

# **African Renaissance**

ISSN: 1744-2532 (Print) ISSN: 2516-5305 (Online)

Indexed by: SCOPUS, IBSS, EBSCO, COPERNICUS, ERIH PLUS,  
ProQuest, J-Gate and Sabinet

Vol. 19, (No. 3), September 2022  
pp 105-127

## **Interrogating the Perceptions of Some South Africans towards African Migrants**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31920/2516-5305/2022/19n3a5>

**Mufaro Mpopu**

*Department of Development Studies  
University of Pretoria, South Africa  
Email: mufarom5@gmail.com*



**Samuel Kehinde Okunade**

*Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship  
University of Pretoria, South Africa  
Email: Samuel\_okunade@yahoo.com*

---

### **Abstract**

South Africa has witnessed several xenophobic attacks over the years. Many African migrants, both legal and illegal, have been humiliated and killed in violent acts of hatred fuelled by the country's existing socioeconomic pressures and instigated by the media and politicians. Research on xenophobia has so far revealed South Africans do hold certain negative perceptions about African migrants, even though their validity has not been sufficiently proven to justify the motivation for these xenophobic attacks. This study adopts a desktop /secondary research approach: existing data from books, journals, articles, news reports and official publications were critically analysed and used in the study. The study presents and interrogates four perceptions to expose their invalidity. Findings revealed more valid reasons for the cause of xenophobia and the socio-economic problems South Africa faces daily. Furthermore, the perceptions of native South Africans towards African migrants are invalid, and

lack sufficient evidence to support them, but that the real reasons behind xenophobic attacks are constructs and consequences made by the South African government. There is no justified need for widespread discrimination and violence towards an already disadvantaged group of people.

**Keywords:** *Xenophobic Attacks, South Africa, African Migrants, Native South Africans, Socio-economic problems.*

## **Introduction**

Over the years, xenophobia has manifested itself in various countries across the globe. According to Oni and Okunade (2018: p 39), xenophobia is defined as the “fear, hatred or dislike of a non-native or foreigner in a particular country”. Xenophobia is also seen as prejudice that rejects people because they are aliens in the community they reside in (Miller, 2018). It can take the form of physical, verbal, and psychological harm, as well as violence. According to Miller (2018), political and economic instability, competition for resources, and the belief that one's country of origin is superior to the other are some of the elements that contribute to xenophobia. On a global scale, examples of xenophobia include the Muslim ban imposed by Donald Trump's administration in the United States of America and anti-refugee sentiments in the European Union because of massive influx of Syrian refugees in 2016 (Miller, 2018).

In the African context, Ghana was the first country to exhibit xenophobia with its Aliens Compliance order in 1969 (Choane, et al. 2011; Akinola, 2018). Followed by Nigeria's anti-immigration act entitled, Ghana must go, in the 1980s. South Africa has also exhibited xenophobia several times. Crush and Ramachandran (2014) observed that in South Africa, In South Africa, people from Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland are more tolerated due to cultural similarities. Zimbabwe, Malawi, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Nigeria are more despised. A Mozambican man had been handcuffed to a police van and dragged through the streets of Johannesburg in 2013. Similarly, UNHCR recorded 120 deaths from in 2012 (Crush and Ramachandran, 2014). A BBC news article published in 2019 reports that data does exist on the frequency of these attacks in South Africa (Xenowatch, 2019). This demonstrates that xenophobia persists.

Notably, South Africa is home to a diverse population of African migrants. A 2011 census conducted in South Africa revealed that out of 52 million people in South Africa, 2.2 million are immigrants with 75

percent being from the African continent (Heleta, 2018). In 2016, an estimated 2.8 million migrants were in South Africa (Heleta, 2018). According to IOM (2020), most African migrants in South Africa are from Zimbabwe and The Republic of Congo. Studies on the frequency of xenophobic attacks in South Africa show that many South Africans believe African migrants to be the cause of their misfortunes and economic competition, hence the aggressive hostility (Crush and Ramachandran, 2014).

Literature abounds on the phenomenon of xenophobia, particularly within South African context. However, not much has been averred about the perceptions of South Africans on xenophobia in relation to what the reality is. Hence this paper challenges the perceptions of some native South Africans who believe that African migrants are the cause of their misfortune in South Africa in relation to ‘what is’ and presents a balanced argument on whether this generalised perception is justified or otherwise. The study utilised qualitative desktop research, including secondary data from books and journal articles on xenophobia in Africa, as well as information from online reports and documents published by the Department of Home Affairs.

## **Examining Afrophobia and Xenophobia in South Africa through The Lens of the Scapegoating Hypothesis**

### **Afrophobia and Xenophobia Nexus in South Africa**

African migrants are the target of most xenophobic attacks in South Africa (Wilson and Magam, 2018). According to Xenowatch statistics show 529 xenophobic incidents by the end of 2018, with 309 deaths, thousands of business stores looted, and tens of thousands displaced (Xenowatch, 2019). Xenophobia has been used to describe the attacks on foreign nationals, but from the above data African migrants are mostly, if not the only ones being attacked, it cannot be considered as simply xenophobia, but Afrophobia, which is “Black-on-black conflict and violence directed at other Africans” (Keohane and Maphunye (2015: p 84). This begs the question, where did South Africans’ dislike of African migrants from come from? The succeeding section utilises the scapegoating hypothesis to x-ray and provide answers to this phenomenon.

## **The Scapegoating Hypothesis**

The scapegoating hypothesis explains the transfer of blame for social ills by the locals to the foreigners (Harris, 2002). In this case, we refer to some native South Africans putting the blame on African migrants for crime in South Africa. This has manifested in the various attacks on African migrants for social ills like drug trafficking and the promotion of prostitution. Is this to say that South Africans are not perpetrators or perpetrators of such inimical acts? Why are African migrants so vulnerable? Isaacs-Martin (2012: p 3) noted that foreigners are easy targets because they are poor outsiders. Equally, Oni and Okunade (2018: p 132) noted that the media worsens the situation by focusing only on crimes committed by African migrants, indirectly painting South Africans as innocent and “crime free”, and further reemphasizing the scapegoating theory. Consequently, the scapegoating theory, coupled with the socioeconomic frustrations of the locals and the media’s propaganda on African migrants, produces a denial of crimes committed by South Africans and a focus on crimes committed by African migrants, thus, portraying African migrants as sole perpetrators of crime in South Africa. This has led to widespread discrimination, resulting in xenophobic attacks. It is noteworthy that African migrants are not the sole cause crime, in South Africa. It is more of a case of getting South Africans fixated on crimes committed by African migrants which has been overly over-exaggerated to an extent that it seems to surpass the crimes committed by South Africans. This only diverts South Africans’ attention from seeing and confronting the truth about the country’s institutional failure.

Scholars have noted that Afrophobia is used as an excuse or cover-up plan in response to the effects of corruption in South Africa (Wilson and Magam, 2018). Further corroborating previous claims that African migrants are used as scapegoats for the South African Government’s laxity, a situation that the media has worsened. Afrophobia stems from officials blaming African migrants for the socioeconomic situation in the country when attention should be given to the corruption pervading the governance structure. Examples of corruption in South Africa include former leader, President Zuma whom the court instructed to pay back 7.8 million Rand that was used for non-security purposes at his private homestead (Wilson and Magam, 2018. p100). Second, cases of corruption during the COVID-19 period such as the 36 cases of corruption that have been reported to be in the advanced stage of

investigation in connection to the theft of Covid-19 funds as addressed by President Cyril Ramaphosa on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 2020 (Van der Merwe, 2020).

Corruption is evident in weak political institutions, replacement of public interest and services with privately owned establishments, poor service delivery, impoverishment, and poor governance (Anderson and Tverdova, 2003). Given these negative factors, along with the low employment rates in the country, one can understand the frustrations of native South Africans. Rather than address these issues, some powerful individuals and politicians incite the native South African community against African migrants as the root cause of their problem thus scapegoating the latter.

Based on an abundance of research on Xenophobia, the above-mentioned perceptions are interrogated in-depth in the next section.

### **Questioning Identified Perceptions of Some South Africans towards African Migrants**

Some South Africans see African migrants as the perpetrators of crime in South Africa and equally come in the country to steal jobs, argues Maistry (2015). Cote et al (2015) avers that they believe that African migrants want to move to South Africa illegally. These perceptions are critically examined below.

### **African Migrants and Crime in South Africa**

African migrants have been stereotyped as perpetual criminals and perceived to be responsible for the crimes in South Africa (Cote et al, 2015). Since the 2011 Census, the numbers of immigrants have increased exponentially. 7.2 percent of South Africa's population is made-up of international migrants, a rise from 2.8 percent in 2005 (Brown, 2020). It is debatable most of the crimes in South Africa are committed by 7.2 percent of its population. Segatti et al (2011), noted that the South African Police Service (SAPS) in many of the municipalities of Cape Town and Johannesburg, spend substantial amounts of time tracking down undocumented migrants, but lack the evidence to show that doing so makes the surrounding communities in which they have made the arrests any safer. It is commendable that the SAPS is doing its job, however, there are no indicators that criminal activities have been curbed in such environments. This is to say that

undocumented migrants should not be presented as perpetrators of crime in such environments. This is a clear example of scapegoating. Segatti, et al (2011) further noted that the constant targeting of African migrants and raiding of foreign owned businesses only worsen the problem of xenophobia as it reemphasizes the perception of African migrants being responsible for the crime in South African communities' larger fashion, without any evidence that the claim is valid. Because the system has tactically made the people of South Africa see African migrants as the perpetrators of crime in their communities, some South Africans grow irritable and end up taking laws into their own hands thus, resorting to violent xenophobic attacks (Segatti et al. 2011). As Newham succinctly puts it,

“The problem with targeting people because of their profile rather than because they are committing specific crimes, is that it has little, if any, impact on public safety. If most people who commit violent crimes are undocumented foreign nationals and the police are arresting large numbers of them, why has this not brought down the level of serious violent crimes in recent years?”- (Newham, 2020)

To re-emphasize the claim that African migrants are the cause of all crime in South Africa, Fagbadebo and Ruffin (2018: p 109) stated that Mario Khumalo, a Pretoria politician, formed the South African First party, with the intent of driving all African migrants out of the country based on the belief that they cause criminal activity. This correlates with the claim that politicians use migrants as scapegoats to cover-up their failures or to enhance their personal endeavors. Supporting this claim is Mohamed; the Executive Director of Amnesty International South Africa (2019) reported that migrants have been targeted for years because of their appearance and have been used as scapegoats for politicians to push the narrative that migrants are to blame for all the ills in South Africa (Mohamed, 2019). Therefore, the claim that migrants are the cause of crime in South Africa can be concluded as propaganda.

The preceding argument is not an attempt to exonerate African migrants from criminal activities, as doing that would be hypocritical. The intention is to show the unjust, unfair, and over exaggerated nature of the claim that African migrants are the cause of crime in South Africa. It is widespread discrimination and very much biased. Some African migrants do partake in crime in South Africa, but as former President Jacob Zuma argued, not all African nationals are criminals (The New

Age, 2017), in the same way that not all South Africans are criminals. Crime is crime, no matter who commits it.

Xenophobia will not eliminate crime from South Africa, crime can only be reduced if the South African Government improves its initiatives and policies, and properly implement them to improve way of life, and if the South African Police Service attribute their actions to the South African population in its entirety, instead of focusing on one already disadvantaged demographic, using them as scapegoats.

### **Stealing of Jobs by African Migrants**

Another perception is that African migrants are stealing the jobs of native South Africans (Maistry, 2015). This is yet to be proven. It remains questionable how 7.2 percent of the migrant population has successfully taken over the jobs of 92.8 percent of South Africans. South Africa has an unemployment rate of above 29 percent as of 2020 (Trading Economics, 2020). Also, the claim by an article in *The New Humanitarian*, of the perception that foreign owned businesses are a disadvantage to South Africans and that the political class is taking advantage of that stereotype, for their failure in service delivery (Anyadike, 2015). One may ask who exactly is at fault, between immigrants and the South African government. This is a classic situation of distribution of guilt, and locals are taking their anger out on the wrong people.

Crush and Ramachandran (2014), indicate through a survey that 62 percent of the South Africans that were involved agreed that African migrants were taking jobs away from South Africans. Against this assertion, Mertens and Sparreboom (2018) note that migrants do not seem to displace locals, with regards to employment in South Africa. Trading Economics (2020) states that the average employment rate in South Africa from 2000-2020 is 43.15 percent and Stats SA (2020) show that the current unemployment rate in South Africa is 30.1 percent. With these statements and figures, it could be concluded that African migrants cannot be stealing jobs from South Africans because the country has been witnessing unemployment for many years. Importantly, the fact that the country demands highly skilled individuals which many African migrants fit into. Mertens and Sparreboom (2018) note that African migrants with tertiary education are in line with the growth of high skill jobs which is an advantage for African migrants. The narrative has now changed to education, and again, African

migrants cannot be blamed for being educated. Meintjies (1998), cited in (Maharaj, 2002) states that African migrants:

“Are, on average, healthier, more energetic, and better educated than people in the host population. Consequently, they draw comparatively less on social welfare and other social services. Many pay tax and, through their entrepreneurship, make a positive injection into local economic development”.

Challenging the claim that Africa migrants steal jobs from South Africans from the viewpoint that African migrants create jobs for South Africans instead of stealing jobs from them. Kalitanyi and Visser (2010) give examples of African migrants who have become successful in South Africa and employed South Africans. According to (Kalitanyi and Visser, 2010) Cites (Bezuidenhout, 2000. p4), Michael Inegbese, a Nigerian who went from selling potato chips by the roadside in Cape Town, to owning his own electronics business and he went from employing 5 South Africans to 10. Similarly, Kalitanyi and Visser (2010) give another example, citing Timberg (2005 p 12), of Axel Geraud a refugee from Congo who employs three South Africans in his internet café along Muizenberg's tourist waterfront (Kalitanyi and Visser, 2010). Furthermore, Strive Masiyiwa, a Zimbabwean, and founder and chairperson of Econet, an international technology group with a base in South Africa, with more than 55 000 people directly and indirectly employed (Econet, 2019). African migrants are creating jobs for South Africans and this should invalidate the claim that foreign owned businesses are a disadvantage to South Africans. Rather than seeing these foreign investors/ businesses as creators of jobs, such businesses are tagged foreign owned. This is a clear case of scapegoating in its entirety.

The preceding indicates that African migrants should not be held responsible for South Africa's low employment rate over the years that have resulted in the high demand for skilled African migrants to fill the areas that the country lacks. We reiterate that when some South Africans partake in xenophobic acts for reasons such as the preceding, they are, attacking the wrong people. African migrants are not responsible for the low employment rate, rather, way the South African government has conducted the country in a post-apartheid era should be questioned.



## The Desire by African Migrants to Live in South Africa Illegally

There are claims that African migrants want to live in South Africa illegally; without papers and to an extent, this may be valid. Many undocumented African migrants have been caught and deported back to their countries of origin. According to Newham (2020), 15 396 undocumented African migrants had been repatriated during the first three months of Operation Fiela in 2015. Still, it is wrong to make a blanket statement about all African migrants based on the actions of a few of people compared to the entire population in South Africa. The actions of a small minority do not represent the values and intentions of the entire African migrant population. Many African migrants are in South Africa legally with valid visas and permits, yet they are still being attacked. (Adeogun and Faluyi, 2018) add that some African migrants' passports are destroyed by the police, making it impossible to prove their innocence, which raises the issue of widespread discrimination and corruption against African migrants by the South African Government and police.

Frequently, figures of African migrants have been exaggerated to the point where it puts African migrants in danger due to incorrect public perceptions. This is aimed to scapegoat African migrants. According to Crush and Ramachandran (2014), the media, politicians and officials tend to exaggerate these figures alarmingly. Figures of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa have often been stated to be 3 million, yet more reliable sources put the number at less than 1 million (Crush and Ramachandran, 2014). Also, the preference of African migrants being given temporary rather than permanent stay in South Africa could not produce numbers as high as the ones made public by government officials (Crush and Ramachandran, 2014). Vearey (2011) shared the same sentiment. According to him:

“Several reputable research institutes suggested unrealistic estimates of 3–8 million people. Such figures would mean that 2 people out of 10 in South Africa are undocumented migrants. These figures were immediately dismissed based on observations and smaller-scale studies by demographers and migration specialists.” (Vearey, 2011. p 147).

The 2010 Zimbabwean Documentation Project stated that the South Africa Government uses “grossly inflated figures”, *but only* 800 000 to 1 million Zimbabweans lacked documentation (Vearey, 2011).

Besides the above data showing that the South African Government has a history of pushing false information with regards to immigration

numbers in the country, another problem is corruption within the South African Home Affairs. It is one thing to blame African migrants for living in South Africa illegally, but what about Home Affairs officials that allow this? According to Segatti (2011: p 58) “Home Affairs officials have regularly been arrested and condemned for corruption and fraud.”

The South African Government releasing false information to the public regarding immigration numbers has a negative effect that results in the perception that African migrants want to live in South Africa illegally. It is this dishonesty that has caused the deaths of many African migrants through xenophobic attacks. One wonders if Government and immigration officials had been honest from the start, many South Africans would not feel that their country is being taken over by African migrants, thereby avoiding several attacks. As it stands, African migrants have become the causality of the government’s dishonesty. South Africans have been lied to, misled, and enticed into a revolt against African migrants. Furthermore, African migrants should not be the casualty of a Home Affairs official’s dishonesty.

### **Potential Benefits of African Migrants to the South African State**

Some of the following advantages may also contradict and render certain perceptions of African migrants invalid due to the existence of evidence for the benefits and the non-existence of evidence to support the negative perceptions. Below are four advantages:

#### ***African Migrants and the Labour Market***

African migrants have and continue to contribute enormously towards the provision of employment opportunities for South Africans. Sparreboom (2018) states that the presence of newly arrived migrants has a positive effect on both the employment and wages of locals on a national level. According to The World Bank Report (2018), each immigrant who runs a business outfit generates approximately two jobs for local citizens. That African migrants tend to be entrepreneurial, and if the business is successful, it will cause a multiplier effect which will not only benefit the economy but also, South Africans (The World Bank Report, 2018).

The ratio of employment to population is higher for foreign born individuals at 60.8 percent as compared to locals at 36 percent in 2011, yet foreign born individuals do not reduce employment for locals at a

national level (Sparreboom and Economists, 2018. p 127). This reiterates the earlier claim that African migrants do not steal jobs from locals, neither is it their fault if they are more employed. This may also assist to alleviate certain forms of crime in South Africa as both African migrants and South Africans gain more employment opportunities and a source of income and less to partake in crime because of socio-economic frustrations.

### ***Economic growth***

African migrants assist in the growth of South Africa's economy. According to Sparreboom (2018), the contribution of immigrants in South Africa with regards to the country's GDP was close to 9 percent in 2011. Immigrants in South Africa have a positive net impact on the government's fiscal balance (ILO, 2020). Sparreboom and Economists (2018) states that immigrants pay more taxes than local citizens. This assists with the development of the country, to the benefit of the locals. According to Landau and Segatti (2009), in 2006, the Mbeki government acknowledged that South Africa had a widespread loss of skills and foresaw that by 2014 there will be a 1.2 million persons' skills gap in the country. To address this issue, The Department of Home Affairs South Africa developed a Scarce and Critical skills criterion in 2006 which entailed that people from other countries could migrate to South Africa, if they had the skills required (Landau and Segatti, 2009. p 25). This was aimed at filling up the skills gap South Africa had; therefore, one can conclude that to an extent, African migrants assist in both the micro and macro growth of the South African economy through individuals with skills they lack. Washinyira (2015) reported on a project by The African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town with regards to the role of migrants on the South African economy, revealing that African migrants bring new products, business opportunities and skills that are lacking like manufacturing to the township economy. Another contribution is paying rent to South Africans as 56 percent of the 500 migrants interviewed in Cape Town during the project said to have been paying rent of on average Rand 2,200 a month to South Africans or the City Council (Washinyira, 2015). Washinyira also adds that:

“Immigrants are doing slightly better than their South African counterparts in the spaza market because of hardwork or long hours put in, careful attention to sourcing of products and servicing customer needs, and a culture of thrift. A study of spazas in Khayelitsha found

that only 28% of South African spaza shop owners kept business records compared to 90% of immigrants”- (Washinyira, 2015)

From the forgoing, African migrants provide better service to the South African community than South Africans. This should breed competitiveness, not hostility. African migrants being attacked because they work hard is not justification for xenophobia. In 2015, Former South African minister of Home Affairs Malusi Gigaba stated that African migrants enter South Africa daily, weekly, and monthly to buy goods from local retail shops to sell in their home countries and that such high purchases increased South Africa’s social and economic expenditures to the benefit of locals (Gigaba, 2015)

### ***Job Creation***

Sparreboom and Economists (2018) averred that foreign born workers increase the numbers of employed people by 678 000, with 462 000 being South African citizen workers and 216 000 being migrants. African migrants help South Africans get employed. According to Kalitanyi (2007: p 22-23) migrants bring specific skills to South Africa, and when these migrants employ South Africans, they pass on these skills to them. Not only is this job creation for locals, but it is also the skills transfer for self-betterment. One Hundred and Seven 107 migrants were interviewed, and it was discovered that more than one in five non-South Africans employ South African locals (Kalitanyi, 2007. p 23). When it comes to immigrant entrepreneurship, these networks spread the word about employment opportunities, but the priority is to create new businesses and housing (Serrie, 1998). They also contribute towards the economic growth of the receiving country (Serrie, 1998). According to McDonald et al (1999), of 501 African migrants that were interviewed, 38 percent worked in the informal sector and employed South Africans, bringing with them skills, goods and services that were hitherto unavailable. Given this statement and its date, African migrants creating jobs for South Africans is not a recent act. This has been an ongoing trend which many South Africans have benefited from, and by default, the South African economy. Julius (2019) states in a City Press report that foreigners are net job creators in South Africa as 11 percent of migrants are employers and 21 percent of migrants are self-employed compared to non-migrants, those being South African locals, of which 5 percent are employers and 9 percent are self-employed. Julius (2019)

continues that outrage should be directed towards the South African Government, not foreign nationals for the unemployment crisis in the country, which supports the previous claim that South Africans are attacking the wrong people.

### ***Diversity***

In response to Afrophobia, (Gigaba, 2015), argues that immigrants contribute to nation-building and social cohesion by bringing diversity to the country. African migrants also enable South Africans to understand “diverse nature, not only Africans of Africa but also, of the peoples of the world” (Gigaba, 2015). (Gigaba, 2015) continues that migrants further enrich South Africa thereby increasing its competitiveness. South Africa is known as the rainbow nation, and it can be concluded that the existence of furthered diversity with the presence of other African migrants is in line with that vision. With that in mind, there can be less of a need to feel threatened by, or hatred towards African migrants.

### **Potential Detriments of African Migrants to the South African State**

This section identifies potential detriments of the presence of African migrants in South Africa. Superfluous perceptions have been formed with no supporting data, leading to false accusations and conclusions, biased judgements, and a lack of further development because the public is being made to believe in problems that are non-existent. Only when some real problems have been identified can there be some improvements, otherwise, resources and energy are being misdirected without any productivity.

### ***Crowding, Gentrification and out migration***

Gentrification is defined as the buying or renovation of buildings and stores in deteriorated urban areas, thereby raising the property value and displacing the families and small businesses already in place (Dictionary.com, 2020). Kalitanyi (2007: p 26) states that long term residences with a fixed income find their taxes and property value increasing and therefore are unable to afford living in that area which he also terms as gentrification. According to Barnabe and Bowers-du Toit

(2019), Hillbrow in South Africa is known as Nigeria's Abuja or Lagos due to the high number of Nigerians there, and similarly, Mogadishu, an area in Bellville Cape Town, which is known for having a high concentration of Somalians and few Ethiopians. Barnabe and Bowers-du Toit (2019) further state that situation in the case of Bellville, out migration, for the white South African population, is a common occurrence as seen in this statement:

“a great number of African refugees, is among the factors that cause most whites to gradually leave the areas”- (Barnabe and Bowers-du Toit, 2019)

Still yet, Barnabe and Bowers-du Toit (2019) state that the motivation of many African refugees moving into the area is profitability in the CBD (Central Business District), the opportunity to trade informally, to vend on the streets, and inexpensive property. From this, it can be said that they do nothing that constitutes a nuisance in the environment, therefore the outmigration of white South Africans can be seen as a discriminatory or xenophobic manifestation. Though it is just business and there is nothing wrong with a group of people living in an area because it suites their financial situation, it still however causes overcrowding of African migrants, gentrification and out migration of South Africans, consequently, due to the limited resources, in this case housing, locals may exhibit cases of extreme nationalism and may become violent towards African migrants. This is supported by (Oni and Okunade, 2018. p.42) asin the case of Nigeria and Ghana. Another cause of out migration of South Africans from that area is rivalry between refugee communities which could turn violent (Barnabe and Bowers-du Toit, 2019). Nyamnjuh and Brudvig (2014) state that African refugees receive little or no support from government welfare with regards to accommodation, employment, and skills. This may cause rivalries, resulting in crime as people attempt to make a living at any cost.

### ***Catering cost***

According to a news report in The Citizen newspaper (2019), Home Affairs Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi revealed that over R8 million was spent on flights and airlines for deporting undocumented migrants between April and August 2019. Motsoaledi further stated that in the 2018/2019 year, over 33 million had also been spent on deporting

undocumented migrants (The Citizen, 2019). According to (Gumede, 2019) SAPS recorded an estimated average of 9000 detained undocumented immigrants a month between 2017 and 2018 and those 1.7 million rand had been spent per month on meals. This excluded health care and transport costs (Gumede, 2019). Mthembu-Salter et al. (2014: p 11) state that in the 2013/14 fiscal year, the Department of Home Affairs Immigration Program had budgeted 647 million Rand for its services, of which R 199.8 million Rand had been spent on only deportations in 2012/13. Often, deportations occur with the same people twice, especially those from neighboring countries such as Zimbabwe as noted (Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014. p12). A further 90 million Rand had been spent on Lindela Holding Facility which is South Africa's primary deportation facility (Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014. p 11). The following statistics are the costs of deportation and detention as stated by (Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014. p12):

- "The average cost of deportation is R725 per person, if done by road, and R29, 000 if, done by chartered flight.'-(Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014. p 12)
- "The DHA has reported that it spent R60.5 million on Lindela in 2010/11, R90.7 million in 2011/12 and R90.7 million in 2012/13.1'-(Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014. p 12)

It is evident that a lot of money goes to the catering of undocumented immigrants when it comes to detaining, transporting, deporting, processing etc. Millions of Rands could have been used for the further development of the country and its people, instead it goes to the deportation and detention of migrants with high number of them from neighboring African countries. The prohibitive cost of immigrants is detrimental to South Africa and can contribute to its socioeconomic standing as it is possible that certain sectors do not receive as much funding because of these expenditures.

### ***Susceptible to the spread of disease***

Some African migrants who do have communicable diseases and who also avoid health services, do put the South African community at risk as they spread the illness, however, some branches in the South African Health System are also to blame due to the difficulty African migrants experience in accessing Health Services. The WHO (World Health

Organization) African Region (2018: p 11) states that several cross-border Zimbabweans living in South Africa face challenges when trying to access health services and that several irregular migrants avoid public health facilities in the host country due to fear of deportation. (Vearey, 2011. p 128-129) states that:

“The public health rationale for providing healthcare to regional migrant groups is often overridden because of concerns about citizenship, legitimacy, entitlement, and a resource-constrained healthcare system”

Vearey (2011) further states that by not treating African migrants with communicable diseases will cause public health concerns and will put the host population, that being South Africans, at risk (Vearey, 2011. p 128-129). According to the WHO African Region (2018: p 11), migration may increase vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and that female migrants were found to be 1.6 times more likely to be HIV positive in certain parts of South Africa. In terms of Tuberculosis, half a million men travel across Southern Africa to work in mines in South Africa and the overcrowding poses a higher risk of contraction and spread of Tuberculosis (WHO African Region, 2018. p 11). This phenomenon poses great danger to the South African space if not carefully managed and addressed.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The perceptions of African migrants by some South Africans identified and discussed above are misplaced and should not be encouraged. It is obvious that African migrants have been successfully scapegoated to a point that some native South Africans are ever ready to take to the streets. This is a recurring phenomenon in South Africa. African migrants and South African locals can co-exist peacefully, and the relationship, if properly harnessed, could be beneficial to both parties. Xenophobia and Afrophobia can be stopped when the public realize the massive potential that comes with such a relationship, yet these two social issues persist as many people are unaware of these benefits, and the media worsens the situation. It could be said that many African migrants, in their quest to seek a better life in South Africa, assist many South African citizens in the process and in varying measures, and invariably support the Government's effort to make life better for its citizens. This then raises the question; why are African migrants not regarded as partners?



On the other hand, a few potential detriments that do come with the presence of African migrants in South Africa have also been identified. While these issues are germane, they could be addressed, and the onus lies with the government who has all the instruments at its disposal to ensure these issues are addressed. In the short and long run, both parties (South Africans and African migrants) will benefit from the process and live in peace and harmony.

Considering the preceding, the following recommendations are made.

- The South African Government must earnestly consider their evaluation and improvement of the nation's education to close the skills gap and South Africans having the skills set needed by employers of labour.
- The media is indeed a powerful tool. It could provoke and mobilize the public for either positive or negative reasons. Due to its over exaggeration tendencies, alongside politicians' and government officials' abuse of the South African media for personal gain or shifting of guilt or responsibility, there must be an implementation of increased accountability, accuracy of sources and censorship with regards to false or over exaggeration of information to/by the media.
- The South African government must actively fight against corruption such that the loopholes for siphoning public funds are blocked and those found guilty of such an act are made to face the full wrath of the law irrespective of their status and position.
- The government must set strict rules and implement evaluation reports for Home Affairs officials and use those found guilty of fraud and corruption as a deterrent for others by imposing stiff penalties and barring. This should also happen within SAPS for law enforcement officials who either promote, instigate, aid, or initiate xenophobic acts
- The establishment of multiple refugee or migrant service centers in conjunction with the South African Home Affairs instead of being a branch of it so that African migrants can get exclusive assistance with regards to getting valid visas.
- Police Stations should be established in informal areas where xenophobic attacks have occurred previously and high-risk areas

for xenophobic attacks, and in addition, establish a complaint system and conflict resolution system/center where locals can report their grievances easily instead of resorting to violence.

## References

- Akinola, A.O. (2018). *The Political Economy of Xenophobia in Africa: Understanding Xenophobia in Africa*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Anderson, J, and Tverdova, Y. (2003). *Corruption, political allegiances, and attitudes toward government in contemporary democracies*. *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(1): 91–109.
- Adeogun, T and Faluyi, O. (2018). *The Political Economy of Xenophobia in Africa: Xenophobia, Racism, and the Travails of 'Black' Immigrants in South Africa*. Springer International Publishing
- Anyadike, O. (2015). *South Africa's xenophobia problem: dispelling the myths*. Available: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2015/04/21/south-africa%E2%80%99s-xenophobia-problem-dispelling-myths> (Accessed 2020/06/5)
- Barnabe, M. and Bowers-du Toit, N. (2019). *The impact of gentrification on the refugee community: Interfacing practical theology and human geography*. Available: [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S2413-94672019000300023&lng=en&nrm=iso\\_](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2413-94672019000300023&lng=en&nrm=iso_) (Accessed 2020/08/02)
- Brown, J. (2020). *Xenophobia isn't keeping immigrants out of SA – here are the latest, if contentious, numbers*. Available: <https://www.businessinsider.co.za/immigrant-numbers-for-south-africa-are-still-rising-despite-xenophobia-and-violence-2020-2> (Accessed 2020/06/5)
- Choane, M., Shulika, L. S., & Mthombeni, M. (2011). An analysis of the causes, effects, and ramifications of xenophobia in South Africa. *Insight on Africa*, 3(2), 129-142.
- Crush, J. and Ramachandran, S. (2014). *Xenophobic Violence in South Africa: Denialism, Minimalism, Realism*. Cape Town: SAMP
- Cote, D., Garderen, J.V., and Maistry, A. (2015). *Three powerful myths that fuel xenophobia*. Available: <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-06-24-3-myths-fuelling-xenophobia-in-sa/> (Accessed 2020/06/3)
- Econet. (2020). Available: <https://www.econetafrica.com/company/econet-mobile-network-group-mng> (Accessed 2020/07/23)

- Fagbadebo, O and Ruffin, F. (2018). *The Political Economy of Xenophobia in Africa: From Hate to Love: Black South Africans and the Xenophobia Project*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing
- Gumede, W. (2017). Policy Brief 14: *Combating Corruption in South Africa*. Available: <https://democracyworks.org.za/policy-brief-12-combating-corruption-in-south-africa/> (Accessed 2020/09/23)
- Gigaba, M. (2015). *Most foreign nationals making a positive contribution to SA – Malusi Gigaba*. Available: [https://www.politicsweb.co.za/politics/most-foreign-nationals-making-a-positive-contribut\\_](https://www.politicsweb.co.za/politics/most-foreign-nationals-making-a-positive-contribut_) (Accessed 2020/07/30)
- Gumede, D. (2019). *Immigration Amendment Bill: Police Minister & Home Affairs Deputy Minister input; Home Affairs office accommodation: Minister of Public Works input*. Available: <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/27969/> (Accessed 2020/08/03)
- Gordon, S. (2018). *Why do people attack foreigners living in South Africa?* Available: <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/review/hsrc-review-sept-2018/foreigners-in-sa> (Accessed 2020/06/8)
- Heleta, S. (2018). *How many immigrants live in South Africa?* Available: <https://africasacountry.com/2018/10/how-many-immigrants-live-in-south-africa> (Accessed 2020/06/1)
- Harris, B. (2002). *Xenophobia: A new pathology for a new South Africa?* In D. Hook & G. Eagle (Eds.), *Psychopathology and social prejudice* (pp. 169–184). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Human Rights Watch, (2020). *“They Have Robbed Me of My Life” Xenophobic Violence against Non-Nationals in South Africa*. Available: [https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media\\_2020/09/southafrica0920\\_web\\_2.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2020/09/southafrica0920_web_2.pdf) (Accessed 2020/09/28)
- IOM. 2 (020). *Southern Africa*. Available: <https://www.iom.int/southern-africa> (Accessed 2020/06/1)
- Isaacs-Martin, W. 2012. *Scapegoating the foreigner: A Guardian view of the continuing Violence in South Africa*. Available: <http://www.interdisciplinary.net/probing-the-boundaries/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/isaacsvpaper.pdf> (Accessed 2020/07/20)
- International Labor Organization, (2020). *Labor Migration in Africa*. Available: [https://www.ilo.org/africa/areas-of-work/labour-migration/WCMS\\_670561/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/africa/areas-of-work/labour-migration/WCMS_670561/lang--en/index.htm) (Accessed 2020/07/27)
- Julius, J. (2019). *Foreigners are not taking our jobs; the government is failing to create jobs*. Available: <https://www.news24.com/citypress/voices/for>

- eigners-are-not-taking-our-jobs-the-government-is-failing-to-create-jobs-20190416 (Accessed 2020/07/30)
- Kalitany, V and Visser, K. (2010). *African immigrants in South Africa: job takers or job creators?* Available: [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S2222-34362010000400001](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2222-34362010000400001) (Accessed 2020/07/22)
- Keohane, M.L.J. and Maphunye K.J. (2015). *Afrophobia, Moral and Political Disguises: Sepaleholoke a moeti*. The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa, 11(4): 83–98
- Landau, L.B. and Segatti, A.W.K. (2009). *Human Development Impacts of Migration: South Africa Case Study*. Available: [https://mpr.aub.uni-muenchen.de/19182/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_19182.pdf](https://mpr.aub.uni-muenchen.de/19182/1/MPRA_paper_19182.pdf) (Accessed 2020/07/28)
- Miller, S.D. (2018). *Xenophobia toward Refugees and Other Forced Migrants*. Canada: Centre for International Governance Innovation
- Mohamed, S. (2019). *South Africa: Years of impunity for xenophobic crimes driving the latest attacks*. Available: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/09/south-africa-years-of-impunity-for-xenophobic-crimes-driving-the-latest-attacks/> (Accessed 2020/07/21)
- Mertens, J. and Sparreboom, T. (2018). *How Immigrants Contribute to South Africa's Economy: Immigrant integration in South Africa: Labour market outcomes and human capital*. Paris: OECD Publishing
- Meintjies, F. (1998). *Immigrants are people like us*. Sunday Times Business Times, 20 September 1998, p. 20
- Maharaj, B. (2002). *Economic refugees in post-apartheid South Africa-asset or liabilities?* Implications for progressive migration policies, 56(1): 47–57.
- McDonald, D.A., Mashike, L. and Golden, C. (1999). *The Lives and Times of African Migrants and Immigrants in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Cape Town: Southern African migration project (SAMP).
- Newham, G. (2020). *Do foreigners really commit SA's most violent crimes?* Available: <https://issafrica.org/amp/iss-today/do-foreigners-really-commit-sas-most-violent-crimes>. (Accessed 2020/07/21)
- Nyamnjoh, F and Brudvig, I. (2014). *Routledge Handbook of Global Citizenship Studies: Conviviality and negotiations with belonging in urban Africa*. New York: Routledge.
- Oni, E.O and Okunade, S.K. (2018). *The Political Economy of Xenophobia in Africa: The Context of Xenophobia in Africa: Nigeria and South Africa in Comparison*. Springer International Publishing

- Oliver, G. (2020). Briefing: *South Africa's 'Afrophobia' problem*. Available: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2020/03/11/south-africa-xenophobia-migrants-refugees-afrophobia>. (Accessed 2020/06/6)
- South Africa Unemployment Rate. (2020). Available: <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/unemployment-rate> (Accessed 2020/06/5)
- South African Government News Agency, (2020). *President Ramaphosa announces a nationwide lockdown*. Available: [https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/president-ramaphosa-announces-nationwide-lockdown\\_\(Accessed 2020/08/13\)](https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/president-ramaphosa-announces-nationwide-lockdown_(Accessed 2020/08/13))
- Segatti, A., Landau, L.B., and Misago, J.P. (2011). *Contemporary Migration to South Africa: Mobility and Municipalities: Local Authorities, Local Impacts, and the Challenges of Movement*. Washington DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development of the World Bank
- Stats SA. (2020). Unemployment rate. Available: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?s=unemployment+rate> (Accessed 2020/07/22)
- Sparreboom, T. 2018. *How Immigrants Contribute to South Africa's Economy: Immigrants contribution to South Africa's economy: Overview and policy implications*. Paris: OECD Publishing South African Government, (2020). *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996- Chapter 2: Bill of Rights*. Available: [https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/cha-pter-2-bill-rights\\_\(Accessed 2020/09/23\)](https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/cha-pter-2-bill-rights_(Accessed 2020/09/23))
- Snook, A. (2019). *What is a Lifestyle Audit?* Available: [https://i-sight.com/resources/what-is-a-lifestyle-audit/\\_\(Accessed 2020/09/23\)](https://i-sight.com/resources/what-is-a-lifestyle-audit/_(Accessed 2020/09/23))
- Steenberg, B. (2019). *The social management of HIV: African migrants in South Africa*. Available: <https://theconversation.com/the-social-management-of-hiv-african-migrants-in-south-africa-1279> 55 (Accessed 2020/08/04)
- Serrie, H. (1998). Immigrant entrepreneurs, ethnic networks, and family dynamics. *Review in Anthropology*, 27(3): 213-223.
- Tshaka, R. (2016). *Afrophobia versus xenophobia in South Africa*. Available: <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/News-&-Media/Articles/Afrophobia-versus-xenophobia-in-South-Africa> (Accessed 2020/06/6)
- Trading Economics. (2020). *South Africa Employment Rate*. Available: <https://tradingeconomics.com/south->

- africa/employmentrate#:~:text=Employment%20Rate%20in%20South%20Africa%20averaged%2043.15%20percent%20from%202000,the%20first%20quarter%20of%202004. (Accessed 2020/07/22)
- Timberg, C. (2005). *Refugees with hopes, skills find opportunity in South Africa*. Washington Post, Foreign Service, A 21
- The New Age. (2017). Zuma urges South Africans not to blame all criminal activities on Foreign Nationals. Available: <http://www.thenewage.co.za/zuma-urges-south-africans-to-not-to-blame-all-criminal-activities-on-foreign-nationals/>. (Accessed 2020/07/21)
- The World Bank, (2018). New Study Finds Immigrants in South Africa Generate Jobs for Locals. Available: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southafrica/publication/new-study-finds-immigrants-in-south-africa-generate-jobs-for-locals> (Accessed 2020/07/26)
- The Citizen, (2019). Home Affairs spent over R40m on flights to deport illegal immigrants. Available: <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/parliament/2188352/home-affairs-spent-over-r40m-on-flights-to-deport-illegal-immigrants/> (Accessed 2020/08/03)
- Van der Merwe, M. (2020). Ramaphosa vows 'very, very severe' consequences for theft of Covid-19 relief funds. Available: <https://www.news24.com/fin24/economy/south-africa/ramaphosa-vows-very-very-severe-consequences-for-theft-of-covid-19-relief-funds-20200723> (Accessed 2020/07/24)
- Vearey, J. (2011). *Contemporary Migration to South Africa: Migration and Health in South Africa: Implications for Development*. Washington DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / the World Bank
- Wilson, R and Magam, L. (2018). *The Political Economy of Xenophobia in Africa: Frustration-Aggression, Afrophobia and the Psycho-Social Consequences of Corruption in South Africa*. Springer International Publishing
- Washinyira, T. (2015). How immigrants contribute to the SA economy. Available: [https://www.groundup.org.za/article/how-immigrants-contribute-sa-economy\\_3043/](https://www.groundup.org.za/article/how-immigrants-contribute-sa-economy_3043/) (Accessed 2020/07/29)
- WHO African Region, (2018). Health of refugees and migrants. Available: <https://www.who.int/migrants/publications/AFRO-report.pdf?ua=1>. (Accessed 2020/08/03)
- Xenowatch, African Centre for Migration and Society. (2019). South Africa: How common are xenophobic attacks? Available:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-47800718> (Accessed 2020/06/3)

Xenowatch (2019). Xenophobic Violence in South Africa: 1994-2018: An Overview. The African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS).