

# Illegal Immigrants in Southern Africa: Analysis of Dynamics Propelling Illegal Immigrants in Zambia

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**Abstract:-** The article analyses the dynamics that stimulate immigrants to enter Southern Africa states or nations in the case of Zambia illegally. The phenomenon of illegal immigration has been a thorn in most states to the extent that some citizens like in South Africa have at times engaged in xenophobia attacks. The question now rises, what stimulates these foreigners to leave their country and opt to cross illegally into another country where safety is not granted? To internalize the dynamics the voluntary and involuntary migration has been explored. The article later explores the migration outlook in Africa and the causes, the migration in Southern Africa. To comprehend the issue under study widely, constructivism theory has been applied as it differs with other international relations theories like realism and liberalism because it views the world as socially constructed. The article, therein, analyses the dynamics propelling the phenomenon to escalate in Zambia, thereafter, the conclusion is drawn. In this connection, the article builds on a qualitative research methodology in which primary data is triangulated with secondary data collected from various literatures and thematically analyzed. The methods used were semi-structured questionnaire, in-depth interview and observation where respondent were selected through Purposive, random and snowball sampling. The dynamics in southern Africa were established to be more of the push factors prevailing in the countries of origin.

**Keywords:-** Southern Africa, Zambia, Illegal Immigration and Dynamic.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Migration is one of the greatest paradoxes in the contemporary world than it was before globalization. Southern Africa is engulfed with contemporary population movements some within southern Africa whereas others being driven by the interconnected global economy that favors free flow of people as well as goods, capital, technology (Chikanda, 2010). Dynamics are stimulators driving the illegal immigration to forcefully cross the frontiers leaving their home lands. This article first defines the illegal immigration phenomenon before ingress in the dynamics under study. Illegal immigration is synonymous of

irregular or undocumented immigration. Nevertheless, this article adopts the concept of illegal immigration as opposed to other two term because the study is holistic, which include those who enter irregular using other orthodox or those who stay in the yet the immigration status documents expired and never renewed.

## II. ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Illegal immigration is the migrating to another country by crossing the borders without the valid required immigration documents or using other orthodox to enter foreign country. Others persons may cross the border with all the required documents but whilst in the foreign country, they ignore to renew their visa or decide to engage in jobs contrary to their work permit thereby becoming illegal immigrants (Campbell, 2006). Not surprisingly, in certain countries illegal immigration is treated as a very seriously criminal behavior. When such a person is apprehended, it is either is prosecuted through the courts of law and later deported or removed if proven guilty or can be removed to the country of origin without being trialed by the courts of law. Chiswick (1988) defines illegal immigrant as foreign national who entered the country clandestinely by dodging an immigration check and who defy the immigration law of a particular country. Illegal immigration can be involuntary or voluntary depending on the nature propelling someone to movement.

### ➤ Involuntary Immigration

Involuntary migration is precipitated by various factors and it is unconstructive ways of migration. The government or other authority may force someone to move like deported Jews to concentration camps during holocaust. Rawley & Beharendt (2005) stress that the distressing involuntary migration is of Atlantic slave trade though benefited the slave traders to attain part of economic history yet blacks were proletariat and forced to migrate. Adler & Gielen (2003) point out that the brutal involuntary migration in history is when millions of Sub-Saharan Africa were captured against their will and sold to New World.

Many people in the world once they are faced with calamities like displacement, turmoil at times forced to migrate. McConville (2018) postulates that the world was

grappling with forced immigration in which globally in every minute 20 people are forced to leave their home and currently over 65 million are forcibly displaced people. McConville argues that many causes are attributed to involuntary immigration not necessary civil conflict. Disaster when it falls the community like drought, it negatively disturbs regular livelihood of people whose dependency is on successful harvests. The drought disaster has in most African countries affected the citizens to have challenges to grow enough food to feed themselves and their livestock was also affected as streams remain dry and green vegetation was difficult to be found. The most pronounced droughts increasing were Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Somalia among the African Countries. The precipitation of these events tends to stimulate illegal crossing of neighboring countries for safe havens.

Commenting on the effects of involuntary migration (Padovani, 2009) cites the involuntary migration that 1.5 million people from 1,350 villages were forcefully migrated due to government developmental project of constructing China's Three Gorges Dam and put 13 cities, 140 towns. Many of the displaced people were not compensated whereas, some the place they were forced to move to were not suitable as the land left in terms of for agriculture, geographically and nor secure. Government developments can also force people to migrate to another country when they feel suffocated with the alternative land they are taken to, with a view to acquire better living.

#### ➤ *Voluntary Immigration*

Meanwhile, people may decide to migrate on their own (Cassidy, 2013). There comes at in someone's life with free mind and initiative decides to migrate after valuating options and choices depend on the reasons. Before a person decide to migrate, has to weigh the push factors that are in the country or origin to the pull factors prevailing in the country of destination. For instance, when someone desires for better employment opportunity than the one prevailing country of origin with the same qualifications he may willfully migrate. But whilst working in that country need to have all the required immigration documents and abide by the law of that country failure to do so may subject that person to illegal immigration. There also factors that precipitate people to voluntarily move like; getting married, empty-nest, retirement, politics, and individual personality.

IOM Report (2005) observed that historically, voluntary cross border migration have been the order of the day in Southern Africa as national migrate either from Lesotho to Mozambique or South Africa for labor. The individuals migrating to other countries to look for informal employment opportunities in commercial farms, traders and domestic workers, and mostly these are the ones involved in illegal immigration by both crossing and stay in foreign country without documents. The movements in Southern Africa is worrisome in the region as the illegal migration was

increasing where people were no longer respecting the borders and immigrations laws and the spreading of communicable diseases like HIV/AIDs was escalating.

However drawing on definition of 'migration' where any person who moves from the place of resident to another place which is not his/hers, is a migrant even though could have moved voluntary or involuntary cover all aspect of qualities of migrations but rises a concern on issues of human rights. In UN Article 1.1 (a) migration does not include human smuggling or human trafficking because such individuals do not move with personal convenience. They are always compelled to move to another country under duress by falsehood either the traffickers or the smugglers. When such victims once apprehended by law enforcement agencies have sometime being mistakenly to illegal immigrants and prosecuted and sentenced using an appropriate article depending on the legal framework in a particular country where such an offence is committed.

### III. GENERAL OUTLOOK OF MIGRATION IN AFRICAN CONTINENT

In the contemporary world, migration does not only engulf African moving to Europe or Mediterranean as viewed by International media, but there is tendency of huge number of migration also demonstrated in southward. There has been massive migration in southward since the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994 coupled with the political stabilization in Botswana, Namibia and Mozambique (IOM Report, 2005). Most of the migrants were being pulled to migrate to seek employment thereby resorting to use of both legal and illegal means to enter host countries. Migration within and out of Africa has been fashioned by governance system of colonial periods. The 16th–19th century slave trade of trans-Atlantic contributed to the involuntary movement by millions of Africans to the 'New World'. Ruthford (2013) postulates that it was the most distressing involuntary migration where over 30 million Africans were involuntarily taken to North America, Latin America and Middle East. This was in a backdrop of colonial rule which supposed that to enhance economic achievement acquiring labor by the phenomenon of forcible movement of people was the only fundamental way.

Abebe (2017) cites that in 2015, 52% (18 million) of the 34 million migrants who were born in Africa migrated within like most affected countries; Côte d'Ivoire, South Africa and Nigeria being the leading destination countries, hosting 2.3, 2 and 0.9 million African migrants respectively. Nonetheless, Africans also migrate to other parts of the world. In the same year 2015, 14% (34 million) of the 244 million international migrants were born in Africa. The fastest growing destination for African migrants as between 2000 and 2015 was Asia with an average annual growth of 4.2%.7. The better life in terms of physical and economic security, were attributed to push and pull factors support intra-regional and inter-continental for migrations.

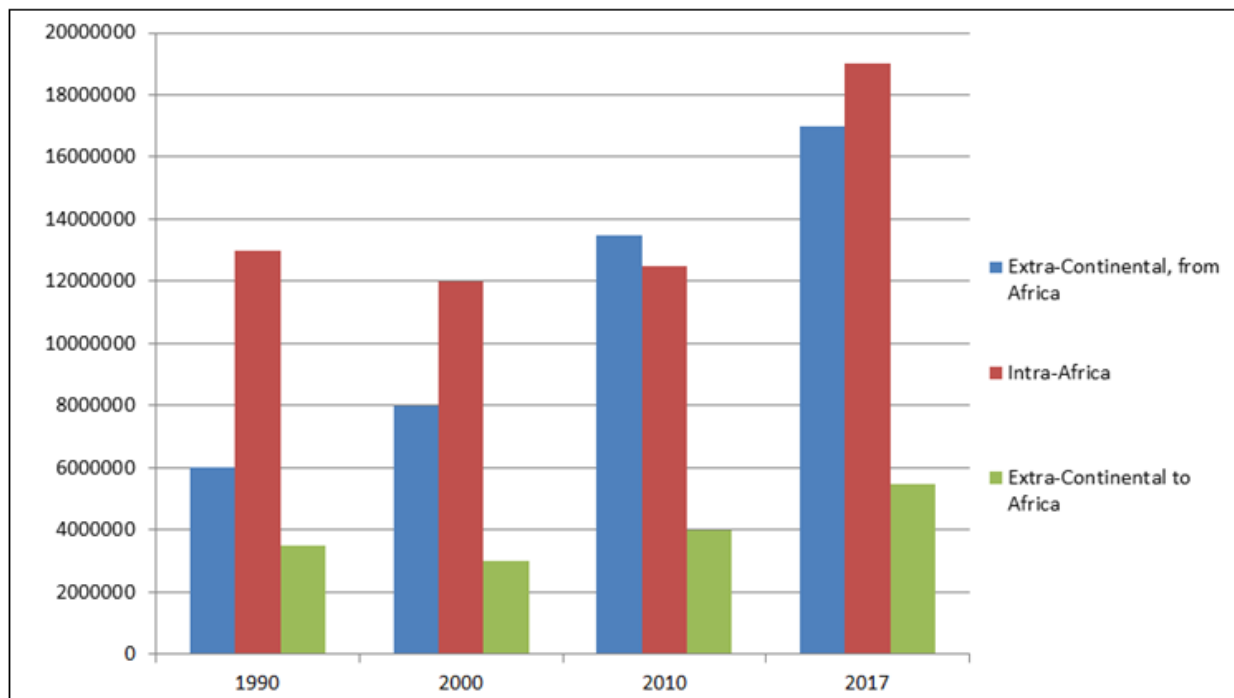


Fig 1:- Stock of Migrants from, within and to Africa  
Source: Economic Development in Africa Report 2018

Figure 1 shows the growth of migration from, within and to Africa as from 1990 to 2017 in which the three categories were increasing. In 2017, there was increase in African migration in each stock exceeded the value in 2000. African migration was largely intercontinental in 1990, although over time, the distribution has changed. However, the main stock was from Africa and living in Africa as international migrants in 2000, which was at 12.5 million, translating that intra-African migration was foremost. Over and over again, by 2017 this stock grew and reached 19.4 million.

Furthermore, the analysis indicated that in 1990 and in 2017 the stock of international migrants originating from Africa and living outside the continent increased to 16.9 million (Economic Development in Africa Report, 2018). However the margin of the international migrants apart from 2010 shows that since 1990 it has been narrowing, despite the recorded increase. It should be noted that in 1990, there was strong growth in migration to Africa and Extra-continental migration as compared intercontinental migration. The share of population raised from 1.8 per cent in 2000 to 2.0 per cent in 2017 or from 18 to 20 migrants per 1,000 people for the stock of international migrants.

#### ➤ Causes of migration in Africa

Bedarff (2017) postulate that in Africa and world over, human being was being influenced to migrate due to factors like the preindustrial era and environmental. The connection between environment and migration elaborates how the Bantu-speaking peoples expended 2000BCE from West

Africa throughout Central and Southern Africa starting. The suitable climate for agriculture practices enforced Bantu-speakers to find somewhere to migrate and settled.

Population adjusted upwards in new places in where these Bantu-speaking were migration to in preference to well-suitable environment for their agriculture practices. The growth in population demanded for development to which the skill of agriculture moved to iron technology and there was a strain on local resources and land space which resulted into population in sub-Saharan Africa to escalate.

The nature of most national boundaries hereditary from colonial administrations, migration in Africa has always had an important cross-border component. This can be viewed from the economic interdependence between ecological zones, and the establishment of regional political and economic alliances in the 1960s and 1970s (McGranahan et al, 2009). Africans are continuing to migrate out of the continent both as regular as well as irregular migrants.

#### ➤ Migration in Southern Africa

Having explored migration and the causes in Africa in general, we now zero in to discuss the migration in Southern Africa. As earlier alluded to in the preceding pages, Southern Africa is one of the sub regions in Africa where migration has been fashioned by pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial governance systems. The Southern Africa member states were grappling with illegal immigration the situation which is a source of concerned among politicians and policy makers. The illegal immigration in Southern Africa states just

like across the globe was being influenced by various factors some which are push and others pull factors.

Some scholars postulate that Southern Africa was constrained with resources and hardships have most of the times culminated in conflict. Citizen at times have no religion

right, economic opportunities, jobs and disasters. These have been termed as ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors of migration. However, immigration is influenced by either “Pull” or “Push” factors. The study explores these factors in Southern Africa states as elaborated in figure 2

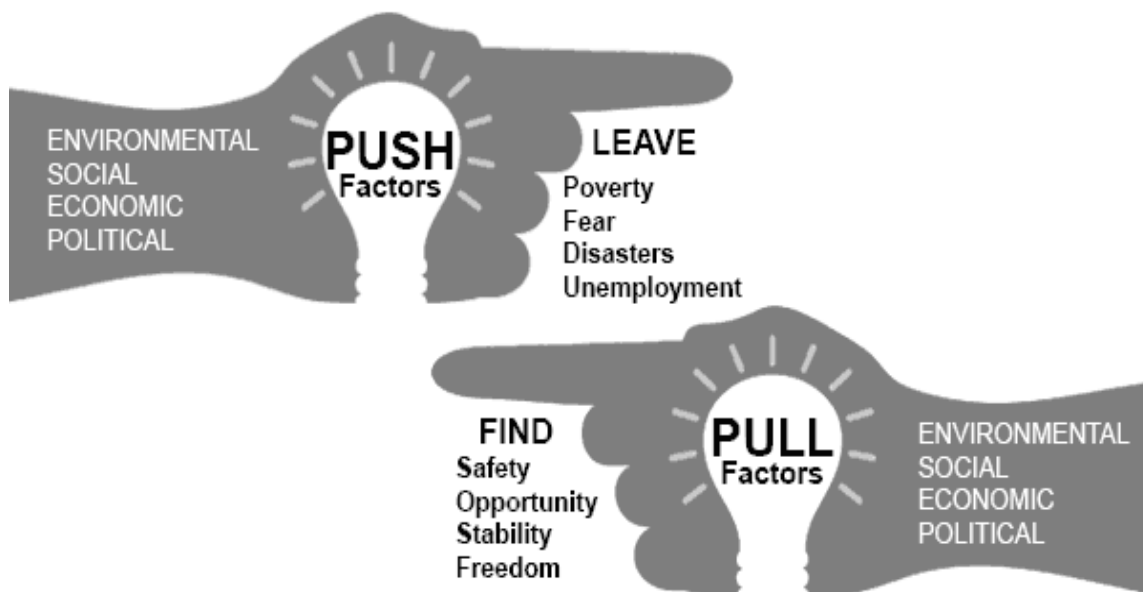


Fig 2:- Push and Pull factors by leaving and finding Lee (1917-2007)

Source: Everett S. Lee (1917-2007)

#### IV. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM THEORY

Mitchell (2011) defined “social constructivism is the view that the material world shapes and is shaped by human actions and interaction dependent on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretation of the material world”. Ruggie, constructivist (Craciunescu, 2013), states that the world is intersubjective because of social communication. We understand others and others understand us. Intersubjectivity is a shared understanding that helps us relate one situation to another. Groups in society such as organization, policymakers and other social groups share ideas that are embedded in institutions. The framing of common sense with communal and ordered social meaning are concerns social constructivists.

The end of the cold war manifested a number of theories in international relations anti-alia constructivism which was companionable to an integer of international relations substantive theories. Constructivism tries to analyze socially how people think about the world and the social application of epistemology and ontology (Oezel, 2015). Constructivism theory differs with other international relations theories like realism and liberalism because it views the world as socially constructed.

The argument of constructivism theory is that the world is constituted not with political speeches (linguistic pattern) but through discourse of non linguistic practices and routine such as borders to create social facts. Constructivism views the danger that may appear in the world, on a few focuses on via discourse. The construction of certain assumption and the link between migration and security is a reputable and reason of fact by constructivism. The theory has been useful to some scholars since the 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2001 bomb attack in USA on how to comprehend certain immigrants by analyzing the security threat focusing of social factor (Oezel, 2015). Akinyemi (2013) in concurring with constructivism assumption indicates that security is very paramount for each and every state. Therefore, governments need to ensure that there is stability at their respective borders for nothing can be done under insecurity of lives and property. If the borders are insecure, the social and economic development of such a state will be a prodigious task, and tribulations such as poverty, diseases, hunger and fear will dominate the society.

➤ Engbersen and Leun (2001) when discussing on the constructivism approach of illegal immigrants, write:

*Illegal immigrants are no new phenomenon in Dutch society. Yet, since the beginning of the 1990s, their presence has been increasingly considered a social problem. In the post-war period, three phases can be differentiated by deploying social construction in the ways in which the Dutch*



*State reacted to the presence of illegal immigrants. In the first phase (1960–1969), the Dutch State showed considerable leniency in admitting 'spontaneous migrants', who came primarily from the Mediterranean region. This leniency was closely related to the great demand for low-skilled labourers in the expanding Dutch economy. In the second phase (1969–1991), there was still considerable leniency, although less in terms of a liberal admission policy and more towards the presence and work of illegal immigrants. The 1980s were the years of tolerance par excellence. Although meanwhile a restrictive migration policy had been developed based on new legislation in respect of immigrants, there was still a large gap between legislation and its implementation in practice when it came to effectively combating illegal residence. Then, at the beginning of the 1990s, a policy turnaround became apparent, leading to the third phase (1991–present). The toleration practices still continued to exist, but a number of legislative and other measures were taken to combat illegality more effectively.*

Engbersen and Leun point out that in Dutch society constructivism played a pivotal role for stakeholders to understand how to treat immigrants basing on three phases. Important international theories have been developed out of constructivism and Craciunescu (2013) postulates that the concept of constructivism is considered to be the starting point of the institutionalization of values that eventually are developing into cooperative behaviors within the international society.

The dynamics of illegal immigrants in entering the country can be comprehend once we know the identity and interest of the country which is the aim of constructivism. The countries through their actors are fashioned by global and domestic norms and forms of identity. However, Pecoud (2017) assert that states get infuriated with some international organization whenever, they try to use powers to influence the movement of immigrants (especially Irregular/undocumented/illegal immigrants) arguing that such influence violates security policy.

Palan (2000) on the world of their making espouse that constructivists maintained that human can cause anarchy and security dilemma to the state if human opt to change and develop new ways. The actors (human) create state and the inter-state systems hence, are both artificial constructs and can be reconstructed by the same if so wish and cause insecurity.

It becomes clear in relation to security that discourse construct social reality about a subject such as illegal immigrants. Constructivists argued that only some are fuse via discourse at depicts dangers in the world. The security threat of illegal immigration is neither denied nor perceived as construction, constructivists are interested in the impact

the influx of illegal immigrant cause to the security and the economy of the receiving country ( Oezel, 2015).

Constructivists claim state identity is paramount to the state's approach to illegal immigration. The state identity, norms culture, beliefs, ideas shape the interest of the state; therefore, in the process of state interaction, interests can change. Social interaction lead to share and internalize beliefs, norms, culture into state identity and provide very important links to support the basic argument of constructivist theoretical framework (Alexandrov, 2003).

## V. FINDINGS ON THE DYNAMICS PROPELLING IMMIGRANTS' ILLEGAL ENTRY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (ZAMBIA).

The respondents indicated that in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Zambia like other SADC member state and the World at large were grappling with illegal immigration due to various factors, and the major ones for Zambia were;

- A. Political instability in some neighboring countries
- B. Natural disasters;
- C. Economic instability in neighboring countries;
- D. Employment and business opportunities and
- E. Education.

### A. Political Instability in neighboring countries

The perpetual political instability in terms of conflict among heterogeneous groups of people living in close proximity has always forced citizens to migrate to neighboring or beyond countries where peace is assured (Gebremedhin & Mavisakalyan, 2010). The respondent argued that Zambia was known as the haven of peace since independence in 1964, therefore, citizens of neighboring countries once they are at war they feel Zambia is safe haven to migrate to either as refugees, asylum-seekers or illegal immigrant. Some of the interviewed Congolese and Somalis nations' illegal immigrant in state custody indicated that they ran away from their countries in fear of civil strife and found that it would safe to be in Zambia.

In December, 2017, 12000 Congolese fled into Zambia escaping militia violence in Haut-Katanga and Tanganyika Provinces of Democratic Republic of Congo. The continued rule of the country's President, Joseph Kabila saw a number of civilian especially in south-eastern killed by the Government forces. Within three months of 2017, Zambia hosted more than 8,400 Congolese refugees where most of them crossed illegally in applied for refugee status indicating a worsening of the situation in Democratic Republic of Congo (VOA, Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017).

### B. Natural Disaster

Another dynamic that was contributing to the influx of illegal immigration to Zambia was natural disasters in other countries. According to Southern African Research and Documentation (2000) indicated that in 2000 the central and

southern of Mozambique lost 150 people in floods and that dozens of them went missing whereas, 900,000, of whom over 300,000 had been displaced from their homes were affected with food . Mozambique being a neighbor of Zambia some of them migrated to Zambia.

One respondent cited that in March, 2019 a category 3 cyclone made landfall in Mozambique causing damages and power cuts as the tropical cyclone made landfall to which in the first day 66 people were killed whereas, 45 people died in Malawi. The cyclone, named Tropical Cyclone Idai, gathered strength over the Indian Ocean (News24, 14/3/19). These disasters forced some nationals in the two countries to flee their countries to Zambia. “In April, 2019 SADC launched an Appeal amounting to US\$323 million to support the humanitarian needs and disaster response recovery of millions of people affected by devastating impacts of Tropical Cyclone IDAI in three of its Member States; Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe (Lopi, 2019)”. The disaster killed almost 830 people in the three affected countries, thousands were injured, and nearly three million people were displaced and were in daring need of immediate humanitarian assistance.” The displaced

*C. Economic instability in neighboring countries*

Mandrilly (2008) pointed out that economic instability in Zimbabwe many citizen were forced to flee to Botswana, South Africa and Zambia. Zimbabwean forced migrants in

the SADC region, and especially in Zambia, tends to spread poverty, as most Zimbabweans fleeing their country are destitute and unemployed. Moreover, Zambia is a rather poor country, with about 68% of Zambians living below the recognized national poverty line. As far as Zimbabweans are concerned, for Zambia shares its border with Zimbabwe in the South of the country, meaning that Zimbabweans who flee Zimbabwe end up first in the Southern provinces of Zambia. BBC News (2008) reported that about 300 Zimbabwean women were working as prostitute in Zambia border town of Livingston and were contributing to the high spread of HIV and Aids.

*D. Employment and business opportunities*

The respondent indicated that some immigrants from Rwanda and Congo DR had flooded most of the businesses in Lusaka and Copperbelt. Some Rwandese national who ran away from genocide have declined to be repatriated, instead they have established businesses in Kamwala South, Chilenje and Chaisa in Lusaka, whereas some Congolese national were running restaurants, plating hair in Lusaka and towns on the Copperbelt.

**VI. PROMINENT NATIONALITY INVOLVED IN ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IN ZAMBIA**

The study established that Zambia is a transit and a destination for illegal immigrants from various countries.

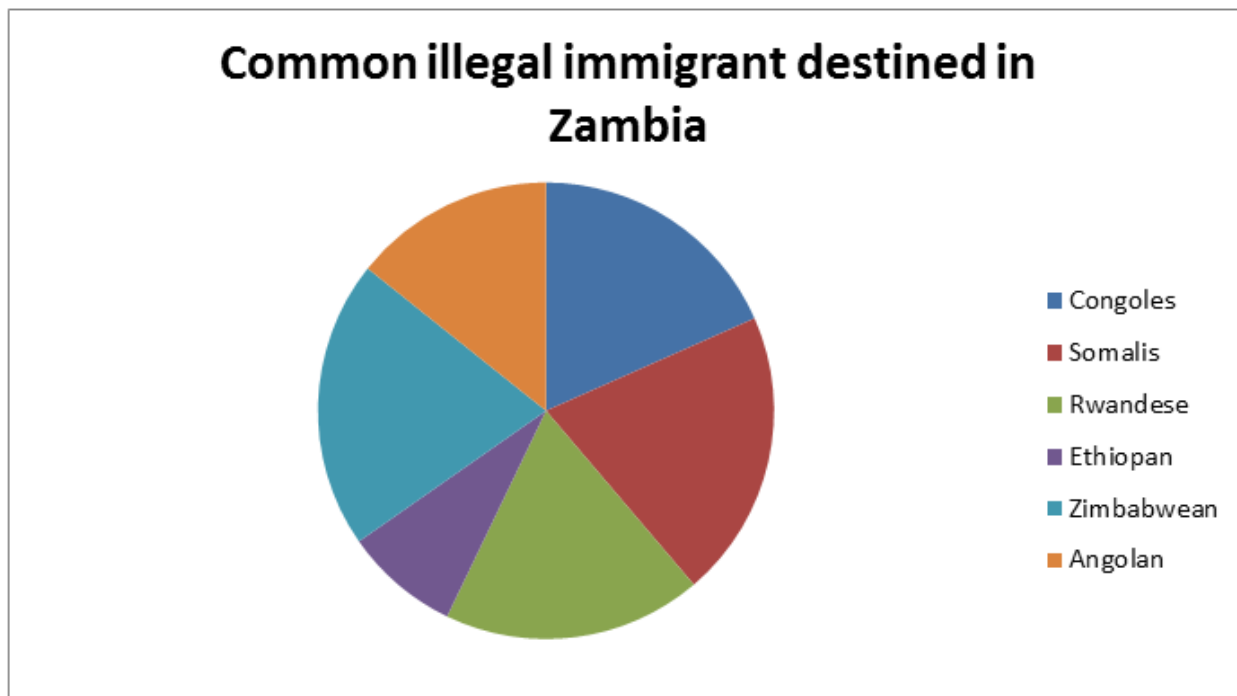


Fig 3:- Common illegal immigrant destined in Zambia

## VII. PROMINENT ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT DESTINED IN ZAMBIA

According to the study out of the 21 respondents who were asked to state the prominent nationalities who were prone to illegal immigration to Zambia as their destination, only 20 respondents replied. However, some respondents were giving two, three or four nationalities and prominent ones. 50% and 45% indicated that Somalis, Rwandese, Congolese and Zimbabweans were more of illegal stay mainly Somalis in Lusaka and Copper-belt, while Angolans were in Western Province and Zimbabweans in Southern and Lusaka provinces.

Other respondents representing 35%, 25% and 20% indicated that, Angolans, Ethiopians and Chinese were also using Zambia as destination as illegal immigration. These were in Zambia for business and employment opportunities, but some fail to renew the permits when they expire, thereby becoming illegal immigrants. In some instances, some were victims of human trafficking or human smuggling.

## VIII. PROMINENT ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT NATIONALITIES TRANSIT THROUGH ZAMBIA

The data collected established the common nationalities involved in illegal immigration through transit Zambia were Congolese, Somalia and Rwandese where 25% of respondents reported to be common, though, 50% of the respondents indicated that Angolans transit illegally more often to the Republic of Namibia. Tanzanians, Burundi's and Ethiopians were graded at 10%. During research, a Congolese couple arrested at Katimamulilo border with Namibia on Zambian side frantically indicated that they were from Botonga village in North Kivu of Congo DR and fled that country in fear of political instability, and vowed not to return but to be accorded passage to transit to South Africa.

## IX. CONCLUSION

The dynamics stimulating the movements of illegal immigrants have not spared Southern African states. They are experiencing substantial impenetrability in the pursuit to guarantee that the country's inadequate resources are moderately extended to every citizen. In South Africa there is constant xenophobia in South due to heavy or high influx of illegal immigrants who are hired at low wages. The dynamics analyzed included Political instability in some neighboring countries; natural disasters; economic instability in neighboring countries; employment and business opportunities and education. In the light of the highlighted complexity, there is need to study how these dynamics can be cushioned.

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