

The Dialectics Of Xenophobia In South Africa: A Casual Analysis

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Abstract: *The perennial challenge of youth restiveness in South Africa targeted against African foreigners had over the years elicited regional fear and anxiety. cursory observation and studies illuminate systemic failure that exacerbates suspicion and hatred between the citizens and foreigners. In this regard, this paper adopt Marxian dialectical materialism model and secondary data to establish that xenophobic attacks against Non-South Africans emanates from the quest for material survival. The paper also revealed that the unabated spread of this absurdity is a function of structural inadequacies bedeviling the South African society. The paper therefore opines that South African state institutions should be strengthened, socio-economic challenges mitigated, migrant laws reviewed, and enlightenment and advocacy intensified as plausible measures to stem the tide of xenophobic restiveness in South Africa.*

Keywords: South Africa, migration, xenophobia, marxism and dialectics.

Introduction

Crime and violence are endemic in post-apartheid South Africa. Their intensity and spread are also alarming with particular reference to the loss of lives and properties of foreign African nationals in what is usually termed xenophobic attacks. The persistence of this prejudicial onslaught against African immigrants in the post-apartheid country has over the years elicited regional anxiety and global concerns. In this regard, xenophobic violence in particular has become a longstanding feature since 2008; tens of thousands of people have been harassed, attacked or killed because of their status as outsiders or foreign nationals (Misago, Freemantle and Landau, 2015, p 1.). During this restive period, what might be termed xenophobic violence has increased across townships and informal settlements, although in the absence of a centralised and standardised recording mechanism, it is possible that it is also just being noticed and reported more (Palmary et al, 2003; Murray, 2003, Landau and Haithar 2007).

Obviously, xenophobia in South Africa is unprecedented and widespread. Thus, the lives and properties of over 14 million African immigrants are vulnerable to the daily and increasing xenophobic comments, attitude and restiveness from citizens in defiance of international law on human safety and rights domesticated in South Africa. These unpleasant situations perhaps show the inadequacies of the South Africa immigration policy and practices as observed in arrest, detention and deportation which were fundamental components of the country's immigration regime; research over the last two decades suggests that such practices are carried out in ways that are not only highly prejudicial but often extended beyond legal limits (Amit 2010, p.11).

It is therefore fair to say that “anti-immigrant sentiment” is not only strong, it is widespread and cuts across virtually every socio-economic and demographic group (Danso and MacDonald in Nyanjoh, 2006, p.38) Perhaps, there is strong evidence that South Africans are generally uncomfortable with the presence of black and Asian non-nationals in the country (Misago,etal , 2015,p.7).

Accordingly, the factor underlying the intermittent exacerbating of hostility against black foreigners is the thrust of this discourse. Thus, the dialectics of the xenophobic restiveness is a causal analysis of the conflict between extreme contradictory tendencies and its effects.

Conceptual Clarification

Xenophobia

Basically, the term “xenophobia” is polemical and replete with divergent interpretations with reference to its meanings and manifestations. In this vein, it is argued that despite its widespread usage, xenophobia is an ambiguous and contested term in popular and scholarly debates. The interchangeably or complementary use of similar terms such as nativism, autochthony, ethnocentrism, tenoracism, ethno-exclusionism, anti-immigrant prejudice and immigration phobia (Crush et al 2008, p. 2). These synonymous terms further reveal the vagueness of the term *xenophobia*. Xenophobia is also seen as dislike, hatred or fear of others (Nyanjoh, 2006, p.3). Though, these terms however fails to provide in-depth analysis of the peculiarity of xenophobia.

Succinctly, Misago et al (2015) define xenophobia as attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity. However, this perspective elicits attributes of segregation or racial discrimination however failing to illuminate the underlying indices of xenophobia. In this same vein, it is conceived as negative attitude and chauvinistic behaviour (Harris 2002, p.2). Thus, this peculiar attitude and behaviour often manifest in hostility – the xenophobic violence. To a reasonable extent, Harris and Stoleke’s conception aptly underscore certain reflective attributes of xenophobia.

Furthermore, Stoleke (1999) remarks that xenophobia is a phenomenon that manifests in visible hostility towards strangers or that which is deemed foreign. Indeed, as elsewhere, xenophobia in South Africa translates into a broad spectrum of behaviour including discriminating policies and practice by government and private officials such as exclusion from public service to which target groups are entitled; selective enforcement or by-laws by local authorities; assault and harassment by state agents particularly the police and immigration officers; as well as public threats and violence commonly known as xenophobic violence that often results in massive loss of lives and livelihoods.

In this sense, xenophobia permeates every fabric of the South African society creating anxiety and fear between the locals and aliens. Historically, xenophobia is not a recent phenomenon as revealed by Mayfield but a historical phenomenon of global dimension. Xenophobia did not start in South Africa. Thus, North America, Europe, United Kingdom, Japan and others have had long histories of xenophobia (as cited in Kinge 2016, p.12).

With reference to South Africa, hatred and violence targeted against African foreign nationals first occurred in post-apartheid South Africa in 1994 (Adeosun, 2012, p.20). Ever since that event, it has recurred intermittently in 2008, 2011, 2015, 2017 and 2019 where hundreds of lives were lost and properties worth millions destroyed.

Migration

As a concept, it is vague with a plethora of definitions. To this end, there is an absence of unanimity of ideas among scholars on what migration represents. Accordingly, Shaw (1995) defines migration as the relatively permanent movement of persons over a significant distance. However, the phrase “significant distance” is obviously a definitional problem. In particular, Woods (1982) remarks that migration has both distance and time dimensions. Hence, the movement of persons and groups involves a change of residence or movement of some distance which results in a change in permanent residence and type of boundaries crossed.

Arguably, migration is best defined (in general terms) as crossing of a spatial boundary by one or more persons involved in a change of residence. This spatial movement is regulated by legislations and policies known as the immigration policy peculiar to every country. In this regard, South Africa has always been a migrant-receiving country since the end of the apartheid policy in the early 1990’s and the dawn of democratic rule. These migrations are not only limited to African immigrants who include both skilled professionals and economic migrants as well as refugees trying to escape from conflict areas within the continent (Smith and Isike, 2012, p.93).

Remarkably, the socio-political and economic uncertainties in most African countries perhaps encouraged the massive entry of immigrants in the Rainbow Country as observed that in post-apartheid period. And, this trend has continued and there has been a growing influx of migrants across South Africa’s borders. Driven by “push” factors such as political instability and economic hardship in these countries as in the case of Zimbabweans and by the pull of economic opportunities available in South Africa, thousands of migrants from predominantly African countries have entered South Africa (Monson, 2008 p.641).

Subsequently, the exit of the racial policy and the dawn of democratisation also stimulated the “rush” to the Rainbow Country for greener pastures as remarked. Following the democratic transition, South Africa continued to attract international migrants despite a decline in labour recruitment. Based on data on legal migrant movements into the post-apartheid nation at legal entry points collected by the South African government, the number of legal entries reported increased in the decades following the transition (Segatti, 2011, and Crush, 2012).

A significant numbers of South African immigrants were professionals, as earlier indicated, such as teachers, doctors, including artisans and asylum-seekers. They reside in town and cities. They were often referred to with derogatory terms such as “Makwerekwere” by South African indigenes. It therefore showed the extent of non-receptive, anti-immigrant sentiment and hostile attitude of the South African residents as illustrated in the NIPS research instruments which found that South African citizens tended to exaggerate the number of foreigners residing in their country and tended to view immigration as a problem rather than an opportunity (Crush and Pendleton 2007, p.64).

Consequently, in comparison with the citizens of other nations, South Africans were found to be the most supportive of restrictions on immigration (Crush, et al 2008). However, the South Africa immigration policy is fraught with inadequacies which can be

traced to the early exit of the apartheid policy as Gordon enunciates (2015), in the early post-apartheid period, migration into South Africa was governed according to the controversial Alien Control Act (No 26) of 1991, a piece of apartheid-era legislation which remained in place after the political transition and was only replaced in 2002. Scholars like Crush (1999) describe the Act as an item of control, exclusion and expulsion, and argued that the post-apartheid migration management system was characterised by corruption and racial double standards.

These irregularities further showed that the immigration policy of South Africa has been strongly criticized for not giving adequate attention to the rights of refugees and other foreigners. For example, asylum-seekers may not seek or take up employment pending the outcome of their application while, in reality, the processing of the application could take up to six (6) months and above, yet the government did not provide for the need of the asylum-seekers. Inconsistencies in the immigration policy of South Africa still suggest the pursuit of a restrictionist policy to actively discourage migration. Also, the inconsistencies make the implementation of the policy by local government and other agencies challenging, giving room for corrupt and hostile practices against asylum-seekers. Notably, exclusionary and xenophobic attitudes are reported to be especially focused on black African immigrants (Crush and Williams, 2001; Peberely and Rogerson 2000 and Palmary 2002).

It is true though that the South African government had made frenetic efforts to improve on these inadequacies and democratise the immigration policy. For instance, the South African government is a signatory to several declarations of the rights and treatment of immigrants. For instance, the 1993 memorandum of understanding between the South African government and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) for the safe passage of refugees into South Africa is a good example.

Table 1: Most Undesirable Immigrant Groups in South Africa, 2003 – 2012

Year	Nigerians		Other Africans		Asian		Other		Can't choose	
	(%)	Std. err	(%)	Std. err.	%	Std. err.	(%)	Std. err.	(%)	Std. err.
2008	21	(1.03)	30	(1.12)	3	(0.44)	11	(0.78)	34	(1.19)
2009	17	(1.04)	30	(1.19)	4	(0.49)	22	(1.16)	26	(1.18)
2010	20	(1.08)	32	(1.26)	5	(0.53)	19	(1.06)	23	(1.11)
2011	22	(1.03)	39	(1.24)	7	(0.63)	16	(0.96)	15	(0.92)
2012	26	(1.34)	34	(1.37)	9	(0.79)	14	(1.05)	16	(1.04)

Note: Dates are weighted using the weights specifically designed for SASAS.

Source: SASAS (2008 – 2012)

Theoretical Framework

The dialectics of xenophobic onslaught in South Africa is a scientific analysis. The analysis of which underscores the imperative of the appropriate conceptual model. In this regard, the Marxian dialectical materialism model is the suitable framework for the empirical analysis of the rationale, occurrence and outcome of the xenophobic sentiment and restiveness in South Africa.

The model dialectical materialism is Karl Marx’s scientific theory established to illuminate the process, conflict and development that defined the human society. Karl Heinrich Marx (1818-883) was truly the last of the great critics in the western intellectual tradition. His ideas exerted a decisive influence on all aspects of human endeavour and transformed the study of history and society (Mukhejee and Ramaswamy, 2007, p.348). Thus, Karl Marx developed a paradigm or perspective in social sciences that accentuate the primacy of material condition – the fundamental for human survival and societal advancement as Nwoko (2006, p.119) aptly indicates:

What made Marx’s approach different from that of other social thinkers was that he subscribed to what Engels called the materialist conception of history or historical materialism (A Marxist theory that holds that material or economic conditions ultimately structure law, politics, culture and other aspects of social existence).

The term “dialectics” is coined and developed by Hegel to explicate the essence of human mind in conflict, contradiction and development. As indicated, Gauba, (2003) remarks that G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) famous German philosopher believed that “idea” or “consciousness” was the essence of the universe....it was the force behind all historical development. Dialectics is also a process of development in which the interaction between two opposing forces leads to a further or higher stage; historical change resulting from internal contradictions within a society (Heywood, 2007, p.120).

Subsequently, Karl Popper (1990, p.4) explicates further on Hegelian’s dialectics:

Dialectics (in the modern sense i.e. especially in the sense in which Hegel used the term) is a theory which maintains that something, more especially human thought, develops in a way characterised by what is called the dialectic triad: thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis. First, there is some idea or theory or movement which may be called a thesis; such a thesis will often produce opposition because, like most things in this world, it will probably be of limited value and will have weak spots. The opposing idea or movement is called the anti-thesis because it is directed against the first – the thesis. The struggle between the thesis and the anti-thesis goes on until some solution is reached which in a certain sense goes beyond both thesis and anti-thesis by recognising their respective values and by trying to preserve the merits and to avoid the limitations of both. This solution which is the third step is called the synthesis.

In other words, dialectics is a scientific analysis of negation or the conflict of contradictions (thesis and anti-thesis) that illuminates the consciousness of the human mind.

Karl Marx was fascinated by the Hegelian dialectics of human mind. As Marx agreed with Hegel in the dialectical process but emphasized the real rather than the ideal, the social rather than the intellectual, matter rather than the mind. For Marx, the key ideas were not the history of philosophy, but the history of economic production and social relations that accompanied it (Mukherjee and Ranaswanmy, 2007, p.356).

In this regard, Aja (1997, p.13) explicitly establishes the Marxian purpose of dialectics:

The historical task of Marx and Engels was how to falsify Hegelian dialectics of knowledge of social change in human history. The concern of Marx was primarily to reverse Hegelian dialectics to recognise the economic or material existence as the root cause of class conflict in human history and not a matter of ideas and philosophies of men. In a corrective sense, Marx employed the approach known as dialectical materialism.

In other words, Karl Marx, therefore, argued that the social conflict, division and turbulence bedeviling the human society stemmed from the quest for material survival. The uncertainties and inequalities of the human society are therefore a reflection of the dialectics of materialism.....the quarrel and tussle over what are scarce and limited in a private-property economy.

In this vein, the model of dialectical materialism established the following basic assumptions:

1. the primacy of the material condition of life
2. unequal distribution of means of production
3. emergence of class and exploitation
4. the intense class antagonism
5. the social change and formation of synthesis.

With reference to its critics, dialectical materialism is susceptible to limitations. It is often seen as a crude and deterministic form of Marxism that dominated intellectual life in orthodox communist states (Haywood, 2007, p.118). Again, the Marxian model over-emphasised economic conditions with less or no emphasis on politics and other processes or aspects of the society. The inadequacies identified do not however undermine the methodological relevance of the model as the appropriate framework for analysis and generalisation.

In reference to its applicability to South Africa's xenophobia, it is therefore argued that the influx of black foreign Africans into the Rainbow Country is primarily influenced by the quest for material survival. Moreover, the xenophobic sentiment, attitude and restiveness of the South Africa citizens against these black foreigners are enormously stimulated by their abject conditions of material wellbeing. Thus, this unpleasant condition inextricably created two contradictory and antagonistic tendencies (*class of haves and have nots*) immersed in ceaseless conflict and violence over in their quest for means of material survival such as employment opportunity, business opportunity, etc. The dialectical process therefore reflects the clash between the thesis (the South African citizens) and the anti-thesis (the black foreigners). The outcome of this clash leads to a new order of increasing divisive tendencies and fear in the South African society appropriately described as "synthesis". In other words, the xenophobic violence is a function of a dialectical process fraught with ceaseless tussle over what are limited and inadequate occasioned by the abysmal failure of relevant institutions in the post-apartheid South African society.

The Historical Background and Spread of Xenophobia in South Africa

As earlier indicated, xenophobia is endemic in the South African society. Human Rights Watch (1998) observed:

In general, South Africa's public culture has become increasingly xenophobic, and politicians often make unsubstantiated and inflammatory statements that the "deluge" of migrants is responsible for the current crime wave, rising unemployment or the spread of diseases. As the unfounded perception that migrants are responsible for a variety of social ills grow, migrants have increasingly become the targets of abuse in the hands of South African citizens as well as members of the police, the army, and the Department of Home Affairs.

The unhealthy relation and suspicion between the citizens and African foreigners may have emanated from the bane of societal vices bedeviling the South African nation-state. Hence, this disliked sentiment and attitude towards Africans is further explicated by Misago, et al (2008, *ibid*):

South African xenophobia manifests in various forms ranging from everyday street level abuse to discrimination and harassment by government officials and recurring bouts of popular xenophobic violence in varying intensity and scale. There is a strong evidence that outsiders, a group including non-nationals, domestic migrants and others living and working in South Africa face discrimination. This comes in the hands of citizens, government officials, the police and private organisations contracted to manage and provide services, promote urban development or manage detention and deportation processes.

These indiscriminate and unpleasant attitudes have led to restiveness. This violence have intermittently occurred in recent years beginning from 2008 to 2011, 2014, 2015, 2017 and recently in 2019.

In May, 2008, xenophobic riots broke out in the Alexandra Township North of Johannesburg, spread to separate settlements across the province of Gauteng and then ignited across the country. Sixty-two people were killed, 670 were wounded and over 150,000 were displaced or forced to leave the country, most of them were foreign nationals and members of ethnic minorities. (Crush and Williams: 2005). The insanity continued unabated amid the expressed commitment of the government to stem the tide as remarked by Gordon (2015, p.494): since the mass anti-immigration riots of May 2008 displaced more than a hundred thousand people in South Africa, the prevalence of anti-immigrant sentiment in the country has been the subject of extensive debate. The South African government has pledge to fight xenophobia and promote tolerance towards foreign nationals.

However, the outbreak of hostilities in 2011, 2012 and 2014 indicated the failure of the South African government towards this prejudicial restiveness as embellished by Stephen (2015, p.13):

In 2011, at least 120 foreign nationals were killed, five of them burnt alive; 100 were seriously injured and at least 1,000 displaced and 120 shops and businesses permanently or temporarily closed down through violence or selective enforcement of laws. In 2012, the number of violent incidents increased; at least 250 incidents were recorded resulting in 140 deaths and 250 serious injuries. In 2013, an average of three major violent incidents was recorded per week with attacks regularly reported in many areas across the country during 2014. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, up to March 2014, an estimated 300 incidents of violence against asylum-seekers and refugees had been reported; an estimated 200 shops had been looted and 900 persons had been displaced. The South African Police Service (SAPS) were overwhelmed by the increase in violence against foreigners and required support and assistance from all relevant government departments.

Similarly, the 2015 xenophobic violence started in Durban and spread into cities such as Pieter- Maritzburg and Johannesburg causing loss of lives (both foreigners and South Africans) and the destruction of properties mainly foreign-owned shops (Tella and Ogunnubi, 2014, p.21). The same hostilities recurred in 2017 when Nigerians were mainly the victims as documented. In February, property worth millions of dollars belonging to Nigerians was destroyed by some South Africans. On Wednesday, March 15th, five Nigerians were attacked leaving them in a critical condition in the hospital. According to Collins Mgbo, Secretary, Nigeria Union South Africa, the Nigerians were attacked at Ivy Port in Polokwane, capital of Limpopo Province in South Africa. Adeosun (20017, p.25):

This was not the first time Nigerians living in South Africa had been attacked. In April 2015, 300 Nigerian residents in Jeppe town, some kilometers away from Johannesburg, lost their houses and businesses to the restive black South Africans. For instance, their shops were looted and burnt. Remarkably, xenophobia in South Africa is not peculiar to any particular locality whether

interior or urban. It is a phenomenon that permeates every locality, race and career in the racial-divisive South African society. In this vein, Tella and Ogunnubi (2014, p.27) stress again:

These antagonistic attitudes are not limited to the country's citizens; some government officials various government departments, a number of politicians and the press have perpetuated xenophobic behaviour. Sharing her personal experience, a British Scholar (an employee of one of the top Universities in South Africa) asserted that the presence of xenophobia in South Africa is not limited to uneducated communities. It exists within both educated and uneducated communities. In addition, foreign refugees, asylum-seekers, domestic and international migrants have unpleasant experiences to narrate and share as xenophobic attitudes and behaviour increasingly spread to cities and villages of high and low population density in South Africa. Also, as the refugees and asylum-seekers continue to seek protection in poor and marginalised urban and peri-urban areas, they become vulnerable to unfriendly utterances and intolerant attitude that not only threaten their lives and livelihoods but painfully prevent them from accessing public services such as education, healthcare, water, electricity, etc. Xenophobic violence manifests in any form of collective violence executed by either a large population or a fraction of people but with broad popular support or complicity. Its manifestation includes murder, assault causing bodily harm, looting and vandalism, robbery, arson attacks, burning of properties, immolation, displacement, intimidation, threats, eviction notices, etc. It must be understood that in some circumstances, intimidation and the threat of violence cause substantial socio-economic damage and thus of the same order as overt physical attacks.

Xenophobia had created social insecurity implanting suspicion and hatred in the relation between South Africans and foreigners and among South Africans. It also undermined the process of socio-economic growth and development because multi-million and billion dollar business investments were withdrawn, destroyed and prevented. Subsequently, the anti-immigrant sentiment and restiveness had over the years severed the relation between the Rainbow Country and victim countries in the continent and beyond. This situation is indeed challenging to the South African government and elicits the anxiety of reprisal attacks against South African nationals and investments in various parts of the region and beyond.

Then, the fundamental question is what exacerbates this insanity in a country whose constitution upholds the tenets of liberty and rule of law. This is further illustrated in cognizance that South Africa enjoys one of the most progressive constitutions in the world. The constitution guarantees the rights of both citizens and non-citizens resident in the country. It forbids discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion or linguistic background (Tella 2014, p.154).

Absurdly, many South Africans were intolerant of foreigners especially the black foreigners. What propels such intolerant attitude and behaviour are perhaps revealed below.

The Factors That Exacerbate Xenophobia in South Africa

This discourse argued that xenophobia in South Africa against black foreigners stems from the quest for material survival. This quest leads to a rival relationship between South Africans and African foreigners over limited and scare resources expedient for living, happiness and comfort. Hence, the tussle between the "thesis" and "anti-thesis" is invariably the quarrel and restiveness over limited resources, survival and advancement. In credence to this assertion, Miller (2012) writes that the link between economic self-interest and competition theory indicates that antagonism is likely when different groups (i.e. citizens and foreigners) are rivals for the same limited resources. The economic competition argument states that realists fear the economic impact of immigration on the local labour market and the welfare system affects attitudes towards immigrants.

As a consequence, therefore, those less exposed to economic hardships are more likely to exhibit more favorable sentiment towards foreigners than those unshielded. Evidence of public opinion analysis in Europe and North America suggests a link between individual and anti-immigrant sentiments (Ceobanu and Escandell, 2015, p.42).

The evidence ostensibly supports the argument of this discourse that in South Africa there is a link between economic interest and anti-immigrant sentiments. And the quest for economic fortunes also stimulated the influx of immigrant Africans in the South African society as further revealed by Baden et al (1997,p.11):

Post-apartheid South Africa is highly attractive to other Africans from countries suffering from various forms of macro-economic deficiencies and violent conflicts. For the South African economy is one of the largest and richest in Africa. It is rich in natural and mineral resources and is considered as reasonably industrialised.

Thus, South Africa has registered a huge influx of African migrants since the end of apartheid (Crush and Williams, 2001, p.6) for economic reasons alone does account for high influx of African immigrants into South Africa (Mudi-Okorodudus, 2014, p.11).

Notably, the antagonism and restive attitude against foreign immigrants particularly African foreigners began with the failure of expectations at the dawn of democratisation as embellished by Tella and Ogunnubi (2014, p.149):

During the apartheid regime, the majority of South Africans blamed their economic deprivation and misfortune on the apartheid administration and consequently directed their aggression at white minority rule. The end of apartheid and the dawn of democracy promised better conditions, more rights and generally improved welfare for the black South African population and citizens had high hopes and expectations. However, two decades into democracy, the black majority's aspirations and expectations have not yet been fulfilled; hence the need to find an outlet for their aggression. Vulnerable Black African foreigners have thus become early targets.

Accordingly, Seteolu (2014) indicates that there is the perception that foreign workers largely occupy jobs meant for South Africans. The mining and retail sectors are somewhat populated by foreign migrants from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria. In this sense, Oluwaseun and Olusola (2014, p.151) indicate that:

Black African foreigners are seen as enterprising and are often willing to accept lower wages than local people from employers of labour. This is perceived to diminish the job opportunities available for local people. Black South Africans blame foreigners for their misfortunes and economic hardships including unemployment, limited infrastructure and the spread of diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis. This aggression reached a peak with the 2008 xenophobic violence in the country and has since continued to flare up sporadically.

For instance, the recent outbreak of hostilities against African foreigners was caused by inflammatory statements of frustration by South African politicians. Dabiri-Erewa, the Special Adviser to Nigeria's President on Diaspora matters alleged that South African political leaders said to the citizens that the foreigners were taking their jobs..... It is also recalled that in December 2016, Herman Mashaba, a Mayor from Johannesburg in Gauteng town, referred to foreigners as criminals responsible for their economic misfortune.

Similarly, in April, 2017, Nigerians who were Real Estate agents were attacked by a mob of indigenes who alleged that Nigerians and other foreign black nationals were illegally acquiring houses which was later discovered as untrue. In other words, the economic competition over scarce resources intensifies suspicion and hostilities between the South Africans and black foreign immigrants. In this regard, Landau (2011) notes that citizens regularly echo long standing state discourses blaming foreigners and migrants more generally for many of the country's socio-economic ills. As well as what is perceived to be illegitimate competition for scarce resources and opportunities including jobs, businesses, houses, social services and women (Misago, et al 2009).

The second factor is the phobia created by decades of the practice of apartheid occasioned by socio-economic uncertainties. In this vein, Seteolu (2014, p.17) argues:

The racist and apartheid policies created a social division between the white majority and black majority populations. The land dispossession of majority black population and its transfer to white farmers created "land questions", while the Bantustan education and segregated residence are major sign posts of the expropriation policy of the apartheid phase. This, however, held the promise of social change in the socio-economic conditions of the black populace. The perception of the receding expectations occasioned by the preponderance of such residents, continued land dispossession and high level of unemployment among the black populace and the increasing entry of foreign migrants who competed with South Africans for jobs underscore the xenophobic attacks...

The third factor is institutional failures to effectively stimulate growth and development in situations of widening poverty and inequality. This failure also led to intermittent outbreak of hostilities as revealed by Gordon (2015, p.497):

Undoubtedly, the South African government is frustrated by its inability to make inroads into socio-economic problems such as income inequality, relative and absolute poverty and most importantly rising unemployment, particularly among its black citizens. This has created

avenues for environment where foreigners are seen as a threat to those competing for limited resources such as employment, housing and other social welfare facilities; and this in a country where nearly half of the citizens live below the poverty line.

Furthermore, Misago, et al (2015, p.25) writes that:

Systematic and deeply entrenched xenophobic attitudes and behaviour in South Africa are clear evidence that responses and interventions designed to address the problem have been largely ineffective. National government and relevant local authorities have so far either tended to ignore the problem or to categorise violent against foreign nationals and other forms of xenophobic behaviour as a part of normal crime with no need for additional targeted interventions.

This cynical attitude towards this societal malaise also showed the inadequacies of the South African Police in mitigating the spread of xenophobia as shown in the comments of one of the victims. While appreciating the Police efforts to save their lives, some victims of the attacks believed that efforts should also be made to protect their property..... Saving livelihood is as important as saving lives. A Somali Shop owner in Organe farm states:

Well, the problemhelpers, the police, they are coming. And they come to save our lives, but not our property. They say "leave the shop; let us take you to the police station; and tomorrow, how can we survive? Yes, okaythey save my life Tomorrow, what can I....eat and drink? Yes they have to protect us with our property.

To this extent, it is pertinent to assess the level and efficiency of responses to xenophobic restiveness in South Africa.

The Responses to the Xenophobic onslaught in South Africa

Responses to incessant hostilities against black foreigners in South Africa are very overwhelming and constructive amid inadequacies. These responses were from the government, police, civil society organizations and international humanitarian agencies to mitigate the effects of this onslaught and prevent a recurrence of such a violent conflict. On government's response, certain interventional legislations and policies have been initiated to enforce public order and curtail further disturbance. However, these efforts had failed because of frequent outbreak of xenophobic hostilities that spread unabated. In this regard, Stephen (2015, p.2) remarks that one would have expected the South African government to take bold and decisive actions to prevent the escalation of violence, but it did not show much political will to arrest the situation. Instead, government action was disorganised and lacking in leadership.

Still on government's effort, the South African government amid certain institutional inadequacies had demonstrated unflinching commitment to uphold the declarations adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) held in Durban in 2001. The conference indeed underscored the need to translate the objectives of the Durban Declaration into a practical and workable plan. However, for more than a decade, the South African government had not worked assiduously in this trend. Although there is a National Action Plan to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance which had been under discussion for years in isolation of plausible modalities for its implementation. The Nation Action Plan is the initiative of the South African Department of Justice and Constitutional Development but lacks the institutional framework, modalities and plausible procedures for its implementation.

Furthermore, the South African Police, which is the organ of the government, have a crucial role in this direction. Although, the police are charged with protecting all residents in South Africa from physical harm, they have often demonstrated ambivalence towards the rights and welfare of the "outsiders" or have been actively hostile and complicit in violence against them (see Amnesty International 2010, Landau and Haithar, 2007). Also, rather than grapple with the issue as distinct from high levels of ordinary crime, government and police officials have resisted pressure to approach xenophobic violence as anything rooted in attitudes, political instrumentalism, or economic ambition. Instead, they argue that the language of xenophobia is a mere cover for criminality or even a conscious effort to bring South Africa's reputation into disrepute (Misago and Landau 2015, p.27).

According to Police Spokesperson quoted in May 2013:

Holistically speaking, South Africa is not xenophobic and many cases are merely crimes. We cannot conflict this issue and we commonly see this as Afrophobia that is underpinned by criminality when we see children looting shops and people robbing people of their goods. It is to use a blatant sign of crime that is being excused as xenophobia.

This further illuminates the failure of the police to curtail the spread of xenophobia and ensure adequate safety for lives and property.

Beyond the interventions from the state institutions, civil society organizations and humanitarian agencies have also responded effectively to provide social rehabilitation and relief assistance to the victims of this onslaught. Series of advocacy initiatives had over the years been launched by South African civil society organizations in response to xenophobic violence. These are:

- (i) The Roll Back Xenophobic (RBX) Campaign
- (ii) The Advocacy by National Consortium on Refugee Affairs in partnership with South Africa Human Right Commission.
- (iii) Advocacy by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees

These civil society organizations are working to provide enlightenment and advocacy in the media, schools, communities and work places on the essence of tolerance, accommodation, sense of responsibility and self-reliance.

Subsequently, amid chaos due to lack of coordination and communication among different stakeholders, the immediate humanitarian response to the May 2008 crisis was generally laudable, NGO, (Local and International), UN agencies, Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) and some individuals provided volumes of donated food, clothes and other goods and services to the displaced population (Igglesden, et al 2009). In addition, there are civil organizations that initiated laudable programmes aimed at preventing the occurrence of the violence and promoting social cohesion. The Nelson Mandela Foundation is the leading civil advocacy group in this campaign. For instance, the foundation had over the years organized social cohesion and community dialogues in violence-prone communities across the country.

The efforts of these non-governmental interventional groups are however constrained with challenges of co-ordination, funding, security and leadership. In other words, these problems undermine the laudable efforts in this regard. This had also lent credence to the failure of response to the restiveness of xenophobia in South Africa.

Conclusion and Recommendations

South Africa is a society of xenophobia. The black foreigners are daily vulnerable to xenophobic comments, attitudes and restiveness in their neighborhood, schools, businesses and work places. The situation is endemic and unabated. This discourse argues that the intensity and spread of xenophobia in South Africa are a function of dialectical antagonism and conflict between the South African citizens and aliens over limited material resources. To this end, (Dodson, 2010; Misago, 2012; and Bamidele, 2015) stressed that poverty and limited opportunities within the South Africa society stimulated non-receptive and restive attitude to the immigrants, which invariably created situations of social disorder and disturbances in the racially divisive country.

Furthermore, the South African government, police and other relevant institutions have failed to proactively mitigate its spread and assuage its effects although certain efforts have been seen in the form of policy-statements and interventional programmes. However, more laudable measures are still needed to stem the tide. In other words, the exigencies of these inadequacies therefore justify the following recommendations. It is important to note that the challenges or problems of xenophobia in South African can be mitigated through collective and proactive efforts from the South African government, the police, the civil society and foreign missions.

From Government Perspective:

- (i) The South African government should review the South Africa immigration policies to provide more humane and civil approach for the immigrants.
- (ii) The South African government should, through relevant institutions, intensify the sensitisation and advocacy on tolerance and accommodation of South African asylum-seekers, migrants and refugees.
- (iii) The South African government should not relent in ensuring affordable and accessible utility services and infrastructure for all, the citizens and aliens alike.
- (iv) The South African government should also continue to interface with the foreign missions in the country to strengthen networks of engagement, understanding and modalities of safety of lives and properties of foreign residents.
- (v) The South African government, through its relevant institutions, should continue to synergise with the foreign communities for interactions and dialogue on responsibility, self-reliance and safety measures.
- (vi) The South African government, through appropriate channels and institutions, should provide leadership for the agencies and civil society organizations on their response against xenophobic restiveness.

On the Side of Civil Society Groups and Global Humanitarian Agencies

- (i) More sensitisation and advocacy in the violent-prone areas or cities.

- (ii) Collaboration with the South African government to establish rehabilitation centers for the victims of the xenophobia.
- (iii) Sustained partnership with regional and global organizations such as the Africa Union and the United Nations on plausible measures for the mitigation of the psychological and socio-economic effects of this prejudicial onslaught.
- (iv) Constructive engagement with the home government of these foreigners through appropriate diplomatic mechanisms and channels.
- (v) Collaboration with United Nations agencies such as World Bank, WHO, World Food Programme for the relief assistance of the victim.

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