A Retrospective Study of the effects of Xenophobia on South Africa-Nigeria Relations

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Abstract— The underlying causes of xenophobia are complex and varied. Xenophobia has to do with contemptuous of that which is foreign, especially of strangers or of people from different countries or cultures. Unemployment and mounting poverty among South Africans at the bottom of the economic ladder have provoked fears of the competition that better educated and experienced migrants can represent. South Africa's long track-record of violence as a means of protest and the targeting of foreigners in particular; and, the documented tensions over migration policy and the scale of repatriation serve a very good explanation for its xenophobia. It was clear that while most of the attacks were directed against foreign, primarily African, migrants, that this was not the rule. Attacks were also noted against Chinese-speakers, Pakistani migrants as well as against South Africans from minority language groups (in the conflict areas). Settlements that have recently experienced the expression of 'xenophobic' violence have also been the site of violent and other forms of protest around other issues, most notably service delivery. The failure of government in service delivery was vexed on this form of xenophobia (HSRC, 2008).

Due to the increase in migration, this conflict is certainly not temporary in nature. Xenophobia manifests in different regions and communities, with devastating effects on the affected nationals. Nigerians living in South Africa have been objects of severe attacks and assault as a result of this xenophobic attitude. It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate the xenophobic attacks against Nigerians in South Africa. The methodology is basically qualitative with the use of secondary sources such as Books, Journals, Newspapers and internet sources.

Keywords—Nigeria, Poverty, South Africa, Unemployment, Xenophobia,

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I. INTRODUCTION

The perennial spate of attacks on foreign-owned shops in some South African townships raises uncomfortable questions about xenophobia in South Africa.

This attitude generated the questions which include: To what extent can South Africa's inconsistent immigration policy be blamed for xenophobia? Do foreigners really 'steal' South African jobs? Do foreign-owned small businesses have an unfair advantage over those owned by South Africans?

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.

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 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).

Xenophobia is a dislike and/or fear of that which is unknown or different from one. It comes from the Greek words (xenos), meaning "stranger," "foreigner" and (Phobos), and meaning "fear." The term is typically used to describe a fear or dislike foreigners or of people significantly different from oneself, usually in the context of visibly differentiated

minorities (Shinsana,2008). It is more broadly defined in the Dictionary of Psychology (1978) as "a fear of strangers".

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, 2005:103; 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).

To be sure, the issue of xenophobic relations in contemporary South Africa is rooted in and conditioned by the structure of its apartheid economy. The apartheid economy was a totalizing one, in that it mobilized all the social forces at its disposal to further the interest of the apartheid South African state. Since the primary productive force in the apartheid South African economy was gold and the concomitant social relations of the mining process was by mostly black labour force, the industry attracted heavy migrant labour from Southern African regions notably Zimbabweans, Malawians and Mozambicans to the fast thriving industry. The immediate result of this was that, as the foreign labour force began to gain social mobility in the gold industry and the black South Africans continually subjected to the repressive policies of apartheid, social tensions rose in the political economy of the state and has since remained a dominant part of the social relations of the post-apartheid South African state (Konanani and Odeku, 2013; Chidozie, 2014).

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. This problem continues to dominate contemporary discourse on the nature of post-apartheid economy in South Africa.

Thus, this contradiction in the social relations of apartheid, resulting in limited opportunities for blacks in South Africa fuels fear and suspicions among the majority of them, especially for foreigners. The mounting poverty and unemployment rate among the majority of the South African blacks have intensified in post-apartheid South Africa

prompting the various governments to initiate economic reforms to reverse the trend. Hence, even though policies such as the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Programme (GEAR) and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) came under heavy attack, especially from the white minority in South Africa, it nonetheless, portrayed government's genuine intervention to redress racial (mis)representation in the country's political economy (Alozieuwa, 2009; Edigheji, 2012).

But the efforts of the government are not enough as indicated by the report released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2003. The report concluded that:

> Human Development Index has worsened (from 0.73 in 1994 to 0.067 in 2003), poverty still engulfs 48.5% of the population (21.9 million in 2002), income inequality has increased (from 0.60 in 1995 to 0.63 in 2001), the majority of households have limited access to basic services, and the official unemployment rate has sharply increased to more than 30% in 2003 (UNDP report, 2003:3, cited in Hendricks, 2005:104).

However, the deep economic cleavage in post-apartheid South becomes pronounced when the rising influx of "other foreigners", especially Nigerians and their active role in the economy of South Africa comes under scrutiny. According to the report of an oral interview conducted in 2013, Salifu of the Institute for Securities Studies (ISS), South Africa, estimated that there are about 13 million Nigerians living in South Africa while about 1 million South Africans are living in Nigeria. She argued that the implication of these figures is that, rather than portend an advantage for the South African economy, as many believe, there is instead a huge tension in the South African economy which has resulted in xenophobia in recent times (Salifu, *oral interview*, 2013).

In effect, recent waves of xenophobic attacks on Nigerians living in South Africa bring into stark reality the preponderance of Nigerian business community in post apartheid South African economy. The attacks in which more than 60 persons were killed and thousands displaced attracted diplomatic intervention by the Nigerian state. Even though no Nigerian was killed in that wake of the violent xenophobic attack, many lost their properties and their shops were looted; an indication of an orchestrated attack on the businesses of Nigerians in South Africa (Alli, 2008:1).

To this end, the mass protest by South African women married to Nigerians in August 2013 on the street of Johannesburg under the aegis of the United Nigerian Wives in South Africa (UNWISA), an umbrella organization established to protect their interest becomes very pertinent. The group

gathered to fight against alleged stigmatization, discrimination, and humiliation by government departments, agencies and officials of the South African state. The protest march which eventually ended at the city of Johannesburg home affairs office, threatened to continue in Nigeria with the intention of persuading the Nigerian government to react by stopping South African businesses operating in Nigeria (Vanguard Editorials, August 13 & 14, 2013:6 & 9). To be sure, the Nigerian government chose to be cautious and observe proceedings before making official statement on the matter, since the event had occurred shortly after a major diplomatic strain in her relations with South Africa over yellow fever cards.

In view of this background, the paper interrogates the retrospective effects of xenophobia on South Africa-Nigeria relations given the dynamism that governs the countries' diplomatic engagements in recent time. The paper is divided into five parts. Following the introduction, the second part covers a historical overview of Nigeria-South Africa relations. The third section presents a literature review on Xenophobia in South Africa. The fourth part narrows the discussion to specific case study analysis of xenophobic attacks on Nigerians in South Africa. The last section concludes the work and proffers relevant policy recommendations.

Historical Overview of Nigeria-South Africa Relations

The history of Nigeria-South Africa relations could be traced to events arising from the Sharpeville massacre of 21st March, 1960, when the South African police shot and killed 72 blacks and wounded 184 (Wilmot, 1980:9; Zabadi and Onuoha, 2012:439; Akinboye, 2013:18). This event which occurred even before Nigeria's independence marked the beginning of Nigeria's confrontation against white South Africa. The Tafawa Balewa government (1960-1966) upon assumption of office in October 1, 1960 was faced with overwhelming pressure from both domestic and external sources to institute measures to check South Africa's apartheid policies.

Consequently, Nigeria banned the importation of South African goods into the country and was instrumental to the political and economic sanctions passed against the racist regime. Furthermore, Balewa went to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in March 1961 in London, where he spearheaded the move that led to the withdrawal of South Africa from the Commonwealth (Aluko, 1982; Ajala, 1986 & 1993). By 1962, Nigeria terminated all the privileges of Commonwealth membership which South Africans enjoyed in Nigeria. Nigeria government's anti-apartheid policy continued until the first republic was ousted by Major Nzeogwu-led military coup in January 15, 1966.

The military coup of January 15, 1966 which seized power from the Balewa's regime brought Aguiyi Ironsi's transition to the helm of affairs. The brief administration of General Ironsi

between January-July 1966 did not record any substantial policy against the apartheid regime in South Africa, due largely to the volatile security situation in Nigeria that was precipitated by the coup (Ademoyega, 1981).

Following the take-over of the reins of government in Nigeria in July 29, 1966 by the military-led administration of Yakubu Gowon after the assassination of General Aguiyi Ironsi, a slightly modified policy towards South Africa was adopted. The new policy which was based on boycott and confrontation with white minority regime in South Africa led to a proclamation declaring white South Africans prohibited immigrants in Nigeria. The Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970 further deepened the conflict in Nigeria-South Africa relations, upon realization that South Africa was sabotaging the effort of Nigeria in the war. Yakubu Gowon strengthened his anti-apartheid policy as a result, and this was continued after the war when Nigeria became even much more financially buoyant as her oil resources contributed enormous foreign currency to her coffers than hitherto, and the country was able to play a confident and much more dynamic role in world affairs (Ajala, 1993).

The Murtala Mohammed government (1975-1976) that overthrew the Gowon administration through a coup was, right from the outset, prepared to take radical measures in Africa's decolonization process. The Angolan crisis of 1975 provided an opportunity for the Nigeria government to demonstrate her commitment to the anti-apartheid struggle by resolving the political stalemate in the former (Fafowora, 1984; Ogunsanwo, 1986; Gambari, 2008; Onuoha, 2008; Akinboye, 2013). Following the killing of General Mohammed in the abortive coup led by Colonel Buka Dimka in July 1976, General Olusegun Obasanjo continued the same radical approach in the country's foreign policy relations with South Africa. Thus, General Obasanjo's administration was widely perceived as a continuation of Murtala Mohammed administration (Nnoli, 1976; Ajala, 1986, Garba, 1987).

In the 1980s, Nigeria-South Africa relations witnessed these phases: the civilian administration of Shehu Shagari, and the succeeding military administrations of Muhammad Buhari and Ibrahim Babangida. Yet there was hardly any difference in their pursuit of Nigeria-South Africa relations. For instance, the second republic administration of Shehu Shagari (1979-1983) was encumbered by a number of domestic challenges which bordered on its inability to deliver on his electoral promises, coupled with sharp decline in oil revenues. These two factors largely affected Nigeria-Africa policies and had serious implications for Nigeria-South Africa relations. This was evident in the administration's inability to contribute financially to the fight against apartheid in South Africa (Ajala, 1986).

In the short-lived regime of Muhammad Buhari (1983-1985), the Afro-centric foreign policy of the Nigerian government

toward South African apartheid regime was re-vitalized, but not without serious opposition from domestic pressure groups, which clamoured for improved standard of living for citizens rather than rendering assistance to other African countries. Therefore, the only appreciable impact of Nigeria-South Africa relations under Buhari regime was the hosting of the second international conference on apartheid, tagged; 'Legal Status of the Apartheid Regime' held in Lagos, Nigeria, August 1984. In the conference, apartheid was declared illegal and the result further heightened the pressure on apartheid regime in South Africa, and re-enforced Nigeria's determination to eradicate all vestiges of racist regimes in Africa (Ajala, 1986).

Apartheid regime in South Africa would appear to have been effectively tackled under Babangida's regime (1985-1993). The UN Anti-Apartheid Committee which had enjoyed Nigerian headship for the better part of its existence continued its vigorous campaigns against apartheid. At the level of the Non-Aligned Movement, the dying tempo of decolonization was revived with a resolution for the establishment of an African Fund at the Harare Conference in 1986, to assist the liberation of Southern Africa as a whole, and at the Paris International Conference for sanctions against apartheid in 1987. Nigeria, in addition to her usual financial support, opted for tougher sanctions against the apartheid regime in South Africa (Saliu, 2006).

However, it is important to note that the requirements of economic diplomacy compromised Babangida's famous stand on apartheid. For instance, Nigeria hosted the then apartheid President Frederick De Klerk in Abuja in 1992 despite the reversible steps taken by the apartheid state towards reforms. In essence, Babangida regime's rhetorical approach was a mere ploy to redeem the discredited image of his regime (Saliu, 2006:305).

From the foregoing, it is clear that Nigeria's policy towards South Africa between 1960 and 1993 was characterized by the former's disdain of the latter's apartheid policy. Although Nigeria, from independence, maintained a hostile attitude towards South Africa for more than thirty years until the early 1990s, both countries established formal diplomatic relations on 21 February 1994 following the termination of apartheid policy, release of the African National Congress (ANC) leader, Nelson Mandela and conduct of general elections in South Africa. Prior to this time, Nigeria Mission was operating through the Angolan High Commission in Pretoria. Subsequently, an exchange of High Commissioners was done by the two countries, with each acutely conscious of the fact that both countries need each other's support in the mutually advantageous conduct of their bilateral relations and multilateral diplomacy in Africa (Akindele, 2007).

The post-1994 Nigeria-South Africa relations began with a major disagreement over Nigeria's domestic policy. General Sani Abacha's dictatorial military regime (1993-1998), and its decision to hang Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight Ogoni men on 10 November 1995, provided the first occasion for an open diplomatic strain in the relationship between Nigeria and South Africa in the aftermath of apartheid era. Consequent upon the alleged role of South Africa in the suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth at the Auckland Summit in November 1995, the Nigerian state retaliated this diplomatic offensive by severing diplomatic relations with South Africa (Zabadi, 2004; Ibeanu and Nwachukwu, 2004; Saliu, 2006; Akindele, 2007; Akinterinwa, 2009). The frosty relationship between the two countries was consequently amended by the military regime of Abdusallam Abubakar whose reconciliatory trip to South Africa marked the beginning of a relatively new relationship between the two countries.

By the year 1999, Nigeria and South Africa began to redefine their bilateral and multilateral relationships, more so as this period coincided with democratic transitions in both countries. In essence, the period since 1999, ushered in an era of strategic bilateral dealings which heralded the formation of Nigeria-South Africa Bi-National Commission, inaugurated in October 1999 (Akinboye, 2005; Akindele, 2007). Indeed, the period between 2000 and 2005 witnessed a more focused and active articulation of a strategic partnership between Nigeria and South Africa due largely to the perceived challenges of Africa in a rapidly globalizing world. The personality of then Nigeria's President, Olusegun Obasanjo and his South African counterpart, Thabo Mbeki, was a major contributing factor to the emerging and cordial relationship between the two countries. Obasanjo and Mbeki perceived the urgent need for Africa's re-birth and they shared equal passion for the realization of such goal (Adebajo and Landsberg, 2003).

Keying in to the re-awakening of Pan-African consciousness and regional role conception by Nigeria and South Africa after the end of Cold War in 1989, there were concerns in policy and scholarly circles on the need for the two countries to play major roles in conflict mitigation and peace-building in war-torn African countries. This was moreover in view of the fact that Western countries and United Nations began to challenge African governments to help resolve regional conflicts in the continent. This new stance was fuelled by the repeated complaint at the United Nations about the shortage of funds to finance peace-keeping operations (Benneh, 2001).

Another major collaborative effort by Nigeria and South Africa in promoting continental renaissance was the facilitation of the diplomatic process that transformed the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 1999. Nigeria and South Africa were also instrumental to the formation of Africa's new development initiative, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001, and its governance tool; African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in 2003. The expectations by the international community, since the year 2000, that Africans and the

continental political leadership should look inwards to solve their problems made these initiatives very important and timely (NEPAD, 2001).

In a more recent time, Nigeria-South Africa diplomatic relations has deteriorated on many fronts, prompting the visit of President Goodluck Jonathan to South Africa where he addressed the latter's joint parliament. The Presidential visit was prompted by the yellow fever certificate saga that involved both countries. The South African government had on March 2, 2012 deported 125 Nigerians (75 aboard South African Airways) and (50 aboard Arik Air Ways) for possessing fake yellow fever vaccination cards (*The Guardian Editorials*, March 5, 2012:3). The Nigerian government had immediately retaliated what was generally perceived as unfair treatment of Nigerians, indeed an affront to diplomatic norms, by deporting a total of 128 South Africans within two days, citing 'lack of proper documentation' as reasons for shutting them out (*The News Editorials*, March 19, 2012:50).

In a related development, the arms deal that involved both countries which came on the heels of the collapse of a building at the Synagogue of All Nations Church, Lagos, a Nigeria-based religious centre, claiming the lives of about 84 South African nationals became the latest in the ranks of diplomatic embarrassment that has bedeviled the Nigeria-South relations. According to Kayode (2014:97) failure on the part of the Nigerian government to officially declare the cash of 9.3 million USD, loaded into a Nigerian-owned jet to the South African Customs as required by the latter's law attracted negative diplomatic reaction from the South African government. He argued that the seizure of the cash in the custody of the Nigerian intelligence officials who had attempted to purchase arms through the "black market" allegedly for the prosecution of war on terror and insurgents did not violate any international practice in the field of security and intelligence. He concluded that the diplomatic row engendered by the incident in Nigeria-South Africa relations only portrayed the hypocrisy in the international security architecture.

From the above analysis, it is evident that the history of Nigeria-South Africa relations has vacillated between cooperation and conflict, necessitated by each country's foreign policy, regime type, domestic intricacies and international diplomacy. We now turn our attention to specific cases of xenophobic attack on Nigerians in South Africa.

Literature Review
ANTECEDENT OF MIGRATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The act of cross-border migration has taken different various forms. At one end of the gamut is the highly regulated and formalized mine contract-labor system established between 1890 and 1920, which continues today. At the other are various kinds of informal or unregulated movements across borders. South Africa has received both kinds of migrants for decades. Commercial farmers also relied heavily on outside labor, much of it clandestine. The apartheid state channeled unauthorized migrants to commercial farms by offering them the option of working on farms or being deported. (Crush, 2008).

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.

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 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).

Xenophobia is a dislike and/o fear of that which is unknown or different from one. It comes from the Greek words (xenos), meaning "stranger," "foreigner" and (Phobos), and meaning "fear." The term is typically used to describe a fear or dislike foreigners or of people significantly different from oneself, usually in the context of visibly differentiated minorities (Shinsana,2008). It is more broadly defined in the Dictionary of Psychology (1978) as "a fear of strangers".

The violence and unrest accompanying the xenophobic attacks, which took place in May, 2008, left more than 50 people dead and thousands displaces in locales across South Africa. More than sixteen thousands people, including Nigerians living in Gauteng alone were forced to find alternative living arrangements. According to most reports, the attacks began in Alexandra then spread to other areas in and around Johannesburg, including Cleveland, Diepsloot, Hill brow, Tembisa, Primrose, Ivory Park and Thokoza. Violence in Kwazulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Cape Town soon followed. Two patterns emerged in the violence that unfolded. Firstly, the violence was largely, although not exclusively, carried out against migrants from other African countries, especially Nigerians and not all foreigners in general. The term 'xenophobic' violence was widely used to describe the violence to apply to groups of people who may be within or

outside a society, but who are not considered part of that society (Harris,2002).

One of the most striking features of the outbreak of anti-foreigner violence is just how unsurprising, it actually is. A Human Rights Watch (HRW) report of 1998 for example stated that "South Africa's public culture has become increasingly xenophobic, and politicians often make inflammatory statements that the "deluge" of migrants is responsible for the current crime wave, rising unemployment, or even the spread of diseases. As the unfounded perceptions that migrants are responsible for a variety of social ills grows, migrants have increasingly become the targets of abuse at hands of the police, the army, and the Department of Home Affairs. It is also noted that refugees and asylum seekers with distinctive features from far-away countries are especially targeted for abuse (HRW 1998: 4).

Another analyst extends the description of xenophobia by observing that: An examination of this phenomenon and its manifestation reveals that 'the foreigner' has become site for the violent convergence of a host of unresolved social tensions. The difficulties of transition, socio-economic frustrations, a legacy of racial division, and an inherited culture of violence are just some of the factors contributing to violent xenophobia in South Africa today (Valji, 2003).

It is important to keep in mind that violence perpetrated against Nigerians was documented a s early as 1994. In a study on Congolese and Nigerians migrants in Johannesburg, Morris (1998: 1120) noted for instance that "the increase in the size of the foreign population in South Africa has been accompanied by a substantial growth of xenophobia and numerous attacks on foreigners have been reported (Weekly Mail and Guardian, 23 September 1994: Weekly Mail and Guardian, 3 February 1995)". He added that some of the most virulent prejudice has been directed against black Africans originating from countries north of Southern Africa. Another reference to South Africa's past experience with anti-Nigerian violence which resonates in the present circumstances was also made by Minaar and Hough 1996 (cited in Croucher 1998:646); "One frequently cited example occurred in December 1994 and again in January 1995, when armed youths in Alexandra township carried out attacks against suspected illegal aliens _ destroying homes and property, and marching suspected illegal aliens to a local police station to demand their immediate and forcible removal….". Alexandra has since been a center site of recent xenophobic violence.

For instance, President Mugabe sent buses to convey Zimbabweans back home. The same was done by the Mozambicans, Malawians, Swazis and Kenyans governments, just to name a few. Nigerian president; Yar'Adua, visited South Africa as a result of the attacks to ensure that the lives of his citizens were secured and also demanded that affected Nigerians receive compensation.

The South African President, Zuma describes this growing xenophobia in South Africa way, Behind any conflict, whether it is in northern Ireland, the Balkans, Sudan, genocide in Rwanda, apartheid in South Africa, problems in the middle east between Israel and Palestine, you are sure to find racism, racial discrimination, xenophobic or a related intolerance.

South Africa's long track-record of violence as a means of protest and the targeting of foreigners in particular; and, the documented tensions over migration policy and the scale of repatriation serve a very good explanation for its xenophobia. It was clear that while most of the attacks were directed against foreign, primarily African, migrants, that this was not the rule. Attacks were also noted against Chinese-speakers, Pakistani migrants as well as against South Africans from minority language groups (in the conflict areas) such as those who speak sePedi and isiTsonga. The current wave of violence has extended beyond a simple conception of foreign versus indigenous, by traversing the spectrum of ethnicity, indigeneity, citizenship and even legal status (legitimacy). Settlements that have recently experienced the expression of 'xenophobic' violence have also been the site of violent and other forms of protest around other issues, most notably service delivery. Hence, the failure of government in service delivery was vexed on the form of xenophobia

As regards Nigerians, about 50 people died and tens of thousands of people have been displaced as a result of xenophobic violence in South Africa during 2008. Many Nigerians lost their properties, families and others living in fear of a resurgent attack.

The worst implication of this xenophobic attack is the fact that the victims are legitimate migrants with responsible business. They pose no immediate or remote danger to their South African attackers. This raises a number of concerns about the safety of Nigerians studying and living in South Africa. It is not clear why foreign African migrants, especially Nigerians studying and living in South Africa. It is not clear why foreign African migrants, especially Nigerians are the targets of violence in informal settlements. The timing, location and scale of the xenophobic attack cannot be clearly explained by the government inability to deal with the problem, posing a more serious danger to the Nigerians living in that country. The main drivers behind the violence are pervasive belief by the South Africa that foreigners make life difficult for them but the severity in those against Nigerians can be disturbing.

According to Crush (2008) the expansion and consolidation of South Africa's economic relations with the rest of the continent are also reflected in these figures. Small-scale entrepreneurs involved in cross-border trade, particularly those who come to South Africa to source goods to sell in their home countries, usually travel on visitor's permits. Thus, the increase in the issue of visitor's permits to Africans reflects a change in trading patterns and the growth in small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs involved in formal and informal cross-border trade.

By contrast, levels of immigration fell dramatically in the 1990s. The number of people granted permanent residence

declined from around 14,000 per year at the beginning of the decade to 3,053 in 2000 (see Table I). (Crush, 2008).

However, the proportion of immigrants from Africa did increase over the decade, with Africans making up nearly half of all immigrants in both 2003 and 2004. Between 1990 and 2004, a total of 110,000 legal immigrants entered the country, 27 percent of whom were from other African countries.

TABLE I

LEGAL IMMIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA, 1990-2005

Year	Legal immigrants	African immigrants	% African immigrants
1990	14,499	1,628	11.2
1991	12,379	2,065	16.7
1992	8,686	1,266	14.6
1993	9,824	1,701	17.3
1994	6,398	1,628	25.4
1995	5,064	1,343	26.5
1996	5,407	1,601	29.6
1997	4,102	1,281	31.2
1998	4,371	1,169	26.7
1999	3,669	980	26.7
2000	3,053	831	27.2
2001	4,832	1,584	32.8
2002	6,545	2,472	37.8
2003	10,578	4,961	46.9
2004	10,714	5,235	48.9
Total	110,121	29,745	27

TABLE I Source: Department of Home Affairs annual reports; Statistics South Africa Tourism & Migration reports, PS015.

Suffice it to say that the policy of reductionism contributes to the reduction in the migration in the migration of people into South Africa. In essence, contrary to the predictions of many, no massive brain drain to South Africa from elsewhere on the continent took place.

Crush (2008) later emphasized that after 1994, the number of people entering legally on temporary work permits also declined. In 1996, 52,704 work permits were issued, a number that fell to 15,834 in 2000. The decrease in the issue and reissue of temporary work permits had little to do with labour market demand and everything to do with government policy. Employers found it more and more difficult to hire abroad, even temporarily, and foreign workers found themselves enmeshed in Home Affairs red tape.

The restrictionist immigration and migration policy was at odds with another reality that South Africa, along with many other developing countries, has had to face: brain drain. South Africa has been shedding skills at an alarming rate to its global competitors, especially in the industrial, medical, and education fields. Official emigration statistics do not capture the full dimensions of the brain drain. Statistics South Africa, for example, recorded a total of 92,612 people (including 20,038 with professional qualifications) emigrating between 1989 and 2003 to five main destination countries: the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

However, the destination-country statistics of immigrant arrivals from South Africa show 80,831 professionals and 368,829 total immigrants arriving from South Africa during the same time period. Official statistics therefore undercounted the loss by around three-quarters. Recent studies of the health sector conducted by SAMP showed massive discontent with virtually all aspects of working and living conditions. The vast majority of health professionals expressed an intense desire to leave South Africa. Around 8 percent of a national sample said they would probably leave within six months, 25 percent within two years, and half (52 percent) within five years. The South African gold mining industry entered a period of renewed expansion after 2000. The mining companies fought hard to keep their right to hire foreign contract workers without government interference. Earlier drafts of the 2002 Immigration Act were modified to accommodate this lobby. However, the 2002 Immigration Act still made it more difficult for the mining companies to hire foreign workers. They now must apply for "corporate permits" which, once the government grants the permits, allow them to import a specified number of foreign workers.

Selected Case Study Analyses on Xenophobia in South Africa

According to a 1998 Human Rights Watch Report (cited in Olupohunda, 2013:5), immigrants from Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique living in the Alexandra Township near Johannesburg were physically assaulted over a period of several weeks in 1995, as armed gangs identified suspected migrants and marched them to the police station in an attempt to "clean the township of foreigners." The campaigners, known as "Buyelekhaya" (go back home), blamed foreigners for crime, unemployment and sexual attacks.

In September 1998 a Mozambican and two Senegalese were thrown out of a train. The assault was carried out by a group returning from a rally that blamed foreigners for unemployment, crime and spreading AIDS. In 2000 seven foreigners were killed on the Cape Flats over a five-week period in what police described as xenophobic murders

possibly motivated by the fear that outsiders would claim property belonging to locals. In October 2001 residents of the Zandspruit informal settlement gave Zimbabweans 10 days to leave the area. When the foreigners failed to leave voluntarily they were forcefully evicted and their shacks were burned down and looted. Community members said they were angry that Zimbabweans were employed while locals remained jobless and blamed the foreigners for a number of crimes. No injuries were reported among the Zimbabweans (Konanani and Odeku, 2013)

In the last week of 2005 and first week of 2006 at least four people, including two Zimbabweans, died in the Olievenhoutbosch settlement after foreigners were blamed for the death of a local man. Shacks belonging to foreigners were set alight and locals demanded that police remove all immigrants from the area. In August 2006 Somali refugees appealed for protection after 21 Somali traders were killed in July of that year and 26 more in August. The immigrants believed the murders to be motivated by xenophobia, although police rejected the assertion of a concerted campaign to drive Somali traders out of townships in the Western Cape. Attacks on foreign nationals increased markedly in late 2007 and it is believed that there were at least a dozen attacks between January and May 2008. The most severe incidents occurred on 8 January 2008 when two Somali shop owners were murdered in the Eastern Cape towns of Jeffreys Bay and East London and in March 2008 when seven people were killed including Zimbabweans, Pakistanis and a Somali after their shops and shacks were set alight in Atteridgeville near Pretoria (Abdi, 2013).

The most severe incident occurred in 2008 when a series of riots started in the township of Alexandra. Locals attacked migrants from Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, and Nigeria. In recent years, tales of xenophobic attacks on Nigerians living in South Africa have left compatriots at home in shock. There have also been reported cases of harassment of Nigerian travellers arriving at the Oliver Thambo Airport. One celebrated case of disrespect was the treatment of Africa's first Nobel winner, Prof. Wole Soyinka. In 2005, Soyinka was denied entry into South Africa. It took the last minute intervention of Mandela's wife, Graca Machel, to admit the Nobel Laureate into the country. Soyinka's trip to South Africa which was in response to an invitation to deliver a lecture in honour of Mandela drew national and international focus to the country, both because of Mandela, whose birthday it was and Soyinka who was the guest speaker (Olupohunda, 2013).

The South African government has also indirectly promoted and encouraged its citizens into believing that immigrants are responsible for unemployment and crimes. For example, South Africa's borders have been remilitarised. According to Christopher McMichael (cited in Olupohunda, 2013:5): "This shared state-corporate project of building up a 'fortress South Africa' also reveals a deeply entrenched seam of xenophobia, in which undocumented migrants and refugees from African countries are painted as a security risk akin to terrorism and organised crime. Parliamentary discussions on border security are rife with claims that foreign nationals are attempting to drain social grants and economic opportunities from citizens. The packaging of illegal immigration as a national security threat, which often relies on unsubstantiated claims about the inherent criminality of foreign nationals, provides an official gloss on deeply entrenched governmental xenophobia, in which African immigrants are targets for regular harassment, rounding up and extortion by the police. This normalisation of immigrants as figures of resentment may also fuel outbreaks of xenophobic violence'' (Olupohunda, 2013).

In May, 2013 Reports of spontaneous assault by some South African members of Port Nolloth community were said to have targeted the Nigerian community living in the area. They were reportedly chased out of their homes, their property looted and their shops burnt. The attackers have always accused the Nigerians of dealing in drugs. But the Nigerian community in South Africa has denied the allegation. Consequently, President Jacob Zuma of South Africa and his counterpart in Nigeria, President Goodluck Jonathan initiated high level diplomacy to repair the damage brought about by the incident (Abdi, 2013). In short, Abdi (2013) has asserted that, in view of the rate of xenophobic violence in South Africa, coupled with other recorded rape violence, the country qualifies as one of the most violent societies in the world.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper focused on the retrospective discourse on xenophobia in South Africa, pointing attention to its effects on contemporary Nigeria-South Africa diplomatic relations. It demonstrated that xenophobia in South Africa is rooted in the nature and character of apartheid and its discriminatory policies against the black majority which incidentally denied them of economic opportunities, ultimately fuelling the attitude of suspicion and hate for foreigners. The paper further suggested that the mercantilist and imperialistic ambition of the apartheid South African government which attracted huge menial labour from the Southern African region to service the growing mining industry in the former accounted for xenophobic violence that has bedevilled the post-apartheid South African society. The paper further observed that the targeted xenophobic attacks by South Africans against Nigerians are borne out fear for the entrepreneurial ambition of the latter and their tendency to dominate a given environment. The paper concludes that the political economy of the post-apartheid South African society is such that the distortions inherent in the deeply divided society will warrant the continuation of xenophobia until this anomaly is addressed.

It therefore recommends the strengthening of regional and sub-regional organizations like the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) respectively to ensure the total dismantling of all the apartheid structures that still manifest in form of regional ambitions and economic imperialism. This will facilitate the rapid disintegration of the economies of the smaller Southern African countries from the dominant South African economy and ensure equitable trade balances between the neighbouring countries. Again, the government of South Africa must intensify efforts to empower the black population in the post-apartheid South Africa in other to resolve the contradictions of apartheid and ensure a free society for all. Similarly, the white minority that hold the commanding heights of the post-apartheid South African economy must show the willingness to open the space for competition and inclusion.

In the particular case involving Nigeria-South Africa relations, both countries must strengthen the instrumentality of the Nigeria-South Africa Bi-National Commission as a veritable platform to resolve diplomatic impasses speedily before they degenerate into avoidable row. In the same vein, Nigeria and South Africa must move above rhetoric and embrace their continental responsibility of Africa's development and renaissance.

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