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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN**

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY OF

MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

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Declaration by the student

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or for any other award.

Signature:

Date:

Charity Karimi Nyambura**MIRD/2022/54203****Approval by supervisor**

I confirm that the work presented in this project is carried out by the candidate under my supervision.

Signature:

Date:

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Mount Kenya University

ABSTRACT

As the two largest economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa and Kenya have long had complex economic ties. Through these partnerships, both countries benefit from trade, investment, tourism, and other forms of growth and development. Immigration laws have a significant impact on these economic relationships. Workers, wealth, and goods are easily moved by immigrants. There have been recent modifications to South Africa's immigration policy. The socio-economic ties between South Africa and Kenya are mainly disregarded, even though these shifts are extensively recorded. The purpose of this study is to analyze the implications of South Africa's visa free travel regime of 2023-2024 for socioeconomic relations with Kenya. The objectives of the study are to analyze the implications of South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime on the bilateral trade, bilateral labor relations, and bilateral cultural exchange with Kenya. The study was grounded theoretically using liberalism theory and the

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|------------|--|
| AfCFTA | African Continental Free Trade Area |
| ESAiN | Embassy of South Africa in Nairobi |
| EU | European Union |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| KCC | Kenya Chamber of Commerce |
| KCCOs | Kenya Chamber of Commerce Offices |
| MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| NACOSTI | National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation |
| NAFTA | North American Free Trade Agreement |
| PDR | Performance Development Review |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| SSA | Sub-Saharan Africa |
| UERC – MKU | University Ethics & Review Committee of Mount Kenya University |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| US | United States of America |
| USD | United States Dollar |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

According to Ortega & Peri (2013) international migration patterns are significantly influenced by the GDP per capita of a destination nation. The rate of immigration rises by 0.76% for every 1% increase in per capita income. A further factor influencing migratory flows is the immigration laws passed by the nations that receive immigrants. Immigration drops by roughly 6% when a destination nation strengthens its admission restrictions. Internal migration was, however, reduced by about 10% as a result of the Schengen Treaty in Europe.

According to Gregory (2015) in the last decade Australia has implemented a two-stage process for immigrants to obtain permanent residency. To work or study in Australia, skilled or potentially skilled individuals must first secure temporary immigration status. There are fewer restrictions and no caps on the number of migrants in this level. In the second phase, temporary immigrants bolster their credentials for permanent residency by showcasing their superior labor market skills through their work experience or studies in Australia. This step is more tightly regulated and capped in terms of the number of migrants. Wright (2012) the liberalization of labor immigration policies in Australia and the UK had an impact on the labor market. During both countries' labor shortages, immigration controls were relaxed, thus increasing foreign worker intake.

According to Conversi & Machin-Autenrieth (2019) the cultural exchange in al-Andalus was not limited to Muslims and non-Muslims but also extended to other regions. Trade routes allowed Islamic goods, ideas, and knowledge to be exchanged with al-Andalus. Scholars, artists, and merchants from different parts of the Muslim world travelled to al-Andalus, contributing to the vibrant cultural atmosphere. Conversi & Machin-Autenrieth (2019) affirm that the historical significance of Muslim Spain lies in its role as a bridge between the Islamic and European civilizations. Art, architecture, music, and literature all received a resounding influence from al-Andalus's cultural exchange. Symbolizing intercultural dialogue and coexistence, al-Andalus' legacy is still celebrated and studied.

In addition to producing a sizable pool of temporary migrants with job rights, the two-step process lengthens the period of time between an immigrant's arrival and establishment of permanent visa status. The criteria for selecting settlers, the routes to permanent residence, and the interaction between recent immigrants and the Australian economy are all significantly impacted by this strategy (Gregory, 2015). In the construction, personal services, health, financial, and public sector industries such as education and healthcare, this was particularly evident. Growth in both countries increased labor demand over the domestic market's capacity during this period. The increase in labor immigration helped to fill this demand and sustain economic growth (Wright, 2012). Immigration in Canada has not increased aggregate unemployment over time. Increasing migration will ultimately benefit Canadian-born workers as the labor market adjusts (Islam, 2007).

Peters (2015) states that States closed their doors after World War I to immigrants and to trade. Peters (2015) claims that a number of causes led to immigration limitations. Most likely, labor-saving technologies reduced the amount of labor required. Natural trade barriers have been lessened by shipping and communications technologies, while more liberal trade laws have reduced labor-intensive industries in certain states. The ultimate blow that resulted in autarkic immigration and trade policy was the Great Depression. In determining how immigration affects economic performance, human capital is crucial. A highly skilled immigrant can contribute innovation and productivity in addition to bringing specialized knowledge and expertise. As native workers face greater competition for low-skilled jobs, low-skilled immigrants may raise greater controversy (Bashier & Siam, 2014). According to Muysken & Ziesemer (2013), temporary immigration may reduce unemployment and increase average wages, as well as GDP per person. The economy can benefit from these relatively small benefits. However, there must be a chance for immigrants to work alongside natives. According to Muysken and Ziesemer (2013), immigration policy ought to prioritize not just the quantity of immigrants but also their employability and skill distribution.

Immigration is a national issue and a federal responsibility (Su, 2012). For many years, the United States has drawn foreign nationals due to its economic opportunities, religious freedom, and civil and political rights. This lengthy history of immigration has been advantageous to our nation, maintaining and advancing our economic production and boosting the vitality of our diversified community (Kim, 2010). America has observed a steady pattern of immigration with the nation accounting for over 20% of the global immigration population. While the state and federal states have historically conflicted on regulation on immigration (Merrit, 2013; Miller,

2002; Elias, 2014). Morales (2013) advise that Reformers should devise original, democratically acceptable strategies to change the demands made by citizens, as opposed to concentrating on ways to overturn anti-immigrant measures that are responsive to popular will

According to Zimmermann (1996), Europe has seen waves of push and pull migration in recent decades. While push migration is thought to worsen the employment situation, pull migration has historically been viewed as economically advantageous (Jenkins, 1977; Parkins, 2010; Shrestha, 2017). This idea's theoretical foundation takes controlled migration into account, along with diverse labor and monopoly union conduct. Recent econometric studies indicate that business cycle impacts (supply-push) and chain migration (demand-pull) were the main drivers of immigration from the nations targeted for recruitment; however, these dynamics were altered when recruitment stopped in 1973. Contrary to popular belief, the relative economic circumstances in the receiving countries also have an impact on the flows of asylum seekers and refugees (supply-push) (Urbanski, 2022).

As FDI increased, so did support for free immigration in the United States, according to Peters (2014). Businesses that relied on the labor of immigrants faced greater competition and the risk of failure as trade opened up and other states became more welcoming to foreign capital. A decline in local workforce led to the closure of several businesses or the relocation of manufacturing abroad. Support for unrestricted immigration then declined as a result of these companies allocating their political capital to non-immigration-related causes. The absence of support gave officials the ability to impose immigration restrictions (Peters, 2014).

Lupak (2014) contends that migration can contribute to the socio-economic development of recipient territories by increasing human resources, urbanization, and stimulating the integral index of socio-economic development. A small scale of migration and other stronger factors may prevent immigration processes from having a significant impact on socio-economic development, according to Lupak (2014). According to Czaika and De Haas (2011), migratory origin and internal composition, as well as total volume and long-term trends, are more successfully impacted by immigration policies' overall efficacy than they are by their selection and composition. It is their contention that the available data indicates the importance of particular policies for particular groups of migrant flows that they are intended to regulate. The objectives of public discourses surrounding migration, however, appear to differ significantly from the real migration trends and patterns.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The immigration policy plays a very significant role in international relations, as it regulates the movement of people across borders, thereby leading to the exchange of goods and services, investment, culture, and diplomatic relations between countries. Hence the very importance of relation between immigration policy and international relations in regions where cross-border interactions form the basis of economic and social development, Sub-Saharan Africa in particular. South Africa and Kenya have been long-standing leading economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, with their relations very intricate in terms of socio-economic aspects. These relationships form a basis of benefiting both countries in terms of trade, investments, and tourism in other areas of growth and development. The large area of interaction is influenced by economic policies such as immigration, which the movement of goods, capital, and workers takes into effect. Recently, the immigration policy in South Africa has highly changed. While many of these policy shifts have been documented, their impact on the South African-Kenyan socio-economic relations have largely been left unattended to.

Preliminary observations suggest that these amendments in immigration policy are bound to affect bilateral trade, investment flows, and labor mobility, besides all other socio-economic interactions between the two countries, very deeply. However, the nature, extent, and long-term implications of these changes in immigration policy around the world are not clearly known. Without proper research, policymakers, business leaders, and other stakeholders will be in the dark. This therefore bestrides the urgency with which it becomes necessary to appraise whether the point of alteration of visa travel regime by South Africa will become an arena of more magnified socio-economic cooperation or still will be a noose that slowly but surely gets to draw at the socio-economic linkage between these two countries. This visa travel regime has lacked proper research on the possible effects and imprints the South African policy may have on its socioeconomic relations towards Kenya. This, in the process, provides insight into the general current affairs of the day on socioeconomic matters, with an aim of charting a way forward in terms of policy and business decisions.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the implications of South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime for socioeconomic relations with Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to;

- i. To analyze the implications of South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime on the bilateral trade with Kenya.
- ii. To assess the implications of South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime on bilateral labor relations with Kenya.
- iii. To investigate the implications of South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime on bilateral cultural exchange with Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The following are the research questions for the study;

- i. What are the implications of South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime on the bilateral trade with Kenya?
- ii. What are the implications of South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime on bilateral labor relations with Kenya?
- iii. How does South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime impact the bilateral cultural exchange with Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The South Africa Immigration Policy Change therefore means a lot in respect to the socio-economic affair between South Africa and Kenya. South Africa and Kenya are the two leading economies on the continent of Africa. Understanding the dynamics between these two countries could provide insight into regional socio-economic trends. Therefore, this research outlines how visa free travel regimes can encourage or discourage socio-economic growth between two leading economies of Africa. The effects of changed immigration policy on socioeconomic factors are therefore very relevant not only to the South African and Kenyan policymakers but also to entrepreneurs or business leaders who have an eye on the growing markets in the two countries. With this research increasing the pool of knowledge in identifying some of the probable socioeconomic consequences of this amended immigration policy, future decisions will be more evidence-based. For entrepreneurs and business leaders, pending changing economic fortunes in both countries need consideration. An appreciation of visa free travel regime implications shall place businesses in a better position to strategize operations, investments, and partnerships. Labor mobility between South Africa and Kenya has implications for job opportunities, skills transfer, cultural interchange, and economic

development. This points out the impact of the policy change on professional, skilled, and other labor category movements between the two countries. Indeed, Africa's aspirations for increased regional integration, reflected in initiatives such as AfCFTA, require seamless interactions of policies across the member states. This study adds to the discussion how country-level policies shape regional ambitions. Literature is lacking on how changes to immigration policy within the African context more precisely affect bilateral economic relations. This thus be a contribution of some sort to the academic field, adding new insights and data to this relevant issue.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study focused on analyzing the implications of South Africa's visa free travel regime for socioeconomic relations with Kenya. The study specifically analyzes the implication of South Africa's policy change on; cultural exchange, volume of trade, balance of payment and skilled worker's transfer. The study target South Africa's diplomatic staff, Kenya's immigration officers, trade representatives, cultural ambassadors and representatives from the Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The study have a sample size of 356 respondents. The study looks at visa free travel regimes in the last decade and be carried out between October 2023 to June 2024. The study uses descriptive design and target the Kenyans importing or exporting from and to South Africa.

1.8 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This section identifies the scope, limits, and boundaries within which this research was undertaken. The section is important in identifying areas of focus for the study while recognizing that recentness of policy, challenges in the availability of data, and the contextualizing of findings against these particular socio-economic dynamics restricts this further. In this sense, this part of the research both describes the limitations and delimitations, thereby clearly showing the reach of the study; yet it also takes into consideration limitations that may be imposed relative to generalization or depth.

1.8.1 Limitations of the Study

Given that the visa free travel regime is recent, the study will only capture short-term effects. A full assessment of long-term implications that may differ significantly may not be available. Comprehensive and up-to-date data on certain socioeconomic indicators might be lacking, especially if governmental or relevant institutions have not conducted recent surveys or studies post-policy change. In generalizing its findings to other African countries with different

socioeconomic and political circumstances, limitations may arise. These socioeconomic relations between countries are influenced by a myriad of factors, including global economic trends, other policy changes, and unforeseen events (e.g., natural disasters, pandemics). Isolating the impact of the visa free travel regime from these other variables can be challenging.

1.8.2 Delimitations of the Study

This is a geographical study with a focus on Nairobi, Kenya. It contextualizes the theme of socioeconomic ties between South Africa and Kenya in view of the recent shift in the country's immigration policy. The choice of Nairobi for this study was very strategic; it is not only a center of diplomacy but also of trade and culture. All the important organizations pertinent to this work are hosted here: the Kenya Chamber of Commerce, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the South African Embassy. The study focuses on the effects that result after a change in the immigration law over some period in South Africa. To enable a contemporary understanding of the effects that result from changes in policy, the analysis shall only consider current changes and span for a time after the implementation of such. The target audience is restricted to groups that have been directly impacted by or are aware of the changes in South Africa's immigration laws and how they affect Kenya. This includes the diplomatic staff from South Africa, the government officials from Kenya who oversee the immigration and desk in South Africa, experts in trade and commerce, and cultural ambassadors. These groups were selected based on their capacity to offer perspectives pertinent to the goals of the research. The research design was a mixed-method approach, with the results derived from key informant interviews embedded in structured questionnaires. This methodology does, of course, limit the research to data that can be captured using these tools: skilled worker exchanges and quantitative trade, together with qualitative information about cross-cultural interactions and the broader effects of policy changes. A study of this nature is automatically limited to the approaches adopted and the variables focused on while undertaking the task, even when it aims to provide comprehensive knowledge regarding various effects that emerged as an outcome of changes in the immigration policy in South Africa. This paper places ample emphasis on trade, exchange of skilled workers, and cultural interaction rather than on an integrated studying all probable socio-economic effects.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study will be carried under the following assumptions;

- i. It is assumed that the changes in South Africa's immigration policy are implemented consistently across the board, without significant deviations or exceptions.
- ii. The study assumes that the data sources utilized, whether governmental reports, economic indicators, or primary data collected, are accurate and reliable.
- iii. The study operates under the assumption that during the research period, there are no significant external shocks (e.g., global economic crises, major geopolitical events) that might disproportionately affect the economic relations between South Africa and Kenya.
- iv. The study assumes that during the research period, Kenya does not undergo significant immigration or related policy changes that might affect its economic relations with South Africa.



1.10 Operational Definition of Key Terms

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| Balance of Payment | the balance of payment between South Africa and Kenya will be analyzed based on the net difference between the monetary value of exports and imports, including financial transfers and investments, over a specified period, typically a fiscal year. |
| Diplomatic Relations | diplomatic relations between South Africa and Kenya refer to the official communications, agreements, treaties, and interactions facilitated through their respective embassies and consulates, and any other recognized diplomatic channels. |
| Economic Relations | economic relations between South Africa and Kenya refer to the volume and nature of trade (exports and imports), investment flows, labor exchanges, and any other monetary transactions that occur between the two nations. |
| Immigration | immigration pertains to the movement of individuals from Kenya to South Africa or vice versa, for purposes such as work, study, business, or settlement. |
| Immigration Policy | immigration policy refers to the official documents, laws, and regulations set by the South African government that dictate the terms and conditions under which Kenyan nationals can enter, reside, and work in South Africa, and vice versa. |
| Immigration Policy Change | immigration policy change denotes any recent alterations made by the South African government to its existing immigration rules and regulations that pertain to Kenyan nationals, or vice versa. |
| Skilled Workers | skilled workers refer to individuals from Kenya working in South Africa, or vice versa, who have attained a certain level of formal education (e.g., diploma, degree) or possess professional certifications in fields such as |

engineering, medicine, IT, finance, and other specialized sectors.

Volume of Trade

the volume of trade between South Africa and Kenya will be measured by the combined value (in USD or another appropriate currency) of imports and exports between the two nations over a specified timeframe, typically a fiscal year.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the review of literature from published scholarly work, providing a solid foundation for the study. It also describes the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that support the research, providing an organized lens through which the subject is investigated. The chapter also noted research gaps in the overall study's aims that call for doing this investigation.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

One of the most important areas of research in the fields of international relations and economic development is the dynamic interaction between changes in immigration policy and socioeconomic interactions. This analysis of the literature methodically looks at the growing corpus of academic work that clarifies the complex effects of South Africa's revisions to its immigration laws on its socioeconomic ties to Kenya. The three main goals of the evaluation are to examine how these policy changes would affect trade between the two countries, how skilled people will be exchanged, and how these policy changes will affect the subtleties of cultural integration and interchange.

The literature provides insights into the intricate mechanisms by which immigration policies affect skilled labor mobility, cultural dynamics, and economic connections. It draws from a wide range of perspectives in the fields of political science, sociology, and economics. Researchers like Peters (2015) and Jacks & Tang (2018) explore the relationship between trade regulations and immigration policy and their economic justification. As a strategic element of contemporary immigration strategies, academics such as Boucher & Cerna (2014) and Ferrer et al. (2014) concentrate on the targeted attraction of talented workers. In terms of culture, Gretter et al. (2017) and Kim & Streich (2020) investigate how to create welcoming cultures and how institutions may help immigrants fit in with their new social environments. The goal of this review is to compile the results of previous studies while pointing out any gaps that could provide directions for further research. This review aims to illustrate the interdependence of immigration laws, trade agreements, labor mobility, and cultural assimilation through a survey of the literature, highlighting the intricacy of socioeconomic relationships in a globalized society.

2.2.1 Overview of Visa free travel regime and International Socioeconomic Relations

Czaika & De Haas (2013) defined immigration as a migration into a country with the aim of settling. Crossing international borders and establishing residence overseas are involved. The government establishes immigration policies to regulate foreign entry, stay, and rights, according to Money (2010). Several factors, including the conditions and purpose of entry this. In different countries, immigration policies may specify skill requirements, reunification requirements, humanitarian considerations, or national security concerns. Using these policies, the country manages and regulates immigrants economically, socially, and politically. Economic growth, the makeup of the labor market, education, inequality, conflict, and the emergence and fall of governments are the main factors influencing international migration. These elements are thought to shape migration processes and are affected by nation-states' participation, non-migration policies and institutions, and both (Czaika, & De Haas, 2013).

Ferrer, Picot, and Riddell (2014) state that Canada is one of the top immigration destinations in the globe, with between 200,000 and 250,000 newcomers moving there each year on average in recent times. It is anticipated that 0.8 percent of immigrants from the western world are allowed to Canada and Australia annually. Ferrer et al. (2014) claim that Canada did away with the long-standing practice of classifying source nations as "preferred" or "non-preferred" in 1962 and instead decided to admit candidates based on their individual qualities, particularly their level of education and skill. Australia began using points-based selection for economic migrants in the early 1980s; Canada had pioneered this method in the 1960s. According to Ferrer et al. (2014), the points system was solely applicable to "principal applicants" who were applying for admission as members of the "economic" class.

In Lupak (2014), migration and socioeconomic development are complex, multifactorial relationships. The socioeconomic development trend can both be a factor and a consequence of migration. Social development, disposable income, and average wages can be affected by migration in socioeconomic indicators. However, socioeconomic factors such as social infrastructure and labor market development can also influence migration intensity and direction. Migration and socioeconomic development are best studied using econometric tools (Lupak, 2014) to determine their strength and direction. Phouxay, (2010) analyses the socio-economic change in Lao Performance Development Review (PDR) highlighting several key points. Political regime changes and social structure change marked the period from 1975 to 1980. This included resettlement efforts post-war, the return of refugees to their original areas, and movement to cities or the capital city. In 1985 to 1990s period, the government

implemented development policies such as resettlement programs, upland development, rural development programs, and infrastructure improvement. A market-oriented economy and foreign investments occurred simultaneously in Laos. Migration patterns during this time included resettlement from war areas, rural-rural migration, and the emergence of rural-urban migration (Phouxay, 2010).

The emergence of Turkey as a migration destination, particularly for the offspring of Turks and Kurds who have traveled to Germany and Europe during the past fifty years, is examined by Sirkeci, Cohen, and Yazgan (2012). Insecurity has been the main factor influencing migration from Turkey to Europe, particularly Germany, for the past 50 years. However, changes in Turkish society, the economy, and security are now drawing migrants. According to Sirkeci et al. (2012), ethnic conflicts have historically had a significant role in migration and, as they point out, they still have an effect on the relationship that exists between socioeconomic growth and the emigration rates of Kurdish migrants today. However, Sirkeci et al. (2012) contend that rising social freedoms and the expansion of Turkey's economy encourage more immigration to the country. Returnees and second and third generation Turks from Germany are among the groups of people who immigrate to Turkey (Sirkeci et al., 2012).

2.2.2 Visa Free Travel Regime and Bilateral Trade

According to Peters (2015), researchers should examine trade and immigration policy from an integrated perspective rather than studying them as distinct foreign economic strategies. According to Peters (2015), immigration and trade policies can be substituted. Trade policy decisions have an impact on immigration laws in nations with a labor shortage by affecting businesses. Trade closure results in lower average firm demand for immigration, which leads to restricted immigration, while trade opening results in higher average firm level demand for immigration, which leads to immigration openness. To investigate the immigration policies of 19 states from the 18th to the early 21st centuries, researchers created new datasets. According to Peter (2015), trade policy does, in fact, have the predicted impact on immigration; understanding immigration policy requires understanding trade policy.

Trade and immigration have become important policy concerns again in the modern era, and with good cause, according to Jacks & Tang (2018). The collective flow of products and labor has shown significant ups and downs as a measure of globalization. According to Jacks & Tang (2018), these two forces grew almost simultaneously in the decades preceding World War I, fell apart during the interwar years, and then began to recover, although with a far stronger increase

in commerce than in immigration. According to Jacks & Tang's (2018) long-panel analysis, there is a positive correlation between the bilateral exports of the US and Canada, which together accounted for the majority of immigrants and goods during this period, and inward migration from those trade partners, indicating complementarity based on factors of production. On the other hand, a significant shift in US immigration policy during the interwar years combined with the study's meticulous examination utilizing a triple differences paradigm suggests otherwise. Although Jacks & Tang (2018) attribute this to unreported changes in immigration law, it does highlight the need for more rigorous empirical research in this field.

Borjas (2018) draws a comparison between immigration and global trade in the document. The author contends that although both involve flows across international borders, immigration and commerce are not always equivalent in terms of their perceived benefits and contributions to the economy. Human migration is a component of immigration, as noted by Borjas (2018), and its effects have the potential to negate or even reverse the net economic benefits that such flows can produce for the receiving nation. Therefore, Borjas (2018) suggests reconsidering immigration from the perspective of economic efficiency rather than redistribution.

According to Luckstead, Devadoss & Rodriguez (2012) North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) contributed to the increase in undocumented workers in US agriculture. Under NAFTA, trade liberalization increased US farm exports to Mexico, increasing agricultural labor demands. In search of employment opportunities, Mexican workers migrating to the US. The US agricultural market was flooded by US products, causing Mexican farming output prices to drop and some Mexican farmers to leave the business. This further pushed Mexican workers to seek employment in the US. Undocumented workers' impacts of NAFTA are complex, influenced by many factors including US farm subsidies (Luckstead et al., 2012).

According to Çağatay et al. (2014), there is a favorable association between migration and the export of food, drinks, live animals, machinery, and transport equipment. It is thought that the work force that migrants provide meets labor demand, increases exports, and increases production in these industries. Furthermore, Çağatay et al. (2014) note that immigrants from Eastern European nations boost industry and crude material exports. According to Çağatay et al. (2014), migration benefits the imports of machinery, transport equipment, food, and live animals. Imports of food and live animals are rising in tandem with the rising demand for domestic goods among migrants. The increase in the importation of machinery and transport

equipment may be attributed to the labor force of unqualified immigrants who are unable to obtain jobs in these industries within the European Union (EU) (Çağatay et al., 2014).

One may make the case in Genc et al. (2012) that immigration raises output and aggregate demand, which in turn raises the demand for imports. If immigrants work in export-related businesses where unit production costs are reduced or if immigration generally improves the host country's global competitiveness, exports may also rise as a result. According to Genc et al. (2012), there is a possibility that immigrants will maintain ties to their home country on a micro level. These ties could aid firms in the host nation in creating networks that will enable them to import or export goods to and from the migrant's country of origin. According to Genc et al. (2012), having migrants engage in trade can also increase trust in the home and host nations' commercial connections. Homegrown products are frequently preferred by migrants (especially food items, but not entirely). Due to a "demonstration effect," the demand for these products eventually rises within the host community as well (e.g., ethnic eateries).

According to Jacks & Tang (2018), there is a substantial amount of empirical research analyzing the effects of immigration on recipient nations, specifically with regard to wages. However, very few studies situate immigration within the framework of an open economy connected to trade flows or involving numerous nations. According to Jacks & Tang (2018), there is conflicting historical evidence: trade and immigration were equally important during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, while trade was more prevalent after World War II. Trade and immigration may consequently differ according on the time period under consideration.

2.2.3 Visa Free Travel Regime and Bilateral Labor Relations

According to Boucher & Cerna (2014), governments' policy preferences for skilled immigration have increased over the past ten years. Skilled immigration strategies aim to fill labor market gaps caused by structural aging and economic trends by bringing in new immigrants. Simultaneously, skilled immigrants—including those coming through family reunification streams—are frequently perceived as less government dependent and more prepared for the labor market than other types of immigrants. Skilled immigration is becoming more and more significant globally, according to numerous international organizations (Boucher & Cerna, 2014).

According to Ferrer et al. (2014), the points system has prioritized the selection of highly skilled immigrants from its inception, particularly in the last few years. Immigration policy has

changed recently, favoring admitting more people into the economic class and fewer people into the family reunification and refugee classes. Including the primary applicants and their spouses and dependents, around 60% of all immigrants to Canada currently fall into the "economic" category.

According to Muyambo & Ranga's (2020) research, the primary driver of migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa was the lack of work in Zimbabwe. Migrant households' consumption of commodities increased and their purchasing power increased as a result of the migration. Remittances covered household expenses, but they weren't enough. As a result, some neglected to consume balanced diets, seek medical attention when ill, and pay their children's school fees on time. According to Muyambo & Ranga (2020), migrant workers' children do not always automatically enjoy a better life when they choose to relocate to South Africa. Some of them don't send money home on a regular basis, and the sums they do send may be modest. Notwithstanding this difficulty, migrant households relied on remittances to support them in hard times. According to Muyambo & Ranga (2020), the government should regulate labor migration to South Africa by generating jobs and making sure the offspring of low-income labor migrants attend school.

Immigration can replace institutions that don't exist or don't produce the desired results, claim Afonso & Devitt (2016). Education and skill sets are an excellent example of this: when institutions of vocational training do not produce enough workers to meet the demands of businesses (for example, in the fields of carpentry, bricklaying, or plumbing), there is a skills mismatch and a possible need for hiring foreign labor. In this situation, immigration can take the place of educational institutions by allowing businesses to hire talented individuals from other countries. Additionally, as was the case with early training in the United States, a huge supply of personnel with foreign training could impede or replace training institutions. A consistent flow of skills created "for free" overseas can deter domestic businesses from investing in educating employees to produce these abilities domestically (Afonso & Devitt, 2016).

Holzer (2011) states that there has been a lot of political and scholarly focus on the costs associated with immigrants of lower skill levels. In the US labor market since the 1980s, immigration has significantly increased the number of workers without a high school education; nonetheless, the effect on the earnings and employment opportunities of Americans with lower skill levels has been less than anticipated. In the long run, immigration is thought to be mostly

unrelated to the decline in lower-skilled Americans' labor market employment and earnings, even according to the most pessimistic assessments of the effect on comparable US workers.

According to Holzer (2011), if immigration were to stop, earnings might increase slightly in some fields and professions, but most likely not enough to significantly improve the lives of Americans with lower skill levels, such as "disconnected" youth and racial minorities. According to Chassamboulli & Peri (2020), the family route creates family employment chances for high-skilled immigrants who travel to the US, even though it also permits unskilled workers. Highly skilled people are more likely to relocate and, through job referrals, create networking possibilities for other highly competent people. According to Chassamboulli & Peri (2020), symmetrically, the job route creates family opportunities for unskilled immigrants while only permitting highly skilled professionals. When opposed to employment-based policies, the long-term benefits and drawbacks of family reunion policies in the US are slightly less in terms of rising skilled/unskilled ratios. It turns out that restricting either of the two methods has comparable detrimental effects on job development.

Kahanec & Zimmermann (2011) claim that Europe has always been the meeting point of numerous immigrant paths and a crossroads of cultures. Whether immigrants are a benefit or a curse is not well-defined in the public discourse of Europe. This ambivalence is evident in the policy response to the issues posed by immigration, which is likely also a reflection of its own incoherence. While the customs of European nations toward immigration management vary, there is a general consensus regarding the absence of a functional immigration strategy. Consequently, controlling immigration from outside the country continues to be one of Europe's biggest problems. Specifically, any immigration policy aimed at luring highly skilled workers is still in its early stages (Kahanec & Zimmermann, 2011).

According to Reitz (2013), despite the fact that Canada has long prioritized the selection of highly talented immigrants, there are now significant gaps between the reality of skilled immigration and what occurs in the country's labor markets. The common consensus is that education must be prioritized in order to satisfy the growing need for skilled labor, which is expected to worsen with time due to the demands of the information economy. But there are three significant "gaps" between the real involvement of immigrants in Canadian labor markets and this skilled immigration. First off, despite being assumed to be qualified, skilled immigrants frequently fail to land professional and other highly specialized employment. Second, despite the focus on professional and other post-secondary education, many companies have indicated

a considerable demand for less-skilled immigration to fill labor shortages in various crafts and other lower-level occupations. Finally, there is an increase in illegal immigration, primarily of unskilled foreigners filling positions that native-born Americans are purportedly unable to complete (Reitz, 2013).

2.2.4 Visa Free Travel Regime and Bilateral Cultural Exchange

According to The Alps and Carpathians (2017), "welcoming cultures" are social settings that encourage the growth of ties between newcomers and long-term locals. It entails forming integrated communities, identifying chances for cross-cultural exchange, and identifying areas of shared interest. The goal of a welcome culture, according to Gretter et al. (2017), is to reduce resistance to changes in social interactions, encourage community members' empowerment and engagement, and improve the allure of areas as places to live and work. Gretter and colleagues (2017) underscore the significance of a nurturing social milieu, the involvement of community members who serve as intermediaries between disparate socioeconomic and ethnic groups, and the accessibility of suitable sites for the relocation and provision of assistance to recently arrived individuals. Gretter et al., (2017) found that there has been a counter process of increasing immigration into mountainous regions in the Alps and Carpathians, which have traditionally experienced outmigration and abandonment.

Language and cultural difficulties, according to Liaqat, Axtell, and Munteanu (2021), pose a serious threat to the social relationships that grandparents and grandchildren have in immigrant families. Activities involving cultural interaction, such as storytelling aloud, help strengthen these vital bonds. According to Liaqat et al. (2021), families find it difficult to manage these seemingly ordinary exchanges because of the hurdles that are in place. Grandparents are more vulnerable to long-term social separation from their families as a result of the ensuing intergenerational drift. Previous studies that offered technology-mediated assistance for the social contacts between grandparents and grandchildren in non-immigrant households discovered that these treatments did, in fact, strengthen the bonds between grandparents and grandchildren in both physically close and distant multigenerational families. According to Liaqat et al. (2021), technology-mediated support for intergenerational immigrant cultural exchange needs to be planned for this triologic process, take into account the importance of expressing values as a kind of meta-commentary on a narrative, and change the way that we view current "barriers" in order to see how they might encourage more engagement.

The impression of culture is correlated with exposure to foreign languages, according to Newman, Hartman, and Taber (2012). Interactions with immigrants who do not speak English and unintentional exposure to Spanish can heighten sentiments of cultural threat. According to Newman et al. (2012), this is because these interactions and exposures really erect obstacles in the way of interpersonal exchange and communication, making people feel afraid. White Americans who had close interaction with non-English speakers perceived more cultural challenges, which bolstered support for deportations and immigration restrictions.

According to Antonsich & Matejskova (2015), the national is still important as a socio-political structure since it gives underprivileged groups a sense of emotional connection, solidarity, and empowerment. According to Antonsich & Matejskova (2015), the national should be objectively studied rather than disregarded. The essay emphasizes the need to transcend an essentializing, monoculturally colored conception of the country. According to Antonsich & Matejskova (2015), the national can be interpreted as a political, social, or economic register that acts in a variety of settings and scales and can bring together customs, behaviors, and sensibilities that go against the nationalist notion of a nation that is monocultural.

According to Kim & Streich (2020) centers for international exchange in Japan play a crucial role in the integration of foreign residents. Services and activities are offered here to assist foreign residents in adapting to Japanese life and fostering community connections. Kim & Streich (2020) affirm that these centers serve as information hubs, providing foreign residents with essential information on various topics such as visa procedures, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. Foreign residents can take language classes and get translation assistance from them to overcome language barriers. In addition, Kim & Streich (2020) contend that centers for international exchange organize cultural exchange programs and activities that promote understanding and appreciation of Japanese culture among foreign residents. Craft classes, cultural festivals, and community events are among these events. Kim & Streich (2020) found that centers for international exchange play a crucial role in the integration of foreign residents in Japan.

According to Conversi & Machin-Autenrieth (2019) Muslim Spain, also known as al-Andalus, had a significant historical significance in terms of cultural exchange. The Spanish intellectual, artistic, and scientific world flourished during Muslim rule. A multicultural and pluralistic society coexisted and interacted in Muslim Spain. Conversi & Machin-Autenrieth (2019) contend that the cultural exchange in al-Andalus was influenced by the Islamic civilization,

which brought advancements in various fields such as science, medicine, mathematics, and philosophy. The Renaissance brought ancient Greek and Roman texts back to Europe thanks to the translation and preservation of Muslim scholars. Therefore, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism merged their cultural elements in architectural, musical, literary, and poetic forms.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This paper will adopt an expanded toolkit incorporating liberalism in international relations and the Push-Pull Theory of migration to analyze implications of the changes in immigration policy in South Africa on socioeconomic ties with Kenya. Both theories have two concepts explaining the intricate dynamics of immigration policy impacts: incentives for micro, more detailed individual levels and macro-level international interactions. While building on the work of contemporary scholars such as Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, underpinned with enlightenment principles from intellectuals such as Immanuel Kant and John Locke, enables a more profound perception of the international relations dimensions of this work. Within the context of this research, liberalism, through the lens of possibilities of gains and collaboration, will provide lenses for an investigation into the ways in which visa-free travel regimes of South Africa influence bilateral trade, exchanges of skilled workers, and cultural integration with Kenya.

Complementary to liberalism, the Push-Pull Theory of Migration has been developed by Everett S. Lee (1966) and others, encapsulating personal and social aspects of migration. He finds "pull" factors such as job opportunities, political freedom, or improvement in living conditions that pull people into a new country and "push" factors-economic hardship, political turmoil, or environmental decline-that push people out of their own countries. Based on this theoretical framework, this paper explores some of the unique economic and social contexts in South Africa and Kenya that inform migratory flows into the country and considers what potential effects changing immigration legislation may have on these push-pull dynamics. The dual theoretical lends itself to an investigation of high-level international relations elements that influence state policy and individual-level choices that determine migration patterns. It provides an analytical framework through which the socioeconomic consequence of immigration policy on commerce, labor mobility, and cultural exchanges in the complex relationship between South Africa and Kenya is gauged.

2.3.1 Liberalism Theory

Liberalism as an international relations concept first emanated from the philosophy of the enlightenment supported by intellectuals like John Locke and Immanuel Kant 1724-1804 in the 18th century. It contemplates a world where democratic governance, the rule of law along with the interdependence of states and non-state players reduces the anarchic aspects of global society. Other well-renown representatives of modern liberalism are Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, who gave wider promotion to the theory by explaining in more detail how transnational exchange of ideas and cultures, economic interdependence, and international institutions promote concord and cooperation in international relations. Liberalism proceeds on the supposition that people, businesses, and international organizations all have significant responsibilities to perform in international affairs as well as governments. It postulates that moral principles and self-interest are meeting points in these actors and that cooperation is desirable as well as possible even in a globalised society. From the liberal view, this complex web of interactions present amongst states acts as an opportunity for cooperation and development rather than a ground for power contention. For instance, in Gold & McGlinchey (2017),. This introduction identifies the importance of the theory through understanding the dynamics of international policy and the effects it produces, setting a stage to apply the principles of liberalism in assessing socioeconomic ramifications that the South African visa travel regimes have on its ties with Kenya.

Liberalism perceives international economic interdependence as a source of harmony and cooperation (Meiser, 2017). Based on this, the current research has considered how the change in immigration policy in South Africa could affect the state of economic interdependence of the nation with Kenya to alter the trade relations based on the liberalism theory (Watson, 2017 & Phillips, 2017). As the hypothesis goes, more liberal immigration laws can enhance labor mobility and skill sharing that may augment trade by diversified markets and facilitated atmosphere for business cooperation, accordingly. Research, as presupposed by the liberal view that more interdependence strengthens the development of bilateral relationships, shall look into how these policy changes affect trade volume and the balance of trade to finally the industries most positively or negatively impacted.

In the theory of liberalism, international cooperation seeks to identify the guiding principle: mutual benefit from cooperating partners. The theoretical framework in this paper will, therefore, be instructive to see the way in which South Africa and Kenya could potentially find ways of cooperating to surmount the challenges presented by changing immigration policy in

search of outcomes that benefit all parties. Therefore, this research will explore how laws shape cultural exchange, social inclusion, and the development of a multicultural society by underlining some useful exchange programs and cultural diplomacy strategies for the benefit of the bilateral relationship. The use in this paper of the liberalism theory as one aspect of the theoretical framework means the complex dynamics at play in the aftermath of reforms to South Africa's immigration law will be fully explored.

Although liberalism extrinsically provides an appropriate conceptual framework for international cooperation and interdependence, there are a number of limits and assumptions that undermine its real-world applicability in certain situations. For instance, an over-optimism of the liberalism approach holds it axiomatic that states and other actors naturally would prefer cooperation to conflict and that economic interdependence would promote harmony. This is oblivious of the fact that asymmetries of power and national interests create conflict between otherwise interdependent states. Critics argue that liberalism diminishes competitive and security-oriented dimensions of international relations, which are underscored in theories like realism, identification of state sovereignty and power retains its prime place. Liberalism even assumes that democratic values are universally respected and beneficial, setting aside diversity in culture and politics that may lead other states to reject democratic governance as a primary end. It is, therefore, advisable that even as liberalism offers a helpful insight into cooperation and economic ties, it may be idealistic to the extent that it is rather insufficient when power politics and clashing national interests rule.

2.3.2 Push-Pull Migration Theory

The Push and Pull Theory of Migration is an elementary framework through which the dynamics of human migration may be understood. First developed by Everett S. Lee in 1966, the 'pull' factors of the destination country-for example, better employment opportunities, higher living standards, and political stability-are intertwined with the 'push' factors of the country of origin, including economic hardship, political instability, and environmental challenges. This theory sets out the interaction of these factors in esteem. The latter is based on the premise of the interrelation of each one of those factors and such intervening obstacles as physical distance, immigration laws, and cultural barriers on the decision to migrate. Among the many outcomes of this pioneering work done by Lee are that several scholars have taken upon their mantle to investigate the complex factors that influence migrant decisions of individuals and groups, placing emphasis on how personal and environmental factors play a role in such a process. It is the broad-based approach found in this theory that has molded

migration studies. Indeed, it has furthered mankind's understanding of the dynamic forces that shape patterns of migration throughout the world and how those are influenced by shifting policy (Zimmerman, 1996 & Jenkins, 1977).

This approach, based on the application of Everett Lee's Push-Pull ((1966) Theory of Migration in the analysis of what effects the modifications of South Africa's immigration policy may create for its socio-economic relations with Kenya, gives a methodical framework for the analysis of complex reasons that underlie the migration flows between the two countries. It provides a wide eye through which the dynamics of migration can be understood; it identifies and analyzes the aforementioned pull factors of this theory-improved job prospects, higher living standards, and political stability in South Africa-alongside the push factors-economic duress, unemployment, and political instability in Kenya (Garell & Tazzioli, 2021; Van Hear, Bakewell & Long, 2020). This analytical tool will allow an all-rounded analysis and understanding of how specific changes in immigration laws can influence the desirability of South Africa as a destination for Kenya emigrants. It considers not only political and economic motivations but also intervening obstacles that may be created or destroyed by such policy changes and influence migrants' decisions. The idea emphasizes the importance of judgement regarding the level of push and pull, such as immigration laws and policies, on the pattern of migration.

The Push-Pull Theory certainly applies in this study and will help shed light on the relationship between individual decision-making processes and broader socio-economic trends. It recognizes that migrants weigh up the relative benefits of movement in the context of current circumstances influenced by the various prevailing socio-economic conditions in their home country and those presented to them from within their resettlement country (Parkins, 2010; Khalid & Urbański, 2021). For instance, the study by Muyambo & Ranga (2020), has demonstrated how economic push factors-most of which were inspired by the lack of employment in Zimbabwe-are combined with the pull of employment prospects in South Africa to induce migrant flows. Application of this theory goes further in understanding how modifications within immigration policy in South Africa could change these push-pull dynamics, hence affecting the amount and kind of migration that emanates from Kenya. The Push-Pull Theory makes it possible to adopt an all-rounded outlook toward understanding migration as part of responses to shifting policy landscapes, considering the involvement of national economic trends and immigration policy at a macro level against decisions made at the micro levels of the individual or family. This brings significant socio-economic implications for both countries of destination and origin.

Another preliminary framework, the Push-Pull Migration Theory, underlined economic, political, and environmental factors attracting migrants to a destination or pushing them from their origin. Simultaneously, this theory is often criticised because such an approach is too simplistic; it reduces very complex migrations into simple dichotomies in factors of push and pull. In the process, it may turn a blind eye to other influential factors, such as social networks, historical connections, and affinities based on culture. These can be considered critical in migration decisions but will not fall into the push-pull categories. Another failing of the theory is that it perceives migration as an individual linear process of rational decision-making, which may fail to take into consideration a number of other pressures, such as those emanating from emotions, social and psychological factors that may come to bear upon the migrant. Critics insist that the theory is bound to be too rigid to explain the irregular migration patterns in the contexts where migrants are considerably constrained or face systemic barriers and that it may also fall short of portraying the agency of migrants in their decision to move outside purely economic motives of gain, such as lifestyle choice or personal aspiration. Consequently, the Push-Pull Theory provides useful insights, though not without its own limits; for this reason, even this theory is in need of supplementation by other theories in order to explain the multidimensional nature of migration.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The dependent variables are aspects of the relationship that may be changed, whereas the visa-free travel regimes in South Africa serve as the driving force or independent variable. These latter effects, although direct, may also be moderated by the quality and nature of the diplomatic ties, or the intervening variable, between South Africa and Kenya. Good diplomatic rapport may cushion negative impacts or positively affect the policy change on bilateral trade, labor relations, and cultural exchange. Conversely, strained diplomatic relations would deteriorate the negative implications or depress the positive ones.

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

South Africa's Immigration Policy

Socio-Economic Relations

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Intervening Variable

- Frequency and quality of diplomatic interactions (e.g., high-level visits, joint commissions).
- Mutual agreements or treaties.
- Joint participation in international forums.
- Public statements on mutual interests

: Conceptual Framework

Source, Researcher (2024)

2.5 Research Gap

Critical analysis of the corpus of research relating to the influences of new immigration laws in South Africa on its socioeconomic ties with Kenya demonstrates several critical gaps in knowledge. Even while trade dynamics, skilled worker migration, and mechanisms for cultural exchange have appropriately been explored, further research is needed to understand just how these interlink and how policy fitted into these directly. Although researchers such as Peters (2015) and Jacks & Tang (2018) have explored the connection between immigration laws and trade, few empirical studies have especially focused on implications for bilateral trade between South Africa and Kenya boosted by visa-free travel regimes. This disparity again underlines the need for focused study to comprehend how these regulations affect trade volumes, product diversification, and business alliances. A survey of literature indicates that interest in skilled migration is an increasing trend; works by Boucher & Cerna (2014) and Ferrer et al. (2014) all point out policy changes that favor immigration based on economic class. There is a limited number of studies on how such policy reforms would directly impact the exchange of skilled labour between the two countries, South Africa and Kenya. Such has been the case, particularly with regard to labour market integration, the transferability of skills, and socio-economic outcomes for migrants. As Kim & Streich (2017) have indicated, cultural contact and integration processes play a fundamental role in fostering mutual understanding and cohesion between immigrant and native communities. Even with this recognition, little is known about the specific impact of South Africa's immigration laws on cultural ties with Kenya, and most especially the role played by friendly cultures and official support for their integration.

2.6 Recap of Literature Review

The other current issues that the literature review addresses in this study are three: impact on trade, exchange of skilled workers, and integration and exchange of cultures. Issues that attract prominent attention in the study are those pertaining to the implications of the new immigration policy in South Africa for her socio-economic relations with Kenya. This review discusses the complexity introduced by immigration laws, economic factors, and cultural dynamics influencing cross-national and intra-community interactions in the context of migration from a wide range of academic literature. The literature underlines the interdependence between trade and immigration policies, appealing for an integrated approach to the analysis of both. Scholars like Peters (2015) and Jacks & Tang (2018) indicate that the relation of openness to trade and immigration policy is a two-way interaction, since labor demand is among the most leading economic drivers of immigration policy. Given the empirical evidence of complementary and

substitution effects with respect to trade and migrant flows, this complex relationship underlines the need for an overall study of how changes in policy changes affect bilateral trade relationships.

The findings of the review indicated that the global trend for skilled immigration is very strong and countries like Canada attract talent by offering point-based systems (Boucher & Cerna, 2014; Ferrer et al., 2014). For attaining economic development and maintaining the gap in the labor market, the policies have been strategized (Reitz, 2013). Nevertheless, problems emerging from the literature relate to, for example, the integration challenge of skilled immigrants in the labor market, whereas some the broader socio-economic implications for countries of origin and destination include educational attainment and family reunification, among others ((Muyambo & Ranga, 2020; Afonso & Devitt, 2016). The dynamics of cultural exchange and integration will concern the development of receptive cultures, the significance of national identity, and socio-political organization (Antonsich & Matejskova, 2015). Finally, the role of language and cultural barriers will be discussed. This literature explores to what degree historical models of multicultural cohabitation (Conversi & Machin-Autenrieth, 2019) and institutional support, such as international exchange centers (Kim & Streich, 2020), are able to foster rich cultural exchanges that help immigrants integrate.

This review highlights the interactive complexity of economic strategies, labor market demands, and cultural integration processes that explain how changes in immigration policy affect socio-economic relations. The reviewed body of work offers a starting point for any in-depth understanding of the intricacies of immigration effects on skilled labor migration, trade exchanges, and cross-cultural relationships. It consequently undertakes a number of theoretical and empirical frameworks that would help make sense of the wider implication provided by changes in immigration laws and offers useful insights into potential pathways to good socio-economic and cultural relations between South Africa and Kenya. Summary of these findings underlines a very important premise that immigration policy and its socioeconomic consequence have to be framed within comprehensive integrated approaches, supplementing economic requirements with measures for integration and cultural understanding.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains research methodology, research design, target population, location of the study, sample and sampling procedure. The chapter also contains the research instruments, proposed data collection tools and ethical consideration. This study shed light on how visa free travel regimes can either foster or hinder socioeconomic growth between two major African economies.

3.2 Research Methodology

The study used a mixed-method approach that combined quantitative and qualitative research methods to offer a broad view of the implications of the change in South Africa's immigration policy. This approach was beneficial because both numeric data and in-depth insights can be integrated to provide a complete picture of the issue at hand. Another major mixed methods strength lies in the ability of this method to capture the complexity of socioeconomic relations through a combination of quantitative data breadth and qualitative depth of explanation. In contrast, qualitative data gives an in-depth understanding relative to 'why' concerns and views of stakeholders within such trends. Such a dual approach increased the validity of findings by cross-checking results with respect to different methods and perspectives. In this regard, the mixed-method approach was particularly relevant in exploring multifaceted implications of South Africa – Kenya visa free travel regime on trade relations, exchange of skilled workers, and cultural exchanges between South Africa and Kenya.

The quantitative section, therefore, entailed the collection and analysis of the numerical data availed through trade databases, data from immigration departments, data from labor organizations, and data from cultural exchange forums. The data was clearly demarcated measured insights into the study variables, such as changes in the volume of trade, shifts in labor market dynamics, and the frequency of cultural exchanges. Particularly, quantification on the flow of trade agreements, flow of skilled workers, and the extent of cultural exchanges between the two countries after the change in immigration policy was done using secondary data. Further surveys were conducted among businesses, skilled workers, and cultural organizations in both South Africa and Kenya in an exercise to collect statistical data on experiences and perception post-change in policy. Descriptive and inferential statistical

techniques were used to analyse this data, through which it became apparent that its presence is likely to indicate some of the trends, correlations, and possible causal relationships between the change in the immigration policy and the observed socioeconomic outcomes. This was supplemented with qualitative descriptors during in-depth interviews.

Interviews were therefore specifically conducted with policymakers, diplomats, business leaders, professionals, and cultural representatives within both countries to present detailed insights on perspectives, life experiences, challenges, and opportunities that emerged with the change in policy. It involved the thematic analysis of such qualitative data to decode what emerged as recurring themes, patterns, and narratives in nuanced and differentiated ways in the policy change related to immigration. The subsequent phase involved synthesizing the results of the quantitative and qualitative sections to compose an articulate picture of the effects of South Africa – Kenya free visa travel regime. This synthesis would allow for the research to cross-validate findings between statistical trends since the lived experiences and narratives of the people directly affected should make sense with those trends. Thus, such integration of findings into the analysis gave a thick base to the conclusions and the recommendations, making the mixed research approach appropriate and effective in satisfying the objectives of this work.

3.3 Research Design

The design used in this study was descriptive, for it looked to describe the characteristics of the situation or phenomenon under investigation. Descriptive research is one form of scientific methods of research that is rather good at giving detailed descriptions of existing conditions without interfering or manipulating the variables, as would be the case in experimental research. It does not, therefore, result in a hypothesis but rather describes what is in relation to the variables or conditions being studied, so it would be very appropriate in capturing the current situation. Descriptive design presented an all-inclusive picture of the phenomenon under study. The approach allowed for the observation and documentation of patterns, trends, and relationships as they naturally occurred, providing insights into subject matter. As such, descriptive research can also help in understanding the characteristics of a given population or situation and hence provide a foundation for further research or policy decisions. This design was flexible, and several data collection methods, such as surveys, and interviews were adopted and operated according to need in the study.

The descriptive design was paramount in exploring the implications of South Africa's visa free travel regime on its socio-economic relations with Kenya. All of the variables of interest—trade relations, skilled worker exchanges, and cultural exchanges—are complex and multifaceted, thus requiring that their current state and observable changes resulting from the shift in the immigration policy be captured. The description design was instead used to detail how the visa free travel regimes in South Africa influenced its relationship with Kenya along all these variables. Current status descriptions of trade relations between the two countries were made using surveys and analysis of secondary data to determine any trends or movements in trade volumes, agreements, and types of goods and services traded. The design further enabled in-depth exploration into the movement and employment of skilled workers and thus documented changes in professional mobility, job opportunities, and working conditions for Kenyan professionals based in South Africa. The descriptive design described what is; therefore, the representation of the impact that South Africa's visa free travel regime has had on its socio-economic relations with Kenya was open and clear.

3.4 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Nairobi, Kenya. The city hosts the Embassy of South Africa, which is pivotal in diplomatic relations and offered primary data on the implications of South Africa's visa free travel regime. Foreign Affairs and Immigration offices are in Nairobi. These institutions play a significant role in shaping and responding to international policies, making them key points for data collection regarding the study's objectives. A wealth of information about Kenya-South African trade dynamics can be found at the Kenya Chamber of Commerce Offices (KCCOs) on Kenya's capital city's streets. Insights into business trends, trade volumes, and the overall impact of immigration policies on commerce can be gleaned from this source. Nairobi, being the capital, offers well-developed infrastructure, making navigating and accessing data easier for the research team. Its status as the administrative and economic hub ensures that relevant personnel, from government officers to trade experts, are readily available for interviews, surveys, and other data collection methods. The city is the administrative and economic hub of Kenya as well as a place of diversity culturally. Kenya and other countries, including South Africa, exchange cultural views through it. The city's cosmopolitan nature can offer valuable insights into the cultural implications of South Africa's visa free travel regime, as it relates to Kenya.

3.5 Target Population

The target population is an entire group of individuals or entities relevant to the research question. It is crucial to precisely define this group to ensure the research findings are applicable and valid. For this study, the target population encompasses; Officials and staff from the Embassy of South Africa in Nairobi (ESAiN) who are well-versed with the details of the visa free travel regimes and their implications on bilateral relations. Personnel from Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Kenya- South Africa immigration desk, especially those who directly handle matters related to South African affairs or have been involved in discussions and negotiations about visa free travel regimes. The Kenya Chamber of Commerce Offices' representatives, executives, and members understand the changes in South Africa's visa free travel regime which may have impacted trade dynamics, patterns, and shifts. Individuals or groups in Nairobi are involved in cultural exchange programs or initiatives between Kenya and South Africa.

: Target Population

| Category | Number | Percentage |
|--|-------------|------------|
| South Africa's Diplomatic Staff - Consul General, Political Affairs Attaché, Economic Affairs Attaché, Cultural Attaché, Public Diplomacy Officer | 10 | 0.3 |
| MFA – Kenya - Principal Secretary, Director - Africa & AU Affairs, Deputy Director - Diaspora Affairs, Desk Officer for South Africa, Legal and Treaties Department, Consular Affairs Department, Trade and Investments Department | 10 | 0.3 |
| Immigration Officer (Kenya) | 3000 | 92 |
| Trade Reps | 50 | 1.4 |
| Cultural Ambassadors | 200 | 6 |
| Total | 3270 | 100 |

Source, Researcher (2023)

3.6 Sampling Procedure

This study used sampling method that allows for representation from each subgroup within the target population given its diverse nature. Stratified simple random sampling provides a framework to ensure that all subgroups (or strata) are adequately represented in the sample. The target population was divided into the following strata: South Africa's Diplomatic Personnel, Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Officials concerned with South Africa's Desk), Kenya's Immigration Officers, Trade and Commerce Experts, and Cultural Ambassadors. Each member of the respective strata were identified and listed. All the officials concerned with South Africa's Desk were enumerated. Based on the research objectives, time, and resources, a sample size for each stratum was decided. It was ensured that the sample size represented the size and significance of the stratum. From each stratum list, individuals were selected randomly. The system guaranteed equal selection chances to all individuals in the stratum. The final study sample was formed by combining samples from each stratum.

3.7 Sample Size

This study utilized Yamane's (1967) formula to ascertain the sample size, taking into account a precision level of 0.05 and a 95% confidence level. This enabled the determination of an appropriate sample size is critical for ensuring the reliability and validity of study findings. The choice of a 95% confidence level, combined with the precision level of 0.05, assured that the results were both reliable and precise.

The formula is:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$$

where:

- n = sample size
- N = total population
- e = level of precision (margin of error), usually set at 0.05 for a 95% confidence level

Given target population (N) is 3,270 and a 95% confidence level with a margin of error (e) of 0.05, we can plug these values into the formula to calculate the sample size (n).

$$n = 3270 / (1 + 3270 * (0.05^2))$$

First, calculating the value of e^2 :

$$0.05^2 = 0.0025$$

Plug in the value of e^2 back into the formula:

$$n = 3270 / (1 + 3270 * 0.0025)$$

$$n = 3270 / (1 + 8.175)$$

$$n = 3270 / 9.175$$

$$n = 356.44$$

We round of to the nearest one. Therefore, the sample size (n) we need for the study, based on Yamane's formula, is approximately 356 participants.

: Sample Size

| Category | Proportion | Sample Size |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| South Africa's Diplomatic Staff | 10/3270 | 1 |
| MFA (Kenya) | 10/3270 | 1 |
| Immigration Officers (Kenya) | 3000/3270 | 327 |
| Trade Representatives | 50/3270 | 5 |
| Cultural Ambassadors | 200/3270 | 22 |
| Total | 1 | 356 |

Source, Researcher (2023)

3.8 Construction of Research Instruments

The study used questionnaires and key informant interviews as the main data collection instruments. While the questionnaires provided standardized, quantifiable data to analyze trends and patterns, the interviews offered in-depth insights, shedding light on the deeper implications and expert perspectives on the subject matter.

3.8.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are structured tools used to collect specific data from a predefined group. They contain standardized questions that ensure data uniformity, allowing for comparability and generalizability of the results (Mackey & Gass, 2016). The questionnaires were administered to a broad segment of the target population, especially South Africa's Diplomatic Personnel, Kenya's Government Officials, and Trade and Commerce Experts, ensuring a wide coverage and diverse perspectives. The questionnaire were organized into various sections, each targeting

specific data points. Section A: Demographic Data; This section captured basic demographic details of the respondents. Several questions covered age, gender, professional designation, and years of experience. Section B: Bilateral Trade; Questions in this section assessed the volume, nature, and frequency of trade exchange between Kenya and South Africa since the visa free travel regime. Examples include inquiries on perceived increases or decreases in trade volumes and the sectors most affected. Section C: Bilateral Labor Relations; This segment targeted the movement of skilled workers between the two countries. Respondents were prompted about any noticeable trends, challenges, or opportunities that have emerged post-policy alteration.

3.8.2 Key Informant Interview

Key informant interviews are qualitative in-depth interviews with people who have specialized knowledge about a topic. They provide detailed insights, experiences, and narratives that might not be captured through structured questionnaires. For this study, key informant interviews were designed to delve deeper into the details and unquantified implications of the visa free travel regime. The interviewees were selected purposively. The interviews primarily focused on: Cultural Ambassadors and those involved in arts, heritage, and traditions were probed for their insights on how the visa free travel regimes have influenced cultural interactions and exchanges between Kenya and South Africa. Key informants, due to their expertise, also provided broader insights on all three objectives. The 4 key informant interviews were targeted at Cultural Ambassadors and select high-level officials from both the South African Embassy and Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as experts from the Kenya Chamber of Commerce.

3.9 Testing for Validity and Reliability

3.9.1 Validity

Instrument validity refers to whether it measures its intended purpose accurately. Research results are accurate and conclusions drawn are indeed based on those results. To ascertain content validity, the research instruments, particularly the questionnaires, were reviewed by the supervisor and experts from the field of international relations. Using experts from relevant fields, these experts ensured the questions are clear, relevant, and comprehensive in capturing what is intended. Face validity was measured by involving a non-expert but a representative panel from the target population assessing the instruments (Mackey & Gass, 2016). Having their feedback ensured that the questions are clear and understandable, and measure what they should.

3.9.2 Reliability

As measurements are taken over time, reliability refers to consistency and stability. A reliable instrument will produce the same results when administered multiple times under the same conditions. To ascertain the internal reliability of the research instruments, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was applied to determine the internal consistency of items in the questionnaire. An alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher. For qualitative data from the key informant interviews, inter-rater reliability was assessed. Two independent researchers analyzed a subset of the interviews to check for consistency in coding and interpretation (Mackey & Gass, 2016).

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

Prior to the commencement of the data collection process, the necessary approval was sought from the University Ethics & Review Committee Office of Mount Kenya University (UERC-MKU). The research proposal, instruments, and any other required documentation was presented to ensure that the research adhered to ethical standards. After scrutiny, modifications were incorporated, and formal approval was obtained. Permission were sought from the Research Office of Mount Kenya University. This office provided additional guidance on research quality, participant treatment, and other procedural elements that uphold the university's reputation and standards. A license application was submitted to NACOSTI for science, technology, and innovation research. Research on this topic adheres to national research guidelines and contributes positively to the country's knowledge base. Upon evaluation of the research proposal and instruments, NACOSTI was granted a research license, signifying approval to carry out the research.

Once approvals were secured, the data collection team underwent a thorough training session. Their comprehension of the research goals, each instrument, and ethics considerations, especially regarding participants' confidentiality was enhanced. Team members were deploy to Nairobi with the necessary permissions and training. Their prime responsibilities involved the distribution and collection of questionnaires and the scheduling and conducting of key informant interviews. A clear instruction manual was provided with questionnaires to the target population. The participants had adequate time to consider their answers. The completed questionnaires then was collected for data analysis. Interviews were scheduled at convenient times for the informants. A semi-structured approach was adopted, allowing for a blend of predetermined questions and spontaneous, in-depth discussions based on the responses. Interviews were recorded (with permission) to ensure accuracy during data transcription. All

collected data was stored securely. Electronic data was password-protected, and hard copies were locked in cabinets accessible only to the research team. Confidentiality and privacy of participants was upheld throughout the research process.

3.11 Proposed Data Analysis Techniques

Inconsistency, missing value, and outlier were checked before actual analysis begins. Cleaning of data ensured valid data points are taken into consideration, hence increasing accuracy of results. Response from questionnaire was entered into computer database. The incomplete or inconsistency responses were flagged and removed. Transcription from key informant interview will be made from the recorded interviews. Clarity and comprehensiveness were checked on these transcriptions. First, data analysis according to the nature of this descriptive study had to consider the main features of the data. In this respect, descriptive statistical measures used included means, medians, modes, standard deviations, and frequency distributions to give a general overview of quantitative data. Qualitative data responses have been divided according to common themes and patterns. A thematic analysis was conducted to identify and report patterns within the data.

Descriptive analysis was further complemented by the use of inferential statistics in order to make conclusions about a larger population based on sample data. Through correlational analysis, it examines whether South Africa's Visa Free Travel Regime and its socio-economic relations with Kenya are related. Examples of our quantitative data are described using a bar graph, pie chart, and histogram. We have then synthesised the quantitative and qualitative data analyses results. The insights were achieved by a comparative assessment aimed at addressing the objectives of the research. More specifically, findings were interpreted based on available literature and theoretical frameworks. Core analysis was done using SPSS 27 mainly because of its high functionality in statistical functions.

3.12 Ethical Consideration

Research, under any condition, must be conducted with the highest respect for ethical considerations, as the nucleus of scientific investigation is integrity, responsibility, and respect. The section hereafter will outline the ethical discourse concerning this research in regard to the rights and welfare of participants, the accountability of the researcher, and also adherence strictly to guidelines in the course of the research process. Knowledge of ethical standards increases the validity and reliability of the research finding and protects the opinions of participants as well as society. This section develops the premises of an ethics research strategy

which demonstrates commitment to the highest possible standards of academic integrity and moral obligations of research involving human beings. The research therefore looked into the ethical issues to ensure that openness, fairness, and respect for the entities in both the research and application phases applies in the growth of ethical knowledge.

The researcher conducted the study honestly and objectively, avoiding biases. The researcher provided clear and detailed explanations of the research methodologies and processes. The study disclosed any conflict of interest or limitations. The researcher commits to keep any personal or sensitive information about the research confidential. The researcher described to all participants in detail the research purposes, methods, and intended uses. The study obtained participants' written consent before collecting data. The study informed participants that withdrawal was completely voluntary. Efforts were made to ensure that participants' identities remained anonymous. Personal identifiers were removed or disguised in the reporting of findings. The study took every precaution to avoid harming participants physically and psychologically. The researcher ensured that questions and interactions did not cause distress or discomfort. Debriefings followed the study to ensure participants understand its purpose. Data was collected, stored and processed with integrity, without alteration or misrepresentation. Findings were reported without bias. Both positive and negative findings were reported transparently, ensuring a true representation of the data. All external sources of information, including literature and other research, was appropriately credited. Research was reported without plagiarism. All collected data, especially personal or sensitive information, was stored securely.

CHAPTER FOUR

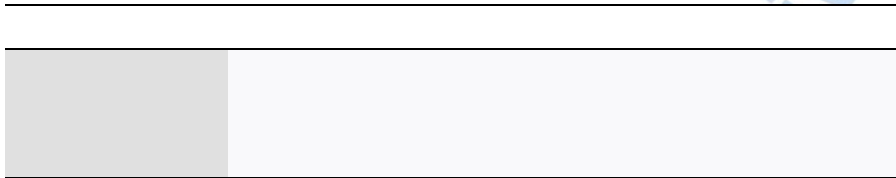
RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings per objective, the analysis to draw implications of the variables under study. This chapter gives the data collected meaning by going through a structured approach to its relevance to the laid-down research objectives, arriving at informed conclusions and a recommendation.

4.2 Demographic Data

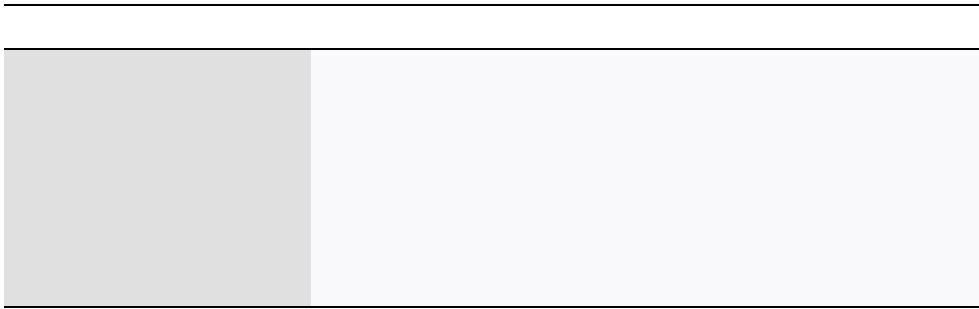
4.2.1 Gender



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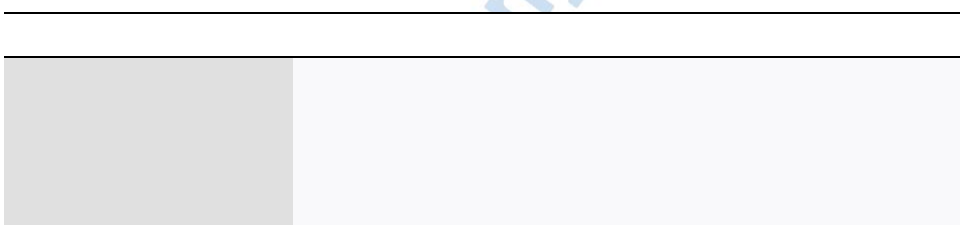
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4.2.2 Age



On age distribution, 5.1% were between the 18 – 24 years, 24.2% were between 25 – 34 years, y, the 18–24-year-olds are 5.1 percent of the total respondents. This low level of participation

4.2.3 Education



4.2.4 Length at the Current Role

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4.3 Reliability Statistics

4.4 Objectives Descriptive Statistics

4.4.1 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Trade

The first objective sought to answer the question, what are the implications of South Africa visa free travel regime of 2023 – 2024 on the bilateral trade with Kenya?

On whether the recent South-Africa visa free travel regime has positively influenced trade

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The Mid-Term Review Session of the Kenya-South Africa JCC took place on 6th-7th November, 2022 in Nairobi preceding the State Visit by the President of South Africa to Kenya. New

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bilateral instruments were negotiated during the MTR and three (3) MoUs and one (1) Agreement were signed during the State Visit – Key Informant Interviewee

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On whether the recent policy change led to an increase in Kenyan exports to South Africa, the study got a mean of 4.18 and a std deviation of 1.144. The mean score was set at 4.18 on the Likert scale, indicating that, by and large, respondents supported the notion that the recent policy change has led to increased Kenyan exports to South Africa. A standard deviation of 1.144 indicates moderate levels of variability in the responses. In turn, while most participants agree on the positive impact, the opinions have an average spread, meaning that the increase in exports is not uniformly perceived to the same end. The relatively high mean score of 4.18 generally confirms that the policy change will be perceived to have a significant positive impact on the volume of Kenyan exports to South Africa. This is consistent with the hypothesis that positive liberalization measures, such as visa-free travel and reduced negative tolerance, increase export activity because business is accessible to conduct business and trade between countries. The standard deviation of 1.144 means varied opinions from the respondents. These could be brought about by factors such as industry category, the magnitude of the enterprise, and the economic status in regions or countries. This means that the gains would be felt more by some participants than others, meaning the trade effects are certainly heterogeneous. The high mean score means the policymakers would consider the recent policy shift as a practical measure of the increase in Kenyan sales of products in South Africa.

Both countries are signatory and parties to the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite FTA (TFTA). On 1st February 2024, Kenya imported its first consignment of machinery, agricultural products and electronics, among them refrigerators from South Africa under AfCFTA. Kenya has also sought market access and consensus on export routing and mutual recognition agreements on standards and Sanitary & Phytosanitary (SPS) procedures related to tea, avocado, meat products and other export commodities – Key Informant Interviewee

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On whether South-Africa-Kenya visa free travel regime led to diversification in the types of goods and services traded between the two countries, the study got a mean of 3.77 and a std deviation of 1.360. The mean score of 3.77 shows that the visa-free travel regime has made an average respondent agree on the brought-out diversification in terms of goods and services traded between the two countries. This is a relatively high level of variability in results, as evidenced by the standard deviation, which is 1.360. This variance in opinion, therefore, implies that though most of the respondents agree with the positive impact, a significant number critically hold neutral or differing views. This variance may also suggest a divergence in experiences or perspectives on how far trade has been diversified. Some industries might have achieved massive diversification, but others not. Again, individual experiences and the scale of operations of businesses are likely to affect perception of diversified trade. The overall mean of 3.77 reflects that the visa-free regime has been cited positively but moderately as one that facilitated the diversification of goods and services that are traded between the two countries. Probably, this policy has opened new opportunities where different businesses could explore and trade in a variety of goods and services. Still, this effect is not uniform across all participants. This means that the visa-free travel regime is, overall, considered beneficial for diversifying trade by the majority of study participants.

4.4.1.4 Easier Movement of Goods

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On whether the South-Africa-Kenya visa free travel regime facilitated easier movement of goods between South Africa and Kenya, the study got a mean of 3.59 and a std deviation of 1.419. With a mean score of 3.59, the participants would agree with the fact that the visa-free traveling policy facilitates relatively easy movements of goods between South Africa and Kenya. This means that the policy may have instigated ease in logistics and administrative procedures in cross-border trade. A pretty high variability of responses is indicated by the standard deviation of 1.419. This means that though some respondents agree that this policy has eased the movement of goods, significant disparity has been shown in the opinion; thus, some may either oppose or remain neutral. This could be due to the diversified experiences of impacts that depend on the industries, regions, and scales of operations of the businesses. To some companies, moving their goods may be easy, and to others, still, there are significant difficulties. The mean score would depict it as positively inclined, in general, but still relatively moderate, suggesting somewhat a positive feeling towards the visa-free regime in their influence to ease the movement of goods, though indicating room for improvement.

4.4.1.5 Trade Balance

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On whether the South-Africa-Kenya visa free travel regime led to a more favorable trade balance for Kenya, the study got a mean of 2.22 and a std deviation of 1.349. Indeed, from the generally low mean score, 2.22, one perceives that this visa-free travel regime has done little to improve Kenya's trade balance with South Africa. This would mean that more effortless movement, which would possibly increase the volume of trade with policies allowing that,

might not have worked in favor of Kenya concerning these trade balances. Though there might be other factors at play, the nature of the traded goods, competitive advantages, and trade policies are some of the possible ones. The relatively high standard deviation (1.349) may imply that opinions regarding the trade balance impact of the visa-free travel regime differ divergently. All of this may be increased by these experiences in the trade sectors of a country or by different experiences in the country's various regions. While some industries may have benefited, others may not have experienced a marked improvement or maybe found increased competition from South African products. The generally below-the-mean negative score would mean that there is a need for more investigations for policymakers to dig down to the cause as to why a visa-free regime has not achieved a more favorable trade balance for Kenya.

While Kenya has remained one of South Africa's leading trade partners in Sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for about 56% of South Africa's exports to the Eastern and Central Africa Region, the current balance of trade of USD 39 million in exports against imports of USD 615 million is largely in favour of South Africa. Therefore, there is need to increase the total trade volume between the two countries to beyond USD 1 billion and thereby increase Kenya's exports – Key informant interviewee.

4.4.1.6 Kenyan Business Expansion in South Africa

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On whether Kenyan businesses expanded their operations in South Africa due to the agreement, the study got a mean of 3.59 and a std deviation of 1.397. The mean score of 3.59 shows that, on average, participants agree that the visa-free travel regime opened the ways for the expansion of Kenyan businesses in South Africa. It is positive that the visa-free regime drove companies in Kenya to expand into South Africa. It elucidates the possibility that the policy might have reduced entry barriers, allowed access to the market, and further developed the willingness of the businesses to be set up and grow in South Africa. More so, the relatively high level of variability in the responses, as presented by the standard deviation 1.397, enhances this likelihood. Generally, the score for the mean is demonstrated to be positive and hence indicates that the visa-free travel regime is taken in a positive approach in promoting business expansion.

4.4.1.7 Bilateral Trade Relations

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On whether the South-Africa-Kenya visa free travel regime positively impacted trade relations between South Africa and Kenya, the study got a mean of 4.16 and a std deviation of 1.238. The high mean score of 4.16 indicates that the visa regime has positively impacted trade relations between South Africa and Kenya. The high mean score recorded through the free-visa regime unveils a strong perception that the ties between South Africa and Kenya have improved substantially. This, therefore, implies that the policy has transformed easy process interactions into more bi-lateral trade activities and economic solid ties between the two countries. The positive feeling is likely to have come from the low travel threshold, with businesspersons being surveyed being allowed to move around with much ease compared with the past. The moderate level should be considered as the standard deviation is only 1.238. The high mean that is good in most readings can be taken to mean that the visa-free travel regime is a good measure for policymakers in places that seek to enhance their trade relations.

*Kenya submitted a list of **exportable products** to South Africa and is awaiting a response on the requirements for entry into their market for exporters' compliance – Key Informant Interviewee*

4.4.2 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Labor Relations

The second objective sought to answer, what are the implications of South Africa visa free travel regime of 2023 – 2024 on bilateral labor relations with Kenya?

4.4.2.1 Travel for Professionals

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On whether the South-Africa-Kenya visa free travel regime made it easier for Kenyan professionals to work in South Africa, the study got a mean of 3.58 and a std deviation of 1.506. The mean score of 3.58, therefore, indicates that, on average, there is a likelihood that respondents agree that the visa-free travel regime has facilitated the working environment in

South Africa for Kenyan professionals. This shows that it improved the perception that the visa-free regime facilitated professional mobility among Kenyan professionals. It means the policy might have reduced the bureaucratic hurdles, loosened the process barriers, and created more inroads for Kenyan professionals to work in South Africa. A standard deviation of 1.506 reflects the fact that the majority of the opinions of the respondents concerning the policy on visa-free travel consideration are distributed over broad ranges. Whereas some professionals found it easier to work in South Africa, some others still have challenges in terms of accreditation, work permits, or industry-specific laws and regulations. The mean score is generally positive and suggests that the visa-free travel regime in South Africa is viewed favorably about facilitating employment for Kenyan professionals in South Africa.



4.4.2.2 Participation in South African Conferences

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On whether the participation rates of Kenyan professionals in South African job fairs, conferences, or training programs increased post South-Africa-Kenya visa free travel regime,

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4.4.2.3 Hiring of Kenyan Workers

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On whether the South-Africa-Kenya visa free travel regime led to improved labor relations and

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4.4.2.5 Better Working Condition for Kenyans

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On whether the visa free travel regime resulted in better working conditions for Kenyan workers

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4.4.2.6 Bilateral Labor Agreements
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On whether there been a significant increase in bilateral labor agreements between South Africa and Kenya since the visa free travel regime, the study got a mean of 2.53 and a std deviation of 1.490. The fact that the mean was 2.53 indicates that, taken together, participants tended to disagree with the statement that under the visa-free travel regime, there has been a remarkable increase in bilateral labor agreements between South Africa and Kenya. The average low mean score of 2.53 reflects the perception that there has not been a significant uptick in bilateral labor agreements between South Africa and Kenya under the visa-free regime. This means that perhaps, with some level of travel ease, little was affected in the formalization of labor collaborations in agreements. This could be policy priorities, the level of diplomatic

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engagement, and mutual needs in the labor market. Moreover, there is an excellent dispersion of one's responses towards another among the respondents, signifying further a significant divergence of opinions regarding the impact that the visa-free travel regime has had on BLAs. The predominantly negative mean score, therefore, should be a wake-up call to policymakers to delve deeply into the issues about this area and why the increase in bilateral labor arrangements is not significant. It could be the identification and surmounting of barriers to formalizing labor relations, such as variability in regulations, a lack of communication or coordination between countries, and differences in labor market needs.

4.4.3 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Cultural Exchange

does South Africa’s visa free travel regime of 2023 – 2024 impact the bilateral cultural

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Has the visa free travel regime led to an understanding and appreciation of each country's cultural heritage?

whether the visa free travel regime led to an understanding and appreciation of each country's

ot been one of very significant impact as a result of the visa-free regime. It is thus suggested that the other aspects—institutional collaborations, investment, and administrative bottlenecks

4.5 Discussion

4.5.1 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Trade

s and services traded between the two countries, with a mean score of 3.77. This aligns with Çağatay et al. (2014), who observed that immigration can lead to an increase in the variety of

eals a generally negative perception of the visa-free regime's impact on creating a more a's overall trade balance with South Africa, suggesting that other factors may be at play. The findings further indicate a generally positive perception of the visa-free regime's impact on the

4.5.2 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Labor Relations

so highlights a strong positive perception of the visa-free regime's impact on increasing the

However, the findings also reveal a generally negative perception of the visa-free regime's me's impact on improving labor relations and collaborations between South Africa and Kenya,

Despite these positive aspects, the findings also indicate a generally negative perception of the visa-free regime's impact on improving working conditions for Kenyan workers in South Africa. Similarly, the findings indicate a generally negative perception of the visa-free regime's impact on increasing bilateral labor agreements between South Africa and Kenya.

4.5.3 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Cultural Exchange

The study also reveals a moderately positive perception of the visa-free regime's impact on increasing cultural events and activities between South Africa and Kenya. The study also reveals a moderately positive perception of the visa-free regime's impact on increasing cultural events and activities between South Africa and Kenya.

Similarly, the findings indicate a moderately positive perception of the visa-free regime's impact on increasing understanding and appreciation of each country's cultural heritage, with a mean score of 3.5, indicating a moderate level of agreement. This impact may not be as widespread or deeply felt as might be desired. On the other hand, the study finds a generally negative perception of the visa-free regime's impact on increasing student exchange programs between the two countries, with a mean score of 2.5, indicating a moderate level of disagreement.

Finally, the study reveals a generally negative perception of the visa-free regime's impact on increasing bilateral trade agreements between South Africa and Kenya. This finding is in line with Newman, Hartman, and Taber's (2012) observation that cultural barriers can

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations for this study. It presents a precise summary of findings for each objective as well as the conclusions based on findings. The study then draws recommendations for practice policy making and future research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

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5.2.1 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Trade

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The study conducted to examine the implications of South Africa's visa free travel regime on socioeconomic relations with Kenya found that participants generally perceive the visa-free travel regime positively regarding its impact on trade agreements. With a mean score of 3.82, participants agreed that the policy has positively influenced trade agreements between South Africa and Kenya. A mean score of 4.18 there is agreement of the policy's beneficial effect on increasing Kenyan exports to South Africa. The perception of the policy's impact on the diversification of goods and services traded between the two countries is also positive, with a mean score of 3.77. The visa-free travel regime is perceived to facilitate the easier movement of goods between South Africa and Kenya, as indicated by a mean score of 3.59. However, the findings reveal a generally negative perception regarding the policy's impact on creating a more favorable trade balance for Kenya, with a mean score of 2.22. Despite this, there is a generally positive perception of the policy's impact on the expansion of Kenyan businesses in South Africa, with a mean score of 3.59. The findings indicate a strong positive perception of the visa-free travel regime's impact on overall trade relations between South Africa and Kenya, with a mean score of 4.16. These results highlight the varied impacts of the visa-free regime, with significant positive effects on exports, trade relations, and business expansion, but less favorable outcomes concerning the trade balance.

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5.2.2 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Labor Relations

The study on the implications of the South Africa-Kenya visa-free travel regime on skilled workers exchange between the two countries reveals varied perceptions. Participants generally perceive the policy positively in terms of making it easier for Kenyan professionals to work in South Africa as indicated by a mean score of 3.58. The visa-free travel regime has significantly increased the participation rates of Kenyan professionals in job fairs, conferences, and training programs in South Africa, evidenced by a mean score of 3.96. However, the findings show a generally negative perception of the policy's impact on increasing the hiring of Kenyan workers by South African companies, with a mean score of 2.27. Similarly, the impact on improving working conditions for Kenyan workers in South Africa is perceived negatively, with a mean score of 2.46. The perception of the policy's impact on increasing bilateral labor agreements is also generally negative, with a mean score of 2.53. Despite these challenges, there is a positive perception of the policy's role in improving labor relations and collaborations between the two countries, supported by a mean score of 3.41. In conclusion, while the South Africa-Kenya visa-free travel regime has facilitated professional opportunities and participation in career development activities, it has not significantly impacted hiring rates, working conditions, or bilateral labor agreements.

5.2.3 Visa free travel regime and Bilateral Cultural Exchange

Participants generally perceive the policy very positively in facilitating richer cultural exchanges, as indicated by a mean score of 3.98. There is a moderately positive perception of the policy's impact on increasing cultural events and programs, with a mean score of 3.32. The visa-free regime is perceived to have a moderately positive impact on increasing understanding and appreciation of each country's cultural heritage, as shown by a mean score of 3.40. However, the findings reveal a generally negative perception of the policy's impact on increasing student exchange programs, with a mean score of 2.45. The perception of the policy's impact on increasing collaborative cultural projects between artists from the two countries is moderately positive, with a mean score of 3.39. However, the findings also indicate a generally negative perception of the visa-free regime's impact on increasing the number of joint arts and music festivals celebrating both cultures, with a mean score of 2.45. In conclusion, while the South Africa-Kenya visa-free travel regime has had a strong positive impact on enriching cultural exchanges and fostering a better understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage, it has had less success in increasing student exchange programs and joint cultural festivals.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

In conclusion, the South Africa-Kenya visa-free travel regime has had a positive influence on enhancing trade relations, increasing exports, and expanding business opportunities, despite challenges in achieving a more favorable trade balance for Kenya. While the South Africa-Kenya visa-free travel regime has facilitated professional mobility and engagement in career development activities for Kenyan professionals, it has not significantly improved hiring rates,

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5.4 Recommendations

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5.4.1 Recommendations for Practice

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i. To enhance Kenya's trade balance, it is recommended to implement trade facilitation measures, such as the reduction of non-tariff barriers and the simplification of customs procedures. To achieve a more equitable trade balance for Kenya, it is crucial to enhance bilateral trade agreements and offer assistance to Kenyan exporters. This would help divide the advantages of the visa-free regime more equally.

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5.4.2 Recommendations for Policy Making

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Policy makers should formulate and enforce measures with the objective of diminishing trade imbalances. Possible actions could involve engaging in negotiations to secure more advantageous conditions for Kenyan exports, offering incentives to South African

businesses to import goods from Kenya, and strengthening assistance to Kenyan exporters through trade facilitation initiatives. The objective of these policies should be to enhance the competitiveness of Kenyan products in the South African market and overcome any obstacles that impede the improvement of trade balance.

- ii. Policy makers should prioritize the establishment of complete bilateral labor agreements that encompass the acknowledgment of credentials, simplified work permit procedures, and safeguards for workers' rights. These agreements should guarantee that Kenyan professionals have enhanced accessibility to employment possibilities in South Africa, while also ensuring the protection and enhancement of their working conditions.
- iii. Policy makers should bolster assistance for cultural and educational exchange programs through the provision of financial resources, the establishment of reciprocal cultural agreements between two countries, and the promotion of collaborative endeavors. This may involve establishing scholarships and grants for student exchanges, financing joint cultural festivals, and endorsing collaboration initiatives between artists from South Africa and Kenya.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

- i. Subsequent research should examine the precise obstacles that hinder the visa-free travel system from enhancing Kenya's trade surplus with South Africa. The primary objective of this research is to specifically identify and thoroughly analyze non-tariff barriers, regulatory obstacles, and any other hindrances that negatively impact the competitiveness of Kenyan exports.
- ii. Further studies should analyze the variables that impact the job opportunities and working circumstances of Kenyan professionals residing in South Africa. This may encompass research on the validation of credentials, the effectiveness of work authorization procedures, and the implementation of labor protections.
- iii. Future research should investigate the effects of cultural and educational programs that are made possible by the visa-free travel arrangement between South Africa and Kenya. The research should prioritize the comprehension of the efficacy of current student exchange programs and collaborative cultural events, while also pinpointing the variables that contribute to their success or failure.

Mount Kenya University



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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

Introduction

Welcome to our study on the implications of South Africa's visa free travel regime of 2023-2024 on its socioeconomic relations with Kenya. Understanding the multiple impacts of this policy change will be possible with your insights. Read the introductions to each section before answering. Research will only use your responses and your responses will remain confidential

Section A: Demographic Data

1. What is your gender?

Select your age bracket

a. 18-24 years

b. 25-34 years

c. 35-44 years

d. 45-54 years

e. Above 55 years

What is your position/role? _____

What is your organization/affiliation _____

How long have you been at your current role

a. 0-3 years

b. 3-4 years

c. 4-10 years

d. 10-20 years

e. Above 20 years

6. What is your educational background

a. Postgraduate

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| Questions | SD=1 | D=2 | N=3 | A=4 | SA=5 |
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| The recent changes in South Africa's immigration policy have | | | | | |
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| Questions | SD=1 | D=2 | N=3 | A=4 | SA=5 |
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| The policy change has facilitated a richer cultural exchange between South Africa and Kenya. | | | | | |
| There has been an increase in cultural events and programs between the two countries since the policy change. | | | | | |
| The policy change has fostered a deeper understanding and appreciation of each country's cultural heritage. | | | | | |
| The policy change has led to an increase in student exchange programs between South Africa and Kenya. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| There has been a rise in collaborative cultural projects between South African and Kenyan artists since the policy change. | | | | | |
| Since the implementation of the new immigration policy, there has been a marked increase in joint arts and music festivals celebrating both South African and Kenyan cultures | | | | | |

Appendix II: Key Informant Interview

Title

Implications of South Africa’s Visa free travel regime of 2023-2024 on Socioeconomic Relations with Kenya

Introduction

Dear Respondents

Thank you for agreeing to speak with us today. My name is Charity Karimi, and I am conducting a study on the implications of South Africa’s recent visa free travel regimes on its socioeconomic relations with Kenya. It will be invaluable for us to have your informed insights as a key informant in this field. During the interview, you can withdraw to remain anonymous.

Background Questions

1. Please describe your role and experience within the South Africa-Kenya relationship.
2. How familiar are you with the recent changes in South Africa’s immigration policies?

Bilateral Trade

3. In your view, how have the visa free travel regimes impacted the trade dynamics between South Africa and Kenya?
4. How has the policy change affected new trade agreements or partnerships?
5. From your perspective, have these immigration policies influenced the import/export balance between the two countries?

Bilateral Labor Relations

6. Have you observed any shifts in labor movement or professional exchanges between South Africa and Kenya since the visa free travel regime?
7. How do you think the policy changes have affected Kenyan professionals working or seeking to work in South Africa?
8. In what ways, if any, have the policy changes influenced professional training and development collaborations?



Bilateral Cultural Exchange

9. Have there been noticeable changes in cultural exchanges, such as arts, music, or education, following the immigration policy amendments?
10. Is there any impact on tourism between two countries due to the immigration policy?

Diplomatic Relations

11. Based on the new immigration policy, how do you assess South Africa and Kenya's diplomatic ties?
12. How might the new policy changes affect any recent high-level diplomatic engagements?

Closing

13. How else has South Africa's visa free travel regimed the South Africa-Kenya relationship?
14. How do these policy changes likely affect future trends or outcomes?

Thank you for your valuable time and insights. Your input will greatly contribute to our study. Would you mind adding any additional comments or suggesting others we speak to?

End of Interview

Appendix III: Letter of Introduction



DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MIRD/2022/54203

15th March, 2024

*National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)
Off Waiyaki, Upper Kabete
P.O Box 30623- 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA*

Dear Sir/Madam,


RE: CHARITY NYAMBURA KARIMI - REGISTRATION NO. MIRD/2022/54203

The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing Master of Arts in International Relation and Diplomacy in the Institute of Security Studies Justice and Ethics in the School of Social Sciences.

The title of the research is "Implications of South Africa's Immigration Policy Change of 2023-2024 on Socioeconomic Relations with Kenya." It has been cleared by the University's Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data between March, 2024 and May, 2024.

Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.


Dr. Samuel M. Karunga, Ph.D
Director, Graduate Studies
Enc.

Mount Kenya University
P.O. Box 342 - 01000, THIKA
Office of the Director
Graduate Studies

Appendix IV: ERC



REF: MKU/ISERC/3522

Date: 14 March 2024

TO: CHARITY NYAMBURA KARIMI

REG: MIRD/2022/54203

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: IMPLICATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S IMMIGRATION POLICY CHANGE OF 2023-2024 ON SOCIOECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH KENYA

This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **2566**. The approval period is **14/03/2024 - 13/03/2025**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

The Chairman
Mount Kenya University
Ethics Review Committee
P.O. Box 342-0100, Thika

Dr. Alfred Owino, PhD

Chairman, Mount Kenya University ISERC

Main Campus, General Kago Road, P.O. Box 342-01000 Thika


Cell: +254 709 153 000 / +254 709 153 200

Email: info@mku.ac.ke Web: www.mku.ac.ke


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Unlocking Infinite Possibilities

Appendix V: NACOSTI Permit



REPUBLIC OF KENYA




**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

RefNo: 758010

Date of Issue: 03/April/2024

RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Ms. Charity Nyambura Karimi of Mount Kenya University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: IMPLICATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S IMMIGRATION POLICY CHANGE OF 2023 - 2024 ON SOCIOECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH KENYA for the period ending : 03/April/2025.

Applicant Identification Number


License No: NACOSTI/P/24/34256

758010



Director General
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION**

Verification QR Code



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See overleaf for conditions

Appendix VI: Turnitin

Charity Karimi

IMPLICATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S IMMIGRATION POLICY CHANGE OF 2023-2024 ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC RELATIONS W...

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Appendix VII: Informed Consent Form

Study Title

IMPLICATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S VISA FREE TRAVEL REGIME OF 2023-2024 ON SOCIOECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH KENYA

Purpose of the Study

Studying South Africa's recent visa free travel regime of 2023-2024 in relation to its socioeconomic relations with Kenya focuses specifically on trade exchange, labor relations, and cultural relations.

Participation

This study is completely voluntary. No negative consequences will result from your refusal to participate or withdrawing.

Confidentiality

All information you provide during the research will remain confidential. No personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses. It will be secured and only available to the primary researcher. No individual participant will ever be identified in the study results or presentations at conferences.

Risks and Benefits

There are no anticipated risks to participating in this study. While there may be no direct benefit to you from participating, the findings might help in understanding the wider implications of visa free travel regimes on international relations.

Questions

Any questions about the study may be asked now at Charity Karimi at 342 – 01000 Thika and 0708956789

Consent

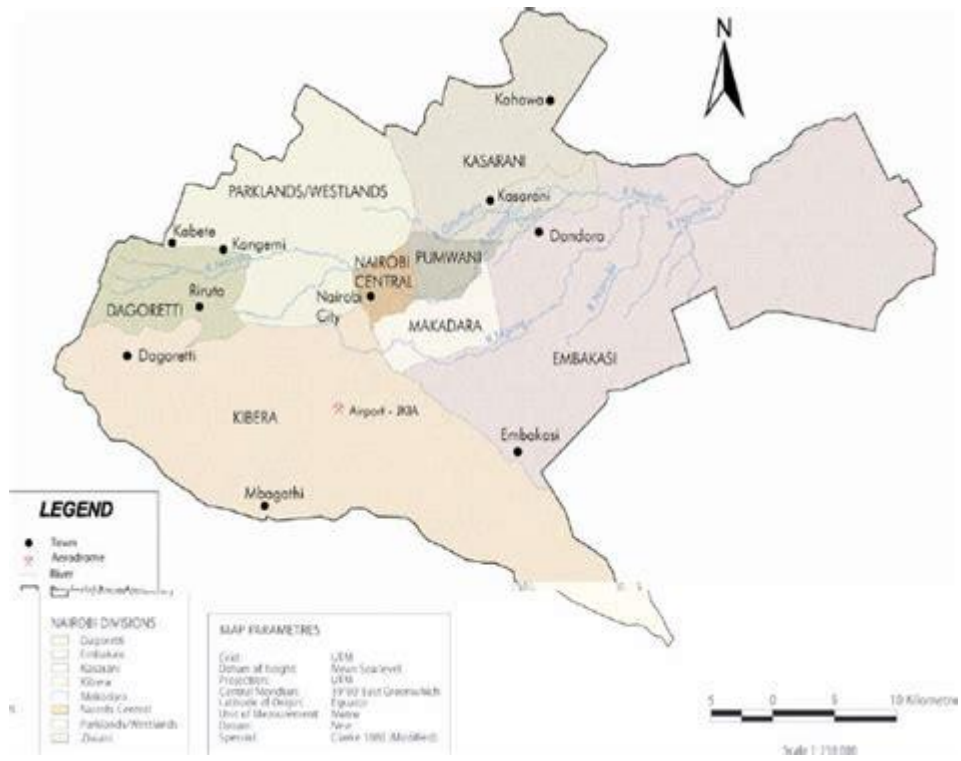
Getting answers to my questions has been satisfactory. This study has my voluntary consent. My withdrawal from the study is without consequence at any time.

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

The study would be greatly appreciated if you participated.

Appendix VIII: Map of Study Location



:Map of Study Area

Mount Kenya