

# International teacher migration: Double-edged experiences of African teachers in the diaspora and the implication for the source countries

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## **Abstract**

Over the last few decades, globalisation has brought about increased socio-cultural, political and economic interconnectedness between countries. As many nations embraced neo-liberal policies and free-market economies, transnational migration of skilled professionals, including teachers, between and among developed and developing countries, has emerged as an important feature of globalisation. The ageing teacher workforce in industrialised countries and the consequential shortage and demand for highly experienced teachers have spurred these countries to recruit replacement teachers from other industrialised countries and from developing countries. Teachers in developing countries find the prospects of better and attractive remuneration and working conditions in developed countries appealing and are ready to take up any opportunity that presents itself. The teachers are unaware of the challenges that they might encounter when they strive to re-establish their careers in a new country. For the host countries, the inflow of teachers has brought enormous economic and cultural benefits. On the other hand, the outflows from developing countries have negatively impacted on the countries' education quality and development by depriving them of much needed and scarce intellectual capital. While it is recognised that individuals have a right to migrate for various reasons including socio-economic transformation, the adverse effects of the migration of teachers from poorer nations raises serious concerns. This paper explores the double-edged experiences of immigrant teachers from southern Africa in Australia and the United Kingdom with a view to highlighting the hurdles and obstacles they face as they seek social, cultural and professional integration

into the education system of their host country. The paper also seeks to explore the impact of the teachers' migration on their countries of origin.

**Key words:** African diaspora, globalisation, migration, teacher recruitment, experiences

## Introduction

Over the last few decades, globalisation has brought about increased socio-cultural, political and economic interconnectedness between countries. As many nations embraced neo-liberal policies and free-market economies, transnational migration of skilled professionals that includes nurses, doctors, engineers, information technologies and teachers has emerged as an important feature of globalization (Brown, 2008; Golberg, 2006; Hawthorne, 2005; Manik, Maharaj & Sookrajh , 2006). Significantly, teacher migration across national borders since the 1990s has not gone unnoticed and has gained prominence (Appleton, Sives & Morgan, 2006; Han, 2004; Michael, 2006). The main factor driving teacher mobility is the shortage and demand for teachers world-wide (Grimmet & Echols, 2001; Lonsdale & Ingvarson, 2003; OECD, 2002). The shortages in industrialized countries are attributed to the ageing teacher workforce, the decline in the status of the teaching profession and serious problems in the recruitment and retention of teachers (OECD, 2002). The problem of supply and demand of teachers is exacerbated by the increasing student enrolments and teacher attrition (Grimmet & Echols, 2001). Studies in the United States and Australia (Grimmet & Echols, 2001) suggest that more than a third of beginning teachers leave the profession within the first five years of employment to search for better paying jobs and that the supply of teacher education graduates fails to meet the demand for teachers. In order to make up for the shortfalls in the teacher labour market, industrialized countries have, since the 1990s, embarked on aggressive recruitment drives by agencies, often commissioned by governments, to recruit teachers from among themselves and from developing countries (Appleton,, Sives & Morgan, 2006; Lonsdale & Ingvarson, 2003; Manik et al. 2006; Michael, 2006; Reid, 2005).

The global disparity of wealth, power and economic opportunities explains why some countries are attractive as destination countries for migration (Manik et al., 2006; Schiller, 2010). Teachers, among them the most highly qualified, talented and experienced, leave

their home countries in developing countries to practise their profession in developed countries in anticipation of higher remuneration, better lifestyles and working conditions (Betram, Appleton, Muthukrishna & Wedekind, 2006; Manik, et al., 2006; OECD, 2004). For the destination countries, the inflow of teachers has brought enormous economic and cultural benefits (Miller, 2008a; Miller, 2008b). Outflows from developing countries have been portrayed as negatively impacting on the countries' education quality and development by depriving them of much needed and scarce intellectual capital (Appleton et al. 2006; Brown, 2008; Manik et al., 2006; Nunn, 2005). However, recent research suggests that that teacher migration from developing countries has had double-edged consequences for both the migrants and their home countries (Bailey, 2009; Co & Tan, 2014; Crossley, Hancock & Sprague, 2015). This paper seeks to explore, through a survey of literature, the double-edged experiences of immigrant teachers in Australia and the United Kingdom (UK) and the impact of their migration to their countries of origin. Southern Africa will be used as a case study for origin countries. In the following sections, the paper will discuss the conceptual framework, the experiences of migrant teachers, the impact of migration and finally the conclusion.

## **Conceptual framework**

In recent years the use of the terms diaspora and transnationalism in research literature has gained traction. The term diaspora derives from its historical use denoting the forcible dispersal or scattering of a religious or national group from its homeland to which they hope to return. The contemporary use of the term has wider connotations that include any form of dispersal, voluntary or otherwise (Faist, 2010). A salient characteristic of 'diaspora' is the triangular relationship between the migrants, the destination country and the country of origin (Vertovec, 1999). The term transnationalism refers to processes, multiple ties, socio-cultural and political networks linking people and institutions across international borders (Fast, 2010; Portes, 1999; UNESCO, 2015). In the context of globalisation and advances in technology, transnationalism has extended pre-emigration physical community interactions into virtual communities which communicate remotely (UNESCO, 2015:15).

Since notions of diaspora implying dense and sustained linkages between destination and homeland are in sync with transnationalism as a concept used to capture cross-border

social, cultural, political and economic networks and activities (Faist, 2010), the two concepts will be used in this paper as a lens to view the experiences of African teachers who make up the African diaspora and how their emigration has impacted on their countries of origin. The metaphor 'double-edged sword' provides a second lens to view how migration can have both favourable and unfavourable consequences.

## **Experiences of migrant teachers**

Research in Australia, the UK and other immigrant receiving countries suggests that migrant teachers (including African teachers), who I will also interchangeably also refer to as overseas trained teachers (OTTs), experienced numerous hurdles and barriers as they sought recognition of qualifications and experience, registration and certifications, and employment (Guo & Singh, 2009; Miller, 2008a). The migrant teachers chose to migrate voluntarily and were expected to accept any consequences and responsibilities that they might encounter on the neo-liberal international labour market. To highlight the experiences of the migrant teachers, registration and recognition of qualifications, language proficiency, socio-cultural and professional integration, and discrimination will be considered.

## **Registration and recognition of qualifications**

In Australia and the UK, African migrant teachers, as well as teachers from other continents, experienced more or less similar barriers as they grappled with registration and accreditation to teach in the host country. The obstacles included long delays in processing credentials, non-recognition of qualifications and re-certification (Guo, 2009; Guo & Singh, 2009; Michael, 2006; Miller, 2008a; Schmidt, Young & Mandzuk, 2010; Walsh, Brigham & Wang, 2011).

In Australia, the registration of teachers is the responsibility of the teacher regulatory authority in each state and territory jurisdiction. The regulatory authorities, which are basically guided by common nationally consistent procedural elements, are mandated through legislation to provide a regulatory framework for the teaching profession (AITSL, 2014; Halliday & Heazlewood, 2010). The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) website lists the state and territory regulatory authorities.

In all jurisdictions across Australia, OTTs endure several stages of a rigorous approval process which includes: obtaining a statement of eligibility for accreditation or registration from their respective regulatory authority (based on assessment of qualifications); completing an online application (which requires subsequent submission of supporting documents) and giving consent to probity checks including national criminal record checks and employment checks; undertaking an assessment of English language proficiency (Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT) Test for NSW, International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or the International Second Language Proficiency Rating (ISLPR) for the other states and territories), if required; participating in the two-day Pre-employment Program for Overseas Trained Teachers and a five-day in-school placement and assessment; and, attending a personal suitability interview subject to successful completion of the preceding stages (AITSL, 2014; BOSTES, 2015; UNSW, 2015). Completing all the steps is a lengthy process and OTTs expressed despair and frustration over what they considered to be bureaucratic and systemic delays in the processing of their teacher registration documents (Guo & Singh, 2009). OTTs who were successful were granted formal approval to teach in public schools. Approval did not guarantee full-time permanent employment and those with approval could seek employment as casual or relief teachers while waiting with scores of other OTTs for full-time employment opportunities. Immigrant teachers who failed to get registration or recognition for their qualifications enrolled for further education courses or retrained to gain local qualifications – a process that further prolonged the delay in their entry into the teaching labour market (Guo & Singh, 2009; Peeler & Jane, 2005).

In the United Kingdom (UK), the Department for Education (2014, p. 3) defines OTTs as “people who have qualified as teachers in a country outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland having successfully completed a course of initial teacher training which is recognised by the relevant authorities in their home countries.” For the African migrant teachers who migrated to the UK, the initial stage of their registration began with the assessment of their qualifications against local standards. OTTs whose qualifications were considered equivalent to UK standards were allowed to work as temporary ‘unqualified’ teachers (supply teachers) in state maintained schools and non-maintained special schools for a maximum period of four years within which time they were required to

enrol in programs to attain UK Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). On the other hand, those whose qualifications failed to meet the required standards were denied access to a QTS training course until they upgraded their qualifications. QTS, awarded by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) is the teacher training qualification required for all teachers in the UK and it gives recognition as a qualified teacher (Department for Education, 2014; Maylor, et.al., 2006; Miller, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; NCTL, 2014; Warner, 2010). Overseas trained teachers without QTS were regarded as 'unqualified teachers' (Miller, 2008a, p. 21), not eligible for either permanent work contracts or holding positions of responsibility despite the fact that most of them had vast professional work experience in their home countries (Miller, 2008a). OTTs, in this case teachers from outside the EEA and Switzerland, other than Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America must complete an accredited training program in England to obtain QTS to be eligible to take up a permanent teaching position. Interestingly, teachers from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA, who are fully qualified and registered in their own countries can apply, like their EEA counterparts, for UK QTS without the prerequisite for completing an accredited program (Department for Education, 2014; NCTL, 2014). The lack of recognition of qualifications and experience for OTTs engendered feelings of frustration, loss of professional status, loss of self-esteem, confusion and deprivation (Miller, 2008a, 2008b, 2009).

Overall, in Australia and the UK recognition of qualifications is the initial stage of the registration process. However, each country follows different approaches in accrediting OTTs. In Australia, OTTs are assessed by state and territory regulatory authorities using a common nationally consistent framework whereas in the UK, the recognition of qualifications is centralised.

## **Language proficiency**

One of the requirements for a skilled migration visa is proficiency in the official language of the host country. Skilled migrants intending to settle in Australia and the UK are required to be proficient in English (Hawthorne, 2005; UK Visas and Immigration, 2013). Despite having satisfied English language proficiency requirement in their immigration visa application, African migrant teachers, whose first language was not English, might also be required, in

addition to meeting the academic and professional requirements, to provide proof of proficiency in English for teacher registration and certification processes in Australia, and the UK (ATISL, 2014; NCTL, 2014).

In Australia, since English is the medium of instruction in public schools, African teachers, like other teachers from non-English speaking background (NESB) countries, are required to undertake and pass an assessment of English language proficiency - Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT) Test for New South Wales (NSW), International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or the International Second Language Proficiency Rating (ISLPR) for the other states and territories (AITSL, 2014; BOSTES, 2015). In all jurisdictions, teachers from English-speaking Western countries (whose first language is English) that include Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom, the USA and specific cases from South Africa are exempted from taking the English language proficiency tests (AITSL, 2014).

Two studies (Murray & Cross, 2009; Murray et al., 2012) involving two groups of participants drawn from OTTs in NSW enrolled in a preparatory course for PEAT, reflect some of the attitudes and perceptions of OTTs towards the language proficiency tests. The studies revealed that many participants challenged the validity and underlying purpose of the tests and saw them as an obstacle to the resumption of their professional lives. Objections came particularly from participants from non-Western countries where English was commonly used in daily lives and whose applications for exemption were rejected (Murray et al., 2012). The success rate of 15% per course administration (Murray & Cross, 2009) contributed to negative emotions and the suspicion that the test was part of a broader scheme of exclusion (Murray et al., 2012). The amount of time spent repeating (with several repeats for some) components of the test in a bid to attain the required grades delayed the registration process and, therefore, employment creating further frustration (Murray et al. 2012).

In the UK, not all OTTs intending to register as teachers were required to undertake an English language proficiency test. OTTs whose qualifications were accepted by UK NARIC as being equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree were exempted from taking the language test if their degree program was taught in English. The exemptions included the majority of OTTs originating from Western English speaking countries and most former British colonies who

have continued to use English as their official language (Miller, 2008a; UK Visas and Immigration, 2013).

## **Socio-cultural and professional integration**

African teachers migrating to Australia faced social, cultural and professional hurdles as they tried to re-establish their professional identities (Guo, 2009; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Reid, 2005; Sharplin, 2009; Sharplin et al. 2011). These teachers are at risk of failure to make positive transitions in their careers in their new country if they do not receive adequate induction, support and professional development (Miller, 2008c). Their dilemma was compounded by their disparate socio-cultural background which made it more difficult for them to fit into a new cultural environment than would teachers from similar cultural backgrounds as the host country, Australia. However, little has been published in Australia and the UK to document the challenges or the successes OTTs encounter in the process of integration.

Sharplin (2009) recounted some of the difficulties experienced by migrant teachers appointed to unfamiliar, isolated remote rural locations in Western Australia. These included lack of information about school policies and procedures, roles and duties of support staff and non-teaching roles as well as culture shock. The teachers in the study were new to the schools and never attended an induction or a professional development meeting. To facilitate their smooth transition into the system, Sharplin et al. (2011) recommended that education policy-makers should develop and improve system-based support structures and processes that would provide efficient, supportive and welcoming higher levels of organisational support for teachers appointed and relocated to remote rural areas such as in Western Australia.

Peeler and Jane (2006) contend that mentoring relationships provided support for immigrant teachers to make effective transitions into their new circumstances. They argue that newcomers needed to be guided by longer serving members of staff on a regular basis, formally and informally, to acquire the necessary knowledge to assist them with social and professional integration into their new workplace. The results of their study confirmed how the positive influence of support from peers through mentoring energized in the immigrant

teachers “their capacity to operate effectively as teachers in their new contexts and develop positive professional identities” (p. 334). Reid (2005) recommends ‘continued networking opportunities’ for OTTs and that OTTs who are now fully integrated into the system be encouraged to assist by taking on mentoring roles. Furthermore, professional integration into a school system without the cooperation and support of other teachers in the school and the school administration is difficult. Many OTTs in Australia, notably those from visible ethnic minority groups such as Africans, find themselves in this unfortunate situation.

Integration barriers in the UK are similar to those experienced in Australia. In an earlier section of this paper, the pathways to a teaching career for OTTs were discussed. The delays in obtaining QTS and hence full-time employment have implications for professional integration of African migrant teachers. As in similar situations in Australia, induction and professional development in the UK are essential ingredients for professional integration. Confusion over the organisation of initial induction programs by local education authorities has resulted in OTTs arriving in the UK failing to access basic professional and cultural orientation they required to resume their careers (Miller, Ochs & Mulvaney, 2008; Miller, 2008c). Hutchings (2004, cited in Miller et al. 2008) reported breaches by recruitment agencies who reneged on their obligations to provide cultural adjustment or adaptation induction programs to recruited overseas teachers. Maylor et al. (2006) observe that lack of adequate information and clarity of what to expect in a British education system, prior to commencing work in the UK, contributes to the difficulties of OTTs in adjusting to their new work environment. For instance, immigrant teachers from South Africa experienced culture shock in their first month in the UK classrooms, with some describing their encounters as “shocking”, “appalling”, “nightmarish” as they came face to face with “shockingly low levels of discipline” that they never expected (Manik et al., 2006, p. 24). Migrant African teachers in the UK could benefit more if the authorities commissioned initiatives like Refugees into Teaching in Scotland (RITeS) whose agenda is to offer support and guidance to refugee teachers, who also happen to be OTTs (Kum, Menter & Smyth, 2010).

Miller, (2008c, p. 282) recommends that “OTTs must be supported by schools, teacher training providers, local authorities, and social, religious, cultural and appropriate national policies that make the tasks of integration easier.”

## Discrimination

The major factor that drove the transformation of Australia's skilled migration policy in 1997 was the inferior labour market outcomes for migrants, notably those from (NESB) countries. NESB country migrants had poorer job success rates than either mainstream Australians or migrants from English-speaking background (ESB) countries. The general perception among the NESB migrants was that they were discriminated against when seeking employment and that they were less preferred when hiring than Australians with similar qualifications and experience. Although Hawthorne (2005) observed, however, that the transformed skilled migration procedures produced substantially improved employment outcomes for immigrant professionals, OTTs, notably visible minorities such as African teachers, believe discrimination is still prevalent in the school workplace. Collins and Reid (2012) observed that OTTs in their study perceived professional prejudice as a barrier to their employment as the majority of the participants were only able to secure casual teaching positions. For those in permanent teaching positions it was difficult and almost unthinkable for them to gain promotion. Collins and Reid (2012) also noted that OTTs endured racism from students in classroom settings. For instance, students mocked their accents and even made negative stereotypical comments. Marginalisation is another form of discrimination that OTTs have experienced despite their professional qualifications and experience. Santoro (2007, citing Santoro et al., 2001; Peeler & Jane, 2005) observes that 'teachers of difference', including African teachers, are often relegated to the peripheral in mainstream educational communities. They are treated as if they were invisible and their voices are not listened to. Kostogriz & Peeler (2007) posit that OTTs are perceived as the peripheral 'other', the 'stranger' and the 'foreigner' presumably because of their cultural and linguistic difference from their 'mainstream' colleagues.

African OTTs in the UK experience discrimination in much the same way as their counterparts in Australia. One of the most contentious issues which engender feelings of professional discrimination among OTTs, has been the selective recognition and non-recognition of overseas qualifications (Department for Education UK, 2014). Even more problematic is the practice of exempting one group of OTTs from completing qualifying training programs leading to QTS such as the Overseas Trained Teachers Program (OTTP)

and the Graduate Teacher Training Program (GTTP) and allowing them to apply for QTS in as much the same way as UK graduates. OTTs from outside the EEA, Switzerland, Western English-speaking countries that included Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland and United States were encouraged to pursue the OTTP or GTTP route to QTS (Miller, 2008a, 2008b; Warner, 2010). A study undertaken in South-east England (Cole & Stuart, 2005) exposed worrying levels of xenophobia and racism against OTTs in local schools. In another study, Kum et al. (2010) confirmed the prevalence of racism, prejudice and discrimination experienced by OTTs in Scotland. Several other incidents of students making derogatory racial remarks about OTTs accents and racial name-calling have been found to be common in UK schools (Miller, 2008b). Similarly, in Australia, the Australian Human Rights Commission reports that racism exists in the country and it affects overseas-born people more than other people in the country in their everyday lives and at the workplace (Australian Human rights Commission, 2015).

## **Impact of teacher migration on counties of origin**

The migration of teachers is a global phenomenon whose impacts variably affect both receiving and sending countries across the world. In exploring the impact of migration, I have deliberately opted to focus on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regional grouping of fifteen southern African countries instead of a wider perspective which might otherwise stretch beyond the scope of this paper. SADC countries, like many other developing countries across the world, have lost highly qualified and experienced educators to the more lucrative labour markets of the industrialized countries. Because of the paucity of data from Australia it has not been possible to disaggregate the number of African teachers from the migration data available on the Australian Bureau of Statistics website. However, the 2006 national census estimated that 16.95% of the teacher workforce (74,620 out of 438,060) was overseas-born (Reid, Collins & Sing, 2013). With a total estimate of 10,474 teachers migrating to the UK between 1997 and 2006, South Africa emerged as the top supplier of teachers to that country (Miller, 2008a, 2008b). Other destination countries for South African teachers were the US, Australia, New Zealand and Canada (Manik et al., 2006). Despite the outflows, and thanks to its stable economy, South Africa has been an attractive destination for teachers from its neighbours but still experiences a net loss of

teachers as the inflows have not kept pace with the outflows (Appleton et al., 2006; Brown, 2008). Zimbabwe's dysfunctional economy has seen it losing 45% of its educators from secondary and tertiary institutions to other SADC countries and abroad between 2001 and 2003 (Brown, 2008; Kwenda & Ntuli, 2014). Exceptionally, Botswana has until recently been a net receiver and prime destination country, within SADC, for expatriate teachers recruited to meet the demand created by acute teacher shortages (Appleton et al., 2006). The loss of personnel has serious and significant implications for the delivery of quality education and the management of education systems in the region. Financial and policy implications are an essential feature of this discourse and cannot be ignored.

Brown (2008) contends that the out-migration of teachers from the SADC region has negatively affected the delivery of education in terms of quality, content and management. Brown cites evidence of how quality is compromised in a number of SADC countries where emigration has created teacher shortages resulting in the employment of untrained teachers, teachers teaching subjects they were not qualified to teach and in some instances schools operating with skeletal staff. Under such circumstances, the schools' ability to meet quality benchmarks became unattainable. In most cases, the most qualified and experienced teachers who were usually lost to migration, were difficult to replace either because of the shortage of suitable replacements or simply due to bureaucratic delays (Appleton et al., 2006; Brown, 2008). Furthermore, the lack of qualified teachers meant schools could not offer certain subjects or that certain sections of the teaching programs were not taught. Where larger classes were crammed into small classrooms, teachers spent more time on behaviour management instead of teaching (Appleton et al., 2006; Brown, 2008).

The unprecedented exodus of teachers from Zimbabwe provided glaring examples of the negative impact of migration on a country of origin. Although rated highly at 90% for its literacy rate, the country's education system has declined in terms of quality and resources, with unqualified teachers filling positions left by those who emigrated. Teachers left behind have had to grapple with additional work loads, high teacher-to-pupil ratios and extra teaching hours. As Zimbabwe's human capital flight continues, the country's progress towards achieving meaningful universal educational goals appears to be under threat (Besada & Moyo, 2008; Brown, 2008).

In any education system where the attrition rate of teachers is due to emigration and teachers leave at short notice, managing transitions becomes problematic. When teachers leave abruptly, it becomes difficult to plan for a smooth transition for the replacement teachers to takeover classes because teachers who migrate often do not provide the time to allow that to happen. Managing transitions becomes even more problematic, as in the case of Zimbabwe, when the exodus of personnel from the education sector included managers and therefore the system did not only have to deal with managing the transition of teachers but also that of the absence of managers (Brown, 2008). In the same context, Brown observes that there is a correlation between the provision of quality education and sound school management and therefore disruption of management processes is likely to impact negatively on quality dimensions of education.

In most developing countries, the cost of training teachers is heavily subsidized by the state and SADC countries are no exception. Developing countries have lost investment in education as they witness the exodus of skilled professionals to other countries (Kwenda & Ntuli, 2014). Collins and Reid (2012, p. 45) observe that "... Australia gets professionally trained and experienced people whose education has been paid for by other countries taxpayers." Governments feel aggrieved when they lose personnel whose training they have sponsored and the benefits accrue to other countries (Appleton et al., 2006). As a response to concerns raised by Commonwealth education ministers from developing countries over the massive recruitment of teachers from poorer countries to richer countries such as the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, Commonwealth countries signed the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2004 (Manik et al., 2006; Miller, Mulvaney & Ochs, 2007; Miller, Ochs, & Mulvaney, 2008). The aim of the protocol was to protect the integrity of national education systems of poorer nations by preventing the exploitation of their scarce human capital as well as safeguarding the rights of migrant teachers (Miller et al., 2007). The protocol encouraged recruiting countries and source countries to engage in bilateral discussions that would yield bilateral agreements that were mutually beneficial. Implementation of the protocol was problematic since it had no legal force and left it to individual countries to come up with legislation to address their commitments (Miller et al., 2007).

International migration of teachers is not only about outflows to industrialised countries but also of inflows into developing countries where the impact has been positive. The rapid expansion of the education system in Botswana in the 1980s and 1990s would not have been successful without the participation of expatriate teachers. Migrant teachers have immensely contributed to the development of education through their involvement in curriculum design, the writing of textbook and pedagogical materials (Appleton et al., 2006). The recruitment of immigrant teachers to teach in Botswana boosted an otherwise poorly resourced workforce. The consequences were that class sizes were reduced, teacher shortages were mitigated and the overall delivery of education was enhanced (Brown, 2008). However, in order to wean off the dependency on foreign teachers, the country developed its teacher training institutions to increase the local supply of teachers and embarked on a policy to localize teaching posts and to gradually do away with expatriate teachers by non-renewal of their contracts (Appleton et al., 2006). Despite losing teachers to the UK and other Western countries, South Africa has also benefitted from inflow of teachers from its neighbours, allowing it to adjust its workforce shortages (Brown, 2008).

Another positive impact of teacher migration, consistent with the concepts of transnationalism and diaspora, is the issue of remittances that immigrant countries send to their countries of origin to support their kin or as investment. Remittances from the African diaspora have become a major source of direct investment for SADC countries. In Zimbabwe, authorities now portray the diaspora as partners in economic development and encourage them to tap into the real estate market with remittances channelled through formal institutions. Indeed, the remittances have kept the Zimbabwean property market afloat (Kwenda & Ntuli, 2014; Mbiba, 2005).

## **Conclusion**

It is clear that African migrant teachers in Australia and the UK faced more or less similar barriers as they tried to register as teachers. Demands of the registration processes and procedures, the systemic bureaucratic delays in the processing of teacher registration, delayed employment causing frustration and disillusionment, integration and discrimination were examined. It is also clear that notwithstanding the negative experiences that the migrant teachers encountered, they also benefitted immensely from relocating overseas to

practise their professions – the double-edged experiences. The majority were able to experienced better lifestyles, and better remuneration, allowing them to remit some money back to their home countries to their families and more importantly, the teachers benefitted from extensive professional development available in host countries, with some attaining higher professional qualifications. Through their transnational networks, teachers in the African diaspora were also able to positively influence the professional work of their colleagues in their home countries.

The impact of migration on source countries and destination countries were varied. For source countries, the migration of deprived them of their best human resources and amounted to the transfer of their educational investment from poor to rich countries. Teacher migration compromised the quality dimensions of education in developing countries and created shortages of personnel that threatened their ability to meet educational and development goals. While it is an acknowledged fact that countries of origin lost human capital crucial for their economic development, the other side of the double-edged sword suggests that benefits also accrued to the countries. In some cases, counter-flows of teachers from industrialised to developing countries have made valuable contributions to the development of education. Botswana has been cited as one such county that has immensely benefitted from the recruitment of foreign teachers.

While it appears there is a fair amount of research that has been undertaken on the experiences of migrant teachers in Australia and the UK, more needs to be done to unravel further how widespread the problem of racism and discrimination is, and to what extent it impacts on the successful transition of migrant teachers into their new roles. The few initiatives adopted to mitigate the effects of the barriers encountered by migrant teachers provide some welcome optimism that stakeholders are increasingly becoming aware of the need to provide more support to migrant teachers. Research should also be aimed to explore how international migration of teachers could be balanced to ensure equity in the mutual benefits realised by both source and origin countries.

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