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A HISTORY OF CONGOLESE AND RWANDESE IMMIGRANTS IN HARARE'S URBAN TRANSPORT SECTOR 1993–2022

ABSTRACT

This article traces the involvement of the Congolese and Rwandese in the Harare urban transport sector by engaging with the challenges and successes they registered from 1993 to 2022. Despite the wave of economic nationalism and challenges that have affected Zimbabwe over the past decades, the Congolese and Rwandese transport operators have survived. The study argues that the reasons for the survival of Congolese and Rwandese transport operators over the past decade can be understood within their economic ties or social networks to a greater extent. However, local links play a complementary role. Despite their seemingly insignificant numbers, Congolese and Rwandese immigrants are a force to reckon with as they play a crucial role. The article moves away from the conventional approach of focusing on South-to-North migration by looking at South-to-South migration. It also demonstrates how those considered to be on the margins of the state seek to contest their marginality, registering their visibility. Moreover, Zimbabwe is a country punctuated with crisis discourse, and this article offers a paradoxical case in point on Congolese and Rwandese immigrants who resettled in Zimbabwe. The article deploys oral histories from the key participants and primary and secondary sources to critically examine the resettlement and survival of immigrants in Zimbabwe. It concludes that foreign players in the transport sector cannot be ignored for long since evidence indicates that they play a significant role in their small numbers.

Keywords: *Economic empowerment, social networking analysis, economic nationalism, South-to-South Mobility, de-regularisation, immigrants*

1. INTRODUCTION

The article seeks to highlight the role foreign entrepreneurs of Congolese and Rwandese origin have played in Zimbabwe's Greater Harare commuter omnibus transport system from 1993 to 2022. It sets out to review individual fleet operators' achievements in running their businesses and how they have navigated the complex terrain of stringent operating protocols coupled with state-sanctioned bribery and corruption in the sector. A number of challenges have been faced by the Harare urban transport sector in relation to commuter omnibuses. These have been researched in other disciplines, such as Rural and Urban Planning, Geography and issues like congestion, corruption, and environmental pollution being explored.¹ It also engages with the wave of economic nationalism during the early 2000s and its impact on the Congolese and Rwandese transport operators. Zimbabweans have become more vocal about the ownership of their means of production and the operations of businesses in various sectors of the economy. This has been evidenced by the Fast-Track Land Reform Programme, the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy and issues on the nationalisation of mining companies.² More importantly, the survival of Congolese and Rwandese should also be understood within the context of historical social networks and resilience in the face of the urban transport sector in Harare, Zimbabwe. While the adoption of historical social networking analysis has been argued to be lacking by scholars such as Charles Wetherall,³ this article adds to the burgeoning historical literature on immigrants and resilient mechanisms in a foreign land.⁴ The economic ties and ability to survive or remain relevant in the urban transport sector showed the importance of historical social networking analysis. The areas of transport operations that are used as case studies in this study include Waterfalls and the Harare Central Business District.

1 TC Mbara, "Coping with demand for urban passenger transport in Zimbabwe: challenges and options," Paper presented at the Southern Africa Transport Conference, Document Transformation Technologies, Pretoria, 2006.

2 "Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment, Press statement by the Minister of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment, Honourable S Kasukuwere (MP) on the publication of the sector specific framework for indigenisation in the manufacturing sector", *The Herald*, 12 November 2011, p.7; Empowerment lobby calls for government action", *The Herald*, 8 May 2012; Foreign shop owners in panic", *The Financial Gazette*, 5 December 2013, p.15.

3 C Wetherall, "Historical social network analysis", *International Review of Social History* 43, Supplement, 1998, pp. 125-144.

4 E Buchnea and Z Elsahn, "Historical social network analysis: Advancing new directions for international business research", *International Business Review* 31, 2022.

In 2019, in the wake of the outbreak of COVID-19, Zimbabwe reintroduced the Zimbabwe United Passengers Company (ZUPCO) buses, the state monopoly enterprise with the claimed objective of meeting the needs of those in need of public transport. A subsidy was put in place by the government of Zimbabwe to assist civil servants and the general populace grappling with hyperinflation; hence, the commuter omnibuses faced stiffer competition. The reintroduction of ZUPCO in the short-term appealed to the public transport users. The government of Zimbabwe saw this as an opportune time to eliminate commuter omnibuses and claim monopoly over the public transport system. As such, Statutory Instrument (SI) 99 of 2020: Covid-19 Prevention, Containment and Treatment was enacted under the National Lockdown Amendment Order No.5, 2020, giving ZUPCO exclusive rights to provide public transport services.⁵ However, within a year of ZUPCO's monopoly over public transport, indications of failure to cope with demand led to challenges for the state transport operator.⁶ In 2022, the government of Zimbabwe reverted to calling for lifting the kombi⁷ ban. It is in this context that the researchers examine the involvement of Congolese and Rwandese transport operators in Harare from 1993 to 2022 and assess how they weathered all the challenges to survive in this industry.

The article is divided into three sections. The first section covers the historical background of the Harare urban transport sector as well as the coming in of Congolese and Rwandese transport operators. The second section focuses on the challenges faced by the Congolese and Rwandese transport operators, which included threats from locals such as youth groups, namely, *Upfumi Kuvadiki* (Wealth to the Youth) and *Chipangano* (Covenant), fear of xenophobic attacks, corruption, bogus police and municipal council. Despite all these challenges, these immigrants remained resilient and relevant in the industry. The final section focuses on the survival of Congolese and Rwandese transport operators. It is in this section that the article explains the benefits of historical social networks, the networks that these immigrants have and the role they have played in their survival in the competitive Harare urban transport sector punctuated by exclusionary indigenisation policies. Although the immigrants have their own survival networks, it is not in dispute that there are also local connections that are imperative in sustaining their business.

5 "Blow for kombi operators as gvt imposes total ban," *New Zimbabwe*, 7 November 2020, <https://www.newzimbabwe.com/blow-for-kombi-operators-as-govt-imposes-total-ban/>, accessed 30 September 2023.

6 ZUPCO monopoly challenged, <<https://kubatana.net/2021/08/21/zupco-monopoly-challenged/>>, accessed 30 September 2023.

7 Kombi is a word popularly used in Zimbabwe to refer to commuter omnibuses.

While there is abundant literature on Zimbabwe's crisis, with outward migration playing a significant role⁸, there is scant evidence on inward migration in post-independent Zimbabwe, with a particular focus on those who want to settle in Zimbabwe.⁹ In as much as the government de-regulated the transport sector in August 1993, it is plausible to acknowledge that in 2010, Statutory Instrument 21 sought to respond to the "threat" posed by foreign players in the business.¹⁰ Indeed, privatisation of urban transport has been a subject of international academic and public debate, especially when efforts to adopt Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS) in the developing world gained momentum.

Zimbabwe was not left out in this step towards both the adoption of Economic Structural Adjustment Programs (ESAP) and privatisation of urban transport by introducing commuter omnibus operators or kombis in 1993. While critically analysing the negative impact of International Monetary Fund conditionalities, Alois Mlambo avers that those of low income significantly faced the harsh decisions by the political actors with transport challenges compounding the crisis.¹¹ Mlambo further observes that in June 1994, the government's decision to de-regularise urban transport ended the ZUPCO's monopoly and allowed competition by licensing other operators, thereby ensuring a faster and more efficient transport system than before.¹² This deregulation led to the introduction of new competition in the form of commuter

- 8 J Crush and D Tevera (eds.), *Zimbabwe's exodus: Crisis, migration and survival* (Cape Town: Southern African Migration Programme, 2010); D Lucas and B Edgar, *Zimbabwe's exodus to Australia*, Paper presented at the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) Conference at Flinders University, Adelaide, 2 December 2011; "Zimbabwe census sees flight of whites," *Irish Examiner*, 24 August 2005; L Landau, "Drowning in numbers: Interrogating new patterns of Zimbabwean migration to South Africa". In: R Leslie (ed.), *Migration from Zimbabwe: Numbers, needs and policy options* (Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2008); D Tevera, "Early departures: The emigration potential of Zimbabwean students", SAMP Migration Policy Series No 39, Cape Town, 2005; L Zinyama, "Who, what, when and why: Cross-border movement from Zimbabwe to South Africa". In: D McDonald, *On borders: Perspectives on international migration in southern Africa* (New York: St, Martins Press, 2000), p. 77.
- 9 A Chikanda and J Crush, "The geography of refugee flows to Zimbabwe", *African Geographical Review* 35 (1), 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19376812.2014.933706>, accessed 10 April 2023; S Gukurume, "Chinese migrants and the politics of the everyday life in Zimbabwe", *Asian Ethnicity* 20 (1), 2019, p.85-102.
- 10 Statutory Instrument 21 of 2010 (Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment (General) Regulations, 2010), <<https://www.jsc.org.zw/upload/Acts/2018/1433done.pdf>>, accessed 10 April 2023.
- 11 A Mlambo, "Towards an analysis of IMF Structural Adjustment Programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA): The case of Zimbabwe 1990-94", *Africa Development / Afrique et Développement* 20 (2), 1995, pp. 77-98.
- 12 A Mlambo, *The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme; the case for Zimbabwe* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1997).

omnibuses and the disintegration of ZUPCO. The disintegration of ZUPCO led to futile efforts by the government to provide equal access to transport for its citizens due to the private sector's dominance.¹³ For instance, commuters ended up stranded after working hours as the timetable of buses did not apply to commuter omnibuses.¹⁴ The negative impact of ESAP can be observed with the continued unregulated fleets of commuter omnibuses as well as the government's failure to curb congestion.¹⁵ The involvement of Congolese and Rwandese urban transport operators in Zimbabwe, dating from 1993 to 2022, adds to the contemporary history of urban transport history, focusing on the coming in of immigrants.

David Chapfika, formerly Chairperson of the National Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Board (NIEEB), further emphasised that Zimbabweans, "refers to indigenous Zimbabweans and not blacks from all over Africa".¹⁶ The indigenisation policy framework in Zimbabwe was arguably exclusionary in nature, particularly on invisible minorities. This was, however, meant to compete with foreigners in the urban transport sector. Since the adoption of ESAP, it is vital to account for actors who are usually "viewed" within the margins of the state. Over the recent few years in Zimbabwe, there has been an increasing number of scholars on the issue of urban transport, with issues revolving around congestion, environmental pollution, and studies pointing to the use of obscene language from students whenever using commuter omnibuses¹⁷ while city planners grapple with informality in general in urban areas.¹⁸ The private transport operators are painted in a bad light despite their positive contribution to addressing the poor urban transport provision.

13 Mbara, "Coping with demand for urban passenger transport in Zimbabwe: challenges and options".

14 Mbara, "Coping with demand for urban passenger transport in Zimbabwe: challenges and options".

15 K Munzwa and W Jonga, "Urban development in Zimbabwe: A human settlement perspective", *Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management* 1 (1), 2014, pp.120–148.

16 "Zimbabwe to kick out Chinese, Indian retail businesses", *Shout Africa*, 9 September 2010, www.shout-africa.com/news/zimbabwe-to-kick-out-chinese-indi+an-retail-businesses/, accessed 09 April 2023. See also; J Muzondidya, "Zimbabwe for Zimbabweans': Invisible subject minorities and the quest for justice and reconciliation in post-colonial Zimbabwe". In: B Raftopoulos and T Savage (ed.), *Zimbabwe: Injustice and political reconciliation* (Cape Town: Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, 2004), pp. 213-235.

17 P Mashiri, "Managing 'face' in urban public transport: polite request strategies in commuter omnibus discourse in Harare", *Zambezia* XXVII (1), 2001.

18 CG Tichagwa, "Unlicensed taxis in Zimbabwe's urban areas: The case for legalising an informal urban transportation system", *Development Southern Africa* 33 (1), pp. 81-98, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2015.1113125>, accessed 16 April 2023.

The effects of the Government of Zimbabwe's decision to privatise the transport sector have been looked into in detail. It was noted that passengers benefited immensely because of the improved service but in the long run, the control of increase in commuter services was needed for this would lead to an increase in pollution¹⁹ and congestion to the detriment of residents in Greater All Harare.²⁰ Also notable is that literature on urban transport demonstrates that the Zimbabwean diaspora, particularly those in the United Kingdom (UK), have, over the past decade made attempts to invest at home. The diaspora fleet addressed the urban transport challenges to a limited extent.²¹ However, the researchers paid little attention to the foreigners who have dominated some Harare urban areas. These include Errant Haninda, with an estimated fleet of over 70 kombis, Gwekwerere (Congolese), Trustworthy Muhire (Rwandese), all of whom dominate Waterfalls, Highfield, Glen Norah, among other routes.²²

Furthermore, beyond Zimbabwe's borders, studies have also engaged with how engineers and urban planners in Kenya perceive commuter operators as thugs on the one hand and entrepreneurs on the other. Some of the issues associated with the *Matutu* operators are corruption, bribery, expensive insurance premiums, fluctuating fares, overloading, and negligence of the law, among others.²³ *Matutus* are understood as formerly pirate taxis that were later on regulated by the government in Kenya in 1973 to address public transport shortages.²⁴ Similarly, the Government of Zimbabwe introduced commuter omnibuses in August 1993, witnessing the entrance of all business players from all walks of life. In this context, some Congolese and Rwandese transport operators registered their interests in the Harare urban transport sector. Drawing from this parallel, it is imperative to examine how the Congolese and Rwandese in Zimbabwe managed to compete to survive in the transport sector despite the economic constraints that swept Zimbabwe for over a decade from 1997.

19 Southern Rhodesia, mass transportation in urban areas of Rhodesia, Government town planning department, Report of the Commission of inquiry into urban and peri urban omnibus passenger services, Salisbury, 1960.

20 GC Mazarire and S Swart, "The pots on our roads'-The diaspora fleet and Harare's urban commuter system", *African Diaspora* 7, 2014, pp. 63-68.

21 "Cops own 50% of Harare kombis", *NewsDay*, 28 January 2014, <https://www.newsday.co.zw/transport/article/147625/cops-own-50-of-harare-kombis>, accessed 27 August 2024.

22 Interview: author with Ngezha, Waterfalls-Parktown, 11 January 2015.

23 K Kapoor, D Mugwara and I Chidavaenzi, *Empowering small enterprises in Zimbabwe* (Washington D.C, World Bank publication, 1997).

24 M Khenzwana and DAC Maunder, "International experiences of deregulated urban public transport systems", *Indian Journal of Transport Management* 18 (17), 1993, p. 460.

The deregulation of the urban transport sector in Zimbabwe was influenced by the government's desire to allow local small operators to grow their businesses whilst providing a reliable mass bus transport system.²⁵ This created numerous jobs as hundreds entered the urban passenger transport services sector. Furthermore, Innocent Hamandishe, the former Zimbabwe African National Union for the Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) Youth League Secretary for Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment, said the local transport sector was reserved for locals and also that bringing foreigners was against government policy.²⁶ It is thus pertinent for this article to focus on the Congolese and Rwandese in Zimbabwe as evidence indicates that in urban areas, they still have an enclave in the transport sector.

Again, Zimbabwe went through Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment (IEE) policies with a reserved sector for locals. Among the sectors reserved for local Zimbabweans were transport (passenger buses, taxis and car hire services), retailing, wholesaling, hair salons, advertising agencies, estate agencies, grain milling, bakeries, tobacco grading and packaging and artisanal mining.²⁷ There is, however, policy inconsistency on the question of who can operationalise their businesses in Zimbabwe.²⁸

2. THE COMING IN OF FOREIGN OPERATORS

Zimbabwe is a state member of the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 protocol as well as the 1969 Organisation of African Unity (OAU, now African Union) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa.²⁹ Zimbabwe has maintained a long and generous tradition of allowing asylum seekers access to its territory through asylum adjudication procedures. Refugees are accorded equal rights to medical services, on the same footing as nationals, and have access to primary and secondary school education,

25 DAC Maunder and TC Mbara, The initial effects of the introduction of commuter omnibus services Harare, Zimbabwe, TRL Report 123, 1995, <<https://transport-links.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/the-initial-effects-of-introducing-commuter-omnibus-services-in-harare-zimbabwe.pdf>>, accessed 27 August 2024.

26 Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act, Ministry of Youth, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment, Government of Zimbabwe (Harare: Government Printers, 2007).

27 "Zimbabwe to ban all foreigners from owning shops", *Mail & Guardian*, 27 January 2013; "Take advantage of reserved sectors", *Chronicle*, 17 November 2013; "Foreigners not allowed to operate in reserved sectors" *The Herald*, 5 July 2021, accessed 10 April 2023.

28 "Foreigners can now invest in restricted sectors", *The Sunday Mail*, 15 September 2019, <https://www.sundaymail.co.zw/foreigners-can-now-invest-in-restricted-sectors>, accessed 10 April 2023.

29 Refugee Act 1983, <<https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/legacy-pdf/4cd96ab29.pdf>>, accessed 5 June 2024.

skills, and vocational training.³⁰ The refugees are also able to access tertiary institutions of learning.³¹ Refugees reside mainly at Tongogara Refugee Camp in Chipinge district of Manicaland Province and the Waterfalls Transit Camp in Harare.

While Zimbabwe hosts a total of 22 400 refugees and asylum-seekers, the country also continues to face economic imbalances, with issues related to ownership of the sectors of the economy, such as land redistribution and the operating systems of small to medium enterprises.³² As such, several Zimbabweans have cast eyes on the transport sector as a survival strategy, following the land reform (the late 1990s) and the economic hardships that grappled the country since the early 2000s. This is compounded by the unemployment rate among many youths in Zimbabwe as well as other ambitious Zimbabweans who want to get rich quickly.

Dating back to the early 1990s, Zimbabwe received refugees from the Great Lakes region, with countries such as Burundi and Rwanda forming many of these refugees.³³ It was during this same era that there were civil wars in East Africa, with the Rwandan genocide reaching its apex in 1994, leading to massive displacements and regional migration, among other effects associated with the civil wars. Refugees from the Great Lakes region usually remember Zimbabwe due to its involvement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) war of the late 1990s.

In the mid-1990s, some immigrant names began to emerge in the Zimbabwean/local urban transport sector, such as Mukukhu Moses, Handana Albert and Norman Nzeimani.³⁴ The coming in of displaced people from Central and East Africa allowed refugee camps like Tongogara in Chipinge and the Waterfalls Transit Camp to offer accommodation to people from the DRC, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Sudan, among others. The immigrants were in abject poverty as they walked from Somalia to Chipinge, in Zimbabwe. Other immigrants would go as far as South Africa, Bellevue in Johannesburg, which offers shelter to many other refugees from all over the African continent. Some questions can be paused on why these foreigners continue to grow

30 Refugees Act (Chapter 4:03), <<https://www.law.co.zw/download/refugees-act-chapter-403/>>, accessed 26 June 2023; S Chitsama, How does refugee protection policy respond to the needs of refugees with physical disabilities in Tongogara and Waterfalls refugee camps in Zimbabwe? (Msc, Africa University, 2011) p. 11.

31 UNHCR Zimbabwe: Education Update, <<https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/unhcr-zimbabwe-education-update-september-2023>>, accessed 20 September 2023.

32 Zimbabwe, <<https://www.unhcr.org/countries/zimbabwe>>.

33 Refugees reach an incredible 45 million, <<http://www.kubatanablogs.net/kubatanarefugees-reach-an-incredible-45-million/>>, accessed 30 April 2015.

34 Interview: author with T Mapfeka, Waterfalls- Parktown, 11 January 2015.

in numbers flocking to Zimbabwe. Pedzisayi Leslie Mangezvo, Maureen Kademaunga and Simbarashe Gukurume contribute to the studies that focus on migrants coming to Zimbabwe for business, particularly from Nigeria, the DRC and China, respectively. Although outside the scope of urban transport history in independent Zimbabwe, these three studies acknowledge the prevalence of south-to-south migration with a focus on traders in Harare.³⁵ The Congolese and Rwandese demonstrate particular interest in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), which are sectors meant for the local Zimbabweans according to the indigenisation and empowerment policies.

The early Waterfalls transport operators, including Moses, Nzeimani, and Harienda Albert, are also believed to have started with small businesses, such as tuck shops, which they later quickly left for the transport sector. This information is pertinent because there are indications that even the current most prominent omnibus owner, Errant Haninda, is believed to have started with the tuck-shop business.³⁶ It was only in 2000 that he changed this trade and joined the transport sector with just a few commuter omnibuses pirating the Waterfalls-City route.

Further, one Congolese, whose pseudonym is Lloyd, has been a mechanic since 2005, when he came to Zimbabwe and worked for Norman Nzeimani until 2010. He had two of his commuter omnibuses inscribed "*Mwana we Africa*"³⁷ (child of or from Africa) on the front windscreen of a flat-roof Toyota Hiace. Lloyd offered an insightful account of a Congolese who had a skill he managed to transfer into the urban transport business. Notably, Lloyd successfully laid the foundation for his urban transport business venture through interaction with his close networks. He claimed to have no citizenship of a single country but rather an African citizen who can live wherever he wants. He also claimed not to know his exact place of birth but only certain that he was born in Africa.

35 P Mangezvo, "Catechism, commerce and categories: Nigerian male migrant traders in Harare". In: O Bakewell and LB Landau (ed.), *Forging communities: mobility, integration and belonging* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, Springer, 2018) p. 157-180. See, M Kademaunga, "Thriving Chinese migrant entrepreneurship in a deteriorating socio-economic environment in Zimbabwe". In: CC Nsimbi and I Moyo (ed.), *Migration, cross-border trade and development in Africa* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, Springer, 2017). Also see Gukurume, "Chinese migrants and the politics of everyday life in Zimbabwe", p. 85-102.

36 E Haninda is a Rwandese transport operator who owns a number of kombis ranging from 62-70. He started his business in the year 2000 and he has over 15 years in the transport industry which operate in areas like Waterfalls, Highfield, Glenview, Glen-Norah, Kuwadzana and Mufakose. He is also in his late 40s.

37 *Mwana we Africa*, *Mwana* is a Shona word when translated means child and this can be called child of Africa in English.

Lloyd also offers his services to other transport operators like Americanno (pseudonym) and Gwekwerere (pseudonym), who own nine commuter omnibuses, come from Rwanda and currently live in Uplands, Waterfalls.³⁸ It can, however, be observed that Lloyd's experiences echo the Congolese philosopher and anthropologists, Valentin Mudimbe's complex reflections on the identity, self-representation in Africa within the "colonial library" debate.³⁹ Lloyd's narrative is important because he falls into tactical cosmopolitanism "from below".⁴⁰ This implies partially negotiating inclusion and belonging that transcend ethnic and national boundaries. While the colonial boundaries have been deployed to understand demarcations on nation-states, experiences from individuals such as Lloyd defy existing border regimes.

Most of the transport operators started by joining the tuck-shop business, including Jonas Nzeimani and Errant Haninda. Still, this information somehow differs from cases of individuals like Lloyd, who worked hard to join the industry as a mechanic.⁴¹ The likes of Janvier Sabi Mana, John Paul, and Harienda Paul have a background in running small businesses like tuck-shops, which they later changed to the transport sector.⁴² Evidence indicated that John Paul was no longer in the transport sector but back to his former business, that is, running tuck-shops in Mbare.⁴³ Also notable is that most of these Congolese and Rwandese transport operators have their fleets covering routes such as Waterfalls, Highfield, Glenview, Glen Norah, Kuwadzana, Mbare and Southlea Park to town (city centre).

3. THE CHALLENGES FACED BY CONGOLESE AND RWANDESE TRANSPORT OPERATORS IN THE HARARE URBAN TRANSPORT SECTOR

The Harare urban transport sector, particularly the commuter omnibus category, was usually characterised by congestion, pollution and violence, which have been labelled by the Zimbabwean media as a "war" between

38 Gwekwerere, in his early 40s, depends on the transport business for his survival and was not comfortable to disclose information to do with how he started his business. He uses a Shona name, and he is proud to use the name. It is not his actual name.

39 SG Ndlovu and B Ngqulunga, "From the idea of Africa to the African idea of Africa", *The Thinker* 93, 2022, pp. 6-9, <https://journals.uj.ac.za/index.php/The_Thinker/article/download/2201/1442>, accessed 4 July 2023.

40 LB Landau and I Freemantle, "Tactical cosmopolitanism and idioms of belonging: insertion and self-exclusion in Johannesburg", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36, 2010, pp. 375-390.

41 Interview: author with J Paul, Waterfalls-Parktown, 14 January 2015.

42 Interview: author with S Mapfeka, Waterfalls-Parktown, 20 December 2022.

43 Interview: author with Paul.

Kombi operators and the municipal police and the Zimbabwe Republic Police.⁴⁴ Some of the challenges faced by the Congolese and Rwandese transport operators included threats from local operators, fear of xenophobic attacks, bad roads, road unworthy kombis, rank marshalling, “bogus police”, corruption, *Mushikashika (go faster)*, and other so-called politically aligned youth groups, among others.

4. RANK MARSHALS AND THREATS FROM LOCALS

Rank marshals are touts who self-claim stewardship of ranks. The phenomenon has been on the rise, particularly after dollarisation in 2008 in Zimbabwe when most youths had no jobs, making efforts to be bus conductors. Rank marshals “maintain order” at ranks at pick and drop zones.⁴⁵ Many youths have invaded most ranks, claiming ownership and control. Areas with such activities in the Central Business District (CBD) include Corner Mbuya Nehanda and Jason Moyo Streets, Fourth Street Copacabana and Albion Street. These rank marshals are also believed to be the brains behind the “artificial” shortage of kombis by forcing kombis to charge high fares to maximise their returns instead of the normal R5/ US \$0,50 fare.⁴⁶

Managers like Ngezha of the God-Given fleet argued that the problem of rank marshals was at its peak during the 2008-2013 period, and from then on, it is not getting worse.⁴⁷ Some activists indicated that these rank marshals pocket a range of US\$40-80 per day for their duty of “maintaining order”.⁴⁸ The main challenge is that these rank marshals have no legal right to collect money from kombi drivers the way they do. It is the “City Fathers”, that is, the local government authorities who have the mandate to maintain order and bring sanity to all ranks.

Furthermore, the issue of ranks has been contested since the introduction of urban transport system in Zimbabwe, sometime in 2010 onwards, when indications of the involvement of youth groups like Chipangano and Upfumi Kuvadiki were prevalent.⁴⁹ Some of the Congolese and Rwandese

44 See, “The sting of kombi lawlessness”, *The Herald*, 16 January 2016, <<https://www.herald.co.zw/the-sting-of-kombi-lawlessness/>>, accessed 15 June 2024; “War on kombis erupts after cop abducted”, *Nehanda Radio*, 22 February 2013, <<https://nehandaradio.com/2013/02/22/war-on-kombis-erupts-after-cop-abducted/>>, accessed 15 June 2024.

45 Zimbabwean commuters suffer daily daylight robbery, <<http://www.kubatanablogs.net/kubatanazimbabwean-commuters-suffer-daily-daylight-robbery/>>, accessed 2 March 2015.

46 Interview: author with Boss Magirazi, Harare Market Square, 13 January 2015.

47 Interview: author with Ngezha, Harare Market Square, 13 January 2015.

48 Zimbabwean commuters suffer daily daylight robbery, <<http://www.kubatanablogs.net/kubatanazimbabwean-commuters-suffer-daily-daylight-robbery/>>, accessed 2 March 2015.

49 Zimbabwe 2013 human rights report, <<https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/220388.pdf>>, accessed 27 August 2024, p. 17.

immigrants expressed their disgruntlement but had no option but to pay these youths; but their businesses were immensely affected. With such a hostile situation, the Congolese and Rwandese immigrants felt disadvantaged, although they continued to operate in the urban transport sector.

Added to the above, some local operators who owned around one to five kombis and less than ten were bitter about the coming in of foreigners of different nationalities. One Mr Muswe, a former local transport operator and businessman, expressed his bitterness by arguing that he would in person sacrifice some money to ensure all these Congolese and Rwandese are put off the road.⁵⁰ The argument was that if the Congolese and Rwandese had money to do business, they should invest in the bus transport and haulage trucks rather than small businesses like kombis, tuck-shops, and saloons requiring little capital.⁵¹ In the same vein, the same informant argued that it is these Congolese and Rwandese transport operators who the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) swindled. Thus, Mr Muswe's dissatisfaction with the involvement of Congolese and Rwandese immigrants in the Harare urban transport sector demonstrates a miniature of resentment towards foreigners by locals.⁵²

Zimbabwe's case illustrates the rhetoric of economic nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Economic nationalism is defined as an ideology that differs from economic *laissez-faire* (liberalism) in two major ways: it rejects self-interest as the main guideline for organising the social and economic, and it disagrees with the notion that the market can maximise the welfare of the collective.⁵³ This economic nationalism is not unique to Zimbabwe but can be found elsewhere in Africa.⁵⁴ Economic nationalism has led the ruling party in Zimbabwe, ZANU-PF, to resolve that in January 2014, foreigners were banned from running certain businesses earlier cited.⁵⁵

50 Interview: author with Mr Muswe, Waterfalls-Parktown, 14 January 2015.

51 Interview: author with Muswe.

52 "Zimbabwe's changing spaces", *Mail & Guardian*, 5 May 2013, <<https://mg.co.za/article/2013-05-31-00-zimbabwes-changing-spaces/>>, accessed 15 July 2023.

53 The content of economic nationalism is a set of, "economic policies which promote economic development without threatening national cohesion, and whose costs and benefits are shared by the people of the whole nation-state."

54 "Is Magufuli's economic nationalism working?", *The Africa Report*, 9 May 2019, <<https://www.theafricareport.com/12725/is-magufulis-economic-nationalism-working/>>, accessed 30 September 2023; H Fuller, "Economic nationalism". In: T Falola and MM Heaton (ed.), *African histories and modernities* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

55 "Foreigners banned from owning businesses in Zimbabwe", *Timeslive*, 1 January 2014, <http://www.timeslive.co.za/africa/2014/01/01/foreigners-banned-from-owning-businesses-in-zimbabwe/>, accessed 15 January 2015.

Even local drivers like Bhanditi had no kind words for Congolese and Rwandese transport operators. Having worked for a number of these foreigners for eight years between 2007 and 2015, his major grievance was that they require a lot of money in cash at the end of the day, which is unrealistic. Receiving salaries is another issue. According to Bhanditi, “foreigners should leave this country because there is peace in their home countries, especially Rwanda. Again, when they make money, they go and enjoy the money in foreign countries like Australia and New Zealand”.⁵⁶ Bhanditi recalled one Jonas Nzeimani, a Rwandese, who used to have an estimated 160 kombis but left Zimbabwe around 2015 for the United States. He further reiterated that, “these foreign operators do not even leave any mark of investment in the country but rather rob us of our labour and money before they go”.⁵⁷ Hence, Bhanditi maintained that the involvement of foreigners in the urban transport sector is unacceptable.

Although some people, particularly local Zimbabweans, were arguably unhappy with the involvement of Congolese and Rwandese in the Harare urban transport sector, some were satisfied. Congolese and Rwandese were aware of the grievances levelled against them by the locals, but some of them, like Gwekwerere, argued that “if we take our kombis out of the road, pickpockets, burglars will be all over the city doing all sorts of illegal activities”.⁵⁸ Gwekwerere further noted that, “we (foreigners) support a number of households due to the number of locals we employ. For instance, one who has around 62 kombis supports almost 200 families since each kombi will be having 2 to 3 people working and, in some cases, 2 to 4”.⁵⁹ In this way, migrants construe themselves as agents of development through employment creation to locals.⁶⁰ To Gwekwerere, even the claim by the government through the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development to ban the import of kombis starting from 2016 was actually, in his eyes, impractical since the government has been good at lip-service concerning the matter. In fact, no alternative has come to fruition. Having said that, threats from locals are still a challenge to Congolese and Rwandese immigrants operating in Harare.

56 Interview: author with Bhanditi, Waterfalls-Parktown, 14 January 2015.

57 Interview: author with Bhanditi.

58 Interview: author with Gwekwerere, Waterfalls-Parktown, 14 January 2015.

59 Interview: author with Gwekwerere, Waterfalls-Parktown, 14 January 2015.

60 S Hall, “Migrant urbanisms: ordinary cities and everyday resistance”, *Sociology* 49 (5), 2005, pp.853-869.

5. MUSHIKASHIKA (GO FASTER AND EVEN FASTER)

The word is widely used by commuter omnibus operators in Harare and the general public. The term “*mushikashika*” [faster and even faster] generally refers to illegal pick-up kombis and points, particularly in Harare.⁶¹ Also notable is that *mushikashika* means an aggressive approach to transport shortages characterised by hitch-hiking any mode of transport.⁶² In short, it has to be understood that *mushikashika* borders on lawlessness and a cat-and-mouse or hide-and-seek relationship with the police, municipal traffic cops and kombi drivers as well as *mahwindi* (touts). The origins of this chaotic system are argued to have resulted from the diaspora vehicle fleet post 2000s in Zimbabwe’s urban transport. While to some authors *mushika-shika* loosely translates to “faster and even faster,” a term derived from artisanal diamond miners hurrying to extract before law enforcement agents and predators arrive. It implies the same in the commuter transport industry, where illegal operators “pick up and drop off” passengers at undesigned points to evade arrests by the authorities.⁶³

The issue of *mushikashika* has been cited by both Congolese and Rwandese transport operators as an obstacle, challenge or hindrance to business growth and daily cash-in since most people easily go for the so-called “go-fasters” who operate at illegal pick-up points.⁶⁴ Those who are badly affected operate at the legally designated operating points. Market Square is identified with those who use the hindrance to business growth argument, while the daily cash-in points to the so-called “go-fasters” operate at illegal pick-up points. Examples include Corner Albion and Mbuya Nehanda Street, as well as Corner Harare Street and Albion.⁶⁵

The issue of *mushikashika* was a problem to both local and foreign operators, but these foreigners maintained that their kombis were roadworthy and met the requirements of operating; hence they did not allow their drivers to go for *mushikashika*. Those who operated from the legal rank charged normal fares, that is, the R5/\$US0.50/\$ZIM 0.50, and those who used illegal operating areas, “*mushikashika*” would charge R10/\$1.00/\$ZIM1.00. These

61 “Harare’s Kombi Jungle”, *Dailynews*, 15 January 2015, <<https://dailynews.co.zw/harares-kombi-jungle/>>, accessed 27 August 2024.

62 D Dube and I Chirisa, “The informal city: assessing its scope: variants and direction in Harare”, *Global Advanced Research Journal of Geography and Regional Planning* 1, 2012, pp. 016-025.

63 Mazarire and Swart, “‘The pots on our roads’: The diaspora fleet and Harare’s urban commuter system”, pp. 63.

64 Interview: author with Lloyd, Waterfalls-Houghton Park, 22 January 2015.

65 “Hundreds of kombis impounded by the police”, 8 July 2020, <https://iharare.com/tag/mushikashika/>>, accessed 1 October 2023.

fares were, however, not static but rather changed over time with rainy seasons showing increased charges ranging from \$US1.50 and \$US 2.00. *Mushikashika* was common during pick hours or rush hours and was taken advantage of, especially during the rainy season. One transport operator, Lloyd, concurred with another local operator, Mr Kunaka, that were it not for *mushikashika*, they would be able to buy a single kombi every three months because the business would be rewarding. As such, *mushikashika* was a stumbling block.

These operators expressed their disgruntlement towards the local authorities, noting that they were supposed to take serious steps to do away with those illegal pick-up points which were discouraging business, perpetuating insanity, chaos, disorder, bribes, and exposing passengers and other pedestrians to the dangers of being run over by kombis when the municipal traffic cops are chasing them. The reputation of kombis became very negative over the years due to the illegal contact with drivers and touts. Transport operators like Gwekwerere proposed that the local authorities and the traffic cops should be serious when handling such issues. They argued that the authorities are well known for maintaining order and were reluctant to do away with such a petty issue as *mushikashika*. Another reason for the persistence of *mushikashika* was the allegation that some of the officers had their own kombis.⁶⁶ With some of the police officers allegedly operating unregistered kombis, this directly affected those operating registered kombis. The only foreigners identified in this context operating unregistered kombis were from Pakistan and India.⁶⁷

6. BAD ROADS

Zimbabwe's road network comprises 88 300 kilometres of road infrastructure, including 15 000 km of paved.⁶⁸ The road network consists of four main categories: primary, secondary, tertiary feeder access roads and urban roads. Primary roads consist of 5 per cent of the network and link the country to neighbouring countries like South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana and Zambia. Secondary roads allow the movement of people and goods and connect the main economic centres and consist of 14 per cent of the network.

66 AR Matamanda *et al.*, "The political economy of Zimbabwean urban informality since 2000 – A contemporary governance dilemma", *Development Southern Africa* 37 (4), 2020, pp. 694-707; "Cops own 50% of Harare kombis", *NewsDay*, 28 January 2014, <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2014/01/cops-50-harare-kombis>>, accessed 16 June 2024.

67 "Cops own 50% of Harare kombis", *NewsDay*, 28 January 2014.

68 Zimbabwe: country data and statistics, <https://www.worlddata.info/africa/zimbabwe/transport.php>>, accessed 15 July 2023.

The department of roads controls the primary and secondary road networks.⁶⁹ Then, 70 per cent of the road network is made up of tertiary or feeder access roads, which link the rural network to secondary roads and social amenities such as schools, health centres and markets. These are controlled by the District Development Fund (DDF). Town councils oversee the remaining seven per cent of the urban road network.⁷⁰

Although roads are supposed to be maintained with taxpayers' money by local authorities, there is a persistent challenge of bad roads and poor service delivery, which destroys the commuter omnibuses, especially the mechanical suspension of the vehicle. The tyres, springs and shock absorbers were easily worn out due to the magnitude of the potholes on many roads. The complaint was made by the Congolese and Rwandese transport operators and other local transport operators.⁷¹ Potholes are generally caused by traffic, loading, age, water and deferred maintenance.⁷²

In Zimbabwean urban areas, much blame has been laid against the local authorities whilst they also blame it on the past decade's economic challenges, which grossly affected the country, thereby making them fail to repair old-ageing roads properly, those affected by heavy traffic as well as the increasing vehicles in general. The problem of potholes affected all motorists and even pedestrians. The potholes in most Harare roads, as well as other urban areas, immensely affected business in that more money would be required to buy more spare parts than necessary, that is, having at least two spare wheels per Commuter Omnibus since anything can happen due to the bad roads.

On the expense side of the transport operator, unnecessary costs were incurred; hence, road users crying foul over the poor service delivery from the local government as well as from the Zimbabwe National Road Administration (ZINARA). ZINARA was responsible for fixing, collecting and disbursing road user charges and mobilising revenue for road development and maintenance. Over the years, the problem of potholes in urban road users worsened. This can be observed through media headlines like *Motorists to Sue for Pothole*

69 Zimbabwe: country data and statistics, <<https://www.worlddata.info/africa/zimbabwe/transport.php>>, accessed 15 July 2023.

70 Zimbabwe: country data and statistics, <<https://www.worlddata.info/africa/zimbabwe/transport.php>>.

71 Interview: author with Mr Muswe.

72 T. Clayton, "Potholes, causes and traditional repair methods", *Colorado Asphalt Pavement Centre* 11 (2), 2005, pp. 1.

*Damage,*⁷³ *Pothole plagued Harare seeks to build climate-resilient roads*⁷⁴ among others, all which evidence points to the failure of the government to solve that problem.

In some local media circles in Zimbabwe, potholes were regarded as sinkholes due to their magnitude.⁷⁵ To solve the problem of potholes, the local authorities responded by buying pothole-patching equipment used to patch the holes worth US \$ 555 000 in January 2013.⁷⁶ In a speech presented by the then Honorable Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development, Nicholas Goche, argued that what has been hampering road maintenance was the poor economic conditions that affected the country due to the illegal sanctions imposed on it by the West (European Union and its allies).⁷⁷ The pothole-patching machines coming into the country was a relief since motorists were now reluctant to raise the issue of potholes with the government. However, challenges to do with potholes persisted despite the coming of the pothole patching machines in 2013. Motorists' complaints changed, leading to poor workmanship in rehabilitating the roads, poor materials for road maintenance, and, in most cases, materials not meant for road construction. As a result, after three days or a week, potholes could resurface after work has been done. Transport operators like Lloyd, as well as one Americano (both Congolese), expressed their disgruntlement by arguing that the government should be serious when offering tenders to companies in road construction which can do long-lasting jobs and, of course, employing people who can do the proper mixtures when patching the roads.⁷⁸ It is still to be seen how the US\$4,1 million availed by ZINARA and Harare City to fix roads will work and provide the much-needed better world-class roads in urban areas.⁷⁹ Hence, the problems of potholes remained a challenge to tackle with a new dimension where motorists can form their community groups and contribute money and resources to see efficient work being done.

73 "Council repairs roads after lawsuit", *The Herald*, 14 October 2014, <https://www.herald.co.zw/council-repairs-roads-after-lawsuit/>, accessed 15 July 2023; "From potholes to sinkholes, residents vent anger on authorities", *The Herald*, 10 January 2015, <https://www.herald.co.zw/from-potholes-to-sinkholes-l-residents-vent-anger-on-authorities-l-council-zinara-cant-do-it-alone/>, accessed 15 July 2023.

74 "Pothole plagued Harare seeks to build climate-resilient roads", <https://nehandaradio.com/2017/07/26/pothole-plagued-harare-seeks-build-climate-resilient-roads/>, accessed 15 July 2023.

75 *The Herald*, 10 January 2015.

76 "Government acquires pothole patching equipment", *The Herald*, 7 January 2013, <https://www.herald.co.zw/govt-acquires-pothole-patching-equipment/>, accessed 27 August 2024.

77 *The Herald*, 7 January 2013.

78 Interview: author with Harinanda, Waterfalls- Parktown, 12 January 2015: Interview: author with Americano, Waterfalls-Parktown, 12 January 2015.

79 "Zinara, Harare city in \$4, 1 million project to fix roads", *The Herald*, 13 January 2015.

7. CORRUPTION AND ROAD UNWORTHY KOMBIS

Corruption is understood as willingly acting dishonestly in return for money or personal gain.⁸⁰ Corruption is the abuse of power and public resources to enrich or give unfair advantage to the individuals, their families or friends.⁸¹ The challenge of some corrupt traffic officers and the municipal council police has been a thorn in the flesh, particularly to Congolese and Rwandese commuter omnibus operators. In some sense, the challenge of both municipal and ZRP police seeking bribes from drivers being cancerous and viral in the urban transport sector as well as other sectors of the Zimbabwean economy, both private and public. To the commuter operators, the main challenge was that some bogus municipal and ZRP cops ended up taking money from the kombi drivers, which was indeed a setback to the business.⁸² The money, which was usually used to bribe, ranges from US\$5 00 to 15 00. The language associated with bribing can easily be identified with Zimdancehall artist songwriter Obey Makamure, a.k.a Tocky Vibes, with the song *VaMayaya (Officer)*,⁸³

*...Officer musashande ininii, inga mhene dzamabhururutsa dzawanda,
... don't be on my case, you're chasing away passengers
Inga tiri verimwechete ganda, We are of the same family
maOfficer mirai mhenii, musashande ininii... inihandishandiimimiii,
...hold on officer, don't be on my case and I won't be on your case
oyi one mari mumbononwawo cane take this money & go have a
drink...⁸⁴*

In the song, *Officer* refers to the traffic cops who are always after kombis that evade the law, and the singer appeals to the traffic cops not to always go after them as they are also trying to make ends meet. The officer was told to wait and give the driver a chance to work. Lastly, the officer will be given some money to buy refreshments at the end of the day. The offences usually committed by the drivers include driving a road unworthy vehicle, not having

80 GW Brown *et al.*, *Concise Oxford dictionary of politics and international relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), <<https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780199670840.001.0001/acref-9780199670840-e-292>>, accessed 28 August 2024.

81 See J Muzondidya, "From buoyancy to crisis, 1980-1997". In: B Raftopoulos and A Mlambo (eds.), *Becoming Zimbabwe: A history from the pre-colonial period to 2008* (Harare, Weaver Press, 2009), pp. 182-184

82 Interview: author with Ngezha.

83 "All you need to know about Tocky Vibes", *Pindula*, www.pindula.co.zw/Tocky_Vibes>, accessed 21 February 2015.

84 *VaMayaya*, <www.yourepeat.com/watch/?v=DoWNE>, Tocky Vibes- *VaMayaya (Officer)* - *YouRepeat*, accessed 21 February 2015.

up-to-date insurance coverage for both the vehicle and the passengers, failure to provide an operating license, age limit, exceeding the carrying capacity of a commuter omnibus, among many other offences that these drivers can commit.

The transport sector continued to face challenges owing to resource constraints, obsolete equipment, corruption, mismanagement, vandalism and the absence of a robust corporate governance policy.⁸⁵ The challenge of corruption was not to be limited to Harare but even to other areas such as Kwekwe and Redcliff, which are well documented. The case of Kwekwe, Redcliff indicates that the government created the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in an effort to empower the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. The question that can now be posed is the legality of these Congolese and Rwandese immigrants in running businesses in Zimbabwe, particularly in sectors reserved for locals. In line with Section 2 of the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act (Chapter 14:33), indigenisation was a “deliberate involvement of indigenous Zimbabweans in the economic activities of the country, to which hitherto they had no access, so as to ensure the equitable ownership of the nation’s resources”.⁸⁶ The Indigenisation Act implies that locals have their stack in the transport sector.

The ZRP was regarded by some research groups as among the most corrupt in the region, like the Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa (ACT-Southern Africa).⁸⁷ Through the Zimbabwean print media, one paper carried the headline, “ZRP most corrupt in the region” to indicate that the institution was not performing well when guarding the law.⁸⁸ Some people accused the top leadership in the police force of responding to such cases and coming up with practical solutions to the problem of corruption. However, it can be observed that the challenge at hand in Zimbabwe was complex since evidence indicates that even the ZRP Commissioner General Chihuri once upon a time proved to be leading the roost of corrupt officers.⁸⁹ Sometime in 1997, there was a War Veterans’ Gratuities corruption scandal whereby Chihuri was found to be 90 per cent disabled; yet in normal circumstances, he was supposed to

85 Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation-ZIMASSET, <<https://www.veritaszim.net/node/930>>, pp. 23, accessed 27 August 2024.

86 Section 2 of the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act (Chapter 14:33), <<https://www.veritaszim.net/node/190>>, accessed 4 June 2024.

87 “Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa, 2010, Mini-assessment report: Corruption by traffic police officers and vehicle drivers in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe”, <<http://actsouthernafrica.posterous.com>>, accessed 4 June 2024

88 “ZRP most corrupt in the region”, *NewsDay*, 6 November 2012, accessed 21 February 2015.

89 W Mwatwara and J Mujere, “Corruption and the comrades: Mugabe and the ‘fight’ against corruption in Zimbabwe, 1980-2013”. In: SJ Ndlovu-Gatshehi (ed.), *Mugabeism? History, politics and power in Zimbabwe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 192.

be 100 per cent fit.⁹⁰ With such a scenario, tackling corruption in Zimbabwe could be untenable since the top brass was also corrupt.

It is imperative to note that efforts have been made to curb corruption through the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission often by pretending to be part of the ordinary passengers when approaching roadblocks. Although this helped apprehend some culprits, some of them knew strategies that had been designed by the cops, such as the “Airtime” strategy. Airtime strategy involved commuter crews paying bribes before arriving at roadblocks using a mobile money transfer.⁹¹ Such methods have been revealed by both kombi drivers and other cops who brag about their immoral, corrupt activities. More importantly, the problem of corruption was not only against the ZRP but a societal disease since both the drivers and the cops are involved. Some Congolese operators such as Americano and Haninda tried to solve the problem by employing managers who were ever ready to collect money and closely monitor the trips made by each driver.

Others, including Gwekwerere still faced the challenge immensely because he had no managers, making it not easy for him to monitor every kombi simultaneously since he owned nine kombis. Thus, the problem of corruption was worsened by the fact that there were many road-unworthy kombis. In most cases, road-unworthy kombi drivers made efforts to make a living and risk the lives of passengers by using their kombis. It became apparent that there was tolerance for unworthy vehicles, which have been regarded as corruption catalysts by other Congolese and Rwandese operators since daily cash-in was immensely affected by such kombis. This could perhaps be the reason one newspaper reader had to comment in response to the headline, “ZRP most corrupt in the region” stating that the problem of corruption will not be solved overnight, hence the need for members of society to be taught how bad corruption is even in schools just like the scourging Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) issue was done.⁹² This, again, was a clear sign that traffic cops were rampantly corrupt in the urban transport sector.

Another critical issue raised in relation to corruption was spot fines, which some believed to be the root of corruption. Justice Lawrence Kamocho and Maphios Cheda ruled that no police officer should insist on spot fines but

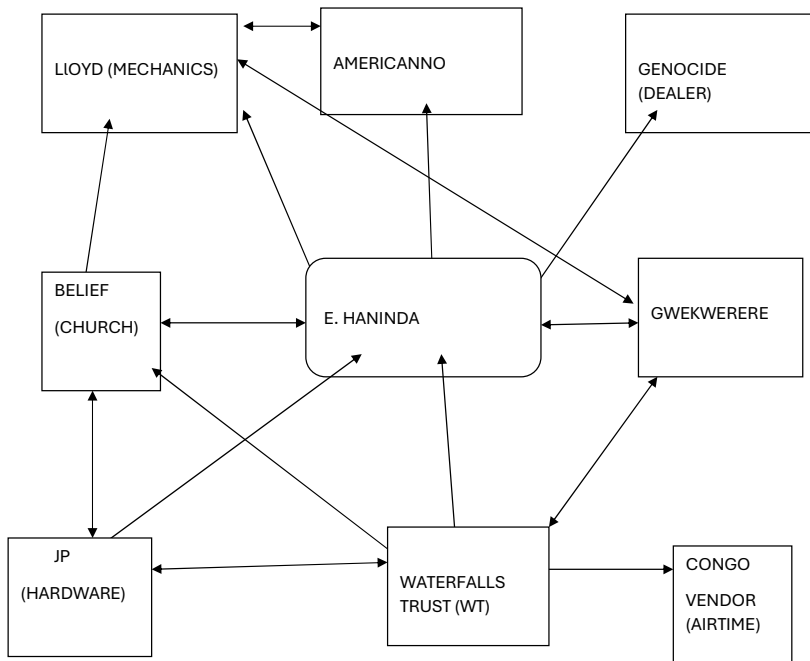
90 Mwatwara and Mujere, “Corruption and the comrades: Mugabe and the ‘fight’ against corruption in Zimbabwe, 1980-2013”, p. 192.

91 “Traffic cops’ bribe taking strategies”, *The Zimbabwean*, 9 January 2013, https://www.thezimbabwean.co/2013/01/traffic-cops-bribe-taking-strategies/#google_vignette, accessed 21 February 2015.

92 “ZRP most corrupt in the region”, *NewsDay*, 6 November 2012; “ZRP ranked most corrupt gvt dept”, *NewsDay*, 16 May 2022, accessed 28 August 2024.

should allow a motorist reasonable time to pay the fine if they are admitting to the offence.⁹³ He added that, "a police officer cannot and should not insist on a spot fine if he does not have a ticket book, which is a necessary administrative tool for duty execution."⁹⁴ Spot fines have led to many debates among legal experts, the general public, transport operators, and the ZRP cops. The conditions for payment of spot fines are a contested terrain in determining exactly how not one should pay the money since the cops end up persuading one to pay money. Hence, in some cases, kombi drivers took advantage of such situations and stole money from their bosses thereby negatively impacting the operations of the business.

8. SOCIAL NETWORKS



93 "Spot fines: court ruling unearthed", *The Herald*, 12 February 2015, pp.1-2.

94 *The Herald*, 12 February 2015.

Core and peripheral positions in groups were first defined by early network analysts, Davis Allison *et al.*⁹⁵

From the diagram, Haninda can be called a core member because of his relations with other transport operators such as Gwekwerere, Americanno, and Lloyd. Through oral interviews with his friends like Gwekwerere, Americanno and Lloyd, indicated that they could not do without Haninda, for, in some cases, when business was not performing well, they would always approach him for financial assistance. Those individuals who participated together most often and at the most intimate affairs are called core members; those who participate with core members upon some occasions but never as a group by themselves alone are called primary members; while individuals on the fringes, who participate only in frequently, constitute the secondary members of a clique.

Homophily played a pivotal role since these transport operators were associated based on several characteristics like gender, race, occupation, status and values. Homophily in social networks mainly refers to the tendency of similar-minded people to interact with one another in social groups than with dissimilar-minded people.⁹⁶ Through oral interviews, all these individuals were able to mention the important roles played by their colleagues during tough times in business and all positive because of financial and business ideas they shared to remain relevant and succeed in the Zimbabwean competitive transport sector as well as the challenge of surviving in the fluctuating economy of Zimbabwe.

Waterfalls Transit Camp in Waterfalls-Harare was regarded as home to many foreigners in Zimbabwe. One or more transport operators always made pledges to sustain livelihoods at the transit camp. Waterfalls residents close to the Waterfalls Transit camp indicated that the likes of Haninda usually pledged groceries, transport and other basic needs to the Trust in an effort to meet the demands of these foreigners.⁹⁷ However, there are still competing narratives about the welfare of the refugees from those accounted for by former refugees and the state. The government of Zimbabwe still needs to

95 D Allison *et al.*, *Deep south: a social anthropological study of caste and class* (Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 2009).

96 KZ Khanam, G Srivastava and V Mago, The homophily principle in social network analysis: a survey, *Multimedia Tools and Applications* 82, 2023, pp. 8811-8854, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11042-021-11857-1>, accessed 25 September 2023.

97 Interview: author with Ambuya Va William, Waterfalls-Parktown, 21 February 2015.

do more to address the everyday needs of the refugees.⁹⁸ This is so because many other ethnic minorities from all of Africa go there for assistance seeking shelter and food. As such, despite opposition from locals, these transport operators are of great help to the humanitarian cause; hence, their relevance and survival are sustained.

9. CONCLUSION

The article elaborated that Congolese and Rwandese transport operators faced several challenges, which included corrupt police and municipal police, bad roads, road unworthy kombis, xenophobia, *mushikashika* as well as threats from locals. The solutions to the challenges were complex due to the lack of a clear transport policy which offers practical results, the cancerous problem of corruption, which does not require an overnight solution, and the wave of economic nationalism which swept over the country over the past decade. In this regard, the government of Zimbabwe still needs to look closely at the transport sector and respond to challenges with the rapid urbanisation not only taking place in Zimbabwe but also in the region of Sub-Saharan Africa. Nonetheless, Rwandese and Congolese managed to survive and thrive in the transport industry. This can be attributed to the strong social network ties with their fellow family friends, and government officials, as well as the relations they formed over time with the locals.

98 <<https://parlzim.gov.zw/download/national-assembly-hansard-07-june-2018-44-66/>>, accessed 10 June 2024.