Chapter 12
Experiences of Mozambican Migrant Children in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga, South Africa

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12.1 Introduction

Bushbuckridge District is situated within Mpumalanga province, located on the northeastern side of South Africa, 100 km from the Mozambican border. It is home to first-generation Shangaan-speaking Mozambicans who settled in the then Gazankulu (a former apartheid homeland, now part of Mpumalanga) between 1970 and 1980. Statistics South Africa (2015: 40) estimates that 200,000 out of 320,000 of the first generation of Mozambican migrants, who fled persecution and the RENAMO (Mozambican National Resistance) civil war in Mozambique, settled in South Africa. Bushbuckridge District is particularly significant in migration studies because the majority of the population is foreign-born (Polzer Ngwato, 2012). Statistics SA (2015: 14) shows that, of the current population of Bushbuckridge, numbering 546,215 people, approximately 60% originated in Mozambique. These Mozambican families "self-settled" permanently in Bushbuckridge (Polzer, 2004: 4) and gave birth to second-generation migrants. These are individuals born in a host country to at least one migrant parent. Mpumalanga province is one of the poorest and most marginal areas of South Africa, with the second-highest official unemployment rate at 56% (Statistics SA, 2015).

The site of this research is Hluvukani village, a former refugee area during the apartheid era (Polzer Ngwato, 2012), located in the rural areas of Bushbuckridge. It is home to a majority of Mozambican children of school-going age, the subject of this study (Chiyangwa, 2018). The village is one the poorest in Bushbuckridge, where people compete for limited resources such as food, health care, water and educational support structures (Buffelshoek Trust Website, 2014). Nevertheless, for Mozambican migrant families, the situation is particularly dire because of additional societal and structural barriers attributed to the discrimination and

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xenophobic attitudes experienced (Chiyangwa, 2018; Machava, 2005), resulting in non-nationals being unable to access social services such as education, despite it being acknowledged as a fundamental human right. Migrant children, together with their caregivers,[1] have to overcome multiple barriers encountered whilst living in socio-economically poor rural areas.

This chapter departs from the norm in South African migration studies by drawing attention to a neglected research area, that of second-generation migrant children. It answers the question: How do migrant children employ agency in fulfilling their educational needs, overcoming barriers concerning access to education? The research contributes to the literature on migrant children in South Africa by examining their agency when accessing education. For migrant children, agency is demonstrated regardless of the challenges brought by the underprivileged context they experience and the power structures that present them with multiple vulnerabilities (Bandura, 2006). This chapter summarises the literature on second generation Mozambicans residing in Bushbuckridge. A discussion on relational theory in understanding the experiences of children is followed by the methodology. The findings expand on participants' challenges and their agentic responses in navigating such difficulties. The chapter concludes by demonstrating the participants' capabilities as social agents.

12.2   Literature Review

Access to education is valuable for the development of societies and as a tool for curbing inequalities (Carabott, 2018). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) categorically states that education is a human right for all (United Nations, 1949). The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) specifies the nation's commitments towards upholding human rights and access to education. The SAHRC stipulates the state's obligations to ensure access to education in the "4A" legal framework: availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. Availability speaks of what should be legally, institutionally, and structurally in place for children to access education. Accessibility pertains to non-discriminatory forms of education that allow school-going children, particularly marginalised children, to enrol, attend and complete their education. Acceptability is the quality of learning (for example, content being taught), while adaptability concerns the flexibility of learning institutions for meeting the specific and unique needs of children (Proudlock, 2014: 102).

Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) is the Bill of Rights, which emphasises the rights to equality. The Bill of Rights is the central legal framework governing the right to education in South Africa and emphasises the rights of children to access education. It encourages the South

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[1] Adults who have custody of a child or children, who can be biological parents or not.

African government to cooperate with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in providing basic education for all (Chapter 2 Section 29: 1–4 of the Bill of Rights). Although the SAHRC (1996) and the Bill of Rights focus on the right to education for children, migrant children are not explicitly provided for, exposing them to different kinds of structural vulnerabilities. Killander (2019) argues that, by denying migrant children access to education, South Africa violates its international obligations such as agreed in the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Globally, migrant children face enormous challenges in host societies when trying to access education. For instance, refugee children are five times less likely to access education than the global average (Sobane et al., 2018: 6). A 2016 UNCRC report shows that approximately 3.7 million of the 6 million school-age children under the UNCRC mandate have no access to school. Mainly, they struggle to access education due to challenges with proper documentation (UNICEF, 2003; Bartlett, 2015). Migrant children in South Africa (particularly second generation), are regarded as foreign nationals who should retain the citizenship of their parents and must apply for appropriate visas to access basic social services such as education, health care, foster grants and child support grants (Immigration Act 13 of 2002). One possible visa option for a child born to migrant caregivers in South Africa is to acquire the accompanying dependent visa or permanent resident visa. The latter is on the basis that either of the migrant caregivers gets South African citizenship since they are non-South Africans. These children can apply for a relative visa. Upon reaching 18 years of age, the children are granted the right to apply for South African citizenship on the basis that they have ordinarily been residents of South Africa for those 18 years (Immigration Act 13 of 2002).

Migrant families face considerable difficulty obtaining identity documents, permanent residence permits or dependant visas. This leaves many migrant children without proper documentation ("irregular") and unable to access education (Bartlett, 2015). The South African education system is fairly reluctant to incorporate undocumented migrant children, especially in rural areas where access to resources is limited (Makgate, 2013). The International Organisation for Migration (2019) acknowledges the challenges of implementing policies for migrant children. In some parts of South Africa, documented or undocumented, migrant children are turned away from public schools and experience xenophobia (UNESCO, 2018), making them vulnerable to human rights abuses.

Irrespective of the developed-and-developing-countries binary, migrant children are exposed to racial discrimination, poverty and poor nutrition, since they tend to be concentrated in poor residential areas (Bartlett, 2015). In developing countries such as South Africa, research on migrant children's access to education reflects their problems underpinned by lack of finances (Palmary, 2009). Nonetheless, they often outperform their local counterparts in school (Tienda & Haskins, 2011).

In navigating some of the challenges to accessing education, Bandura (2006) shows that migrant children employ agency as individuals, in groups, or through peers, demonstrating that they are social actors in their own right. Even in hostile situations such as wars and abusive circumstances, children can be active survivors

rather than victims of their situations (Honwana, 2005; Punch, 2002), or make decisions to join support groups in schools (Manzoni & Rolfe, 2019). This chapter closes a gap in the narrative on migrant children, which normally presents them as passive recipients of circumstances (Hendrick, 2015), to present a perspective that views them as capable social beings who can use agency in navigating daily challenges.

12.3 Theoretical Framework

Relational theory is a philosophical approach that gives importance to the relational nature of experiences (Huijsmans et al., 2014). People in society are motivated by the need for relations and are active participants in shaping their own experiences. Through the lens of relational theory, the reality is understood by interpreting the existing nature of things through their relatedness while acknowledging that experiences are not isolated. The theory is valuable in migration studies in analysing children's development since it exposes the connection of interrelated forms of development in migration processes. Relational theory is adopted in migration studies that focus on children because of its ability to view children as "social actors" who are influenced by and are influential on the structures and organisation of their societies (Huijsmans et al., 2014: 45).

This study applies to Huijsmans et al.'s (2014) approach, taking into account the confluence of context, power, agency or structure and barriers in shaping one's experience. Migrant children in rural areas face challenges in accessing education because of caregiver migration and their foreign status.

Agency is the ability of an actor (or actors) to make purposeful choices and is determined by an individual's assets (social, psychological and collective assets). Samman and Santos (2009) show that agency is multidimensional and can be exercised in different societal structures, domains and levels. The "duality of structure" states that the formulation of structures can be both enabling and constraining to human development (Giddens, 1984). This chapter seeks to understand the constraining factors that inhibit migrants' children's access to social services. The ability of these children to influence their situations is therefore discussed with their varying levels of agency.

12.4 Methodology

This study utilised a qualitative approach to understanding the experiences of Mozambican migrant children in accessing education. This methodology allowed the researcher to engage with, talk with, listen to and interact with the participants, thus helping in understanding and interrogating the topic from the participants' perspectives (Babbie, 2012). The chapter forms part of a broader Master's dissertation

conducted with a sample inclusive of 24 migrant children, their caregivers, organisational staff and other key informants on the subject. Upon reviewing the documents of the Buffelshoek Trust[2] and for this chapter, a sample of one primary and one secondary school – those with the highest numbers of Mozambican children enrolled at the time of the study – was purposively selected from Hluvukani village. Permission was granted by the headmaster of each school to choose five Mozambican migrant children, based on specific criteria, from the school's database. These children were five boys and five girls in grades 6–12, 13–18 years old and born to former refugee Mozambican parents in South Africa. Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant. The focal participants were children, a vulnerable group, which meant that obtaining permission from the university ethics committee was necessary, and, in 2015, ethical clearance was granted. Their participation was vital, and hence child-centred research techniques such as story writing, drawings, mingle gaming, guessing gaming and mapping exercises were employed to enhance participation. In the broader study, additional focus-group interviews were conducted with caregivers of the migrant children interviewed. Written consent was obtained from participants through signing consent forms after a detailed verbal discussion of the research purpose.

Among the key questions asked were the following: (i) Explain why you think it's important for you to go to school; (ii) What challenges at home, school or community are blocking you from attending school regularly? (iii) How do you overcome the challenges you experience? All interviews were recorded for analysis, with the participants' permission.

A thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data (Babbie, 2012). Data was analysed through the themes of agency, structure, context and barriers, generated from the relational theory. In the thematic analysis, the researchers followed Taylor-Powell and Renner's (2003: 5) five-step guidelines for getting to know your research material, focusing on the analysis, information categorising, identifying connections among categories and information consolidation. The researchers were aware of the biases and problems associated with a single data collection method, and thus data triangulation was used to enhance the validity and reliability of this research. Primary data was gathered from interviews and focus group discussions with participants, while secondary information for triangulation was gathered through reports, articles and programme documents. Informed by the constructs of relational theory (context, power and structure) in determining participants' agency to respond to their daily challenges, this research ensured that the information presented reflects participants' viewpoints.

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[2] This was an NGO that worked in Bushbuckridge with the mandate "Education for all".

12.5 Results and Discussion

Although non-generalisable, the experiences of migrant children in accessing education are indicative of a complex relationship amongst the concepts of value, barriers and agency. Access to education for participants in this study was laden with obstacles presented by institutional and social structures. In refusing to accept practices that stigmatise and undermine them, such as mistreatment at school, participants showed that they exercised agency in navigating challenges they faced while accessing education.

12.5.1 Understanding the Value of Education

The participants' responses reflected their understanding of the value and benefits of receiving an education. From their perspective, education is a meaningful tool capable of positively transforming one's future and able to nurture children into becoming responsible adults who are independent (financially and socially) and can contribute to their families and society. Lida,[3] a 15-year-old girl, wrote in her worksheet: "… I want to study for a degree in medicine and help my parents. I will take my family to stay at the home that I would have built-in town". Thabiso, a 14-year-old boy, also narrates:

> I have to go to school and get my matric certificate to get a place to study further at a university. I know that if I am not educated, I will struggle to get a job that can pay good money. My wish is to become a teacher. End of every month when I get my salary, I want to help my two little sisters so that they can learn in good schools.

These findings are similar to those of Wenxin (2013: 55), who states that education is a "crucial vehicle by which economically and socially marginalised children and adults can lift themselves from poverty and be able to obtain the means to participate fully in their communities". The participants from this study see themselves as having the capacity to act or to influence their society, thus indicating agency and the desire to make a difference to household income and the well-being of their families. In narrating the value of education, participants also emphasised the need for food, school clothing, and parental care in influencing the overall development of children. Accessing education without support for these basic needs is difficult for migrant families, especially when high poverty and poor socio-economic conditions threaten their wellbeing (Buffelshoek Trust Website, 2014). Language barriers and weak psychosocial support at home were found to add to their problems.

Rabia, a 14-year-old girl, stated:

> I wish my father could help me with my schoolwork. Sometimes I do not understand the words that my teacher use[s] in class. Especially when its examination time, I feel that I am

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[3] Names used are pseudonyms.

alone and maybe it will be better if I stop going to school. … I know that I will have a brighter future if I pass.

The participant's response reflects self-motivation and understanding of the importance of education. These findings are similar to those of Samman and Santos (2009: 4), who show that children demonstrate resilience because they are aware of the possibilities of improved employment prospects when they are educated.

Crush and Tawodzera (2014) draw attention to the lack of psychosocial support and its impact on the wellbeing of migrant children. Thabiso, a 14-year-old boy, shared: "I grew up without my parents, there was no one to take care of me until, recently, my aunt took me into her house. Thinking of my past makes me feel neglected. It disturbs me from focusing well at school."

His response shows the need for psychosocial support. Unathi, a 14-year-old girl, also emphasised the need for psychosocial support when she says, "I come from a very large family and it is a problem for granny to always give us full attention. We are many and she is the only parent, we fight for her attention" Unathi found comfort and support from friends and members of the community whom she could confide in. She wrote, "I thank God for my two friends. We play and work together, we are like family. She always support[s] me and encourage[s] me to complete my secondary school and go to college." Friends and social network support systems played a role in providing some form of psychosocial support for participants in this study.

The Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI, 2015) states that the provision of psychosocial support – psychological, social, environmental or spiritual – is beneficial to one's well-being. Despite South Africa's obligation to make education available and accessible for all, migrant children who participated in this study in Bushbuckridge painted a different picture as they had experiences of structural and societal barriers.

12.5.2 Participants' Challenges in Accessing Education

The participants reflected on their problems with accessing social services meant for migrant children. They reported negative experiences around their status as second-generation migrants in South Africa. The structural barriers include the Department of Social Development (DSD), the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), and their policies. The institutional structures (such as the DSD, Child Support Grant, and public health care) were reported as inaccessible by participants. Yet organisations such as UNICEF (2003) emphasise that children in rural areas rely on social services for survival.

Asasia, a 13-year-old girl from a child-headed family,[4] relayed some of the difficulties she encountered with the DSD: "I recently visited the DSD in Hluvukani because I wanted them to help me with taking care of my younger siblings while I

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[4] A family where someone younger than 18 years became the head of the household.

was at school, but there was no help. I was told to go from one office to the other without any meaningful help. I left and never went back." The majority of the participants confessed that they had no identity documents and this deterred them from approaching the DSD during times of need. Shelton, an 18-year-old boy, narrates his challenges with the DHA:

> When I started school at this primary, the principal wanted a birth certificate but my parents failed to get one at the Home Affairs because they feared [they would] be turned away since they did not have proper documents. I was born in South Africa but I struggle to get an identity document. Our neighbours, who are South Africans and have South African identities, ended up adopting me and they helped me to get a birth certificate that I am using now. The birth certificate has the neighbours' surname, not my own.

Similarly, Lwandile, a 14-year-old boy, together with his parents who possessed refugee permits during the time of the study, were entitled to access the child support grants and health care assistance, but officials failed to recognise their refugee permits.

The cases of Asasia, Shelton and Lwandile reflect some of the difficulties that participants faced in rural Bushbuckridge. The DSD (2015) states that the role and responsibility of the DSD are to uphold the well-being and protection of children's and families' rights. Such rights encompass protection from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation, and access to social services, family care or parental care. Even though the responsibility of the DSD is clear in policy, participants' experiences show a deviation in the implementation of these responsibilities.

Lida, a 15-year-old girl, described her challenges with securing identity documentation because her caregiver also failed to renew her own documentation. She explained that her caregiver was using an asylum permit[5] since she came to South Africa; she was told that DHA no longer recognises such permits as they had expired. The participant further narrated that her mother failed to process her identity documents. A similar story about the DHA was also shared by two other participants. Even though the majority of the children interviewed were born in South Africa, they were not recognised as South African citizens and were expected to acquire appropriate legal documentation to access services from schools, clinics and social welfare institutions. Proudlock (2014) notes that children born in South Africa to undocumented parents are stateless, and hence constrained from accessing services, despite the policy specifications of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989. Without proper identity documentation, migrant children face difficulty in accessing services.

In this study, the process of acquiring identity documents was a complex one for migrant children because most of them were dependent on their caregivers who were also are undocumented because they failed to secure proper documentation when they came to South Africa as refugees. The findings show that the lack of proper documentation perpetuates generations of undocumented stateless people.

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[5] A temporary permit valid for two years, given to an individual pending a decision after applying for refugee status.

Manjengenja (2014) concurs that migrant families and their children encounter administrative barriers when trying to acquire identity documents at the DHA, pointing to the lack of implementation of national policies.

The UNCRC (1989) specifies the care and protection of all children irrespective of their origin or documentation status. While protection and care are important for children, according to the South African Human Rights Commission, it is also important to have laws that specifically cater for children of migrants as they grow into adulthood. There are no such provisions for migrant children born in South Africa and they "often fall under the radar as stateless children who later are bound to become discarded adults" (Magnus 2019).

Responses from some children suggest that they would like to strengthen their social relationships with other children at school and in the community to ease the social exclusions they face regularly. Elements of stigmatisation echoed in the low self-esteem prevalent among the children and negatively influenced their educational performance. One of the children wrote, "… Sometimes others laugh at me in class and call me names like *mupoti*[6] especially when the teacher asks me a question and I do not know it. This is stressful and it makes me feel less of a human" (Mavie, a 16-year-old girl).

In addition to the structural barriers, the migrant children also shared their experiences of integrating into society, and the majority of them identified barriers such as discrimination and bullying at school and difficult living conditions in the home. Each of the children showed a level of agency in overcoming some of the barriers experienced.

12.5.3 Participants' Agency

Agentic response is an important concept that entails one's capability to exercise control over one's context. Migrant children in this study were not mere recipients of circumstances; they presented themselves as capable of influencing their surroundings. Similar to the rural migrant children in Punch's study (2002), participants employed mechanisms to mitigate the daily challenges of accessing education because they were active social members of the community they were living in. Traditional constructions of children largely perceive them as objects of situations; however, in some cases in this study, they were active subjects in influencing their daily experiences.

Direct Agency Responses from the majority of the participants indicated that they often use direct agency at school. Asasia, a 13-year-old girl, explained that she reported the perpetrators whenever she was mistreated or called derogatory names at school. Another female participant explained that she negotiated chores with her family members at home as a way of mitigating time to focus on schoolwork at

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[6] A degrading term used to refer to those of Mozambican origin.

home. She stated, "When my mother wants me to do the house chores and I have homework to do, I tell her nicely that my elder sister should assist her, and I cover up for her when I have submitted my homework." These responses show how children reset their boundaries in search of autonomy and dealing with circumstances at school or home. She did acknowledge that this was a stressful process because she was often labelled as a rude and rebellious child. It is important to understand that migrant children's attempts to realise their autonomy are not perceived as means of being resistant to adults but are emphasised as part of complex processes in exercising their direct agency when their behaviour is directed by their own goals and outcomes (Bandura, 2006: 164). In a similar vein, Alanen (2011) argues that the aim of children's negotiations is for them to gain control of their time and space and to shift unequal child-adult power relations.

Some participants indicated that it was challenging to navigate institutional barriers such as problems experienced with the DSD. One of the participants confessed that it was impermeable because he believed that he had less power to challenge institutional structures. Foucault (1982: 793) understood this as the "ambiguity of free choices" because children may have positively influenced their immediate situations but some of their experiences related to the broader structures that frame their lives have left them with minimal choices. Without just complaining about their situations, most participants found comfort in acknowledging that they could take advantage of some areas such as fighting and negotiating discrimination and bullying at school.

Proxy Agency Participants responses show that the children also exercised proxy agency. This is when one chooses to exercise their agency through others (Bandura, 2006). Rabia (a 13-year-old girl) reported that: "If I am not able to talk to those who bully me, I nicely ask my friend to accompany me to report to the educators. It disturbs my mind when I am bullied but I know she is able to help me". Such proxy agency motivated the participants' efforts to complete their education. Rabia's response concurred with the majority of the participants' responses and demonstrated their resilience. Similar findings by the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT, 2012) show that there is evidence of widespread xenophobic violence and abuse against migrant families and their children, which hinders their safety in schools, threatens unity and security among migrant families, and produces detrimental effects on migrant children's psychosocial development and integration into host societies.

The children reported that they were involved with non-governmental organisations which were able to assist them with some material support such as school uniforms, stationery and food parcels. Shelton, an 18-year-old boy, explained: "I knew there were a lot of organisations that were helping children in this community but I had to choose and associate myself with the one that was important to me – I needed food and school uniform the most." The majority of the children echoed that they were grateful for the support they received from Buffelshoek Trust and stated that it was making a significant difference in their educational lives.

In addressing the financial hardships at home, the teenage participants said they sought part-time work to assist their caregivers. They were engaged in work opportunities such as cleaning cars, assisting in shops, selling fruits or even cleaning their educators' houses at school or anywhere in the community to get money to contribute towards their schooling requirement. This demonstrates migrant children's agency as a means to minimise financial constraints. Lwandile, (a 14-year-old boy) wrote in his worksheet:

> I was separated from my parents when I was starting grade 3 and until now I'm in grade 7 and I still do not stay with my parents. I have to decide what to eat and what I do to be able to go to school. My parents are hardly home – they work in the city – so they sent money for me and my younger brother to use at home.

His response reflects his agency for minimising his reliance on his caregivers. The children, who stayed in a child-headed family of six, showed that migrant children were independent beings who, through their ability to make meaningful decisions and choices, allowed societies to reconstruct the notion of "traditionally seeing children as passive and dependent beings" (Wenxin, 2013: 46).

Collective Agency Despite direct and proxy agency, responses from migrant children in this study showed they also exercised collective agency. This is organised agency guided by collective intentions, resulting in enhanced collective efficacy (Bandura, 2006: 164). Collective agency was employed as a strategy to overcome structural and societal barriers in their access to education. Participants demonstrated collective agency by the way their households were situated in Hluvukani village. The village has specifically demarcated areas where migrants are located, known as former refugee areas. One of the children acknowledged: "Though people from Mozambique are looked down upon in my community, I appreciate that all my neighbours are also from Mozambique, so we get along well and there is no one calling me names." Participants felt comfortable being in places with other migrants where living arrangements seemed not as discriminatory to the children.

Collective agency was also demonstrated through peer relations. Three children mentioned that they played with and shared ideas with other children at home and school. These informal interactions directly supported the children in building their social capital in the community. Foucault (1982) defines social capital as the networks and associations in a society created by individuals to derive support in improving their well-being. The children emphasised that, through play and engagement with friends at school, they built trusting relationships that the children could draw upon during times of need. Given the responses from children, strengthening social capital was essential in minimising the emotional stress experienced by the children while accessing education.

Collective agency was also pronounced during examination time. The secondary school children would team up with other children in the neighborhood and help each other prepare for exams. In this way, they developed new friendships as a way of coping with emotional distress at school. As evidence, one of the children in the study stated:

> I cannot imagine myself spending the whole day without talking to my friend. I like her so much; she is more than a sister to me. I talk to her when I am happy or even when I have problems. She always listens to me and encourages me to take my school serious. (Nasma, a 13-year-old girl)

Nasma's explanation suggests that migrant children in this study believe in collective agency and they consider each other as family, especially in times of need.

12.6   Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter is important because it demonstrates that interwoven structural and social factors in a rural context shaped the experiences of migrant children. Numerous challenges have created barriers in limiting equal access to education for the participants. The study brings attention to the nexus of migration and rural contexts; the relationality of second-generation migrants in rural spaces remains an under-researched area. South Africa is one of the top countries where migrants experience many negative attitudes when accessing social services (Manzoni & Rolfe, 2019). Access to education is arguably vital for eliminating poverty, fighting social exclusions and contributing to mending social disharmonies as stated in the 1960 UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education. For migrant children, access to education is characterised by bullying and discrimination, and the most critical challenge is the access to legal identity documentation (Proudlock, 2014).

Through a relational theory, this chapter introduced a new perspective for viewing migrant children as agentic when facing adversity in rural Bushbuckridge. Being a rural migrant child has multiple constraints on accessing education, but evidence in this study shows that migrant children employ resilience and significant agency in overcoming daily hurdles in the form of direct, proxy or collective agency. Hence, they are seen as active contributors in shaping their own experiences (Wenxin, 2013: 46). Specific contributions of this chapter are that migrant children face difficulties in all spheres of their educational lives, but their lives are also defined by resistance and, in this case, agentic response. As essential as it is for migrant children to be protected, it is also important to better enlighten them on how they can protect themselves through strengthening their resilience and self-efficacy. The migrant children need to be educated about the human rights they are entitled to. This study calls upon rural institutions such as tribal authorities to assist former refugees with supporting documents that they can submit to DHA. Relationally, the inability to meet these needs posed a threat and introduced intertwined social and structural barriers to migrant children's access to education, and in turn compromised participants' access to social services.

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