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Social Media Dialogues on Immigration Policy: The Case of Operation Dudula

Thabiso Mmotong

February 2024

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in 50% fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Sector Management).

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DECLARATION

I, Thabiso Mmotong, bearing student number 1447408, am enrolled as a student pursuing a Master's in Management: Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation in the year 2023. I affirm that the work I am submitting for assessment is entirely my own effort and has not been influenced or aided by external sources. I am committed to adhering to the stipulated guidelines for referencing the ideas and thoughts of other writers and authors. I possess a clear understanding of the accurate referencing method, including the appropriate methods for avoiding plagiarism, as discussed during the orientation class. I am also cognizant of the University of Witwatersrand's stringent stance against plagiarism. I acknowledge that if I fail to appropriately acknowledge the sources utilized in my study, it may result in disciplinary measures being taken against me.

Signature:  **Date:** 19 February 2024

DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this final academic report, the culmination of my master's degree journey, to two extraordinary individuals whose impact on my life knows no bounds: my late mother, Tselane Magdeline, and my cherished son, Letlhogonolo. Their unwavering support and unwritten inspiration have been the guiding stars throughout this arduous yet profoundly fulfilling academic odyssey.

To My Late Mother, Tselane Magdeline: A woman of indomitable strength and boundless wisdom, my mother instilled in me the profound significance of education from my earliest days. As a dedicated teacher herself, she understood the transformative power of knowledge and kindled the flames of curiosity within me. Her legacy lives on, even though she is no longer physically present. This dedication stands as a tribute to her unwavering faith in my potential and serves as a testament to her everlasting influence on my academic journey.

To My Beloved Son, Letlhogonolo: You, my precious child, are the beacon that illuminates my path. Your laughter, your dreams, and your unwavering belief in my abilities propel me forward. As I step onto this milestone in my educational pursuit, I dedicate this work to you. May it resonate with the importance of education—a torch to light your own way. May you follow these footprints, explore the vast realms of learning, and weave your own tapestry of aspirations. Know always that your presence fuels my determination and infuses purpose into my academic endeavours.

With gratitude and love.

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With deep appreciation.

ABSTRACT

In the democratic context of South Africa, where public engagement mechanisms are limited, there exists a risk of citizen disenfranchisement and internal conflicts. This study advocates for participatory governance and harnesses the power of social media to actively involve citizens and stakeholders in shaping immigration policies. Recognizing the transformative potential of online platforms, the goal is twofold: to critique existing inadequacies and contribute to more inclusive and responsive governance models. By bridging the gap between policymakers and the public, this endeavour aims to foster informed and harmonious discourse on immigration policy.

The paper specifically examines Operation Dudula, a grassroots movement that has garnered attention for its immigration-focused stance. Through qualitative research methods, the study sheds light on societal perspectives regarding immigration policy in South Africa. The analysis focuses on publicly shared Twitter posts, including those associated with the hashtag #OperationDudula and content from the official Operation Dudula account. This study provides a window into the intricate landscape of South African immigration policy, revealing a dynamic discourse that unfolds across social media platforms. It spotlights the pivotal role of citizen engagement in shaping immigration policy. Participants demonstrate a collective commitment to grappling with the complexities inherent in immigration.

The research advocates for proactive measures, emphasizing the need for transparent and inclusive communication practices. By actively engaging with diverse perspectives on social media, we can foster an environment conducive to informed dialogue. Furthermore, the study champions initiatives focused on citizen education and empowerment, aiming to facilitate meaningful participation in the formulation of immigration policies.

Key Words: Immigration policy, Social Media, Twitter/X, #OperationDudula, Glo-Cal Politics, Informal Policy Approaches.

ACRONYMS

ADFSAfrica	African Diaspora Forum South Africa
ANC	African National Congress
ASMU	Asylum Seeker Management Unit
AU	African Union
BLM	Black Lives Matter
CBD	Central Business District
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MEC	Member of Executive Council
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SABC	South Africa Broadcasting Corporation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAPS	South African Police Services
SMS	Short Message Service
USA	United States of America
UN	United Nations
WW2	World War 2
ZEP	Zimbabwean Exemption Permits

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH CONCEPTUALISATION

1. Introduction

This study delves into the theoretical framework of participatory governance, focusing on the intricate dialogues surrounding South Africa's immigration policy. Specifically, we explore sentiments expressed on Twitter/X using the hashtag "#OperationDudula" and glean insights from the movement's social media account. Our aim is twofold: to assess whether the nation's immigration policy garners stakeholder support and to understand the underlying reasons.

In a democratic state like South Africa, the absence of robust public engagement mechanisms poses risks. Citizens may become disenfranchised, and internal conflicts can escalate. Recent waves of retaliatory and violent mass protests underscore the urgency of meaningful socio-political reform. Our study advocates for participatory approaches to shaping national immigration policy, bridging the gap between policymakers and the public (Auriacombe & Sithomola, 2020; Ojiagu et al., 2020).

The structure of this paper unfolds as follows: 1. Introduction and Background: We provide context, articulate the research problem, and outline our purpose and research questions. 2. Literature Review: A comprehensive review establishes the conceptual and analytical frameworks. 3. Participatory Governance Theory: We delve into the theory, emphasizing its relevance. 4. Research Strategy: Details on design, data collection, analysis, and considerations are elucidated. 5. Results: Clear and objective presentation of findings. 6. Discussion: A thorough exploration of results. 7. Conclusion: A concise summary to wrap up our exploration.

1.1 Background to the Problem

The global phenomenon of millions of people fleeing unstable conditions in their home countries poses a significant challenge for the nations they seek refuge in (Thomas, 2020). Immigration policies play a pivotal role in defining the rights and privileges available to non-native citizens residing in a host nation. When crafted thoughtfully, these policies uphold the rule of law, ensure resource sustainability, and maintain socio-political stability. However, mishandling immigration policies can lead to socio-economic tensions between local populations and immigrants, possibly fuelled by perceived competition for resources.

1.2 The Impact of Immigration: A Multifaceted Lens

Immigration weaves a complex tapestry within receiving states, influencing various facets of their socio-economic fabric. For example, as these states strive to achieve developmental goals, they often rely on foreign nationals to fill critical skill gaps and contribute to their growth (Drahokoupil & Fabo, 2022; Lan, 2022). Notably, the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the pivotal role of tourism—driven by overseas visitors—in bolstering countries' GDPs (Menegaki, 2020).

Categorization Matters: Labels assigned to immigrants—whether as "economic immigrants," "refugees," or "asylum seekers"—significantly impact how they are perceived by host nations. In a thought-provoking study by Wyszynski and colleagues (2020), drawing from social psychology principles, the concept of the "social labelling phenomenon" emerges. Their argument posits that immigrants exert a comparable socio-economic impact on host societies. Differential perceptions, therefore, stem not from inherent disparities but rather from the consequences of labelling. In navigating the intricate landscape of immigration, understanding these nuances becomes paramount.

The central factor contributing to a country's encounter with an influx of refugees or asylum seekers is geopolitical unpredictability (Pradella & Taghdisi Rad, 2017). Wars and their aftermath, including infrastructure destruction and famine, often lead to a significant rise in the number of individuals compelled to flee their home countries.

Policy, rather than being static, evolves in response to changing contexts. A notable example is from the French Republic after the conclusion of World War II (WW2). Initially, a host nation facing an immigrant influx may demonstrate accommodation and a willingness to assist those in need. However, there are instances when the receiving country eventually tightens its borders citing resource constraints. This decision aims to sustainably manage the impact of the influx on its domestic institutions (Levatino et al., 2018).

In numerous European countries, entrenched bureaucracies have led to a paradoxical situation: even refugees and asylum seekers who meet the requirements outlined in the Geneva Convention are sometimes labelled as illegal immigrants. This transformation occurs due to administrative complexities and procedural hurdles (Schuster, 2013). Consequently, a

disproportionate number of these individuals find themselves migrating to specific European nations, including The Kingdom of Spain, The Hellenic Republic (Greece), The Republic of Malta, and The Italian Republic.

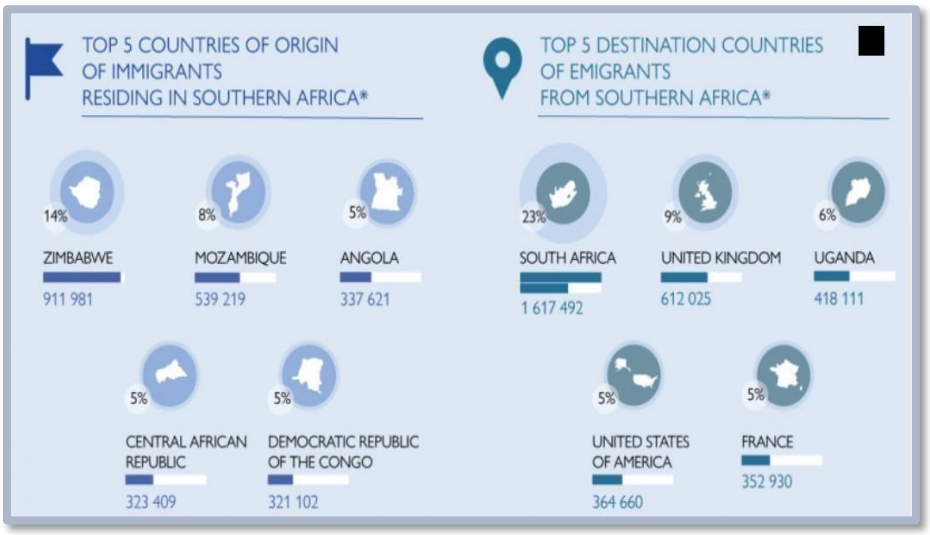
A similar scenario unfolds in North America. Former President Donald Trump famously advocated for the construction of a border wall between the United States of America (USA) and its neighbouring United Mexican States. His concern centred around the perceived adverse effects of unchecked immigration into the USA (Santamaría Graff, 2017). Remarkably, this wall remains in place today, symbolizing the ongoing debate over immigration policies and their impact on host nations.

Understanding Southern African Migration Dynamics

A crucial framework for regulating immigration among the Southern African Development Community (SADC) nations is established through international agreements, such as the SADC Labour Migration Policy (Vanyoro, 2019a). These policies serve as a mechanism by which countries within SADC implement immigration regulations tailored to accommodate foreign nationals desiring to engage in activities such as visiting, residing, or working in a country other than their own. By being signatories to these accords, SADC countries are effectively and by international law supposed to uphold and enforce immigration protocols that aim to maintain order and ensure the smooth functioning of cross-border movements.

The majority of labour immigration within the SADC region originates from the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Republic of Mozambique (Utete et al., 2023). Scholars contend that these movements are directly related to the failures of local socioeconomic conditions. In the Republic of Botswana, anti-immigration populism has arisen and has been used as a means to gather political support. A series of immigration policies and proposals are recommended as a means to effectively manage migration movements in the region. **Figure 1** below shows statistics of where emigration in the SADC region originates and the destinations thereof.

Figure 1: Immigration and Emigrant Profile



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020).

Understanding Immigration Dynamics in Southern Africa

In a comprehensive 36-month case study conducted by Ng'andu (2019), The Republic of Zambia—a member state of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)—faced formidable challenges due to its porous borders. The surge in unauthorized immigration exacerbated these difficulties. The study revealed that illegal immigration acted as a catalyst for various transnational criminal activities within Zambia. This situation could be attributed to the forces of globalization, the lack of political determination to safeguard the nation's borders, and the absence of a comprehensive migration policy (Ng'andu, 2019).

In South Africa, immigration is governed by the Immigration Act 13 of 2002, as amended. This legislation establishes the legal framework and regulations governing immigration and entry into South Africa. It outlines the requirements and procedures for various immigration categories, including visas, permits, and citizenship. Additionally, the Act specifies enforcement measures and penalties for non-compliance.

Since the implementation of the Immigration Act 13 of 2002, South Africa has witnessed a substantial increase in immigration, signifying the effectiveness of the pro-immigration policy. The act's requirements emphasize the importance of applicants possessing good character,

being desirable inhabitants unlikely to cause harm, and refraining from seeking jobs already available in the local skills pool. These provisions aim to ensure the selection of qualified and suitable immigrants (The Presidency, 2002). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that these provisions have also inadvertently contributed to a significant influx of immigrants, as the country becomes an attractive destination for individuals seeking opportunities and a better quality of life.

The implementation of the Zimbabwe Exemption Permit (ZEP) was a consequential outcome of the Immigration Act. The Department of Home Affairs (DHA), through its political principal, Dr. Arron Motsoaledi, indicates that the ZEP was initiated in 2008 in response to a surge of asylum seekers from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, predominantly consisting of individuals of Zimbabwean nationality (Department of Home Affairs, 2022). The DHA further explains that the Asylum Seeker Management Unit (ASMU) found itself overwhelmed by the sheer volume of applicants, with the Musina Refugee Reception Office alone receiving over 1000 applications per day. Insufficient staffing levels and inadequate financial resources further exacerbated the challenges faced in managing this surge.

The surge of immigrants to South Africa can be attributed primarily to the prevailing policies and the perception of enhanced economic opportunities (Machinya, 2022; Mamabolo, 2015). Nevertheless, empirical investigations indicate that South Africa contends with alarmingly high levels of unemployment and socioeconomic inequality, positioning it among the most afflicted nations globally in these regards (Hewitt et al., 2020; World Bank, 2022). The influx of immigrants coupled with the prevailing economic challenges seem to contribute to the proliferation of conflicts concerning immigration dynamics, particularly within the context of supply and demand, exacerbating tensions between native-born citizens and immigrants (Mamabolo, 2015).

Instances of violence against immigrants in South Africa have been reported since the post-1994 period, with a notable increase observed from 2008 onwards (Misago & Landau, 2023). It is noteworthy that these attacks have thus far demonstrated a lack of explicit affiliation with dedicated membership, widespread social support, or overt organizational coordination (Albertyn, 2019; Myeni, 2022; Phiri, 2021). This marks a significant departure from the more

recent emergence of the Operation Dudula anti-immigration movement, which has prompted a surge in vigilante-like actions targeting African immigrants residing in South Africa.

While numerous studies have focused on the broader issues of migration, legality, and socio-economic impacts, this research diverges in its focal point. It centers on the pivotal role of social media platforms and organized movements, exemplified by Operation Dudula, in shaping public discourse and responses to the perceived weaknesses in the South African government's immigration policy. Rather than solely scrutinizing migration patterns or legality, this study examines how these digital platforms and grassroots initiatives exert influence on public sentiment and policy direction.

In recent years, Operation Dudula has emerged as a notable player in this dynamic. This movement, driven by impassioned citizens and facilitated by social media, introduces a novel dimension to the immigration discourse. It mobilizes collective action, articulating concerns over perceived government inadequacies in handling immigration matters. Through the strategic use of digital platforms, Operation Dudula amplifies its message, garnering support and influencing public opinion.

Social media, as a potent tool for disseminating information and mobilizing communities, offers a unique vantage point to understand the evolving dynamics of public opinion. By scrutinizing sentiments expressed under the hashtag "#OperationDudula" and the messaging disseminated by the movement's social media accounts, this study aims to unearth the underlying motivations, beliefs, and concerns that drive stakeholder engagement with South Africa's immigration policy.

Furthermore, this research underscores the imperative for governments to not only address the structural aspects of immigration policy but also to actively engage with and respond to the voices emerging from these digital spaces. It elucidates the intricate interplay between citizen-led movements, social media, and policy discourse, highlighting the need for a nuanced, multifaceted approach to immigration governance.

In essence, this study serves as a departure from conventional immigration studies by placing a magnifying glass on the transformative influence of social media and grassroots movements.

It illuminates how these platforms and initiatives are reshaping the narrative surrounding immigration policy in South Africa, offering a fresh perspective on the dynamics of governance and public participation in the digital age. Several instances where social media's power was showcased can be found below.

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement

Social media platforms, particularly Twitter and Instagram, have been instrumental in spreading awareness and mobilizing activists in the ongoing BLM movement (Morimoto, 2019). The movement gained momentum after the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's killer in 2013, but reached a new level of prominence following the death of George Floyd in 2020 (Priniski et al, 2021). Activists and protestors used hashtags like #BlackLivesMatter to share videos, organize protests, and demand justice for victims of police brutality. Social media has amplified the movement's message and allowed it to garner widespread support both nationally and internationally.

The 2019-2020 Hong Kong Protests

Social media played a crucial role in the protests that erupted in Hong Kong in 2019 against a proposed extradition bill (Lee et al., 2020). Protestors used platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Telegram to organize, share information about police movements, and document incidents of police brutality. These platforms also allowed the movement to gain international attention and support. The use of social media helped protesters coordinate their actions and communicate their demands to a global audience, influencing the course of the protests and the response of authorities.

The Arab Springs

The Arab Springs serves as a notable example highlighting the transformative power of social media in socio-political contexts. Through its pervasive reach and decentralized nature, social media enabled individuals to transcend traditional barriers to communication and mobilization, empowering them to challenge established systems and advocate for political change (Allagui & Kuebler, 2011). The unprecedented use of social media during these uprisings underscores its instrumental role in facilitating the dissemination of information, fostering solidarity among like-minded individuals, and amplifying the voices of those seeking political reform (Moldovan, 2020). Ultimately, this resulted in significant regime changes in several Islamic

North African countries, marking a turning point in the region's socio-political landscape.

For this study, it is therefore particularly relevant that a sizable portion of Operation Dudula leverages the power of social media to openly coordinate activities and exchange messages via Twitter. Even while many of the movement's acts, such as denying access to public healthcare facilities, are illegal, they are nonetheless successfully coordinated publicly on social media without being able to be curtailed by the government. Social media has progressed and is continuously evolving as a technology more quickly than legislation can keep up with (Fenwick et al., 2016).

An expanding volume of literature examines disputes between natives and foreigners in South Africa using thematic, discourse, and content analysis of Twitter exchange (Solomon-Uriri & Tappe, 2021). There is, however, a lack at the moment of those using a participatory governance analytical lens and confining their attention to the issue's connection to the newly formed and better-orchestrated anti-immigration movement known as "Operation Dudula."

In summary, the intricate dynamics surrounding South Africa's immigration policy, as illuminated by this research background, underscore the paramount importance of studying the influence of social media in policy-sensitive domains such as migration. The #OperationDudula movement, operating in the digital sphere, has reshaped public discourse and mobilized citizens to engage in issues of immigration governance.

This study, along with parallel instances of social media's transformative impact in movements like Black Lives Matter, Hong Kong protests, and the Arab Springs, collectively reaffirm the urgent need for comprehensive research in this area. Social media serves as a potent platform for disseminating information, shaping public sentiment, and influencing policy direction. As we navigate the complexities of the digital age, understanding how social media interacts with and impacts sensitive policy issues like immigration is not only relevant but crucial for fostering informed, inclusive, and responsive governance in an increasingly interconnected world.

Amidst the backdrop of a governance power contest deeply entwined with policy matters, a pressing research problem emerges. This contest, situated within the state apparatus and

involving a diverse array of stakeholders, is illuminated through the lens of participatory governance theory. Notably, the ongoing struggle, prominently led by #OperationDudula, appears to stem from a glaring deficiency in consensus and alignment among stakeholders with regard to immigration policy. This persistent discord has given rise to a disconcerting escalation marked by increasingly violent and unlawful protests targeting immigrants residing in South Africa (Dauda et al., 2018).

Phiri's (2021) comprehensive investigation also underscores the grim toll exacted by these tumultuous events, revealing that a minimum of 62 individuals lost their lives, and over 100,000 immigrants, including women, children, and the elderly, were forcibly displaced during the turbulent spate of attacks that unfolded in the year 2008. The multifaceted concerns arising from socio-political conflicts of this nature are of paramount importance.

Firstly, they invariably result in grievous human casualties, as exemplified by the meticulous examination conducted by Mamabolo (2015). Secondly, the deliberate targeting and vandalization of critical public infrastructure, including transportation networks and educational institutions, engender profound financial repercussions, inflicting substantial losses upon both private enterprises and governmental entities alike (Bonga, 2021). These disruptive incidents cast a shadow of instability, significantly deterring the allure of foreign direct investment. Thirdly, the aftermath of such tumultuous conflicts frequently foreshadows the permanent cessation of commercial enterprises, exacting a heavy toll on employees who find themselves deprived of their livelihoods. This dire consequence is corroborated by the empirical findings of Vhumbunu (2021), whose research underscores the profound economic and social repercussions that follow in the wake of such upheavals. Lastly, the existence of anarchic elements within the confines of a democratic framework has the potential to erode the confidence of taxpayers and voters in the state's capacity to govern effectively. This erosion of trust could ultimately undermine the bedrock of socio-political stability, a concern that resonates with the broader implications emphasized by contemporary scholarship on this intricate subject matter.

In light of this complex context, the central research problem revolves around the need to comprehensively investigate the role of social media in shaping South Africa's immigration policy, particularly in the context of governance power contests and conflicts such as those led

by #OperationDudula.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study aims to explore dialogues related to South African immigration policy on Twitter, specifically using the Operation Dudula hashtag. Framed within the participatory governance theoretical framework, it seeks to analyze how public discourse influences policy development. By doing so, the research deepens the understanding of stakeholder attitudes and explores how participatory mechanisms can align immigration policy with the needs and concerns of diverse stakeholders.

1.4 Research Questions

Main Question

1. What insights do social media dialogues using the hashtag "Operation Dudula" provide regarding South African society's viewpoints on immigration policy?

Sub-Questions

1. Can tweets from social media serve as a valuable tool for analysing South Africa's immigration approach?
2. How do users of the Twitter hashtag #OperationDudula engage in dialogue?
3. What immigration policy suggestions emerge from the comments and views shared?

1.5 Chapter Summary

This study focuses on South African immigration policy, employing a participatory governance theoretical framework to understand stakeholder support and sentiments. Given that South Africa is a democratic state, meaningful citizen engagement on immigration policy is crucial to avoid disenfranchisement and internal conflicts. By examining discussions on social media—specifically Twitter—using the hashtag #OperationDudula, we aim to gain insights into South African society's perspectives. Additionally, we will analyse tweets as a tool for public participation and identify potential immigration policy recommendations based on shared comments and views.

CHAPTER 2: MIGRATION POLICY IN A SHIFTING GLO-CAL SPHERE, THROUGH THE LENSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA.

2. Introduction

In this chapter, we embark on a journey through time and space, tracing the historical evolution of migration patterns globally. Our focus narrows to Africa and ultimately homes in on South Africa. We begin by immersing ourselves in the annals of global migration history, exploring the factors that have driven people to traverse borders and continents. South Africa emerges as a pivotal case study, shaped by its apartheid history and reliance on migrant labour. Beyond its borders, South Africa's role within the Southern African Development Community adds complexity to regional migration patterns. Social media, with its global reach, amplifies diverse voices and challenges stereotypes. As we navigate this multifaceted landscape, we analyse how South African policy intersects with global trends and social media narratives. Our journey culminates in a chapter summary that synthesizes these intricate threads, providing a panoramic view of migration's impact on the African continent and beyond.

2.1 The Global Historical Perspective on Migration

Migration policy is deeply rooted in historical, global, and local contexts, shaping the dynamics of human movement and societal responses (Natter, 2021). The history of human migration is woven with threads of economic opportunities, conflict, cultural exchange, and political forces (Geurts et al., 2021). To understand contemporary migration policy, we must delve into the chronicles of global migration history, where patterns of movement have been shaped by an intricate interplay of factors spanning centuries.

Early Explorations, Colonization, Labour Migration, and Industrialization

The roots of global migration trace back to early human explorations and the quest for new territories (Turchin, 2016). During the Age of Exploration (15th to 17th century), European powers sent explorers like Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan to chart uncharted waters. Inadvertently, this initiated the exchange of peoples and cultures between the Old World and the New (Columbus et al., 2009).

Colonization played a pivotal role in driving migration waves. European colonial powers established vast empires in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, resulting in the mass movement of people. Notably, the Atlantic slave trade stands as one of the most infamous examples of coerced migration during this era. Millions of Africans were forcibly transported to the Americas to fuel the burgeoning plantation economies (Inikori, 2022).

Industrialization, Conflict, and Shifting Migration Patterns

The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed significant shifts in migration patterns due to industrialization, global conflict, and displacement. The rise of industrialization in the 19th century drew people from rural areas to burgeoning urban centers in search of factory jobs and economic opportunities (Sundvall, 2023; Avtar et al., 2019). Mass migrations occurred within countries and across continents, including Irish laborers heading to the United States and Chinese laborers relocating to Southeast Asia (Sovacool, 2022). In the 20th century, unprecedented global conflict, such as World War I and World War II, triggered large-scale migration driven by war, persecution, and political upheaval (Bramwell, 2021; Gimenez-Gomez et al., 2019). The Holocaust notably forced millions of Jews to seek refuge worldwide (Dragostinova, 2016), further reshaping global migration patterns.

The Effects of Globalization and the Role of Diaspora Communities

In the latter part of the 20th century and into the early 21st century, globalization significantly shaped migration dynamics (Jahanger et al., 2022). Economic opportunities and the promise of a better life fuelled migration flows from developing to developed countries (Woldoff & Litchfield, 2021). The rise of multinational corporations and global supply chains further increased the demand for labour mobility, resulting in the movement of workers across borders (McMaster et al., 2020).

Additionally, diaspora communities have historically played a pivotal role in shaping migration patterns (Cohen, 2022). These communities often act as bridges between their countries of origin and host nations, fostering cultural exchange, trade networks, and remittances, which contribute to the development of both sending and receiving countries (Safran, 1991). This historical overview underscores the dynamic and multifaceted nature of global migration. It provides a foundation for understanding the complexity of contemporary migration policy, which must address a wide range of historical legacies, economic drivers,

and social dynamics.

2.2 South Africa's Unique Role in Migration Dynamics

The Republic of South Africa, situated at the southernmost tip of the African continent, occupies a pivotal position in shaping migration patterns within Africa. Its historical significance, economic prominence, and evolving migration policies render it a crucial case study for understanding contemporary migration dynamics on the continent.

South Africa's Migration Dynamics: From Apartheid to the Post-Apartheid Era

South Africa's history of apartheid—a system of institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination that persisted until 1994—has profoundly shaped its migration dynamics (Letsoko et al., 2022). During apartheid, migration policies enforced strict racial classifications and heavily relied on migrant labor (Lemon, 2021). This system drew workers not only from within South Africa but also from neighbouring countries such as Lesotho, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe (Nesvet, 2020), resulting in forced removals, family separations, and complex migration flows across the region.

The end of apartheid in 1994 marked a turning point in South Africa's migration landscape (Remmington, 2022). As one of the largest net receivers of migrants within Africa, South Africa's relatively stable political climate, developed infrastructure, and diverse economy attracted individuals seeking economic opportunities, education, and social mobility. Cities like Johannesburg became vibrant hubs of diversity, fostering interactions among people from various African nations (Dirsuweit, 1999). This transformation has profoundly impacted both South African society and its relationships with neighbouring countries.

The post-apartheid era witnessed a shift in South Africa's migration policies from exclusionary to more inclusive approaches (Landau et al., 2011). The government recognized the need to address historical injustices and foster social cohesion, not only within South Africa but also within the broader African context (Khaile et al., 2021). Policy reforms aimed to grant greater rights and protection to migrants and refugees, aligning South Africa with international human rights standards (Vanyoro, 2019b). However, internal debates have emerged regarding how to balance the need for economic growth and social integration with the concerns of South African citizens and African neighbours (Nyamwanza & Dzingirai, 2019).

2.3 South Africa' role within the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

South Africa's role in migration dynamics extends beyond its borders as a prominent member of the SADC, a regional organization that includes several African countries (Nshimbi & Moyo, 2020). The movement of people within the SADC region, driven by economic opportunities, creates a complex web of migration patterns and policy challenges not only for South Africa but for the broader African region (Hirsch, 2021).

South Africa's migration policies and practices have a profound impact on neighbouring African countries, as changes in South African policy can lead to shifts in regional migration dynamics (Dinbabo & Badewa, 2020). This regional context adds another layer of complexity to South Africa's role in managing migration flows and contributes to the broader discourse on migration within Africa. Therefore, South Africa's unique position in the southern African region, its historical legacy of apartheid, and its evolving migration policies make it a crucial case study in understanding contemporary migration dynamics within Africa. The interplay between historical factors, economic opportunities, and regional implications underscores the complexity of migration in South Africa and its broader impact on the African continent.

2.4 The Rise of Social Media in Shaping the Migration Narrative

The emergence and widespread adoption of social media platforms have had a profound impact on how migration is discussed, perceived, and experienced (Komito, 2011). Social media has become a powerful tool for shaping the migration narrative globally, including within South Africa (Rowe et al., 2021).

The Global Reach of Social Media and the Amplification of Migrant Voices

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter/ X, Instagram, and WhatsApp, have achieved unparalleled global reach, connecting individuals across geographical, cultural, and linguistic boundaries (Nayyar et al., 2023). This interconnectedness has transformed the way information is disseminated and consumed, making social media a potent force in shaping public opinion and discourse on migration (Chandio et al., 2023).

Through social media, individuals from different corners of the world can share their migration stories, experiences, and perspectives in real-time. This has allowed for a more nuanced and

diverse portrayal of migration, challenging traditional media narratives that often focus on crisis and conflict (Komito, 2011).

One of the most significant contributions of social media to the migration narrative is its ability to amplify the voices of migrants themselves (Georgiou, 2018). Migrants can now share their personal stories, challenges, and successes directly with a global audience. This direct engagement humanizes the migration experience, enabling people to connect on a personal level with those undertaking journeys in search of better opportunities or safety (de Saint Laurent et al., 2020; Udwan et al., 2020). Organizations and advocacy groups have also harnessed social media to advocate for migrant rights and raise awareness about the challenges migrants face. Hashtags like #RefugeesWelcome and #MigrantRights have gained traction, mobilizing support and solidarity on a global scale (Barisione et al., 2019).

Social Media, the Influence of Visual Content and related Challenges and Controversies

Visual content, including photos and videos, has become a powerful tool for shaping perceptions of migration (Gurrieri & Drenten, 2019). Platforms like Instagram and YouTube have enabled migrants and content creators to share visual narratives that provide a unique window into their experiences.

Photographs and videos capturing the realities of migration, from perilous sea crossings to acts of kindness by host communities, evoke strong emotions and can challenge stereotypes and misconceptions (Udwan et al., 2020). Visual storytelling through platforms like Instagram Stories and TikTok offers an immediate and immersive way to engage with migration narratives.

While social media has opened new avenues for dialogue and understanding, it has also brought challenges and controversies. Misinformation and fake news related to migration can spread rapidly, leading to the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes and fear (Ekman, 2019). Additionally, some governments have been shown to have used social media to disseminate anti-migrant propaganda or to monitor and target migrant communities (Ravelin & Mann, 2020). The intersection of social media, surveillance, and migration raises complex ethical and human rights questions (Lunga, 2020).

2.5 South Africa's Context: Social Media and Migration

In the South African context, social media has played a significant role in shaping the migration discourse (Moyo & Mpofu, 2020). Organisations like Operation Dudula have harnessed social media platforms to advocate for stricter immigration policies and have garnered substantial public attention (Hlatshwayo, 2023). The rise of such movements on social media reflects the contentious nature of migration debates within the Republic of South Africa. Moreover, South African citizens, migrants, and advocacy groups have used platforms like Twitter and Facebook to share stories of integration, discrimination, and resilience, contributing to a more complex understanding of migration within the country (Budree et al., 2019).

Therefore, social media's rise as a global communication tool has transformed the migration narrative by amplifying diverse voices, challenging stereotypes, and mobilizing support. While it has the potential to foster empathy and understanding, it also presents challenges related to misinformation and surveillance. In the Republic of South Africa, social media has become a dynamic arena where migration debates are passionately contested, reflecting the complex and evolving nature of migration in the country.

2.6 The Intersection of Global Migration, South African Policy, and Social Media

The complex interplay between global migration, South African migration policies, and the influence of social media platforms presents a dynamic landscape that shapes the discourse, perceptions, and outcomes of migration within South Africa.

Global Migration Trends and South Africa's Evolving Migration Policies

To comprehend the intersection of these elements, it's essential to recognize the broader context of global migration. The 21st century has witnessed significant shifts in migration patterns, driven by factors such as conflict, economic disparities, climate change, and the aspiration for better livelihoods (Kaczan & Orgill-Meyer, 2020).

South Africa, situated at the confluence of various migration corridors, stands as a microcosm of these global trends. Its status as a regional economic hub, coupled with its relatively stable political environment, has made it a magnet for migrants from across Africa and beyond (K. Moyo & Zanker, 2020).

South African migration policies have undergone substantial changes in response to these

global and regional dynamics. Post-apartheid Republic of South Africa embarked on a journey to rectify historical injustices and adopt more inclusive policies (Mutanda & Ndawana, 2023). However, crafting policies that balance the interests of South African citizens and migrants, many of whom seek economic opportunities, has been a complex endeavour (Le Pere & Van Nieuwkerk, 2020). This intricate policy landscape has profound implications for the integration, rights, and protection of migrants within South Africa.

Social Media as a Policy Arena: Impacts on Public Perceptions and Policy

Social media platforms have transformed into policy arenas where discussions, debates, and advocacy surrounding migration policy unfold in real-time. South African policymakers and stakeholders, including civil society organizations and advocacy groups, actively engage on platforms like Twitter/X and Facebook to share their perspectives and mobilize support (Ondiek & Onyango, 2023).

These digital spaces offer a forum for migrants to voice their concerns, share their experiences, and seek solidarity. Migrants, activists, and researchers leverage social media to document and draw attention to issues such as xenophobia, discrimination, and the experiences of asylum seekers (Chenzi, 2021).

The intersection of global migration, South African policy, and social media has significant impacts on public perceptions and attitudes towards migration. Debates on social media often reflect the polarized nature of the migration discourse within the Republic of South Africa (Tesfaye, 2020).

Social media can amplify both pro-migrant and anti-migrant sentiments. It can be a platform for humanitarian efforts, such as campaigns advocating for refugee rights, as well as a space where xenophobic narratives and hate speech can spread (Messing & Ságvári, 2021). Moreover, social media should influence how policymakers engage with the public and how they respond to public sentiment. Policy consultations must increasingly take place in digital spaces, where policymakers gather input and feedback, providing an opportunity for more inclusive decision-making (Magade, 2020).

South Africa's Role in the Global Migration Discourse

South Africa's migration policies and social media dynamics also have implications for the broader global migration discourse (Kanayo et al., 2019). The country's experiences and policies serve as a case study for how nations grapple with the challenges and opportunities presented by migration in the 21st century.

South Africa's engagement with regional and international organizations, such as the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN), shapes the broader narrative on migration governance in Africa and beyond (Adam, 2023). The country's stance on migration and its willingness to collaborate with neighbouring states influence regional migration dynamics (Moyo & Laine, 2021).

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter's narrative begins with a broad historical perspective on migration, underscoring the complex interplay of factors such as economic opportunities, conflict, cultural exchange, and political forces. It then systematically traces the evolution of global migration patterns, from early explorations and colonization to the influence of industrialization, conflicts in the 20th century, and the effects of globalization. This historical context serves as a critical foundation for understanding contemporary migration policy, emphasizing the rich tapestry of historical legacies, economic drivers, and social dynamics that underpin the study.

Within this historical framework, South Africa emerges as a pivotal case study in understanding modern migration dynamics within the African continent. The chapter illuminates how South Africa's historical experiences, notably the era of apartheid and its reliance on migrant labour, have profoundly shaped migration patterns. The post-apartheid transition marked a turning point, making South Africa a significant magnet for migrants in search of economic opportunities and political stability. The evolution of South African migration policies, from exclusionary approaches to more inclusive ones, adds further complexity to the narrative, highlighting the delicate balance between the interests of South African citizens and the aspirations of migrants.

As the chapter progresses, it analyses the rise of social media platforms and their transformative impact on the migration discourse. Social media's ability to amplify diverse voices, challenge

stereotypes, and mobilize support is showcased, offering a nuanced and dynamic portrayal of migration. However, the chapter also candidly addresses the challenges and controversies associated with social media, including the spread of misinformation and the use of these platforms for surveillance.

Moreover, this chapter adeptly examines the intersecting dynamics of global migration trends, South African migration policies, and the influence of social media. It emphasizes their profound impact on public perceptions, policy outcomes, and South Africa's role in the global migration discourse. This nuanced and multidimensional chapter serves as a solid foundation for understanding and analysing the multifaceted relationship between migration, policy, and communication, setting the stage for an in-depth exploration of the research findings.

CHAPTER 3: PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3. Introduction

In this chapter, the participatory governance theory is discussed in detail as it is the theoretical underpinning upon which this paper is based. In light of this, the findings will be discussed, analysed, and interpreted primarily through the lens of this theory. To provide a thorough understanding of the theory, we adapt what Wotela (2017), in his systems thinking inspired paper, referred to as 'The six fundamental questions that can be used to decode any field of study.' Accordingly, the purpose of this chapter is first to 'Define Participatory Governance.' Secondly, clarify the 'Purpose of the Theory.' The third step is to describe some key 'components' as well as 'processes' that are involved in the theory. Fourth, we highlight some of the relevant and key 'debates within participatory governance discourses.'

3.1 Defining the Participatory Governance Theory

Participatory governance theory in this research is defined as a democratic approach to the state decision-making processes that involves the active participation of citizens and stakeholders (Bua and Bussu, 2021). It emphasizes inclusivity, collaboration, and accountability. Through mechanisms like public consultations and community meetings, citizens are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and expertise to shape policies and hold decision-makers responsible. Participatory governance recognizes the value of diverse knowledge and experiences, aiming to enhance transparency and legitimacy in public institutions.

3.2 Purpose of Participatory Governance Theory Approach

By empowering marginalized groups and fostering a sense of ownership, the purpose and aim of the approach is to create a more equitable and inclusive society. According to Megdal et al., (2017), this approach is rooted in democratic principles, human rights, and social justice, enabling citizens to actively participate in shaping their lives and the decisions that impact them. It appears therefore that a disregard for this approach may therefore also equate to a disregard also for democratic principles, social justice, and human rights.

3.2 Components of Participatory Governance Theory

A participatory governance system consists of several key components that work together to facilitate citizen participation and decision-making. These components, as listed in the table below, collectively form a participatory governance system that promotes citizen empowerment, inclusivity, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes.

1. Legal Framework:	A set of laws, regulations, and policies that establish the legal basis for participatory governance and outline the rights and responsibilities of citizens and stakeholders.
2.Institutions and Structures:	Dedicated institutions and structures at various levels of governance, such as citizen assemblies, advisory committees, and participatory budgeting processes, that provide platforms for engagement and decision-making.
3.Information and Communication:	Effective communication channels and mechanisms for disseminating information about government plans, policies, and decision-making processes, ensuring transparency and enabling citizens to make informed choices.
4.Participation Mechanisms:	Various mechanisms like public consultations, town hall meetings, focus groups, and online platforms that facilitate citizen engagement, allowing individuals and groups to voice their opinions, contribute ideas, and participate in decision-making processes.
5.Capacity Building:	Programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing the capacity of citizens, government officials, and civil society organizations to effectively participate in the governance process, including training, workshops, and awareness campaigns.
6.Feedback and Accountability:	Mechanisms to capture and incorporate citizen feedback into decision-making processes, as well as mechanisms for holding decision-makers accountable for their

	actions and ensuring that their decisions align with citizen preferences.

Source: Adapted from Brugha and Varvasovszky (2000)

Legal Framework, Institutions and Structures

The legal framework serves as the backbone of participatory governance. It sets the rules and boundaries within which the system operates. A well-crafted legal framework ensures that citizens have clear rights and responsibilities when it comes to participation. It also provides a means of recourse if these rights are violated. For example, if a government fails to hold public consultations as required by law, citizens can take legal action. In this way, the legal framework provides a level of protection and legitimacy to the participatory process.

These are the practical mechanisms through which citizens engage with their government. These institutions, such as citizen assemblies and advisory committees, should be representative of the population they serve. They should provide a safe and inclusive space for citizens to voice their opinions and influence decisions. Additionally, the structures should be well-designed to facilitate meaningful dialogue and decision-making. The presence of these institutions demonstrates the government's commitment to participatory governance and offers a direct avenue for citizen participation.

Information, Communication and Participation Mechanisms

Transparency is a cornerstone of participatory governance. Effective communication ensures that citizens are aware of government plans, policies, and decisions. This transparency builds trust and empowers citizens to engage confidently in the process. Information should be easily accessible and comprehensible to all, and governments should actively communicate with various communities, using multiple channels to reach diverse populations.

The diversity of participation mechanisms is essential because it recognizes that different individuals and groups may prefer various ways of engaging with the government. Some citizens may be more comfortable with online platforms, while others may prefer face-to-face town hall meetings. A well-balanced set of mechanisms ensures that the process is inclusive and that no voices are marginalized. The mechanisms should also be designed to collect diverse

perspectives and ensure that minority groups are not left out.

Capacity Building, Feedback and Accountability

The effectiveness of participatory governance depends on the capabilities of all involved parties. Citizens need to understand how the system works and how they can participate effectively. Government officials must be trained to engage with citizens and incorporate their input into decision-making. Civil society organizations play a crucial role in bridging the gap between citizens and government. Capacity-building programs equip these stakeholders with the skills and knowledge needed for successful engagement, fostering a more informed and empowered citizenry.

Feedback mechanisms are vital for ensuring that citizen input is not merely symbolic but genuinely influences decisions. Citizens should see tangible results from their participation. Accountability mechanisms hold decision-makers responsible for considering citizen input and making decisions that align with the preferences of the public. This accountability ensures that the participatory process is not a token gesture but a meaningful avenue for citizens to shape policies and programs.

Therefore, participatory governance is a dynamic process that relies on the interplay of these components. When they function together effectively, they create a virtuous cycle of engagement, transparency, and accountability. Citizens are informed, empowered, and confident in their ability to participate, while the government is responsive, inclusive, and accountable to the people it serves. The result is a more democratic and just society where decisions reflect the diverse needs and aspirations of the entire population.

3.3 Debates and Discourses Within Participatory Governance

The theory on participatory governance represents a cornerstone of democratic practice, emphasizing active citizen engagement, inclusivity, collaboration, and accountability in the decision-making process. It seeks to create a more equitable society by empowering marginalized groups and fostering a sense of ownership.

In this subsection, we delve into a critical debate on whether participatory governance theory can embrace the transformative power of social media, focusing on the case of Operation

Dudula. We argue that social media has the potential to reshape traditional stakeholder engagement, prompting the need for governments to reconsider their approach to migration and online platforms as spaces for citizens to express their views openly and without fear of any nature.

The Role of Social Media in Participatory Governance

One of the fundamental aspects of participatory governance is transparency. Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for governments to instantly disseminate information about policies, initiatives, and decision-making processes to a wide audience. It enhances transparency by making information easily accessible to citizens, enabling them to stay informed and engaged. Operation Dudula's use of social media has demonstrated the potential of this platform to reach and inform citizens across geographical boundaries, enabling a broader and more transparent communication channel.

Participatory governance thrives on direct and immediate communication between citizens and government officials. Social media platforms provide avenues for public consultations, surveys, and feedback mechanisms, allowing citizens to voice their opinions, contribute ideas, and actively participate in the governance process. Operation Dudula's engagement on social media exemplifies how real-time interaction fosters inclusivity, encourages active citizen engagement, and amplifies their voices, thus challenging traditional notions of stakeholder engagement.

Social media transcends geographical boundaries, facilitating the formation of online communities and networks. This is particularly relevant for participatory governance as citizens can connect, share experiences, and collaborate on various governance issues. Operation Dudula's online presence has showcased how citizens can come together, fostering collective action and amplifying their voices. Furthermore, social media empowers marginalized groups to be heard, enhancing their representation in decision-making processes. Social media offers governments the opportunity to gather data and analyse public sentiment. This aids policymakers in making more informed decisions based on public preferences and needs, supporting evidence-based policymaking by providing diverse perspectives and feedback. Operation Dudula's use of social media has demonstrated how this platform can be a valuable tool for collecting and analysing public sentiment, potentially influencing policy

decisions.

Challenging Traditional Notions of Stakeholder Engagement

Operation Dudula's utilization of social media challenges traditional ideas of stakeholder engagement within participatory governance. The platform has become a space where citizens openly express their views, creating a dynamic shift in how stakeholders engage with the government. This shift necessitates a re-evaluation of how governments approach migration and the creation of online spaces for citizens to share their perspectives.

In essence, participatory governance theory, with its emphasis on inclusivity, collaboration, and accountability, inherently allows for the integration of social media as a transformative force. Operation Dudula's use of social media has highlighted the potential of this platform to enhance citizen engagement, challenge traditional stakeholder engagement practices, and encourage governments to create online spaces that respect the voices of all citizens. As social media continues to evolve, it becomes increasingly imperative for participatory governance theory to adapt, ensuring that it remains a relevant and effective approach to decision-making in our ever-changing digital landscape.

3.4 Chapter Summary

The selected theoretical framework of participatory governance offers a robust foundation for comprehending and assessing the research outcomes. It facilitates a comprehensive evaluation of citizen engagement, the democratic principles underpinning governance, and the transformative possibilities inherent in contemporary communication channels. This framework will play a pivotal role in deriving insightful conclusions from the research findings, shedding light on the intricate interactions between governance, citizen participation, and the evolving dynamics of the digital era.

The analytical framework therefore not only enriches the study's conceptual underpinning but also serves as a practical tool for dissecting the research data. By scrutinizing the various components of this framework, researchers can effectively gauge the degree of inclusivity, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes, thereby providing a deeper understanding of how governance influences the topic under investigation. This multi-dimensional framework is poised to contribute significantly to the insightful interpretation of

research results, enhancing our understanding of the complex relationship between governance and the phenomenon being studied.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines our chosen approach, emphasizing its alignment with our research goals. We explore key elements such as sampling, data analysis, and ethical considerations. Additionally, we address positionality, limitations, feasibility, and the quest for validity and reliability.

4.2 Research Strategy

The preferred research strategy for this study was primarily qualitative. Qualitative research allowed us to explore the subjective experiences of respondents, uncover perceptions, and examine the immigration policy dialogues (Patton, 2014). Rather than aiming for a generalization across the entire Twitter/X population, our goal was to provide an in-depth analysis of specific perceptions related to the current implementation of immigration policy.

4.3 Sampling

For this study, a non-probability purposive sampling approach was employed. The goal of this approach was to identify and include 213 relevant Twitter comments from the population of comments utilizing the Operation Dudula hashtag. In the subsequent step, 50 Twitter messages were also collected from the Operation Dudula social media coordinating account.

While intentional sampling is susceptible to bias, it offers several advantages. One such advantage is the ability to promptly acquire data as soon as it becomes available. By following this approach, the researcher selectively collects, through a snapshot using Nvivo software, messages that are directly relevant to the research question and also appear at the forefront of the chronological timeline in the Operation Dudula Twitter feed. Key to note is that the choice of sample size in qualitative research considers the study's objectives. In this case, the sample size was carefully selected to provide rich and detailed information pertinent to the dialogues surrounding immigration (Nasheeda, 2022).

4.4 Data Analysis

For this study, we employed textual and thematic analysis to make sense of the collected data from the sampled comments. We gathered written and verbatim text messages from the Twitter/X social media platform. Applying qualitative data processing and analytic techniques, we aimed to extract meaningful insights. Our goal was to identify patterns in meaning, extract themes, and ultimately address the research questions. To assist in this process, we utilized the qualitative analysis computer program NVivo. It's important to note that all data were manually coded by the researcher, with the software serving only as a facilitative tool.

Furthermore, we incorporated minimal descriptive statistics to help gain deeper insights beyond qualitative analysis. Specifically, we calculated the percentage distribution between the 4 key themes that emerged to ascertain the level of interest in each. To gauge exposure to the dialogues, also calculated was the number of Followers and Retweets that the samples messages had received (Maxfield and Babbie, 2017). These metrics allowed us to understand aspects of interest in a manner not achievable through qualitative methods alone, and while descriptive statistics do not aim to test hypotheses, they provide critical information required to make the study more comprehensive (Aidley, 2018.)

4.5 Positionality

The researcher, a native South African, investigated public opinion on immigration policy within their home country. Recognizing the potential for bias in sourcing, analysis, and interpretation of the collected data, the researcher took deliberate steps to address this concern. South Africans have often been portrayed as xenophobic, particularly toward African immigrants (Misago and Landau, 2022).

To mitigate bias, the researcher adopted a reflexive approach, commonly employed in ethnographic research studies. This method allowed for rigorous self-reflection, acknowledging the researcher's subjectivity and power dynamics. By doing so, the impact of personal perspectives was minimized (Townsend and Cushion, 2021). Furthermore, the purposive sampling technique was employed. This approach ensured that verbatim data relevant to the research topic was appearing and sourced chronologically regardless of the

expressed views. Through these measures, the researcher aimed to enhance the validity and reliability of the study's findings.

4.6 Limitations

While the study was anticipated to reveal essential insights into the views of a key stakeholder segment regarding immigration policy, it was characterized by several noteworthy limitations that needed acknowledgment. Following are the limitations that emerged from this study:

Twitter Platform Changes: It is worth noting that the data collection occurred on Twitter/X, a social media platform that has undergone significant changes since the inception of this research. Twitter, now referred to as "X," implemented various alterations to its policies and features. These changes may have impacted the dynamics of data collection, introducing new rules and regulations governing what users may publish. Consequently, the content available for analysis and triangulation efforts could be influenced. Additionally, Twitter's censorship policies, as of the time of data collection, lacked advanced algorithms to censor content, especially from smaller accounts owned by average users (Petrescu et al, 2020).

Access Limitations: While the Twitter platform has experienced substantial growth in the number of users, not all members of the public have access to this platform for various reasons. Factors such as the lack of a smartphone, limited internet bandwidth, or other barriers to entry may exclude certain individuals. However, for a qualitative study like ours, it is essential to recognize that a limited number of respondents can suffice. Generalizability to the entire population was not the goal.

Anonymity and Pseudonyms: It is crucial to acknowledge that certain Twitter users may have already assumed pseudonyms or anonymous profiles to protect their identities in order to enable them to express their views without fear of retaliation. This anonymity introduces complexities when interpreting and attributing comments to specific individuals.

Accuracy of Twitter Views: Views published on Twitter may not always represent the true opinions of the users posting them. The platform's informal and often unfiltered nature allows for a wide range of content, including satire, sarcasm, and hyperbole. Consequently, discerning the sincerity and accuracy of shared perspectives becomes challenging.

Cross-Sectional Study Constraints: Cross-sectional studies, such as this one, inherently struggle to capture the dynamic nature of opinions and attitudes, especially within an evolving socio-political landscape. Given the topic's context—where issues like the potential banning of ZEP undergo significant changes—recent court rulings overturning such bans can influence the expressed attitudes on the platform (Smith et al., 2022).

Temporal Challenge: The selected research topic exhibits inherent dynamism, characterized by ongoing and frequent developments. This temporal challenge necessitates careful consideration of the information incorporated into this research. By the time of publication or submission, some data may have become obsolete or outdated, emphasizing the importance of assessing the temporal relevance of the findings.

4.7 Feasibility

Feasibility becomes a more pronounced concern when studies involve collecting primary data through interviews. In such cases, finding a suitable time for both the researcher and the interviewees can be challenging. Given the time constraints inherent in any study, this logistical aspect becomes critical. Interviewees may not prioritize participation in interviews, potentially complicating scheduling.

However, in the case of Twitter data collection, we encountered a distinct advantage. The data is readily available for the researcher to source at their convenience. Unlike interview-based studies, where coordination can be cumbersome, Twitter provides a wealth of information accessible without direct interaction. Moreover, Twitter's platform allows for the utilization of advanced data mining software, enabling the collection of data that might otherwise remain inaccessible to the average user.

4.8 Ethics

To ensure strict adherence to ethical standards and the principle of doing no harm, our study's ethical procedures commenced with securing approval from the Wits Ethics Committee. Data collection activities proceeded only after obtaining this necessary approval. Throughout the study, we prioritized participants' interests, rights, and safety, ensuring the protection of their personal information.

In this context, participants—whose posts would be collected through publicly available comments—were further safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms. Each response was coded using these pseudonyms, preserving anonymity and confidentiality (Lahman et al., 2018). Additionally, all personal identifiers were meticulously removed from the study dataset.

To enhance data security, we employed a password-protected computer, securely housed in the researcher's office. Access to this computer was restricted solely to the researcher, minimizing the risk of unauthorized data exposure.

4.9 Validity

Ensuring the accuracy of results in reflecting the assessed topic is paramount for establishing validity. To achieve this, key factors were considered to help guarantee measurement trustworthiness. One crucial approach involved actively seeking alternative explanations for the apparent research findings by using a relatively large sample size than what would normally be used for a qualitative study. By exploring multiple perspectives, we aimed to enhance the study's validity.

The colourful/explicit language in some of the sourced comments was retained as is to help maintain the authenticity and accuracy of the social media data, ensuring the sentiments expressed were not misrepresented. Omitting these would risk altering the tone and context, which are critical to understanding the emotional intensity of the discourse. Additionally, this transparency is intended to avoid bias or selective reporting.

4.10 Reliability

The method employed in the study played a pivotal role in ensuring accurate findings—findings that could be replicated if the research were conducted again under identical circumstances. However, it's essential to recognize that outcomes may not remain constant over time. Sentiments and policies evolve, as exemplified by France's immigration policy post-WW2 compared to the pre-war era.

4.11 Dependability

Drawing from Janis's (2022) argument, we have meticulously documented the consistency and dependability of the methods employed and the study's findings. This documentation allows

external verifiers to audit and potentially critique the research process, ultimately establishing dependability.

4.12 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the methodology employed in this study on immigration policy perceptions was meticulously explored. Following are the critical aspects highlighted:

The chosen primary research strategy was qualitative. The aim was to delve into the subjective experiences of participants and conduct an in-depth analysis of perceptions related to immigration policy. Despite the potential bias and non-generalizability associated with purposive sampling, this approach allowed pertinent data to be collected in a timely manner. The sample size was carefully determined to align with the objective of providing comprehensive and detailed information on the topic.

I employed textual and thematic analysis, utilizing both the Twitter comments collected. By examining nuances and underlying themes, deeper insights could be gained. Qualitative data processing was facilitated using NVivo software. Additionally, descriptive statistics to supplement our understanding beyond qualitative analysis was incorporated.

Acknowledging the researcher's position as a native South African, I actively mitigated biases. Reflexive practice and verbatim data collection were implemented to ensure methodological rigor.

Several limitations were identified. Twitter's evolving policies impacted data collection. Not all individuals had access to Twitter, affecting the representativeness of our sample. While pseudonyms protected participants, complexities arose in interpreting and attributing comments. Cross-sectional limitations hindered tracking changes in opinions over time.

I leveraged the availability of Twitter data and advanced data mining software to address feasibility concerns effectively. Ethics committee approval, participant protection, and data confidentiality were meticulously ensured throughout the study. I actively sought alternative explanations for our findings, emphasizing validity. Transparent documentation of research methods and outcomes allowed for external scrutiny, contributing to reliability.

Dependability was established through meticulous documentation, enabling external auditing and evaluation. Overall, the study contributes nuanced insights into immigration policy perceptions on social media, emphasizing methodological rigor while acknowledging inherent limitations.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5. Introduction

In Chapter Four, we detailed the data collection plan, a critical step in explaining how we acquired the necessary data to address our research question and provide transparency and clarity to the reader. The purpose of this chapter is to objectively present the findings from the data collection process, excluding the analysis or discussion of results. The researchers' interpretation or analysis will therefore only be addressed in the subsequent chapter titled "Discussion of Findings" (Wotela, 2019).

The chapter's structure comprises an overview of four main themes, each explored in distinct sections. Specifically: The first section covers the theme "Operation Dudula." The second section outlines the findings related to "Key Political Parties." Subsequently, we delve into the theme of "Dialogues Surrounding South African Immigrants." Finally, the concluding section delineates the fourth and final theme: "Competition for Resources."

To enhance readability of the chapter's organization, **Figure 2** below provides a graphical overview. While the themes are presented distinctly, it's important to recognize that they are intrinsically linked to one another and that the separation is purely for analytical purposes.

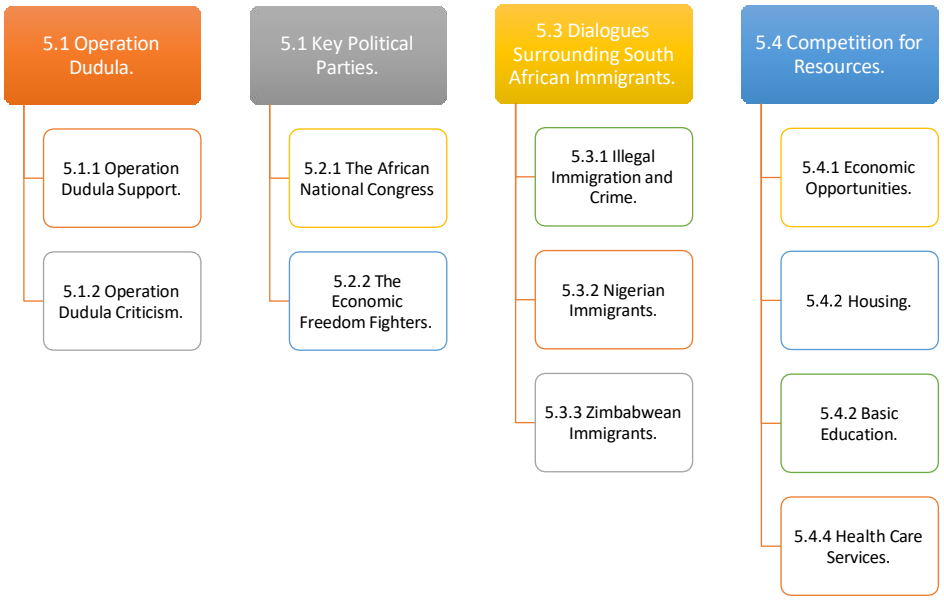


Figure 2: Chapter Overview

In this section, we explore our findings by analysing the quantitative distribution of the four emergent themes. The accompanying chart, **Figure 3** below, visually represented the relative proportions of these thematic areas, providing valuable insights within the research context. By examining the prominence of each key theme, we gained a more comprehensive overview of their significance. The results were as follows:

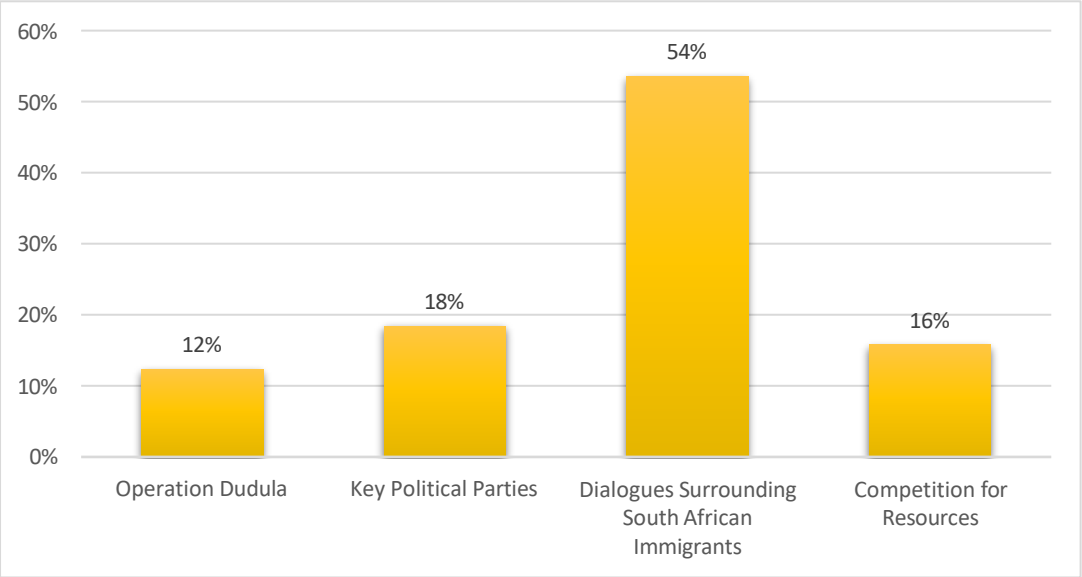


Figure 3: Comments Distribution by Each of the Four Identified Themes

The theme "Dialogues Surrounding South African Immigrants" garnered the highest number of comments, accounting for 54% of the total. Following closely was the theme "Key Political Parties", which constituted 18% of the overall discussion. Additionally, we observed significant contributions from the themes "Competition for Resources" (at 16%) and "Operation Dudula" (at 12%).

Figure 4 below is a snapshot that provides insights into the potential exposure of other Twitter users to the dialogues. Exposure could occur either by following the account that posted the message or encountering a "Re-Tweet," which refers to a message shared by another user.

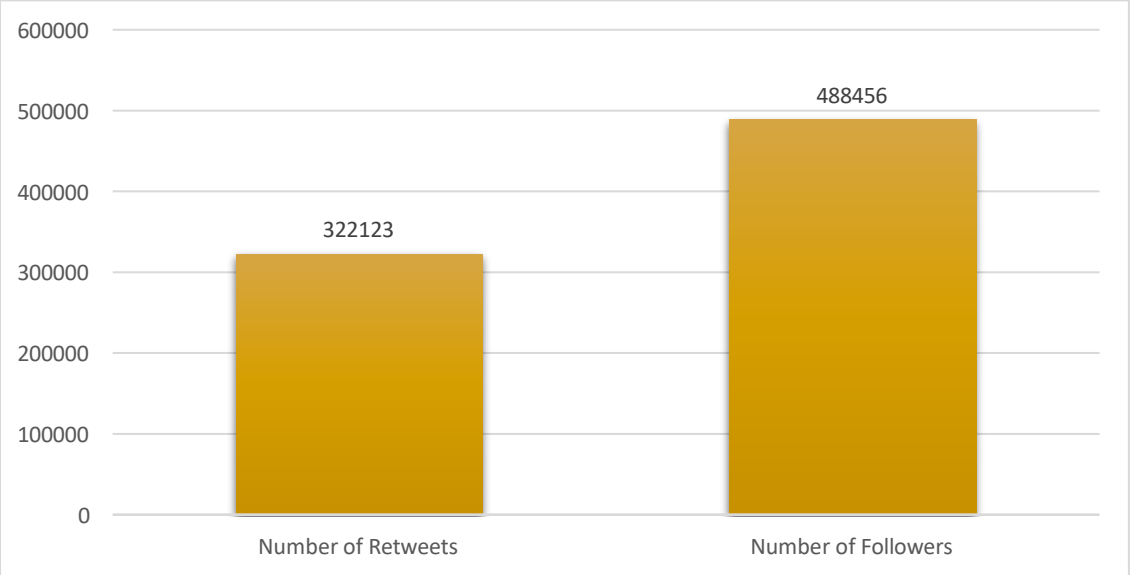


Figure 4: Number of Followers and Retweets from the Data Sourced and Used for this Study.

The chart reveals that 322,123 re-tweets represent the unique Twitter/X users who encountered one of the messages associated with the themes and chose to repost it within their own Twitter network. Additionally, 488,456 followers may have engaged with or been exposed to the dialogues. However, it's important to note that the followers are not necessarily exclusive to the number of re-tweets.

5.1 Operation Dudula

The diverse dataset enabled a nuanced examination of laypeople's perspectives on Operation Dudula as a social movement. By analysing the viewpoints, this study aimed to uncover the resonance of the movement across different segments of society and understand the underlying reasons for such resonance. Additionally, we explored the potential factors contributing to resistance, shedding light on the challenges that the movement may encounter in the future.

Overall, while a majority of Twitter users expressed support for Operation Dudula, dissenting voices also emerged, and their significance should not be overlooked. Consequently, this study delved into the reasons behind this opposition, providing an in-depth analysis of the factors shaping the diverse range of opinions among Twitter users.

5.1.1 Operation Dudula Support

The following excerpt comprises verbatim Twitter posts that reflected the prevailing sentiment in favour of Operation Dudula. These posts underscored the movement's significance and resonated with its existence. To safeguard the privacy of the commenters, real names have been replaced with pseudonyms.

In a tweet, @Blackmanslament expressed scepticism and lack of confidence in institutions such as the police, ANC, military, and individuals like Bheki Cele. The author argued that it falls upon South Africans themselves to unite, organize gatherings, and act against crime and illegal immigration:

"We have established that the police, the ANC, our military, and figures like Bheki Cele are ineffective and will never assist us. Therefore, it is our responsibility as South Africans to come together, address crime independently, and curb illegal immigration." — @Blackmanslament

In a separate tweet, @SelbyNhleko praised #OperationDudula and #PutSouthAficansFirst as the only movements consistently advocating for the welfare of South Africans. They criticized other groups, suggesting that their motivations are primarily driven by political agendas and personal gain:

"The only people consistently marching for the benefit of South Africans are #OperationDudula and #PutSouthAficansFirst. Others seem to be engaged in political games and pursuing their own interests." — @SelbyNhleko

In a tweet, @Thabo commended #OperationDudula for its exceptional work, attributing perceived immigration problems to the South African government. The author expressed a lack of confidence in the country's law and order situation:

"#OperationDudula is doing a remarkable job. This is the work of the South African government. There is no Law & Order in this country of ours." — @Thabo

In another tweet, @Sabza encouraged individuals to join and actively engage in #OperationDudula, emphasizing the need to contribute to its administrative functioning. They

suggested that anyone who shared the movement's vision and concerns should participate, regardless of their affiliations:

"#OperationDudula is the movement you should join, participate in, and contribute to its administrative functioning irrespective of your affiliation, as long as you share the same vision and concerns with other patriots." — @Sabza

Similarly, @Ishmael described being part of #OperationDudula as an obligation for individuals when it comes to their country. The author emphasized that patriotism should be motivated by love for the country and did not necessarily require monetary compensation.

"[Being part of Operation Dudula] It's an obligation one should have when it comes to their country… and I am doing it for the love of [the country]. You don't even need to be paid to be patriotic." — @Ishmael

Lastly, @Mxolisi expressed personal admiration for #OperationDudula, stating that their heart skips a beat every time they witness a march by the movement:

"My heart skips a beat every time I see a march by #OperationDudula" — @Mxolisi

Operation Dudula supporters have posted opinions defending the movement against what they perceive as a lack of adequate media coverage and unfair commentary that seeks to portray the movement as vigilantes and xenophobic.

In a tweet, @Mkoo expressed confusion and disappointment regarding the lack of information on the #OperationDudula March related to RDP housing in their social media timeline. They mentioned following news outlets such as @Newzroom405 and @eNCA, with the expectation of being updated about events in the country. @Mkoo questioned whether there was a specific reason for the news outlets not tweeting about the march or if they simply missed the tweets:

"I did not see anything hit my timeline yesterday about the #OperationDudula March re: RDP housing. I follow you guys trusting to be kept abreast of everything in our country, @Newzroom405 and @eNCA. Is there a reason you did not tweet about it? Or did I just miss

your tweets?" — @Mkoo

@Custoza9 criticized the media's initial reporting on #OperationDudula, suggesting that they anticipated violence and looting. However, once they realized that the operation was driven by people who love their country and seek law and order, the media allegedly stopped reporting on it. The individual believed that the media's attempt to tarnish Operation Dudula failed and, instead, it gained support and momentum.

"Earlier when they reported on #OperationDudula they thought it was going to be violence and looting, when they realised its people who love their country and want law and order they stopped their reporting. They failed to tarnish Operation Dudula, instead it grew." @Custoza9

@TP545, in another tweet, stated that both the #OperationDudula and #PutSouthAfricaFirst movements do not require media coverage because their actions speak for themselves. This comment implies that the communities involved in these movements embrace and support their causes without relying on media attention.

"I have grown to realise that both #OperationDudula and #PutSouthAfricaFirst do not necessarily need Media! Their actions speak for themselves and communities embrace that." @TP545

@MalegaM, claimed that there is a deliberate effort by the South African media to dismiss the relevance of the issues raised by #PutSouthAfricansFirst and #OperationDudula. The author accused the media of trying to suppress the voices of these movements.

"There's a concerted effort by SA media to think issues raised by #PutSouthAficansFirst and #OperationDudula are irrelevant and they are doing their best to suffocate their voices." @MalegaM

Lastly, @AhEbMA similarly questioned the media's lack of coverage on the #OperationDudula march that took place the previous day. They highlighted the peaceful nature of the protest, emphasizing that no burning of tires, damage to public property, stone-throwing, store looting, or driver intimidation occurred. The individual expressed their

disappointment at the absence of coverage by major media houses, suggesting that the event should have been reported and shared on social media platforms:

"#OperationDudula marched/protested yesterday. They did not burn tires, damage public property, throw stones, loot stores, or intimidate drivers in the area. Why did the media not report this yesterday? This should have been covered. I did not see any tweets from major media houses." — @AhEbMA

5.1.2 Operation Dudula Criticism

Despite the widespread support for the movement, a few critical perspectives emerged on the social media platform, sparking a valuable debate. While the movement had gained momentum and public approval, it is essential to acknowledge the importance of critical voices in promoting open discourse and creating a space for constructive dialogue. Such criticism, which highlighted that the movement's actions were targeted only at black African immigrants, provides an opportunity for the movement's supporters to examine their beliefs and consider alternative viewpoints.

@Bhungane2002 expressed concern about the selective targeting of black African immigrants by #OperationDudula, contrasting it with the treatment of white farmers from Zimbabwe who entered South Africa. They questioned why the movement did not address this disparity.

"Many white farmers from Zimbabwe ran into South Africa NOT a single #DudulaMovement. #OperationDudula @OnsBaizaNie @GaytonMcK is chasing them away the same way Africans are brutally attacked!!" — @Bhungane2002

@LendozaMaila criticized the African National Congress (ANC) and predicted that President Cyril Ramaphosa would not last beyond March. They pointed out that while #OperationDudula blamed foreigners, the movement should recognize other factors responsible for unemployment in South Africa.

"President Cyril Ramaphosa won't make it past March. The ANC has failed. #OperationDudula will still blame foreigners, yet they can see with both eyes who is responsible for unemployment in South Africa." — @LendozaMaila

In response to the reported death of a foreigner, @Themba suspected that #OperationDudula might have been involved in the incident. Their tweet questioned the movement's potential role in the tragedy.

"@eNCA I wonder whether #OperationDudula is not involved in this cowardly and criminal act." — @Themba

5.2 Key Political Parties

Political parties play a crucial role in shaping policies within a democratic society. It is unsurprising that discussions about critical policy areas, such as immigration, involve considerations of political party involvement. In the context of South Africa—a nation with a rich history of political struggle and ongoing social and economic challenges—the role of political parties in shaping immigration policy becomes particularly significant.

In debates surrounding immigration policy in South Africa, two political parties stand out as frequently discussed actors: the African National Congress (ANC) and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). The ANC is the current ruling party in South Africa, with a storied history of involvement in the country's political landscape. Its stance on immigration reflects its broader political ideology and governance priorities. Meanwhile, the EFF, as the second-largest opposition party, has gained significant traction in recent years. The party focuses on economic transformation and social justice, often challenging the status quo and advocating for change in immigration policy.

These two parties play pivotal roles in shaping South Africa's immigration discourse, and their approaches have implications for the nation's future policies.

5.2.1 The African National Congress (ANC)

The collected text messages and comments express a range of opinions and concerns related to the ANC government and the presence of foreigners in South Africa. These messages convey a mix of frustration, blame, and calls for action.

@Aaron expressed the belief that foreigners residing in South Africa are criminals who have fled their countries. The sender blames the ANC government for jeopardizing the lives of South

Africans by allowing these foreigners into the country. They see it as their responsibility to remove the ANC from power.

"These foreigners are criminals who ran away from their countries. The ANC government has risked South African lives. Our lives are in constant danger because of the ANC. It is our responsibility to remove the ANC." — @Aaron

@MahlatseM accused the ANC of releasing Somali, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi terrorists among the South African population. The sender called for action and the deportation of foreigners as a solution to this perceived threat:

"The ANC unleashed these Somali, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi terrorists on sheepish South Africans. We must act. #DeportForeigners" — @MahlatseM

@Whitesoul_Sage sarcastically thanked the ANC for various issues such as potholes, illegal foreigners, unemployment, and load shedding. The sender ironically encouraged the ANC to continue their work until the next election in 2024, suggesting that these issues will motivate voters to seek change:

"Thank you, ANC, for potholes, illegal foreigners, unemployment, load shedding, etc. Keep up the good work; we will meet in 2024." — @Whitesoul_Sage

Voices on ANC and Immigration

In the following, we explore the perspectives shared by various Twitter users regarding the African National Congress (ANC) and immigration:

@Malatjib blamed the ANC administration for allowing foreigners to act audaciously. The sender suggested that a regime change in 2024 would lead to placing all these foreigners in refugee camps:

"These foreigners are daring thanks to the mismanagement by the ANC administration. A regime change in 2024 will see all these 'aliens' in refugee camps." — @Malatjib

@DumiOfficial identified the constitution and Bill of Rights as the source of the problem, as

they protect foreigners. The sender believed that the only solution lies in voting the ANC out of power, considering the ANC to be the cause of the issue:

"Our constitution and Bill of Rights are our problem. They protect foreigners. Unless we vote the ANC out of power, we will continue to face this challenge." — @DumiOfficial

@LeagoGP addressed those with xenophobic views, encouraging them to dream of a better South Africa without the ANC and illegal foreigners. The sender supported the idea of removing both the political party and foreigners from the country:

"Good fellow xenophobes… Dream of a better South Africa without the @MYANC and illegal foreigners." — @LeagoGP

@Agnes claimed that former President Thabo Mbeki foresaw the ANC as a long-term problem. The sender criticized ANC cadres, suggesting a lack of intellectual capacity among them:

"President Thabo Mbeki knew that the ANC is a problem, and it will remain so in the long run. Most of the ANC cadres lack intellectual capacity." — @Agnes

@Sayeed1909 expressed frustration and accused prominent South African figures, including Mr. Mbalula Fikile, President Cyril Ramaphosa, and the ANC, of selling the country and replacing black South Africans. The commenter suggested that these individuals are responsible for compromising the nation and attempting to suppress dissent by replacing the population:

"When we say @MbalulaFikile @CyrilRamaphosa @MYANC sold the country, we mean it literally. And that was not enough for them; they decided to replace us, black South Africans, so that no one questions this fake freedom." — @Sayeed1909

@Sabzo criticized the ANC, blaming them for failing to address crime effectively. The sender argued that when citizens take matters into their own hands, as in the case of #OperationDudula, where society organizes against criminals, the ANC labels them as vigilantes. The message suggests a disconnect between the government's response to crime

and the actions of concerned citizens:

"@CyrilRamaphosa Every time @MYANC gives an excuse for its failure to deal with crime, they resort to blaming society or expect society to play a role. When they beat or burn criminals to death, you throw tantrums. When society organizes itself like #OperationDudula, you call them vigilantes." — @Sabzo

@Isaac highlighted a perceived contradiction in the statements made by President Cyril Ramaphosa. The commenter questioned the sudden claim that the government will now create jobs, despite previous statements indicating that the government does not possess that ability:

"Isn't Cyril the same guy who told us that the government doesn't create jobs? Now all of a sudden, he will create jobs." — @Isaac

@Daviny directed criticism towards the South African Police Service (SAPS), Mr. Mbalula Fikile, and the ANC. The sender accused them of being useless and incompetent in enforcing immigration laws, implying that they occupy political and state positions without fulfilling their duties:

"@Daviny There's a concerted effort by SA media to think issues raised by #PutSouthAficansFirst and #OperationDudula are irrelevant and they are doing their best to suffocate their voices." — @Daviny

@Wisba criticized the South African Police Service (SAPS), Mr. Mbalula Fikile, and the ANC. The sender accused them of being useless and incompetent in enforcing immigration laws, implying that they occupy political and state positions without fulfilling their duties:

"@SAPoliceService and @MbalulaFikile and @MYANC, what's stopping you from enforcing our immigration laws? You are just a bunch of useless and incompetent fellows occupying political and state positions." — @Wisba

@uMalumewenu questioned the delay in translating the words of Mr. Mbalula Fikile, who mentioned that people cannot act as they wish in other countries, into action. The sender implies

that there is a lack of action on the part of Mr. Mbalula Fikile and potentially the government regarding this issue:

"We can't go to other countries and do as we wish - Fikile Mbalula. When is this talk translated into action?" — @uMalumewenu

@Thabang3733 blamed President Cyril Ramaphosa and the ANC for the current state of illegal immigration, referring to it as a mess. The comment called for the immediate removal of these individuals, suggesting a belief that they are responsible for the problem and need to be replaced promptly:

"This is why we are in this [illegal immigration] mess because of @CyrilRamaphosa @ANC. They must be removed with immediate effect!!!" — @Thabang3733

Not all ANC members were subject to criticism. Dr. Phophi, at the time of writing, was a provincial ANC member of the executive council (MEC) responsible for health. Infamous for a viral video that showed her in a hospital ward lamenting to an admitted Zimbabwean illegal foreign patient, she became a focal point of discussion:

"We have been waiting for people from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and Mozambique, etc., to be deported, but nothing is happening. We are not going to vote for the ANC in 2024. Dr. Phophi is power." — @WillieM

5.2.2 The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)

In the following, we delve into the perspectives shared by various Twitter users regarding the political figure Mr. Julius Malema and his party, the EFF, as well as their stance on immigration and its impact on South Africa's future:

@KhuliMazwi expressed concern about Mr. Malema selling the country to the African continent for free, seeing him as a threat to South Africa's future. The sender claimed to have been warning South Africans about this and continues to expose Malema through #OperationDudula, which the sender believes Malema dislikes:

"The biggest threat to the future of South Africa is this man, @Julius_S_Malema, who's busy selling our country to the African continent for free. We have been warning South Africans, and we're still doing it today by exposing him. Hence, he hates #OperationDudula." — @KhuliMazwi

@Sayit9848 criticized the EFF Brothers for their actions, suggesting that they would never tolerate someone destroying their home and children. The comment implies disagreement with the party's methods and the sender's disbelief that others would accept such behaviour.

"The EFF Brothers are doing the most in this country. I could never have a brother who would come and destroy my home and my children. And then, I would say everything is okay—never." — @Sayit9848

@Tshepo3833 questioned Mr. Malema's support for illegal immigration, insinuating that he may also be supporting criminal organizations like the Black Axe. This message raised concerns about Malema's associations and their potential impact on the country:

"So @Julius_S_Malema, you are not only supporting illegal immigration but also supporting mafias? Somebody said Black Axe has something on you." — @Tshepo3833

@Londonfog112 warned against voting for the EFF and accused them of wanting to destroy children's futures by allowing Mr. Malema's "brothers" (possibly referring to immigrants) to enter the country illegally. The sender highlighted the perceived threat posed by the EFF and the potential consequences for the youth and their future:

"They want to destroy your children and take away their future by allowing @Julius_S_Malema's brothers illegally into our country. Don't ever vote for @EFFSouthAfrica." — @Londonfog112

@Mahlatsi8 criticized the youth for idolizing Mr. Malema, while suggesting that his own children receive quality education in schools associated with White Monopoly Capital. The sender argued that supporting Malema is detrimental to the youth's future, asserting that he is

taking away their opportunities:

"Our youth is taking a wrong path about their futures, trying to impress @Julius_S_Malema, while his children receive quality education at WMC [White Monopoly Capital] schools. The sooner they see that this anarchist is taking their future away, the better." — @Mahlatsi8

Twitter user @Sthululu80 highlighted the difference in perspective between the EFF, #PutSouthAfricansFirst movement and #OperationDudula. Here's a breakdown of their contrasting views:

"#PutSouthAficansFirst and #OperationDudula do not discriminate about the nationality of illegal foreigners. The premise is that once you cross the border illegally, you've committed a crime. The EFF cult, on the other hand, sees illegal immigration from a racial position." — @Sthululu80

Additionally, @Thabo12mo responded to media reports showing some Nigerians destroying and closing South African businesses in that country. The sender questioned the absence of the EFF and ADFSAfrica in addressing the issue of xenophobia:

"Where is @EFFSouthAfrica and @ADFSAfrica to say there is no foreigner in Africa, only in South Africa? What has happened to the word 'Xenophobia'? Pan Africanism only in South Africa." — @Thabo12mo

Overall, these Twitter messages convey various concerns about Mr. Julius Malema, the EFF, and their positions on immigration and its potential impact on South Africa's future. They reflect a range of opinions and highlight the divisive nature of these political discussions.

5.3 Dialogues Surrounding South African Immigrants

Twitter user @Bheki33 expressed a sentiment that sharing the same skin colour does not automatically result in support for someone's actions or beliefs. The sender implied holding more contempt for individuals who are aware of the struggles faced by people with black skin but still engage in what the sender considers detrimental behaviour. The message characterizes such individuals as a more dangerous enemy:

"The fact that we share the same skin colour doesn't automatically mean that I will support your bullshit. In fact, I will hold you with even more contempt because how dare you when you know what the black skin has been through. You are a far more dangerous enemy." — @Bheki33

In another comment, @Leago00 questioned the efforts individuals from other African countries are making to promote Pan Africanism. The sender insisted that South Africans reject this ideology, particularly when it comes at their expense:

"What are your brothers and sisters doing to push forward this fake Pan Africanism? Why is it the responsibility of South Africa? We as South Africans reject this Pan Africanism, especially since it's at our expense." — @Leago00

Twitter user @Xolimn2 suggested that a country's problems can only be resolved by its own people. The sender urged individuals from other countries to return home and address their own issues, stating that their unwelcome presence hinders South Africans from addressing their own challenges:

"A country's problem can only be solved by its people. Ask your people to go home, including you, and go and solve your problems. We need space to attend to ours, and your unwelcome presence is making it difficult. GO HOME, GO FIX YOUR COUNTRY." — @Xolimn2

@Siphomm highlighted the perceived madness exhibited by foreign individuals in the country and expressed concern that this behaviour is negatively impacting future generations. The sender emphasized the urgency of addressing this issue:

"That is some of the madness that we are witnessing from aliens in our country. People watching from a distance will think that South Africans are making this up. It can't continue like this, down to our children and our descendants!" — @Siphomm

@Thulachip1 pointed out that there are Basotho and Batswana communities whose languages are integrated within South Africa. The sender questioned why these communities do not

engage in the same pan-African mentality that is being imposed on South Africa:

"We have Basotho and Batswana, whom their language is embedded in South Africa, but you will never hear them saying 'Africa nywere nyere' [bla bla]. Why do you impose this African crap mentality on SA only?" — @Thulachip1

@Khwezy76 called for South Africans to disengage from foreign opinions, urging them to stop participating in debates, discussions, and spaces where foreign opinions are entertained.
"South Africans need to stop entertaining foreign opinion. Stop engaging, stop debating, stop joining their spaces, stop it, just stop it." @Khwezy76

Some commenters alluded to the perceived immigration crisis as being deliberately designed to work against the impoverished and black race of native South Africans.

"Ladies and Gentlemen...we need to get moving on cleaning South Africa of all African excess ...Government, Laws and Politics azosithola phambili. Kuliwa nathi sizwe esinsundu saseMzansi...iqiniso lihle [will find us there, we are being attacked as the brown people of South Africa… that is the truth]." @Istradi4

"Poor affected South Africans have been saying this for a long time and they have been labelled Xenophobic and Afro phobic." @Jerrysm

The comments were nuanced and one of these was recorded from the main Operation Dudula social media account referring to "All foreigners" meaning that the organisation maybe anti all foreigners and not just illegal ones.

"Please ignore this bug seeking attention. No foreigner will be comfortable in South Africa. End of Story." @OperationDudula

5.3.1 Perceptions of Illegal Immigration and Crime

Several text messages under this theme conveyed concerns regarding illegal foreigners and associated criminal activities in South Africa. One message highlighted the release of a criminal on bail, indicating South Africa's reputation as a haven for such individuals.

“Threat 1: South Africa is officially a paradise for illegal foreigners involved in criminal activities. We have just received a letter from the office of Gauteng Provincial Commissioner that a criminal facing the following serious cases was released on bail.” @Mashabane

A message from the operation dudula account categorized different nationalities and attributes crimes to each group, such as drug dealing, human trafficking, producing fake products, car-jackings, and serial murders.

“The South Africa crime scene: Nigerians- Deal drugs- Human trafficking. Somalian/Ethiopian - Making fake products to sell. Malawians and Moz [Mozambicans] - Car jackings. Zims [Zimbabweans] - Leeches of the South African constitution - illegal border jumpers - serial murders of our women - Cheap labourers” @OperationDudula

The lack of skills among illegal foreigners was flagged as a factor that drives them towards criminal behaviour.

“We continually warn about the illegal foreigners who have no skills. It is only natural for them to resort to crime.” @OperationDudula

@Sbu accused businesses of employing illegal foreigners and contributing to modern-day slavery and human trafficking.

“Hey Checkers, are you also involved in modern day slavery? Are you aware that by employing illegal foreigners you're contributing to human trafficking?” @Sbu

The need for law enforcement to prioritize arresting and deporting illegal foreigners rather than visiting illegal shops was questioned.

“Why should they be visiting illegal shops with illegal foreigners in the first place, instead of arresting them? First thing first, they are "illegal" and that's a criminal offense. They should arrest and deport, not visit!” @Refilwe35

Additionally, the connection between illegal immigration and road accidents was raised,

suggesting a perceived correlation.

"@eNCA have you ever asked yourself why illegal immigrants cause so many accidents on our roads?" @Jakob0

Lastly, the appointment of illegal immigrants without security clearances in various institutions was criticized, exemplifying a perceived absence of proper vetting procedures in South Africa.

"The Ascension of Dr Makwarela to the mayoral throne showed that Vetting does not exist in South Africa. Human Rights Commission, Government Departments etc. are full of illegal immigrant Foreigners Appointed without Security Clearances." @TheAttorneyG

@Lepara raised the issue of allocating a large amount of money for advertising purposes, specifically to Tottenham, while questioning the lack of equivalent funding for building refugee camps, asylum camps, and detention centres for illegal aliens. The message implied a perceived misallocation of resources and challenges the logic behind such decisions.

"We have a billion rand to give to Tottenham for advertising, but we don't have a half a billion rand to build refugee camps, asylum camps and more detention centres for illegal aliens?? Make it make sense." @Lepara

@Mickies0 implied that the only problem posed by illegal immigrants or foreigners is the task of finding inexpensive transportation to return to their home countries. This viewpoint simplifies the issue and overlooks potential concerns associated with illegal immigration.

"The only challenged by illegal immigrants/foreigners is for them to find cheap transport back to where they come from." @Mickies0

In a critical response to the ADFSAfrica, @Leago90 questioned the notion of "the killing" attributed to illegal foreigners, dismissing it as nonsense. The sender advocated for promoting the message in other African countries instead of South Africa. This perspective rejects the idea of addressing the issue within the country and emphasizes the perceived need to focus on other locations.

“@ADFSAfrica "the killing"? Who has been killed? Stop talking nonsense, illegal foreigners need to go, ADF must promote this shit in other African countries not here in SA.” @Leago90

@Trevarockson argued that no court can impede the actions of #OperationDudula and #PutSouthAficansFirst in evicting illegal foreigners from buildings in South Africa. It dismissed the potential influence of media outlets like Daily Maverick or the African Diaspora Forum South Africa (ADFSAfrica) and expressed a determination to continue until foreign individuals, derogatorily referred to as "Amakwerekwere," leave the country. The message conveys a strong stance against the presence of illegal foreigners.

“Let me make this clear, there's is no court that can stop #OperationDudula and #PutSouthAficansFirst evicting illegal foreigners from on SA buildings. Not even the media Daily Maverick or @ADSFR can help them. We will not rest until Amakwerekwere [derogatory name for foreigner] leave our country. Clear?” @Trevarockson

In response to ADFSAfrica, @Leago questioned the characterization of #OperationDudula's actions as vigilantism, emphasizing that citizens have the right to govern when law and order fail. The sender accused ADFSAfrica of encouraging illegal immigrants to return home and criticizes what they perceive as self-promotion rather than condemning fraudulent activities occurring in the host country.

“@ADFSAfrica So Operation Dudula exercising their constitutional right is now seen as vigilantism? If law and order fail then the citizens shall govern, wena [you] encourage illegal immigrants to go back home and stop this nonsense grand standing.” @Leago

Yet another message criticized ADFSAfrica for failing to denounce the alleged fraud happening in the host country and suggests that the organization is quick to complain when communities act. The message implies a dissatisfaction with ADFSAfrica's response and raises doubts about their commitment to addressing issues within the host country.

“@ADFSAfrica so you're basically not condemning this fraud that's happening in a host country? And you're quick to bleat when communities take action.” @uMalumewabantwana

One message expressed admiration for South Africans, highlighting their perceived bravery in not running away from their country like cowards. The sender asserted their determination to confront the situation and make it uncomfortable for illegal foreigners, referring to them as parasites.

"I love South Africans they don't runaway like all these cowards who ran away from their country. We deal with the situation at hand, it won't be comfortable for illegal foreigners everywhere we are coming for you parasites." @Dhlems

In contrast, @Letswe9899 mentioned the challenges posed by the influx of illegal immigrants into South Africa but finds hope in individuals like Ike Khumalo. The message expressed gratitude to Khumalo, implying that people like him inspire optimism amid the perceived lost cause.

"Sometimes the influx of illegal immigrants into South Africa seems like lost cause but its people like Ike Khumalo who give us hope. Thank you, Sir." @Lentswe9899

A message of gratitude was directed towards a patriotic South African, referring to them as a child of the land. The sender expressed pleasure and honour in encountering individuals who share their patriotic spirit and encourages them to maintain that spirit until they overcome what they perceive as the madness of the illegal invasion.

"Dankie [Thanks], child of our land. It is always such a pleasure and an honour to come across patriotic South Africans like yourself. Keep that spirit until we overcome this illegal invasion madness." @SizweSethu

A message from Operation Dudula wished the recipient a safe Monday while drawing attention to the estimated 15 million undocumented illegal foreigners in the country. The sender used vivid language, referring to them as ghosts due to their lack of fingerprints and papers. The message seems to underscore the perceived presence and impact of undocumented individuals in South Africa.

"We wish you a safe Monday as you walk around with 15 million undocumented illegal

foreigners around you. No fingerprints No papers Ghosts" @OperationDudula

Another post from Operation Dudula criticized certain individuals, attributing the current state of the country to their actions, and labelling them as idiots. The message emphasized the importance of not being afraid to report crimes committed by foreigners as South Africans, suggesting that such reporting is necessary to prevent foreigners from gaining power in specific areas like Hillbrow and Sunnyside. The message implies a belief that fear or hesitancy to report crimes by foreigners has contributed to the current situation.

"It because of idiots like this that the country is in the state it's in. You can't be afraid of reporting a crime by a foreigner as a South African. That is how they gain power in areas like Hillbrow and Sunnyside." @OperationDudula

@Moses highlighted the need to normalize reminding South Africans about why they have been grey listed, referring to a situation where the country has faced certain international restrictions or scrutiny. The sender accused South Africans of willingly and unprovoked allowing terrorists to use South Africa as a base, citing an example of 22 Afghan nationals who were granted asylum in the country. The message suggests that this perceived allowance of terrorists has led to the country facing negative consequences, such as being grey listed.

"Normalize reminding South Africans why they've been grey listed. They willingly, unprovoked, allowed terrorists to use SA as a base [22 Afghan national provided asylum in South Africa]." @Moses

@Amoss00 criticized the leader of the EFF, describing him as the most hypocritical leader, a chameleon, and a flip-flopper. The sender accused the leader of opportunism, claiming that he now showed interest in the South African youth only because it aligns with his agenda. The message further stated that the leader had previously gone against the youth and never supported them. The hashtags #PutSouthAficansFirst and #OperationDudula were mentioned as initiatives that addressed real issues such as drugs, building hijacking, and employment in restaurants.

"[Leader of the EFF] Most hypocrite leader ever, a chameleon, flip flopper. Now he wants

South African youth coz it suits his agenda, he went against the youth, never supported them #PutSouthAficansFirst, #OperationDudula for raising real issues of drugs, building hijacking, restaurants jobs." @Amoss00

@Umalume claimed that over 99.9% of kidnappings were committed by foreign nationals. The sender suggests that others may deny this fact, but they state it to be true. The message implies a belief that foreign nationals are primarily responsible for kidnappings and expresses a negative sentiment towards them.

"Over 99.9% of these kidnappings are done by foreign nationals. You can deny it if that makes you happy." @Umalume

@Leago alleged that foreigners are hijacking buildings, resulting in the murder of South African homeowners in most cases. The sender mentioned the hashtag #OperationDudula, which has vowed to bring back RDP houses and remove foreigners from owning spaza shops (small convenience stores). The message suggests a concern about the impact of foreigners on the housing market and local businesses.

"Foreigners to hijack buildings, where in most cases South African homeowners are murdered. #OperationDudula has vowed to bring back RDP houses and remove all foreigners from owning spaza shops." @Leago

@NotOpressed criticized someone, referring to them as "kwerekwere" (a derogatory term for a foreigner). The message accused them (kwerekwere) of lying and questions how they concluded that #OperationDudula, the subject of discussion, killed individuals and left unharmed the foreigners who hijacked a building. The sender expresses disapproval, using the term "sies" to convey disgust.

"You have no shame you kwerekwere when lying, how did you ended up concluding by claiming #OperationDudula killed them and abandoned foreigners who hijacked building removed unscratched? Sies!" @NotOpressed

@SolG suggested that it is up to South Africans to decide whether they want their country to

be a kidnap capital of the world or not. This suggestion highlights the importance of South Africans acting to prevent their country from being associated with a high incidence of kidnappings.

"It's up to South Africans if they want their country to be used as a kidnap capital of the world or not." @SolG

Illegal foreigners are perceived to be taking over and adding to the problem of overcrowding in prison cells. One message highlighted a statement made by someone, suggesting that foreign nationals are gradually becoming the majority within prison cells. This remark implies a concern about the representation of foreign nationals in the prison population.

"Someone said foreign nationals are slowly dominating prison cells ya ne." @Mswati007

@Mastone44 raised the question of how many countries from the top 10 list have individuals establishing criminal networks in South Africa. The sender expressed apprehension about the potential rise of terrorism and kidnappings in the country, possibly due to the activities of foreign nationals.

"How many countries from top 10 have their people establishing cells in South Africa? Terrorism and kidnappings are going to engulf our country." @Mastone44

@ObakengL0 expressed a desire for a patriot movement within prisons, indicating a frustration with what the sender perceives as negative influences from foreign nationals. The use of the term "evil kweres" reflects a derogatory sentiment towards these individuals.

"We need a patriot movement in our prisons. We are tired of these evil kweres now, fok man." @ObakengL0

@Sotobe3 directed a question to prominent figures such as Cyril Ramaphosa, Ronald Lamola, and the South African Police Service. The message questioned whether Zimbabwean criminals are being accommodated in South African prisons and expresses concern that South African taxpayers might bear the financial burden associated with their incarceration.

"@CyrilRamaphosa @RonaldLamola @SAPoliceService so now are we babysitting Zimbabwe criminals in our prisons?? The SA taxpayers are expected to foot this bill??" @Sotobe3

One message raised the question of whether any action has been taken to address attacks on vehicles crossing the border into South Africa. The sender also asked whether there have been calls for citizens to refrain from stealing cars in South Africa and smuggling them into Mozambique. The message suggested a concern about cross-border criminal activities and calls for measures to address these issues.

"Have they called for action to stop attacks on vehicles crossing border into South Africa? Have they called for their citizens to stop stealing cars in SA and crossing them in Mozambique?" @LondoFog

@Leago emphasized the importance of the rule of law and asserts that it must be supreme. The sender urges authorities to take proactive steps to prevent illegal immigration at the borders. The message suggested a desire for stricter border control measures to ensure compliance with immigration laws.

"Rule of law must be Supreme. Authorities needs to step up to stop illegal immigration at our borders." @Leago

A positive sentiment was expressed in a message applauding the South African Police Services (SAPS) and Home Affairs for conducting a roadblock, stop, and search operations. The sender expresses satisfaction at the sight of these activities and encourages the continuation of such efforts. The term "patriots" is used to refer to those who support and participate in these actions.

"So happy to see SAPS [South African Police Services] and Home Affairs doing a roadblock, stop and search. Let's keep putting the pressure patriots." @Wakanda33

Overall, these text messages reflected a range of opinions and emotions surrounding the issue of illegal immigration in South Africa, highlighting the need for further analysis and discussion regarding immigration policies, law enforcement, and social integration.

5.3.2 Nigerian Immigrants

Comments under this theme reflected a negative sentiment towards Nigerians in South Africa. The messages highlighted concerns over perceived exploitation of South African women, criminal activities such as drug and prostitution rings, and the use of fake South African documents by Nigerians.

"Nigerian men will take SA women and make them mules but not their Nigerian women...Wow." @Akasiiya2

"Sosha [Soshanguve], Garanga [Ga-Rankuwa], Pheli [Phelindaba], Mams [Mamelodi] aka Vlaka, Mabopane, Sgandaf [Winterveldt], Hebron, Hammitown [Hammanskraal], Akasia, [Names of black townships near Pretoria, South Africa] etc. let's go reclaim Sunnyside. It's now or never. Sunnyside belongs to South Africans, not to Nigerians." @RamsTum1

There was an assertion that Nigerians are a problem wherever they go and a call for action to protect South Africa's image and reclaim certain areas from Nigerian influence.

"Nigerians are a problem everywhere they go and now that their selling themselves as South Africans to the world @HomeAffairsSA how you will protect our image?" @Mphogif

"This is how the South African Police dealt with Nigerian drug and prostitution rings in the 90s. We need such task teams urgently and they must be paid well. We are under siege!" @Jigsaw33

The messages also emphasized a distinction between South Africans and Nigerians, with derogatory remarks directed towards Nigerians' countries of origin.

"For you [Nigerian Twitter user] to utter the words scared. Proves how you are so arrogant, yet your countries are dumps. Let me put your suspicions at ease, you are a nuisance not a threat. Don't ever get that confused." @Isaac33

"Your countrymen are now using fake South African documents to bypass this hurdle [law enforcement detection]. Soon the world will be unable to distinguish between a South African

& a Nigerian. When South Africans wake up, it'll be too late." @AuditorGen3

Media reports were circulated in January 2023 about a Johannesburg based Nigerian consulate that was disconnected from the electricity grid due to non-payment. In response, @Mawillys00 insisted that the consulate must pay and not allowed to be disrespectful in the country.

"Nigeria needs to pay its electricity bill! @CityPowerJhb we will follow up. We want that R600k Proof of Payment. No disrespectful foreigner will be comfortable in RSA" @Mawillys00

Overall, these messages expressed a negative perception of Nigerians, portraying them as a threat, nuisance, and responsible for various societal issues in South Africa.

5.3.3 Zimbabwean Immigrants

Data collected from Twitter revealed a strong sentiment against Zimbabweans residing in South Africa. The comments expressed concerns regarding perceived entitlement, ungratefulness, and victimhood mentality attributed to Zimbabweans. There were claims that Zimbabweans exploit South African resources and infrastructure. While it is important to note that these comments represent individual opinions and not the entire population, they provide insight into the sentiment prevalent in the online discourse.

@Nadeen4 highlighted the belief that as long as South Africa offers free education, free medical services, jobs, and housing, Zimbabweans will not be motivated to return to their own country and contribute to its rebuilding. The commenter suggested mass deportation as a measure to protect South Africa and Zimbabwe from potential collapse (@Nadeen4).

"As long South Africa provides free education, free medical, jobs housing, Zimbos will never see the need to return to Zimbabwe and rebuild their country, mass deportation needs to happen to safe South Africa and Zimbabwe from total collapse." @Nadeen4

Another commenter expressed frustration over what they perceived as entitlement, ungratefulness, and victimhood mentality among Zimbabweans, asserting that they have used manipulative tactics to benefit themselves in South Africa for an extended period of time

(@Joleon3).

"It's the entitlement, ungratefulness and victimhood mentality that has led zimbos into thinking SA resources are their birth right. They've gotten away for too long with their parasitic & manipulative tactics to get their way in South Africa." Joleon3

@KG4life expressed concern about the impact of Zimbabweans on South African infrastructure, suggesting that it would be destroyed within two days if the situation continued.

"Jesus help South Africa from Zimbabweans serious clearly the leader isn't doing nothing...South African infrastructure will be destroyed in two days." @KG4life

Another comment discussed the experience of South African students who faced challenges paying their university fees, only to be criticized by Zimbabweans who were perceived as exploiting job opportunities while labelling South Africans as lazy and stupid (@Putsanine5).

"Imagine going through all that #WitsShutdown #WitsProtest [Wits University student fess protests] trauma of struggling to paying your fees only to graduate and Zimbabweans tell you how stupid lazy South Africans are while they are exploited [by employers], I swear you can't make this stuff up." @Putsanine5

@SizweThulo reflected the fear that the actions of Zimbabweans could reveal their true intentions against South Africans, particularly the politicians who have supported foreigners, including Zimbabweans, leading to feelings of jealousy and potential conflict in the future (@Sizwe.

"I hope that this meddling behaviour will ultimately show our politicians what we meant for ages now that their beloved foreigners, especially you jealous Zimbabweans, will one day feel too comfortable here in SA and show your true colours against them." @SizweThulo0

Lastly, @BafansDB88 expressed satisfaction with an operation aimed at addressing the issue, suggesting that Zimbabweans have "invaded" South Africa and questioned the defence of something that they perceived as not adhering to any international standards (@BafanaSB88).

"I'm glad that #OperationDudula is addressing this problem. Zimbabwe has literally invaded South Africa and I'm surprised there are South Africans who defend something that's not benchmarked on anything in the world." @BafanaSB88

There was opposition to the extension of ZEP (Zimbabwean Exemption Permit), calls for supervised elections in Zimbabwe, and a desire to sever diplomatic ties with Zanu-PF, the ruling party in Zimbabwe. The presence of Zimbabweans in various sectors, including education and politics, is viewed with suspicion and criticized. @Leago states that the days of Zimbabweans in South Africa are numbered and calls for all Zimbabwean permit holders, as well as those living illegally, to be forcefully removed back to Zimbabwe by the end of June 2023.

"The days of Zimbabweans are numbered. 30 June 2023 any Zimbabwean in South Africa must give a very good reason to be in the country. All the 178k Zimbabwean Permits Holders must go. All 5 million Zimbos living illegally here must be removed forcefully back to Zimbabwe." @Leago

Another comment referenced opposition to the extension of ZEP permits, which are permits granted to Zimbabwean nationals allowing them to stay and work in South Africa (@Rafaltan33).

"[At the] Pretoria High Court today, opposing extension of ZEP Permits." @Rafaltan33

@Skwai1 implied that the cancellation of ZEP permits is inevitable, even in the face of potential disagreement.

"Probably your last lecture on our universities. ZEPs are being cancelled, whether you like it or not." @Skwai1

@AuditorGen3 suggested that the days of Zimbabweans in South Africa are limited, referring to them as "neighbours from hell" and implying that their removal is imminent.

"The Days of Zimbabweans are numbered. June is D Day for these neighbours from Hell." @AuditoGen3

A political figure was mentioned as advocating for severing diplomatic ties with Zanu-PF, freezing assets of senior Zanu-PF officials, and advocating for supervised elections in Zimbabwe.

"Herman Mashaba [Leader of one of South Africa opposition political parties], says he won't have diplomatic ties with Zanu-PF. Senior Zanu-PF officials must be banned from South Africa. Their assets must be frozen. He also wants to advocate for Zimbabwe elections to be supervised to be free and fair." @EmmaRa4

@Leago challenged the Zimbabwean President on human rights violations carried out by Zanu-PF in Zimbabwe.

"You [Reply to the Zimbwabwean President's Twitter account] are not going to talk about the human violations your party Zanu-PF subjects Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe to? I mean that would be a perfect example and topic don't you think?" @Leago

A concern was raised about the presence of Zanu-PF branches in South Africa and the potential implications for the ANC (African National Congress) government.

"Why Zanu-PF have opened branches in South Africa. This should be the question Ramaphosa's government and ANC branch members should be worried about. Operation dudula should demand answers from anc." @AmosSongs0043

Lastly, the appointment of a Zimbabwean as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Pretoria was criticized by Operation Dudula, with a suggestion that South Africa could be "officially sold" to Zimbabwe if a Zimbabwean were to become president.

"The Vice Chancellor of the University of Pretoria is a Zimbabwean. Tawana Kupe is the name. All we need now is a Zimbabwean president and South Africa is officially sold to them." @OperationDudula

These messages collectively express an anti-Zimbabwean sentiment, emphasizing the need for their removal, questioning their influence, and asserting that their presence poses a threat to South Africa's well-being. However**,** it is critical to emphasize that these comments represent individual opinions expressed only on Twitter under the "Operation Dudula" hashtag and as such may not reflect nor represent the views of the wider South African population.

5.4 Competition for Resources

It is important to note that, as mentioned in the introduction to this paper, competition for resources plays a significant role in drafting and implementing immigration policies. From the data collected, a theme on "Competition for Resources" between locals and foreigners emerged. While the areas of competition were nuanced, economic opportunities, housing, basic education, and health care were the most prominent.

5.4.1 Economic Opportunities

Under this subsection comments posted express concerns related to foreigners in South Africa, particularly focusing on issues of employment, land, and crime. Operation Dudula account mentioned the experience of having ordered food delivered by a South African and reflects on the rarity of such an occurrence, suggesting a perceived prevalence of non-South African service providers.

"Today we ordered food, and it was delivered by a young man from Polokwane speaking the most beautiful Sepedi [One of South Africa's eleven official languages]. We asked him to somaar [right there] eat with us. Most of us have forgotten what it feels like to have food delivered by a fellow South African. A rot so deep!!" @OperationDudula

@Menzi0022 characterized the presence of Zimbabweans as a "hostile invasion" and accuses them of attempting to claim land that supposedly belongs to South Africans.

"Zimbabweans not only coming for our jobs and trading spaces, now they are coming for the land they always claim we don't own. This is hostile invasion; we are being colonized by rats from next door." Menzi0022

There was a sentiment that foreigners are prioritized over locals in terms of job opportunities

and resources, leading to feelings of marginalization and economic struggle for South Africans.

"South Africa is the only country that prioritizes foreigners over locals. Yet it's called xenophobic, meaning they want to take everything while we become beggars in our own country." @Umalumewabantwana

Furthermore, the messages mentioned the perceived lack of skill-sharing and the impact of illegal foreigners on the labour market, specifically in the agricultural sector.

"Foreigners aren't just occupying jobs South Africans are competent at. They also refuse to share skills, whilst actively gate keeping. Lol. Such nasty business to watch the entitlement of people who claimed that asylum was all they were after." @Leago

"The danger of having 15million+ illegal foreigners. The ghosts living amongst us. The cheap labour that the sons Jan van Riekaak [Derogatory reference to white South African farmers] hire on their farms and cry farm murder." @OperationDudula

"An average of 60% farmworkers are foreigners in the Western Cape. Judge 4 yourself why we have a high unemployment rate in South Africa. Listening to people like Julius Malema is dangerous." @CDwell33

These messages collectively reflected concerns regarding employment, land ownership, and the socio-economic implications of the presence of foreigners in South Africa.

5.4.2 Housing

The collected comments under this subsection provided focus on the issue of housing and the perceived presence of illegal foreigners in RDP houses. @JusDoIt98484 accused the government of corruption, stating that houses intended for elderly South Africans in 1996 were now occupied by foreigners. The hashtag #OperationDudula was used to express solidarity and determination in reclaiming these houses for South Africans.

"#OperationDudula #PutSouthAficansFirst and department of housing today, we have bo magogo [Elderly persons] who applied for houses in 1996 but due to corruption by the

@myanc government the houses are in the hands of foreigners. This is South Africa battle dududu." @JusDoIt98484

Operation Dudula account announced a planned march to the Department of Housing to assist those who have allegedly lost their RDP houses to illegal foreigners, specifically Zimbabweans who received them through corruption. Affected individuals were requested to bring their C-Form, likely referring to documentation.

"#OperationDudula will march on the 10 March 2023 to the Department of House to help those who lost their RDP to illegal foreigners mainly Zimbabweans who were given RDP houses by corrupt officials. Those who are affected are requested to bring their C-Form." @OperationDudula

"Today we went to Housing and forensics in Braamfontein. Soon shit will hit the fan." @TinApricot38

@RuralMan88 expressed support for the cause and emphasized the importance of restoring the dignity and ownership of RDP houses to Black South Africans.

"Duuuuduuuuuu keep fighting so return the dignity and honour of Black South Africans. RDP houses belong to South Africans only, phambili bahlali [forward residents]." @RuralMan88

These messages collectively highlighted concerns regarding housing allocation, allegations of corruption, and the perceived impact of illegal foreigners on housing opportunities for South Africans. It is noteworthy to highlight that these findings are indicative of the broader discourse surrounding immigration in South Africa, which has historically been characterized by tensions and conflicts between the native population and immigrants. The prevalence of comments related to Nigeria and Zimbabwe highlights the perceived significance of these countries in the context of immigration and their representation in the media.

5.4.3 Basic Education

This subsection present messages sourced from different individuals around the issue of school placement and the presence of illegal foreign students. @OperationDudula highlighted the pain

experienced by South African parents who are unable to secure placements for their children due to this issue, suggesting that targeting children is necessary.

"Anyone complaining that we are targeting kids clearly does not know the pain of South African parents unable to place their child due to this…" @Operation Dudula

In another message @OperationDudula celebrated the removal of 179 illegal foreign students from a specific school and asserted that their actions aim to protect South African children.

"The team has removed 179 illegal foreign students from the Lekamoso Secondary School, Etwatwa, Ekurhuleni. Our kids will not suffer under our watch." @OperationDudula

However, a @OperationDudula criticized the use of resources by a media outlet and urged affected parents to seek solutions in their home country rather than in South Africa. The message further called on South African parents to report cases where a foreign student had secured a place while their child had not, emphasizing the need for information about the school and principals involved.

"@UnfilteredSABC @AldrinSampear Useless use of SABC resources…. Tell those parents to go get affected in Zim not here. We urge all South African parents whose child did not get space but has definite proof that a foreigner in the same grade has space to notify us and give us the school and principals details." @OperationDudula

These messages illustrated the tensions surrounding school enrolment, the impact on South African parents, and differing perspectives on addressing the presence of illegal foreign students.

5.4.4 Health Care Services

The comments sourced under this theme reflected various perspectives regarding healthcare and the presence of foreign nationals in South African hospitals. @OperationDudula expressed support for intensifying efforts to ensure that budgeted resources serve South Africans and praises the leadership qualities of an individual politician.

“Dear @PhophiRamathuba. We will intensify the battle at our hospitals to ensure your budgeted resources service South Africans. You are a true leader.” @OperationDudula

In another message @OperationDudula raised concerns about foreign nationals taking over hospitals, alleging issues such as rude doctors, medication theft, and the prioritization of foreigners.

“Foreign nationals have taken over our hospitals! Rude doctors. Stealing meds. Putting foreigners Infront.” @OperationDudula

@Ntjebe58 defended actions taken against foreign nationals, suggesting that they were intended to support South African doctors and expresses disapproval of unemployed doctors.

“When @dudula is going after @foreigners, who are full in all these hospitals and clinics is to help South African doctors. It's not a good thing to see doctors on the streets.” @Ntjebe58

Additionally, one message reported the arrest of an illegal Malawian foreigner involved in selling medication from a clinic.

“SAPS in joint operation with #OperationDudula resulted in the arrest of illegal Malawian Foreigner who was selling medication from Mayfair Clinic.” @Dimaximore44

Lastly, an individual accused certain groups of victimizing whistle-blowers who exposed illegal foreign nationals giving birth at clinics and utilizing ambulances, subsequently suing for "negligence."

“ANC cadres victimized us for exposing at @CityofJoburgZA Health these @HomeAffairsSA illegal foreigners criminality giving augmented birth at Clinics using @GautengHealth Ambulances as ferries then sue for "negligence".” @Gwabin1

These comments highlight the complex dynamics surrounding healthcare provision, the involvement of foreign nationals, and allegations of misconduct and illegal activities.

5.5. Chapter Summary

Operation Dudula is a movement that garnered both support and criticism, Operation Dudula supporters brought to light the issue of media coverage and public perception. Supporters also staunchly defended the movement, decrying what they perceived as inadequate media attention and biased commentary. Meanwhile, critics ignited valuable debates, expressing reservations about the movement's exclusive focus on black African immigrants.

During online discourse, the role of political parties—particularly the ANC and the EFF—in shaping immigration policies in South Africa took centre stage. Opinions and concerns flowed freely, with participants dissecting the actions of both parties. Dialogues surrounding South African immigrants revealed nuanced sentiments. Some expressed disdain for individuals engaging in harmful behaviour, even as they acknowledged the hardships faced by black South Africans. Negative perceptions toward Nigerian and Zimbabwean immigrants were palpable, emphasizing worries related to exploitation, criminal activities, and broader societal implications.

Resource competition emerged as a recurring theme. Economic opportunities, housing, basic education, and healthcare were all hotly debated topics. Participants voiced concerns about employment prospects, land ownership, housing distribution, school placements, and healthcare access—all within the context of immigration.

Overall, the results painted a complex and divided landscape of opinions and concerns regarding immigration in South Africa. The situation calls for deeper analysis, open dialogue, and a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted issues at hand.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6. Introduction

The primary objective of this chapter is to build upon the insights presented in Chapter Five. To achieve this, we delve into an in-depth analysis using participatory governance as our theoretical and analytical lens. In order to maintain a coherent structure and address each emergent thematic area effectively, this chapter follows the same format as the preceding one. It is divided into distinct sections, each exploring one of the four main themes.

In the first section, we provide a comprehensive examination of the findings presented under the "Operation Dudula" subsection. This movement, which garnered both support and criticism, serves as a critical backdrop for our exploration. The second part delves into the outcomes related to key political parties. Specifically, we discuss the roles played by prominent parties such as the ANC (African National Congress) and the EFF (Economic Freedom Fighters) in shaping immigration policies within South Africa. Our third section focuses on the nuanced discussions surrounding South African immigrants. Here, sentiments vary, with some expressing empathy for the struggles faced by black South Africans while others harbour negative perceptions toward Nigerian and Zimbabwean immigrants. Lastly, we conclude by analysing the theme of "Competition for Resources." Within the context of immigration, we explore concerns related to economic opportunities, housing allocation, education, and healthcare provision.

6.1 Operation Dudula

Building upon the insights presented in Chapter Five, this section goes further and attempts to interpret the users' perspectives on Operation Dudula. Specifically, we explore how participants perceive and engage with this movement. Their views are categorized into two distinct camps: those in support and those critical of the movement.

6.1.1 Operation Dudula Support

Among participants, a prevailing sentiment emerges—a call for active citizen engagement in addressing pressing societal challenges related to immigration policy. Supporters of Operation Dudula express a deep-seated desire to collectively combat crime and address issues

surrounding illegal immigration. Their positive sentiments underscore the potential impact of participatory approaches in shaping immigration policy within South Africa. The urgency and shared commitment to collective action are palpable.

Alignment with Participatory Theory

A closer examination of sentiments expressed during Operation Dudula discussions reveals striking alignments with the principles of participatory theory. This theory emphasizes empowering individuals to actively shape their communities. The dialogues surrounding Operation Dudula highlight the perceived necessity for inclusivity and collective decision-making. Here, the needs and aspirations of the community take precedence. This alignment underscores the pivotal role that fostering active citizen participation plays in transforming immigration policy dynamics within the nation.

The pervasive emphasis on active engagement within the Operation Dudula discourse is palpable, as participants encourage and motivate one another to join the movement and actively contribute to its administrative functioning. This powerful sentiment underscores the participatory principle of shared responsibility, emphasizing that participants are not mere bystanders but integral agents actively shaping the trajectory of immigration policy. The impassioned calls to action, urging citizens to wholeheartedly participate, contribute ideas, and offer unwavering support to the movement, stand as compelling evidence of Operation Dudula's potential to mobilize a collective effort in robustly addressing immigration challenges.

The resonating sentiment that participation should be firmly grounded in patriotism and a deep-rooted love for the country reverberates with the essence of participatory engagement. Understanding these profound motivations becomes instrumental in fostering sustained and meaningful citizen participation. By tapping into this sense of identity and dedication, Operation Dudula and similar movements possess the capacity to inspire individuals to actively engage in immigration policy discussions and purposeful initiatives aimed at enhancing the fabric of the nation.

The expressions of discontentment regarding media coverage raise significant concerns about transparency and inclusivity in information dissemination related to Operation Dudula. The sentiments articulating reservations about the absence of comprehensive information and perceived biased reporting underscore a collective yearning for media coverage that faithfully represents the activities and objectives of Operation Dudula. This genuine yearning aligns perfectly with the participatory principle of providing unfettered access to information, thereby fostering an environment of open dialogue and informed decision-making.

Twitter as a Platform for Public Engagement

Embarking on a comprehensive examination of how Twitter users are leveraging the Operation Dudula hashtag reveals invaluable insights into the multifaceted realm of public viewpoints on immigration policy in South Africa. Twitter, as an influential social media platform, serves as a potent tool for capturing diverse perspectives and facilitating robust public engagement due to its broad reach and accessibility. Analysing the content, discussions, and sentiments expressed on this platform offers a comprehensive understanding of public viewpoints, thereby enabling policymakers to explore a broader range of perspectives and innovative solutions in crafting immigration policy.

Summary

The kaleidoscope of comments and views shared under the banner of Operation Dudula offers a treasure trove of invaluable suggestions for shaping immigration policy in the intricate context of South Africa. The thorough analysis of sentiments expressed on Twitter presents an unparalleled opportunity to identify recurring patterns, address prevailing concerns, and contemplate alternative approaches that may serve as beacons guiding policy formulation. The pivotal role of public participation on platforms like Twitter unleashes the latent potential of the crowd-sourced approach, tapping into the collective wisdom of participants and arming policymakers with a diverse array of perspectives and transformative solutions that breathe new life into the realm of immigration policy.

6.1.2 Operation Dudula Criticism

Operation Dudula undoubtedly garnered extensive support and praise on social media platforms. However, it is of paramount importance to acknowledge that not all perspectives expressed during this surge of popularity were unreservedly positive. Among the overwhelming support, critical voices emerged, initiating crucial debates, and daring to challenge the movement's objectives and methods. Despite constituting a minority, these critiques play a profoundly vital role in promoting open discourse and fostering an environment of constructive dialogue.

Ensuring Inclusivity, Addressing Biases, Accountability and Responsible Conduct

One particularly critical perspective brought to light concerns about the purported targeting of black African immigrants by the movement. This piercing criticism draws attention to the pressing need for closer scrutiny of Operation Dudula's actions and motivations, ensuring that inclusivity reigns supreme and any potential biases are confronted head-on. Welcoming these critical voices provides an invaluable opportunity for supporters of Operation Dudula to engage in a process of introspection, re-evaluating their beliefs and embracing alternative viewpoints, all in the spirit of fostering a more inclusive approach that fully embraces the rich tapestry of South Africa's diversity.

Further compounding the critical voices were reports from select media outlets that recounted the death of a foreigner, with one commentator hinting at Operation Dudula's potential involvement. Although handling such reports with caution and diligently verifying facts is imperative, this sobering incident serves as a poignant reminder of the indispensable nature of accountability and responsible conduct within any social movement. It also serves to underscore the profound significance of media scrutiny in upholding transparency and shedding light on any possible issues or unintended consequences that might arise.

By situating itself within a participatory framework, Operation Dudula explicitly recognizes that embracing constructive criticism and dissenting viewpoints is the bedrock of a more robust and well-rounded understanding of any social movement. Acknowledging and engaging with

such criticism propels the movement forward, encouraging a journey of self-reflection and growth, while concurrently cultivating the potential to address any inherent shortcomings or unintended consequences within Operation Dudula. By heeding these concerns and fostering an environment of open dialogue, the movement stands poised to fortify its credibility, amplify inclusivity, and forge ahead as a catalyst for driving transformative change across South Africa.

Summary

While Operation Dudula unquestionably basked in the warmth of widespread support and resounding approval, it is vital to heed the clarion call of critical voices. Constructive criticism emerges as a precious gem, unearthing opportunities for self-reflection, growth, and the pervasive promotion of inclusivity within the movement's very core.

Moreover, the unsettling reports that raised questions about the movement's potential involvement in the untimely death of a foreigner underline the sheer gravity of accountability and responsible conduct. By embracing these concerns and fostering a culture of open dialogue, Operation Dudula charts a course for even greater impact, wholeheartedly embracing diverse perspectives, and unwaveringly safeguarding the principles of justice and inclusivity that stand as the pillars of a brighter and more equitable South Africa.

6.2 Key Political Parties

As key stakeholders and actors in the policy development space, it was perhaps unsurprising that comments on political parties and politicians made an appearance in the immigration discourse. In this section our analysis provides a discussion on the EFF and the ANC as the prominent parties mentioned.

6.2.1 The African National Congress

In this sub-theme, we delve into a series of text messages that reveal citizens' opinions and concerns about the ANC-led government and the presence of foreigners in South Africa. By applying the lens of participatory governance theory, we seek to unravel the dynamics of citizen participation, political accountability, and the intricate interaction between citizens and the ANC concerning these critical issues. The tweets offer a rich tapestry of diverse opinions and concerns, ranging from frustration and blame to passionate calls for action, showcasing the profound impact of these topics on the public discourse.

Citizen Engagement, Deliberation, Political Accountability and the Citizen's Role

At the heart of participatory governance theory lies the importance of engaging citizens in shaping policies and decisions that impact their lives. The tweets provide a window into a vibrant and active public sphere, where individuals fearlessly express their viewpoints, critique government actions, and propose innovative solutions. This robust engagement underscores the citizens' ardent desire to play an active role in politics, and, in turn, holds the governing ANC accountable for its actions and policies.

A multitude of messages spotlight the ANC government as the focal point for blame regarding various societal challenges, such as crime, unemployment, and inadequate service delivery. These voices resound with a common sentiment that the ANC has fallen short in addressing the citizens' pressing needs and priorities. This sharp critique serves as a powerful reminder of the indispensable role political accountability plays in ensuring that leaders remain responsive to the aspirations and welfare of their constituents.

The tweets transcend mere criticism and venture into more assertive territory, with demands for the ANC's removal from power, attributing the party's alleged role in facilitating the presence of foreigners and compromising national security. These impassioned calls for change mirror the essence of participatory governance theory, underscoring the belief that citizen engagement and mobilization can indeed wield transformative power, steering the nation towards meaningful progress.

Participation as a Tool for Accountability and the Importance of Inclusivity and Diverse Views

In the tweets, we find voices that question the ANC leadership's competence and raise concerns about their ability to govern effectively. These critical reflections emphasize participatory governance's crucial role in assessing leadership quality and cultivating a climate of citizen trust and confidence. By demanding transparent and accountable governance, citizens signal their unwavering commitment to holding leaders to the highest standards of performance.

While participatory governance encourages citizen engagement, the tweets also compel us to confront the ethical implications of xenophobic views expressed in certain messages. Recognizing the imperative of inclusivity, we are urged to embark on a deeper exploration of the root causes of social tensions. Only through an open and inclusive dialogue can we foster a participatory democracy that accommodates diverse perspectives and ensures that no voices are silenced or marginalized.

Embedded within the tweets is a powerful realization of political accountability's profound impact on the dynamics of participatory governance. Citizens' palpable frustration with the ANC's performance is intertwined with a belief that their collective dissatisfaction possesses the potential to influence electoral dynamics. The upcoming elections are perceived as a critical opportunity for citizens to exercise their agency, shaping the nation's trajectory through the democratic act of voting.

Summary

The analysis of these tweets offers us valuable insights into citizen engagement, political accountability, and the intricate interplay of public opinions regarding the ANC government and foreigners in South Africa. We witness a vibrant tapestry of diverse perspectives, woven together by an ardent desire for meaningful change and inclusive governance. While we celebrate the spirit of participatory engagement, we must remain vigilant in addressing xenophobic sentiments and foster a democratic space that genuinely encompasses the voices and aspirations of all citizens. The lessons gleaned from this analysis shall guide policymakers and stakeholders in their tireless efforts to address citizen concerns and strengthen participatory governance practices, ultimately forging a more equitable, responsive, and inclusive South Africa.

6.2.2 The Economic Freedom Fighters

The tweets analysed in this sub-theme reveal a diverse array of opinions and concerns regarding Julius Malema, the EFF, and their stance on immigration in South Africa. Through these messages, we gain valuable insights into the dynamics of public opinion and the complexities surrounding these political figures and their positions on immigration.

Criticism of Julius Malema the EFF and Disapproval of Methods and Behaviour

A recurring theme in the tweets is the expression of criticism directed towards Julius Malema and the EFF. Commenters voice their concerns about Malema allegedly selling the country and perceive him as a threat to South Africa's future. This lack of trust in Malema's leadership raises questions about his intentions and the potential consequences of his actions. These expressions emphasize the urgent need for greater transparency and accountability from political figures to address public concerns and restore faith in the democratic process.

The tweets also highlight significant disapproval of the EFF's methods and behaviour in handling issues they deem important. Several commenters express disbelief and dismay at the party's perceived destruction of homes and children. This criticism signals a rejection of the EFF's confrontational approach and underscores a desire for political figures who adopt more constructive and inclusive strategies. It calls for leaders who can foster unity and collaborative problem-solving, rather than exacerbating societal divisions.

Concerns about Illegal Immigration, Criminal Associations and Impact on Youth and Future prospects

Another dimension of the analysis revolves around the concerns raised about Julius Malema's support for illegal immigration and alleged associations with criminal organizations. These messages question the potential impact of Malema's affiliations on the country's well-being and security. The emphasis on the importance of leaders who prioritize the rule of law and uphold good governance principles resonates with citizens' aspirations for ethical and responsible leadership.

The tweets also highlight deep concerns about the potential impact of Julius Malema and the EFF on the youth's future. Critics argue that idolizing Malema could hinder the youth's opportunities, particularly in terms of education and employment. This concern reflects a deep commitment to the well-being and development of the younger generation, calling for leaders who prioritize youth empowerment and inclusive policies that foster a brighter future for all.

The contrasting perspectives on immigration revealed in the tweets demonstrate the richness and complexity of viewpoints within South Africa. The divergence between the #PutSouthAfricansFirst movement, which views illegal immigration as a crime based on nationality, and #OperationDudula, which criticizes the EFF for racializing the issue, underscores the multifaceted nature of the immigration debate. These contrasting viewpoints highlight the importance of inclusive and open dialogue that considers various concerns and seeks common ground for effective and just policymaking.

Summary

The analysis of these posts provides a wide spectrum of opinions and concerns about Julius Malema, the EFF, and their positions on immigration. These messages reflect a growing demand for transparent and accountable leadership, ethical conduct, and inclusive policies that address the needs and aspirations of all South Africans. Understanding and actively addressing these concerns are vital for fostering a more participatory, responsive, and cohesive political system in South Africa. As policymakers and leaders engage with the public, they have the opportunity to bridge divides, build trust, and work towards a united and prosperous future for the nation.

6.3 Dialogues Surrounding South African Immigrants

The sentiments expressed in the comments collected offer profound insights into various themes surrounding immigration in South Africa. These themes encompass solidarity, perceptions of Pan Africanism, self-determination, concerns about foreigners' behaviour, cultural dynamics, exclusion of foreign perspectives, and the perceived immigration crisis. By comprehensively understanding these multifaceted perspectives, we can foster constructive dialogue and work towards inclusive and sustainable solutions to the immigration-related challenges facing the nation.

Solidarity, Disappointment, and Perceptions of Pan-Africanism: Self-Determination, Self- Reliance, and Concerns about Foreigners' Behaviour

The prevalent sentiment rejecting the assumption that shared skin colour automatically implies support for certain actions or beliefs reveals the expectation of solidarity among those with a common racial identity. This sentiment is further intensified by the disappointment experienced

when such solidarity is not met. By analysing these expressions, we gain valuable insights into the complexities of identity and how individuals navigate their sense of belonging within a diverse society.

The questioning of efforts made by individuals from other African countries to promote Pan Africanism raises intriguing points about how this ideology is perceived within South Africa. The implication that South Africans may view Pan Africanism as potentially coming at the expense of their own interests necessitates a deeper examination of the interactions between national identities and continental unity.

The call for resolving a country's problems through the agency of its own people emphasizes the significance of self-determination and self-reliance. This sentiment echoes the aspiration for communities to take charge of their destinies and underscores the importance of building internal capacities to address challenges effectively.
The perception of foreign individuals exhibiting "madness" within South Africa and the accompanying concern about its impact on future generations reflects genuine anxieties about the behaviour and actions of foreigners. By understanding these concerns, we gain an opportunity to explore ways to promote positive interactions between different communities and create a harmonious and safe social environment.

Cultural Dynamics, Perspectives, and the Exclusion of Foreign Voices: The Perceived Immigration Crisis and an Examination of Operation Dudula's Objectives

The observation of Basotho and Batswana communities' integration within South Africa and their potential distinct perspectives on Pan Africanism introduces a valuable dimension to the discussion. Analysing these dynamics unveils the rich tapestry of cultural interactions within a multicultural society, shedding light on how diverse communities navigate their identities and relationships.

The call for South Africans to prioritize local voices and perspectives by disengaging from foreign opinions raises important questions about the inclusivity of public discourse. By recognizing the desire for an inward-focused approach, we can explore ways to encourage open dialogue that embraces diverse viewpoints while preserving the uniqueness of South African perspectives.

The comments alluding to a perceived immigration crisis designed to work against impoverished and black South Africans signal deep concerns about social inequality and its relation to immigration policies. These comments demand careful consideration and prompt an examination of policies to ensure they address the needs and welfare of all citizens equitably.
The reference to "All foreigners" in the Operation Dudula social media account raises vital questions about the organization's stance and intentions regarding immigration issues. By critically examining these objectives, we can understand how they may influence public perceptions and contribute to the national discourse on immigration.

Summary

The diverse themes and sentiments expressed in these comments provide a rich and nuanced understanding of the immigration landscape in South Africa. Each perspective contributes a valuable piece to the complex puzzle of immigration-related challenges. By engaging in participatory dialogue and considering the broad spectrum of views, policymakers and stakeholders can work collaboratively to formulate solutions that address the concerns of all citizens while preserving the values of justice, inclusivity, and unity in South Africa.

6.3.1 Perceptions of Illegal Immigration and Crime

This theme offers valuable insights into the multifaceted concerns, opinions, and sentiments surrounding the issue of illegal immigration and crime perceptions in South Africa. These messages shed light on various sub-themes, presenting a diverse range of perspectives from the public. As we delve into the analysis, we can see how these discussions highlight important aspects of the immigration debate and contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved.

Criminal Activities and Public Safety and Economic Factors and Exploitation

The messages within this theme illustrate a prevailing fear and concern among citizens about the association of illegal foreigners with criminal activities. The attribution of crimes such as drug dealing, human trafficking, producing fake products, car jackings, serial murders, and kidnappings to different nationalities intensifies anxieties about public safety. The sentiments expressed call for robust law enforcement and border control measures to address these criminal elements within immigrant populations. These tweets not only reflect public apprehension but also reveal the need for effective policies and strategies to address the root

causes of criminal behaviour and ensure the safety and well-being of all citizens.

A recurring perspective in the tweets highlights the perceived link between the lack of skills among illegal foreigners and their involvement in criminal behaviour. The discussions point to limited economic opportunities and social exclusion as contributing factors driving some individuals towards illicit activities. Additionally, accusations levelled against businesses for employing illegal foreigners expose a sense of exploitation and resentment among citizens. These sentiments signal a call for greater scrutiny of labour practices and a demand for fair treatment of all workers, regardless of their immigration status. They also underline the need for policies that foster inclusivity and equal opportunities for both native citizens and immigrants.

Law Enforcement and Vetting Procedures, Resource Allocation and Policy Decisions

The tweets expressing concerns about the prioritization of law enforcement efforts, particularly focusing on arresting, and deporting illegal foreigners over visiting illegal shops, reveal a perception of skewed priorities within the system. This critique suggests that law enforcement should not solely focus on apprehending individuals but also address the root causes of illegal immigration, such as businesses hiring illegal workers. Additionally, the criticism of the appointment of illegal immigrants without proper security clearances underscores the importance of robust vetting procedures in ensuring national security and safeguarding the integrity of key institutions. These discussions urge authorities to adopt more comprehensive and balanced strategies in addressing illegal immigration.

The tweets that question the allocation of funds for advertising rather than refugee camps and detention centres express dissatisfaction with resource distribution and policy decisions. This viewpoint highlights the need for a more equitable distribution of resources, particularly when dealing with humanitarian issues. Furthermore, the oversimplified views on illegal immigration, suggesting that the only problem posed by illegal immigrants is finding inexpensive transportation for their return to their home countries, underscore the need for public education and awareness on the complexities of immigration challenges. These

discussions emphasize the importance of well-informed policy decisions that consider the diverse dimensions of illegal immigration and its impact on society.

Support for Eviction, Criticism of Organization, National Repuation and Leadership

The strong support for initiatives like #OperationDudula and #PutSouthAfricansFirst, advocating for the eviction and removal of illegal foreigners, reflects growing frustration and a desire for immediate action among certain segments of the population. These sentiments signal a need for policymakers to address public concerns regarding immigration and take proactive steps to restore a sense of security and trust among citizens. Moreover, the criticism directed towards organizations like ADFSAfrica indicates a desire for transparency and accountability from institutions involved in addressing immigration issues. These discussions call for organizations to actively engage with public concerns and work towards effective solutions through collaborative efforts.

Expressions of admiration for South Africans confronting the situation and concerns about the country's international reputation reveal citizens' aspirations for strong and principled leadership. The discussion surrounding the association of South Africa with terrorism and negative consequences signals a need for decisive and strategic decision-making by political leaders. Citizens expect leaders to prioritize national security while upholding democratic values and human rights. The criticism directed towards specific individuals, including political leaders and public figures, underscores the public's call for integrity, consistency, and alignment with the interests of the nation. These discussions serve as a reminder to leaders to stay accountable and responsive to the needs and concerns of the people they represent.

Summary

The analysis of these tweets provides a comprehensive picture of the multifaceted opinions and emotions surrounding illegal immigration in South Africa. These discussions highlight critical aspects related to crime, economic impact, resource allocation, national security, and social integration. Engaging with these diverse viewpoints is crucial for fostering meaningful and constructive dialogue that informs effective immigration policies, law enforcement strategies, and social cohesion efforts. By listening to the concerns and aspirations of the public, policymakers can work towards inclusive and sustainable solutions that address the

complexities of immigration challenges while upholding the principles of justice, security, and unity in South Africa.

6.3.2 Nigerian Immigrants

An array of posts surfaces, reflecting a pervasive negative sentiment towards Nigerians in South Africa in this theme. These messages underscore concerns over perceived exploitation, criminal activities, and the use of fake documents, and additionally emphasize a troubling distinction between South Africans and Nigerians, with derogatory remarks targeting the country of origin of Nigerians.

Perceived Exploitation, Criminal Activities, Stereotypes, and Prejudice: Derogatory Remarks and Media Reports

The messages vocalize significant apprehension regarding the perceived exploitation of South African women by Nigerians. This viewpoint propagates a belief that Nigerian individuals or groups are intricately involved in nefarious activities, including drug and prostitution rings, which allegedly inflict detrimental consequences on local communities. Criminal activities, such as drug trafficking and the use of counterfeit South African documents, are specifically attributed to Nigerians, painting a stark and contentious picture of their role in South African society. Consequently, these messages engender anxieties about the integrity of the immigration system and national security.

A particularly unsettling assertion surfaces, claiming that Nigerians are considered problematic wherever they reside, insinuating a broader, negative perception of Nigerians beyond South Africa's borders. This perspective hints at deeply ingrained stereotypes and prejudice against Nigerians, perpetuating a generalized distrust or animosity towards them. The calls for action to protect South Africa's image and reclaim certain areas from perceived Nigerian influence reveal a profound desire to confront the perceived issues associated with Nigerians, underscoring a perceived need for intervention to safeguard national interests and maintain societal harmony.

The theme further unravels with derogatory remarks explicitly targeting Nigerians' country of origin, exuding an intent to devalue or demean individuals based solely on their nationality. Such language unequivocally contributes to a negative perception of Nigerians, fostering

divisions between different ethnic or national groups. The circulation of media reports pertaining to a Nigerian consulate allegedly being disconnected from the electricity grid due to non-payment is mentioned, though the precise connection to the broader negative sentiment towards Nigerians remains unclear. Nonetheless, this incident may have further exacerbated negative perceptions or reinforced existing biases.

Summary

This theme unearths a deeply ingrained and worrisome negative perception of Nigerians in South Africa. The messages unequivocally portray Nigerians as a perceived threat, a nuisance, and, regrettably, as accountable for a myriad of societal issues. It is imperative to acknowledge that these messages represent the viewpoints of individual users and may not accurately reflect the broader population's opinion. Nevertheless, they illuminate the existence of negative stereotypes, prejudice, and tensions between different communities within South Africa. Confronting these deeply rooted issues necessitates fostering open dialogue, cultivating cultural understanding, and intensifying efforts to promote inclusivity and social cohesion throughout the nation. Only through collective action can South Africa strive to overcome these challenges and create a society that embraces diversity, respects human dignity, and nurtures unity.

6.3.3 Zimbabweans

This sub-section delves into comments and findings regarding Zimbabweans in South Africa as well as the potential cancellation of the ZEPs. This analysis will closely explore power dynamics, citizen engagement, and public participation in shaping perceptions and decisions related to Zimbabweans in South Africa. Noteworthy is that the process of cancellation was still in litigation during the write up.

Power Imbalance, Negative Perceptions, and the Lack of Dialogue and Constructive Engagement

The findings offer a revealing glimpse into the prevailing power dynamic, with commenters expressing concerns about the presence and impact of Zimbabweans in the country. There is a perception that Zimbabweans are taking advantage of South Africa's resources, such as free education and healthcare, without reciprocating efforts to rebuild their own country. Within this context, a power imbalance emerges, fuelling calls for mass deportations and portraying

Zimbabweans as parasitic invaders. These negative perceptions stem from an apparent perception of entitlement, ungratefulness, and a victimhood mentality among some Zimbabweans, contributing to a sense of frustration and resentment among certain South Africans.

Participatory government theory emphasizes the importance of citizen participation and open decision-making processes. However, the user-generated comments reveal a striking absence of dialogue and constructive engagement between South African citizens and Zimbabweans. Instead of seeking shared understanding or exploring potential solutions together, there appears to be a tendency to generalize and stereotype Zimbabweans as a problematic group. This dearth of communication hampers the possibility of participatory governance, as it fails to create spaces for inclusive dialogue, mutual understanding, and the development of policies that address the concerns of all stakeholders involved.

Promoting Participatory Governance: Challenging Stereotypes and Prejudices, Inclusive Decision-Making, and Addressing Root Causes through Collaboration

To promote participatory governance in this context, it is imperative to foster dialogue and establish platforms for engagement between South African citizens and Zimbabweans. Encouraging community forums, public consultations, and initiatives that cultivate cross-cultural understanding and cooperation can help bridge the divide. By providing spaces for interaction and active participation, a more inclusive decision-making process can emerge, facilitating the exchange of ideas and the development of policies that address the concerns of both South African citizens and Zimbabweans.

Additionally, it is vital to challenge the negative stereotypes and prejudices that perpetuate these adverse perceptions of Zimbabweans. Efforts should be made to spotlight the positive contributions of Zimbabweans to the social, economic, and cultural fabric of South Africa. Creating opportunities for shared experiences, such as cultural exchanges or collaborative projects, can help dismantle barriers and foster empathy among different communities.

The cancellation of the ZEPs by the South African government has been a significant point of contention. It is essential that decision-making processes regarding immigration policies and permits involve the affected communities. Engaging with Zimbabwean communities and

seeking their input can help shape more inclusive and effective strategies for managing migration and addressing concerns related to infrastructure, job availability, and social services.

Moreover, it is critical to address the power dynamics prevalent in the discourse surrounding Zimbabweans in South Africa. Rather than solely focusing on deportation or exclusionary measures, efforts should be directed towards understanding the root causes of migration and addressing the underlying socio-political and economic challenges in Zimbabwe. Collaborative endeavours between the South African and Zimbabwean governments, as well as civil society organizations, can contribute to addressing these challenges and finding mutually beneficial solutions.

Summary

The comments extracted from social media illuminate a lack of participatory approaches in the discourse surrounding Zimbabweans in South Africa. Through the lens of participatory governance theory, it becomes evident that fostering dialogue, challenging stereotypes, and promoting inclusive decision-making processes are crucial for creating a more inclusive and participatory society. By involving citizens and affected communities in decision-making processes, it is possible to develop policies and strategies that address the concerns and aspirations of all stakeholders involved, while promoting understanding and cooperation between South African citizens and Zimbabweans.

6.4 Competition for Resources

This section provides an analysis of the theme on competition for resources. For an in-depth analysis, the theme is therefore broken down into four subsections. The first is on Economic Opportunities. The second on Housing, and the third and fourth are on Basic Education and Health-Care Service respectively. The need for more inclusive and participatory approaches to the governance of these resources is argued for.

6.4.1 Economic Opportunities

Within this theme, we analyse the findings presented in subsection 5.4, focusing on power dynamics, citizen engagement, and public participation in shaping perceptions and decisions related to foreigners and economic opportunities. The findings reveal a power dynamic where

some South African citizens express frustration and concern about the presence of foreigners in the country, particularly in relation to economic opportunities and job competition. There is a perception that foreigners, particularly Zimbabweans, are taking jobs that should be reserved for South African citizens, leading to high unemployment rates among locals. This sentiment is evident in the comments, which use derogatory language and compare foreigners to rodents, implying a dehumanizing characterization.

From a Lack of Dialogue and Constructive Engagement to Fostering Inclusive Decision-Making: Challenging Negative Stereotypes and Prejudices

Participatory governance philosophy emphasizes inclusive decision-making procedures and citizen participation. However, the user-generated comments illustrate a lack of dialogue and constructive engagement between South African citizens and foreigners. Instead of seeking a shared understanding or exploring potential solutions together, there is a tendency to generalize and stereotype foreigners as a threat to the economic well-being of South African citizens. This lack of communication hinders the possibility of participatory solutions, as it fails to create spaces for inclusive dialogue, mutual understanding, and the development of policies that address the concerns of all stakeholders involved.

To promote participatory governance in this context, it is crucial to foster dialogue and create platforms for engagement between South African citizens and foreigners. This dialogue should include discussions on the labour market, job creation, and skills development. By providing spaces for interaction and active participation, a more inclusive decision-making process can emerge, allowing for the exchange of ideas and the development of policies that address the concerns of both South African citizens and foreigners.

Furthermore, it is important to challenge the negative stereotypes and prejudices that perpetuate these negative perceptions of foreigners. Efforts should be made to highlight the positive contributions of foreigners to the economy, such as their role in job creation, skills transfer,

and entrepreneurship. Creating opportunities for shared experiences and economic collaboration can help break down barriers and foster empathy among different communities.

It is important to note that while the comments primarily focus on negative perceptions of foreigners, particularly Zimbabweans, it is necessary to approach the issue with nuance and consider the diverse experiences and contributions of foreigners in South Africa. Not all foreigners are in the country illegally or engaged in unfair job competition. Policies and approaches should be based on evidence and a comprehensive understanding of the economic dynamics, labour market needs, and skills gaps in South Africa.

Summary

The Twitter comments highlight a lack of participatory approaches in the discourse surrounding economic opportunities and the presence of foreigners in South Africa. Applying the participatory governance theory, it becomes evident that fostering dialogue, challenging stereotypes, and promoting inclusive decision-making processes are essential for creating a more inclusive and participatory society. By involving citizens and affected communities in decision-making processes, it is possible to develop policies and strategies that address the concerns and aspirations of all stakeholders involved while promoting understanding and cooperation between South African citizens and foreigners.

6.4.2 Housing

This section delves into the findings presented under subsection 5.4.2, on housing. It is evident that there is a perception that foreigners, including Zimbabweans, are benefiting from the state-subsidized social housing scheme known as the RDP. The analysis focuses on power dynamics, citizen engagement, and public participation in shaping housing policies and addressing concerns related to housing allocation. The comments reflect a power dynamic where South African citizens express frustration and concern over the allocation of RDP houses to foreigners, particularly Zimbabweans. There is a perception that corrupt officials have granted RDP houses to foreigners instead of prioritizing deserving South African citizens. This sentiment is evident in the comments, which call for action and express a desire to reclaim RDP houses for South African residents.

Lack of Participatory Governance in the Housing Sector and Fostering Dialogue, Citizen Engagement and Addressing Underlying Causes and Needs

Participatory governance theory stresses the importance of involving citizens in decision-making processes. However, the user-generated comments indicate a lack of participatory governance in the housing sector. Commenters feel excluded from the decision-making process and believe that their concerns regarding housing allocation have not been adequately addressed. The comments suggest growing frustration and a willingness to act if their concerns are not resolved.

To promote participatory governance and address these housing concerns, fostering dialogue and creating platforms for citizen engagement are crucial. Efforts should be made to increase transparency in the housing allocation process and ensure that it is based on fair and equitable criteria. This could involve establishing clear eligibility criteria for RDP houses, improving accountability mechanisms, and creating avenues for citizens to voice their concerns and provide feedback on housing policies and practices.

Additionally, addressing the underlying causes of the housing shortage and the need for social housing is essential. This includes dealing with issues of land availability, urban planning, and ensuring that housing policies consider the needs and aspirations of all residents, including the previously disadvantaged. Engaging with communities and involving them in the decision-making process can help identify local housing needs and develop targeted solutions.

It is also crucial to combat corruption in the housing sector. Efforts should be made to strengthen anti-corruption measures, enhance transparency, and hold accountable those responsible for misallocation of housing resources. This can help restore trust in the housing allocation process and ensure that housing opportunities are provided to those who genuinely need them.

Summary

Dialogues under this theme highlight the need for participatory governance in the housing sector to address concerns regarding housing allocation and the perception that foreigners, particularly Zimbabweans, are benefiting from social housing programs. By involving citizens

in decision-making processes, promoting transparency, and addressing corruption, it is possible to develop housing policies that are fair, equitable, and responsive to the needs of South African residents. Through inclusive dialogue and citizen engagement, it is possible to build trust, address housing challenges, and work towards providing adequate and affordable housing for all residents.

6.4.3 Basic Education Services

The results presented under subsection 5.4.3 shed light on the frustration expressed by the Operation Dudula Twitter account regarding the alleged lack of enrolment space for qualifying South African native children, which is perceived to favour children from immigrant families. This analysis applies the principles of participatory governance to the case study, considering the potential implications and recommendations for promoting inclusive and equitable education in South Africa. In this case, the key stakeholders include South African native children, children from immigrant families, South African parents, Operation Dudula, state schools, the SABC, and relevant government authorities responsible for education.

Perceived Injustices, Accountability, Dialogue and Accountability

Participatory governance theory emphasizes equal access to public services for all citizens. The concern raised by Operation Dudula indicates a perceived lack of inclusivity and equity in the enrolment process, with South African native children allegedly being denied enrolment due to limited space, while children from immigrant families are prioritized. This raises questions about the fairness and transparency of the allocation of educational resources. Operation Dudula's use of social media platforms like Twitter demonstrates their attempt to hold responsible parties accountable and raise awareness about the perceived injustices. However, the use of forceful removals, as mentioned in the excerpt, raises concerns about the accountability of Operation Dudula's actions. The lack of clear information regarding enrolment policies and procedures may also contribute to the frustration and perception of unfairness.

Participatory governance theory emphasizes the importance of dialogue and collaboration between stakeholders. Operation Dudula's call for South African parents to provide information

about schools and principals suggests a desire for collective action and mobilization. However, a more constructive approach would involve engaging in dialogue with relevant government authorities to address the enrolment issues, rather than resorting to vigilante actions.

Policy Reform, Stakeholder Engagement, Infrastructure and Resources

The issue of limited enrolment space and perceived favouritism towards immigrant families' needs to be addressed through policy reform. The government should ensure that enrolment policies are transparent, fair, and inclusive, providing equal opportunities for South African native children and children from immigrant families. Clear guidelines should be established to address situations where demand exceeds available capacity. Government authorities should proactively engage with stakeholders, including Operation Dudula, South African parents, and affected communities, to understand their concerns, grievances, and suggestions for improvement. Establishing formal channels of communication, such as public consultations or forums, can foster a collaborative approach to address the challenges faced in the education system.

To accommodate the increasing demand for education, the government should invest in expanding the infrastructure and resources of state schools. This includes constructing new schools, increasing the number of classrooms, and providing adequate training and support to teachers to meet the diverse needs of students from different backgrounds.

Enhancing transparency requires effective communication strategies to inform the public about enrolment processes, criteria, and available resources. The government should utilize multiple channels, including social media platforms, to disseminate accurate information and address misconceptions or misperceptions.

Summary

This theme focuses on Operation Dudula supporters' frustration regarding limited enrolment space for South African native children, prioritizing children from immigrant families. Applying participatory governance principles, it highlights the need for inclusivity, transparency, collaboration, policy reform, stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and public awareness. Fair access to education requires dialogue, reforms, and effective

communication to ensure equal opportunities for all students. By embracing participatory approaches and involving all stakeholders in decision-making, South Africa can work towards a more inclusive and equitable education system.

6.4.4 Health Care Services

The Health Care Services theme presents a range of perspectives related to healthcare and the presence of foreign nationals in South African hospitals. Participatory governance theory emphasizes the inclusion of diverse stakeholders in decision-making processes, seeking to ensure their active participation, representation, and empowerment. It recognizes the importance of multiple perspectives and the need for transparent, inclusive, and accountable governance structures.

Diverse Perspectives on Healthcare, Resource Allocation, Addressing Concerns and Ensuring Transparency

Firstly, the findings in the theme reflect a variety of perspectives on healthcare and resource allocation. One message supports efforts to prioritize budgeted resources for South Africans, which can be seen as an expression of the need for equitable access to healthcare for the local population. This perspective aligns with the principles of participatory governance, as it emphasizes the importance of addressing the needs and priorities of the community.

On the other hand, another message raises concerns about foreign nationals taking over hospitals and alleges misconduct, including rude doctors, medication theft, and the prioritization of foreigners. This perspective highlights a potential tension between the local population and foreign nationals, and it raises questions about the quality of care provided to all patients. From a participatory governance perspective, it is important to recognize and address such concerns, involving all stakeholders in the decision-making process to ensure transparency, accountability, and the fair allocation of healthcare resources.

Balancing Job Opportunities, Foreign Healthcare Workers, Ensuring Safety and Integrity of Healthcare Services

Furthermore, a message defends actions taken against foreign nationals, suggesting that it supports South African doctors and expresses disapproval of unemployed doctors. This perspective emphasizes the need for job opportunities for local healthcare professionals and

raises questions about the role of foreign healthcare workers in the system. Participatory governance theory would encourage open dialogue and collaboration between different stakeholders to find solutions that address the concerns of both local and foreign healthcare workers, ultimately aiming to enhance healthcare provision for all.

Additionally, the report of an illegal Malawian foreigner involved in selling medication from a clinic raises issues of illegal activities and the potential risks posed by unauthorized individuals. Participatory governance theory underscores the importance of accountability and transparency in healthcare systems. In this context, it would call for effective regulatory measures and collaborative efforts among stakeholders to ensure the safety and integrity of healthcare services.

Lastly, an individual accuses certain groups of victimizing whistle-blowers who exposed illegal foreign nationals utilizing healthcare facilities and subsequently suing for "negligence." This accusation brings attention to the need for protection and support for those who raise concerns about potential misconduct or illegal activities in the healthcare system. Participatory governance theory promotes an inclusive and safe environment for participation, where individuals feel empowered to report wrongdoing without fear of retaliation. It underscores the importance of whistle-blower protection mechanisms and the fair treatment of those who bring such issues to light.

Summary

Overall, the comments presented in the theme reveal complex dynamics related to healthcare provision, the involvement of foreign nationals, and allegations of misconduct and illegal activities. Through the lens of participatory governance theory, it becomes evident that fostering inclusive and accountable decision-making processes is crucial to addressing these issues. It requires collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including government officials, healthcare professionals, local communities, and foreign nationals, to ensure equitable access to healthcare, transparency, accountability, and the provision of quality services for all. By embracing participatory approaches and involving all stakeholders in decision-making, South Africa can work towards a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system.

6.5 Chapter Summary

At the core of the ongoing migration discourse in South Africa lies a profound emphasis on citizen engagement and participatory governance. The narrative unfolds with the inception of "Operation Dudula," a movement that fervently advocates for active citizen involvement in addressing immigration challenges. This movement serves as an embodiment of the call for participatory approaches in shaping migration policies, aligning with the global discourse on the importance of inclusive decision-making.

Operation Dudula serves as a microcosm of the larger debate, demonstrating the desire for grassroots involvement in immigration-related issues. This resonates with the participatory governance literature, emphasizing the role of citizens in influencing policy dynamics. The movement's call for collective action underscores the potential impact of participatory approaches in navigating the complexities of immigration policy in South Africa.

The exploration extends beyond grassroots movements to the realm of political parties, reinforcing the importance of citizen engagement in shaping electoral dynamics. This aligns with literature highlighting the vital role of inclusivity in democratic processes. The emphasis on inclusivity reflects a recognition of the diverse perspectives within society, acknowledging the need for representation that considers the multitude of voices. Diving into the discussion on South African immigrants, prominent themes emerge, such as solidarity and the imperative of open dialogue. These themes resonate with the literature on migration, disproving stereotypes that often-cast immigrants as a monolithic entity. The call for open dialogue aligns with the participatory governance approach, emphasizing the importance of considering diverse perspectives in policy formulation.

An in-depth examination of illegal immigration and crime reveals multifaceted concerns, challenging the oversimplification of migration-related issues. Criticisms of resource allocation and policy decisions underscore the complexity of the immigration challenge. This complexity disproves notions of a one-size-fits-all solution, advocating for nuanced, inclusive, and context-specific policy responses.

Perceptions of Nigerian immigrants evoke negative sentiments, emphasizing the necessity for open dialogue and cultural understanding. This contradicts literature that may stereotype

certain immigrant groups, stressing the importance of recognizing individual narratives and fostering a more inclusive societal narrative. The section on Zimbabweans and potential ZEP cancellation brings attention to power dynamics, emphasizing the need for cross-cultural understanding and inclusivity. Concerns about resource competition and housing allocation fairness challenge simplistic narratives, highlighting the importance of engaging with communities in policy decisions.

In basic education services, frustrations about alleged enrolment space shortages for South African children contradict assumptions, urging a closer look at systemic challenges. Healthcare perspectives emphasize the importance of inclusive and accountable decision-making, aligning with global trends that emphasize a human-rights-based approach to healthcare for all, regardless of migration status.

The evolution of South Africa's migration policies reflects a response to changing global and regional dynamics. Post-apartheid policies aimed at rectifying historical injustices align with literature advocating for more inclusive approaches. However, the ongoing complexity of crafting policies that balance citizen and migrant interests challenges the notion of straightforward policy formulation.

The emergence of social media platforms as pivotal policy arenas attests to the dynamic nature of contemporary governance. This reflects the changing global landscape in migration governance, where real-time discussions on policies occur on digital platforms. Policymakers, civil society organizations, and advocacy groups actively engaging on these platforms exemplify a departure from traditional top-down policy processes.

Therefore, South Africa's migration discourse is a complex tapestry interwoven with themes of inclusivity, diversity, and evolving policies. This complexity mirrors broader global trends that emphasize the necessity of participatory approaches in migration governance. This approach recognizes the intricate nature of migration and advocates for a more inclusive, participatory, and context-specific response to the multifaceted challenges posed by migration. As the discourse continues to evolve, the need for ongoing research and nuanced policy interventions becomes increasingly evident, underscoring the dynamic and ever-changing landscape of migration governance in South Africa.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. Introduction

This study examined the dynamic interplay between the participatory governance theory and modern social media platforms. Participatory governance, characterized by citizen engagement, inclusivity, collaboration, and accountability, was defined as a democratic practice. Meanwhile, social media platforms had transformative power, reshaping stakeholder engagement.

To explore subjective experiences, we employed a qualitative research strategy. Our focus: subtle views on immigration policy within the context of "Operation Dudula" on Twitter. We meticulously selected 213 relevant Twitter comments and 50 coordinating account tweets using purposive sampling. Employing NVivo software, we conducted rigorous textual and thematic analysis, gaining a holistic insight into digital discourse. Descriptive statistics complemented our exploration. Mindful of positionality, we used pseudonyms and reflexivity to mitigate biases. However, we acknowledged limitations—social media platforms evolved, and opinions shifted. Thus, our findings remained snapshots in time.

Our findings illuminated participatory governance in the digital era. Social media's transformative potential necessitated adaptable approaches from policymakers and stakeholders. Enhancing digital literacy, fostering transparent communication, and adhering to ethical guidelines could foster informed and accountable governance. We proposed cross-platform analyses and public education campaigns to enhance participatory governance within the digital landscape.

7.1 Community-led Activism

The findings from this research highlight the significance of active citizen participation in shaping immigration policy in South Africa. The Operation Dudula discussions revealed a strong desire among participants to collectively address societal challenges related to immigration, showcasing a positive sentiment towards taking responsibility and combating crime. This aligns with participatory theory, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity, shared decision-making, and empowering individuals to actively engage in shaping their communities.

The movement's ability to mobilize a collective effort and the emphasis on patriotism and love for the country further demonstrate the potential for participatory approaches to shape immigration policy. However, it is important to recognize and engage with critical voices that emerged, challenging the movement's objectives and methods. This allows for constructive dialogue and self-reflection, promoting inclusivity and fostering a more robust understanding of the social movement.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made to enhance the effectiveness of citizen participation in shaping immigration policy in South Africa. Firstly, it is crucial to prioritize transparency and inclusivity in information dissemination. Media organizations should strive for comprehensive and unbiased reporting of movements such as the Operation Dudula, ensuring that the activities and objectives are accurately represented. This will enable citizens to make informed decisions and contribute meaningfully to the immigration policy discussions. Additionally, policymakers should actively engage with social media platforms, particularly Twitter, to capture diverse perspectives and facilitate dialogue.

By analysing the content, discussions, and sentiment expressed on these platforms, policymakers can gain a more nuanced understanding of public viewpoints and incorporate them into policy formulation processes. Furthermore, efforts should be made to educate and empower citizens on the importance of their active participation in shaping immigration policy, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility. This can be achieved through awareness campaigns, workshops, and creating platforms for citizens to contribute their ideas and suggestions.

In addition, it is vital for Operation Dudula to address the concerns raised by critical voices, particularly regarding inclusivity and potential biases. Engaging with these perspectives promotes self-reflection, growth, and a more inclusive approach that embraces the diversity of South Africa. Lastly, ensuring accountability and responsible conduct within the movement is essential. By addressing concerns and promoting open dialogue, Operation Dudula can

strengthen its credibility, promote inclusivity, and continue to drive positive change in South Africa, safeguarding the principles of justice and inclusivity.

7.2 On the Role of Politics

Dialogues related to key political parties, namely the ANC and the EFF, provides valuable insights into citizen engagement, political accountability, and public opinion dynamics. The messages reflect a diverse range of perspectives, highlighting the active participation of citizens in shaping the political discourse. However, it is essential to address and critically evaluate xenophobic views and foster inclusive dialogue to build a more inclusive and participatory democracy. The findings underscore the significance of political accountability, inclusivity, and diverse views in shaping governance practices in South Africa.

Recommendation

Based on the analysis of the tweets, several recommendations can be made to strengthen participatory governance and address citizen concerns regarding key political parties in South Africa. Firstly, political parties should prioritize transparency and accountability, ensuring that citizens have access to reliable information about their actions, policies, and intentions. This can be achieved through enhanced communication strategies, public disclosures, and mechanisms for citizen feedback and engagement.

Secondly, fostering inclusive dialogue is crucial to address xenophobic views and promote a more inclusive democracy. Political leaders should actively engage with diverse perspectives, encourage respectful and ethical conduct, and work towards building consensus on key issues, including immigration. This can be facilitated through public forums, town hall meetings, and platforms for constructive engagement.

Additionally, leaders should prioritize the well-being and development of the youth by implementing inclusive policies that empower them and provide opportunities for education and growth. Lastly, political parties need to address concerns raised about leaders' affiliations and behaviors that may compromise the integrity of the political system. Upholding the rule of law, promoting good governance, and ensuring ethical conduct are vital for maintaining public trust and confidence.

By implementing these recommendations, political parties can enhance citizen engagement, foster inclusive dialogue, and strengthen participatory governance practices in South Africa. This will contribute to a more responsive and accountable political system that addresses citizen concerns and upholds the principles of justice, inclusivity, and democratic participation.

7.3 Perceptions on African Immigrants and Immigration

The study reveals a diverse range of sentiments and perspectives. Comments shed light on the complexities surrounding immigration issues and highlight the various attitudes towards foreigners within South Africa. Some key themes that emerged include solidarity among racial identities, the impact of Pan Africanism, self-determination, concerns about the social conduct of foreigners, cultural dynamics, exclusion of foreign perspectives, perceptions of an immigration crisis, and negative sentiments towards specific immigrant groups such as Nigerians and Zimbabweans.

The comments related to illegal immigration and crime underscore the concerns about public safety, law enforcement priorities, and vetting procedures. There is a need for effective border control measures and robust screening processes to address criminal elements within immigrant populations and ensure the security and integrity of key institutions. The negative sentiment towards Nigerians and Zimbabweans highlights the existence of stereotypes, prejudices, and tensions between different communities within South Africa, calling for efforts to promote inclusivity, cultural understanding, and social cohesion.

Recommendation

It is crucial to encourage constructive dialogue and open communication channels between different communities, including South African citizens and immigrants. This can be achieved through community forums, public consultations, and initiatives that facilitate cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. Engaging in meaningful conversations can help bridge divides, challenge negative stereotypes, and foster empathy and mutual respect.

To address the concerns and aspirations of all stakeholders involved, it is important to promote a participatory governance approach in decision-making processes related to immigration policies and permits. This involves actively involving affected communities, such as Zimbabweans, in shaping strategies for managing migration and addressing infrastructure, job availability, and social service concerns. Inclusive decision-making processes can help develop policies that consider the needs and perspectives of all involved parties.

Strengthening border control measures is essential to ensure the security and integrity of the immigration system. This includes improving vetting procedures, implementing effective screening processes, and enhancing law enforcement efforts to address criminal activities within immigrant populations. Strategic resource allocation should be considered to support these measures effectively.

Efforts should be made to foster cultural exchange and understanding between different communities within South Africa. Cultural exchange programs, collaborative projects, and shared experiences can help break down barriers, challenge prejudices, and promote inclusivity. Highlighting the positive contributions of immigrants to the social, economic, and cultural fabric of South Africa can also help counter negative stereotypes and promote a more inclusive society. To mitigate migration pressures and address the root causes of migration, collaborative efforts between the South African government, Zimbabwean government, and civil society organizations are necessary. By addressing the underlying socio-political and economic challenges in Zimbabwe, such as unemployment and instability, it is possible to reduce the push factors for migration. This can involve supporting development initiatives, fostering regional cooperation, and facilitating economic opportunities within Zimbabwe.

It is crucial to actively combat discrimination and xenophobia within South Africa. Education and awareness programs can help promote tolerance, respect, and acceptance of different cultures and nationalities. Public campaigns and initiatives aimed at challenging negative stereotypes and fostering social cohesion should be encouraged. Collaborating with international organizations, such as the African Union, can provide valuable insights and assistance in addressing immigration-related challenges. Engaging in dialogue

7.4 On Economic Opportunities

Twitter dialogues highlight a lack of participatory approaches in the discourse surrounding economic opportunities and the presence of foreigners in South Africa. Applying the participatory governance theory, it becomes evident that fostering dialogue, challenging stereotypes, and promoting inclusive decision-making processes are essential for creating a more inclusive and participatory society. By involving citizens and affected communities in decision-making processes, it is possible to develop policies and strategies that address the concerns and aspirations of all stakeholders involved while promoting understanding and cooperation between South African citizens and foreigners.

Recommendation

Create platforms for dialogue and engagement between South African citizens and foreigners, focusing on the labour market, job creation, and skills development. Provide spaces for interaction and active participation to facilitate the exchange of ideas and the development of policies that address the concerns of both South African citizens and foreigners.

Highlight the positive contributions of foreigners to the economy, such as job creation, skills transfer, and entrepreneurship. Create opportunities for shared experiences and economic collaboration to break down barriers and foster empathy among different communities. Evidence-based Policies: Base policies and approaches on evidence and a comprehensive understanding of the economic dynamics, labour market needs, and skills gaps in South Africa. Consider the diverse experiences and contributions of foreigners in South Africa, ensuring that policies are fair and equitable.

Housing Services

The dialogues highlight the need for participatory governance in the housing sector to address concerns regarding housing allocation and the perception that foreigners, particularly Zimbabweans, are benefiting from social housing programs. By involving citizens in decision-making processes, promoting transparency, and addressing corruption, it is possible to develop housing policies that are fair, equitable, and responsive to the needs of South African residents. Through inclusive dialogue and citizen engagement, it is possible to build trust, address

housing challenges, and work towards providing adequate and affordable housing for all residents.

Recommendation

Create platforms for dialogue and citizen engagement, allowing citizens to voice their concerns and provide feedback on housing policies and practices. Increase transparency in the housing allocation process and ensure that it is based on fair and equitable criteria. Address the underlying causes of the housing shortage, such as land availability and urban planning. Ensure that housing policies consider the needs and aspirations of all residents, including the previously disadvantaged. Strengthen anti-corruption measures, enhance transparency, and hold accountable those responsible for misallocation of housing resources. Restore trust in the housing allocation process and ensure that housing opportunities are provided to those who genuinely need them.

Education Services

Dialogues reveal complex dynamics related to basic education services, including enrolment space and perceived favouritism towards immigrant families. Through the lens of participatory governance theory, it becomes evident that fostering inclusive and accountable decision-making processes is crucial to addressing these issues. By collaborating with diverse stakeholders, establishing clear guidelines, and promoting inclusive education, it is possible to ensure equitable access to quality education for all children in South Africa.

Recommendation

Invest in expanding educational infrastructure and allocating adequate resources to schools to address the issue of limited enrolment space and overcrowded classrooms. Conduct awareness campaigns and sensitization programs to foster understanding, cultural diversity, tolerance, and mutual respect within educational institutions and communities. Provide support for language acquisition and communication, including language classes, bilingual education programs,

7.5 Areas for Possible Future Research

Exploring the Impact of Participatory Governance on Socioeconomic Integration

One potential area of future research could focus on examining the impact of participatory governance processes on socioeconomic integration between South African citizens and foreigners. This research could involve qualitative and quantitative analyses to assess the effectiveness of dialogue platforms, inclusive decision-making processes, and citizen engagement initiatives in promoting understanding, cooperation, and shared economic opportunities. By investigating the outcomes of participatory approaches in different contexts and regions within South Africa, researchers can gain insights into the factors that contribute to successful integration and identify potential barriers or limitations that need to be addressed.

Understanding the Role of Communication and Media in Shaping Perceptions on Immigration

Another area for future research could center around the role of communication channels, including social media and traditional media, in shaping perceptions and attitudes towards foreigners and their impact on resources. This research could explore the impact of media representations, public discourse, and social media interactions on public opinion, stereotypes, and policy preferences related to economic opportunities, housing, education, and healthcare. By analysing the content of media platforms, surveying public perceptions, and conducting content analysis of social media conversations, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of how information dissemination and communication channels influence public attitudes, and how these perceptions subsequently impact policy decisions and social dynamics. Overall, conducting research in these areas can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of participatory governance mechanisms, as well as the role of communication and media in shaping public perceptions and policy outcomes. By addressing these gaps in knowledge, policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders can make informed decisions and implement evidence-based strategies to promote inclusive socioeconomic development, address resource competition, and foster positive interactions among diverse populations in South Africa.

7.6 Conclusion

The research findings shed light on various aspects of South African immigration policy and the surrounding social media dialogues. The study emphasized the significance of active citizen participation in shaping immigration policy, showcasing a strong desire among participants to collectively address societal challenges related to immigration. It is recommended to prioritize transparency and inclusivity in information dissemination, actively engage with social media platforms to capture diverse perspectives and educate and empower citizens on the importance of their participation.

Additionally, critical voices should be recognized and engaged with, and accountability and responsible conduct within social movements should be ensured. The role of politics in citizen engagement and political accountability was also highlighted, emphasizing the importance of transparency, inclusivity, and diverse views. Recommendations include firstly prioritizing transparency and accountability, fostering inclusive dialogue, prioritizing the well-being and development of the youth, and addressing concerns about leaders' affiliations and conduct. Moreover, the research highlighted diverse sentiments and perspectives regarding African immigrants and immigration in South Africa, calling for efforts to promote constructive dialogue, inclusive decision-making, and cultural understanding.

Second, include encouraging dialogue between communities, involving affected communities in decision-making, strengthening border control measures, and actively combatting discrimination and xenophobia. Finally, the study identified the need for participatory approaches in addressing resource competition, particularly in the areas of economic opportunities, housing, and education services.

Third, creating platforms for dialogue and engagement, highlighting positive contributions, basing policies on evidence, increasing transparency in housing allocation, addressing the underlying causes of housing shortage, investing in educational infrastructure, conducting awareness and sensitization programs, and supporting language acquisition.

Future research is recommended to explore the impact of participatory governance on socioeconomic integration and to understand the role of communication and media in shaping perceptions on immigration. By addressing these areas, policymakers and stakeholders can make informed decisions and implement strategies that promote inclusive socioeconomic development and address resource competition in South Africa.

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APPENDIX 1: WSG Ethics Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE: **WSG-2023-47W**

PROJECT TITLE: **Social Media Dialogues on Immigration Policy: The Case of Operation Dudula**

INVESTIGATOR	Thabiso Mmotong
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	School of Governance
DATE CONSIDERED	23 October 2023
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally.
RISK LEVEL	No Risk
EXPIRY DATE	Date of submission of the Research Report

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 25 October 2023

CHAIRPERSON Rekgotsofetse Chikane
Rekgotsofetse Chikane

cc: Supervisor:

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

TSMMOTONG
Signature

25 / 10 / 2023
Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES