

XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE AND NIGERIA- SOUTH AFRICA DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

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Abstract

Xenophobic violence is characterized by acts of hostility and aggression towards foreigners. It has been a recurring issue in South Africa, with Nigerian immigrants being among the targeted groups. This paper aimed at examining Xenophobic Violence and Nigeria-South Africa Diplomatic Relations, and how these events have affected bilateral cooperation, trade, and people-to-people interactions. It further explored the underlying factors contributing to xenophobic violence in South Africa. It adopted Relative Deprivation Theory and the theory suggests that feelings of discontent, frustration, and aggression arise when individuals or groups perceive a significant discrepancy between their actual situation and their expected or desired situation in comparison to others. It adopted descriptive research design, while the data was collected through secondary source such as text books, journal articles and internet materials. The data generated was analyzed through content analysis. The paper found out that though Nigeria has not severed her diplomatic tie with South Africa, the relationship has been strained particularly due to the constant attacks on Nigerians with South Africa not taking decisive steps to stop further occurrence. Additionally, the study found out that there is high unemployment rate in Nigeria that caused high migration to South Africa, thereby, responsible for the xenophobic attacks against Nigerians and other citizens of other African States. Finally, the study therefore, recommends that Nigerian government must take decisive actions both to restore and guarantee peace for the immigrants residing in South Africa; else the attack might degenerate into regional conflict which invariably will affect the relationship between both nations in all angles. Also, there should be massive and aggressive job creation in both public and private sectors in Nigeria to reduce both legal and illegal migration to South Africa..

Keywords: Xenophobia, Violence, Diplomatic Relations, Youth Unemployment.

Introduction

There is no doubt that Africa has been the centre-piece of Nigeria's foreign policy since independence. One important aim of Nigeria's policy is its anti-colonial preoccupation, inspired by both the celebrated 1960 United Nations' General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples and the anti-colonial obligation under the Addis Ababa Charter of the OAU (now AU), Nigeria committed herself fanatically to ridding Africa of all forms of colonialism and neo-colonialism (Onuaha, 2018).

Xenophobia originated from the two Greek words "Xenos" which means "Strangers", "foreigners" while "Phobos" which also means "fear" the term is generally used to describe fear or dislike of people significantly different from oneself, usually in the context of visibly differentiated minorities (Shinsana, 2008). Prompting several governments to initiate economic reforms to reverse the ugly trend. To be sure, the issue of Xenophobic violence in contemporary South Africa is rooted in and conditioned by the structure of its apartheid economy. The underlying causes of xenophobia are complex and varied. Xenophobia has to do with contemptuous of that which is foreign, especially of strangers or people from different countries or culture. Unemployment and mounting poverty among South- Africans at the bottom of economic ladder have provoked fears of the competition that better educated and experienced migrants can represent, (Fayomi et al, 2016).

Xenophobia is gradually becoming recognized aspect of life in Africa. From West, East, North and South, discrimination against non-nationals, particularly fellow Africans, has been on the rise according

to international media reports. However, (Crush,2008) in (Fayomi et al, 2016) noted that exclusion, based on the idea of being “non-native” has existed in Africa since independence and contemporary xenophobia can be seen as one of the most current manifestation of this attribute. Violence against foreign citizens and African refugees has become increasingly common and communities are divided by hostility and suspicion (SAMP,2004).

Arguably, the hope of the founding fathers (Nnamdi Azikiwe, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Jomo Kenyatta among others) of the Organization of African Unity (African Union presently) in 1963 was to transform the entire African continent into a single state. States that would be occupied by people of integrity who are willing to ensure that peace, security, prosperity as well as financial mobility are abound. Regrettably, (Kinge,2006) in (Ekanem,2022) lamented that, “Xenophobic attacks ruined the chances of the 54 African countries coming together to form a robust and diversified United States of Africa. The inhuman act on the part of some South Africans has caused negative impacts on Africa as a whole. It should be recalled that in 2000 a Nigerian was attacked and killed in Cape Town. Since then attacks on Nigerians have become norms for South Africans (Bello &Tunde, 2017). Similarly, in 2014 about 60 Nigerians were killed in different cities in South Africa while 20 Nigerians were reported killed in 2016. The most sympathetic ones was the extra judicial killing of Tochukwu Nnamdi, a 34 year old Nigerian. Added to this, it is on record that on 18th February, 2017, Nigerians living in Pretoria West were attacked by the South Africans. Mr. Ike Chukwu Ayene, the President of Nigerian Union in South Africa, officially reported this incident to the government of both Nigeria and South Africa. (Adebisi, 2017) in (Bello and Tunde ,2017) recalled that: During the attack, 5 buildings occupied by Nigerian businessmen, a church belonging to Nigerians and a garage with 28 cars under repair were looted and burnt by South Africans, leading to the injuries sustained by a Nigerian pastor.

Nigerians are not the only target of the xenophobic attacks in South Africa. In 2008, widespread xenophobic attacks resulted in the death of 62 foreigners which incidentally led to the death of 21 South African citizens while 100,000 people were displaced, 670 wounded and 1,300 arrested (Monson & Arian, 2011) in (Landau,2011) explained further that, during that incident, a Mozambican, Ernesto Mhamugue, was set ablaze in Ramaphosa at the East Land... Shops, homes and other businesses of foreigners were destroyed.

Most non-nationals who were settling in a rural area popularly known as De Doorns in the Western Cape were attacked and forcefully chased out from their homes. This led to the displacement of 3,000 people (Ker & Durrheim, 2013) in (Kinge, 2016). Also, it was recorded that in 2013, a Mozambican taxi driver died in police custody, after being handcuffed and dragged behind a police van. In that same year, violent attack broke out in the Eastern Cape against foreigners, following the death of 19 year old South African, whose death was attributed to Somali immigrants. Regrettably (Eze and Akena,2017) recorded that law enforcement agents in South Africa, most especially the Police, appear to be slow in responding to distress calls by victims, whenever they are in danger. It is for this reason that many observers believe that police officers often take sides to the advantage of South Africans.... Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (2010) also added that, Police are very quick to dismiss attacks on foreign nationals as simply “criminal” rather than “xenophobic,” they have limited ability to detect prejudice motive in criminal incidents... when police arrest or bring perpetrators to justice, which they rarely do, the focus is almost exclusively on those caught in the act rather than on instigators behind the scenes (Kinge, 2018). Senior citizens of South Africa are not helping matter. Jacob Zuma, the immediate past President of South Africa commented once, that South African blacks should not behave as if they were “typical” blacks from Africa in the same vein, Gwede Mantashe, the African National Congress Secretary General blamed foreigners for causing unrest in South Africa Platinum belt. The worse of all was hate speech of Zulu King, Goodwill Zwelithini in 2016, during an event in Pongola, Kwazulu Natal Province. King Goodwill Zwelithini openly declared that, “African migrants should take their things

and go because they are changing the nature of South African society with their goods and enjoying wealth meant for the locals.

This paper adopted *expos facto* research design and gathered data through secondary sources like, books, journals articles, manuscripts, internet materials, conference papers etc. We used content analysis to analyse data gathered. The persistent spate of attacks on foreign owned shops in South African townships raises uncomfortable and one thousand dollar questions about xenophobia in South Africa. This strange attitude begs for the questions which include: Does youth unemployment account for the xenophobic attacks on foreigners? Did xenophobic attacks affects Nigerian –south Diplomatic Relations ?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The chequered history of Nigeria-South Africa relations can be understood bearing in mind the 3Cs – conflict, cooperation and, competition. The history of Nigeria-South Africa diplomatic relations could be traced to events arising from the Sharpeville massacre of 21st March, 1960, when the South African police shot and killed 72 blacks and wounded 184 (Onuoha, 2018). This event which occurred even before Nigeria's independence marked the beginning of Nigeria's confrontation against white South Africa. The Tafawa Balewa government (1960-1966) upon assumption of office in October 1, 1960 was faced with overwhelming pressure from both domestic and external sources to institute measures to check South Africa's apartheid policies.

Consequently, Nigeria banned the importation of South African goods into the country and was instrumental to the political and economic sanctions passed against the racist regime. Furthermore, Balewa went to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in March 1961 in London, where he spearheaded the move that led to the withdrawal of South Africa from the Commonwealth (Aluko, 1982; Ajala, 1986 & 1993) in (Fayomi et al ,2016). By 1962, Nigeria terminated all the privileges of Commonwealth membership which South Africans enjoyed in Nigeria. Nigeria government's anti-apartheid policy continued until the first republic was ousted by Major Nzeogwu-led military coup in January 15, 1966. The brief administration of General Ironsi between January-July 1966 did not record any substantial policy against the apartheid regime in South Africa, due largely to the volatile security situation in Nigeria that was precipitated by the coup (Ademoyega, 1981).

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

The Murtala Mohammed government (1975-1976) that overthrew the Gowon administration through a coup was, right from the outset, prepared to take radical measures in Africa's decolonization process. The Angolan crisis of 1975 provided an opportunity for the Nigeria government to demonstrate her commitment to the anti-apartheid struggle by resolving the political stalemate in the former (Fafowora, 1984; Ogunsanwo, 1986; Gambari, 2008; Onuoha, 2008; Akinboye, 2013). Following the killing of General Mohammed in the abortive coup led by Colonel Buka Dimka in July 1976, General Olusegun Obasanjo continued the same radical approach in the country's foreign policy relations with South Africa. Thus, General Obasanjo's administration was widely perceived as a continuation of Murtala Mohammed administration (Nnoli, 1976; Ajala, 1986, Garba, 1987). In the 1980s, Nigeria-South Africa relations witnessed these phases: the civilian administration of Shahu Shagari, and the succeeding military administrations of Muhammad Buhari and Ibrahim Babangida. Yet there was hardly any difference in

their pursuit of Nigeria-South Africa relations. For instance, the second republic administration of Shehu Shagari (1979 and 1983) was encumbered by a number of domestic challenges which bordered on its inability to deliver on his electoral promises, coupled with sharp decline in oil revenues. These two factors largely affected Nigeria-Africa policies and had serious implications for Nigeria-South Africa relations. This was evident in the administration's inability to contribute financially to the fight against apartheid in South Africa (Ajala, 1986). Toward South African apartheid regime was re-vitalized, but not without serious opposition from domestic pressure groups, which clamoured for improved standard of living for citizens rather than rendering assistance to other African countries. Therefore, the only appreciable impact of Nigeria -South Africa relations under Buhari regime was the hosting of the second international conference on apartheid, tagged; 'Legal Status of the Apartheid Regime' held in Lagos, Nigeria, August 1984. In the conference, apartheid was declared illegal and the result further heightened the pressure on apartheid regime in South Africa, and re-enforced Nigeria's determination to eradicate all vestiges of racist regimes in Africa (Ajala, 1986).

Apartheid regime in South Africa would appear to have been effectively tackled under Babangida's regime (1985-1993). The UN Anti-Apartheid Committee which had enjoyed Nigerian headship for the better part of its existence continued its vigorous campaigns against apartheid. At the level of the Non-Aligned Movement, the dying tempo of decolonization was revived with a resolution for the establishment of an African Fund at the Harare Conference in 1986, to assist the liberation of Southern Africa as a whole, and at the Paris International Conference for sanctions against apartheid in 1987. Nigeria, in addition to her usual financial support, opted for tougher sanctions against the apartheid regime in South Africa (Saliu, 2006). However, it is important to note that the requirements of economic diplomacy compromised Babangida's famous stand on apartheid. For instance, Nigeria hosted the then apartheid President Frederick De Klerk in Abuja in 1992 despite the reversible steps taken by the apartheid state towards reforms. In essence, Babangida regime's rhetorical approach was a mere ploy to redeem the discredited image of his regime (Saliu, 2006) in (Fayomi et al, 2016).

From the foregoing, it is clear that Nigeria's policy towards South Africa between 1960 and 1993 was characterized by the former's disdain of the latter's apartheid policy. Although Nigeria, from independence, maintained a hostile attitude towards South Africa for more than thirty years until the early 1990s, both countries established formal diplomatic relations on 21 February 1994 following the termination of apartheid policy, release of the African National Congress (ANC) leader, Nelson Mandela and conduct of general elections in South Africa. Prior to this time, Nigeria Mission was operation through the Angolan High Commission in Pretoria. Subsequently, an exchange of High Commissioners was done by the two countries, with each acutely conscious of the fact that both countries need each other's support in the mutually advantageous conduct of their bilateral relations and multilateral diplomacy in Africa (Akindele, 2007). The post-1994 Nigeria-South Africa relations began with a major disagreement over Nigeria's domestic policy. General Sani Abacha's dictatorial military regime (1993-1998), and decision to hang Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight Ogoni men on 10 November 1995, provided the first occasion for an open diplomatic strain in the relationship between Nigeria and South Africa in the aftermath of apartheid era. Consequent upon the alleged role of South Africa in the suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth at the Auckland Summit in November 1995, the Nigerian state retaliated this diplomatic offensive by severing diplomatic relations with South Africa (Zabadi, 2004; Ibeanu and Nwachukwu, 2004; Saliu, 2006; Akindele, 2007; Akinterinwa, 2009). The frosty relationship between the two countries was consequently amended by the military regime of Abdusallam Abubakar whose reconciliatory trip to South Africa marked the beginning of a relatively new relationship between the two countries.

By the year 1999, Nigeria and South Africa began to redefine their bilateral and multilateral relationships, more so as this period coincided with democratic transitions in both countries. In essence, the period since 1999, ushered in an era of strategic bilateral dealings which heralded the formation of Nigeria-South

Africa Bi-National Commission, inaugurated in October 1999 (Akinboye, 2005; Akindele, 2007). Indeed, the period between 2000 and 2005 witnessed a more focused and active articulation of a strategic partnership between Nigeria and South Africa due largely to the perceived challenges of Africa in a rapidly globalizing world. The personality of then Nigeria's President, Olusegun Obasanjo and his South African counterpart, Thabo Mbeki, was a major contributing factor to the emerging and cordial relationship between the two countries. Obasanjo and Mbeki perceived the urgent need for Africa's re-birth and they shared equal passion for the realization of such goal (Adebajo and Landsberg, 2003). Keying into the re-awakening of Pan-African consciousness and regional role conception by Nigeria and South Africa after the end of Cold War in 1989, there were concerns in policy and scholarly circles on the need for the two countries to play major roles in conflict mitigation and peace-building in war torn African countries. This was moreover in view of the fact that Western countries and United Nations began to challenge African governments to help resolve regional conflicts in the continent. This new stance was fuelled by the repeated complaint at the United Nations about the shortage of funds to finance peace-keeping operations (Benneh, 2001).

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

On April 21, 2007, Nigeria's presidential election was conducted and, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua was declared the winner of the election, (Ogunnoiki, 2018). In 2008, President Yar'Adua undertook a two-day State visit to South Africa from June 3-4. On September 21, 2008, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa announced his resignation after the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC recalled him on September 20. President Mbeki was recalled by the Committee after he was found to have interfered in the trial of his deputy, Jacob Zuma, who was facing corruption charges. Hence, Kgalema P. Motlanthe became the interim president of South Africa from September 25, 2008 to May 09, 2009. On November 23, 2009, President Yar'Adua was flown out of the country to receive treatment, he died on May 05, 2010. His vice, Dr. Goodluck E. A. Jonathan was sworn-in as President on May 06, 2010 (Adeola and Ogunnoiki, 2015; Ogunnoiki, 2018). In South Africa, the ANC won the general elections which held on May 06, 2009. As the party with a majority seat in South Africa's parliament, the ANC elected Jacob Zuma as the president of the country. Zuma, not long after his election, was sworn into office on May 09, 2009.

Not too long, Nigeria-South Africa diplomatic relations has deteriorated on many fronts, prompting the visit of President Goodluck Jonathan to South Africa where he addressed the latter's joint parliament. The Presidential visit was prompted by the yellow fever certificate saga that involved both countries. The South African government had on March 2, 2012 deported 125 Nigerians (75 aboard South African Airways) and (50 aboard Arik Air Ways) for possessing fake yellow fever vaccination cards (The Guardian Editorials, March 5, 2012:3). The Nigerian government had immediately retaliated what was generally perceived as unfair treatment of Nigerians, indeed an affront to diplomatic norms, by deporting a total of 128 South Africans within two days, citing 'lack of proper documentation' as reasons for shutting them out (The News Editorials, March 19, 2012:50). In a related development, the arms deal that involved both countries which came on the heels of the collapse of a building at the Synagogue of All Nations Church, Lagos, claiming the lives of about 84 South African nationals became the latest in the ranks of diplomatic embarrassment that has hurts the Nigeria -South relations. According to Kayode (2014) failure on the part of the Nigerian government to officially declare the cash of 9.3 million USD, loaded into a Nigerian-owned jet to the South African Customs as required by the latter's law attracted

negative diplomatic reaction from the South African government. He argued that the seizure of the cash in the international security architecture.

Arguably Nigeria has lost at least 137 citizens, between 2014 and 2016 in South Africa, through xenophobic attacks. Regrettably, the people and government of South Africa refuse to admit that xenophobic attack exist in their soil. They rather attribute the attacks on the foreigners to criminality. Ramaphosa, the South African President attested to this, during his official visit to Nigeria on 12th July, 2018. He said; Yes, South Africans have been exposed to unsafe environments. They have been exposed to criminality and we have historically had a number of challenges in this regard. But to overlay on this, we have also had a huge challenge of unemployment, and people tends to react in a way, where they want to safeguard their interests (Matlala, 2018,). In other words, the President admitted that xenophobia exists in South Africa, but perpetrated by criminal elements that lack jobs. Nigeria cannot pretend as nothing happens and watch its citizens being slaughtered in South Africa. (Torny,2015) recalled that the dreaded Islamic terrorist group, Boko- Haram had issued warning to the government and people of South Africa to stop attacking Nigerians living in South Africa, or they should expect a reprisal attacks on its citizens residing in Nigeria, Niger and Chad.

Niger Delta militants operating in the South- South region of Nigeria also issued a stern warning to the youths of South Africa to desist from the xenophobic attacks on Nigerians else its citizens and their investments in South- South region of Nigeria would suffer repercussions (Kinge, 2006). The South African investments, especially Mobile Telecommunication Network (MTN) were the target of most Nigerians' non-state actors. Buhari's government, for instance, had threatened South African government (through memorandum) to take immediate action that aimed at stopping the xenophobic attacks on foreigners, especially Nigerians, or its companies, MTN and Shoprite would be shut down without further notice. Even the Nigerian student body, National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) also issued a severe warning to MTN in 2016 to leave Nigeria within 48 hours or mount severe pressure on its government in South Africa to stop the xenophobic attacks on Nigerian citizens. In a more recent time, Nigeria-South Africa diplomatic relations has deteriorated on many fronts.

Youth Unemployment as a Causal Factor in Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa

According to International Labour Organization (2012) youth can be defined as a person that is aged between 15 and 29 years. Surprisingly, this age bracket (15-29) constitutes the largest population segment of any given society. The International Labour Organization (2012) went further to define unemployed population as, "members of the economically active population who are without work but available and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs or who have voluntarily left work". (Nwagwu, 2014). Unemployment is a global phenomenon. It does not confine to a specific continent of the earth. For instance, despite economic growth and development in the United States of America, its unemployment rate increased from 5% in 2007 to 9% in 2011. Spain had an increase from 8.6% to 21.52% while United Kingdom experienced an increase from 5.3% to 8.1% in that same years. Similarly Ireland also had an increase from 14.3% to 4.8% while Latvia experienced 5.4% increase. From the above analysis, it is evident that the history of Nigeria-South Africa diplomatic relations has vacillated between cooperation and conflict, necessitated by each country's foreign policy, regime type, domestic intricacies and international diplomacy

These statistics which mostly affected youths confirmed that unemployment is now a major issue affecting both the developed and developing world. This is why Alexander Chikwanda, the former Zambia Finance Minister lamented that, "youth unemployment is a ticking time bomb for all of us (Idris, 2016). The National Bureau of Statistics (2011) hinted further that between 2006 and 2011, at least 1.8 million Nigerians constituted new entrants into active labour market per year. Salami (2013) also added that 23.9% Nigerians were unemployed in 2013. In his (Salami, 2013) analysis, Bayelsa constituted (38.4%), Katsina (37.3%) Bauchi (37.2%) Akwa Ibom (34.1%), Gombe (32.1%), Adamawa (29.4%)

Borno (27.7%) Kano (27.6%), Yobe (27.3%), Taraba (26.8%), Jigawa (26.5%), Imo (20.8%), FCT (21.5%) while Plateau recorded 7.1 as the lowest figure (Adekola, 2016). There are many reasons that account for the high unemployment rate in Nigeria. Distinguished scholars such as (Adesina, 2013, Salami, 2013, Adebayo, 1999, Alanana, 2003, Echebiri, 2005, Aynde, 2008, Murphy 2008, among others) identified neglect of agricultural sector, rural urban migration, rapid population growth, low economic growth, leadership and managerial problem, low investment, lack of political will, outdated school curriculum, lack of adequate youth development programme, gradual collapse of manufacturing sector, among others. Among all these factors, the gradual collapse of the manufacturing sector is the major hindrance to job creation in Nigeria. Adesina (2013) confirmed that: There are over 800 collapsed industries in Nigeria and over 37 factories closed shops in 2009. About half of the remaining operating firms have been classified by Manufacturing Association of Nigeria (MAN) as “ailing”, a situation that poses a great threat to the survival of manufacturing in the country. The banking sub-sector due to the ongoing reforms and consolidation has sent young men and women’s back into the labour market. Instead of the sector generating employment, it is shrinking (Adekola, 2016).

Furthermore (Okafor,2011) in (Adesina,2013) lamented that in 2009, a total number of 176 firms were declared sick and eventually collapsed in Northern Nigeria. Similarly, 178 companies were shutdown in that same period in Southern Nigeria. The South-South region that attracted Foreign Direct Investment experienced shutdown of about 46 companies while the South West lost 225 companies before the end of December 2009. Lagos the commercial capital of Nigeria lost 214 manufacturing firms in that same year, due to government liberal policy and high interest rate. Indeed, it is as a result of high unemployment rate at home that prompted young Nigerians to involve in risky migration to foreign land, especially South Africa, even when the host nationals are hostile to foreigners. Nigerian government has claimed that it has embarked on some poverty alleviation measures; such as establishment of National Directorate of Employment (1986), People’s Bank of Nigeria (1989), Better Life for Rural Women and Family (1986), National Economic Empowerment and Development (NEED) (2003), Family Support Programme (1985), Youth Enterprise and Innovation in Nigeria (2011), Subsidy Re-investment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P) (2012), N-power (2016), National Home-grown School Feeding Programme (2016), Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP) (2018) among others. Though some of these programmes were completely without merits, the truth is that they did not generate a significant, lasting and sustainable positive effect on unemployment in Nigeria(Adekola, 2016,). Regrettably Nigerians that travelled to South Africa, in search of Jobs are not finding it easy. In 2011, South Africa had a population of about 53.9 million people, with 25% of that population being unemployed. Gumede (2014) decried that: The challenge of unemployment, poverty and inequality continues to hamper progress in uplifting the majority of Southern African citizens from economic hardship. Statistics and research demonstrate that despite high growth rates, and the presence of increasing middle class, unemployment, poverty and inequality may have worsened in the past decade. It should be recalled that 1994 Independence which South Africa got, did not immediately translates into growth and development. Prior to the independence, education was mainly for the white. Only few Africans that lived in urban areas (Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban) were opportune to receive western education. (Crankshaw and Parnell,2000) posited that, “instead of using education as an instrument to facilitate economic growth, the apartheid government used it as a way of securing white supremacy in the workplace... The shortage of skills was, and still is, a serious obstacle to productivity and economic growth. Therefore, late President Nelson Mandela had a challenge of rebuilding the post apartheid government based on equality, social justice, growth and development. The first programme introduced by the post apartheid government of African National Congress (ANC) in 1994, was Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

Consequential Implications of Xenophobic Violence on Nigeria – South Africa Diplomatic Relations

Though bilateral relations between Nigeria and South Africa have not been marred by the xenophobic attacks, but there are possible implications for the following;

i) Diplomatic Implication

Since the 2008 anti-foreigner violence, Nigeria and South Africa have been working towards patching their diplomatic relation. In 2013, Nigeria and South Africa signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to reinforce diplomatic ties and forestall future xenophobic attacks (Babalola, 2017). Nevertheless, the attacks on Nigerians have continued. In April 2015 during the Jonathan administration, Nigeria's Acting High Commissioner to South Africa, Martin Cobham, and the Consul-General, Uche Ajulu-Okeke, were 'invited' for consultation (and not 'recalled' as it was falsely reported by some media houses) following the xenophobic attacks in Durban and Johannesburg (Channels Television, 2015). Though, Nigeria, by taking such action, did not sever her relations with South Africa, such diplomatic move was seen by South Africa's Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation as an "unfortunate and regrettable step" (Brock and Dlodla, 2015)

ii)Social and Psychological implication

Xenophobic attacks in post-apartheid South Africa have over the years sowed the seed of fear in the minds of Nigerians. A number of them in South Africa no longer socialise freely with the locals as fellow Africans with a shared history, values, norms and so on., for fear of being a

ttacked if not killed. As for the living Nigerian victims of xenophobic violence, it would noome as a surprise to discover that some of them are now suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Back home in Nigeria, many Nigerians are having a rethink of travelling down to South Africa for tourism, shopping, business, education etc. because of the horrendous news on the killings of Nigerians residing in South Africa.

iii)Economic Implication

The spate of xenophobic attacks on Nigerians living in South Africa and the looting of their shops and stores led to somewhat a reprisal attack on a South African-owned company doing business in Nigeria. On February 23, 2017, the telecommunications giant, MTN, head office in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, was not only looted by some protesters but, office equipment were vandalised. Apart from MTN, there are over 100 South African companies (prior to 1999 there were only 4) operating in Nigeria's telecommunications, manufacturing, aviation, construction, banking, hospitality, entertainment and, oil and gas industry – Power Giant, Eskom Nigeria, South African Airways, South African Breweries (SAB miller), Stanbic IBTC Bank, MultiChoice Africa (operating DSTv/GOTv), Umgeni Water and Shoprite to mention a few, which can become easy targets of reprisal attacks in the future if anti-foreigner violence against Nigerians in South Africa continues (DIRCO, 2010; Copley, 2017; Ismail and Sakariyau, 2017; Mbamalu, 2017; Unah, 2017).

We cannot overemphasise the consequential implication of xenophobic attacks. Recently, Nigerians living in South Africa came under attack by local vigilantes. Many suffered only the destruction of their homes and business while some who lost their lives were not so lucky. This report attracted the usual condemnation from Nigerian authorities. The National Assembly was particularly at the forefront of the demands for answers from the South African authorities. However as it is almost a norm in Nigeria, the intervention of the National Assembly was not without its own measure of drama. For days both chambers of the National Assembly could not agree on the composition of a team of the legislature to visit South Africa, while the House of Representative preferred to call the shots alone, the Senate reportedly pushed for the composition of a committee, which did not pull through. In a statement released by the Nigerian Guild of Editors, the South African Institute of International Affairs was reported as having recorded that Nigeria spent \$61 billion between 1960 and 1995 in the fight against apartheid. (Babalola, 2017). With this level of commitment on the side of Nigeria during the apartheid regime, the government must take xenophobic attacks on its citizens very serious, the drama witnessed between the Senate and the House of Representative speaks volume. It shows that we lack swift response to issues that

concern Nigerians both within and outside the shores of Nigeria. It is no longer news that through protest, the masses remind the government of their responsibility, little wonder the South African government do not take us serious. The Nigerian government has lost about 137 citizens in South Africa, between 2014 and 2016. The chairman, House Committee on Diaspora Matters, Rep Rita Orji, decried the Federal Government's attitude towards the protection of Nigerians outside the country, saying the government paid more attention to remittances from citizens abroad than their welfare. She accused the government of over protecting the businesses and interests of South Africa to the detriment of Nigeria. Orji recounted some of the gory murder of Nigeria in South Africa, Libya and other countries some of which she said her committee had investigated and given the report to the ministry of Foreign Affairs with no visible actions taken. The Nigerian Communication Commission is hell bent on reviewing upward the price of data and voice calls in Nigeria to the detriment of Nigerians. Even with the intervention of the National Assembly, they (NCC) are bent on protecting the interest of the foreigners. Responding, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Khadija Bukar Abba Ibrahim told the committee that though it is the responsibility of the ministry to protect the interest of Nigeria and Nigerians abroad, funds were not made available to the ministry until the 2017 budget proposal. According to her, it is estimated there are up to 15 million Nigerians abroad. It is therefore a herculean task for the ministry to provide protection and welfare assistance when no provision was made for that purpose in the budget. (Ndujihe et al, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Young people often participate in violence because membership in extremist organizations provides immediate economic benefits, because violence itself offers opportunities for economic gain through direct payment or looting, or because conflict promises to open up longer term economic options, for example, through patronage of their ethnic or religious group who captures power. South African youths accused Nigerians, Zimbabweans, Mozambicans, Ghanaians, Somalis, Malawans among others of involving in drug trafficking, prostitutions, as well as armed robbery, therefore, they must be forcefully repatriated to their home states. Regrettably, none of them mention the bad governance that exists in there respective States that renders majority of them jobless. They do not also mention the lootings which the protesters embarked upon whenever there is xenophobic attacks. The truth lies on the opinion of Rodgers (2005) who posited that, in a context of wide spread youth exclusion from paid employment, a minority of the young people' take the opportunity to make a livelihood by becoming involved in criminal activities, such as the local drugs trade, armed groups and other illegal trade. Nigerian government, likewise South African government should create job opportunities in both public and private sectors of their economies for the teeming youths. This will discourage young Nigerians from travelling out of the country in search of greener pasture elsewhere. The job creation would also help South Africans to appreciate their government, thereby discouraging them from attacking aliens. In the same vein, their image would improve globally. As Gumede (2015) advised, African government should pay more attention to improving access to jobs, especially for youths and women through a partnership between government, organized labour and the private sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the mass exodus of youth in search of greener pasture in South Africa. This paper therefore, recommends; that Nigerian government must take decisive actions both to restore and guarantee peace for the immigrants residing in South Africa, else the attack might degenerate into regional conflict which invariably will affect the relationship between both nations in all angles. Also, there should be massive and aggressive job creation in both public and private sectors in Nigeria to reduce both legal and illegal migration to South Africa.

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