Enhancing Socio-Economic Sustainability in South Africa: A Review of Local Municipalities in Managing Inward Migration from the Periphery to the Core

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Abstract

This conceptual paper aims to examine the prevailing patterns of migration from local municipalities to metropolitan areas in the context of socio-economic transformations. Emphasizing the crucial role of local municipalities in addressing and mitigating migration towards urban cores, the paper underscores that the effectiveness of such efforts relies on factors like good governance, enhanced economic prospects, basic service provision, infrastructure development, and tailored skills training within the unique context of each municipality. Migration is a multifaceted phenomenon entwining economic, socio-cultural, and security dimensions. The unsustainable influx from the periphery burdens metropolitans, particularly in rural regions, challenging the mandated responsibilities. The failure of local municipalities to adequately deliver services exacerbates the strain on metropolitans already grappling with limited resources. The migration exodus from rural to urban centers often stems from pervasive socio-economic disparities, making migration a perceived solution to enhance the quality of life. Despite the advent of democracy, developmental progress in rural areas remains limited, necessitating a comprehensive approach that integrates rural development strategies with urban planning, job creation in urban areas, and the resolution of systemic issues. It is crucial to acknowledge that addressing migration requires a holistic perspective, as rural development alone may not suffice to deter migration to urban centers, given the diverse opportunities and amenities they offer. The paper advocates for a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach involving governmental bodies, local communities, NGOs, and the private sector to achieve meaningful and sustainable results in curbing migration from local municipalities to metropolitan areas. In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of achieving a more balanced and sustainable population distribution across municipalities for overall societal well-being.

Keywords: Migration; Local municipalities; Economy; Development

INTRODUCTION

Migration, a global phenomenon, occurs for diverse reasons, including safety, economic prospects, and tourism. In South Africa, migration patterns have witnessed a pronounced surge, with individuals increasingly relocating from local municipalities to bustling metropolitan areas (Dube & Radikonyana, 2024; Mthiyane, Wissink & Chiwawa, 2022). This migration phenomenon is intrinsically linked to concerns about service delivery, as dissatisfied individuals seek better prospects elsewhere. Moreover, discussions surrounding illegal migrants have thrust migration into the spotlight within South Africa. Foreign nationals have become a contentious issue, leading to the country being labeled as xenophobic due to the rapid influx of illegal migrants (Ogujiuba, Anjofui & Stiegler, 2019; Malatji & Rakubu, 2023).

In response to these challenges, Minister Aaron Motsoaledi recently unveiled the White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration, and Refugee Protection in 2024, aiming to comprehensively overhaul migration laws (News 24, 2024; Department of Home Affairs, 2023). However, domestic migration presents its complexities. Metropolitan areas, grappling with overpopulation, strain their resources to meet service delivery demands (Manji et al., 2023). The inadequacy of local municipalities exacerbates the burden on metropolitans, who must now allocate additional fiscal resources to cater to residents. As the population grows and municipal infrastructure faces mounting pressure, rural-to-urban migration introduces adverse environmental, health, and welfare risks (Mthiyane, Wissink & Chiwawa, 2022).

The two primary types of migration have been classified as internal and external. Internal migration involves the unrestricted movement of people within domestic regions, while external migration entails relocation across national borders (Food & Agriculture Organization, 2017; Skeldon, 2017). Alabshar (2020); and Sharma & Mehta (2020) emphasize that migration not only addresses uneven population distribution but also contributes to regional development and economic equilibrium. However, unmanaged migration can lead to crises, as exemplified by an anti-illegal immigrant group called “Operation Dudula” in the South African context.

The strategic placement of municipalities within communities is not coincidental, it is intentionally designed as a developmental lever. As stated by (De Visser, 2024) Municipality is obliged to facilitate Local Economic Development (LED). Local municipalities, akin to metropolitans, bear the responsibility of providing effective services to citizens, as explicitly enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa (1996, Sections 152 and 153). Unfortunately, despite their potential such as budget approval and mineral resources, local municipalities struggle to attract investors, resulting in underdeveloped areas and limited job creation. Entrepreneurship development, industrialization, and infrastructure remain elusive goals for rural and most local municipalities (Chakwizira, 2024; Mashamaite, 2023). These factors, critical for employment and poverty reduction, underscore the urgency of addressing migration dynamics. Rural-urban migration persists due to perceived opportunities arising from economic disparities between rural and urban areas (Ajefu & Ogebe, 2019; Piracha & Saraogi, 2017). As South Africa navigates this complex landscape, policymakers must strike a delicate balance, harnessing the benefits of migration while proactively managing potential crises.
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each striving to illuminate the intricate mechanisms propelling human mobility (De Haas, 2021). This paper has explored three pivotal theories, namely push-pull, neoclassical, and modernization, which were drawn upon to shed light on the migration patterns from peripheral regions to core areas. These theories, while distinct, intersect harmoniously, enriching the understanding of migration dynamics. This theory scrutinizes migration from dual angles: the causes (push factors) and effects (pull factors) of migration (Kanayo, Anjofui & Stiegler, 2019). These impel individuals to leave their place of origin. Examples of push factors include political instability, limited economic prospects, inadequate healthcare, and education facilities, and compromised security (Urbański, 2022; Zanabazar, Kho & Jigjiddorj, 2021). These attract people to their destination, such as improved employment opportunities and better healthcare (Utsua, Habila & Babale, 2023; Mlambo, 2018).

Rooted in economics, the neoclassical theory posits that migration primarily hinges on economic considerations. Neoclassical theory involves a rational assessment of relative benefits and costs, encompassing financial and psychological dimensions (De Haas, 2010). Interregional wage disparities, distance between origin and destination, and labor market conditions shape migration decisions. Individuals often migrate from rural areas to cities, seeking maximum net economic gains. The theory of modernization contrasts sending and receiving areas, delineating push factors for out-migration and pull factors for in-migration (Brettell, 2008). Industrialization drives societal transformation, influencing migration patterns. Underdeveloped local municipalities grapple with deficits in developmental indicators, affecting schools, healthcare, and human capital. The brain drain phenomenon depletes rural areas as highly skilled individuals seek better opportunities elsewhere (Selolo, Mokoele & Mnisi, 2023). Inadequate services, such as clean drinking water, drive migration. Rural dwellers flock to metropolitan areas seeking improved living conditions (Mukwarami & van der Poll, 2023; Kalina, Makwetu, & Tilley, 2023). In South Africa, these theoretical underpinnings resonate with everyday experiences, where deficient service delivery in local municipalities propels an influx into urban centers. As the nation navigates migration complexities, policymakers must heed these theories to foster sustainable socio-economic development.

This research aims to assess the relationship between corruption, migration patterns, and challenges in service delivery within the context of South African local municipalities. Additionally, the study will explore the role of local municipalities and the interaction between good governance, economic opportunities, basic services, infrastructure development, skills development, and training. Furthermore, the research aims to identify specific challenges faced by local municipalities in various aspects of governance, service provision, and socio-economic development.

**METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

In this study, a qualitative research methodology was employed, with a specific focus on the examination of secondary data to understand the management of inward migration from peripheral regions to the core by local municipalities. The authors conducted a comprehensive review of both national and international resources, which included accredited and non-accredited journals, dissertations, books, theses, internet sources, and other published materials. Data collection was facilitated
using various databases, including Google, Google Scholar, and Scopus. The data was subsequently analyzed using a thematic discourse analysis approach. To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, the authors maintained an unbiased stance in the selection of secondary data, employing a variety of keywords to search for pertinent data. Table 1 delineates the research methodology and materials utilized in the conduct of this study (Mamokhere & Meyer, 2023).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Methodology and Design</td>
<td>This study adopted a qualitative research methodology. The study specifically reviewed secondary data. Typically, qualitative research uses nonnumerical data collection methods, such as interviews, focus groups, observations, or content analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aim/Objective</td>
<td>Qualitative research methodology was used to explore and understand prevailing patterns of migration from local municipalities to metropolitan areas in the context of socio-economic transformations. The method was also used to explore the crucial role of local municipalities in addressing and mitigating migration towards urban cores.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>In qualitative research, the following tools are often used; in-depth interviews, participant observations, focus groups, or content/document review. Therefore, for this study, the authors used secondary data in the form of a review of existing data. To gather this data, different databases have been used such as Google, Google Scholar, and Scopus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Commonly, the following analysis approaches are often used when conducting qualitative research, Thematic analysis, content analysis, narrative analysis, or grounded theory. For this study, the authors used a thematic content analysis approach.</td>
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<td>Data Validity</td>
<td>To ensure validity, reliability, and credibility, the authors were not biased in the selection of secondary data, different keywords were used to search for relevant data.</td>
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<td>Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>Based on the nature of this study, no ethical clearance was obtained because the study does not involve human and animal participants. The author has followed the ethical considerations required for theoretical study. Therefore, the author has acknowledged all the sources consulted by citing them in-text and a list of references. Anti-plagiarism was one of the ethical requirements followed.</td>
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<td>Strengths</td>
<td>The authors have adopted a qualitative research methodology because it provides rich, detailed insights, experiences, and perspectives. The qualitative research methodology is cost-effective, time-efficient, comprehensive coverage, and access to existing knowledge.</td>
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<td>Limitations</td>
<td>Methodologically, this study is limited to a qualitative research methodology only.</td>
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Source: Mamokhere & Meyer (2023)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Corruption, Migration, and Service Delivery Challenges in South African Local Municipalities

The assertion that "the love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Timothy 6:10) aptly encapsulates the primary driving force behind migration from local municipalities to metropolitan areas in South Africa, corruption within local municipalities. The mismanagement of public funds has laid bare the pervasive greed and unethical leadership, which starkly contrasts with the principles outlined in Section 195 of the Constitution of 1996. This situation raises concerns about the prevailing deficiency in service delivery.

Funds intended for public service are being misappropriated and redirected to serve the self-interests of those in influential positions. This revelation was brought to light by the Auditor General (AG), who disclosed that a sum of R4.74 billion was wasted through fruitless expenditure in municipalities (AGSA,
In 2019, Angelo Agrizzi implicated government employees, National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) officials, and politicians, highlighting instances such as monthly payments of R50,000 to former environment minister Nomvula Mokonyane (Thusi, Matyana, & Jili, 2023). Ensuring effective public service delivery hinges significantly on the presence of ethical leadership within government (Mbandlwa, Dorasamy, & Fagbadebo, 2020). However, unethical leadership has proven to be catastrophic in local municipalities. In the absence of good governance, corruption reigns. The assertion made by Professor Lumumba, that corruption is a crime against humanity holds weight, as evidenced by most individuals risking their lives to relocate to unfamiliar urban areas. Corruption exacerbates poverty, unemployment, and crime (Mkhize, 2023; Njangang, Asongu & Mouchili, 2024), compelling people to endure challenging living conditions.

Consequently, the lack of money propels people out of their local municipalities in search of better living conditions. This is exemplified by the seventy-four people who occupied an illegal building in the city of Johannesburg and were tragically engulfed by fire (The Guardian, 2023). Their occupation of the illegal building indicates that these deceased individuals were not originally inhabitants of Johannesburg. This unfortunate event might have been averted if the local municipality had fulfilled its responsibilities by ensuring the availability of conducive and fundamental service provisions in their place of origin. Despite repeated expressions of concern by the Auditor General in South Africa regarding the poor performance of municipalities, maladministration persists and continues to worsen, adversely affecting local communities on the ground (News 24, 2023). Economic opportunities, infrastructure development, and skills development are progressing at the slowest pace, comparable to a tortoise, in most local municipalities in South Africa. Such a sluggish pace adversely affects the achievement of the 2030 National Development Goals (NDP).

Metropolitan areas appear to be effectively attracting investors and delivering high-quality services (Jacobs, David & Stiglingh-Van Wyk, 2023). Regardless of facing criticism from the left wings, these metropolitans demonstrate indications of sound governance, a fact underscored by the daily influx of hundreds of individuals seeking an improved quality of life in these urban centres.

Rural areas in South Africa are confronted with a multitude of push factors, including adverse economic conditions such as high unemployment rates, and social issues like inadequate infrastructure, poor road networks, unstable electricity supply, and a lack of accessible clean water, among others (Mustapha, 2009). On the other hand, urban areas present attractive pull factors that stimulate migration from rural areas (Bah, 2023). While some individuals may be motivated to migrate for pleasure or tourism, influenced by globalization, it is crucial to acknowledge that within the context of South African local municipalities, most people often migrate out of desperation, driven by poverty and the absence of basic services. It is undeniable that there are both push and pull factors compelling individuals to move from local municipalities to more developed areas.

A significant challenge confronting South African local municipalities is service delivery, with municipalities failing to fulfill the Constitutional mandate (Dube & Radikonyana, 2024; De Visser, 2024). It is important to emphasize that when individuals relocate, they bring with them...
their expertise, skills, and innovative ideas. Large metropolitan areas benefit from a pool of diverse skills, making them less likely to shut down initiatives that would be beneficial to their cities. In contrast, local municipalities face a shortage of skills, which contributes to inadequate service delivery (Selepe, 2023; Twala, 2023). This dichotomy between rural and urban areas underscores the need for a more balanced approach to development that ensures equitable access to opportunities and services across all provinces. Johannesburg, as a case in point, has witnessed a significant influx of domestic migrants from various regions of the country, all in pursuit of better livelihood opportunities. This surge, however, imposes a strain on metropolitan areas, revealing deficiencies in local municipality performance, particularly in managing increased population growth and housing infrastructure challenges. The delayed response of local municipalities in addressing service delivery issues has had severe repercussions on the provision of services. This phenomenon is typically associated with rapid urbanization and population growth in major cities, underscoring the insufficient investment in rural development by local municipalities.

Presently, local government challenges stem from obstacles such as a lack of necessary skills for driving local economic development, inadequate administrative capacity, and ineffective policy implementation (Koma, 2012). A significant aspect of the debate centres around the high number of residents who do not complete high school, thereby facing difficulties in securing employment. Additionally, the lack of industrialization in rural communities is a major concern. Communities often express frustration with their local municipalities due to the absence of LED. The influx of migrants is pushing cities to their limits. The migration of people from local municipalities is largely driven by the absence of developmental indicators. Local municipalities continue to grapple with the consequences of unemployment, poverty, and poor living conditions (Thusi & Selepe, 2023; Thusi, Mayisela, & Matyana, 2023). In such challenging conditions, it is only natural for people to seek better opportunities, prompting migration to improve their lives. The significant influx of people from rural areas has placed considerable strain on cities nationwide, leading to increased traffic congestion, housing, and infrastructure shortages, and, to some extent, a rise in crime rates (Mlambo, 2018). Rural-urban migration is a significant issue in the South African context, causing considerable concern among policymakers. As a result, local municipalities must dedicate adequate time to partnering with different stakeholders, creating robust governance structures, and upholding public confidence in the system.

The role of Local Municipalities and the interplay between Good Governance, Economic Opportunities, Basic Services, Infrastructure Development, Skills Development, And Training

Local municipalities are bound by Constitution to facilitate good governance, economic opportunities, basic services, infrastructure development, skills development, and training. Section 153 of the Constitution states that municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting, and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote the social and economic development of the community (Constitution of RSA, 1996). According to the Municipal System Act No:32 of 2000, municipalities are mandated to perform as coordinators, facilitators, and promoters of the local economic development programmes, with the aim of achieving sustainable Economy that will ultimately create jobs and alleviate poverty in local communities.
The interplay between good governance, basic service infrastructure development, and economic opportunities in South African local municipalities is a critical aspect of sustainable development. This dynamic and interconnected process suggests that success in one area can positively impact others, leading to holistic and sustainable development at the local government level.

- **Good governance**

  Good governance serves as the foundation for promoting ethical programs that enhance the culture of accountability and transparency in public administration (Maile & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2023). Effective governance is demonstrated through proficient administration and responsible oversight of public resources, necessitating the capacity, skills, knowledge, and resources to combat fraud and corruption (Fourie, 2009). Good governance is key in curbing migration from local municipalities and is a vehicle for realizing the vision of the 2030 Integrated Development Plan (IDP). It involves understanding the shared interests of stakeholders, delineating public action areas, and coordinating them to implement public policies effectively and efficiently (Khousya & Ben Abdelhadi, 2020). Good governance necessitates understanding the needs of the populace, adopting ethical governance practices, and formulating policies that advance the common good by fostering socio-economic empowerment, upholding human rights and dignity, and prioritizing environmental conservation (Ogunyemi, Adisa, & Hinson, 2022). Additionally, it involves implementing anti-corruption measures to ensure that resources are allocated for their intended purposes.

- **Economic opportunities**

  The process of industrialization and its related structural transformation catalyses economic growth and is a significant contributor to the generation of employment opportunities (Alcorta, 2017). Economic opportunities are crucial for poverty alleviation. Governments have underscored the significance of the small, medium, and microenterprise sectors (SMME) as a potential means to enhance opportunities for wealth distribution and the creation of employment (Ayandibu & Houghton, 2017; Department of Trade & Industry, 1995, cited in Enaifoghe & Ramsuraj, 2023). By fostering entrepreneurship and supporting small and medium enterprises, municipalities can address poverty at the grassroots level. Economic opportunities cannot operate in isolation; however, the concept is often blended with good governance to build sustainable economic development and growth.

- **Basic Services and Infrastructure Development**

  Infrastructure development, including roads, water supply, sanitation, and electricity, is essential for economic activities. Well-developed infrastructure attracts investment, facilitates trade, and enhances overall economic productivity. Access to basic services improves the quality of life for residents, leading to better health, education, and overall well-being, creating a healthier and more skilled workforce, thus contributing to economic development. The unending service delivery protests across the country result from the non-prevalence of basic service and infrastructure development (Mamokhere, 2022; Mamokhere & Kgobe, 2023). Infrastructure development is fundamental in bringing about overall development in the municipality. However, most projects have not succeeded completely in local municipalities due to corruption within the supply chain department. Basic service and infrastructure development remain a challenge in local municipalities, regardless of the support and capacity they
receive from other spheres of government (Mamokhere & Kgobe, 2023). Local municipalities must consider investing in infrastructure development and the rendering of basic services, as these remain crucial components of the economy.

- **Skills development, and training.**

To ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of municipalities, a proficient workforce is essential (Department of Public & Development Administration, 2017). The Skills Development Plan serves as a strategic tool designed to improve performance in both service delivery and infrastructure development (Seopetsa, 2020). Skills development and training in local municipalities are essential components for fostering economic growth, enhancing community well-being, and promoting effective governance. Skills development and training promote skills transfer within the jurisdiction of the local municipality, which in return strengthens municipal performance and further brings about socio-economic transformation. As such, investing in human capital becomes essential in ensuring that people with skills are retained. This investment means that proper training is conducted for municipal employees, including both administrators and political office barriers. The municipality should prefer a workforce that is more meritocratic than one that is deployed through a political pathway. Skills development programs should be available in local municipalities to equip local communities with the required skills to transform the state of their jurisdiction.

**Challenges Faced by Local Municipalities.**

Local municipalities in South Africa grapple with a multitude of challenges, including limited resources, service delivery failures, economic imbalances, human resource issues, and governance challenges. These challenges exert significant impacts on metropolitan municipalities as well.

- **Limited Resources and Failures in Service Delivery**

Limited resources and service delivery failures are prevalent in local municipalities, which often struggle to provide quality basic services such as water, sanitation, transport, good roads, and technological infrastructures (Moloto, Mkhomazi and Worku, 2020). These shortcomings are attributed to poor planning, financial mismanagement, corruption, and lack of community participation (Shongwe & Meyer, 2023). The slow pace of service delivery, coupled with the absence of improvement, exacerbates the challenges of poverty and unemployment (Moloto et al. 2020). The influx of people from rural to urban areas, such as the Gauteng Province, strains government resources and exacerbates infrastructure challenges (National Treasury, 2011). Metropolitan municipalities in South Africa are grappling with significant housing blockages, lack of infrastructure, informal settlements, and a dearth of urban planning strategies due to increased rural-urban migration. The government’s slow response in addressing these problems hampers service delivery (Bohler-Muller, Davids, Roberts, Kanyane, Struwig, Masiya & Nomdo, 2016).

- **Economic imbalance**

South Africa continues to witness a rise in rural-urban migration due to insufficient investment in rural development, leading to economic imbalances (Mthiyane, Wissink & Chiwawa, 2022). This migration has resulted in labor market adjustments and structural transformations, potentially impacting economic growth and the aggregate welfare of citizens (Mthiyane et al. 2022).

- **Human Resources and Governance**

Local municipalities face significant challenges in human resources and
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governance (Munzhedzi, 2015). The surge of local community protests over the past seven years indicates a crisis in local municipalities (Carrim, Stanz & Brown, 2022). The continuous findings by the Auditor-General, that local governments are regressing, solidify this fact.

- **Impact on Metropolitans**
  The poor level of service delivery in rural communities is causing a gradual drop in the trust of South Africans in their government, negatively impacting the country’s economic development (Moloto et al., 2020). This has led to numerous strikes and unrest, creating nationwide incidents reported throughout by the media (Moloto et al., 2020).

- **Migration and Strain on Both Rural and Urban Areas**
  The lack of good quality of life in rural areas has contributed to the creation of unhealthy and unsafe conditions, leading to migration (Moloto et al., 2020). This migration puts a strain on both rural and urban areas. Rural areas are left with reduced manpower and resources, while urban areas face increased demand for services and infrastructure (Moloto et al., 2020).

  To this end, the challenges faced by local municipalities in South Africa are multifaceted and interconnected. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that includes improving planning and management, combating corruption, increasing community participation, and investing in infrastructure and services. This would not only improve the quality of life in rural areas but also alleviate the strain on urban areas caused by migration. The study recognizes the need for managing rural-urban mobility, which poses a substantial danger to rural development as well as a burden on urban infrastructure (Chakwizira, Mashiri & Nhemachena, 2008). The neglect regarding the provision of basic infrastructure in rural areas has also resulted in high rural-urban migration (Department of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation, 2023). However, it can be argued that the creation of rural economic hubs can assist in managing rural-urban migration.

**CONCLUSION**

This paper on local municipalities in Managing Inward Migration from the Periphery to the Core in South Africa has yielded significant insights into the dynamics of migration patterns, the role of local municipalities, and the challenges faced in managing inward migration. The results of this paper highlight several key findings that are crucial for understanding and addressing the complexities of migration within South Africa.

**Migration Patterns and Trends:**

The analysis of secondary data revealed a consistent trend of migration from local municipalities to metropolitan areas in search of better economic opportunities, improved living standards, and access to essential services. This migration pattern has been driven by a combination of push factors in rural areas, such as limited job prospects, inadequate infrastructure, and social amenities, and pull factors in urban centres, including higher wages, educational opportunities, and healthcare facilities.

**Role of Local Municipalities:** The study emphasized the critical role that local municipalities play in managing and mitigating migration towards urban cores. By integrating rural development strategies with urban planning, job creation initiatives, and the resolution of systemic issues, local municipalities can create more attractive living conditions and economic opportunities within their communities. This approach is essential for reducing the pressure on metropolitan areas and promoting more balanced population distribution across municipalities.
Challenges and Opportunities: Despite the efforts of local municipalities, several challenges persist in effectively managing migration. These challenges include limited resources, capacity constraints, and the need for greater collaboration among stakeholders. However, the study also identified opportunities for improvement, such as enhancing governance structures, promoting local economic development, and investing in infrastructure projects to enhance the quality of life in rural areas.

RECOMMENDATION
Importance of Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration: A key finding of the study is the importance of a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach involving governmental bodies, local communities, NGOs, and the private sector. By working together, these stakeholders can leverage their respective expertise, resources, and networks to achieve meaningful and sustainable results in curbing migration to metropolitan areas. This collaborative effort is essential for addressing the complex and interconnected challenges associated with rural-urban migration.

Socio-Economic Implications: The unsustainable influx of migrants from rural areas to urban centres not only strains the resources and infrastructure of metropolitan areas but also exacerbates social inequalities and challenges in service delivery. By promoting more balanced population distribution and sustainable development practices, local municipalities can contribute to the overall socio-economic well-being of the country and improve the quality of life for all residents.

The study underlines the importance of understanding the push and pull factors driving migration, the strain it places on infrastructure and services in urban areas, and the implications for economic development and social cohesion. It also discusses the need for comprehensive approaches that involve improving governance, combating corruption, increasing community participation, and investing in infrastructure to enhance the quality of life in rural areas and alleviate the burden on urban centers. To this end, the paper advocates for a balanced approach to migration management that harnesses the benefits of migration while proactively addressing potential crises. By focusing on skills development, infrastructure enhancement, and tailored interventions in rural areas, policymakers can promote sustainable socio-economic transformations and create opportunities for inclusive growth. Ultimately, effective migration management is crucial for fostering resilience, promoting equitable development, and enhancing the overall well-being of both rural and urban communities in South Africa.

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