CHAPTER 10
Relevance of Migrants' Technical Skills for Sustainable Livelihoods: A Case of Low-skilled Zimbabwean Migrants in Botswana's Southeast District

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Abstract
Several Zimbabwean school leavers migrate from the country without specialised training to look for employment in neighbouring countries. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relevance of low-skilled migrants' technical skills in Botswana's labour market to sustain livelihoods. A mixed method research design was used for this study where 60 questionnaires collected quantitative data, whilst 19 interviews collected qualitative data. Quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Programme on Social Sciences (SPSS), and the results were presented using tables and bar graphs. Narratives were used to present and analyse qualitative data. Random sampling was used to select Zimbabwean school leaver migrants as research participants. This study, grounded in the relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson (1981), indicates that relevance is interpreted from social context and reflective thinking processes enhanced by educational intervention. It is suggested as a result of the findings that low-skilled migrants from Zimbabwe perceived that their technical skills were relevant to their jobs, and the skills enabled them to do different jobs in

Botswana. Based on the findings, recommendations were that relevance of technical skills should not be viewed as only meeting local labour market skill needs but internationally benchmarking those technical skill requirements for the evolving world of work. Since this study was on a small scale, larger studies could be carried out in other districts of Botswana and neighbouring countries where low-skilled Zimbabweans are migrating to obtain broader conclusions that can be generalised.

Keywords: curriculum, informal sector, low-skilled migrants, school-leaver, technical skills, relevance

1 Introduction

The inclusion of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in general education at the school level has been adopted by many nations to meet socio-economic development aspirations (Zimmermann 2017). In Zimbabwe, technical skills taught in school-level TVET subjects are meant to equip learners with basic skills essential for further training so that skilled or competent learners can engage in income-generating activities in the economy's informal sector (Munetsi 2016; Coltart 2012). Despite the clear aims of TVET at schools in the country, Zimbabwe is experiencing a high youth unemployment rate. Questions are raised on the relevance of the school TVET skills needed in the context of the local labour market to curb labour migration. For instance, the 2012 population census in Zimbabwe revealed that 36% of youths aged between 15 and 24 comprise 84% of the unemployed population (ZimStat 2012). Coltart (2012) posits that rising youth unemployment in Zimbabwe can be ascribed to irrelevant curricula, a low domestic job market in the country, and policies which are not in sync with the local context. The low domestic job market in Zimbabwe since the early 1990s triggered a huge labour migration in search of employment opportunities in other countries despite shrinking global labour markets due to recessions and pandemics. More answers were sought in this study on whether TVET technical skills from one country's school system are relevant to the type of jobs in a destination country. It is generally acknowledged that technological advancement is changing the nature of work and its effect on how people operate in the workplace (World Development Report [WDR] 2019). The relevance of migrant technical skills in a different context becomes relative. Hence, the authors of this study investigated the perceptions of school-

leaver migrants on the relevance of technical skills acquired at school to the type of work they engaged in in Botswana. In turn, this reflected how Zimbabwe migrants perceived the effectiveness of Zimbabwe's schooling of TVET in imparting technical skills for the world of work.

Since technical skills relate to hands-on skills and related knowledge, skills relevance can be described based on how applicable the skills are to do the work, producing goods and solving existing problems (Mupinga, Burnett & Redmann 2005). The role of TVET in preparing a workforce for human development with relevant job skills is well acknowledged in developing countries today (Zimmermann 2017; UNESCO 2018). On the one hand, school TVET in developing countries grapples with problems of skills shortage, graduate-job skills mismatch, inequality, lack of access to training, school leaver unemployment and poverty. (Allais 2012; Munetsi 2016). On the other hand, developed nations continue to emphasise school TVET for human capital development to improve their economies' productivity and sustainable development (Zimmermann 2017). Key to sustainable skills development is the relevance of skills to the job market to reduce increasing unemployment because of a graduate-job skills mismatch. In many developing nations, the increased importance of strategies for improving the relevance of skills development to the job market is reflected in national development agendas, poverty eradication strategies, education reform strategies and policies, as well as increased budgetary allocations (UNESCO 2018). However, major targets seem not to be realis-ed. It reflects in the current global upsurge of labour migration from developing countries, whereby the young school leavers and those in the ranks of unemployment are on the move in search of employment opportunities outside their countries. Campbell and Crush (2012) found that the youth and active working age groups tend to migrate if they realise there is limited value for their education in their country of origin and if they perceive hope for economic opportunities in a destination country. The challenge to this dilemma is whether embodied low-level skills from one country are relevant in the destination country and the effect low-skilled migrants have on the job market of the receiving countries.

Whilst high-school leavers with TVET skills grapple with the unemployment crisis in Zimbabwe, some migrate to neighbouring countries, includeing Botswana, because of proximity and social and family networks for easy first arrival reception (Mlambo 2017). However, it is acknowledged that migrants often face the challenge of a foreign skills mismatch in the host country's

labour market with different work practices and structural differences in jobs (International Labour Organisation [ILO] 2018). On the other hand, Kopinsk and Polus (2014) suggest that Botswana adopted relative sympathy towards migrant labour due to the lack of a workforce in a country with a population of 2.3 million people. Despite migrants seeking employment in Botswana, the country is also grappling with a shrinking labour market and an estimated youth unemployment rate of 38% as of 2020 (ILO 2020). A World Development Report, WDR (2019) indicates that the nature of work is rapidly changing because of technology, work policy changes, and the need for social inclusion, which may all result in the mismatch between available jobs in a host country and migrant skills. Crush *et al.* (2017) argue that school leavers from Zimbabwe increasingly migrate to neighbouring Botswana probably due to proximity, social and family networks, relative peace, value and stability of the Botswana currency, the Pula (BWP), despite reception and employment challenges.

The objectives of this study were to,

i. investigate how Zimbabwean migrants perceive the relevance of school TVET technical skills to types of jobs in Botswana;

ii. determine the type of skills migrants bring with them and the type of jobs they take up in Botswana; and

iii. examine the challenges faced by low-skilled migrants in Botswana's labour market.

There is limited literature on the relevance of technical skills for school-leaver migrants, as most studies focus largely on the general employability of skilled migrant graduates (Chhinzer & Russo 2017). The study's value is that the perceptions of relevance were from school-leaver migrants who were first-hand partakers of the curriculum. Literature was reviewed around the definition of relevance as it relates to education, high school TVET in Zimbabwe, migrant jobs and challenges faced by migrants in a host country. The analysis section interpreted the findings and their implications. The results and conclusions brought to the fore the perceptions of school-leaver migrants on the relevance of technical skills they acquired from school to the labour market. The results and conclusion helped to recommend improving TVET skills relevant to the job market.

2 Theoretical Framework

The study was grounded in the relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson (1981). The theory was chosen because analysis of the relationship between technical skills and the type of jobs taken up by school-leaver migrants is a key test of technical skills-labour market relevance. A positive relationship between the technical skills learnt and those skills needed in the workplace shows relevance. The theory acknowledges that humans have prospective intuitions of relevance in general. It posits that relevance is interpreted from social context, communication and abstract cognitive and reflective thinking processes, which educational intervention enhances. The theory suggests that after a teaching and learning intervention, learners expect skills learnt to be relevant in their lives, and these expectations can be personal or functional. From one viewpoint, personal relevance occurs when learning is connected to an individual's interests, aspirations, and life experiences and if the skills are beneficial for survival. Murinda (2014) points out that curriculum content and learning experiences will be considered relevant if they meet the learner's expectations and interests. However, curriculum relevance can be functional if employers benefit from it and when qualifying trainees get employment and increased income. The relevance theory was used to evaluate the relationship of technical skills to the job market in a destination country. The relationship between high-school technical skills and the type of jobs assumed by migrants demonstrates the perception of relevance between technical skills and type of jobs.

3 Literature Review

3.1 Relevance of Technical Education and Vocational Training

In TVET, relevance is subjective to the end user's expectations after a teaching and learning intervention; these expectations can be personal or functional. From one viewpoint, personal relevance occurs when learning is connected to an individual student's interests, aspirations, and life experiences (Murinda 2014). Curriculum content and learning experiences will be considered relevant if they meet the learner's expectations and interests. Hiim (2015) sees relevant curriculum as developing students to gain skills to be functional in their vocation. From another viewpoint, Lauglo (2006) posits that curriculum relevance can be functional, as seen through performance indicators reflecting either external or internal effectiveness. Lauglo (2006) elaborates that external effectiveness can be answered by questions such as: are people and employers

benefitting from the curriculum? Are qualifying trainees getting employment? However, internal effectiveness relates to personal benefits such as improved employment chances and income. Therefore, in the context of a Zimbabwe migrant, the relevancy of the TVET curriculum can be viewed as knowledge and skills that are internationally aligned since most of the graduates go to work in other countries. Based on the current economic status in the country, relevancy in Zimbabwe cannot be localised. Hence benchmarking TVET skills with other African and international countries is paramount. It is, therefore, important for TVET curricula developers to align subject knowledge and skills with other countries. The school TVET system in Zimbabwe is described next to understand the relevance of school TVET technical skills to the job market.

3.2 High School TVET in Zimbabwe

It is important to give an overview of the Zimbabwean school TVET system to appreciate how technical skills are taught at the school level. High school TVET in Zimbabwe is available for six years of high school from Form 1 to 6, and it is embedded in public school curricula where students choose at least two TVET subjects alongside other academic and commercial subjects (Munetsi 1996). However, not all schools offer TVET subjects due to limited resources (Mupinga *et al.* 2005:12). A student can exit at Form 4 (Ordinary level) after four years of high school or at Form 6 (Advanced level) two years after Ordinary level. The Ordinary level TVET subjects include Building Studies, Woodwork, Metalwork, Technical Graphics, Home Economics and Agriculture, Music, Art, and Computer Studies. At this level, learners are taught both theory and practical skills while inculcating the right work attitudes of the trade. Upon exiting at the Ordinary level, school leavers are expected to carry out work activities effectively and appreciate the dignity of labour in different jobs they may undertake (Munetsi 1996: 13; Coltart 2012:8). Some students proceed to do TVET subjects at the Advanced level, the upper high school exit level.

Advanced-level, learners are taught to apply practical, theoretical, research and problem-solving approaches to acquire competency-based technical skills, knowledge, and positive work attitudes. TVET subjects offered at the Advanced level include Agriculture, Textiles, Clothing Technology, Building Technology, Food Science, Design and Technology, and Computer Science, amongst others. Therefore, learners can exit Form 4 at the age of 16 years and proceed to find employment or further training, whilst others can

complete Form 6 at the age of 18 years and proceed to tertiary education. Over and above the TVET subjects offered in the general school curricula, some schools offer the National Foundation Certificate (NFC) after the first two years of high school (Coltart 2012: 23).

The NFCs are single-subject courses which are more trade-specific than the related TVET subjects offered in the general high school curricula. NFCs are examined by the Higher Examination Council (HEXCO) responsible for industrial trades. The courses are offered over two years, and the entry-level is two years of secondary education for those learners willing to pursue trade courses. NFCs are more oriented towards skills training and have more time allocated for practicals than the general TVET subjects (Chinyamunzore 1995). For instance, the delivery and assessment components are weighed 60% for practical and 40% for associated theory. Students who take up the NFC must go for work-based learning (WBL) with industrial attachment to acquire on-the-job skills. Upon leaving school with an NFC qualification, one can directly go into employment in a related trade or occupation as a semi-skilled worker and upgrade through trade tests to journeyman. Additionally, NFC learners are taught entrepreneurship skills so that those school leavers who fail to obtain employment in the formal sector can set up small businesses in the informal sector. Table 1 below shows the general practical subjects in the school curriculum and the matching NFC subjects.

General (Form 1-4)	**National Foundation Certificate (NFC)**
Agriculture	Horticulture
Building Studies	Brick and Block laying
Fashion and Fabrics	Tailoring, Clothing and Textiles
Metalwork	Machine Shop Engineering
Technical Graphics	Technical Graphics
Woodwork	Carpentry and Joinery
Food and Nutrition	Catering

Table 1: General Practical Subjects and their Matching National Foundation Certificate Qualifications

The argument for offering NFCs at the school level is that the general TVET practical subjects are insufficient to equip students with skills for employment,

while a more serious thrust in skills training is necessary (Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET] 1999). Mandebvu (1994) argues that specialised skills training at school has been the dimension most developing nations take to meet employment and labour needs. With NFC trade-specific skills, learners, upon leaving school, are likely to take up jobs or go for further training in areas related to the vocational subjects they did at school (Woyo 2013). Numerous examples of trade-specific skills training at the school level exist in other countries, such as pre-vocational in the United States of America and pre-apprenticeships in England, Germany, Austria, France, and Switzerland. These courses are meant to give school-level learners work-oriented technical skills (Woessmann 2018).

3.3 Perceptions on the Relevance of Migrant Technical Skills

Students' and employers' perceptions of TVET relevancy have been investigated in various countries. For instance, in Indonesia, Suarta *et al.* (2018) found that the relevance of TVET skills is perceived through the employability of a new job entrant after the completion of the probation period to the satisfaction of the employer. In a study in the United Kingdom (UK) with employers, Fettes *et al.* (2018) found that most employers perceived technical skills as relevant if they can be 'put to work' in the job context. In another study in Malaysia by Haron *et al.* (2019) on the feedback from employer perceptions on graduate skills needed in the industry, findings revealed that employers perceived the ability to apply skills on the job and being able to transfer such ability to different situations as a measure of skills relevancy. Therefore, training programmes must not be divorced from industry skills requirements.

TVET programmes should be designed in line with national economic needs and global technological advancements to meet the changing nature of the future of work to remain relevant (WDR 2019). The Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET) 1999) in Zimbabwe found that the TVET system in the country was not 'compliant and compatible' with technological advancements in the labour market and recommended 'tissue rejection' from the curricula to deliver relevant technical skills for global labour market participation. In another study on the relevance of Zimbabwe TVET curricula to the labour market by Munyaradzi and Mupondi (2017), findings imply that the country's TVET curricula at secondary and tertiary curricula lagged on global industry skills relevance. This finding was blamed on the weak

collaboration between the education and industry sectors on curriculum development issues and skills training coordination, poor funding, and lack of adequate and appropriate infrastructure, tools and equipment in schools, thereby affecting the acquisition of relevant skills. Despite the alleged irrelevant school TVET, Zimbabwean post-school leavers migrate to other countries with such technical skills and find jobs (Mlambo 2017).

The relevance of migrants' skills in a host country becomes relative, especially when migrants take up jobs even when there is unemployment among citizens (Hondonga, Ramaligela & Makgato 2022). For example, in the USA, Dadush (2014) investigated the employability of migrants from Mexico and found that migrants take up those jobs not preferred by natives in the low-level grades. In a similar study in Germany, Austria, Greece, and Italy on the employability of migrants after their influx into Europe, Constant (2014) found that the relevance of migrants' skills, especially for low-skilled jobs, was determined by their ability to adapt to the existing production technologies and motivation to learn new skills on the job. It creates a perception that migrants' skills are relevant at certain levels that do not require subject mastery. However, the findings did not find a correlation between migrants' skills and the jobs they did since industries adapted their production technologies to the available labour at a lower cost but increased production.

It is well acknowledged in a World Development Report, WDR (2019), that learner skills-work relevance is now affected by structural changes in jobs because of technological and globalisation-driven work tasks, especially in advanced economies, and the relevance of migrant skills in a host country is not spared. For instance, Hagan *et al.* (2013), in a study of the relationship between migrant human capital and migrants' jobs in the USA, found that some migrants found their craft skills to be more fragmented in the advanced production industries and had to accept to either deskill or reskill on-the-job. In another study by Dengler and Matthes (2018) on the effect of digital transformation on the labour market in Germany, Sweden, and Denmark, the findings indicated a serious decline in employment opportunities for low-skilled migrant labour in the usually labour-intensive industries due to mechanisation and automation of operations. Therefore, the relevance of Zimbabwean migrants' skills in other countries with different contexts and work practices was investigated in this study.

In a study of the skills mismatch between natives and migrants in European labour, the International Labour Organisation, ILO (2017) found that the migrant skills mismatch is becoming common since their skills and

knowledge from home may not be relevant to the host country labour market. In addition, other studies on migrant employability by Sanz (2018); IOM (2018); Thebe (2017); and Segatti (2017) suggest that even if migrants possess relevant skills, they struggle to prove themselves, especially in the initial days, due to labour market complexity. Anatol *et al.* (2013) point out that there could be a mismatch of expectations from employers and embodied migrant skills. Mi-grants must manipulate their skills concerning the job, on the one hand, and employers evaluating them on the other. In this study, the type of jobs taken up by migrants and factors that determine such placement into jobs were highlighted.

3.4 Migrant Employment

Chiswick and Miller (2011) found that the level of migrant skills influences the type and level of jobs taken up by migrants in a host country's job market. In this context, low-skilled migrants with limited qualifications and no specialised trade training are likelier to find work in low-wage jobs. In another study, Benach, Muntaner, Delco, Menéndez and Ronquillo (2011) found that low-skilled migrant labourers find jobs more easily in sectors which require abundant manual labour like agriculture, food processing and construction because of their low human capital. The jobs are mostly temporary short contracts and part-time that are not taxed. Other studies by Sanz (2018:21) and Segatti (2017:23) suggest that the level of education and migration are, therefore, intertwined and impact migrants' placement in the labour market of a host country with debatable effects on the economy and competition for jobs with low-skilled natives. However, Dadush (2014) found that regulations of the host country's labour markets generally push people with low human capital to low-wage jobs, while high-technology jobs attract skilled migrants. Hence, in this study, the type of jobs taken up by Zimbabwean migrants with only high school TVET skills in Botswana were investigated.

Despite the various type of jobs, Dadush (2014) points out that migration of low-skilled migrants remains a contentious issue even though they are also needed to perform certain functions, especially those shunned by citizens in a host country. For example, in a study of refugees' jobs in Europe, Andersson, Eriksson and Scocco (2019) found that the migration of low-skilled refugees contributed to the growth of low-paid jobs. Migrants in the low-skilled category have limited job mobility despite continuously gaining experience.

However, Sanz (2018:21) observes that, to a lesser extent, improved personal, job and informal social networks over time make low-skilled migrants learn new skills and occupy new jobs.

Studies in countries with a long tradition of labour migration, such as Canada and the USA by Segatti (2017) and Giovanni (2010), respectively, found that low-skilled migrants even take up jobs unrelated to their past experiences. It is noted in several studies, including those by Segatti (2017:18) and Dadush (2014), that migrants work in places where even their safety is compromised. For example, a fact file sheet compiled on foreign workers in South Africa by the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) (2017) reveals that foreign-born migrants are more likely to be employed in precarious jobs in the informal sector, on short-contract and low-paying jobs than citizens. The fact file suggests that migrants accept these jobs as a stepping stone into the formal labour market. Influence of peers, ethnic niches, and lack of social networks on arrival determines the first migrant jobs and are powerful centres of non-formal on-the-job skills development for low-skilled migrants (Hagan, Lowe & Quingla 2013; Lowe, Hagan & Iskande 2010). Konle-Seidl (2018:23) points out that low-skilled migrants depend on each other to get jobs upon arrival in a host country and may not break away from such working cohorts and ethnic groupings despite the working conditions. As such, migrants may face several challenges in a host country.

3.5 Challenges Faced by Low-skilled Zimbabweans in Botswana

Although low-skilled Zimbabwean school-leaver migrants in Botswana engage in different types of jobs in the host country, they face some challenges. For instance, migrants are regarded as threatening the employment of locals such that migrants face further challenges of social integration in their communities (IOM 2018). Study findings by the UN (2018) and IOM (2016) indicate that low-skilled migrants present 'unnecessary' competition with citizens for jobs that do not require special skills, which is a breeding ground for hostility against migrants. For example, some causes of xenophobia in South Africa include accusations that foreigners 'steal' jobs from locals, accept low wages and are involved in criminal activities, and encourage the natural dislike of foreigners in some communities (Chinomona & Maziriri 2015; Mnyaka 2003). Those migrants without professional jobs are often accused of engaging in anti-social behaviours and bringing unnecessary competition for jobs with citizens on their

level of skills. Botswana is grappling with a shrinking labour market and an estimated youth unemployment rate of 38% as of 2020. High school leavers from Zimbabwe migrate to Botswana to look for employment opportunities (ILO 2020). Untrained, low-skilled migrant labourers who enter a country without a job offer find it difficult to get jobs due to legal restrictions on the labour market (Konle-Seidl 2018).

4 Research Methodology

This study used a mixed method research design (QUAN-QUAL), combining qualitative and quantitative approaches in data collection and analysis in one study (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner 2007:124). The research elements included viewpoints, data collection and presentation methods, and inference techniques for broad understanding and corroboration. It allowed inference of meanings from data collected from respondents about their views on the relevance of school TVET technical skills to the type of jobs they are doing in Botswana. The mixed method provided for data collection and analysis triangulation (Tashakkori, Tieddlie & Sines 2013:11). The research design is a pragmatic methodology accepting the compatibility of quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis methods in one study. Furthermore, the two data collection methods, quantitative and qualitative, were used to give respondents a choice on the method they preferred to provide data with, considering their availability and anonymity issues. Study respondents were Zimbabwean high school leavers who did not receive specialised trade training after high school but depended on the TVET skills gained to find jobs in Botswana. These migrants did not have work experience from home but gained work experience from the various economic activities they engaged in Botswana.

The researcher used a systematic sampling design to select participants from a target population of migrant Zimbabweans working in sectors related to TVET subject areas taught in the Zimbabwean school curriculum. These sectors include the construction sector, where TVET subjects such as Building Studies, Technical Graphics and Woodwork are aligned, the agricultural sector, and the domestic sector, where those who have followed Home Economics or Home Management may be working. The sampling frame was first divided into segments, clusters, or intervals. The random sampling (RS) technique selected the element from the first interval. The selection of subsequent elements from

other intervals depended on the order of the element selected in the first interval. If it were the third element in the first interval, the third element of each subsequent interval would be chosen. The participants were identified at construction sites, farms, and domestic houses. Probability sampling was used for cluster sampling of the areas where the participants were to be drawn from, and random sampling was done to get the exact respondents for the study. Probability sampling was chosen as it afforded an equal and independent chance for all Zimbabwean migrant school leavers in the chosen clusters to be picked for the research (Kothari 2014; Kumar 2011). The study used two sampling methods because probability sampling was used to select only a few clusters likely to have migrant workers. In contrast, random sampling was now used to specifically choose the participants for the study in the clusters amongst the several possible participants.

Quantitative data were obtained using questionnaires, while semi-structured interviews collected qualitative data to allow narrative accounts to be heard and probing for further clarifications was made possible (Creswell 2007; Johnson *et al.* 2007). Questionnaires were administered to 60 migrants, and 19 responded to the semi-structured interviews during data collection. The size of the interviewed sample of 19 participants was considered adequate since the researcher was no longer getting new or different responses. A larger sample of 60 participants was needed to give statistical validity to the responses.

The questionnaire had closed and open-ended items inviting respondents to clarify experiences. The questionnaire had three sections and 30 items. Section A had items asking for respondents' biographical data such as age, gender, academic qualifications and TVET subject(s) done at school. Section B asked about the relevancy of TVET skills studied in high school to the type of jobs migrants were doing in Botswana. Section C covered migrant challenges to mirror the relationship between skills and the availability of jobs. The questionnaire was tested for stability and homogeneity to ensure its reliability. It was re-administered with the same participants on whom piloting was done with the instrument, as they were accessible to the researcher. Each research question was treated separately, and the type of data the research question solicited, whether qualitative or quantitative, was first established to ensure the validity of instruments (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007: 133). A matrix was produced to guide on generating items of each instrument based on the research questions and reviewed literature. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics with the aid of SPSS since a large amount of data

needed an accurate tool to handle and analyse accurately. These interviewees were coded M1-M19, and the same codes were used to present the interview data results. Coding was done for ethical reasons to protect the interviewees' anonymity and confidentiality.

5 Results and Analyses

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of school-leaver migrants on the relevance of Zimbabwean school TVET technical skills to the type of work they were doing in Botswana. The quantitative results were presented using figures and tables, whilst narratives were used for the qualitative data.

5.1 Migrants' Biographical Data

This biographic data is on migrants' gender, ages, and qualifications. In the case study conducted in the Southeast region of Botswana, 49 (81.7%) respondents were males against 11 (18.3%) females. Statistics revealed that most school leaver migrants were 18 years by the time they migrated, consistent with the exit ages from the Zimbabwe high school education cycle (Coltart 2012). The migrants did not receive further training after school. Findings indicated that 38 (63.3%) respondents completed Ordinary Level, the lower high school exit point in Zimbabwe. Amongst the respondents, four (6.7%) had an NFC qualification, and the general TVET subject, suggesting that not many schools offered NFC qualifications. Data revealed that five (8.33%) respondents had Advanced level high school qualifications. Therefore, most respondents had Ordinary levels and did a TVET subject at school, but those school leavers with Advanced levels probably get other opportunities in their home country. They are less likely to migrate with only a high school qualification.

5.2 TVET Subjects Done by Migrants

Determining the TVET subject(s) learnt by school-leaver migrants was done to establish the kind of skills migrants brought into Botswana and the relationship between the skills and jobs being done by migrants in Botswana. Figure 1 shows TVET subjects studied by respondents.

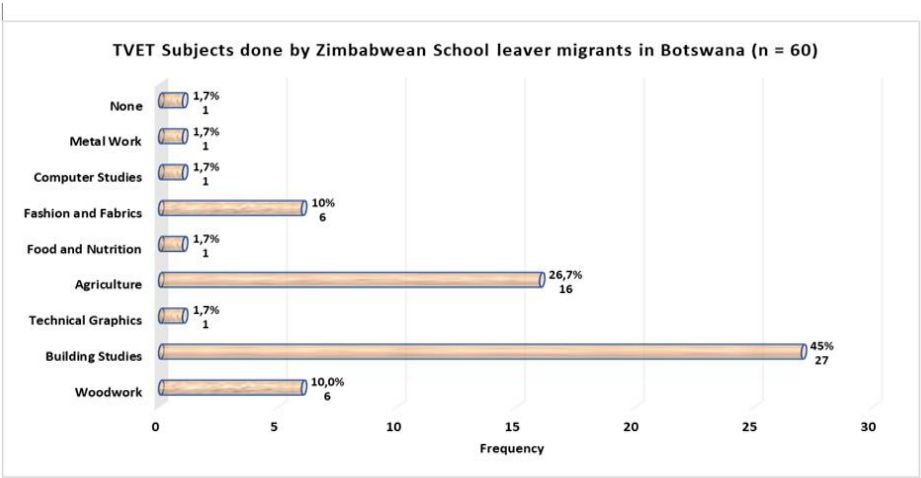

Figure 1: TVET Subjects Done by School-Leaver Migrants to Botswana

Figure 1 shows that most migrants did a TVET subject in school. Building Studies was the most popular practical subject, having been done by 27 (45%), followed by Agriculture with 16 (26.7%), Woodwork and Fashion and Fabrics with six (10%) alike. Other subjects done by migrants were Metalwork one (1.7%), Computer Studies one (1.7%), and Technical Graphics one (1.7%). Therefore, most school leavers did Building Studies followed by Agriculture. It could be because these subjects are institutionalised in many high schools in Zimbabwe, even in remote rural settings without electricity, compared to other TVET subjects, and they do not require expensive training consumables (Misozi, Juma, Edziwa & Chakamba 2013:895). The subjects and related skills acquired by migrants are compared to the nature of jobs migrants were doing in Botswana.

5.3 Type of Work Migrants Did in Botswana

Data in Figure 2 were collected to establish if the TVET skills learnt by migrants related to the type of work they engaged in Botswana.

Of most migrant school leavers from Zimbabwe, 48 (80%) were working in the construction sector, followed by eight (13.3%) who were working in domestic jobs, three (3.33%) in the manufacturing sector and two (3.4%) in agriculture-related jobs. Results suggest that most migrants worked

in the construction sector because many respondents did construction-related TVET subjects *(*Building Studies, Woodwork and Metalwork*)*, as shown in Figure 1. Results suggest that the jobs available in Botswana can absorb even semi-skilled labour. Table 2 went further to check the correlation between the TVET subjects done at school and the sectors where migrants were working.

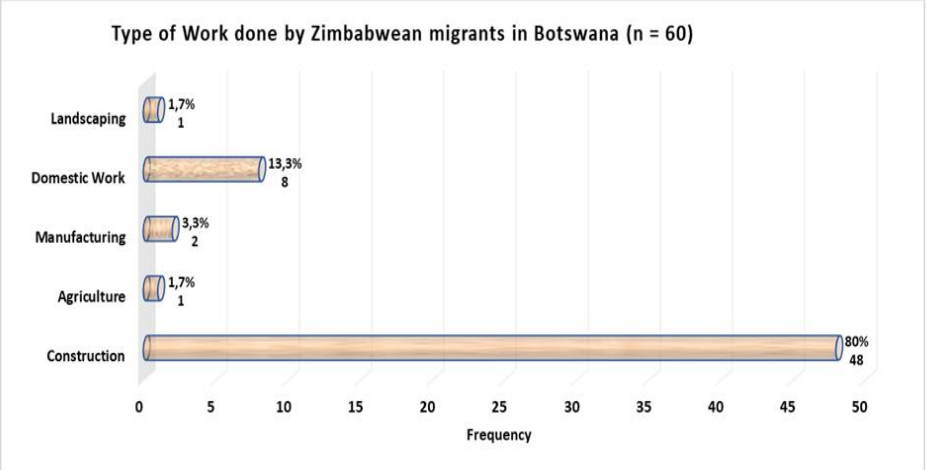

Figure 2: Type of Work Migrants Did in Botswana

Correlation of TVET subjects done at High School and Sectors where migrants were working

	Correlation	TVET Subjects Done	Sectors where Migrants Work
TVET Subject Done	Pearson Correlation	1	.430**
	Significance (2-tailed)		.001
	N	60	60
Sectors where Migrants Work	Pearson Correlation	1	.430**
	Significance (2-tailed)		.001
	N	60	60

**. Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed

Table 2: Correlation of TVET Subjects Done at High Schools and Sectors where Migrants were Working

The SPSS was used to measure the Pearson correlation coefficient between TVET subjects studied in Zimbabwean high schools and the type of jobs taken up by school-leaver migrants in Botswana. Table 2 revealed a significant positive correlation of 0.01, implying that migrants worked in those sectors related to the subjects they had done in high school (Bhebhe, Dziva & Maphosa 2014:447). However, further research can be done to determine if this is attributed to the availability of jobs in related industries, directed job searches, referrals, or other factors.

5.4 Perceptions on the Relevance of Technical Skills Acquired in the Learning of TVET Subjects at School in Enhancing Chances of Employment

Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the relevance of technical skills acquired in school to their jobs in Botswana. Respondents were to provide a rating from 'Relevant', 'Not Relevant', and 'Not Sure'. Ratings by the respondents are summarised in Figure 3.

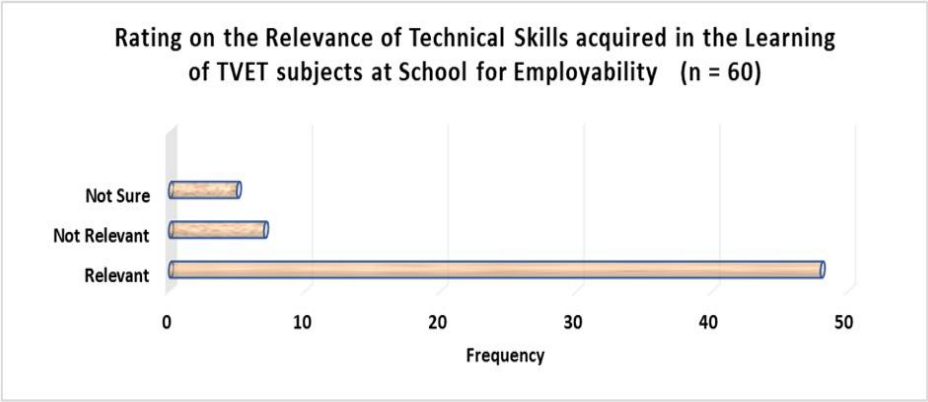

Figure 3: Rating on Relevance of Technical Skills Acquired in The Learning of TVET Subjects in School for Available Jobs

On the one hand, most respondents in Figure 3, 48 (80%), rated the technical skills they acquired from school as 'Relevant' and enhanced their chances of

getting jobs in Botswana. On the other hand, seven (11.7%) respondents indicated that the skills were 'Not Relevant', whilst five (8.3%) were 'Not Sure' if the technical skills from TVET subjects were relevant or not to their jobs. Therefore, most migrants indicated that the technical skills they acquired at school were relevant and increased their chances of getting jobs since most migrants were working on jobs related to the TVET subjects they did at school.

Qualitative data from respondents suggested that upon leaving school, some migrants did not have some of the relevant technical skills since they did not do all the practical skills due to the limited scope of practical work and shortages of equipment in schools. For instance, some of the respondents said:

> **M1** (construction worker): *I cannot say I had adequate skills when I left school, but the two months of industrial attachment when I was doing National Foundation Course gave me some confidence.*
>
> **M2** (construction worker): *No, the skills I had were limited because at school we worked on small projects and did not do some bigger aspects of the practicals.*
>
> **M16** (welder): *No, not on big jobs and using big machines because we did not have a lot of equipment in school to operate, but I was confident to do basic tasks.*

Since many respondents concurred that the technical skills acquired from school were relevant and enhanced their chances of getting employment, it explains that as humans, we acknowledge our prospective intuitions of relevance once our expectations of relevance are fulfilled as espoused from the functional perspective of relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson 1981). Most of the school-leaver migrants utilised learnt skills in the workplaces fulfilling their expectations. The technical skills were relevant if they afforded the learners to accomplish their tasks Hiim (2015), develop more job skills Crush *et al.* (2017), adapt and adopt the acquired skills to take up economic opportunities to sustain their livelihoods in Botswana (Jeon 2019; Haron *et al.* 2019). This approach reflected the relevance of Zimbabwe school TVET technical skills to the type of work migrants did in Botswana. Lauglo (2006) posits that curriculum relevance is seen through external effectiveness if migrants can get jobs,

perform their work, and complete them; or through internal effectiveness when migrants continuously have chances of finding employment and improved income to sustain themselves in a host country.

5.5 Challenges Faced by Zimbabwean Migrants with Only TVET Skills in Botswana

Challenges faced by school-leaver migrants in Botswana were investigated since the type of challenges mirrored the relevance of migrants' skills to the type of jobs they were doing in Botswana. The questionnaire provided for respondents to state at least five challenges. These challenges are summarised in Figure 4.

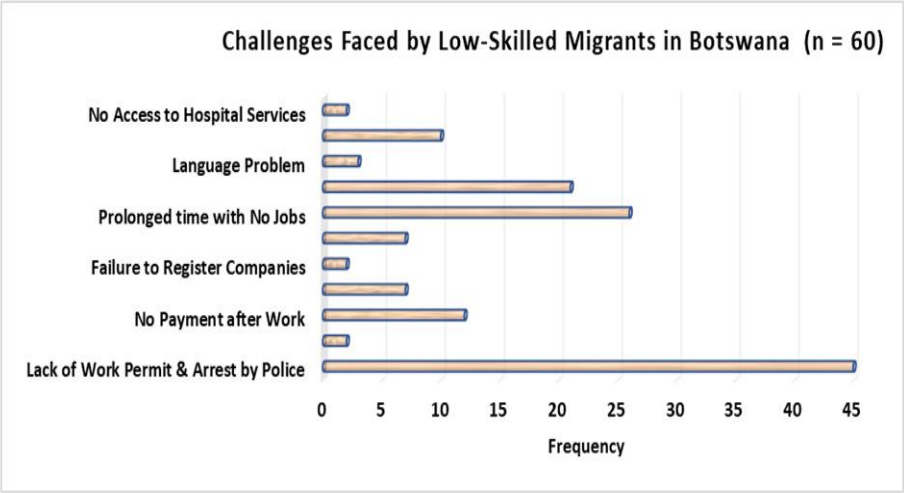

Figure 4: Challenges Faced by Low-Skilled Migrants

Figure 4 shows that 45 (75%) respondents had challenges acquiring work and resident permits. It can be attributed to high school TVET skills being regarded as low-level skills, and migrants with such qualifications did not qualify to get work permits in Botswana. Migrants with such low qualifications could find it challenging to secure decent jobs in the formal sector but were more likely to find jobs in the informal sectors where the rewards are generally low. Botswana

labour market regulations force migrants with only TVET skills from school to take up those jobs shunned by citizens, especially those that are manual, menial and of meagre wages. Figure 4 shows that some migrants indicated they were not accepted in some sections of the communities as they were accused of engaging in anti-social behaviour and creating unnecessary competition for jobs with citizens on their level of skills.

Even when migrant skills were relevant, seven (11.6%) respondents indicated that their low-level technical skills were a disadvantage when big projects were available on a tender. They were forced to charge less than what citizens could charge for the same jobs. If they wanted to charge market-related prices for jobs, often they would lose the jobs and go for prolonged non-working periods, as indicated by 26 (43.3%).

Interview responses from Zimbabwean school-leaver migrants in Botswana attested to the challenges migrants are facing as follows:

> **M1** (construction worker): *I'm not always having jobs, we get small jobs for short durations, but at times we go for days and weeks with no work, it's difficult.*
>
> **M2** (construction worker): *I don't a have a passport and any specialised training, so I cannot get apply for a work permit.*
>
> **M17** (gardener): *I take up any other small jobs without being selective like cutting trees, washing cars or dressing chickens at the nearby farm.*

The interview responses suggested that migrants took up any jobs available, even menial jobs unrelated to their embodied technical skills, for payment. Although some migrants were aware of opportunities to upskill their technical skills, migrants did not bother to pursue the opportunities. Some migrants did not have the required documents to enrol, whilst others were not interested in schooling but would rather work to get money for sustenance and help their families back home. For example, the following responses were captured:

> **M3** (construction worker): *I never tried to enrol for training here; --- I want work to get money only.*
>
> **M16** (construction worker): *I don't have documents and the money to enrol for training in Botswana.*

> **M19 (**domestic worker): *I am aware of schooling opportunities, but I can't afford, I have to work and have money for my survival and help those at home.*

The qualitative responses implied that the migrant workers would learn from each other informally in the workplace and prioritised generating income to sustain livelihoods. Even if migrants wanted to upskill their technical skills, respondents indicated that there were no government strategies or organisations offering skills training specifically for migrants in Botswana other than to refugees. For instance, the following responses were captured:

> **M5** (construction worker): – *no, I never heard of a place where migrants like me are trained otherwise that place could be full.*

> **M12** (construction worker): *I heard that only those who are treated as refugees are getting training at Dukwi Refugee Camp.*

Responses suggested that low-skilled migrants have limited opportunities to learn new skills and occupy new jobs and may remain in the cycle of poverty (Sanz 2018:21). To a lesser extent, skills transfer is more informal amongst migrants, and this happens within migrant working cohorts and with citizens in the workplace.

6 Recommendations

Based on the findings and descriptions above, some recommendations for practice and further research were put forward. For practice, to enhance the relevance of school TVET skills, relevance should not be viewed as only meeting local labour market skills needs, but internationally benchmarking those technical skill requirements to include in the curricula for the evolving world of work (Lauglo 2006; Hiim 2015). In terms of further research, a more comprehensive study could be carried out in other districts of Botswana and regional countries hosting several Zimbabwean migrants. It could lead to more comprehensive conclusions that could be generalised about the relevance of technical skills embodied by migrants from Zimbabwe to those skills needed in the labour market of the host countries.

7 Conclusion

This study found that most Zimbabwean school leavers who migrated and were domiciled in the Southeast district of Botswana did a TVET subject at school. The migrants found that the technical skills they acquired at school were relevant to the jobs they were engaged in. A correlation was found between TVET subjects studied at school and the type of jobs taken up by the migrants in Botswana's Southeast district. This relationship reflected the relevance of Zimbabwe school TVET technical skills to the type of work migrants did in Botswana. The acquired technical skills also enhanced migrants' chances of getting jobs unrelated to the technical skills acquired in school and sustained migrants' livelihoods. Some migrants leveraged the learnt technical skills to learn new skills in the host country's labour market. The study findings suggest that learnt skills enabled migrants to adapt to new work situations for survival. Therefore, the skills were personal and functionally relevant. This finding is well supported by the relevance theory of Sperber and Wilson (1981), which purports that curriculum content and learning experiences will be considered relevant if they can meet the expectations of the learner and their interests. Although migrants got jobs in Botswana, most jobs were in the precarious informal sectors and low-skills levels where the rewards were generally low. The host country's labour market regulations forced migrants with low-level skills to take up jobs shunned by citizens, especially those that are manual and menial. The migrants faced social and integration challenges as they were accused of engaging in anti-social behaviours and creating unnecessary competition for jobs with citizens. However, the study findings cannot be generalised about migrants staying in Botswana due to the study's limited number of respondents and geographic coverage.

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