Examining the Triggers of Xenophobic Attacks in Republic of South Africa

Ikechukwu Stephen Okolie
Department of Political Science
University of Maiduguri, Borno State Nigeria

Olotuche Oscar Joseph
Department of Political Science
University of Abuja Nigeria

Abstract
Xenophobic violence has continued to be a global, social problem which has physical, emotional, psychological, economical and social effects on victims. The manifest, reoccurring and pervasive nature of xenophobic attacks in South Africa has continued to dent the image of the rainbow nation in Africa and international community. The xenophobic attacks on foreigners residing in South Africa especially Africans has cast a doubt on the spirit of Pan-Africanism on the government and citizens of the rainbow nation that fought discrimination and apartheid regime for decades before gaining her independence with the help of sister African states. This paper examined the triggers and underlying causes of unabated xenophobic attacks against migrants in South Africa. An exploratory and qualitative approach was adopted for this study with the use of secondary sources such as books, journals, newspapers and internet sources. The latest xenophobic attack in 2019 is still fresh in the minds of foreigners residing and doing businesses in South Africa. The peak of xenophobic attacks occurred in 2008, followed by 2015 and 2019 which has claimed many lives. Xenophobia is manifest in different regions, communities and institutional levels in South Africa which has devastating effects on the affected victims or nationals. Due to the high migratory rate to South Africa, this violence will certainly not be a temporary one.

Keywords: Xenophobia, South Africa, Inequality, Foreigners, Apartheid

INTRODUCTION

Xenophobia is becoming a prominent aspect of life in Africa. From Kenya to the Maghreb and across Southern Africa, discrimination against non-nationals, particularly fellow Africans, has been on the rise according to international media reports (Ibrahim, *et al* 2019). Xenophobia is a social vice that is as old as social history. It is based on the politics of exclusion, which is a feeling that foreigners are different from the nationals and so should have a lower status than that of the nationals. Xenophobic atrocities and ethnic cleansing led to the collapse of the socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the 1990's. Since the collapse of Yugoslavia, ethnic Albanians, Bosniaks and Croats have tended to develop a negative outlook on Serbs (Fetzer, 2000).

According to Fetzer (2000), Americans view foreigners with suspicion, fear and hatred, even when they needed these immigrants for cheap labour. Their illegal status makes it difficult for them to seek legal recourse in cases of labour and social disputes, lest they are arrested and deported. The alien status of the immigrants makes them more vulnerable to frequent attacks by the nationals. According to Amnesty International, the UN and The

Human Rights Watch, physical attacks against Haitians by Americans have increased since 1992 and reports of lynching of Haitians surfaced as late as 2006 (Fetzer, 2000).

Xenophobic tendencies have also being observed elsewhere outside America. During the 2007 election, the populist Swiss People's Party (SPP) gained 29% of the seats in parliament. The party was accused of increasing racism and xenophobic sentiment by publishing a controversial poster during its campaign. The poster showed a white sheep kicking a black sheep off the Swiss flag. The SPP proposed a change to the penal code to allow judges to deport foreigners convicted of serious crimes once they have served their sentence. If the criminal was under the age of 18, the proposed law allowed the entire criminal's family to be deported as soon as sentence is passed (Crush, 2000).

However, Crush (2008), states that exclusion, based on the idea of being 'non-native' has existed in Africa since independence and was codified during colonialism. Bounded ideas of citizenship have existed in Africa for two centuries, and contemporary xenophobia can be seen as one of the most recent manifestations of this feature. South Africa is extremely high with regular attacks on foreign nationals. Despite a lack of directly comparable data, xenophobia in South Africa is perceived to have significantly increased after the installation of a democratic government in 1994.

According to a 2004 study published by the Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP), The African National Congress (ANC) government, in its attempts to overcome the divides of the past and build new forms of social cohesion embarked on an aggressive and inclusive nation-building project. One unanticipated by product of this project has been a growth in intolerance towards outsiders. Violence against foreign citizens and African refugees has become increasingly common and communities are divided by hostility and suspicion (SAMP, 2004).

Post-apartheid South Africa has enjoyed about two decades of majority rule on the basis of a constitution which declares, as one of its fundamental principles and goals, the "achievement of a non-racial society". However, in spite of the efforts to create "the rainbow nation", neither the question of race nor the questions of class and gender oppression and exploitation have ceased to be central in contemporary South Africa (Gqola, 2001 cited in Hendricks, 2005 and Trimikliniotis et al, 2008). Indeed, the defeat of apartheid, the bastion of state organized racism, a regime based explicitly on racist institutionalization, and its replacement by the "new South Africa" is indicative of how race and racism remain operational forces even after they have officially been declared dead. There is no consensus as to the current transitional state of affairs; for 20 years after African National Congress (ANC) took over from white nationalist/racist minority rule, there is considerable debate as to the direction, pace and nature of the post-apartheid regime (Trimikliniotis*et al*, 2008).

Lester et al (2000), had argued that, while for the first time democratization in South Africa has translated to the poor having the same formal political power as the rich, the country remains one of the most unequal societies on earth. This gross inequality was engendered, according to him, by the fact that, when the country left apartheid behind, it did not leave behind the structures and processes which generated inequality. The increasing xenophobic attacks has dented the image of the rainbow state in the international community which fought apartheid and discrimination for decades before gaining her independence for self rule and self determination. The xenophobic incidence in South Africa has remained unabated for decades and has continued to happen without the government taking any concrete steps to mitigate or eradicate it and this has raised questions about Pan-Africanism on the part of South African government.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

According to Matunhu (2008), Xenophobia is an attitudinal orientation of hostility against that which is foreign to the nationals. According to Smelser and Baltes (2001), the term originates from the Greek words "*xenos*", meaning foreigner, stranger, and "*phobos*", meaning fear. It is based on existing racist, ethnic, religious, cultural or national prejudice.

Xenophobia described as an irrational dislike of strangers and a xenophobe is a person who is contemptuous of foreign peoples (Matunhu, 2008). According to Klaude (2001), xenophobia is one of the principal causes of violence around the world. It can also be viewed as the attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that vilify persons based on the perception that they are foreigners (Declaration on Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances against Migrants and Trafficked Persons, 2001). Xenophobic violence has specific perpetrators (nationals) as much as it has specific survivors (foreign nationals).

Crush and Ramachandran (2009), explain that xenophobia is derived from the Greek words "*xenos*"and"*phobos*"which mean strange or foreign and phobia respectively. The term is typically used to describe a fear or dislike of foreigners or of people significantly different from oneself, usually in the context of visibly differentiated minorities (Shinsana, 2008). Crowther (1995), defined the concept of xenophobia as an intense dislike or fear of strangers or people from other countries. Khosa and Malitani (2014), explained that Xenophobia is widespread in the townships, where immigrants are referred to as *"kwerekwere"*a disparaging word for African immigrant.

As a societal issue, numerous studies have established that xenophobia is deep-rooted in many sectors of the South African society, including government, media and financial organizations (Dodson and Oelofse 2000). Bond *et al.* (2010) and Vale (2002), rightly assert that political xenophobic arrogance and attacks against foreigners are based and rooted in the politics that marked the apartheid and post-apartheid leadership and influenced public policy toward African foreigners that filtered in post-apartheid South Africa.

Xenophobia Realism

National opinion surveys and in-depth qualitative interviews with groups of South Africans and migrants conducted over the best part of two decades lead to the inescapable conclusion that xenophobic attitudes are highly prevalent in South Africa amongst all social, economic, racial and class groups. The Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP) has been monitoring the perceptions and attitudes of South Africans towards migrants and refugees since the late 1990's (Crush, 2008).

Xenophobia Minimalism

A number of academic commentators argue that while xenophobia may exist, it cannot be invoked to explain violence against foreigners by South Africans. One study contends that the term "xenophobic violence" assumes a taken for granted hostile opposition between foreigners and South Africans even though the aggression has been levelled at citizens too in particular areas (Sharp, 2008).The term supposedly holds a "certain descriptive plausibility" but ultimately fails to evaluate in a compelling manner the processes at play and, more importantly, how to handle them. Thus the relationship between South Africans and non-South Africans cannot be understood purely as one of unyielding antagonism under all circumstances (Ibid). Another suggests that violence against migrant shopkeepers cannot be seen as xenophobic because South African shopkeepers are equally at risk (Charman and Piper, 2012).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Several hypotheses have been put forward in an effort to explain the reasons of xenophobia. The study will also explore relative deprivation theory and Isolation theory to understand the triggers of xenophobic attacks in South Africa on foreigners.

The Relative Deprivation theory and xenophobia

When Stark (1984a), first applied the concept of relative deprivation to modelling rural to urban migration, he admitted that "the ideas … (were) exploratory and illustrative and [had] not yet been subjected to complete and formal empirical verification". Since then empirical verifications with data from a number of countries have upheld the ideas and raised his hypotheses to the status of a distinct theory the new economics of migration that has shed considerable light on the process of and issues involving international migration (Stark and Taylor, 1989, 1991a, 1991b; Quinn, 2006and Aleksynska, 2007). Aleksynska (2007) extended the relative deprivation model to cover xenophobia and possibly xenophobic attacks by using it to explain the formation of attitudes towards foreigners that could help in addressing the root causes of xenophobia and thus, in proactively dealing with it. The basis of this extension to the model is that there are differences between natives and foreigners, which are perceived by natives and which play a role in shaping their attitudes toward foreign residents. This version of the theory can therefore be used in analysing and shedding light on the xenophobic attacks that erupted against some foreign African residents in South Africa in May 2008 and April 2015.

The Isolation theory

The isolation theory on the other hand, situates foreignness at the heart of hostility toward foreigners. Morris (1998), argues that apartheid isolated South African citizens from nationalities beyond Southern Africa. In this hypothesis, foreigners represent the unknown to South Africans. With the political transition, however, South Africa's borders have opened up to accommodate foreign nationals from other countries. This has brought South Africans into direct contact with the unknown, with foreigners. Concurring to the isolation hypothesis, the border between previously isolated South Africans and unknown foreigners generate a space for resentment to develop: "When a group has no history of incorporating strangers it may find it difficult to be welcoming" (Morris, 1998). This theory relevant to the study because, firstly its applicability to the study and secondly, it encapsulates a wider understanding as to why local South Africans will resent other nationals in their country as Morris (1998), alluded, "When a group has no history of incorporating strangers it may find it difficult to be welcoming".

XENOPHOBIA: A GLOBAL PHENOMENON

Historically, xenophobia did not start in South Africa; Australia, North America, Europe, United Kingdom, Japan and others have had long histories of xenophobia (Mayfield, 2010). In Rome for example, xenophobic tendencies were manifested towards the Russians and Hungarians who were not citizens but from neighbouring countries (Saideman and Ayres, 2008). Australia though a multicultural society, xenophobia sentiments were manifested towards immigrants. Foreign nationals were seen at all times as criminals or asylum seekers. The situation was worsened by the fact that the government and opposition parties took advantage of these immigrants by indulging in loathing of refugees (Buchanan, 2003).

France, which was once a white and Catholic country anti-immigrant sentiments were directed or developed following the presence of the Muslims in particular and other races. Xenophobia in France became widespread to the extent that French citizens were blaming the

increased unemployment and insecurity on foreign nationals (Roemer *et al*., 2007). The end result was the tightening up of security (immigration laws) by the French government as foreign nationals were called criminals. The French and the British for fear of contamination of their culture by foreign nationals coming from other continents such as Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, established a more stringent immigrations laws, which were passed restricting the number of foreign nationals coming those continents (Campbell, 2003).

In the United States of America (USA), xenophobic assaults are manifested in the form of anti-Hispanic hate crimes (Stacey et al., 2011). Research has it that xenophobia in the USA from a historical perspective started as far back in the 19th century. In 1885, it was reported that White Americans rioted against Chinese residents. Again in 1890, another incident of Xenophobic attacks on the Chinese was reported were white farm workers assaulted their Chinese counterpart. The Americans attitude towards Mexicans, Italians, and Asians, shows that they are not welcomed in the USA. Xenophobic assaults against Mexicans became riffed in 1914. During this period in America, only foreign nationals from Germany, England, French speaking Canadians and Jews, were welcomed to the USA (Fetzer, 2000).

Mikulich (2009), articulates the U.S fear that foreign nationals from Mexico and Latino will overlook "white European-power over U.S. identity". In view of Mikulich (2009), U.S.A. xenophobia, based on the assumption that "our country" is defined by, and should maintain, its dominant White European heritage is rooted in the myth of the U.S. as a nation of European immigrants. This situation represses America's original sin of racism and obscures the fact the country was in part built, advanced and sustained on the backs on African people who were stripped from their cultures of birth and arrived involuntarily via the Atlantic slave trade.

Xenophobic inclination was expressed in India targeting mostly foreign nationals from Bangladesh who were accused by the Indians for the country's predicament such as increased unemployment, terrorism and environmental degradation. Just as in the case of South Africa, the numbers of Bangladesh foreign nationals in India were most often than not, portrayed as a national threat to the country by government officials. One peculiar thing regarding xenophobia in India was that xenophobic assaults against Bangladeshi vary according to religious backgrounds. Xenophobic violence targeted against foreign nationals in both South Africa and India are similar in the sense that it was founded on "politics of exclusion" and again associated with post independence and nation building (Crush and Ramachandran, 2010 and Human Rights Watch, 1998).

Coming to Africa, Nigeria and Ghana have had records of hatred for foreign immigrants, which ended up with xenophobia (Campbell, 2003). Xenophobic inclinations in Ghana became riffed in 1969 to the extent that the Ghanaian government had to evict and expelled a total number of 1.5 million foreign nationals particularly Nigerians. Research has it that in 1983, the Nigerian government evicted 1.5 million foreigners from Nigeria who were Ghanaians in particular (Campbell, 2003). The xenophobic inclination in both countries was spurred by economic difficulties confronting them. Nationals of both countries Ghana and Nigeria in 1969 and 1983, respectively accused each other of their predicaments (Soyombo, 2008). Globalization can be responsible for xenophobic attitudes because in the face of globalization, different nationals of different countries move from one country to another in search for greener pasture and at the end of the day are exposed to xenophobic assaults (Harrison, 2005 and Nyamnjoh, 2006).

In the same light, citizens from Botswana taking prompt xenophobic ideas from South Africa referred to foreign nationals (excluding South Africans) in Botswana as "*makwerekwere*". Such derogatory word, which is also used in South Africa, refers to people who speak strange languages coming from economically devastated countries in search of greener pastures. Xenophobic attitudes towards foreign nationals in both countries slightly

differ in that in Botswana, the Indians are hated for being perceived as treacherous. The Indians despite their huge economic investments in Botswana, the Indians are still targeted (Campbell, 2003).

SCOPE OF XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

Xenophobia runs deep in South Africa and goes beyond the fear and dislike of foreigners. Since the 1990s, studies have consistently acknowledged strong negative sentiments and hostility towards foreigners amongst the general public and government bureaucrats (Dodson, 2010; Crush, 2008; HSRC, 2008; Joubert, 2008; and Nyamnjoh, 2006). While there are cases of hospitality, tolerance, and South Africans defending the rights of non-nationals, there is convincing evidence that South Africans are generally uncomfortable with the presence of Black and Asian non-nationals in their country (Misago et al. 2015). This is exposed in various statistics, produced at both national and local levels:

i. In a 1998 survey, the South African Migration Project (SAMP) found that 87% of South Africans felt that the country was letting in too many foreigners (Dodson, 2002).

ii. Crush (2000), asserted that 25% of South Africans nationally favour a total ban on immigration and migration, considerably more than in other countries in the region and another 20% feel that everyone from neighbouring countries living in South Africa (legally or not) should be sent home.

iii. A 2004 survey carried out by the University of Witwatersrand on residents of the inner city Johannesburg indicated that about 64.8% of South Africans thought it would be a wise thing if most of the African refugees, documented and undocumented immigrants are deported from the rainbow state. Only, few saw deporting or evicting the white minority out of South Africa a top most priority.

iv. In another survey by the Institute for Democracy in Southern Africa (IDASA) in 2011, the findings were that negative attitudes towards foreign nationals and particularly migrants from other African countries are still as strong and persistent as they have always been: "South Africans who are opposed to immigrants exhibit various forms of xenophobia citing that immigrants weaken society and threaten the health of the nation" (IDASA, 2011). As in 2008, around a third of people would be willing to take action against foreign nationals in the country, 32% would be willing to take action to prevent foreign nationals from moving into their neighbourhood, 36% from operating a business in their area, 32% from sitting in class with their children and 31% from becoming co-workers (IDASA, 2011).

v. A 2014 survey by the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) revealed "levels of xenophobia and intolerance of foreigners are increasing in Gauteng", as "thirty-five percent of all respondents said we should send all foreigners home now" (IOL news).

Crush's finding (2008), concludes to say, "South Africans are the least open to outsiders and want the greatest restrictions on immigration". Amongst South African citizens, he notes that a third would be willing to take action against foreign nationals, typically to protect 'local' jobs or fight crime.

MANIFESTATIONS OF XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

Xenophobia in South Africa has been manifested in different forms, ranging from everyday street-level abuse to discrimination and harassment by authority officials and recurring spells of popular xenophobic violence in varying intensity and scale. There is strong evidence to support the fact that foreigners, who make up non nationals, domestic migrants, and others, living and working in South Africa, face discrimination. This comes at the hands

of citizens, government officials, the police, and private organizations contracted to manage and provide services, promote urban development or manage detention and deportation processes (Crush, 2008).

Xenophobic violence in particular has become a longstanding feature in post-apartheid South Africa. Since its democratic transition in 1994, thousands of foreign nationals have been harassed, attacked, and killed just because they are foreign. Over the years, this xenophobic violence has increased across townships and informal settlements in South Africa (Landau, 2011; Landau and Haithar, 2007; Murray, 2003; and Palmary *et al.* 2002). The May 2008 widespread outbreak of xenophobic attacks left 62 people dead, 21 of them South African citizens, over 100,000 displaced, 670 wounded, and 1,300 arrested (Monson and Arian 2011). During that incident, a Mozambican, Ernesto Nhamuave, was set alight in Ramaphosa on the East Rand (Zvomuya, 2013). Shops, homes and other businesses of foreigners were destroyed (Landau, 2011).

The government claimed that this violence was random acts of criminality, but the violence was specifically targeted at people who were believed to be a threat to South Africa (Landau, 2011). Following the 2008 xenophobic attacks on African foreigners, numerous social and political debates were raised on South Africa's tolerance for the presence of fellow Africans originating from the same continent. While migrants from the continent consider South Africa as a location of choice where democracy, socio economic justice and human rights are more respected compared to their country of origin, the 2008 xenophobic attacks provided reasons for victims of attacks to question South Africa's role as a champion of democracy, human rights and socio-economic justice on the African continent (Rukema and Khan 2013). Sadly, the violence did not end in 2008 as dozens have been killed since then Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CORMSA, 2008).

In 2009, the Zimbabwean community was forcefully chased from their informal settlement in a small rural town of De Doorns in the Western Cape. This led to the displacement of 3,000 people Zimbabwean nationals living in the community (Kerr and Durrheim, 2013). Landau (2011), reported that the hundreds of fans who came in to South Africa for the 2010 FIFA World Cup were welcomed with threatening messages on pamphlets to leave the country. Many other incidents of xenophobic attacks were seen in year 2013 upward in South Africa. Firstly, a Mozambican taxi driver died in police custody after being handcuffed and dragged behind a police van (Zvomuya, 2013). Later, violent attacks against foreigners broke out in the Eastern Cape in communities around Port Elizabeth following the death of a 19-year-old South African, allegedly shot by a Somali immigrant (Chauke, 2013).

The local indigenes saw these migrants as threats and competitors for their limited resources, jobs, housing and means of livelihood (Dodson, 2010). Locals also accuse these migrants of indulging in sex works, crimes, and drug and people trafficking, which plagued their country (Crush and Williams, 2013). This led to the aggression and violence by the locals in South Africa who are mostly in the lower economic strata, which further ruptures the relations between the two countries. These challenges led to the May 2008 riot in South Africa, where the targets were migrants in search of asylum. Sixty-one migrants were reported dead, and one hundred thousand displaced. Migrants in their thousands took refuge in churches and police stations as the violent attacks intensified.

Angry mobs armed with sticks, clubs and axes raided homes and stores, targeting refugees (Lyn, Robert, Katherine and Ashraf, 2011). According to Akintola (2014), Xenophobia in South Africa is not a new phenomenon; rather, it is the continuation of other forms of discrimination. Regrettably, it is known that state security agencies like the immigration service and the police have little or no compassion for the displaced (Moses, 2018). In 2015, several Africans died in Durban and thousands fled South Africa after these

attacks (Lynsey, 2019). Violent anti-immigrant demonstrations occurred in 2017 in Pretoria. Protestants forced foreigners out of their homes and had their shops looted in Durban (Philip, 2019).

All the above incidents and many more showed that xenophobia in South Africa can and often do result in violence (Wose-Kinge, 2016). According to Harris (2010), racism, xenophobia and related intolerance continue to thrive in Southern Africa just like the rest of world. The effects of globalization, economic hardship, migration, ethnic conflict and the plight of indigenous people affect many, if not all, countries in the region. Issues relating to education, access to services, disparate economic status, autonomy and problems arising from migration are among the manifestations of racism and xenophobia in South Africa.

From available data, xenophobic attacks in South Africa peaked in 2008 and 2015. Data from early 2019 to late September of 2019 showed that the number of attacks is almost on same the level with 2015. In 2008, there was a wave of attacks across the country against refugees and migrants which led to the killing of more than 60 people and thousands displaced (Okolie, 2021).

In 2015, there were high wave outbreaks of xenophobic attacks against non-South Africans, living mostly in the cities of Durban and Johannesburg, these attacks led to the deployment of the army to deter further attacks on perceived non-South Africans by the mob. In March 2015, the government of South Africa launched an initiative to raise public awareness and improve access to services for victims of discrimination. Human rights groups welcomed it, but said that the government needed to publicly recognise attacks on foreigners as xenophobic and denounce it publicly. In a statement published in October 2018, the South Africa's main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, accused the ruling ANC party for a "scourge of xenophobic violence" on non-South Africans by mobs (Okolie, 2021).

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION TO XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

While the theoretical hypotheses do give some form of contextualisation to the whole dilemma of xenophobia, they still fall short of offering an explanation as to why the xenophobic attacks have taken place in some areas of the country and not others. When looking at specific townships and settlements that have faced violent attacks on non nationals, it is almost always rooted in the micro-politics of these areas. Local leaders often lead or organise violent attacks on foreign migrants in order to gain authority or realise their political interests (Misago 2009, cited in Amisi*et al.,* 2010).

Furthermore, as non-nationals have become increasingly unpopular throughout South Africa, local leaders often feel pressure to exclude foreigners from political participation or ostracise them in general because of their fear of losing their political positions. Because of this fear, some leaders have promoted violent practices against non-nationals in order to ensure their authority within the community.

In 2009 the South African newspaper Mail and Guardianhighlighted a study by the International Office for Migrationrevealing that community leaders and the local governmentdid nothing to prevent or stop violent attacks on foreigners.Furthermore, the study found that some were directly involvedin attacks, while others were reluctant to assist foreigners forfear of losing legitimacy or positions in the 2009 elections(Mail and Guardian, 2009).Similarly the Consortium of Refugees and Migrants in SouthAfrica (CORMSA) released an issue brief in 2010 stating:
"The key trigger of violence against foreign nationals and outsiders in specific locations is localised competition for political (formal and informal) and economic power. Leaders, and aspirant leaders, often mobilise residents to attack and evict foreign nationals as a means of

strengthening their personal and political or economic power within the local community" (CORMSA, 2010).

Beyond local officials, national leaders have also used anti-immigration language during their campaigns in order to gain votes. In addition to the political callousness that has fed xenophobic trends in South Africa there have been documented instances in which migrants have become targets of abuse in the hands of the police, the army and the department of Home Affairs. For example, the former Minister of Home Affairs, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, stated publicly, "If South Africans are going to compete for scarce resources with immigrants, then we can bid goodbye to our Reconstruction and Development Program" (Human Rights Watch, 2008). This type of abuse of power and inciting speech has contributed to the xenophobic sentiments being expressed by South African citizens and the widespread violent attacks against foreigners (Okolie, 2021).

MOBILISATION AS A TRIGGER OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

While scholars identify various techniques and processes involved in mobilisation for collective violence, they share the opinion that the success of mobilisation depends on the ability of the organiser(s), mobilise (s) or leader(s) to develop a set of ideas that resonate with widely held beliefs (Gamson, 1975). Organisersmobilise and convert affected group members and sympathisers into actual participants by casting a situation as a collective problem worthy of attention and by fostering a belief that the identified collective action or solution will effectively resolve the problem and overcome the perceived injustice (ibid.). By crystallising the belief in a collective problem and related corrective collective action, organisers are able to gain the both ideological and behavioural support needed to spur crowds into action (Smelser, 1963).

It is also important to note, as Bond (2007), argued, that mobilisation facilitating collective violence targets not only potential participants but all group and community members, to seek support for and solidarity with those who eventually perpetrate the actual violence. Popular support and approval facilitate mobilisation for the identified violent collective action by rationalising it as a loyal service to the group or community or necessary collective self-protection against malicious others intent on destroying the community and its way of life (Ibid.).

In South Africa, instigators use different mobilisation techniques to trigger xenophobic violence in their respective communities. These include: "haranguing" and inciting crowds during mass community meetings, spreading purposely engineered rumours, appeals to the community's sense of solidarity and right to self defence, setting examples and asking community members to join, and even hiring groups of youths to carry out attacks. In the following, I describe and discuss examples of these processes and techniques drawn from primary data from different research sites. The discussion provides extensive empirical evidence that mobilisation is indeed the trigger of xenophobic attacks (Misago, 2019).

THE TRIGGERS OF XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Many triggers of the series of attacks that were meted out to non-South Africans in the country were developed from the amalgam of literatures on xenophobia; the following reasons have been adduced as being the propelling reasons for the said attacks in South Africa in 2008, 2015 and 2019 (Ijisakin and Fakanbi, 2019).

Firstly, trigger of the attack can be looked at from the angle of governmental neglect of the essential necessities of the people (Ayim, *et al.* 2019). It can therefore be put hypothetically that, frustration with government precipitated aggression among the locals against the non South Africans. Even though, some would put this down, as misplaced

transfer of aggression but it holds some logic that, the people in their bid to vent their grievance, decided to deal with aliens (Ayim, *et al.* 2019). Morris (2008), cited in Ijisakin and Fakanbi (2019), submits that, perceived disinterest of government and the resulting lack of voice experienced by many communities triggered the violence.

Similarly, competition over limited resources constituted another logical argument for the attacks on non-South Africans in the country. Dodson in Ijisakin and Fakanbi (2019), comments that South Africans saw foreign Africans as competing with them for jobs, housing, and other essential services which they believed they are the ones that are entitled to those things. Sharp (2008), adds that wealthy South Africans abhor the idea of paying taxes to provide essential services for non-South Africans who escaped from their different countries due to bad leadership, political incompetence and economic mismanagement.

On a lighter note, Dodson and Oelofse (2000), added interestingly gender and sexual dimension to interpersonal competition between South Africans and foreigners. In other words, foreign African men were inclined to flashing money around, thereby "stealing" their women. In the area of jobs, illegal immigrants to South Africa were ready to take up any jobs without the corresponding benefit and at any wage rate just to survive, especially in low-wage sectors of the economy. It increased the rate of unemployment among South Africans.

The third trigger of xenophobic violence in South Africa could also be linked to poverty. One can therefore say tentatively that, poverty increases xenophobic attacks. This hostility towards the out groups can be placed at the door of economic deprivation which is a precursor to poverty. This theory holds that poverty begets frustration and by extension aggression (Ijisakin and Fakanbi, 2019).

Another reason for the attacks could be that, most times immigrants may believe in different cultural and religious traditions as opposed to what the natives subscribes to Classen in (Ijisakin and Fakanbi, 2019), corroborating this position, observes that, cultural and religious differences of Mozambicans or Zimbabweans (formerly Rhodesia) is not too different from that of the South Africans, that of Nigerians and Eritrea for examples were poles apart from the South African's cultural and religious beliefs, and this made them to feel insure and threatened. Similar view to this is the theory of relative deprivation. This theory holds that, natives naturally deserve better living conditions than immigrants who do not have a stake in the Commonwealth of South Africa. They contend that, in the event of any eventuality, the immigrants have their various countries to run to, but they have nowhere to go (Ijisakin and Fakanbi, 2019).

Chinomona and Maziriri (2015), pointed out the under listed as also push factors that necessitated the xenophobic attacks to foreigners living in South Africa.

Jealousy

According to Khosa and Malitani (2014), Sylvanus Dixon, a community organizer from Sierra Leone, spoke to the BBC about the causes of xenophobia in his adopted homeland of South Africa. Dixon claimed that fear and jealousy related to employment and incomes were to blame. *"South Africans see foreigners with businesses and they don't know how they got their money",* he said. *"That's where the jealousy is coming from. That's when the fear becomes xenophobia"* A study conducted in a Port Elizabeth township revealed that jealousy was one of the main reasons for xenophobic violence there. In the Walmer Township, xenophobic violence usually takes place when attackers are jealous of the foreigner's business success (Khosa and Malitani, 2014).

Stealing Women

In South Africa it is believed that xenophobic violence is as a result of foreigners who steal women from the locals. Mnyaka (2003), explained that African immigrants have not

only taken over the streets of South Africa but, it is alleged, its women as well. (Mnyaka, 2003) goes further to write that, Aliens can afford to spoil local girls with gifts and aliens do feel the need for acceptance and love.

Accepting Below Minimum Wages

Jureiden (in Nyamnjoh, 2006), mentioned that, in general, when cheap"foreign workers are readily available from countries desperate to alleviate unemployment and generate foreign currency, the dirty dangerous and difficult jobs become racialized as they are associated with foreign workers to such a degree that nationals of host countries refuse to undertake them despite high levels of poverty and unemployment". In view of the above opinions, it seems as this is true to South Africa, as the immigrants are prepared to do any job regardless of its standing in society and without taking into account the financial returns.

Stealing Jobs

One of the most repeated reasons given for xenophobic aggression in South Africa is that African immigrants supposedly steal jobs meant for South African citizens. There are researches that have suggested that, a number of South Africa's African foreigners are educated and possess good educational qualifications. Foreigners are therefore not stealing jobs but providing valuable service by filling in the huge voids in the country (Steinberg, 2010). Most Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa are extraordinarily well educated (Nkosi, 2010 and Steinberg, 2010). A report by Nkosi (2010), confirms that the Limpopo Province alone recruited a massive six hundred Mathematics, Science and Technology teachers from Zimbabwe because of the scarcity of such qualified educators in South Africa.

CONCLUSION

The 2019 xenophobic attacks in South Africa was the most recent which has shown the deep rooted levels of sentiments, discrimination and intolerance against foreign migrants. Based on data available the 2008 xenophobic attack in South Africa recorded the highest number of deaths followed by 2015 and 2019 violence. Xenophobia attacks and violence has become a common phenomenon in South Africa and more stringent measures should be put in place to curtail it. Xenophobia is deep rooted in South African society from individual level, to community level, government institutions and agencies including immigration and police. South African Immigration and police do not hide their resentment against migrants which has resulted in extrajudicial killing of foreigners by them without remorse or fear of prosecution. It is of the view that the constant xenophobic attacks and violence in South Africa has a political undertone and has affected the spirit of Pan-Africanism.

Public office holders, community leaders and politicians should refrain from making intolerant statement which might trigger xenophobic attacks. The South African government should educate her young population on Pan-Africanism and the contributions many African countries made for their liberation from apartheid rule, the democracy and economic development they are enjoying today as Africa's most developed state. Eradicating xenophobia in South Africa will take time because of its different levels of manifest. It needs political will and proactive measures not just mere political statement to eradicate xenophobia in South Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Eliminating xenophobia in South Africa requires government action and collaboration among stakeholders, civil society organizations and NGO's. The following recommendations are made:

i. In order to deter xenophobes from carrying out xenophobic attacks as well as the extra-judicial killings of non South Africans by the police, the South African government should arrest, prosecute and convict offenders and their collaborators.

ii. The South Africa government in Pretoria should desist from institutional and political connivance in these attacks on non South Africans and refrain from making statements that incite xenophobia violence.

iii. The South Africa government in Pretoria should tell her citizens their history and how African states contributed during their struggle against apartheid rule.

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