

Security and Economic Implications of Xenophobia Crisis Attacks of Foreign Nationals in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

South Africa as a country has experience youth violence attacks on their fellow African nationalist since 2008, this attitude has constitute the action of what we have witnesses today in the International System as 'Xenophobia' or 'Afro-Phobia violence' these action has led to attacks of various African Nationalist on 30th March, 2015 at Isipingo outside the Durban town that later escalated to different part of the country where the violence has directly linking to attacks on African Immigrants and their lawful business, which allegedly refers to as a labour dispute over the employment of Immigrants at the Jeena Super Market in Isipingo and later the crisis targeted those South African indigenes who are Landlord to other African Migrants. However, very unfortunately, in few months back we witnessing another fresh attack on many Nigeria Nationalist conducting lawful business in South Africa in the month of September 2019, this violence by gangs of unemployed youth in South Africa have led to damaging the spirit of International Relationship affairs between South Africa and other African Countries. In Nigeria counter reprisal attacks on South African companies has been engage by violent youth in Nigeria in places like Lagos, Abuja, Kano, Kaduna and Rivers State. The paper has the following findings. Firstly, there was economic competition amongst foreign and nationals who use local gangs to attack their competitors in South Africa, as well as competition between foreigners and local business owners. Secondly, the study established the links between xenophobia, Youth Unemployment and criminal attacks on foreign African business. Thirdly, the study noted the inability of the South African Government to employ risk-reduction strategy that could prevent and mitigate the impacts of xenophobia escalation to become a crisis. Fourthly, the state apparatus's failed to detect, prevent or mitigate the impact and respond timorously. This study necessitates the need for municipalities in African countries to develop or review by-laws on economic development in the townships and in the informal settlements by regulating informal businesses in African Region to have a harmonized system where African Nationalist everywhere in the region can enjoy the privileged of undertaking business in any African countries without much hindrance. The research study has further encourage the government of various African countries to apply effective, efficient and appropriate crime-intelligence strategies that can detect, prevent or combat any sign of xenophobia in all sectors of society.

Keywords: Xenophobia; Business competition; illegal attacks and gangsters

INTRODUCTION

Since the 2008 widespread aggression against foreign nationals (mainly of African descent) which culminated in the deaths of over 60 people, xenophobia has assumed issues of concern as a result of a recurrent cause of social unrest in different parts of South Africa. In 2015, Durban was a flashpoint for xenophobic violence with over five people killed and thousands more rendered homeless in a spate of violence that lasted about two weeks (Gadzikwa, 2015).

Anti-migrant sentiments and stereotypes has stem from social, political, economic and cultural misconceptions and cleavages have been commonly identified as driving forces for the kind of aggression in South Africa. A number of

studies have confirmed the existence of high levels of stereotypes and anti-migrant sentiments amongst the South African population, more openly displayed by the black population mainly due to their engagements with migrant populations (Tshishong, 2015).

The anti-migrant sentiments are deeply rooted in social misconceptions and political/economic cleavages by identifying and understanding such sentiments is crucial for ameliorating the tensions and violence associated with xenophobia in South Africa. The issues of inequality and poverty have been identified as the major precipitators of the proliferation of anti-migrant sentiments. This position becomes more apparent in the face of economic downturn, inadequate social amenities and an unstable political climate.

Consequently, the quest for ownership and control of limited resources strengthens, resulting in an articulation of identity differences and the emergence of exclusionary measures for eradicating more 'vulnerable' competitors. Central to this approach is the scapegoat adopted by foreign black Africans who are perceived as direct threats to job security and also blamed for the shortfalls of governance in South Africa (Tella, 2016).

However, by looking at the views of scholars like Gadzikwa, Tshishongo and Tella we can simply understand some of the basic causes of the violence upraising in many parts of the Africa as result of youth unemployment, illiteracy, competition between local and foreign business owners as well as lack of appropriate laws by many African countries that would help in detecting and prevention the Xenophobia youth in the African region.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Solomon and Kosaka (2014) explain that "xenophobia basically derives from the sense that non-citizens pose some sort of a threat to the recipients' identity or their individual rights, and is also closely connected with the concept of nationalism, this implies a sense in each individual of membership in their political or ethnic groups as an essential ingredient in his or her sense of identity".

Xenophobia has been commonly analyses through the constructs of relative deprivation (Dassah, 2015). Relative deprivation affirms the connection between violence and economic inequalities. It holds that discrepancies between expected economic conditions and reality fuel the feeling of frustration that precipitates violence in South Africa (Džuverovic, 2013).

Psychological stress and tensions are triggered when individuals perceive their inability to access their entitlements in terms of good living conditions. The tensions are released through aggressive actions against those responsible for the situation or other accessible target. In South Africa, antagonistic sentiments towards foreigners are underlined by a sense of deprivation and driven by anger. The deprivation comes from the widespread inequality, poverty and also the deplorable nature of service delivery mainly experienced by the local population who had high expectations of the post-apartheid regime (Jager, 2011). The frustration and emergent violence are directed towards accessible groups such as African migrants who are perceived as

opportunistic and a hindrance to the attainment of an ideal society in South Africa.

There have been a number of investigations into the perceptions and attitudes of South African youth towards xenophobia. The results of these studies are varied, but overall findings indicate the existence of anti-immigrant sentiments amongst many youths in South Africans. This position was affirmed by SAMP (South African Migration Project) in Rukema and Khan (2013) who pointed that many South Africa as being one of the most xenophobic countries in the world. The nature and expression of these sentiments take different forms. For example, in institutional settings such as universities, xenophobic sentiments are more likely to be expressed in subtle ways but with demoralizing impacts on the subjects, thereby raising concerns about the nature of xenophobic perceptions in such settings (Singh, 2013). Overall, the general persistence of xenophobic violence in the face of increasing globalization has had dire implications for the status of South Africa on the international scene (Duma, 2013), thereby justifying the need for extensive exploration of issues of migration and attitudes towards migrants in South Africa.

Misago, S (2009) has cited that the nature and manifestations of xenophobic violence have drawn attention to the impact of certain intervening factors in the construction and reinforcement of anti-migrant sentiments and behaviors. Xenophobia has been commonly described as a phenomenon rooted in the micro politics of townships and informal settlements. This is mainly because the majority of the violence starts from these areas, thereby raising questions on the level of inequalities and poverty being experienced by the inhabitants of informal settlements. The correlation between xenophobic sentiments and individual level of life satisfaction becomes apparent.

Kayitesi and Mwaba (2014) further explain that "the targeting of African migrants living in these poor communities may be explained by the perception of black South Africans that the migrants exacerbate their dissatisfaction with poor government service delivery".

Kayitesi and Mwaba (2014) and Coetzee (2012), in their studies on perceptions and attitudes towards xenophobia, revealed the existence of a minimal level of xenophobic attitudes amongst some youth and workers while a similar study conducted in Limpopo and the Western Cape

revealed a high level of xenophobic practices amongst university students (Singh, 2013).

From the foregoing revelation of researchers stated above, firstly, a new wave of nationalism born out of the complexities of increased migration, economic inequalities and underdevelopment has pitted local groups against external groups, depicting them as opportunists and threats to the economic security of indigenous groups. Xenophobic attitudes are mainly influenced by a sense of deprivation which is aptly captured by the “relative deprivation” theory. Secondly, it can be deduced that people’s perceptions and attitudes towards xenophobia are not static; they vary from province to province and are influenced by key factors such as the nature of study, participants’ status, participants’ demographics, and location, amongst others, thus elevating the need for a robust body of literature on the subject. By engaging a broader sample size, this study investigates perceptions on and attitudes towards xenophobia, and interrogates the influence of mediatory factors such as gender, age and location on xenophobic attitudes. A study of this nature will contribute in developing a pool of information which could help in identifying the patterns associated with xenophobia in Africa. This could serve as a foundation for broader engagement on the impact of xenophobia in African continent in particular and the World at large. This engagement is pertinent in view of the multi-cultural nature of South African business setting. In line with the pervasive notion of global consciousness, South African economy attracts a considerable number of young business entrepreneurs from other African countries, thereby encouraging the internationalization of the South African economy. Understanding the impact of such trend on culture and constructions of realities could assist researchers and practitioners to devise appropriate strategies to improve the economy African regional economy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study has the general objective of investigating the pervasive nature of anti-migrant sentiments and its impact on different sectors of the society. By exploring youth attitudes towards xenophobia attitude comparatively in South Africa particular and Africa at large, the study aims to contribute to an emerging body of knowledge on attitudes towards xenophobia in South African economic setting.

The specific objectives of the study include:

- To investigate the awareness and disposition of Xenophobic sentiments and attitude among youth both in South Africa in particular and entire African region in general :
- To examine the link between the perceptions on xenophobia and the effort of governments to curtail it is escalation in South Africa in particular and in African region at large.
- To investigate factors influencing the perceptions of Youth on xenophobia in South Africa in particular and African region in general.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper has used the secondary source of data to generate information from text books, Conference papers, and Journal Papers publications and Government Policy gazettes on issue of Xenophobia in South Africa in particular and African region at large and compares the nature of violent youth xenophobia attacks in African countries.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The paper has a scope of covering xenophobia youth violence in both South Africa and other African countries and identifying the causes of all those attacks and its economic and security implication of those violent actions to the African region.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

There are a number of interpretations and perceptions of the meaning and causes of xenophobia. McDonald and Jacobs (2005) and Shisana (2008) refer to it as ‘a deep dislike of foreigners’. Crush and Ramachandran (2009) and Crowther (1995) describe it as ‘strange or foreign and phobia’. The xenophobic violence of 2008 was regarded by Everatt (2011:10) as caused by a combination of sociopolitical conditions, whilst Crush (2008) has described what he calls ‘anti-foreigner attitudes’ as ‘widespread and vitriolic’.

Crush (2009:6) states that xenophobia is rooted in discriminatory practices emanating from negative perceptions about foreigners based on their nationality. Numerous researchers have referred to xenophobia as aggressive (Crush 2009:6), tension-based acts of violence (Hook & Eagle 2002:170) and with the potential to cause bodily harm and damage (Harris 2002:170).

However, in the South African context, xenophobia may denote many things but it is mainly linked to criminal activity, which this study is partly investigating. A number of

commentators define the phenomenon of crime as criminal offences motivated by hate and by the victim's group identity (Hall 2013:2), an intentional illegal act against a foreigner that is based on prejudice of the perpetrators against the perceived or real status of the victim (Craig 2002:86).

Furthermore, some researchers define such violence as the result of foreigners being perceived as people of no value (Wolfe & Copeland 1994:201). It has been assumed that social and political factors motivate such acts (Sheffield 1995:438), which in most cases are violent and discriminatory against marginalized and stigmatized groups (Perry 2001:10).

This study takes into account the aforementioned interpretations and perceived causes of xenophobia and their relationship to criminality. However, it is believed that the underlying causes and influences of such violence have not yet been interrogated deeply and comprehensively by researchers in the townships or peri-urban areas where it is prevalent. Hence, this study attempts to fill this void and to unravel the core causes by targeting the wide array of 'foot soldiers', including civil society groups and government decision-makers, who are directly affected by this catastrophe.

CAUSES AND DIMENSIONS OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

Essa, A (2015) coined three theories that attempt to identify the causes of xenophobic violence. These are power theory, cultural-symbolic theory and phenomenology. The power theory stems from the belief that people's insecurities in the face of real or imagined 'threats' lead them to resentment and hatred and that violence stems from a competition between immigrants and locals. The cultural-symbolic theory is based on the belief that animosity is not a result of economic competition between local and foreign groups, whilst phenomenology articulates the position that such violence emanates from the state's reassurance to its nationals and to its boundaries. It is not a fight about scarce jobs but an outcome of a cultural clash.

According to Fungurai (2015) and Soyombo (2008), the economic theory attributes xenophobic violence to poverty and unemployment (especially amongst the youth), which leads the citizens of a country to become xenophobic. Xenophobic violence has been associated with a multiplicity of causes, including jealousy on the part of locals in respect of job opportunities, foreigners

agreeing to lower salaries and foreign business successes (Clark 2011:5; Khosa&Malitani 2014), foreigners' attraction to local girls as they can afford to spoil them (Dodson &Oelofse 2002:134; Mnyaka 2003), encouragement of prostitution (Nkealah 2011:125) and foreigners as cheap labourers who 'steal' jobs from the locals (Nyamnjoh 2006:2; Steinberg 2010).

A research study conducted by Charman and Piper (2012) in Delft, an African township in Cape Town, surveyed 100 *spaza* (small, informal shop) owners and different key stakeholders, including the police, and found that such violence is not driven by anti-foreigner sentiment. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of *spaza* shopkeepers resented the advent of Somalian businesses, but consumers remained indifferent as they preferred the lower prices. The study found that 'violent entrepreneurship' rather than xenophobic violence was prevalent in Delft, which was exacerbated by business competition driven by a group of ruthless business people, high crime levels and an association between business profitability and the protection offered by a powerful landlord. Moreover, those foreign shopkeepers who aligned themselves with gangsters and street committee leaders were most vulnerable to such violence.

Charman and Piper (2012) espoused the belief that local shopkeepers whose businesses had suffered because of foreign competition had become both hostile and bitter with foreign competition. A number of authors have perceived xenophobic violence as triggered by the struggle to access resources, including low-cost housing, employment and business opportunities in the informal sector

Numerous researchers have associated xenophobia with nationalism and nation-building (Neocosmos 2011), as well as with defensiveness, protectionism, criminal threat and diseases. Such a position leads to the belief that the 2008 xenophobic violence was instigated and perpetrated mostly by poor, young South African men targeting properties and businesses of foreign African nationals (Bekker 2008:4-5). A desktop study analyzing the trends of the xenophobia and violence in 2008 by Bekker et al. (2008) concluded that government officials were just reacting to attacks and disputed that the violence was of a xenophobic nature, that the attacks were perpetrated by criminals and that a 'third force' was responsible. Dodson (2010:1) believes that a democratic, human

rights-based migration policy in South Africa is extraordinarily difficult.

In fact, research has shown that, nationally, 48% of the country's citizens believe that foreigners are a 'criminal threat' (Crush & Williams 2003). Leggett's (2003:52) research findings showed that 63% of the respondents living in Johannesburg thought that it was 'foreigners' who had been committing most of the crime in the inner city. Landau and Jacobsen (2004:45) showed that there is a strong belief amongst 70% of Johannesburg's respondents that there has been a continuous increase of crime in the city primarily because of the 'foreign invasion'. The paucity of published studies in South Africa using a case study design makes the present study unique, as the province of KwaZulu-Natal was used. Parts of the province faced such events in 2015 and beyond. The majority of the studies conducted, as presented; show that such violence is motivated by economic competition without the utilization of the voice of community activists, civil society groups or government officials to buttress such claims and beliefs.

Landau, Keogh and Singh (2005:2) reported that there is 'strong evidence' that foreigners who live or work in South Africa face discrimination at the hands of government officials, including the police and the country's citizens, as well as organizations entrusted with the management of their deportation and detention. The government's highest political leadership have declared the situation as an 'emergency', but a number of attempts to respond have not been adequate, as the so-called third force or 'criminal' elements predominate (Monson 2012:455). This has been supported by Desai (2008), who claimed that following the May 2008 attacks, a powerful xenophobic culture was created. The state organs were geared towards hounding African immigrants and the media engaged in stigmatization and stereotyping, whilst in many townships African immigrants lived under the threat of scapegoat that carried within it the use of violence (Desai 2008:6). Furthermore, a plethora of derogatory names characterized by stigmatization and stereotypes and referring to immigrants, have been used by the print media, which has had an influence on the human behavior of groups of foreign Africans. This study is informed by the perspectives presented, but it hopes to bring new realities to the fore by investigating and dissecting existing theories and perceptions. It hopes to dig deeper in an effort to discover reliable underlying causes and dimensions that fuel this violence both in South

Africa and Nigeria and the African region at large.

TREND AND FORMS OF XENOPHOBIA IN AFRICA

In Africa, some of the evident manifestations of xenophobia have been the threat of expulsion of foreign nationals, unjust deportation, and in many instances, violent attacks against non-nationals have forced many to return to their countries. These manifestations dated as far back as the 1960s (Romola 2015). Romola distinguished different forms of xenophobia in Africa. In Ghana, Nigeria, Angola, Uganda and South Africa, xenophobic reactions were majorly ignited by economic considerations. In Chad and Kenya, xenophobic prejudices were informed by the war on terror. In Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, politics as well as economic considerations triggered xenophobic expulsions. In Tanzania, Burundi and Congo Brazzaville, xenophobic actions were largely spurred by the rhetoric that foreigners were committing crime. In Congo Kinshasa, the expulsion of Angolans was political. Although, xenophobia takes different dimensions, they all have a unified goal; hatred for foreigners.

In November 1969 in Ghana, forty-nine days after Kofi Busia occupied the Prime Ministerial position, he introduced the Aliens Compliance Order (the Aliens Order), aimed at expelling undocumented aliens. Specifically, 'the Aliens Order required aliens who lacked work permit to get them within a period of two weeks or leave the country' (Gocking 2005: 156). Prior to the introduction of the order, there had been an emerging general perception of foreigners as the cause of 'large-scale unemployment that had befallen Ghana' (Aremu and Ajayi 2014: 176). Albinio, the composition of the foreign population in Ghana comprised of nationals from other West African states such as Togo, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire. However, in 1931, Nigerians constituted the majority due to the successes recorded by those that initially immigrated to the country, especially the buoyancy of their businesses. Therefore, the increasing entry of foreigners and the dire socio-economic conditions of Ghanaians gradually raised tensions in the country. Peil, captured this thus:

The (Nigerians) are target workers; immediately they get a few Cedes they go into retail trade and they prosper too. They don't part with their money easily; they are unfriendly and do not help friends when they are in financial difficulty. They are impatient with

buyers, arrogant and difficult to come to terms with. They are thrifty and clannish. They don't seem to trust Ghanaians and confide in them (Peil, 1974).

In response to increased pressure from Ghanaians, certain measures were initiated by the government such as the Aliens Order and the Ghanaian Business Promotion (GBP) which was specifically meant to enforce economic protectionism and pre-serve certain businesses for Ghanaians (Asamoah 2014: 187). He explained further that, in a bid by the Ghanaian government to facilitate the GBP, foreigners, tagged 'aliens' were restricted in respect of the kind of businesses they could engage in. Expansion of their businesses was dependent on meeting certain economic conditions in form of the provision of capital in monetary value.

Opong (2002: 26) noted that the order 'led to the mass exodus of between 900,000 to 1,200,000 individuals from Ghana.' According to Aremu and Ajayi (2014: 176), Ghanaians approved and celebrated the institutionalization of xenophobia as a nationalistic initiative to ensure the availability of jobs for Ghanaians.

Also, there has been a manifestation of xenophobia in Gabon. According to Henckaerts (1995: 16), Gabon took a decision to repatriate all Beninese from the country in 1978. Gray (1998: 396) pointed out that the decision was premised on the 'hatred' President Kérékou of Benin had for President Bongo and the citizens of Gabon. Gray further explained that the reason for this was not far-fetched. It was borne out of the accusation made by President Kerokou in May 1977. He accused officials of Gabon of an attempted mercenary coup that sought to oust him from power and as a result told African leaders that he would consider anyone who attended the regional summit in Libreville a traitor. In reaction, Gabon banned Beninese from coming into the country. Gray (1998: 396) revealed that, 'the person of Bongo and the image of the state were (...) merged in the minds of many Gabonese citizens.' In July 1978, when President Kérékou accused Bongo at the Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Sudan, expectedly, President Bongo became enraged (Gray 1998: 396). President Bongo in his response to the Chairman of the OAU stated that 'the anger of an entire people, which has been controlled for a whole year, literally exploded after the verbal vulgarities and insanity uttered at the OAU' (Gray 1998: 396). This led to the expulsion of about 9,000 Beninese from the country (Henckaerts 1995: 16).

Whenever xenophobia manifests, the individual character is not taken into account, emphasis is directed at one's country of origin. That is all it takes to be attacked. According to Henckaerts (1995: 17), 'the sole factor of being a Benin national triggered the expulsion decisions without an examination of individual behaviour'. Gray (1998: 397) asserted that although the expulsion had implications on the economy and on the education system of Gabon, 'the Gabonese state was able to avert more serious political unrest through an exercise in citizenship promotion'.

There has also been a demonstration of xenophobia in Angola. This reflected in several mass expulsions of Congolese from Angola as a result of perceived theft of natural resources that belonged to Angola. In 2004, the Angolan government expelled an estimated 100,000 Congolese from Angola (Siegel 2009: 23). It did not stop there; over 160,000 Congolese were expelled between December 2008 and December 2009 (Adebajo 2011: 91). Angolan government reiterated its stand through its Foreign Minister who stated that Angola, 'will never give up its right to protect its natural resources and its right to repatriate citizens who are acting in a way which do not benefit the country'.

In response, the Congo Kinshasa government in 2009 expelled 50,000 Angolans in retaliation to the mass expulsion of Congolese from Angola (Siegel 2009: 23). This was done 'amid a rising wave of popular anger over the humiliating treatment of those expelled by Angola' (Human Rights Watch 2012: 11). One reducible observation from the foregoing is that competition over resources and space has threatened or, in some instances, eroded the idea of multiculturalism and global citizenship upon which globalization is anchored.

XENOPHOBIA IN NIGERIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

Experiences of xenophobia in Nigeria and South Africa presented contrasting dynamics in the West African and Southern African countries respectively. By way of summary, the political economy of oil boom in Nigeria in the early 1970s through the early 1980s and the prosperity that followed was a major factor that attracted other nationals into Nigeria, particularly Ghanaians who took up menial jobs and occupied the small and medium enterprises sector in Nigeria. Again, the mismanagement and inherent contradictions of the oil glut of the 1980s as well as its attendant economic disarticulation led to job loss and inadvertently precipitated

Nigeria's xenophobic attitudes against her neighboring immigrants, particularly Ghanaians to reduce competition for scarce resources. This invariably led to the formulation of the tag, 'Ghana must go' and its introduction into Nigeria's socio-political discourse.

South Africa case offers a contrasting reality. Xenophobia is a function of a long standing life of domination and oppression orchestrated by a white minority rule system and white-black segregation which subjected the black majority to every form of suffering, denial, subjugation, oppression and repression. Freedom from apartheid regime meant that black South Africans would put in place resistance strategy against whoever intends to subject them to another form of neo-apartheid experience. However, this resistance has often targeted the African race, considered to be 'brothers and sisters', and not the whites who subjected them to the repressive Apartheid regime. It is thus important to ask, who is a foreigner in South Africa - Africans or Europeans? Who should be feared - African brothers and sisters that vehemently fought apartheid or whites that propagated it? How can we conceptualize the hostilities towards foreigners from Africa descent, is it xenophobia or Afrophobia?

ECONOMIC RECESSION, REVENGE AND XENOPHOBIA IN NIGERIA

The oil boom experienced by Nigeria in the mid-1970s, occasioned by the embargo placed on the supply of crude oil from the Middle East to the West because of the Israeli-Arab war, transformed Nigeria into a big player in the international oil market. Not only this, Nigeria's public expenditure profile rose due to the oil wealth. The period saw Nigeria evolve from a poor agrarian economy into a relatively rich, oil-dominated economy (NCEMA, 2013). This reflected much in the expansion of public investment, though on costly infrastructural projects, internally-driven industrial policy and expectedly a dominant economy in Africa. Arguably, this made Nigeria a toast of other African countries and a haven for greener pasture. It was in the light of this that many nationals of neighboring West African countries particularly Ghanaians migrated to Nigeria in search of better life.

The immigrants were mainly engaged in menial jobs including house cleaning and services, street petty trading while few others got teaching jobs. However, there was a turn of event as Nigeria regressed economically and

experienced decline in oil wealth due to the mismanagement of oil wealth and the collapse of oil prices in the early 1980s. The over-reliance of the government on oil revenue and its failure to divest the economy away from oil with sustainable investments in such sectors as agriculture and solid minerals compounded Nigeria's economic woes and policy failure. The reality of the 'Dutch disease' associated with oil-exporting countries of the global south seemingly described Nigeria's economic crisis of the 1980s (Ismail, 2010). Ismail noted of the Dutch disease thus:

The Dutch disease is the process by which a boom in a natural resource sector results in shrinking non-resource tradable. This process leads to increased specialization in the resource and non-tradable sectors leaving the economy more vulnerable to resource-specific shocks (Ismail 2010: 4.)

The worsening and crippling economic fortunes of Nigeria predicated on the oil boom of the 1980s left the country with economic decline, increasing unemployment, galloping inflation, worsening balance of payment, debilitating debt burden and increasing unsustainable fiscal deficits, high incidence of poverty among others (NCEMA, 2013). Hart 2016 aptly captured this when he noted that:

The majority of the Ghanaian migrants were drawn to Nigeria during the oil boom of the seventies. But by 1983, the Nigerian economy was suffering. And it was an election year; Nigerian politicians hoped the expulsion would prove popular... (Hart, 2016).

To reverse the worsening situation, the government of President Shehu Shagari embarked on austerity measures in 1982 (NCEMA 2013). Meanwhile, the worsening economic condition and increasing crime rate were attributed in large measure to the influx of immigrants (The New York Times, 1985). Due to the waned global demand for oil and the consequential drop in its price, Nigeria's foreign debt soared while its economy went into steep decline. Subsequently and as part of the recovery plan, President Shagari blamed the foreigners in Nigeria for the widespread unemployment and crime rate that followed (The New York Times 1985).

Thus, it can be argued that xenophobia reigned in Nigeria because of the declining economic conditions witnessed in the early 1980s after a period of economic boom in the 1970s that expanded the labour market and the need for cheap labour (Owusu 2012). Precisely, in 1983, the government expelled over 2 million foreigners from the country, more than a million

of these foreigners were from Ghana (Aremu 2013: 340; Otoghile and Obakhedo 2011: 139). In addition to the decline in economic conditions, another key reason given for the expulsion of foreigners from the country was the alleged criminal activities of foreigners in the country (Aremu 2013: 341). In 1985, another wave of expulsion was carried out in which about 300, 000 Ghanaians were expelled from the country (Otoghile and Obakhedo 2011: 139–140). As with the first wave of expulsions, the worsening economic conditions constituted the basis for the deportation (Otoghile and Obakhedo 2011: 139).

Although the expulsion of Ghanaians from Nigeria on both occasions (1983 and 1985) was linked to the retarding economic situation of the country at that time, the action could also be located within revenge and retaliatory theory. While this argument may be subject to debate, its strength is evidenced by the harsh expulsion of Nigerians from Ghana in 1969, the emphasis on nationals of Ghana and the ease with which the Nigerian government reached the decision to expel Ghanaians in the 1980s. As earlier presented, under former Ghanaian President Kofi Busia's Aliens Compliance Order, Ghana enacted the Aliens Compliance Order, and immigrants (mostly Nigerian) were expelled from the country. All foreigners in Ghana were required to have residence permit and, if they did not have it, obtain it within a two--week period. Kofi Busia expelled 20,000 to 500,000 Nigerians in about 3 months. The order drew admonitions from some West African governments, especially Nigeria, Togo, Benin, Mali, Niger, Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso (Owusu, 2012). The immigrants' marching orders of 1983 and 1985 could thus be seen as a combination of Nigeria's socio-economic woes and an act of retaliation. As a matter of fact, the mass exodus of Ghanaians from Nigeria soiled Nigeria-Ghana diplomatic relations (Aremu 2013: 347). It is important to mention that the nature of xenophobia in both Nigeria and Ghana was subtle and non-violent. The expulsion of Nigerians from Ghana in 1969 and the retaliatory expulsion of Ghanaians from Nigeria in 1983 and 1985 were overseen by the governments of both countries through 'Alien and Immigrants laws' thereby are reducing the tendency for citizens' expressions of aggression or violence. There were no records of violent attacks, death and injuries to lives and properties of affected foreigners in both countries. However, the 1983 xenophobia against Ghanaians

in Nigeria created an opportunistic avenue for Nigerians who acquired the properties of Ghanaians cheap and the trans-porters who more than doubled the price of conveying the Ghanaians to the borders (Hart 2016).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The scapegoat theory informs in this study as a sociological theory that dissects aspects of prejudice in a period of change and social transition (Allport 1961). The author assumes that prejudice, driven by frustrations, lead to prejudice, mainly from marginalized local groups who identify foreigners as scapegoats. People displace their frustration onto convenient targets, thereby obscuring the actual causes of their anxiety. Hostile attitudes are formed in relation to unmet promises and limited resources, such as housing, education, healthcare and employment, coupled with high expectations during transition (Morris 1998; Tshitereke 1999). These are ideal circumstances for xenophobic acts to increase through the creation of a 'frustration scapegoat', who is perceived as the key reason for the local population's continuous poverty and deprivation (Tshitereke 1999:4).

This is supported by South Africa's xenophobic violence in 2008, which claimed 60 lives. In addition, 700 were wounded, dozens of foreigners were raped and more than 100 000 were displaced. A third of those were South Africans who were considered to have been married to foreigners (Landau 2012:1). The researcher argues that the South African government denied the 2008 cataclysm, blaming it on the criminal element, opposition and sinister forces, with the Minister of Intelligence blaming criminals and foreigners for instigating the xenophobic violence. According to Landau (2012:2), community leaders, business associations and gangsters attacked and killed shopkeepers. The author opines that the xenophobic violence was caused by anger and resentment, the essence of overzealous citizenship and an anti-outsider sentiment by South Africans.

Meanwhile, Neocosmos (2010:1) posits that xenophobia is directed against Africans, with Mozambicans and Nigerians as the key targets because they are the key perpetrators of illegal immigration and drug dealing according to the media. He contends that foreigners who have reached South Africa for economic or political reasons are considered to be involved in acts of crime. This means that the perception is created that all the survival activities of foreigners are

criminal. Such discrimination is aggravated by the economic and social crisis facing the country.

Neocosmos (2010:4) describes xenophobic attacks in South Africa as being associated with the country's transition to democracy and the frustrations of the local population; Morris (1998) and Tshitereke(1999) associate xenophobia with South Africa's historical exclusion from the rest of the African continent; and Morris (1998) with South Africans' intolerance towards strangers. Neocosmos (2010:15) outlines four theoretical positions on xenophobia: firstly, xenophobia excludes foreigners from communities; secondly, the process associated with exclusion is political, with the central role played by the state; thirdly, xenophobia is founded on the exclusion of foreigners from duties and citizenship; and finally, xenophobia is the result of a relationship between popular and state politics.

Neocosmos (2010:18) contends that xenophobia cannot be framed only on scarce resources, social change and competition but that it also revolves around the popular-democratic politics. The author developed a schematic theory that forms the basis of the understanding of xenophobia, which includes the division of labour that emanates from the realities of the political economy within the context of global capitalist and imperialist forces (migration). Neocosmos (2010:19) further mentions the process of state interpellation discourse as belonging to a nationality, ethnic and tribal groups, and gender. Finally, the author discusses the mediation of politics, which includes silence or voice, as well as popular politics. This study is guided by the theories articulated as it attempts to investigate the positions of these theories at a local level, where xenophobia occurs.

IMPLICATIONS OF XENOPHOBIA FOR PAN-AFRICANISM

Incessant xenophobic attacks in different African countries against Africans cannot but have significant implications for pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism, like the Zionist movement has as its main drive, the centralization of race effort and the recognition of a racial fount (Legum 1965: 14). It speaks to Africa's sense of common hospitality and communalism. Since the scramble for and the partitioning of Africa by Europe in 1884, which reinforced imperialism, colonialism and globalization, Africa's united and development potentials have been dealt a serious blow (Rodney 1972; Ake 1981; Salami 2005; Ariyo 2005). Pan-Africanism thus strives to mobilize Africa's voice against the slavery of

its people, identity and resources through the process of decolonization driven primarily by the faith, will and extraordinary determination of the nationalist leaders (Sylvester and Anthony 2014: 8–9). In this respect, Africans have emphasized the ideas of 'united we stand, divided we fall' and 'Africa for Africans' as the basic principles that guide inter-state and cross-border relations on the continent. These efforts culminated in the establishment of many socio-economic, cultural and political institutions to galvanize and protect Africa's common interests. Sylvester and Anthony submitted that:

The idea of 'united we stand, divided we fall' gives credence to various efforts across the world as attempts were made at various times not only to liberate a people from any form of domination but also to make room for development predicated on self-defined terms. Africans are not left out (Sylvester and Anthony 2014).

The question that agitates the mind is: since the emancipation of African countries from slavery, colonialism and apartheid are the actions and commitment of African leaders and their people reflecting genuine support that could go a long way toward the continued actualization of the lofty ideals of pan-Africanism? Documented xenophobic attacks across the continent do not underscore a united African people and government, rather a more fragmented, self-centered and self-serving people supported by state actions and regulations encapsulated in national interests. It is in this sense that one interrogates the aggressiveness of Africans against fellow Africans who have migrated in search of greener pasture. Rather, efforts should be directed towards the liberation of Africa from the clutches of western domination and oppression. Despite the much acclaimed political independence, these European powers and their agents still dominates the juicy sectors of the African economies to the detriments of African people. Against this background, one should ask, is attack against Africans on the African continent by fellow Africans xenophobia or Afro phobia? A useful response to this dilemma is captured by a South African parliamentarian, Motsoko Pheko, in the wave of the 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa thus:

What is called "xenophobia" in South Africa is brother hating or disliking brother. This signals that the colonial mentality is too deep-seated in this country, if this is not the work of hooligans or a "third force" to derail the Pan-African agenda, which fathers of the liberation struggle in Africa such as Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Touré, Julius Nyerere, Robert Sobukwe, Patrice Lumumba,

Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, George Padmore, Malcolm X and many more embraced (cited in *New African Magazine*, 2015).

Afro phobia is a systematic reawakening of tribalism and ethnicity, two related potent weapons used by the colonial powers to divide Africans. It constantly challenges African unity, common identity and brotherly spirit. If unchecked, it has the potency of robbing Africa and its people of cross-cultural advantages and the much needed socio-economic and political development.

CONCLUSION

This Paper has examined the context of xenophobic attitudes in South Africa particular and other African countries at large noted that both countries presented contrasting dynamics of the manifestation of the phenomenon. Xenophobia in Nigeria was induced by the economic crises of the 1980s explained by the mismanagement of oil wealth and compounded by the collapse of oil prices in the international market. However, its victims largely were Ghanaians hence the actions of the Nigerian government to expel foreigners especially Ghanaians from Nigeria in 1983 and 1985 has been seen in the light of the need to avenge similar actions meted against Nigerians in Ghana in 1969. The South African experiences are associated with violent attacks, resulting in the death of lives and wanton destructions of properties belonging to foreigners. This makes the classifications of xenophobia to be mild, non-violent or confrontational and violent.

The paper observed that xenophobia in Nigeria was mild, subtle, non-violent and driven by the ruling class and politically motivated. Xenophobic attitude in Nigeria was occasioned by state's response to the prevailing economic situation at that period of time. The President, Shehu Shagari had thought the 'Ghana-must-go' policy would make increase its popularity, legitimacy and enhance its electoral victory in the 1983 electoral process. However, the historical trajectory of xenophobia in South Africa is situated within the rhetoric of apartheid which predisposes South African nationals to violently attack foreigners whom they see as agents of neo-apartheid. Obviously, xenophobic attitudes in Nigeria are distinct from what is experienced in South Africa. The phenomenon was state-driven in Nigeria on both occasions it occurred in 1983 and 1985 through 'immigration order' but the situation in South African is often citizens-driven with deep expression of aggression.

However, there is similarity in the motivating factor, which is, attempts to reduce competition with nationals over socio-economic benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper has recommended the following issues that would help African countries in addressing the Xenophobia crisis in region:

- African Countries should provide policies that could provide employments opportunities to many teeming youths
- African countries should provide public enlightenment programs on teaching the general public on the danger of violence and significance relevance of Peace between nationals and foreign business partners and visitors
- African countries at Regional level should developed bilateral protocols that would guide municipal business domicile at various African Countries.
- African Countries should create an early Response Mechanism at their various countries' Security frame work to address the escalation of violence at the infant stages.

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