuously persist as people always seek to improve their lives. Over time the need for other types of information, such as information about driving training, recreation and services also become prominent.

The results of the study indicated the African immigrants used formal and informal sources of information, from interpersonal sources, to the internet, to media, and to public libraries and NGOs. In addition, the study discovered that African immigrants used social media for their information needs, mainly for interacting with relatives and friends from back home and the rest of the world.

The study revealed the major problems experienced by these immigrants when seeking information. The study identified key factors that pushed African immigrants to leave their home countries, as well as those factors which pulled them to stay in Cape Town. Lastly, based on the findings of the study, strategies and suggestions for overcoming barriers that hindered African immigrants to access information were formulated so that the organisations which served immigrant communities might better address these information needs.

To close the gaps this study had not covered, suggestions for further research on other aspects regarding information seeking behaviour of African immigrants were made.

## **7.4 Contributions and originality of the study**

The review of the literature indicated adequate studies which had been conducted in the field of information seeking behaviour of immigrants, but limited studies have been conducted on information seeking behaviour of immigrants by applying the theory of information worlds.

On the one hand, the literature review of the present study presented an overview of the studies that had been done on the information seeking behaviour of immigrants around the world, including in South Africa. This includes Fisher (2004) who studied the information behaviour of migrant Hispanic farm workers and their families in the Pacific Northwest.

On the other hand, the literature highlighted the studies which had been conducted on other aspects of life of African immigrants living in South Africa, in general and particularly in Cape Town. This includes Akokpari's study (2001) in which he studied international migration xenophobia and the dilemma of the South African state.

Although there was adequate literature on other aspects of the life of African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town, very little was known about their information needs, information channels and grounds, and their information seeking behaviour. In this respect, this study has contributed to the body of knowledge in the field of information studies by revealing the following:

- It identified information needs and information seeking patterns of African immigrants in the City of Cape Town.
- It identified information grounds and channels African immigrants used to obtain the information they needed.
- It identified barriers to gain access to information by African immigrants.
- It highlighted African immigrants' information gathering activities.
- It identified the role which interpersonal information seeking behaviour played in the lives of African immigrants and their families.

- It identified pull factors of African immigration into the City of Cape Town.
- It identified factors that had pushed African immigrants to leave their home countries.
- It identified the nature of African immigrants' links with big public spheres and how these links affected their information behaviour.
- It identified the nature of contact among different African immigrant communities, and among African immigrants and the local population.

## 7.5 Recommendations

The study investigated the information seeking behaviour of African immigrants who live in the City of Cape Town. A total of 228 immigrants from sixteen African countries successfully participated in the study.

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

- The inability to speak English was the most important factor affecting the information seeking behaviour of most African immigrants who came from countries where English was not one of the official languages. Language plays an important role in how people search for information. For African immigrants who came from a non-English-speaking background, English proficiency was a basic requirement for communication. Participants reported that they had problems to access the information they needed, as they could not communicate in English. Therefore, it is recommended that government; public libraries of the City of Cape Town and NGOs which serve African immigrants take this barrier into consideration and create as many facilities as possible where African immigrants can easily learn English at a minimum cost. Some NGOs were reported to already be undertaking such initiatives, but it seems as it is not enough, as new African immigrants are still struggling to find places where they can learn English.

- The study revealed that government policies, such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), worked against immigrants when they were looking for information. Many African immigrants argued that they did not bother to look for information about work in the government institutions because they knew that the BEE policy would reject them. It is, therefore, recommended to review such policies and restrict them in such a way that they can become inclusive of other groups of people such as immigrants.
- African immigrants reported issues related to discrimination, racism and xenophobia. Some African immigrants stated that they had been discriminated against, especially by government officials and certain banks. This was the case with one participant who felt discriminated against when he was denied access to open a bank account just because he had no green identity document (ID). This treatment creates in them a sense of social exclusion. As Hungwe (2013) has indicated, continuing social exclusion can put immigrants at a greater risk of remaining information poor, resulting in being excluded from participation in democratic processes, lacking opportunity and feeling a lack of inclusion in the broader community. In this regard it has been found that these issues negatively affect African immigrants' information seeking behaviour. It is on this basis that it is highly recommended that government institutions, banks and other institutions with which African immigrants may interact in terms of access to services and information consider the consequences associated with social exclusion. It is also recommended that these institutions create an environment that will be free of all kinds of discrimination in order for African immigrants to feel welcomed and socially included. This can be achieved by revising policies, providing educational workshop and educational advertisement on media
- Bad service delivery from public servants and poor staff attitudes were also identified as barriers which African immigrants face when searching for information. In order to make access to information a little easier for African immigrants, it is recommended that information providers and public servants understand that African immigrants come from different

backgrounds and different cultures. It is, therefore, recommended that public servants be patient with African immigrants, especially with those who cannot speak English properly. It recommends that the City of Cape Town employ French speaking librarians who can sometime mediate librarians and French speaking patrons.

- Based on the findings of the study in terms of literacy skills, including problems to access the internet, it is recommended that public libraries and NGOs which serve African immigrants provide more technology and training facilities for African immigrants so they may be able to use information available on the internet effectively. This will boost their information seeking practice, as well their self-esteem.
- There are many skills which are declining in African immigrants just because of a lack of South African credentials. These skills can benefit both African immigrants and the South African public. Some African immigrants have reported that they are doing jobs that are not in line with their professional training. They further argue that this is due to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) which takes forever to evaluate their qualifications obtained in their home countries. They have also experienced serious problems with the Department of Home Affairs with issuing their work permits. It is, therefore, recommended that the personnel involved in these kinds of institutions pay more attention to these issues in order to make African immigrants' information seeking behaviour as well as their lives a lot easier.
- The Cape Town City Council should develop proper integration mechanisms for African immigrants, since these immigrants are here to stay. As the findings of the study show, African immigrants are mainly young, educated and hardworking; they are potential employees in many sectors. It would be in the best interest of the South African government and other potential employers to support African immigrants rather than ignoring them.

## 7.6 Suggestions for future studies

The following future studies could be conducted:

- The present study only included a few student participants; therefore, it did not highly many of the academic needs of African immigrants. It might be useful to expand the research to African international students, as well as African immigrant students at UWC in order to gain a better understanding of African immigrants' information seeking behaviour in terms of their academic needs.
- Due to their nature, philosophy and orientation public libraries are weighed down by the responsibility of providing in the diverse and ever-changing informational, socio-cultural, educational and recreational needs of the entire communities in which they operate. As the City of Cape Town is becoming more and more culturally and ethnically diverse, it is crucial for public libraries of the City of Cape Town to respond to this factor by reflecting diversity in both their services and collections. In this regard, further study is needed to investigate how far public libraries of the City of Cape Town have progressed in terms of meeting African immigrants' information needs.
- There is a need to find out whether there are gender-specific differences in terms of African immigrants' information seeking behaviour.
- The population groups that participated on this study included students, professionals, unemployed, House wives, males, females, and all the age groups but the findings of the study were reported collectively. Further study is needed to distinguish information behaviour between these population groups.

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## **Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire**

**University of the Western Cape**

**Faculty of Arts**

**Department of Library and Information Science**

**Private Bag X17**

**Bellville**

**7535**

Dear Participant

My name is Herman Muhambe, a PhD student in the Department of Library and Information Science (LIS) at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa. I am conducting research on **information seeking behaviour of African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town.**

The objectives of this study are to identify information needs and information seeking patterns of African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town; to determine whether their information needs are marginalised or not met in terms of accessing and using information resources available in the City of Cape Town; to identify barriers between information needs and these immigrants; and to formulate strategies or suggestions for overcoming these barriers so that the organisations which serve the immigrant community may better address these information needs.

Please be so kind as to complete the questionnaire below. Participation in this research is voluntary and therefore, you are free to withdraw at any stage. You will remain anonymous and your responses will be kept confidential.

If need be, you can e-mail me at [hermanmuhambe@yahoo.com](mailto:hermanmuhambe@yahoo.com). For more information about this research, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr Gavin Davis, at [gavin.davis58@gmail.com](mailto:gavin.davis58@gmail.com)

Thank you for your decision to participate.



**SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

- 1. Gender**    a.  Male  
                  b.  Female
- 2. Age** a.  Younger than 18  
          b.  18 – 29  
          c.  30 – 39  
          d.  40 or older

**3. Marital status**

- a.  Single, never married  
b.  Divorced  
c.  Widowed  
d.  Married  
e.  Separated  
f.  Other



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**4. Country of origin** (please specify).....

**5. What is your highest level of education?**

- a.  Less than secondary school  
b.  Secondary school  
c.  Technical school  
d.  College diploma  
e.  Bachelor's degree  
f.  Honours degree  
g.  Master's degree  
h.  Doctoral degree  
i.  Other (please specify).....

**6. Which of the following best describes your present employment situation?**

- a.  Working full-time
- b.  Working part-time
- c.  Unemployed (looking for work)
- d.  Unemployed (not looking for work)
- e.  Full-time student
- f.  Other (please specify) .....

**7. How comprehensive is your English?**

- a.  Very good
- b.  Good
- c.  Average
- d.  Not good
- e.  Not at all



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**SECTION 2: IMMIGRATING TO SOUTH AFRICA**  
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**8. For how long have you been staying in Cape Town?**

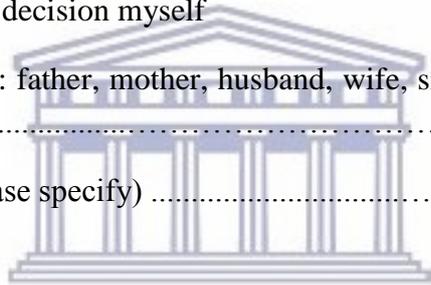
- a.  Less than 1 year
- b.  1 – 3 years
- c.  4 – 6 years
- d.  More than 6 years

**9. What was the most important reason(s) which pushed you to leave your home country?**

- a.  Education
- b.  Financial
- c.  Political conditions
- d.  Religious issues
- e.  To reunite with relatives
- f.  Other (please specify).....

**10. Who made the decision to come to South Africa?**

- a.  I made the decision myself
- b.  My family: father, mother, husband, wife, sister, brother, other (please specify) .....
- c.  Other (please specify) .....



**11. For what reason(s) did you choose to stay in Cape Town (please tick all that apply)**

- a.  Better job opportunities
- b.  To further my studies
- c.  Weather conditions
- d.  Cost of living
- e.  The large African immigrant community
- f.  Don't know
- g.  Other (please specify) .....

**SECTION 3: CHANNELS AND INFORMATION WORLDS**

**12. Upon arrival in Cape Town, to whom or where did you go to find the information you needed? (please tick all that apply)**

- a.  Government officials
- b.  Co-workers
- c.  Public librarians
- d.  University (if you are a student)
- e.  Relatives/friends
- f.  Friends on social networks
- g.  Other (please specify).....

**13. What information did you need upon arrival in Cape Town? (please tick all that apply)**

- a.  Find accommodation
- b.  Language training
- c.  Finding a good school
- d.  Employment
- e.  Healthcare and social services
- f.  Other (please specify) .....

**14. What type of information which you recently needed or currently need did you not look for? (please tick all that apply)**

- a.  Television
- b.  Radio
- c.  Newspapers and magazines
- d.  Internet

- e.  Relatives
- f.  Personal friendships
- g.  Observations
- h.  Libraries
- i.  Immigrant organisations
- j.  Church
- k.  Community centres
- l.  Meeting places for friends (e.g. hair salons, tuck shops)
- m.  Other (please specify).....

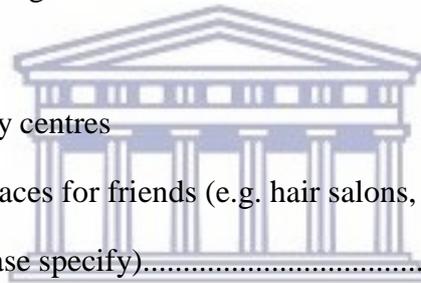
**15. Please indicate your current major source(s) of information (please tick all that apply)**

- a.  Television
- b.  Radio
- c.  Newspapers and magazines
- d.  Internet
- e.  Relatives
- f.  Personal friendships
- g.  Observations
- h.  Libraries
- i.  Immigrant organisations
- j.  Church
- k.  Community centres
- l.  Meeting places for friends (e.g. hair salons, tuck shops)
- m.  Other (please specify).....



**16. Where can you recommend to those who recently arrived in Cape Town about places where information can be found? (Please tick all that apply)**

- a.  Television
- b.  Radio
- c.  Newspapers and magazines
- d.  Internet
- e.  Relatives
- f.  Personal friendships
- g.  Observations
- h.  Libraries
- i.  Immigrant organisations
- j.  Church
- k.  Community centres
- l.  Meeting places for friends (e.g. hair salons, tuck shops)
- m.  Other (please specify).....



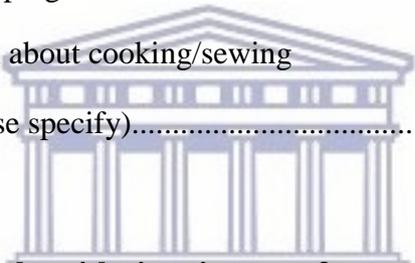
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**17. When finding out about something, which of the following do you prefer to use? (please tick all that apply)**

- a.  Books
- b.  Telephone
- c.  Video, CD and DVD
- d.  Newspapers and magazines
- e.  E-mail
- f.  Talking to people
- g.  Internet
- h.  Other

**18. If you use the internet, for what reason(s) do you use it? (please tick all that apply)**

- a.  To communicate (e-mail, Skype)
- b.  Job-hunting
- c.  Online banking
- d.  To learn about local events
- e.  To read the newspapers
- f.  To obtain educational materials
- g.  To socialise
- h.  To play games
- i.  Online shopping
- j.  Information about cooking/sewing
- k.  Other (please specify).....



**19. Are you in touch with immigrants from other countries/places or immigrant societies (religious/social groups)?**

- a.  Yes (If yes, please specify).....
- b.  No

**20. Are you a member of any social group (religious, societal)?**

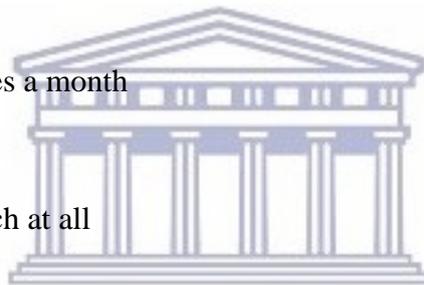
- a.  Yes (If yes, please specify).....
- b.  No

**21. How often do you keep in touch with family and relatives back home?**

- a.  Every day
- b.  Weekly
- c.  A few times a month
- d.  Rarely
- e.  Not in touch at all

**22. How often do your family members get together with other friends in Cape Town?**

- a.  Every day
- b.  Weekly
- c.  A few times a month
- d.  Rarely
- e.  Not in touch at all



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**SECTION 4: BARRIERS**

**23. What was your occupation in your country of origin?**

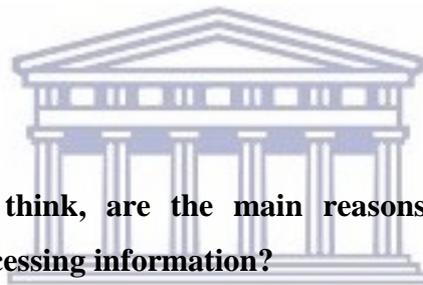
- a.  Formal employment in government, semi-autonomous or other institution
- b.  Informal employment such as artisan, farmer, trader, hawker
- c.  Never worked
- d.  Student

**24. If you answered question 6 by indicating that you are not working, what do you consider the reason(s) to be? (please tick all that apply)**

- a.  Lack of information about available jobs
- b.  Language problem
- c.  Lack of South African credentials
- d.  Lack of South African experience
- e.  Still studying
- f.  Other (please specify).....

**25. Upon arrival in Cape Town, did you expect to find information you needed?**

- a.  Yes
- b.  No



**26. What, do you think, are the main reasons which prevent African immigrants from accessing information?**

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.....

**27. What information that you think should be available is hard to find? This is information that you think would make you reach your potential and improve your life.** .....

.....  
.....

**28. How is your overall life in Cape Town with regard to access to information? Would you say that you always find the information you need?**

- a.  Good: I always find the information I need.
- b.  Fair: Sometimes I struggle to find the information.
- c.  Poor: I always struggle to find the information.
- d.  Other (please specify).....

**29. Do you have any comments or additional information?**

.....  
.....  
.....

**Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your participation is highly appreciated.**



## Appendix 2: Questions for interview schedule

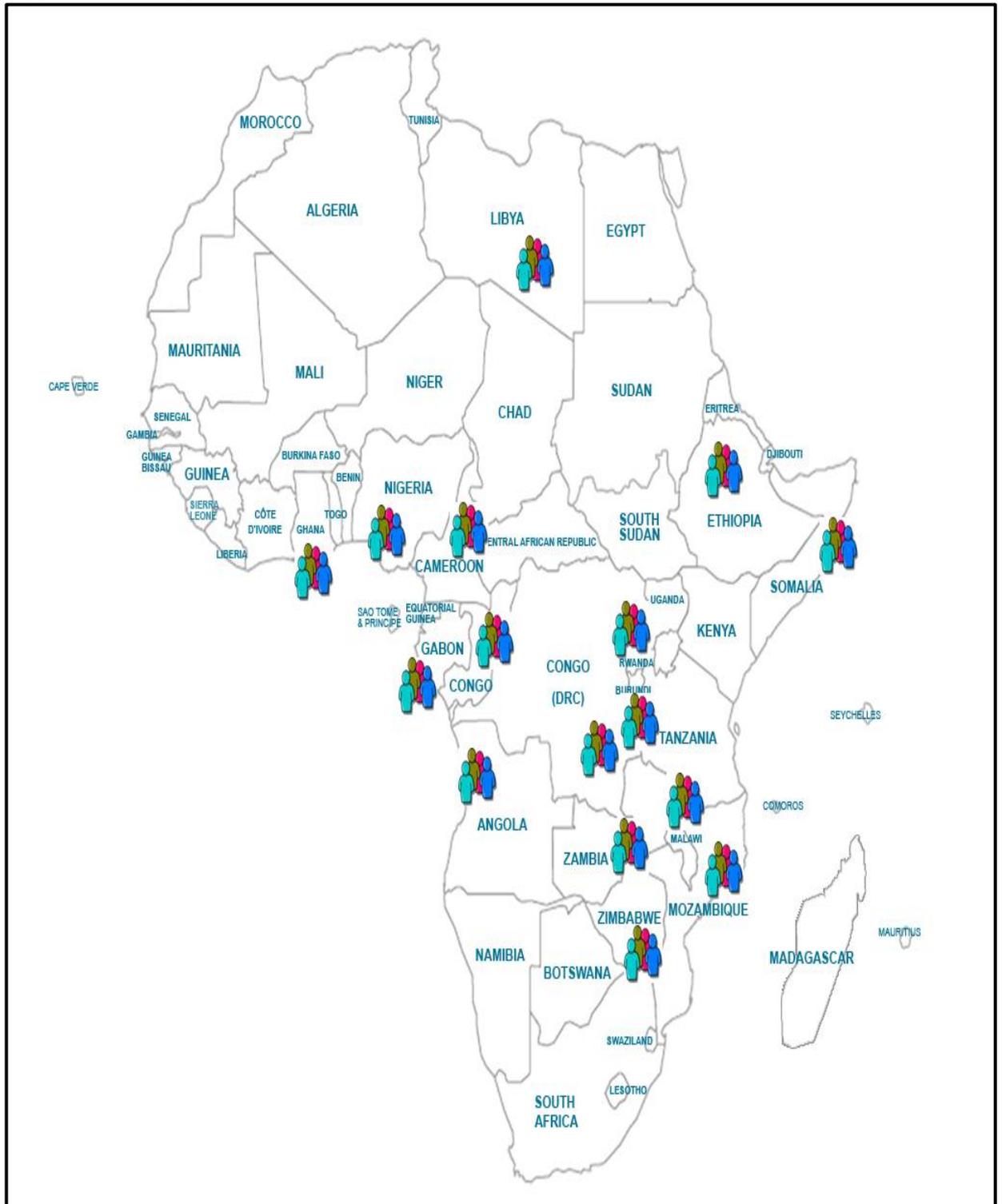
1. Before settling in Cape Town, where else did you stay after leaving your home country, and why did you decide not to stay there?
2. Why did you decide to leave your country?
3. Tell me about the decision-making. Who made the decision to come to South Africa?
4. For what reason(s) did you choose to stay in Cape Town?
5. Upon your arrival in Cape Town, what did you do in order to find the information you needed?
6. A) Can you remember the type of information you needed most upon arrival in Cape Town?  
B) After living in Cape Town for some time, have your information needs changed at all? For what type of information which you recently needed or currently need did you not look for upon your arrival in Cape Town?
7. What advice would you give someone (African immigrant) who has recently arrived in Cape Town regarding where information is to be found?
8. Tell me about your use of the internet. For what purpose do you use it?
9. Tell me about your relationship with other African immigrants or social groups such as religious groups from your home country or the local community.
10. How often do your family members get together with other friends in Cape Town?
11. How often do you keep in touch with family and relatives back home?
12. What was your expectation regarding finding information upon your arrival in Cape Town?
13. A) As you mentioned earlier that you are currently not working, what do you consider to be the reason? OR

B) Do you know any African immigrant who is not working? What do you consider the reason(s) to be?

14. What information which you think should be available is hard to find?  
This is information which you think would make you reach your potential and improve your life.
15. Tell me about your overall life in Cape Town in regard to access to information.
16. Do you have any comments or additional information?



### Appendix 3: Map of Africa



Map of Africa (  Participants' countries of origin)

## Appendix 4: Approval obtained from the UWC Ethics Committee



UNIVERSITY of the  
WESTERN CAPE

### OFFICE OF THE DEAN DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

07 September 2015

#### To Whom It May Concern

I hereby certify that the Senate Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the following research project by:  
Mr H Muhambe (Library and Information Sciences)

Research Project: Information behaviour of African immigrants living in the City of Cape Town.

Registration no: 15/4/9

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josias'.

*Ms Patricia Josias  
Research Ethics Committee Officer  
University of the Western Cape*

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