

Not Suitable for Repatriation nor Refugee Status: How Undocumented Immigrant Women Survives Street Policing

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Abstract : The impression created by the high volume of foreign nationals being deported by the South African Home Affairs and the police departments is that all undocumented foreign nationals insist on staying in South Africa and voluntary repatriation is open for every person. However, those foreign nationals whose request for deportation has been rejected are often not reported on especially their everyday survival as undocumented immigrant women and their encounter with the police on the street. As a result, this paper aims at exploring the everyday experiences of these women on the street and on why the number of undocumented immigrant women in this country will remain a challenge to the police department. The research was conducted in two cities in South Africa, namely: Johannesburg and Pretoria where the police, the undocumented immigrant women, the human rights lawyers and NGO officials were interviewed on this matter. Based on the idea that voluntary repatriation is open for every immigrant, this study has found that some women' request for voluntary repatriation remain a dream that never came true. Furthermore, this article proposes more humanitarian ways of dealing with undocumented immigrant women.

Keywords : repatriation, refugee status, undocumented foreign nationals, humanitarian

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