





## INTRODUCTION



- Since 1993 – South Africa has become a host country for asylum seekers and refugees across Africa.
- The number of refugees – increased from 6 619 in 1997 to 44 000 and 230 000 pending asylum cases in 2008 (UNHCR, 2009) and the number of forced migrants is estimated by the Department of Home Affairs at about 3 million.
- Xenophobia May 2008 - 62 people were killed

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## INTRODUCTION (Cont)



- In line with the Constitution of South Africa which is committed to human rights and dignity South Africa has ratified various international and regional conventions on refugees.
- South Africa has also Adopted the Refugee Act 30 of 1998, which spells out the protection, rights and obligations of refugees.
- Considering the rights and protection of refugees their level of wellbeing and subjective wellbeing(SWB) should be similar to those of South Africans.

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## AIM



- Define subjective wellbeing (SWB)
- Develop a multi-scale SWB index for both refugees and South Africans in Johannesburg
- Compare criteria that can influence SWB of both groups
- Recommendations and future research

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## BACKGROUND

### DEFINITIONS

#### 1. Refugee

According to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol on Refugees

- A person must be persecuted due to his/her
  - race,
  - religion,
  - nationality
- being a member of a social group
- a specific political opinion
- liberation wars and internal upheavals, thus all individuals displaced by generalised conditions of violence (Organisation for African Unity (OAU))
- A person must be outside his/her country and fear for his/her life.
- The person can be in any geographical area.
- There is no time restriction



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## BACKGROUND (cont)

2. Urban refugees - are people living in an urban area outside of their country of origin. The majority of refugees in South Africa settle in urban areas
3. Asylum seekers - are persons who have left their country of origin and have applied for recognition as refugees in another country, but are still awaiting a decision on their application.

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## BACKGROUND (cont)

### THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES IN SOUTH AFRICA

- Dignity
- Life
- Equality before the law
- Freedom of expression, assembly and association
- Freedom of movement
- Right to adequate housing
- Health care
- Sufficient food and water
- Social security
- Basic education
- Legal protection
- Identification document (ID)

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## BACKGROUND (cont)

- Landau(2006) showed that SA institutionally fails to determine refugee status, does not issue recognizable ID's, which denies refugees essential social services, and makes them vulnerable to abuse by law enforcement officers.
- Many of the rights spelled out in the Refugee Act 30 of 1998 are not accessible to refugees.
- How does it influence the wellbeing of refugees?

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## SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING (SWB)

- SWB presents people's evaluations of their lives and includes happiness, pleasant emotions, life satisfaction and a relative absence of unpleasant moods and emotions. (Diener and Biswas-Diener , 2000)
- Clark and Oswald (1996) and Oswald (1997) - showed in research that to maximise subjective wellbeing was the ultimate objective of most people.

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## SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING

- Economists have initially lagged behind other social sciences in the measuring of SWB as they were suspicious of subjectively reported perceptions.
- Therefore much of the research on SWB was undertaken in other disciplines such as psychology and sociology (Frey and Stutzer (2002)).

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## IS SWB MEANINGFUL?

- Data on SWB and life satisfaction are available for many countries
- The data have been validated by researchers in other disciplines
- The answers to SWB and life satisfaction questions are well correlated to:
  - Objective characteristics – unemployment
  - Assessments of people's SWB by friends and family members
  - Heart-rate and blood-pressure measures of response to stress
  - Risk of coronary heart disease (Blanchflower, 2008)
  - Individual's report in terms of wellbeing is strongly correlated with objective measures of positive and negative brain activity (Layard, 2003)

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## IS SWB MEANINGFUL?(CONT)



- Estimates of SWB have produced powerful and (normally) understandable regularities
- Both substantive and significant coefficients in the SWB functions
- Similar results across different periods, different data sets and different countries (Knight , 2004)

Economist's have come to accept that the SWB equations are informative and can be useful

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## MEASURING SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING



- To measure SWB by asking people how they feel.
- Surveys can include single-item or multiple-item questions
- An example of a single-item question is:
  - "How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life overall?"
  - The response can score one to three points - 1 being the lowest (1. Not satisfied to the highest level of wellbeing (3. satisfied)

Research has found single-item scales to be less reliable than multi-item scales

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## MEASURING SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING



An example of a multi-item scale can be found in the General Health Questionnaire in the British Household Panel Survey, which includes questions such as:

- Do you enjoy your normal day to day activities?
- Have you lost sleep over worries?
- Do you feel capable of making decisions?

The scores of the different questions are then added to get a total score on SWB

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## DETERMINANTS OF SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING



The main findings, ceteris paribus, from SWB equations across countries and time are as follows:

SWB is higher among

- Women
- Married people
- Highly educated
- Healthy
- High income
- Young and old – U shaped
- Employed
- Not a victim of crime (Blanchflower,2008)

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## DETERMINANTS OF SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING



- SWB is lower among
  - Newly divorced and separated people
  - Adults in their mid thirties
  - Unemployed
  - Minority groups
  - Poor health
  - Less educated
  - Poor (Blanchflower,2008)

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## METHODOLOGY and DATA



- Data: "Migration and the New African City" (FMSP, 2006)
- 600 non-nationals (200 Somali, 200 Congolese and 200 Mozambicans) and a control group of 200 South Africans.
- Mozambicans - Rosettenville.
- Somalis - Mayfair and Fordsburg.
- Congolese Yeoville, Berea and Bertrams.
- Considered only refugees (respondents 406) and South African citizens (199)

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## METHODOLOGY and DATA (CONT)



- To determine SWB a multi-item approach was used
- The subjective questions were selected in order to address the criticism raised against single-item questions, such as:
  - it reflects how a person feels at a specific time – thus questions were chosen to indicate life satisfaction over a period of time
  - it reflects a persons mood at a specific moment rather than life satisfaction (correlated 41%, 56% with life satisfaction Knight 2006) - thus questions are phrased indirectly not to capture the mood
  - Life satisfaction questions are highly related to relative questions – thus questions were chosen that reflects relativity
  - Single item questions random errors tend to be bigger(Csikszentmihalyi)
  - Direct question is subject to nonsampling bias (Bertrand and Mullainathan) thus rather use an indirect approach

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## METHODOLOGY



Where do you expect to be living two years from now?

The possible answers were:

- Where I am now – this was taken that the respondent was satisfied with life – and a score of 3 was allocated
- In another part of South Africa – this was seen as not so satisfied (score 2)
- In a third country – this was taken as not satisfied (score 1)

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## METHODOLOGY



Generally speaking do you think your life will be better or worse than your parents' lives?

The possible answers were:

- My life will be better – this was taken that the respondent was satisfied (score 3)
- My life will be the same - not so satisfied (score 2),
- My life will be worse – not satisfied (score1)

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## METHODOLOGY



Generally speaking do you think your children's lives will be better or worse than your own life?

The possible answers were:

- Their lives will be worse – satisfied (score3)
- Their lives will be the same - not so satisfied (score 2),
- Their lives will be better – this was taken that the respondent was not satisfied (score 1)

The scores to each question were added with the same weighting allocated to each question. The maximum score was 9 and the minimum 3.

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## METHODOLOGY



To analyse the results found in the SWB indices certain determinants that influence SWB were selected and a comparison drawn between South Africans and refugees

The criteria were :

- housing type,
- marital status,
- educational level,
- employment status,
- income per week,
- age,
- crime,
- relative income,

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## RESULTS AND FINDINGS

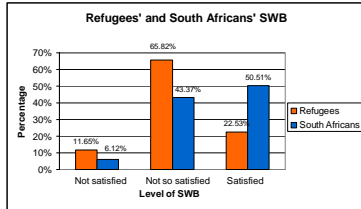


- SWB index
- Comparison between explanatory variables influencing the wellbeing of South Africans and refugees

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**FIGURE 1: SWB INDEX**



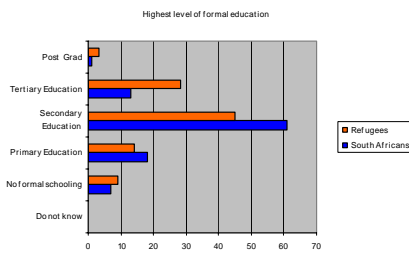
**HOUSING TYPE**



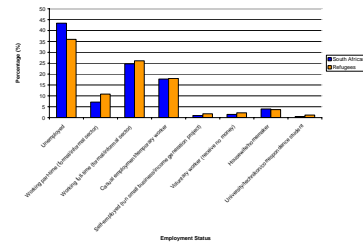
- Housing type – proxy wealth – people in free standing houses have higher wellbeing (Hinks and Gruen)
- Free standing houses: 30.2% - SA and 3.2% - refugees
- 86% - refugees – in apartments, hostels and informal housing

**FIGURE 3: EDUCATION LEVEL**

— % of individuals that completed different educational levels



**FIGURE 4: EMPLOYMENT STATUS** (% of individuals - economic activity)



**TABLE 2: A VICTIM OF CRIME**



	South Africans %	Refugees %
No response/ Do not know	0.5	0.5
Yes	42.9	68.4
No	56.6	31.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Forced Migration Study Programme, 2006

**SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS**



- Satisfied with life - 51% of SA – 22% of refugees
- Not satisfied with life – 6% of SA – 12% of refugees

**Determinants of SWB**

- SA better off – housing type, income per week, age, victim of crime, relative income
- Refugees – more are married but almost twice as many refugees are also staying apart, more refugees have tertiary education, but the majority are employed in the informal sector, fewer refugees are unemployed
- Majority of determinants confirm finding that South Africans have a higher satisfaction with life than refugees

## CONCLUSION



- Although the Refugee Act 30 of 1998 give rights and protection to refugees, their wellbeing is much lower than South Africans'.
- The lack of institutional implementation of refugee legislation contributes to lower SWB of refugees.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



- Government should address problems experienced with the implementation of Act 30 of 1998
- South Africans should be informed about refugees and asylum seekers and their rights

## FUTURE RESEARCH



- Further research is needed to determine which other factors influence the wellbeing of refugees.
- And to estimate the subjective wellbeing function of refugees: Ordered OLS and/or probit/logit. regressions

## QUESTIONS?

