

**XENOPHOBIA AND MEDIA: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE PUBLIC  
PERCEPTION OF THE NELSON MANDELA BAY COMMUNITY**

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**XENOPHOBIA AND MEDIA: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE  
PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE NELSON MANDELA BAY  
COMMUNITY**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ANC – African National Congress

CoRMSA – Consortium for Refugee and Migration in South Africa

FEDHASA - Federated Hospitality of Southern Africa

GDP – Gross Domestic Production

HSRC- Human Science Research Council

IFP – Inkatha Freedom Party

LHR – Lawyers for Human Rights

MEC –Member for Executive Committee

MMP – Media Monitoring Project

NMB - Nelson Mandela Bay

R- Rand (The South African currency)

RBX- Roll Back Xenophobia

SAACI – South African Association for the Conference Industry

SAHRC – South African Human Rights Commission

SAHRC-South African Human Rights Commission

SAMP-Southern African Migration Project

SAPS- South African Police Service

SAS - Somali Association of South Africa

TBCSA – Tourism Business Council of South Africa

## **ABSTRACT**

Development in South Africa at present is at a crossroads; it could become injected with new energy or it could collapse. The presence of foreigners, especially those from Africa is in contention. Some argue that they help the economy whilst others argue they are a hindrance to locals and their employment worth. The “truth” regarding these may not be immediately recognisable and thus open to questioning depending on perception. The press plays a large role in these perceptions and has been criticised for the way it covers issues of public interest. It is envisaged that this study will be a useful contribution to the limited body of literature on xenophobia and media. The purpose of the study is to give foundation to the assumption that the media’s constantly negative coverage of foreigners poses a very real threat to human rights as purported in South Africa’s constitution, in addition to the economic significance, whether positive or not. This study highlights the perception that Nelson Mandela Bay residents have of foreign nationals, and whether negative reporting in the media has influenced residents’ views of foreign nationals.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

The pervasiveness of the media in the twenty first century and its controversial role in shaping public perception in contemporary societies, all point to the need for the assessment of public perception towards immigrants in South Africa and Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) in particular. This is because xenophobia poses an existential threat to human rights and the economic significance of foreign nationals, not to mention its contravention of the constitution of the country.

Since the first printing press started running in Gutenberg, Germany, in 1653, media's contribution to human development and the part it has played in the construction of public perception have been occurring simultaneously along several storylines (Locksley, 2009:5). From smaller towns to cosmopolitan cities, the impact of the press has been felt by all nations around the globe.

However, the last half of the twentieth century has seen the media industry expand and proliferate so profoundly that much of present-day societies' information comes from the media (Schramm & Roberts, 1971: 60). The advent of the internet in the 1970s heralded even more media to be subsumed within information and communication technology (Gorman & McLean, 2009:4). Since then, the popularity of mass media has been burgeoning with the advancement of scientific technology.

The arrival of the "new media" or electronic newspapers in late 1990s, in which newspapers began to offer online versions of their contents free of charge, has seen information consumerism taken yet again to another level. Today, more than ever before in the history of mankind has the "global village" not only expanded reaching even the most remote human groups, making the world smaller than it has ever been, but also, it has evolved into a highly networked media-dependent society.

Media experts acknowledge the impact of mass media and analysed them within various contexts. McLuhan (quoted in Schramm & Roberts, 1971: 60) postulated that media have a far greater impact than the message they communicate. He says the effect does not rest in the content only, but also as seen through the lens by which their audiences view the world.

An objective observation of the omnipresent images of consumer adverts, and how people react to issues highlighted in news coverage, can enable one to notice how media influences public perception. A classic example would be the ever increasing global expenditure on commercial advertisements – estimated to have been close to \$500 billion in 2009<sup>1</sup>. The impact of this results in moral panic considering that the media can influence a society positively but also negatively.

Where the media is instrumental in social and cultural development; knowledge is created, disseminated and stored to strengthen human capital for higher productivity. “Edutainment”, information and education through the medium of entertainment, is a common component of contemporary development projects (Locksly, 2009:2). While the social and economic contributions of the media do not necessarily depend on the content only (including the agenda behind it), the known fact is; they are *always* instrumental since they shape the behavioural patterns of a society.

Fairclough (1980:49) refers to the power of media as “hidden power” and draws a connection between power and language. He points out that the most obvious difference between all other discourses and that of media is the one-sidedness of the latter. Media to the masses design messages for large, and more often than not, extremely diverse audiences.

When it comes to the actual message, there are various dynamics that come into play. Fairclough (1980:49.) identifies three crucial role players: the source, the editor and the journalist/writer of the story. This then raises the question of whether the final story on the paper is the journalist’s points of view, that of the editor as per set agenda, or a direct opinion of the source of the story (Achu, 2008:15).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.zenithoptimedia.com/gff/pdf/Adspend%20focats%20December2007.pdf>

Journalists are often considered watchdogs for a society, but due to the infamous roles some have played, the press has always been entangled in contention (Gorman & Mclean, 2009:3). Disinformation, bias, sensationalism and propaganda by the media have long manifested as topics of discussions in various public discourses. In some instances, media houses have been indicted for participating in atrocities and wars, both directly and indirectly.

In the 1990s, the news media was accused of playing a crucial role in fueling the Rwanda and Bosnian genocides –two of the worst atrocities in the twenty first century. They also played a role in the 2004 US invasion of Iraq where they promoted only the American side of the story (Bennett, 2003). Publishing computer-generated graphics of the alleged Iraqi nuclear facilities and stock piles of readymade atomic bombs, they claimed that the Iraqi government was responsible; allegation that turned out to be untrue. A case in point of two such media houses guilty of said propaganda: The Washington Post and New York Times.

Less akin to this though is the South African mass media which came under scrutiny for discriminating against foreign nationals in the country (Harris, 2001). They have been accused of being a factor in generating xenophobic sentiment, and to a degree fuelling the 2008 spates (among others), which left 62 people dead, almost 700 injured, scores of women gang raped, hundreds of thousands displaced from their homes country-wide, and property worth R1.5billion lost (McConnell, 2009:34; Everatt, 2010:6).

### **1.1.1. Media and Xenophobia**

Since the media was criticised for being involved in anti-immigrant publicity, researchers (see Danso & McDonald, 2000; Harris, 2001; Fine & Bird, 2002; McDonald & Jacobs, 2005; Crush, J. 2008; Bekker et al, 2008; Smith, J. M., 2008) have been, regarding the nature of the accusation, engaged to track whether these can be substantiated or not. A matter also requiring further investigation was the manner in which the media represents foreigners. These authors' findings confirmed

that the accusation of misrepresentation of foreign nationals by the media was not ill-founded. The majority of newspaper articles that been investigated were either biased against foreign nationals or used inflammatory and anti-immigrant misnomers to label them (Danso & McDonald, 2000:124).

Those most guilty regarding these criticisms, are the tabloids (the *Daily Sun*, –the biggest newspaper in the country with 4 million readers; *The Voice*, *Daily News* and *Sunday Sun* among others), popular among the previously marginalised section of South African society. Today, this constituency accounts for most of the xenophobic attacks which occur. Those criticisms most often heard concern the tabloids penchant to peddling sensationalism, reproducing anti-immigration stories, giving space to anti-immigrant political statements, even giving unrestricted freedom to xenophobic reporters (Herman, 2008:1; Maharaj, 2008: 7).

On the 29 May, shortly before the 2008 the nationwide xenophobic attacks subsided, Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) together with the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CorMSA) laid a complaint to the press ombudsman against the *Daily Sun*, this for a series of stories it ran leading up to and also during the attacks. The articles violated “individually and collectively” several clauses of the South African Press Council Code. According to the complaint, *Daily Sun’s* “reporting legitimates the recent violence by perpetuating stereotypes of foreign peoples.” (2008:1).

History provides sufficient evidence that disproves that media initiating the genesis of aggression and possessiveness in humankind. Violence and territorialism, for example, have been there long before newspapers were invented. Aggression has therefore been inherent in human behaviour. However, conclusions that media are instrumental in inciting outbreaks of xenophobia are easily determined without considering the role of social variables in human behaviour when evaluating media-related aggression (Bushman, 1995:950). As a precaution, it would be safer to argue that media stimulates preconceived latent feelings of aggression and xenophobia. However, this raises the question: How could that have happened in the context of xenophobia which came to be a known concern in South Africa only after 1994?

The primary reason for xenophobia dates back to the apartheid government and its anti-immigration policies. These were, for most part directed at people entering the country from other parts of Africa. That the system was reviled in its entirety by most South Africans is a known fact, yet the public was not immune to its policies. The directives given regarding those policies, and the stereotypes this evoked, had an ensuing cumulative effect. For example, the Immigration Act of 1913 to the Aliens Act of 1991 defined blacks from the rest of Africa as migrants who had no place in the South African society. They were permitted to stay temporarily only if they were a cheap labour for some critical sectors of the economy, otherwise they were illegal aliens whose presence posed a threat to the nation's security and economy (Crush & McDonald, 2001).

When the system began to change in the 1990s, and the fear of a foreign influx "pouring" into the country hit the headlines and airwaves, latent stereotypes "of illegal aliens" began to resurface and the media responded to the public fears. Harris (2002:179) observed that early media representations of immigrants were filled with negativity, and the portrayal of immigrants painted them as "invaders". These depictions caused the public to draw wrong conclusions regarding these foreigners.

The question of media involvement in citizen-immigrant issues sparked heated debates. Former *Mail and Guardian* editor Mondli Makanya (quoted by McDonald & Jacobs, 2005:306) said, "Media generally reflect social reality and relations within society. I would not therefore blame the media for fanning xenophobia." Whether or not public information is simply more important than the consequences of such information remains to be seen. But what is clear though "is that there is a cycle of negative (mis)representation of cross-border migration in the English-language print media in the country and it is likely that public opinion and journalistic opinion simply feed of one another" (McDonald & Jacobs, 2005:306).

The role of the media in covering immigrants and xenophobia has put South Africa's international image at a defining moment and human rights issues at stake. As part and parcel of the body politic, the press has the responsibility to disseminate objective reports. Readers construct a large portion of their reality in lieu of the



information conveyed to them by the media. This is because the nature of the choice a society makes in this “information age” is defined by how the media frame a particular information. The international stature of a nation, and the kind of direction they are drawn by international esteem (or lack thereof), are increasingly being defined by the media.

The 2008 xenophobic attacks classified South Africa as a hostile nation. The picture of the burning foreign resident – 35-year-old Ernesto Alfabeto Nhamuave of Mozambique – in the Ramaphosa informal settlement (depicting the face of inhumanity) was widely covered in the international media, evoking doubt as to whether or not South Africa was in fact a safe enough country to host the 2010 soccer World Cup. Suffice to say, the World Cup went exceptionally well with the half million foreign fans returning home with positive image of South Africa. But the tolerant climate of the soccer World Cup was short-lived when, in the Western Cape, foreign traders were attacked a mere week after the final match was played at Green Point stadium in Cape Town. The question of whether South Africa was a capable host swept across the headlines. Whilst an incident-free 2010 soccer World Cup has again built up a reputation lost in years running up to and including 2008, the “flames of hate” depicting South Africans standing by and laughing at a burning foreigner serves as a poignant reminder of South Africa which gave itself over to xenophobia.

## **1.2. LITERATURE OVERVIEW**

Scholarly work on media and xenophobia can be broadly placed into two categories. The first category relates to xenophobia which is widely dealt with by independent scholars as well as research institutions that have generated a large body of literature; while the second is on the media.

Research outputs on xenophobia unanimously agree that South Africans are antagonistic towards foreign nationals. They also agree that the intolerance is widespread (see Crush, 2000; Harris, 2001; Danso & McDonald, 2001; Fine & Bird, 2002; McDonald & Jacobs, 2005; Sichone, 2005; HRSC, 2008; SAMP, 2006; SHRC, 1998). According to a survey carried out in 2006, 69% of South Africans believe that

foreigners either “weaken” or strain the resources while 67% associate the foreign nationals with crime (Crush 2008:3). Compared with 1999 survey, the 2006 survey reveals that the antagonism has intensified.

Researchers have tried to make sense of the causes of such intolerance. Their explications vary a great deal but there are some common factors to be found in most literature regarding xenophobia. Harris (2002) summarises them into three hypotheses: The scapegoat hypothesis explains xenophobia as the result of a widespread belief that non-nationals are responsible for the social ills of South Africans. The second explanation is the isolation hypothesis which views xenophobia as a consequence of South Africa’s history of isolation from the international community prior to the 1994 elections. Lastly, the bio-cultural hypothesis which argues that xenophobia operates at the level of phenotypical differences (physical, biological and cultural). These hypothesis are monolithic and do not explain the degree of hostility. Neither do they take into consideration the roles, and thus impacts, of other influences such as the media and/or other external interferences.

Peter Vale (2002:7) presents an explanation different from the Harris’ hypotheses. He says xenophobia is a construction “woven” by think-tanks to protect the country from the “foreign Africa migrants” – mainly those from other African countries; and this is the reason why xenophobia manifests itself as *Afrophobia*. Xenophobes target African immigrants because of firstly, past history. Apartheid policies treated African immigrants as unacceptable foreigners who posed a threat. Secondly, as a post-apartheid phenomenon associated with post-1994 influx of foreigners coming mainly from the neighbouring countries. Thirdly, there is some level of societal protection that immigrants from outside Africa enjoy. According to Pityana (2001), the Chinese and Indians protect their people who come to South Africa. These ethnic groups provide employment even though they often exploit them giving them a start in life.’ (Human Rights Commission: Racism and Xenophobia Consultative Workshop 1998).

Analysts like McConnell (2009) see xenophobia as a cause by extreme patriotism while the likes of Commey (2008) define it as a multifaceted phenomenon. While the exact causes of xenophobia are in dispute, that it is pervasive is irrefutable. Reports

on violence and abuse against foreign nationals describe acts of physical violence (resulting in death, injury, rape, robbery) and verbal affronts (see Comney, 2008; and Crush, 2000). Yet, these human right violations are said to be either ignored or underreported by the media.

The second category of literature is on media. In 2001, Ransford and McDonald analysed the role the media in xenophobia. A followed-up study was made five years later by McDonald and Jacobs (2005). Both studies analysed how the press covers xenophobia. They critiqued the emotive language used and the types of associative typecasting employed by the press to describe the non-nationals. Their findings revealed that a large portion of newspaper coverage is uncritical, prejudicial and anti-migration. In the analysis of media coverage of immigrants, researchers gave much attention to the print media perhaps because the text is relatively available to analyse and more convenient to refer to.

Most literature on media classifies a press xenophobic: (i) if its reports bear explicit xenophobic or anti-migrant discourses, (ii) if it does not condemn the attacks against foreign nationals (iii) if it gives space to xenophobic reporters, (iv) if it gives politicians and the public a platform to make unsubstantiated and negative comments about foreigners; and finally (v) if it neglects to cover the plights of the immigrants; such issues as abuse of the rights of migrant workers by local employers.

Scholars do not look at a particular publication expecting it to contain all these elements at once. If one or two of these elements are seen to exhibit themselves on an ongoing basis; it is sufficient to qualify a press xenophobic. The *Daily Sun's* unnecessary use of the term "alien" to refer to foreign nationals led Media Monitoring Project (MMP) to lodge a complaint for discriminating against non-nationals (MMP, May, 2008). For a medium, an article or an issue to be regarded as xenophobic partly depends on the presentation of the information and partly the contextualisation of that information.

Despite the fact that xenophobia and media are well covered, the author has not yet come across a study examining xenophobia and media together from the point of public perception to confirm or contradict the allegations that media misrepresentation of foreign nationals has influenced the citizens' perception towards the non-citizens. The available literature deals with either media contents only and does not reflect any empirical engagement with the public or the vice versa. An inadequacy of literature on the subject means that there is a need to explore the relationship between media and xenophobia. Thus, this study explores public perception towards immigrants vis-à-vis the media.

### **1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

NMB has the third largest economically active immigrant population in the country yet it is one of the top in the list of xenophobic hotspots (Barbali, 2009: 3). In townships such as Injoli, Motherwell and Walmer where most of the informal businesses are dominated by foreign traders, gruesome xenophobic incidents happen. According to the Somali Association of South Africa (SASA), their members (one of the largest but also one of the most visible immigrant communities in the township trade in NMB) have experienced the highest number of xenophobic deaths in between 2004 and 2008.

Following a statement by SASA alleging more than 300 of its members were killed in South Africa between 1997 and 2006, the Eastern Cape's leading newspaper, *The Herald* (September 5, 2006) published an article entitled "A refugee Camp is their only home". The caption of the article read as "Locked out of their own country by violence, Somalis have become the wanderers of Africa" portraying the entire Somali nation as a bunch of vagrants bereft of abode. The satirical tone of the article seemed to justify the xenophobic murders of the Somalis by indirectly juxtaposing it with the experiences they have in their troubled country. Intentions of coverage of this nature raise some serious questions: why should the media stereotype the public against immigrants negatively? What other ways does it typecast the public? What does the public think about the media? What motivates xenophobia? By how

much does xenophobia affect the country? We need to bring to the cognisance a number of things.

Firstly, xenophobia poses a genuine threat to the lives of the immigrants and to the international credibility of South Africa. On the one hand, there were the 2008 nationwide attacks against the immigrants from other African countries which could be seen by the international community as a failure on the part of the South African government to protect the immigrants and refugees under its protection.

Secondly, xenophobic violence can have a detrimental effect on revenue brought into the country via tourism. This sector accounts for 8% of the country's annual gross domestic product (GDP) and 60% of that can be attributed to those tourists from other African countries (SA News, 11 June 2008). It could also affect the confidence of direct foreign investors and other foreign interests should it remain unchecked. In 2008, the South African Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI) said regarding the attacks, that they have ruined the country's image as a sought-after conference destination: events ranging from 10 to 1000 delegates were cancelled at a time (ibid.).

Thirdly, the attacks will not discourage the undesired immigrants from coming into South Africa. As long as those factors that "push" them out of their countries of origin continue and those that lure them to a more attractive South Africa do not change, foreigners keep on coming into the country. The nature of these factors, whether presented as economic opportunities or security reasons, it is in fact irrelevant. Another important observation is that as long as immigrants keep on crossing borders to South Africa, the press can be relied on to continue covering immigrants and xenophobia. Thus, if the media persist in publishing anti-immigration reports, so too will the hostility of the nationals.

Finally, xenophobia also affects South African both locally and internationally. More than two dozen South African nationals were killed in the 2008 attacks. Moreover, the relationship between South Africa and other African nations is symbiotic in many respects. South African companies and businesspeople operate in Mozambique,

Zimbabwe, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The citizens of those countries can boycott South African products or even physically retaliate against South Africans migrants in their countries as a response to the suffering of their nationals in South Africa. It is natural that every nation has preferential feelings for its expatriates. National feelings can turn sour even when diplomatic ties are sound. In many cases, public sentiments are not inline with the state politics. Fears of retaliation were sounded by the former Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Malusi Gigaba raising concerns over attacks on foreign nationals leading to revenge attacks on South Africans living in other parts of Africa (SAPA, 16 May 2008). Prudence dictates that a solution be found to prevent collateral damages and that has to start from the sources of information, by establishing the relationship between public perception and media coverage of foreigners.

#### **1.4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

##### **1.4.1. Aims**

The primary aim of the study is to explore public perception of foreign nationals and of media to establish whether press representation of foreigners is indeed a reflection of public perception.

##### **1.4.2. Objectives**

In view of the primary aim, the specific objectives of this study are to:

- Examine economic, services, crime and culture – the alleged cause of xenophobia – to determine whether they are indeed the primary behind the attacks against foreign nationals.
- Understand the relationship between press coverage of immigrants and xenophobic attacks.
- Try elucidate the potential economic downside of xenophobia; that is to say, the economic risks misrepresentation of the foreign nationals can have on South Africa and its implications.

## 1.5. DEFINITION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

### 1.5.1. Xenophobia

Xenophobia is a Greek term made up of two words: *xeno* meaning foreigners and *phobia* which means fear. Xenophobia therefore means fear or dislike of foreigners (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 1999:1385). A worldwide phenomenon, it is a form of disparagement often linked to defensiveness which is informed by "we" and "ours" – the basic tenets of patriotism. In South Africa, xenophobia can be defined as paranoia that manifesting itself across racial groups, income levels, gender, in the media and among government officials.

In terms of manifestation, xenophobia is most apparently seen in verbal and non-verbal abuse. It is an advanced form of antagonism which is accompanied by discrimination. In South Africa though, is the brutal nature of the assaults, which can go as far as burning a foreigner to death. The perpetrators of violence do not distinguish the race, creed, culture, gender or the legal status of the foreigner. This is an indication that tolerance is at its lowest level.

Xenophobes profile people in terms of their nationality. The profiles are often negative and lead to the creation and perpetuation of generalisations and stereotypes (MMP, 2003, pp. 82-83). Wimmer (1997:21) states that; xenophobic hatred does not necessarily depend on real competition within the job market; nor does it necessarily increase when wages are reduced or unemployment increases; rather it depends on feelings of insecurity in the face of threat. However, Wimmer (1997:4) does not invalidate the competition argument but is convinced that xenophobic conflict is orchestrated over a variety of material possessions such housing, jobs etcetera. Barbali (2009:17) remarks that xenophobia is most severe when immigration is sudden and massive. Most immigrants in South Africa today came after 1994.

For the purpose of this research, xenophobia shall be defined as: Any hostility aimed at foreigners and/or people perceived to be foreigners which has physical violence and/or sentimental undertones.

### **1.5.2. Media**

The terms 'press' and 'media' are used interchangeably many times in this study but encompass news, reviews, interviews, opinions, editorials, op-ed articles and cartoons that are carried by the print media only.

### **1.5.3. Migration**

Is the movement of people from one place to another, whether it is across borders within the boundary of one country, or more than that. People come to South Africa from all over the world for various reasons. Some are refugees; others are economic migrants, academic migrants, while some others come for health reason. In South Africa, all immigrants are categorised into two: those who are documented and are legal, and then there are those who remain undocumented and stay in the country on an illegal status. The internal migration (rural-urban migration) is currently a very real problem in South Africa. The one similarity thing among all forms of migration is that the movement always occurs towards more favourable conditions. The "push factors" are insecurity, famine, war, poverty and unemployment while the "pull factors" are: economic opportunity and security.

### **1.5.4. Immigrant**

This is a person who comes to settle in a country other than his home country or country of origin. In this context, it applies to people who enter South Africa from beyond the country's borders.

## **1.6. RESEARCH PLAN**

This dissertation is divided into six chapters:

Chapter 1: presents the *Scope of the Study*: background information, the objectives of the study, problem statement, research methodology.



Chapter 2: deals with *Literature Review* as it will discuss in detail the theories that explain the causes of xenophobia. The media representation of xenophobia will be covered in detail referring to already available literature.

Chapter 3: discusses *Research Design and Methodology*. This chapter gives a breakdown of the type of methodology used, the approaches employed, the sample, the problems encountered during the research process and the ethical procedures undertaken.

Chapter 4: deals with *Discussion and Findings* which is the empirical findings of the data gathered through questionnaires distributed, the interviews conducted and the focus group discussions are analysed.

Chapter 5: *Conclusion and Recommendation* is a wrap up of all the chapters. It presents an overview summary of the research findings, and discusses the limitations encountered. It evaluates whether the objectives highlighted in Chapter One are met. Recommendations on how best the problem can be approached and suggestions for future research seal the research.

## CHAPTER TWO: XENOPHOBIA AND MEDIA

The role of the media in the construction of public perception has been discussed in Chapter One and includes a brief overview of the media vis-à-vis xenophobia. This Chapter discusses the history of xenophobia in South Africa and its theoretical underpinnings. The causes and manifestations of xenophobia are also examined in order to provide better understanding of the problem. The final discourse engages critically with the media representation of foreign nationals.

### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

With the demise of the Apartheid regime and the government that regulated it, South Africa's reinsertion into the global economy has transformed the country, from being a generator of refugees, into a refuge for immigrants. South Africans transition into a democratic society saw foreigners in remarkable numbers making their way into the country, and the question "*Why are they coming?*" became the predominant public discourse. Popular reasoning included, that foreigners were selling expert knowledge, and following opportunities for trade, tourism and studies. Less known to the public included migrant labour, crisis in their home country, economic reasons and wars. For immigrants, South Africa symbolised a country of hope and promise, a symbol of freedom and prosperity and a safe haven from war. But for ordinary South Africans, an increase in the number of immigrants, and principally those from the neighbouring countries created a concern and even some resentment. It meant, among other things, increased competition for limited resources.

With more and more immigrants into the country, the distinction between legal and illegal immigrants had become blurred (Harris, 2002). Locals' views of foreigners as "invaders" clashed with immigrants' impression of South Africa being a place of "refuge". These incompatible perceptions attracted the attention of scholars, many of whom, after their examination of the new social trends, felt that foreigner become a scapegoat for a host of unresolved social issues (Valji, 2003:1). Averatt (2010:1) argues that a combination of deep socio-economic factors such as increasing levels of poverty, continued unequal distribution of wealth, cheap labour, township retail

competition between local and foreign traders, and history of violence, failure of the institution, subjective assessment of foreigner, and the press, among others motivate current hostile attitudes towards foreign nationals.

With the socio-economic factors mentioned above being the lead reason for xenophobia, it is imperative to note that economic migration and xenophobia have always featured together and feature in a substantial portion of history in South Africa. They date back to when mines and mine labour system which according to Crush *et al* (1991:1) became a “key distinguishing feature of South African industrialisation” began. To ignore the relationship between migration, development and xenophobia not only obscures a significant factor of the country’s history, but also denies South Africa’s long standing economic and political links with the region.

## **2.2. HISTORY OF XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Xenophobia in South Africa dates back to late 19<sup>th</sup> Century when gold was discovered in Witwatersrand in 1880s. Successive xenophobic incidents happened afterwards either between the white communities such Afrikaner versus English, against the Jewish migrants or as a form of white traders opposing Indian merchants from entering and trading in South Africa. Xenophobia also manifested itself in forms of racism, tribalism and interethnic violence against groups like Mozambicans and various others on the mines. However, most forms of the bigotry were often blanketed by the situations of the time, racism and its driving force, apartheid, being the most popular.

Nonetheless, when gold was discovered in 1886 in Witwatersrand, an influx of mostly British migrants settled in Johannesburg area in numbers, resenting the Afrikaners who called them “Uitlanders” (foreigners) (Wilkinson-Latham, 1977:5). Notwithstanding, the influx of said migrants was so great, that the city of Johannesburg was created almost overnight (ibid: 5). The Afrikaners discriminated against the British migrants partly because of nationalism and partly because of resources, and president Paul Kruger of Transvaal Republic (part of which is

present-day Gauteng province) proclaimed that the Uitlanders “have come for our country” (Vale, 2002:19). The Boers therefore denied the British voting rights and taxed them heavily (Wilkinson-Latham, 1977: 5). The rift between the two parties grew and later became bloody.

A second wave of xenophobia came in 1911 when the growth of the Indian population caused alarm amongst the white businesspeople who saw the new traders as a threat. After the Union was formed, Parliament passed the first countrywide Immigration Act prohibiting entry of Indians into the Union altogether. This was evidence of the fear and distrust between the South African government and the civil society of foreigners and their different lifestyle, culture, and religion (Davenport, 1977:181).

A third wave of xenophobia came when Jewish immigrants entered the Union in 1937. A legislative Bill called the Aliens Act, was passed to keep the Jewish immigrants from entering the country as much as possible (Kruger, 1969: 180). In much the same way the government viewed the Indian threat, so Jewish immigrant became the new threat as Jews happened to not to be desirable whites. Their religious beliefs and culture were viewed as different and inconsistent with the South African lifestyle. The government identified immigrants from Britain, Holland or Germany mainly Anglo-Saxon, Protestant capitalists as desirable, while those from Eastern Europe and Jews were perceived as non-desirable white immigrants. They were perceived as a threat to the South African culture and way of life (Cape Times, 25 June 1997).

More than century after the 1886 Afrikaner and the mainly English xenophobia, an incident similar in nature occurred in the same area. Black South Africans in Alexandra Township near Johannesburg, who resented the black immigrants, staged a weeks long violent campaign known as “Buyelekhaya” (Go back home) in which they tried to evict Mozambicans, Zimbabweans and Malawians who lived in the area. They blamed these foreigners for stealing their jobs. (Crush, 2008:44). The contemporary xenophobia is similar to the previous xenophobic incidents against the Indians and the Jews for example, in terms of the nature of territorialism accentuated

by “ours” as compared to “theirs”, the economic aspects of it and also the fear of competition for scarce resources. For the immigrants whether English, Indians, Jews or Blacks, the “pull-factor” is the same, the search for opportunities and better living conditions.

The post-1990 spate of xenophobia could be regarded as the fourth wave. What is unique about its magnitude and timing: it is happening nationwide and at a time when there is a democratic system of governance. The second difference is that it is being instigated mainly by those previously oppressed themselves, the blacks. However, incidences of this nature are not unique elsewhere in the world. The Jews who were victims of racism and holocaust have now translated into racism and hatred against Arabs and Palestinians. There could be reasons why previously oppressed people instigate xenophobia and hatred. It relates to the culture of racism and violence which still pervades this country.

It is however, important to note that the lifting of all apartheid immigration restrictions in 1994 by the new system was done too early and at a time when the country “was totally unprepared for the inevitable consequences of reinsertion into the global circuits of capital, commodities and people” (Crush, 2000: 105). The upshot of this is that it spearheaded immigrants, from as far away as China, entrance into the country resulting in what has become a major source of concern to human rights issues in democratic South Africa.

### **2.3. ORIGINS OF XENOPHOBIA**

There are three hypotheses namely: the scapegoat hypotheses, the isolation hypotheses and the bio-cultural hypotheses, which attempt to explain the origins of xenophobia.

In the scapegoat theory, hatred for foreign nationals is explained in relation to limited resources including jobs, housing, health care and education. According to Tshitereke (1999), South Africans developed high expectations that, once the country became democratic, their socio-economic conditions would improve. On the

contrary, poverty levels have increased and the gap between the haves and the have-nots has widened. Resources and service delivery have become major issues of contention with the rate of unemployment hovering above 30% (McConnell, 2009:35) –all at a time when the economy is stronger, the public housing budget has increased and equality is a term enshrined in the constitution.

The theory implies that, when South Africans needs and desires could not be met, their misplaced anger and frustration was aimed at the non-nationals. According to Tshitereke (1999), South Africans have a subjective feeling of discontent, and that this is based on the belief that they are getting less than what they are supposed to get. When the has failed to meet some of its pledges regarding job creation, better service delivery, a gap formed between what is on paper and the reality on the ground, resulting in discontent and frustration (Shindondola, 2002:24). The situation has, as a consequence, created an ideal environment in which the foreigner serves as a temporary relief for the anxiety –expediency which it is not enough to resolve a problem whose underlying substratum is poverty and deprivation.

There are two shortcomings in this theory (Harris, 2002: 172). Firstly, it does not explain why xenophobic attitudes towards foreign nationals manifest so violently. Secondly, while the theory states that foreigners are being used as a scapegoat for displaced frustration, it fails to clarify specifically, why only foreigners and not any another group should be the scapegoats.

The isolation theory explains xenophobia from an historical perspective. It argues that South Africans were subjected to isolation that cut them off from each other and also from the rest of the world. This has impacted on people's ability to tolerate foreigners who represented an 'unknown' alien (Morris, 1998: 1125). As such, it postulates that contemporary xenophobia is a consequence of overlapping isolations: internal and external. While internal isolation was designed, instituted and enforced by the apartheid regime, such that South Africans of different racial groupings could not interact freely, the external isolation was imposed by the international community to punish the racist system. By the time the country embraced democracy in 1994, the division had already entrenched and the people

could no longer tolerate difference (Harris, 2002: 172). According to the theory, the “otherness” of the foreigner is not based on race, rather being a non-South Africanness, meaning, the entire xenophobia is premised on being an ‘unknown’ alien. Harris (ibid.) says one major discrepancy in this theory is that it assumes were completely cut of from the rest of the world.

On the other hand, writers such as Commey (2008) and Sibanda (2009) see isolation as contemporary and dynamic rather than historic. They say it is manifesting through the preservation of apartheid structures, the geographical setting and resource allocation which resulted in ‘group closure’, a “process whereby groups maintain boundaries that separate them from others”. According to Sibanda (2009: 119), the so-called informal settlements are a form of group closure, and their perceived ‘separateness’ is often exacerbated by the inequitable provision of resources”.

Lack of economic emancipation in the face of freedom inculcates in the minds of millions of poor South Africans a sense of denial or disownment which is tantamount to generating frustration. ‘Separateness’ and/or ‘ghettoization’ create a conducive space in which the frustration is unleashed on the ‘unknown.’ Commey (2008:16) sees the above scenario happening now because “the majority of poor blacks still languish at the bottom” while “the better educated, politically connected [few] South Africans have joined the ranks of the affluent” and let the previously disadvantaged majority remain in their status quo.

In a nutshell, this theory determines the foreigner as the centre of focus, and argues that xenophobia is a defence against anxiety induced by ‘the unknown’. It takes into consideration the role of economy, unemployment and struggle for resources as auxiliary causes of xenophobia in South Africa. Harris (2002:173) says it does not, however, explain why ‘the unknown’ produces anxiety and why this automatically results in aggression.

The final hypothesis is the Bio-cultural Theory which argues that xenophobia operates at the level of phenotypical and cultural differences. Animosity is not as a result of competition for resources, but fear of loss of social status and identity. People prefer to be surrounded by people of their own kind rather than to be exposed to others in order that their cultural identity does not get lost or adulterated. The moment they have others, insecurity creeps in.

Bio-cultural markers such as skin colour, dress, inoculation marks and accent are significant because they occur at a visible level of difference between nationals and non-nationals. Morris (1998: 25) reported some Nigerians complain about being stopped by police because of their “darker” skin and physical differences.

A report by the South African Human Rights commission on the arrest and detention of persons in terms of the Aliens Control Act observes that at least 10% of the subjects were apprehended on the bases of their appearance (HRC, 2000). According to Shidondola (2002:28), “Being a black foreigner in South Africa is open to abuse and prejudice....The unsympathetic nature of police and immigration officers ... hinder the possibility of open-handed response to African migrants in South Africa.”

Valji (2003: 16) observes that a dark skin is associated with criminality and poverty. This explains why black Africans are targeted and victimised not by xenophobes only but also by the authority. According to a Wits survey, 71% of non-South African respondents reported being stopped by police, primarily for document checks, compared to 47% of South Africans (Landau 2004: 11). Landau (2004:12) suggests such target of foreigners serve a number of purposes for the police, including the meeting of arrest targets, providing an opportunity for extortion, and, given the public’s association of immigration and crime, the aim to gain the trust, and as such, build legitimacy among the South African citizenry by appearing to tackle “crime and grime”.

Language-wise, French-speaking Africans experience hostility in the way people react to them when they realise their inability to speak a local language (Boulin,



1996:10, quoted in Harris, 2001:174). Malawians are easily identifiable because of their inability to pronounce 'l' they tend to pronounce it as 'r' as is in the case of 'mirk' instead of milk. Migrants from English speaking African countries are still identifiable because the South African accent is distinct. Their features are therefore a mark of their "foreignness". According to a report on by the *Sunday Times* (Brett Horner 25 February 2007), cultural difference was the main reason behind the attacks against Somali traders.

## **2.4. CAUSES OF XENOPHOBIA**

With increased movement of people, capital and goods because of globalisation and the advent of democracy, numerous reasons could be sighted as possible causes for xenophobia in South Africa. This section discusses six reasons. To begin with, an increase in the number of immigrants both legal and illegal has resulted in an influx of people coming into the country. It also resulted in the entry of more highly sensitive goods such as drugs. Moreover, the new constitution has allowed for norms such as prostitution and homosexuality which many South Africans deem as immoral. While all these things were happening at a time when the country was still in a transition, the media publicised gloomy images of foreign cultures and millions of aliens coming to bring in non-South African norms.

Secondly, hostile and xenophobic statements from top figures and government officials reified public fears. Consider the following quote extracted from the introductory speech of Mangosuthu Buthelezi, at a time when he was head of Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the Minister of Home Affairs,

If South Africans are going to compete for scarce resources with the million of aliens that are pouring into South Africa, then we can bid goodbye to our Reconciliation and Development Programme (Minister of Home Affairs, 1994)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Minister of Home Affairs. (1994) Introductory Speech, Budgetary Appropriation. National Assembly, August 9.

Chief Buthelezi made a direct appeal to the public to deal with illegal immigrants, and while still the cabinet Minister, the IFP threatened to take “physical action” against immigrants if the government did not respond. It was still 1994 when “protestors in Alexandra Township marched to a local police station with demands that included for ‘Zimbabweans, Malawians and Mozambicans go home’” (Crush, 2008:44). These acts have been classified by Human Right Organisations as incitement.

History has shown that political manipulation has played a large role in xenophobia and in this regard, if we consider statements by the likes of former Minister of Home Affairs and the former Defence Minister Joe Modise amongst other top officials including Police Commissioners, then South Africa is not the first country in Africa where politicians have been involved in xenophobic incitement. Xenophobia in Gabon and Ivory Coast can be recognised as an outcome of political manipulation. In Gabon, the government used xenophobia implicitly to direct economic and political crisis at non-European immigrants (Gray, 1998:392); and for Ivory Coast, former President Houphouet-Boigny Bedie sparked xenophobia in a bid to ostracise a prominent political opponent, Alassane Outara, an Ivorian politician who hails from the northern part of the country. Since then it has been fostered by three successive Ivorian presidents (Quist-Arcton, 7 September 2001).

During the 2008 nationwide xenophobic attacks, the media reported a “Third force involved in attacks” (May 20, 2008, the Mail and Guardian). The article quoted Gauteng Sport Minister Barbara Creechy saying that “the police have ‘concrete evidence’ of those involved in the orchestration.” At a briefing to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs on 13 May 2008, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, whose Ministry has the most interaction with foreign nationals and has promoted anti-xenophobia training amongst officials, speculated about the involvement of a “third force” involved in orchestrating xenophobic violence (Crush, 2008:11). However, KwaZulu-Natal’s Safety and Security Minister categorically accused the IFP of being behind the unrest. Essop Pahad, Minister in the Presidency, hinted that it “seemed there was ‘a pattern in the way these attacks have developed’ – this regarding xenophobia before election. The Minister said,

We need to understand that xenophobia has historically been used by right wing populist movements to mobilise particularly the lumpen-proletariat against minority groups in society. Political mobilisation on the basis of xenophobia poses grave threats to progressive forces for our society and our democracy. ... All I am saying is we need to be very careful ... it is easy to mobilise this way with right wing agendas. (Minister Pahad quoted in [www.politicsweb.co.za](http://www.politicsweb.co.za))<sup>3</sup>.

Thirdly, xenophobia may be caused by the government's lack of proper mechanism to deal with refugees and illegal immigrants. Crush (2001) has argued that the government did not have any plan or knew how to cope when it removed the apartheid laws. The government's lack of response, or slowness thereof, to immigrants happened at numerous levels:

- i. Lack of proper Immigration Act and insufficient control of borders allowing immigrants to cross into the country clandestinely. An Immigration Act which would replace the Alien Act of the apartheid government was created in 2001 and was implemented 2005; a decade after transition into democracy. Some of these trespassing immigrants are people whom, under the international law, are bona fide refugees. This has caused almost every immigrant in the country to be classified as an illegal migrant.
- ii. Failure to effectively combat corruption at the Department of Home Affairs. This has resulted in foreign nationals in search of permit papers to inundate the Department of Home Affairs. The extended repercussion was the message conceived by citizens whose services at the Home Affairs got delayed – thus foreigners are the cause of the slow service delivery.
- iii. Denialism and/or reductionist approach. “There was no xenophobia, only criminal elements,” stated President Thabo Mbeki at a National Tribute in Remembrance of the victims of 2008 xenophobic attacks.<sup>4</sup> William

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<sup>3</sup> [www.politicsweb.co.za](http://www.politicsweb.co.za)

<sup>4</sup> Address of President Thabo Mbeki at Tshwane: <http://www.info.gov.za/2008/08070451001.htm>

Gumede, writing in the Independent, felt that “long standing denial of xenophobia is at the heart of the terrible violence”.<sup>5</sup>

- iv. Negligence. On 23 May 2008, Minister of Intelligence, Ronnie Kasrils conceded that the government was aware that “something was brewing. It is one thing to know there is a social problem and another thing to know when the outburst will occur.” (Mail and Guardian online, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2008; SABC News Online 22 May 2008). In other words, xenophobia is not seen as a serious social problem but an abstract social problem where violence is not a possible outcome. Simply put, the government knew well about the impending xenophobic attacks but nothing was done about it only to find out that 64 people died and more than a hundred thousand others displaced as a consequence.
- v. Lack of public awareness. The government has failed to institute public educational programmes in which the citizens are made aware of the circumstance that brought the foreigners and also inform the immigrants of the socio-economic dynamics of pre and post-apartheid South Africa. Moreover, legal immigrants – some of whom do not even speak English, let alone any South African vernacular as yet, and have little or no knowledge of the socio-historical background of the nation, are given permit papers and allowed into the country. This has created an impression that, where foreign nationals who went to live in the townships, they are seen as “invaders” rather than people who are being forced by circumstances.

Fourthly, extreme patriotism causes xenophobia. From the view point of Ursula Le Guin, author of *Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), patriotism can be understood from a philosophical perspective, which does not mean love of country but “fear of the other ... and its expressions are political, not poetical: hate, rivalry, aggression.” McConnell (2009:34) argues that xenophobia in South Africa began at the transition from apartheid to democratic government. “The freedom felt within South Africa

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<sup>5</sup> The independent 21 May 2008

came with the ideology that the country must be protected from ‘outsiders’”. We have mentioned earlier that the Minister of Home Affairs appealed to the public and that “it is in their best interest if they are true patriots to report illegal aliens”. Cloward and Piven (1996) wrote “when state leaders appeal to patriotism, they mobilize citizens by invoking foreign threats that cannot be assessed by ordinary people, except sometimes when it is too late, as in the aftermath of war.” According to Barbali (2009:24),

the imagined community of the new South Africa focused on the notion of citizenship as the defining element of post apartheid national identity because South African histories, albeit division, are shared and those who stand outside this shared history are excluded from the unifying implications of the nation building process.

Thus, xenophobia is not only a reassurance identity but also is a political assurance about who has the right to be cared for by the state and society (Warner, 1997:27). The fact that immigrants were seen during the democratic transition as “alien invaders” meant the country had to be protected. And therefore, through love for the country an enemy called the “Other”, which is the foreigner, was created. This view reserves xenophobia as an outcome to a nation building process.

Fifthly, Max Lennit, Safety and Security MEC of Western Cape identified three distinct categories behind the xenophobic attacks in the Western Cape (Cape Argus, page 7, August 4, 2010). They are:

1. House shop robberies where foreigners were victims of ordinary crime even though there are certain factors that made them more vulnerable targets.
2. Opportunistic acts of looting by criminal youth. Youth offenders had been responsible for the majority of the incidents since the World Cup
3. Local shopkeepers forming association with the intent of intimidating foreign competition. “Instances have been recorded where foreigners have been warned verbally and by letter to vacate certain areas.”

In all the cases, according to the article, the perpetrators of the violence did not distinguish between legal and illegal immigrants, meaning xenophobia manifests itself in forms of ordinary criminal acts. Crime affects everybody in the country and is not specific to foreign nationals.

There is a difference between criminality and xenophobia. While every xenophobic incident has a criminal element, not every crime is xenophobic. Criminals do not discriminate or chose their target on the basis of nationality whereas xenophobes do.

Finally, economic growth together with increasing deprivation due to sluggish service delivery can partly be blamed for xenophobic violence. However, it is important to note that lack of service delivery and poverty alone are not strong enough reasons to explain xenophobia. This is despite lots of protests on service delivery and high level of poverty among the previously disadvantaged groups. There are two main reasons why these two factors are not strong. Firstly, if there is direct link between poverty and the presence of large numbers of foreign nationals, countries like Kenya and Uganda which are poorer than South Africa yet are hosting large numbers of immigrants from Somalia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic Congo, amongst others, would long be the most xenophobic nations in Africa. Secondly, for the majority of black South Africans, the South Africa of today is an improvement, not just in terms if service delivery but in all other respects. If we consider that as true, what comparative yardstick is being used to measure better service delivery, given that most South Africans did not previously experience services other than those delivered by an abhorred apartheid government?

## **2.5. MEASURE OF XENOPHOBIA**

In 1995, a report by the Southern African Bishop's Conference concluded that 'there is no doubt that there is very high level of xenophobia in South Africa.' This was followed by a 1998 South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) which identified xenophobia as a major source of concern to human rights issues in the country. Following attacks on foreign hawkers in Central Johannesburg, SAHRC in partnership with other agencies launched on October 1998 a public and media

education programme known as the Roll Back Xenophobia (RBX) Campaign. The campaign was designed “to send out a strong message that an irrational prejudice and hostility towards non-nationals is not acceptable under any circumstances” (Crush, 2001:1). Three years later, South Africa hosted the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban. The conference corroborated that discrimination and intolerance contravened the principles of the United Nations charter as well as the South African constitution (Barbali, 2009:18). Within the same year; that is 2001, President Thabo Mbeki criticised South Africans for their attitudes to other Africans and called xenophobia “fundamentally wrong and unacceptable” (Crush, 2008:48).

Despite the aforementioned anti-xenophobic awareness endeavours, an ensuing study by the South African Migration Project (SAMP, 2001) revealed that the nationals were increasingly becoming “particularly intolerant of the non-nationals and especially African non-nationals”. The study further predicted that the sentiment could have unprecedented repercussions. However, little attention was paid to the SAMP report and the failure manifested itself in the deadly attacks witnessed in the subsequent years, 2007 and 2008.

Harris (2002:170) reports that “a man from the Congo was attacked and he cried out but no-one helped him. And after the thief had gone, the people on the sides said that 'because you are crying in English, we didn't help you. If you are crying in Zulu, we will help you'. Then he went to the police and was told that 'you are not our brother, we can't help you' (Focus Group with foreign students, 25/10/1999).” This shows that there is some level of complicity.

In 2007 for example, 120 Somali-owned shops were looted in Motherwell, a township at the outskirts of Port Elizabeth (Sunday Times, February 25: 2007). Within the same year, similar incident happened in Masiphumelele near Cape Town. In the first quarter of 2007, 40 foreign nationals were killed in the Western Cape alone (<http://my.opera.com/abdinur/blog/show.dml/894423>).

In 2008, between January and April alone, 10 major attacks against foreign nationals took place in five provinces (Sichone, 2004:7). But worst of all these happened in

May 2008 when spates of xenophobic attacks swept across the country. More than 60 people were killed and 1500 others injured and tens of thousands fled the country; scores of women were gang-raped and property estimated to be worth more than R1.5billion was destroyed (da Silva, May 2009; James, 14 September 2008; McConnell 2009).

The brutalities of the 2008 xenophobic violence was manifested when a Mozambican man, Ernesto Alfabeto Nhamuave, was burnt to death while policemen stood by and neatly dressed school children laughed (Bird, 2008). Furthermore, an immigrant family, a woman and her three teenage children, were butchered in Tambo Village in Queenstown (EC). The woman was stabbed 113 times and her deaf teenage child was cut to pieces. The woman and her 14 year-old daughter were gang raped before their horrific killing (<http://blogs.dispatch.co.za/dying/2009/05/11> ).

During the run-up to the 2010 soccer Cup World, rumours of imminent large scale xenophobic attacks were widely speculated. At the end of the tournaments, the predicted disaster did not materialise, though significantly lesser incidents happened, mostly in Western Cape, where 16 foreigners were killed and more than hundred other were displaced. However, the attacks were soon brought under control but random incidents still happen. Unlike the previous coverage, the media has played a significant role to disseminate sufficient information timely enough, enabling the authorities to better prepare themselves as compared to two years previously, even though they still downplayed xenophobia (Jawa, Business Day 22 July 2010 – confirm the newspaper).

## **2.6. EFFECTS OF XENOPHOBIA ON SOUTH AFRICA**

Researchers and analysts alike put forward divergent views regarding the causes of xenophobia. Some have argued that the sentiment is caused by optimism frustrated, others conveniently laid blame on apartheid while even others explained that xenophobia is a multifaceted phenomenon common among societies that are experiencing upheavals of transition. However, the chameleonic nature of the



phenomenon in South Africa negates every possible explanation to describe it. The fact is that xenophobia is inexplicable, and a solution is hard to come by.

Xenophobia affects South African society negatively at two levels. Firstly, as much as it risks the lives of immigrants in the country, it also endangers the lives of South African citizens. Twenty-seven of the 62 people killed in the 2008 nationwide xenophobic victims were identified as South Africans, in particular, 'Shangaans' from Limpopo who, either failed linguistic tests such as knowing the isiZulu word for 'elbow' (*indololwane*) or simply looked too dark to be South African. Laundau et al (2004:32) says xenophobia undermines the values of the constitution. Moreover, xenophobia jeopardises the lives of South African expatriates living abroad. During the 2008 attacks, then Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Malusi Gigaba, expressed concerns over the attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa that could very well lead to revenge attacks on South Africans abroad (SAPA, 16 May 2008).

Secondly, the attacks besmirched the country's credibility in fulfilling its international commitment, and thus, obligation to protect human rights. According to Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) (quoted in SAPA 16 May 2008), there was no consideration given for the protection of the victims, despite assurances made by the Department of Home Affairs. Victims of the xenophobic attacks were being deprived of their rights to lay complaints and criminal charges. LHR cited, amongst others, regarding a case where 32 foreign nationals were attacked and robbed of their belongings in Olifantsfontein on the East Rand in 2008. In response to the attacks, police arrested the victims and transported them to Lindela deportation facility where they were detained pending deportation.

Thirdly, in 2008, the South African Minister for Tourism, Martinus van Schylkywk cautioned the nation that the attacks could have serious consequence on the tourism industry. This sector is vital to the economy, contributing close to 8% - up to R20 billion (TBCSA as quoted by SA news, 11 June 2008) - of the country's total Growth Domestic Production (GDP) and provides employment for up to one million people. In 2007 alone, 9.1m tourists visited the country, 60% of which came from other African countries. During the 2008 xenophobic spates, there were cancellations of

township tours and company conferences. The province of KwaZulu-Natal and the Federated Hospitality of Southern Africa (FEDHASA), representing SA tourism, reported to have felt the impact of the attacks very early on.

African tourism is South Africa's most important source of foreign income. In 2006, non-South African Africans were among the top five foreign nationals bringing revenue into South Africa with Mozambicans topping the expenditure list. In that year, 67 percent of international visitors were from within the continent - 114 380 were from Botswana, 248,828 were from Lesotho, over 600 000 were from Mozambique, 327 168 were from Swaziland and 127 474 were from Zimbabwe (<http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/>).

## **2.7. MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF FOREIGN NATIONALS**

Mass media is one of the most important institutions that transform societies, the most likely reason being that they provide information on daily events and for many it is the only source of information available to them. Under apartheid law, mainstream print media transformed the ideological whims of the apartheid state to the desired terms of a white supremacist and anti-communist view of the government and capital state (Danso & McDonald, 2000:7). According to Danso and McDonald (2000:133),

Highly sensationalized, Africanized and negative reporting of migration issues [which] generally in the form of superficial, statistics-happy articles that do little to inform the reader [about] the complexities of migration or how it fits with broader social, political and economic development in the country/region. Readers are all too often left with little more than incriminating innuendoes and sensational accounts of what migrants are alleged to have done.

More than a decade long study on the South African press revealed that the newspapers have been running stories that are anti-migration (Smith, 2009:3). This chapter will discuss what has been said about press representation of migration and immigrants.

Successive studies have, without contradiction, found that the media has been central in encouraging xenophobic attitudes towards foreign nationals (Crush et al 2008:42). A study which analysed 1200 newspaper clippings from English newspapers between 1994 and 1998 led to the conclusion that the media are, without a doubt, a contributing factor (Danso & McDonald 2000:124). A subsequent study done five years later by McDonald and Jacobs (2005:295) reaffirmed that

the overwhelming majority of the of newspaper articles, editorials, and letters to editors employed sensationalist, anti-migrant language and uncritically reproduced problematic statistics and assumptions about migration.

Danso and McDonald (2000: 123) pointed out that the media produced/reproduced three misnomers regarding immigrants: migrants steal jobs, create crime and migrants are “illegal” immigrants. A conflated use of these terms produce a negative impression which fuels all the fears associated with them. Harris (2002: 177) says such image depicts immigrants, mainly those from other African countries, as dangerous.

Local press tends to cover certain nationalities only in terms of stereotypes “with black Africans either being perpetual criminals or more prone to commit serious crime” (ibid.). For example, all Nigerians are often portrayed as part of criminal syndicates and drug dealers.

The media has sustained a climate conducive to prejudice through the headlines. Misleading and sensationalist headlines is only one example of the kind of borderline unscrupulous stereotyping that is often propagated in the South African media. Headlines are linguistic syntagmas (systematic arrangement of words) which aims to attract the attention of the reader to the topic of news story. For the newspapers, they are known to capture the attention of the reader through sarcastic and controversial headlines, printed in large bold letters. Headlines alone are capable of giving the reader a good idea of what the story is going to be about and at the same time they can reveal the angle from which the newspaper addresses the story.

### 2.7.1. Ways of media misrepresentation

Media misrepresent foreign nationals through unreliable and extrapolated statistics and “guesstimates”. Danso and McDonald (2001:125) noted that the media publishes unsubstantiated estimates of the number of foreign nationals in the country and framed their presence as a perpetual threat to the country’s economy. Primary sources of such information are police or government officials who are ill-informed of the actual figures. The question then becomes, how are the officials able to generate these figures while the actual number of illegal immigrants in the country is not known? Many articles make direct references to the cost of immigration and project foreign nationals as a fiscal drain on the South African economy. Consider the following three examples with regard to the level of negative stereotyping these figures are likely to create in the minds passive media consumers.

The Staff Reporter (18 September 1995) ran an article which argued that the “government has spent about 397 000 on each illegal alien which translates into R1.98billion being spent on maintaining illegals last year”.

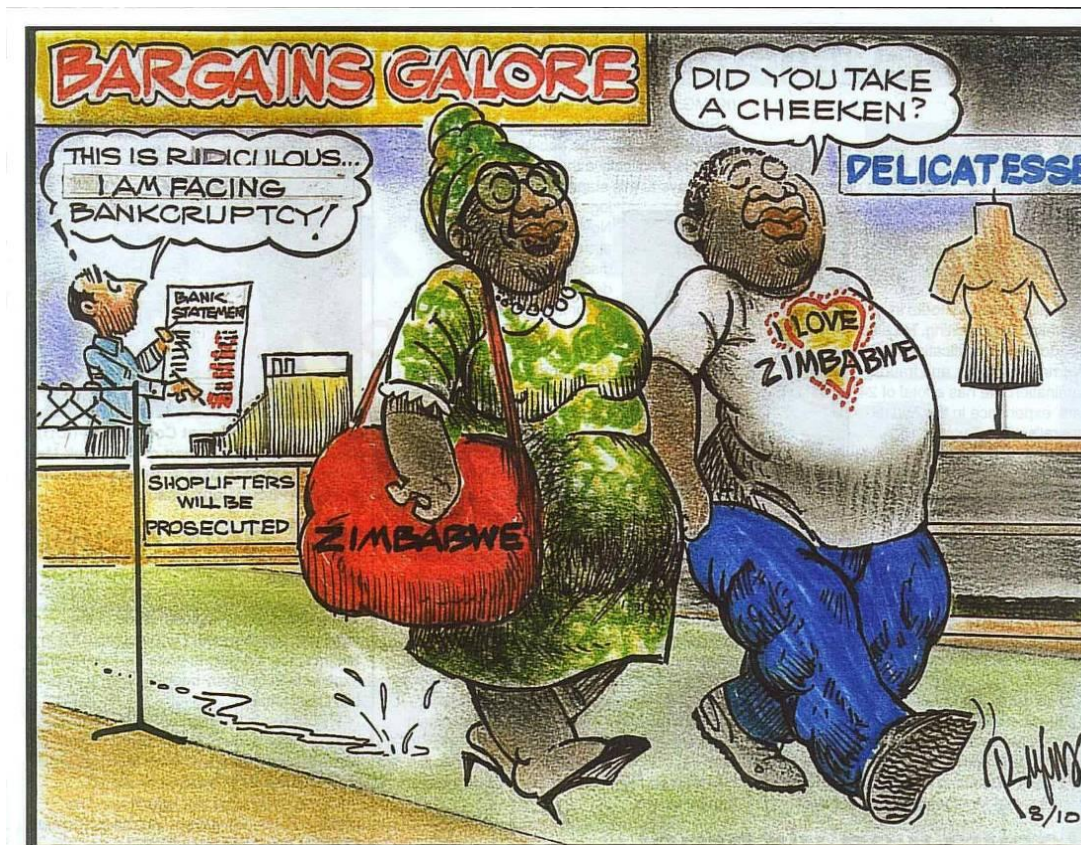
Similarly, the Financial Mail (9 September 1995) carried an article which state “it cost more than R210 million –a tenth of the entire amount budged for the [Reconstruction and Development Programme] –just to house, educate, police and give medical care to only one sector of the problem: the illegal Mozambicans.”

The *Daily News* (10/10/2007) stated that the number of illegal immigrants in the country as 3.5 million. It further illuminated the consequences of this alarming number of people living in the country: increased squatter camps, crime, disease, unemployment, infant mortality and hunger.

Secondly, the misnomer of migrants from other parts of Africa inherently being criminals is another example of how the print media contributes to the perpetuation of stereotypes in South Africa. Danso and McDonald’s (2001:126) survey showed 25% of associated articles reviews have allied migrants directly or indirectly with crime. In some ways the rationale the press appropriates tends to nationalise,

racialise and even Africanise crime involving migrants. In terms of reference to crime, Nigerians are more often than not referred to as criminals who are fond of trafficking drugs.

In some cases, photographs where the nationalities of suspects are included, appear alongside news story. For example, *Limpopo Informant* (8 October 2008, p.6) carried an untitled cartoon depicting a shopkeeper facing bankruptcy with a warning sign saying “Shoplifters will be prosecuted”, an overweight man wearing a t-shirt with the print “I love Zimbabwe!” and an overweight woman with a big purse labeled Zimbabwe coming out of the shop. The man asks his wife, “Did you take a chicken?” whilst the shopkeeper holds a bank statement, perplexed with what is happening to his business.



The picture implies that South Africans and the South African economy are suffering because of Zimbabweans. By extension, it implies that Zimbabweans came to steal, rendering South Africa another African state like Zimbabwe, where the stores are empty.

Thirdly, some articles blame immigrants for the worsening economic situation in the country. On 19/02/1995, *The Weekend Star* published an article by S. Modise in which the writer argued that immigrants were turning “South Africa into a banana republic.” Modise compared the economic situation of pre-and-post-apartheid South Africa and said “even under the most oppressive conditions we endured we were never as bad as the rest of Africa.”

Fourthly, articles may define and distinguish the concept of “us” against “them”. MMP complaint against *Daily Sun* cited a front page article on Wednesday May 2008 titled: “Cops said I was an alien! Homeboy angry after jail horror”. A clear distinction is made between “homeboys” and “aliens” and by innuendo, deserves better treatment. An article which appeared in *the Star* (1995) stated that the word “alien” has become an execration. It goes further stating that the term “alien” is used for those people “who come to take our jobs, our homes and our women, “Conmen from Nigeria who have come to steal our money and feed us with drugs”. The continual reference and association of the terms “alien” and “illegal” with negative and often criminal acts would clearly create sub-conscious concerns if not acrimonious feelings regarding foreign people.

Fifthly, in many occasions, the media use sensationalist language and headlines to perpetuate xenophobia (Danso & McDonald, 2001:129). For example: “Illegals in South Africa add to decay of cities” (van Rensburg, 31 May 1996); “6 million migrants head our way” (Mhlangeni 31 May 1996). Landau (*Pretoria News*, 2004:7) says that there are 150 000 out of a population of 50 million. The argument that South Africa is being flooded by refugees and illegal economic immigrants is a myth. Statistics South Africa put the estimates between 700 000 and one million foreign nationals as opposed to 4 million that the media quotes from police or some government official (Crush, 2008:47). According to McDonald and Jacobs (2005:304), 26% of articles that made negative references to foreign nationals used sensational headlines.

Finally, early media reports on foreign nationals effectively utilised the literary devices of imageries and metaphors. These linguistic devices negatively portrayed

foreign nationals, creating a foreboding or hysteria of the “aliens” during the transitional period. Danso and McDonald (2001:129) observed that there has been repeated use of en masse or mob associative metaphors, such as “floods”, “hordes,” “descend”, “storm”, “overrun”, “flock”, and “stream” in the texts of articles which portrayed immigration in South Africa as “overrun” by illegal immigrants. Imageries and metaphors bring pictures to the minds of the readers to create a clearer, though false, understanding of a situation. They are used in literature to create a certain effect and evoke a particular response from the reader, listener or viewer. McDonald and Jacobs (2008:304) have found out that 21% of articles published between 2000 and 2005 used negative metaphors to describe immigration into the country while 22% of them referred to non-citizens as ‘illegals’.

### **2.7.2. Causes of misrepresentation**

McDonald and Jacobs (2005) listed three reasons to explain the causes of xenophobia in the press, or rather, the press to be ‘xenophobic machine’.

1. The widespread existence of xenophobia. The media reflects the reality on the ground either through journalists reproducing their own images of migrants and migration and/or, by editors providing space for articles and opinion pieces that they feel reflect public consensus on the issue
2. The need to express statements by political representatives and government officials who happen to be xenophobic, when addressing issues pertaining to migration
3. Reliance on wire services which stream in extremely simplistic and xenophobic material. Economic pressures (media owners wanting to improve profit in the context of increased competition, a depressed advertisement market, rising costs of paper and distribution) resulted in media houses not having reporters who specialise in migration.
4. The growth of a tabloid press which tend to play to a populist, exclusionary sentiment in society to boost circulation. Some of these

papers have neither political editors nor opinion editorialists, yet they have political positions. Tabloids latch on to reactionary and sensationalist issues and attitudes to help sell newspapers.

### **2.7.3. Tabloids: the Daily Sun**

William Bird says, there can be little doubt that there is xenophobic feeling in the communities that read *Daily Sun*. He says the paper panders to its audiences. (Bird in Rhodes Journalism Review, September 2008, p18).

The Daily Sun has been pinpointed as one prominent source for anti-immigrant sentiment because of its stereotypical and xenophobic coverage. The paper made inappropriate headlines such as 'Alien Terror' and 'War on Aliens'. According to MMP, its reporting has had the effect of supporting the 2008 xenophobic violence by perpetuating stereotypes of foreign people.

Regarding The Daily Sun, the Media Monitoring Project indicated that the paper blamed foreign nationals for any manner of incidents, ranging from violent robberies, rape, sale of drugs, stealing South Africans of their jobs and also their women.

In support of this claim, the organisation Media Tenor, found that, in the run-up to the violence, there was persistent negative coverage of immigrants, as published in the 4 June 2008 report; Lessons in the rear-view mirror: Reporting on foreigners in South African media.

Media Tenor analyzed the biases in reporting in 1,085 reports from 26 media outlets (6 dailies, 10 news broadcasts, 5 weeklies and 5 financial media sources) from January 2007 to April 2008. From the study it was found that the Daily Sun had the largest number of articles that focused on immigrants and also the highest rate of presenting said stories in a negative light.



According to MMP analysis of Daily Sun as cited in the complaint submitted to the Press Ombudsman on 29 May 2008, there are three substantive conclusions that emerged from the manner in which the 2008 xenophobic attacks have been reported:

1. Foreign nationals in South Africa are constantly presented as “aliens” and as the primary source of all problems;
2. Government is presented as the institution that has enabled the ‘aliens’ to unfairly take advantage of South Africans and South African resources, and;
3. Violence is portrayed as an understandable and legitimate reaction to this state of affairs.

In this regard, the coverage of non-nationals by the Daily Sun is not in line with its responsibility to give a fair, balanced, accurate, and non-discriminatory style of reporting, contravening several fundamental clauses of the South African press code.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the history of xenophobia, its theoretical underpinnings and causes. It has also discussed media representation of foreign nationals, why and how it does the way it represents them. During the discussion, contemporary xenophobia has been depicted as deep rooted sentiment that stretches back to 1994 and well before that. We have briefly mentioned the perception that foreign nationals are bio-culturally different and the nationals are unable to accommodate difference because of historical baggage.

As a summary, xenophobia is caused by multiple factors: structural, social, economic spatial and “third party” involvement. It cannot be “blamed” on a small group of disenfranchised poor people angry with the government or sudden influx of immigrants coming into the country after 1994. There is more to that than can meet the eye because xenophobic attitudes are widespread and entrenched.

The 2008 xenophobic storm that has shaken the country to the core revealed that the country is brazenly held at the mercy of anti-immigrant animosity. With institutional negligence and lack of political will said, the diffusion of outburst from one settlement to another, and from one province to another within a matter of weeks revealed how the press contributes to xenophobia through reckless reporting. During the attacks, the “rumours spread by the mass media ... were similar across both space and time” (Bekker et al. 2008:4) with *Daily Sun* running at the forefront – in terms of being complicit and also encouraging xenophobic attitudes among the population. It is therefore important to note that manifestations of xenophobia through the mass media and government officials, the prejudice is made sound reasonable and legitimate.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the methodological underpinnings of the study will be discussed: research purpose, research method, sample, data collection, data analysis and the theoretical approach, validity and reliability of the findings, and the limitations encountered during research.

### **3.2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The main purpose of the study is to explore the public perception pertaining to foreign nationals establishing whether their representation by the press— as discussed in the literature— is indeed reflected in public perception.

This will be achieved by providing substantiated information showing that balanced coverage of social issues definitely contributes to the holistic development of society, and in particular NMB. Any disinformation on the part of the media not only compromises principal tenets of media ethics (objectivity and fairness), but they also make place for disparagement.

### **3.3. RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **3.3.1. Qualitative Approach**

This study requires an in-depth understanding of views and feelings of the Nelson Mandela Bay residents to provide reasons why they are antagonistic against the foreign nationals. The views and beliefs of the public must be carefully examined as critical factors in the shaping of their realities. The degree and nature of interaction they have with non-nationals must also be examined in detail. This is primarily so because social realities such as poverty and interactions are unstable.

A qualitative approach supports the suggestion that facts are “fluid and embedded within a meaning system” dependant on a complex web of people and events within a specific setting (Neuman, 2006: 92-93). The approach is subjective in the sense that it endeavours to describe and analyse a participant’s experiences, beliefs and thoughts in a non-numerical form. This means that the researcher is required to go directly into the community, to explore and contextualise views in their natural setting, which enables the researcher to garner meaning from personal experience.

As there are so many human behaviours which defy the best efforts to neatly categorise and define, and thus predict. This research employs methods such as; participation and observation, semi-structured, in-depth and open-ended interviews to collect data as regards NMB residents’ perceptions, feelings, and how they relate to non-nationals in NMB. This technique also helps to extract intricate details pertaining to issues often difficult to fathom through more conventional research methods. Xenophobia is an adaptive phenomenon and therefore highly subjective. This approach will enable the researcher to build a complex and holistic picture of xenophobia as experienced through analysis of reported text and the personal views of respondents (Creswell1994:145).

One of the most common qualitative research techniques is the focus group. In this instance, the researcher led two small groups of respondents in candid discussions on xenophobia. As an approach, the researcher placed no constraints on participant response, this technique did prompt subjectivity from the respondents. However, that in itself is important. Common feelings, as terms, are generally used by the layman to describe how they make sense of their own experiences (Creswell, 1994:145). The author uses aspects of the qualitative research described above to obtain deeper understanding of NMB residents’ views towards foreign nationals.

### **3.3.2. Explorative Approach**

Wilson (1993:90) states that a study is exploratory when it entails uncovering relationships and dimensions of a phenomenon by investigating the manner in which

the phenomenon manifests itself in any other related area. As previously mentioned, this study explores public perception to establish whether there is any correlation between media representation of foreign nationals and public perceptions. The study explores how public perception of foreign nationals, the extent to which they feel intimidated and on what grounds and finally, whether or not they believe press has been influential in their perceptions towards the non-nationals.

Grinnell (1993:136) says exploratory research is expected to explore a research question about which little is yet known. Exploring public perception in relation to media representation of foreign nationals should build on what little surety exists pertaining to research done as to whether or not in fact there is a direct correlation between the two.

### **3.3.3. Descriptive Approach**

A study is descriptive when it describes a situation, problem, phenomenon, or provides information of the living conditions within a community or the description of an issue (Kumar, 2005:10). This study describes the attitude or perception of Nelson Mandela Bay residents towards foreign nationals.

According to Cresswell (1994: 145), this approach is important because it tends to give an accurate portrayal of a real-life situation ideal for the purpose of discovering new meaning and giving description to what already exists by categorising the information generated from the study.

## **3.4. ASSUMPTION**

- The media misrepresented foreign nationals and therefore have influenced NMB residents' perceptions towards the foreigners.

### 3.5. SAMPLING

The approach used in this study is a random probability sampling. Probability sampling occurs when elements (in this case a nature specific people group) in a population have a known chance of being chosen to participate in the sample. This type of sampling can take two forms. It can either be a simple random sample which is unrestricted, or a complex probability sample which is restricted. As such, a simple random sampling was seen as relevant for this study.

It would be impossible to collect and test data from all elements (certainly not least for this study) when a population consists of a large number of people. A sample of the population makes it easier to study, becoming more convenient and potentially producing results that are more reliable fatigue not playing as much of a factor, thus fewer errors in the result. Furthermore, gathering data from fewer sources enables the researcher to gather a more detailed, hence accurate, collection of information. The ultimate test of any sample design though, is measured by how *significant* to the study the characteristics of the population it purports to represent are. Schwandt (2007:270) argues that “the sample size depends entirely on the nature of the study, the research question and the concepts being investigated.” It is not always feasible to collect data from every possible observation of the populace. A sample of the entire population, in which case the sample size will be representative of the entire target population, shall be used.

The researcher administered randomly 150 questionnaires to NMB residents, all of which were satisfactorily answered and returned. In addition, 10 interviews and 2 focus groups discussions were conducted. Demographically, the respondents represented all; age groups - 14 years and up -, races, religions, professions and occupations, those employed and unemployed, both literate and illiterate and people living in cities and ghettos (townships), otherwise known as informal settlements. The author though convinced that this sample would provide meaningful data, acknowledges that a larger sample size would have guaranteed more reliable results. The premise regarding the conviction concerning the number of respondents is based on the assumption that, “size is a matter of judgment, rather than

calculation” (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 1997:155). It is not therefore necessary to sample the entire population which, being far too large, would be impractical for this mini-dissertation.

### **3.6. DATA COLLECTION**

The data for this study is collected with the understanding that, first of all, no research is viable in approaching a problem unless there is data to support it. Secondly, regarding the data itself, unless the method used to collect it is scientifically valid, said data is not legitimate. (Smit, 1995:17).

In this study, there are two categories of data sources used: primary data, consisting of information obtained first hand by the researcher from respondents, and secondary data, information sourced from material that has previously been researched.

The primary data for this study was collected from interviews, focus groups, participant observation and questionnaires. Most of the questions were perception-related since the study itself examines public perception. Compiling the secondary data, the author consulted journals, books, newspapers, magazines and internet sources. Relevant material serves to either confirm or contradict the data collected from primary sources. The following discussion covers the three chief forms of data-collection applied to this study.

#### **3.6.1. Questionnaire**

This is the most widely used technique for surveys and data collection for the manner in which it facilitates the respondents’ ability to deliver those answers sought after in a study. According to Saunders et al. (1997: 245), the design of the questionnaire affects the response as well as the validity and reliability of the data collected. The careful design of an individual question can maximise response rate, and too the validity and reliability of the answers.

During construction of the questionnaire designed for this study, the opinions and beliefs of the respondents were carefully taken into consideration. Individual question content and format, wording and sequence of questions and the nature of the question were carefully constructed to yield the responses required for interpretation.

Questionnaires (see appendix A) developed for this study are divided into three sections: Section one delineates the respondent's basic biographical details, such information as gender, residence and any contacts with foreign nationals. Section two - Likert Scale questions - explore perceptions NMB residents have concerning foreign nationals. This entailed the prejudicial inquisition of respondents to elicit programmed answers to 25 questions which fall under five sub-headings (economic, services, crime, culture and media – all environments alleged to be breeding grounds for hostile attitudes toward foreigners. The reason was to avoid respondents from being duplicitous in their responses not wholly honest in reflecting the nature of their actual feelings.

Section three incorporated questions open-ended in nature, and, while focusing on media and xenophobia, prompts respondents to motivate and express their views in detailed. Respondents were not requested to provide their personal details. The questionnaires (both written and the oral) were made simple and short, to avoid any discouragement on the part of the respondents.

### **3.6.2. Interviews**

In this phase of data collection, ten (10) individuals were interviewed orally. During the interview process, they were asked various questions while, at the same time their responses were recorded. The interview followed a pattern of structured, semi-structured and unstructured questions. In line with Riley et al.'s (2000) belief that, requiring preparation, an interview as well as the questionnaire, needs careful thought and preparation. This is in order that the interview yields the information the researcher is attempting to validate. It is important that the researcher allocates enough time to suffice for both preparation and the interviews themselves.



Normally an interview is considered an ideal method for the collection of data as the researcher is afforded the opportunity to ask questions related to facts, beliefs, feelings and even the motives and/or reasons for actions (Saunders et al. 1997). Interviews for this study were conducted to enable the researcher to observe non-verbal expressions such as gestures, facial expressions, pace and tonal changes, all to better grasp the emphasis respondents placed on various words and phrases when giving their answers, cues were used during the interview to guide the conversation whenever the interviewee digressed.

One disadvantage of this method is that it is time consuming. Nonetheless, respondents were allowed enough time to best frame and articulate their answers. Where a respondent did not speak English sufficiently well or simply failed to understand a question and/or concept, the researcher intervened to adapt the question making it understandable for the respondent.

Data collection was solely the responsibility of the researcher. Where a question failed to evoke a reaction from the respondent, it was restructured to make it more understandable. The aim of this study is to obtain, in an exploratory fashion, an adequate description of the way in which the respondents experience their lives in relation to foreign nationals.

### **3.6.3. Focus Group**

During the group discussion, two small groups of NMB residents were asked to express their opinions regarding the foreign nationals and how they see the media coverage of immigrants. One focus group consisted of eight people and the other seven. The entire discussion revolved around the following three questions:

- I. How do you perceive foreign nationals in general?
- II. What do you think are the causes of xenophobia or xenophobic violence?
- III. To what extent do you think the media contributes to xenophobia?

### **3.7. PILOT STUDY**

According Leedy (1997), “a brief study is an excellent way to determine the feasibility of your study” as it sheds light on areas that have previously been ambiguous. Lewis and Thornhill (1997: 306) caution against skipping a pilot test: “Without a trial run, you have no way of knowing [whether] your questionnaires will succeed.” As such, an initial investigation was done to check the relevance of the questionnaires as an effective data collection instrument that can help produce the desired information.

Four respondents were used for the pilot survey to authenticate the questions. One pair of respondents were issued two copies of the questionnaires for them to answer, whilst the other pair (using the same questionnaires) were interviewed verbally by the researcher. The respondents were accorded enough time to complete their answers. The pilot test was employed to check: (i) the clarity of the instructions; (ii) how long it takes the respondents to complete the questionnaire; (iii) whether the layout was clear.

After the test, the pilot survey exposed some loopholes in the questionnaires and the necessary corrections were made. In addition, expert advice concerning the relevance as well as structure of the questionnaires was sought from the research supervisor and also a statistician. Necessary amendments were made and the refined questionnaire became a template for this study.

### **3.8. DATA ANALYSIS**

The aim of this study, simply put, is to produce reliable information. Thus the data-analysis phase of this study is, where raw data is gathered, it is transformed into comprehensive findings. Data-analysis is a process where a researcher attempts to bring order, structure and meaning to the mass of data gathered in the search for recurring, underlying themes and general statements. It is organising data into categories and identifying patterns among the categories. “This is applied through

systematic reflection on the complexities of human experiences by reporting social phenomenon in the words of those being searched” (Marcos, 2010:66).

Qualitative data analysis is an inductive process which searches for variations, construction of meaning and the examination of complexities (Robin & Robin, 2005: 202). According to Marshall and Rossman (2006:156), qualitative analysis involves the following procedure: The organisation of the data, immersion in the data to develop a thorough familiarity with the data, the generating of categories and themes, coding the data and offering interpretation.

Qualitative analysis helped keep a free flow of information and inductive analysis was used in interpreting the data as it allowed the patterns to emerge rather than imposing the patterns on data prior to the data collection process (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:461–462). In the analysis and interpretation of data, each sub-problem is addressed individually and systematically. The data was coded and systematically classified. Data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection and interviews were transcribed from note format to be compared with each other to identify the common themes.

The process entailed collecting information, sorting the information into categories, formulating the information into a story and then writing the qualitative text. Pie charts, graphs, and tables are used to expose clearly the information and also to show the relationship between variables in a more visual way. The main aim for analysing the data was to explore the foundational causes of hostility towards foreign nationals and whether in fact the media has a hand in the xenophobic attacks against foreign nationals.

### **3.8.1. Themes in the Research**

During the analysis, five themes were identified around which it is possible to construct a comprehensive understanding regarding the relationship between negative perceptions against foreign nationals and media representation of foreign

nationals. They constitute the bulk of the alleged causes behind xenophobic tendencies. These are:

Theme 1: *Economic* –immigrants are accused of stealing the jobs of locals by being cheap labour.

Theme 2: *Services* –immigrants are accused of restraining snail-paced service delivery whether it is education, health services or public housing.

Theme 3: *Crime* –they are said to be exacerbating the already high crime level, dealing in drugs, rape, stealing and hijacking.

Theme 4: *Culture* –immigrants allegedly corrupt the culture of local South African by introducing unbecoming norms such as prostitution.

Theme 5: *Media* - accused of disinforming the public through misrepresentation and defaming of foreign nationals.

These themes also used the variables in this study to serve as a barometer to test the public's perception of immigrants in relation to the immigrants coverage by media. In the analysis Chapter, each theme is presented via extracts that provide rich and in-depth descriptions of the theme. Comparative analysis as well as comparative testing is done to determine which factor carries more weight than the other.

### **3.8.2. Testing Tools**

There are two statistical test tools used in this data analysis that test whether there is/are significant differences in the distribution or frequency of the data; that is, they test whether there is a relationship between all the variables and also between the variable (which gauges public sentiment) and media reports. These tools are: t-test and Chi-squared.

Where different mean values for two independent variables were needed to be tested to determine which of two or more pairs of independent variables draw more

anti-immigrant sentiment than the other, t-tests were applied. T-tests are used to assess whether the means of two groups are statistically different from each other.

Since determining difference alone was not enough, the Chi-square test is used to determine how significant the differences is between the expected frequencies and the observed frequencies in the categories. By definition, the Chi-square is a statistical calculation used to test how significant the relationship between variables are or whether the distribution of a set of observed data matches a theoretical probability distribution. However, Chi-square is not able to explain just *how* significant or important the relationship is. In that regard, Cramer's V is used to give this additional information. Cramer's V is used as post-test to determine strengths of association after chi-square has determined significance. It varies between 0 and 1. Close to 0 it shows little association between variables. Close to 1, it indicates a strong association. ([www.changingminds.org/explanations/research/analysis/chi-square.htm](http://www.changingminds.org/explanations/research/analysis/chi-square.htm)).

### **3.8.3. Grounded Theory Approach**

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), grounded theory is a process where a theory emerges from data collected. Neuman (1997: 334) notes one of the essential strategies in which grounded theory is generated and operating is a comparative analysis; that is, it builds a theory by making comparisons. However, the aim of this study is not to develop a new theory; rather, it is to arrive at a set of findings: determine the role of the media in xenophobia; examine the status of xenophobia and its potential effect on development. Grounded theory makes qualitative research flexible and allows the data and theory to interact.

### **3.9. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Validity and reliability are measurement "tools" that are used to check whether a conclusion of a study is inaccurate.

### **3.9.1. Validity**

Validity measures “precision, accuracy, and relevance” of a research project (Sarantakos 2005: 83). Credibility, trustworthiness or authenticity of a research is important because qualitative research does not promote “the idea of a single version of truth” (Leedy, 1997:32). The researcher used the following methods to ensure credibility:

Firstly, the questionnaire was simply worded using emotive terms (strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree instead of using the 1-5 Likert Scale) to ensure that respondents knew exactly what words they wanted to use for their answers. The questionnaires were then given to an academic and a statistician for scrutiny to ensure that the study is not invalidated by: Firstly, subject error which occurs when data are unreliable. Secondly, observer effect; when the respondents know that their behaviour is being observed and then they act in a manner that does not conform to their typical manner (Robson, 1993). When the respondents were asked to comment on the clarity of the questions, they confirmed that there were no any ambiguities in the questions.

Secondly, data from various NMB residents were compared for consistency. The result has shown no discrepancies or contradictions. The study was subjected to an investigator triangulation where the findings were compared with 1999, 2006 and 2008 reports of survey on xenophobia by the South African Migration Project (SAMP). Findings on perception towards media are compared with Danso and McDonalds’ (2000) and McDonald and Jacobs’ (2005) studies on media representation of foreign nationals. Lastly, post-interview evaluation was used for interpretative and descriptive validity.

### **3.9.2. Reliability**

Reliability is a measure of consistency and precision in a research project. Irrelevant questions and inaccuracy of a test may cause any inferences drawn from the

research design to become invalid. In this study, this problem was overcome by making use of a pilot study which served as a test-retest method. The researcher took great care to evaluate the content, scrutinising the validity of the questionnaire.

Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha was used for reliability statistics. Cronbach's alpha is popularly used to determine internal consistency which involves correlating responses to each question with those received for other questions, or for questions within the same sub-section of the questionnaire. After administering the questionnaire used in this study, the responses to sections A and B were statistically tested for internal consistency and the Cronbach alphas for each sub-scale indicated that the scales were acceptable.

### **3.10. LIMITATION**

The main shortcoming of this study is that the results are narrowly based on the perceptions, views and opinions of NMB residents. As such, the findings can neither be permitted as a suitable reflection, enough to generalise to the whole nation, nor does it reflect the rigid views of NMB residents. While the views of the participants are subject to changes, the views of South Africans in other parts of the country might differ completely.

Secondly, in the written section of the questionnaires, some respondents left some vital questions unanswered. For example, they answered to most of the questions but have left some basic biographical information such as gender and/or place of residence. Such information is significant when determining proportional prevalence of anti-foreign sentiment.

### **3.11. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

All the respondent were informed about the nature of the research, that it is solely for academic purposes carried out in fulfillment of a Master's degree. Respondents were

informed that they would not be paid, nor given any incentives for their participation in the research in whichever capacity.

Secondly, respondents were assured privacy and confidentiality. They were clearly told that it is the onus of the researcher to protect all the data collected for the research, to prevent them from being divulged or made available to any other person. Anonymity was ensured such that no space was provided for name or any other person details such contacts.

### 3.12. CONCLUSION

**Table: Summary**

Overall research methodology	Qualitative
Research approach	Explorative, descriptive
Sampling approach	Probability sampling, simple random sampling
Sample size	150 questionnaires, 10 interviews, 2 focus groups,
Data collection methods	Books, journals, structured and semi-structured questionnaires, focus groups, interviews
Methods of data analysis	Coding, integrative diagrams, memoing, thematic analysis
Validity and reliability	Theoretical validation, interpretative validation, descriptive validation
Response rate	The return rate for the 150 questionnaires was 100% successful. However, 2% of the respondents did not answer all the questions.

In conclusion, this chapter has discussed the research design including the methodology to be used in the data collection process, methods of data analysis, sampling, data collection, data analysis, grounded theory approach, validity and reliability of the study, and also limitation encountered during data collection and analysis process. This chapter serves as a precursor for the next chapter.



## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter three, the qualitative research method used for this particular study was discussed in detail. The procedure was structured around, to begin with, a questionnaire consisting of 25 questions and presented to 150 respondents. This was followed by 10 interviews and third and lastly, 2 focus group discussions. Each of these three segments of the study were entirely independent of the others. The aim of this research is to establish and explore the perception of the residents of Nelson Mandela Bay towards foreign nationals. In addition, this research project aims to ascertain how the media representation of foreigners has influenced the perception of otherness by local South Africans in NMB.

Chapter Two comprehensively identified and defined research themes within which one can understand and identify various causes of hostility. This chapter puts a focus on four factors; economics, services, crime and culture, first comparing them to previous findings regarding media coverage of foreign nationals, then explores whether or not there is any correlation between the two. The aim is to establish the effect of the media on public perception of foreigners. The chapter also presents the outcome regarding public opinion of the media, that is to say, what do the public think about the way in which the media represents non-nationals? This is to determine whether or not they feel that the press has had a negative or positive effect on their perception of the non-nationals.

The empirical study commences with an analysis of the biographical information of the respondents. Delivery and analysis of the data is done, followed by the results of the interviews and focus group studies. Throughout, the results are presented graphically, followed a description. Validity tests have been done on the findings of each factor in order to verify the reliability and credibility of the information provided. Every attempt has been made to ensure that the information provided in this survey is accurate.

## 4.2. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

### 4.2.1. Demographic Analysis

Chart 4.1.: Respondents according to gender

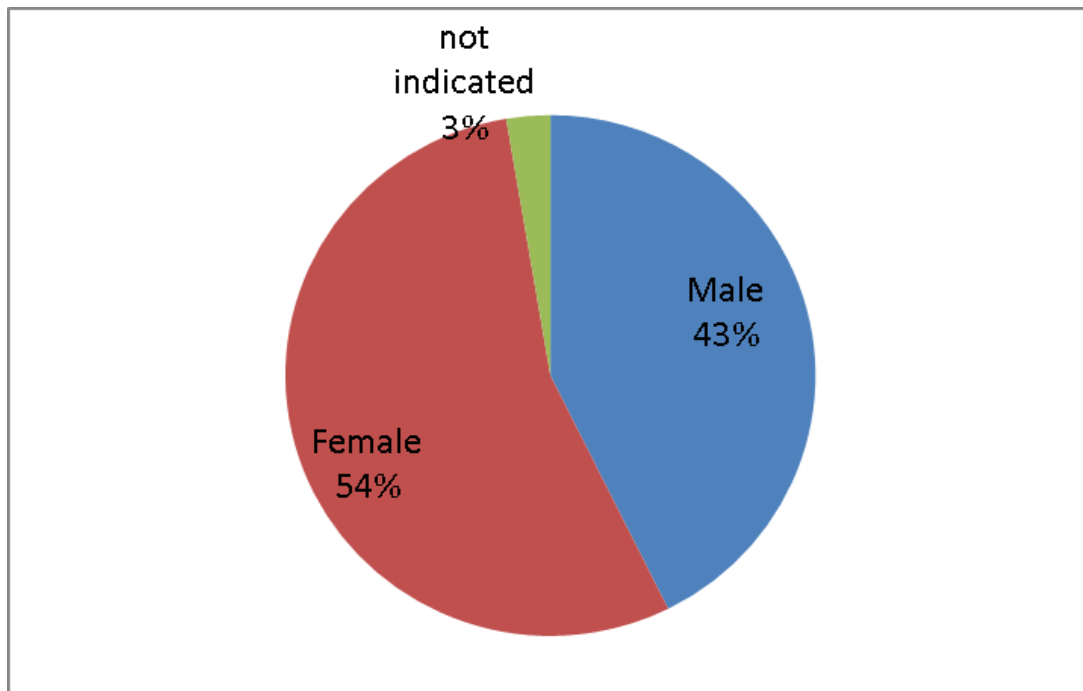


Chart 4.1 above depicts the gender breakdown of sources. Overall, women made up the majority of the sample, with 54 per cent. In terms of representation however, this study does not reflect any significant gender disparity. During the data collection process, the researcher enjoyed excellent audience response from respondents regardless of race or gender. In terms of proportional representation, records of South African Statistics 2001 indicate that females make up 52 per cent of the population. Notwithstanding, random sampling data collection technique which shuns proportional representation was used in this study.

Chart 4.2: Respondents who have contacts with foreigners

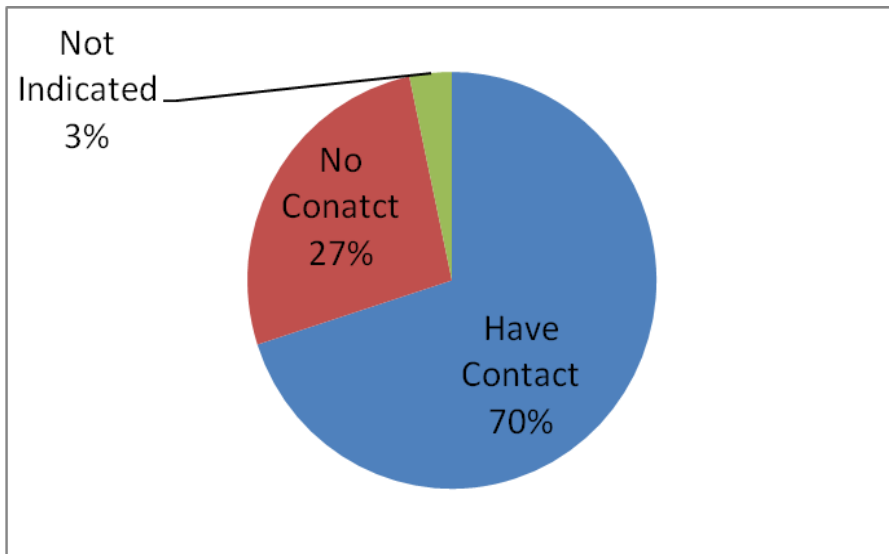


Chart 4.3: Respondents according to area of residence

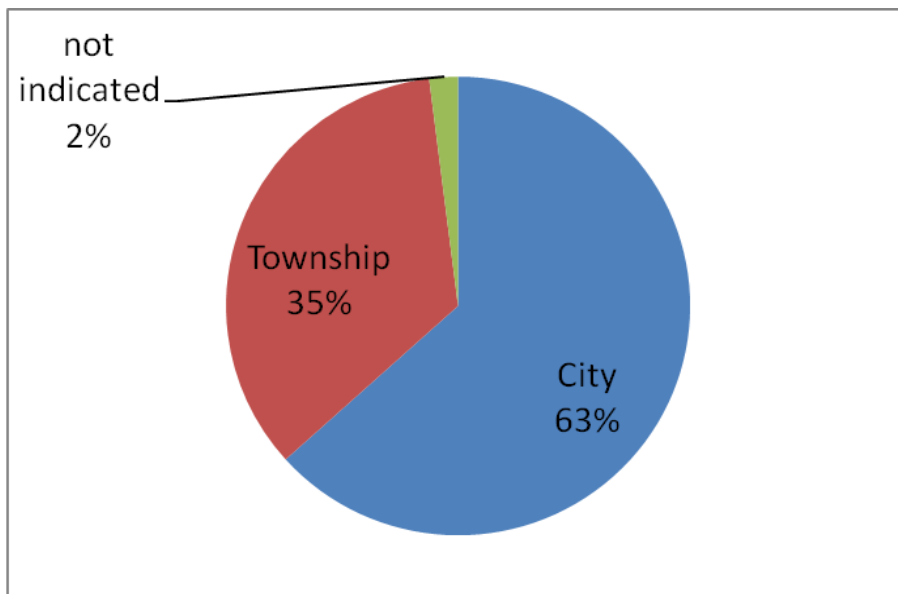
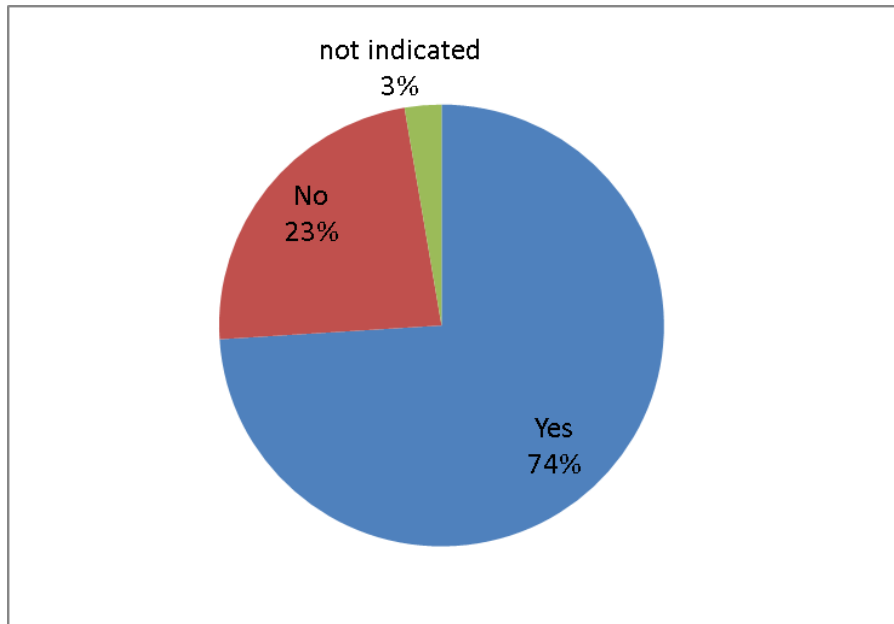


Chart 4.2 shows respondents and their interaction with non-citizens. In Chart 4.3, most of these respondents live in townships. Respondents who have no interaction with foreign nationals are more than a quarter (27%) of the total respondents. This finding corresponds with a 2006 SAMP survey which found that 32% of respondents had no contact with foreign nationals. This implies that this particular group of the

NMB community “form their attitudes about other Africans in a vacuum relying on hearsay and media and other representations” (Crush, 2008:31).

Chart 4.4: Respondents with foreign friends



Most of the respondents who fall into the category of those who do interact with foreign nationals, confirmed that they have foreign friends, nearly three out of every four having foreign friends.

It is interesting to note that, concerning the three pie charts above, all are statistically relatively close regarding the following segments of each. The percentage of respondents who in chart 4.2, have no contacts with foreigners, incorporate 27% of the whole. Chart 4.3 denotes those living in townships to be 35% and in chart 4.4, 23% of respondents indicated having no foreign friends at all. There seems to be somewhat too ‘intimate’ a relationship between “a lack of interaction with foreigners” and the violence enacted against them. Considering that most people who have little interaction with foreign nationals reside in townships and that “most” violent attacks perpetrated against foreign nationals occur in townships, there is a strong

relationship between the high violent xenophobic incidents in the townships and the lack of interaction with foreigners.

It is, however, important to realise that interaction and friendship with none nationals do not necessarily imply a lack of negative perceptions, or even the alternative, towards group members of a personal friend. The data collected for this study reflects that there are respondents who, having foreign friends, still reserve some level of intolerance towards non-nationals. However, such respondents are not likely to resort to violence. According to Crush (2008:31), interactions sometimes confirm prejudices rather than refute them, however, these feelings themselves are to open to prejudice to effectively authenticate any as valid.

While suspicion of foreigners realistically exists, even among those who have foreign friends, interaction (to an extent) forces acceptance and tolerance on the part of nationals, most often upon learning the circumstances that forced these immigrants to seek refuge in South Africa. Yet again, there were a significant number of respondents who interact with non-nationals only when absolutely necessary. Whether the reason is simply a case of caution being the better part of 'valour,' or part of a more sinister view of foreigners is not clear. Crush (2008:32) states contact cannot be isolated from the circumstances of interaction.

The following chart (4.5) presents the result of the statement "I am not fond of making friends with foreigners". Respondents who regularly interact with foreigners yet have no non-South African friends, and those who have no contacts with foreigners at all were targeted in this regard to establish their degree of consideration. The aim was to try to establish whether people distrusted foreigners.

Chart 4.5: Respondents not fond of befriending with foreign nationals

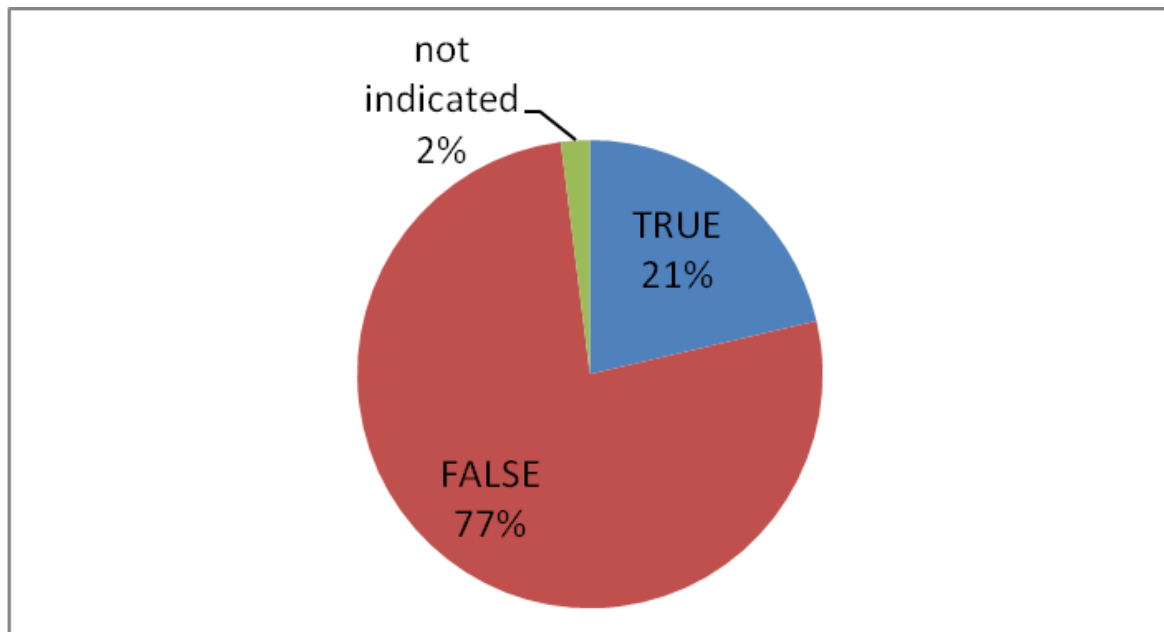


Chart 4.5 above shows more than 20% of the respondents are unwilling to befriend non-South Africans at all. This percentage is staggering however, when we regard charts 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 (above), juxtaposing the percentages of those respondents from *townships* (35%), those who have *no contact* with foreigners (27%), those with *no foreign friends* (23%) and those who are *not willing* to develop friendships (21%), there is a definite and almost tangible nature that is inherent in all. Put another way, the barrier of 'ignorance' created by certain local residents having little to no involvement with foreigners has subliminal impact, consistent across the board, on the development of hostile attitudes towards foreign nationals.

It is hard to gauge exactly the degree and nature of the sentiment that bedevils a country's residents to the point of xenophobic paranoia. Also, it is difficult to know whether or not the 'agents' perpetuating it do incorporate those who, for the most part, have no contact with non-nationals, or not. Nevertheless, the author (a foreigner himself) can confirm encounters hostile in nature, attitudes and responses (on basis on being foreign) on more than two occasions during the data collection sessions for this study. To relate two incidents, two sets of female respondents gave

very unfriendly verbal feedbacks. Both of them demanded the author's nationality before they gave any responses.

#### 4.2.2. Descriptive Statistics of the Factors

The factors: economic, services, crime and culture, are widely believed to be the impetus/motivation behind the hostilities and attacks (i.e. xenophobia) against foreign nationals in the country. This section provides an analysis for each factor to ascertain what NMB residents think/believe about foreign nationals on the basis of these factors.

Frequency table 4.1: Economic Factor

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q1	21.8	41.5	19.7	9.5	7.5	147	2.39	1.15
Q6	12	14.7	34.7	28	10.7	150	3.11	1.15
Q11	10.7	42.7	28.0	12.7	6.0	150	2.61	1.28
Q16	17.3	22.0	19.3	26.0	15.3	150	3.00	1.23

With regards to economic factors, in table 4.1, 63% of the respondents strongly agree or agree that foreign nationals compete for jobs with local residents, whereas 27% of the respondents hold the perception that foreign traders exploit customers. About 19% of the respondents disagree that foreigners contribute to the economy of the country. Close to 40% of the respondents strongly agree or agree that foreign traders destroy local businesses.

These results do agree with the SAMP 2006 findings which indicated 67% of South Africans consider foreigners to pose a threat to the economy (Crush, 2008:3). Compared to the 1999 SAMP result (37%), the findings in this study reveal that the general sentiment, that foreigners pose a threat to the job market and economy, has

intensified. Two empirical factors in determining the economy’s development and stability, employment and trade, carry the conviction among the respondents that foreign nationals severely limit the opportunities of local citizens in these regards. This serves to indicate that to disregard the economy as a significant factor, especially in a climate of suspicion and hostility towards foreign nationals in the country, would in fact be to the country’s detriment.

Frequency table 4.2: Services

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q2	9.5	15	30.6	33.3	11.6	147	3.22	1.13
Q7	12	18	22.7	34	13.3	150	3.19	1.23
Q12	8	13.3	34.7	31.3	12.7	150	3.27	1.10
Q17	7.3	10.7	25.3	34.7	22	150	3.53	1.16

Services refer to those needs the public is dependent on the government to fulfill and cannot be met in their own capacity. These include; public housing, health, transportation and public utilities such as water and electricity. As can be seen in table 4.2 above, the data shows respondents believe the presence of foreign nationals in the country has a negative impact holistically on service delivery: 25% of them believe foreigners reduce public services such as housing and education while 30% think immigrants have worsened the health situation in the country. Surprisingly, 18% of the respondents think foreign learners are given preferential treatment in schools over and above South African learners. More than 20% of the respondents strongly agree or agree, foreigners have under resourced public hospitals and a police regard willing and capable to fight crime on their behalf.



Frequency table 4.3: Crime

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q4	22.1	18.6	29.7	21.4	8.3	145	2.75	1.25
Q9	12.2	23.8	19	29.3	15.6	147	3.19	1.28
Q14	10.1	26.8	22.8	26.2	14.1	149	3.07	1.23
Q19	23.3	21.3	35.3	10.7	9.3	150	2.61	1.22

Table 4.3 above shows widespread concerns among the respondents pertaining to crime associated with foreign nationals: 41% of the respondents believe foreigners deal in drugs while 36% think immigrants are the reason for the increasing corruption in the country. About 37% are convinced crime has increased due to the foreigners. A staggering 45% believe most foreign nationals in the country are illegal immigrants. The findings agree with 1999 SAMP survey which indicated 48% of South Africans saw migrants from the neighbouring countries as a “criminal threat”.

Frequency table 4. 4: Culture

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q5	6.9	10.3	22.8	35.2	24.8	145	2.60	1.17
Q10	13.5	16.9	21.6	24.3	23.6	148	3.28	1.35
Q15	11.4	12.1	12.8	31.5	32.2	149	3.61	1.35
Q20	32.2	32.2	14.8	6.7	14.1	149	2.38	1.37

According to the data in table 4.4 above, 31% of the respondents fall within the categories, ‘Strongly-Agree’ or ‘Agree’ concerning the topic, foreign nationals bringing deviant practices, such as prostitution to the country. Only 17% see the

culture of foreigners as unsafe for their children while 23% do not feel comfortable when people speak in a foreign language. It is important note 21% indicate they cannot even live with people not indigenous to South Africa.

#### 4.2.3. Interpretative Statistics for the Factors

Table 4.6 below gives a snap overview of all the factors discussed separately in the previous section.

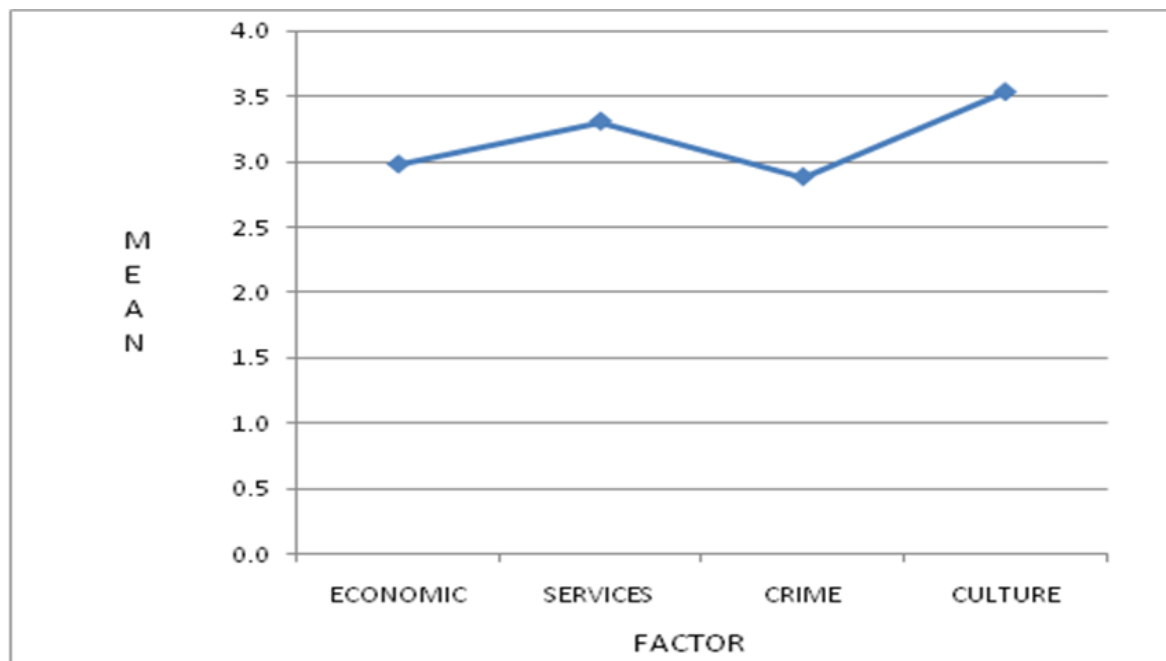
Frequency table 4.5: Means and Standard deviation of the four factors

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>std. dev.</b>
Economic	2.98	0.76
Services	3.31	0.78
Crime	2.88	0.92
Culture	3.53	0.97

The *mean* represents the intermediate value of responses in collusion given for every set of questions under each factor. The lesser the mean of a factor, the greater it is of concern; pertaining to the respondents.

The *standard deviation* (std. dev.) indicates the degree to which the values within the factors above vary. The set above reflects a standard deviation of less than 1 unit Mean's variance between every number. This signifies that the difference in viewpoints expressed by each respondent with respect to each of the four questions relevant to said factors is so negligible that most likely and doubtfully perchance, respondents already shared, along with poplar public opinion, a common viewpoint seen from slightly different perspectives. It is important to take note that individual questions discompose respondents in much the same way. For further elaborations, see the graph below and the explanations thereunder.

Figure 4.1: Mean values for the factors



Graph 4.1 above shows a diagrammatic representation of the relative mean values pertaining to the four factors, as a matter of grave concern for the respondents. The graph depicts the factors determining which individual 'factor' weighs heaviest in being cause of anti-immigrant sentiment.

As mentioned earlier, the mean gives summary to an entire set of feedback by respondents for each factor. A low mean value for a factor signifies a higher level of concern for the respondents, whilst a higher mean value for factors signifies a lower degree of concern. It also indicates respondents have a greater affinity to questions formulated to depict foreign nationals from a negative perspective. In this regard, crime (2.88) and economy (2.98) stand out as the major concerns while culture (3.53), of the four factors is of least concern. Put more clearly, citizens think immigrants pose more of a threat to the economy than to service delivery (mean value, 3.31).

In practical terms, the Nelson Mandela Bay residents think foreigners exacerbate crime level, steal their jobs, destroy local business and introduce pursuits destructive to community development and deviant of accepted norms, prostitution to name but

one. As highlighted in the questionnaires, services include housing, health care and schools while economic issues relate to trade and job opportunities amongst others.

#### 4.2.4. T-Tests and the Analysis of the Factors

In previous sections, we described and interpreted the mean values of the factors. This section assesses the dichotomy of a variety of coupled and seemingly contradictory relationships (discussed in section 5.2.1 viz. male/female, city/township, contact/no contact, friendship/no friendship etcetera). These are reflected against the four factors, and using *t*-tests, draw comparisons which test mean differences in order to justify their validation. The objective is to determine how wide or narrow the mean difference between the factors is and also whether all the factors are critical.

T-Tests are normally used when comparing the means of two groups assessing whether they (the means) are *statistically* different to each other. Bearing in mind that the data was collected using random methodology technique, the author approached the two groups with the assumption that they are probabilistically equal.

The standard measure used to determine statistical difference for the mean in this context is *p* which is equal to or less than 0.05 ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

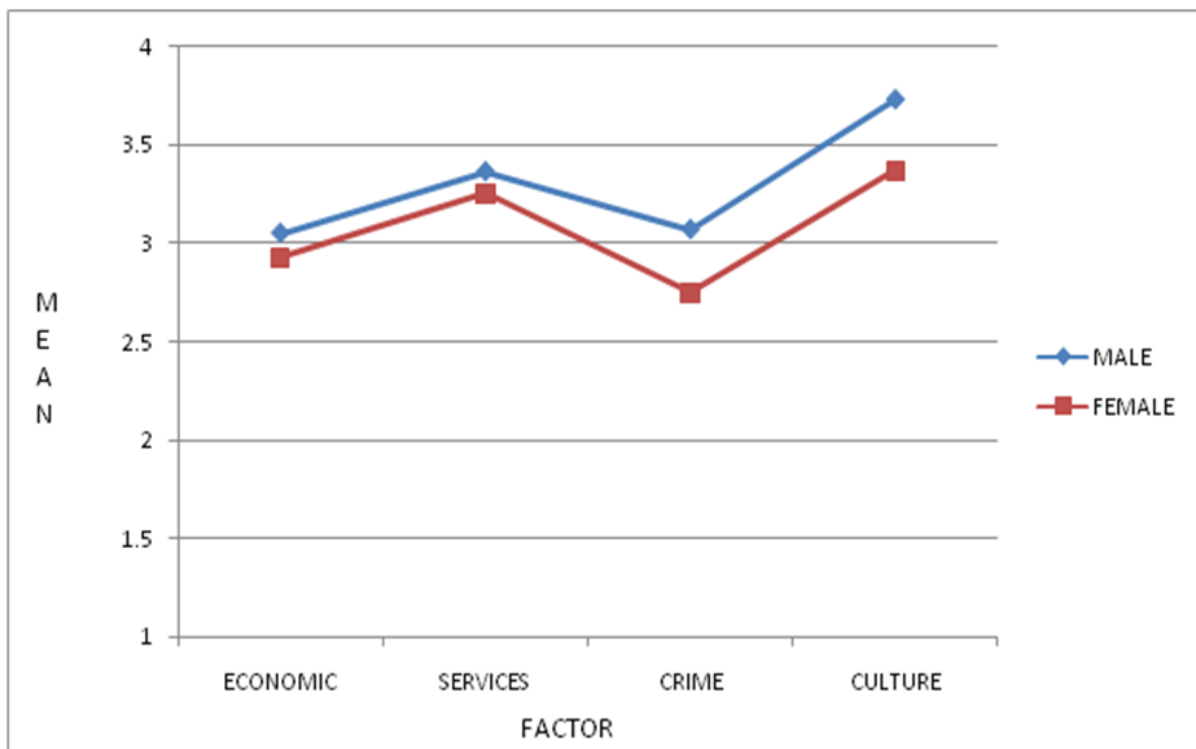
Table 4.6: T-Test for Gender

	<b>Mean Male</b>	<b>Mean Female</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Cohen's d</b>
ECONOMIC	3.05	2.93	0.96	0.3370	0.16
SERVICES	3.36	3.26	0.82	0.4163	0.14
CRIME	3.07	2.75	2.08	0.0394	0.35
CULTURE	3.73	3.37	2.23	0.0273	0.37

According to table 4.6 above, there is no mean difference between male and female respondents on economic factors and services because their  $p$  values are greater than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, the mean difference between crime and culture is statistically significant because the  $p$  value is less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ). In both crime and culture, the mean for females is lower than for males, meaning that females on average are more susceptible emotionally than males regarding reports and rumours that crime in the country has increased due to foreign nationals and also that the culture of foreigners is unsafe for their children.

In table 4.6 it was noted that fear of foreign nationals is relatively consistent to both genders, however, it was shown that female respondents hold more fear of foreigners on account of crime and culture. We have not, however, mentioned that within the domain of the overall ranking of all the four factors, from the highest to lowest, both genders featured crime and economy as the top of the list, i.e. of the greatest concern.

Figure 4.2: Variance Level for gender



In graph 4.1 above, we see the depiction of male (blue line) and female (red line) respondents which graphically positional, represent both the degree and the variance between their respective fears. A low graphic value equates to a high level of phobia and alternatively a high value correlates with a low phobic level. On average, female respondents scored low in graph readings in contrast to their male counterparts. Thus females are more fearful of foreigners than the male respondents regarding all the factors. This is just an indicator of a phobia which exhibits itself more pervasively in women, however, it does not necessarily mean females are more likely to resort to violence against foreign nationals but they may just incite violence.

The graph shows that this affliction affects both sexes, who, revealing no measurable difference in degree, still to some extent exhibit a noticeable fear of foreigners. For instance, the variance between males and females regarding the factor Crime is minimal while Culture is of a relative practical significance. In a country where the rate of crime is one of highest in the world and women are often prime victims, just regarding rape and other forms of violence, it makes perfect sense that any stereotype associative with crime factors heavily regarding womens perspective of said stereotype regardless of whether a victim of such acts or not.

During an interview session, a portion of female respondents expressed grave concerns as regards foreign men marrying local women to acquire South African citizenship. Ironically, some of them met foreign men but confessed having no negative encounters with them. Among the interviewees were also women who were “happily married” still citing the prevalence of the perception of marrying from “outside the community”. However, the fears regarding foreign men marrying local women to acquire citizenship are not ill-founded. The author came across three men who acquired the South African citizenship through fraudulent marriages. The author also encountered a local lady whose foreign husband took her identity card without her knowledge to get the citizenship only to discover his intentions when she was summoned to the Department of Home Affairs to conform their marriage.

The phobia of foreigners regarding the concerns of female respondents does not necessarily come as a result of “otherness” or presupposed associations with criminal activity but also their unpredictability. Foreigners are regarded as having high levels of energy and extremely active. There is the perception that foreigners can commit any crime, simply vanishing afterwards never to be seen again.

Table 4.7: T-test for residence

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Mean Township</b>	<b>Mean City</b>	<b>T-Value</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Cohen's D</b>
ECONOMIC	2.96	3.00	-0.28	0.7837	0.05
SERVICES	3.26	3.33	-0.57	0.5720	0.10
CRIME	2.79	2.94	-0.96	0.3407	0.16
CULTURE	3.28	3.67	-2.35	0.0200	0.41

According to the above table, residents from townships are more afraid of foreign nationals than those residing in the city. This is predominantly due to extreme cultural differences. Economic competition is another factor here but also a concern well expressed by members of focus group and interviewees. In some townships in NMB, there are more foreign traders than are local businesspeople.

Table 4.8: T-test for contact with foreign nationals

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Mean Contact</b>	<b>Mean No Contact</b>	<b>T-Value</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Cohen's D</b>
ECONOMIC	3.01	2.93	0.59	0.5544	0.11
SERVICES	3.39	3.10	2.07	0.0404	0.38
CRIME	2.96	2.70	1.54	0.1261	0.29
CULTURE	3.63	3.29	1.89	0.0614	0.35

Table 4.8 above indicates the most likely barrier restraining nationals from relating meaningfully with non-nationals is the fear that the latter might exploit this to gain access to public services entitled to nationals. Accepting them holistically gives the impression that local citizens are in (involuntary) competition with foreign nationals for the snail-paced services such as free housing, health care and social grants (pension).

Table 4.9: T-test for nationals with foreign friendship

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Mean Have Foreign Friend</b>	<b>Mean No Foreign Friend</b>	<b>T-Value</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Cohen's D</b>
ECONOMIC	3.10	2.58	3.67	0.0003	0.71
SERVICES	3.44	2.85	4.14	0.0001	0.80
CRIME	3.03	2.41	3.61	0.0004	0.70
CULTURE	3.71	2.91	4.52	0.0000	0.88

For the respondents who have contact with foreigners but the dynamics do not extend to friendships, all the factors comparably, are almost equally and comparably important ,  $p$  values for all the factors depicting less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Differences between respondents who have foreign friends and those without foreign friends are significantly large proportionally in all the factors. This means those without foreign friends tend to have extreme prejudiced leanings against foreigners as compared to those with foreign friends.

Table 4.9 above shows that the level of interaction with non-nationals determines the extent to which citizens are likely to reserve misgivings. The more the interaction, the more likely irrational fears dissipate.

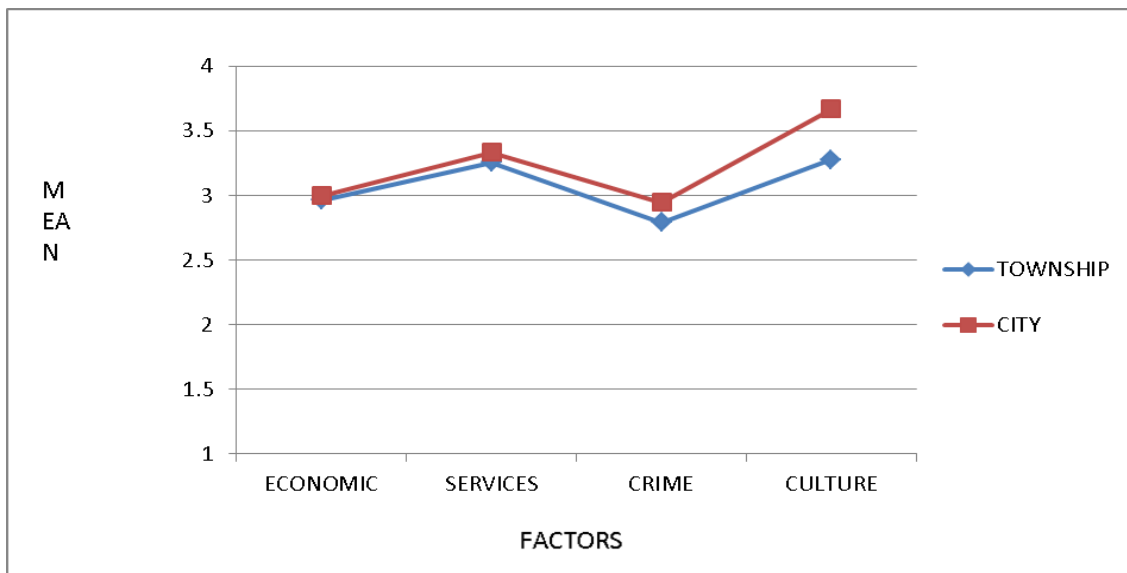


Table 4.10: t-test for accommodating foreign nationals

Factors	Mean Respondents who can Accommodate Immigrants	Mean Respondents who cannot Accommodate Immigrants	T-Value	p	Cohen's D
ECONOMIC	3.04	2.77	1.83	0.0694	0.37
SERVICES	3.37	3.06	2.00	0.0469	0.40
CRIME	2.93	2.75	0.96	0.3398	0.19
CULTURE	3.65	3.10	2.84	0.0052	0.57

In table 4.10 above, culture and services are statistically significant because the  $p$  value is smaller than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Culture is thus the most likely reason why respondents can/will not accommodate the non-nationals. It is however, interesting to note that crime is the least concern in this regard.

Figure 4.3: Mean of Factor against respondent according residential background



Overall, Township residents fear foreign nationals more than city dwellers. This explains quite clearly why xenophobic attacks are more prevalent in the townships.

Figure 4.4: respondents with contact and without contact with foreign nationals

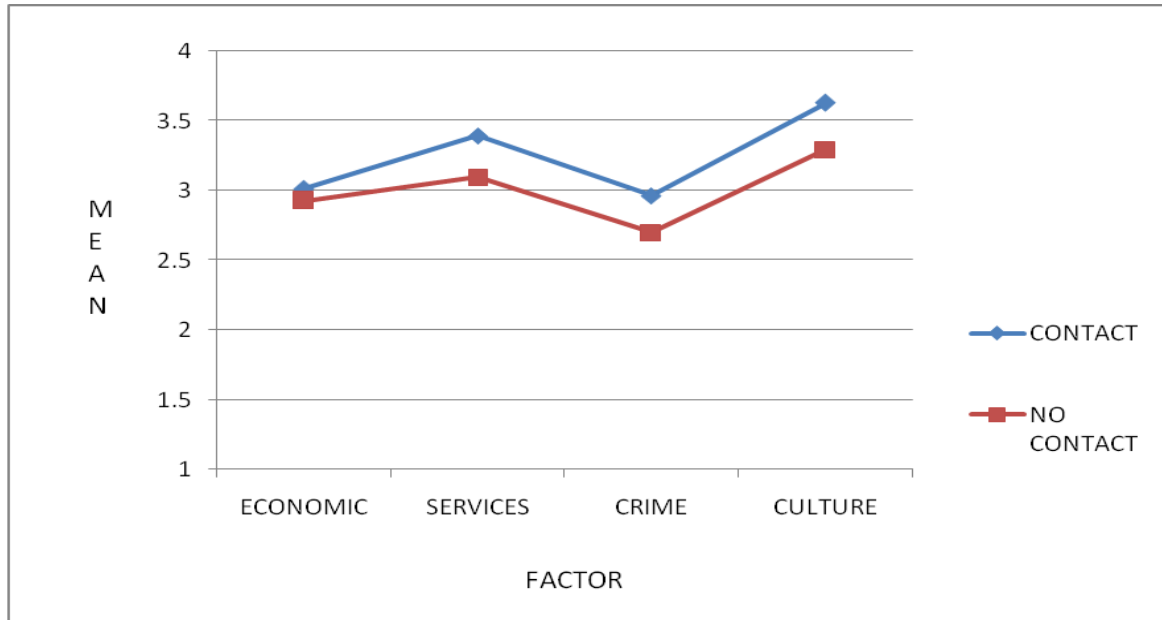
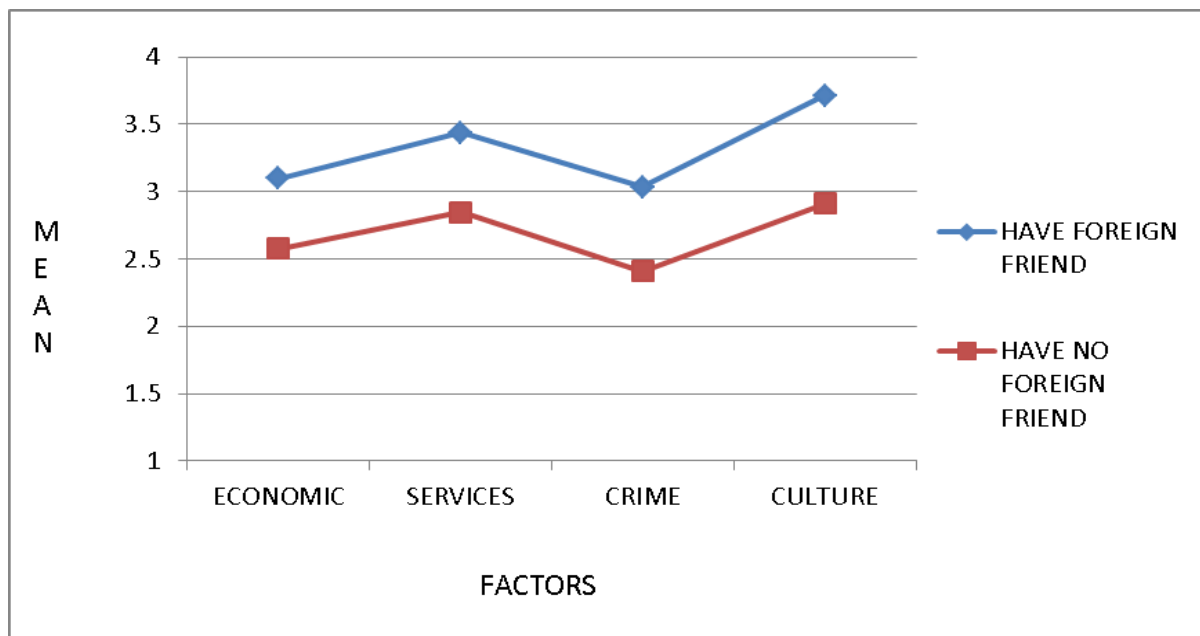


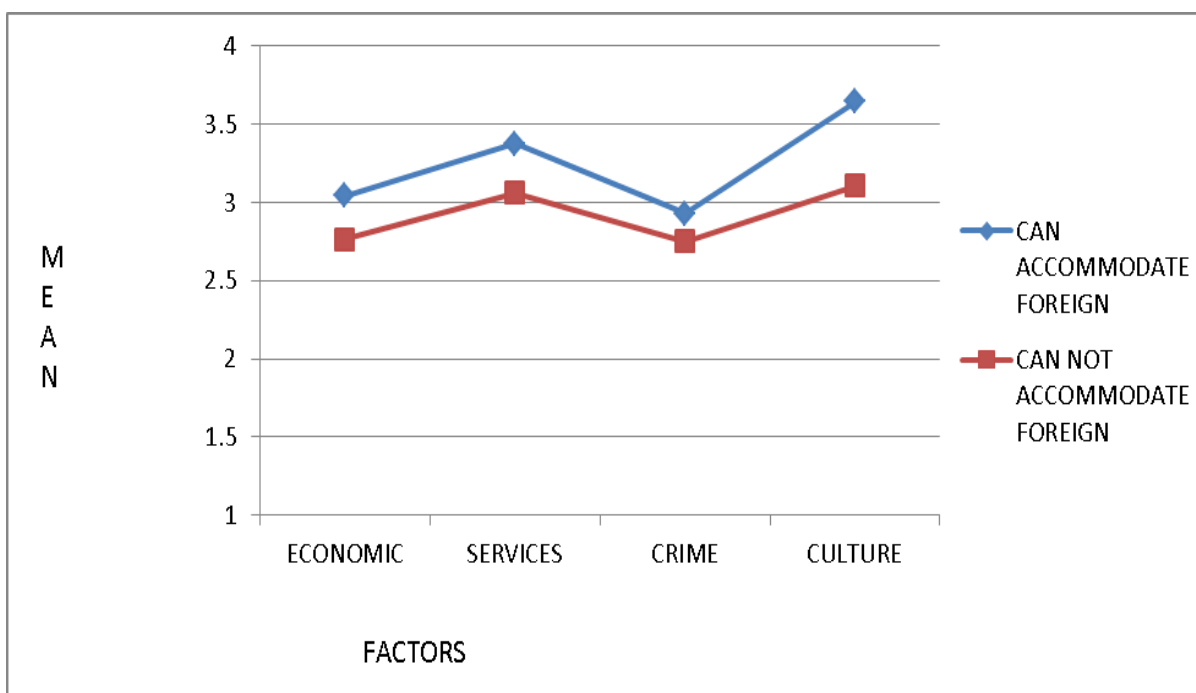
Figure 4 above indicates respondents who, having regular contact/interaction with foreign nationals have overall less fear of them as compared to those who do not have any contact at all.

Figure 4.5: respondents who have and those who have no foreign friends



In figure 5, the gap between the views of those that have foreign friends and those that do not have is distinctly wide. This signifies the importance of acquaintances and how that plays a part in dispelling irrational prejudices by closing the gap and reducing the level of fear. The more one gets acquainted with a foreigner, the more one comes to realize that the fear is irrational and differences pertain more to the nationality than the individual immigrant.

Figure 4.6: Respondents who can/cannot put up with foreign nationals



In graph 4.5, we discussed respondents who are able to give accommodation to the presence of foreign nationals. However, figure 4.6 above gives a diagrammatic illustration of the gap between respondents who can accommodate and those who cannot accommodate foreign nationals. Respondent who said they can accommodate show high levels of tolerance vis-à-vis respondents who, alternatively, said they cannot accommodate them, a predominant reason being due to cultural differences.

### 4.3. PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND THE MEDIA

In previous chapters we have discussed the role of the media as informer, educator and entertainer. In this section of the empirical study, we look at the responses given by NMB residents regarding what that means to them in relation to with foreign nationals and how they perceive the media.

During the data collection, respondents were asked on the Likert Scale their views of the media with respect to foreign nationals. Described below are the responses as give by the respondents.

#### 4.3.1. Overview of public responses

Frequency table 4.11: responses on the media

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Valid n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
Q3	15.6	42.9	15	19	7.5	147	2.60	1.18
Q8	14.7	28	26	23.3	8	150	2.82	1.18
Q13	22.8	27.5	19.5	20.8	9.4	149	2.66	1.29
Q18	8.1	27.5	19.5	29.5	15.4	149	3.17	1.22

As can be seen in table 4.11 above, about 60% of the respondents say they get most of their information on foreign nationals from the media. However, about 40% of the responses bolster belief that the media misrepresents foreign nationals. About 50% of respondents think the media do not only misrepresent the non-nationals, but that the media directly contributes to anti-migrant sentiments. More than 35% of the respondents say the media has negatively influenced their perception towards the foreign nationals in the country.

#### 4.3.2. Testing the Views

Considering the variance of overall views, disparities within different subgroups need to be determined. Under the following headlines, disparities within views for each question are summarised.

### 4.3.2.1. Source of Information

In the overall analysis of the views, close to 60% of the respondents, strongly affirmed or affirmed that they get their basic information regarding foreigners in the country from the media.

The table below presents disparities in the responses to the statement, “I get my basic information on foreign nationals in the country from the media”.

Table 4.12: Testing disparities in the responses

Biographical Information		Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Total Sample		15.6%	42.9%	15%	19%	7.5%	147	2.60	1.18
Male		18.0%	40%	14%	21%	9%	63	2.619	1.224
Female		15.0%	44%	15%	19%	7.5%	80	2.6	1.176
City		14%	40%	16%	23%	7.5%	93	2.699	1.187
Township		20%	45%	14%	14%	7.8%	51	2.451	1.189
Have Contact with foreigners	Yes	14%	43%	17%	20%	7.2%	103	2.641	1.154
	No	23%	41%	10%	16%	10%	39	2.487	1.295
Have foreign Friend	Yes	15%	41%	17%	22%	6%	110	2.627	1.140
	No	21%	46%	9%	9%	15%	33	2.515	1.349
Can Accommodate An immigrant	True	7%	49%	19%	16%	10%	113	2.575	1.209
	False	19%	40%	14%	20%	7%	31	2.742	1.125

NB: This did not correspond 100% because some respondents left some biographical information incomplete.

According to the data above, there is no significant difference between the views of males and females (Chi-squared=0.36; df =4; P=0.986). The practical significance of this result as determined by Cramér’s V was small (V=0.05). Similarly, there is no significant difference between responses of city dwellers and those of township residents with respect to their views of the media in relation to foreign nationals (Chi-square: 2.33, df=4, p=.674627; Cramér’s V was small (V= 0.127).

#### 4.3.2.2. Misrepresentation of Immigrants

The results on the following table test the disparities in the responses to the interrogative statement, “the media misrepresent foreign nationals.”

Table 4.13: Testing disparities

Respondents For Q 8		Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid n	Mean	Std. Dev.
Total Sample		14.7%	28%	26%	23.3%	8%	150	2.82	1.18
Male		24%	22%	25%	22%	8%	64	2.688	1.271
Female		9%	33%	26%	25%	9%	82	2.915	1.124
City		17%	30%	26%	22%	8%	95	2.695	1.149
Township		12%	25%	25%	25%	9%	52	3.038	1.236
Have Contact with foreigners	Yes	18 %	31%	23%	21%	7.7%	105	2.695	1.210
	No	7.50%	23%	30%	30%	10%	40	3.125	1.114
Have foreign Friend	Yes	14.4%	34%	25%	20%	6.3%	111	2.694	1.135
	No	14.3%	9%	29%	34%	14%	35	3.257	1.245
Can Accommodate An immigrant	True	6.25%	16%	28%	38%	13%	32	3.344	1.096
	False	18%	31%	25%	19%	7%	115	2.670	1.175

NB: This did not correspond 100% since respondent left some biographical information incomplete.

Close to half of the respondents believe the media misrepresents non-nationals. The only mentionable difference is that male respondents tend to agree strongly whereas females more than the males, simply agree. In total 44% of male and 42% female respondents agree that think the media misrepresent. There is no significant difference between males and females (Chi-squared=6.99; df =4; p=0.37) with respect to their views. The practical significance of the difference is medium (Cramér's V=0.219).

#### 4.3.2.3. Contribution to Xenophobia

Fifty per cent of the respondents who expressed their views about the media in relation to covering immigrants say the media misrepresent the non-citizens.

Table 4.14: testing the disparity that the media contribute to xenophobia

Respondents For Q 13		Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Total Sample		22.8%	27.5%	19.5%	20.8%	9.4%	149	2.66	1.29
Male		27%	20%	20 %	27%	6%	64	2.656	1.30
Female		21%	32%	20%	15%	12%	81	2.654	1.31
City		25%	28%	21%	18%	9%	94	2.585	1.27
Township		21%	27%	17%	23%	12%	52	2.769	1.34
Have Contact with foreigners	Yes	21%	26%	22%	21%	11%	105	2.743	1.294
	No	28%	33%	15%	15%	8%	39	3.077	1.326
Have foreign Friend	Yes	22%	28%	21%	22%	8%	111	2.667	1.260
	No	29%	24%	18%	15%	15%	34	2.618	1.436
Can Accommodate An immigrant	True	22%	25%	22%	13%	19%	32	2.813	1.424
	False	24%	28%	19%	22%	7%	114	2.605	1.259

NB: This did not correspond 100% since respondent left some of the biographical information incomplete.

Table 4.14, indicates no significant difference between males and females and the pattern is the same for all the other biographical subgroups. For the males and females, the Chi-squared value was 6.16887, df =4, and p=0.189. In terms of practical significance, Cramér's V is medium (V=0.20) which means that some attention may be given to the existing differences. Male respondents tend to strongly agree while the female respondents agree more.

#### 4.3.2.4. Negative Influence

The following table tests the question, “the media have negatively influenced my perception towards foreigners”.

Table 4.15: testing the disparity in the views media negatively influenced my perception

Subgroup		Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Valid n	Mean	Std. Dev.
Total Sample		8.1%	27.5%	19.5%	29.5%	15.4%	149	3.17	1.22
Male		8%	34%	22%	22%	14%	64	3	1.208
Female		9%	20%	19%	36%	17%	81	3.333	1.225
City		8%	26%	20%	34%	12%	95	3.137	1.182
Township		8%	28%	20%	22%	24%	51	3.255	1.309
Have Contact with foreigners	Yes	8%	25 %	22%	32%	15 %	105	3.210	1.199
	No	10%	33 %	13%	26%	18%	39	3.077	1.3256
Have foreign Friend	Yes	9%	27%	20%	30%	14%	110	3.118	1.2171
	No	6%	26%	20%	26%	23 %	35	3.343	1.2589
Can Accommodate An immigrant	True	13%	31%	22%	19%	16%	32	2.938	1.2936
	False	7%	25%	19%	33%	16%	114	3.246	1.2015

NB: This did not correspond 100% since respondent left some of the biographical information incomplete.



Tests on the differences between males and females, and the views of the respondents from the city dwellers and those from townships, express almost similar stances regarding the media. No significant difference was found between them with Chi-squared=5.72; df =4; p=0.22 for males and females. In terms of practical significance of the result as determined by Cramér's was small (V=0.199). In terms of residential considerations, a similar result repeats itself – there is no significant difference with respect to media influencing perceptions towards foreign nationals negatively.

Inferentially, the overall results of the tests on the differences between the views of males and females using Chi-squared test and Cramér's V discussed below every table indicate no contradiction: respondents are convinced that the media misrepresents, contributes and gives a hand to the proliferation of negativity towards foreign nationals.

#### **4.4. INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS**

During the interviews and focus groups, participants have shown that they are aware of xenophobia and the prejudices against non-South Africans. They have also shown profound knowledge for discriminatory as well derogatory terms used to address foreign nationals. Even though none of the interviewees used derogatory language and most of them have shown a great deal of sympathy for victims of xenophobic violence, still they have reserved a considerable amount of suspicion of foreigners and demonstrated reference to a high degree of stereotypes especially when crime and competition for jobs were mentioned. The result of the interviews and focus group are summarised under the following headlines.

##### **4.4.1. Economic**

Respondents identified poverty among the previously disadvantage class of the society as something either inadequately addressed or not addressed at all. Among

the focus group respondents was a respondent who said he migrated to rural areas within Eastern Cape “because the situations have not improved since democracy”. The interviewees have also show high concern for the “increasing unemployment”. But the situation “worsened because people from far Africa take the jobs.” When asked how, some respondents depicted black foreigners as people who are more educated and better skilled than South Africans living in the townships.

A 72-year-old florist who works at an upmarket mall lamented about the job security. She said,

Africans who have got their independence long ago and are better educated come in and work for low wages here. Unfortunately, our government is doing nothing to improve the situation. The government is so corrupt that foreigners can access the resources. You see, corruption has increased because our system is the problem.

However, a man in his early twenties who identified himself as a student from a township reserved a different view. He said “foreigners are not better educated but they are hardworking. They are been attacked because some people feel jealous about their success.”

When asked whether the foreigners contribute to the economy, respondents have argued that foreign immigrants might have contributed to the economy by availing affordable goods but have also put pressure on the economy.

A street vendor from the New Brighton Township emphasised that foreigners compete for jobs with South Africans. When asked to explain further she pointed the figure at her neighbour who had a stall next to hers. There were Senegalese traders in the same street where the old lady sold her items. A few blocks from the old lady’s stall, the author went into the Traduna Mall –a shopping complex in the CBD where I counted ten foreign-owned shops all of which had at least one local lady working there at the time of the visit.

Interviewees from the townships have expressed most concerns when came to competition for jobs. Respondents for the focus group perceived Zimbabweans as better-educated and better skilled cheap labour while the Somali traders were alluded to contributing to the demise of local businesses.

#### **4.4.2. Crime**

On the issue of crime, respondents expressed grave concerns about foreign-instigated criminal activities. Some interviewees were open and expressive when they spoke of certain activities. For example, a shop assistant in her early twenties from Walmer Township working in foreign-owned store discussed at length the issue foreigners involving in drugs and prostitution.

Did you see what is happening there at Central? The Nigerians deal in drugs. The prostitution happening in central Port Elizabeth! They call you 'sisi, just once, once'. If you refuse, they try to offer you money. Nowadays, yoh! Look at what is happening in Central. They use the girls and abuse them. Sometime give them drugs and beat them.

Similar concerns were expressed by an old lady who sold fruit at Govan Mbeki Avenue. She said "Nigerians are criminals. They deal in drugs." Interestingly, her neighbour was a Nigerian man who did not bother himself with what the old lady was saying. At first I thought they were not in good terms but I was wrong. The two were in good terms. At one time during the interview, I saw him leave his stall with her and a shortwhile later she borrowed a pen from him.

During my interview, realised that the association of Nigerians with crime mainly drug dealing and prostitution was pervasive among Nelson Mandela Bay residents and that almost every mention of crime, Nigerians were mentioned.

#### 4.4.3. Culture

During the focus group, respondents reiterated culture as an important factor that limits wholesome interaction between the nationals and non-nationals. Three of the respondents cited three different examples all which suggestively depicted foreign nationals as being seen not only as contaminants but also as inferior human beings. Participant one said, “if you are seen walking with a foreigner in the township, people judge you immediately. They say “hey! You are walking with ‘*u-my friend*’”. The second participant accentuated the comment by first respondent: “it is underestimation. Sometimes say you are four guys, three South African nationals and a foreigner. Then you hear people say: three men and one foreigner, meaning that the foreigner is less equal”. The third participant narrated of a story he witnessed at the Department of Home Affairs in the Port Elizabeth. It happened to a couple who came to register their newborn baby. The lady felt too shy to stand by her Nigerian husband. Then official at the registration spoke to the husband who pointed at his wife. The official at the registration point then called the lady in the local dialect and told her, “Why can’t you come along with your thing (referring to the husband)”.

After the interview, the researcher deliberated to ask a female student at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University who is married to a Zimbabwean man to enquire whether such ostracisation exists. She confirmed this and said it is not rare. “Women who are married to foreigners are stigmatised especially in Townships.” “Whenever I go back home,” she said, “the foreign thing always popped up and I feel bad.”

The “otherness” of the foreigners in the context of xenophobia is accentuated by derogatory language with which non-nationals in the townships are addressed. In Nelson Mandela Bay, there are two common terms – one highly offensive and therefore less common, and the other more euphemistic. Respectively, the two terms are: “*kwerekwere*” and “*u-my friend*”. From economic perspective, the two terms have more or less the same implications. But in terms of usage, “*u-my friend*” – most popular among people and least mentioned by the media – is widely used in Nelson Mandela Bay. *The Herald* Newspaper whose home-base is Port Elizabeth utilises

neither of the terms but identifies foreigners by their nationalities especially when they commit crime.

The terms are explained here because they are seen as having economic and cultural connotations. The significance of “I am not ‘they’ or the ‘other’” and how that resonates in the minds of locals comes into perspective when the phrase “u-my friend” is used by a black local to refer to another black South African. For the addressee as well as the person to whom the reference is made, the terms raise a lot of questions and the doubt of: ‘who does he/she think I am?’ When tests on the usage were made, the responses were often harsh.

According to the focus group respondents, *ama-kwerekwere* refers to “people, who don’t belong here; who don’t know the (local) language”, “people who come from poor countries”, “who are clean.” One of the respondents noted,

It is provocative to use it for a local person. You might hear it used when there is some sort of conflict. It is used to lessen the confidence of the other so that he can take advantage of you for whatever you are competing with him.

The phrase “*u-my friend*” is a corrupted version of the English phrase ‘*my friend*’. The prefix is pronounced as the “u” in *Umtata* or *Uno* (the car). The phrase implies “not been good enough,” “inferiority,” “outcast,” “outsider”, “worthlessness.” When asked how the phrase can be considered as discriminatory, the respondents gave very fascinating illustrations. They said it is an abomination for black South Africans to use it for amongst themselves. Otherwise, it is considered as “degrading”, “offensive” and “insulting.” It means one’s South Africanness is questioned. One respondent from Umtata area said they use it for the “Bangladeshis because the people think they are poor and they come for our money.” It is interesting to note, however, that the people understand the phrase profoundly and use it knowingly for “people who do not look South African”.

The terms attracted the authors’ attention particularly because during the discussion most of the respondents referred to the foreign nationals as either ‘*internationals*’ or

'*u-my friends*'. The former was common among students and respondents who looked formal and while the latter mainly among interviewees from the townships.

## **Conclusion**

This study was undertaken with the intention to explore how residents of Nelson Mandela Bay perceive foreign nationals and media representation of these immigrants. On the one part, four factors have been tested to determine whether they are indeed most probable causes of xenophobia. On the part of the media, the study did test whether the media has (as said by critics) influenced negatively the perception of the public towards the foreigners. Having said that the data for this study was collected randomly using structured questionnaires, interviews and focus groups, the findings in this chapter clearly indicate that there is suspicion of foreign nationals is widespread.

With explicit regard to all hypotheses propounded throughout, the appearance of a prejudice directed at non-South Africans by respondents indigenous to SA (who were all randomly selected) in NMB, prompts one to explore the involvement of a more powerful force in contemporary xenophobia. In this case, there are only two such powers: the government and the media. Considering all other probabilities including the government (which is the most influential entity in the country), the media stands out to be the most likely party involved in stereotyping the public.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Media effects and challenges posed by xenophobia are real and visible in NMB community. In Chapter One, we discussed how media influences and shapes public perception, and in particular, regarding the relationship between xenophobia and media in the context of South Africa. From the media perspective, xenophobia is a negative manifestation of perceptions conceived as a result of disinformation and/or misrepresentation. Chapter Two further detailed media and xenophobia discourses vis-à-vis current hostilities towards foreign nationals. The chapter related knowledge already available in previous studies citing surveys and empirical studies, while Chapter Three has defined the methodological path along which this study followed to explore public perceptions within this regard. Chapter Four has presented the actual findings of the data from this study, collected from members of the NMB community. Finally, tying it all together in the following, Chapter Five presents a sweeping summary for the entire study and seals it with recommendations proposed as remedy for the problem.

This study was undertaken to explore the perceptions of South Africans in NMB pertaining to foreign nationals, establishing whether in fact their representation by the press is indeed reflected by public perception. Data collecting tools namely: questionnaires, interviewees and focus groups were employed to gather the relevant data. In general, regarding the perceptions NMB residents have toward foreign nationals and their apparent misrepresentation in the newspapers, suggest that there is a point where public perception and media representation converge. There are misconceptions, stereotypes and uncertainties, all premised on the convictions that foreigners “steal jobs”, restrain public resources, exploit economic opportunities and commit crime, perversely manifested in the opinions and views of the participants of this study.

A widespread perception in NMB is that foreign nationals are exacerbating crime and criminal activities such as drug dealing, prostitution and corruption. This confirms SAMP findings of 1999 and 2006 that South Africans believe crime in the country has increased because of foreign nationals. This perception also mirrors

unsubstantiated claims made by some media reports, 'academic' reports and political statements as in those uttered by former Minister Joe Modise and Bithelezi that "millions of illegal immigrants" are hell-bent on committing crime and draining the resources. While the manners in which the stereotypes are portrayed are similar, there are variations in the prevalence of the stereotypes and impact thereof. The results of the press tending to "nationalise and Africanise" crime involving immigrants manifests themselves quite clearly in NMB society. Nigerians are more often than not referred to as "hardcore" criminals who "run drug cartels and prostitution dens" in Central Port Elizabeth.

There is another pervasive feeling in NMB that immigrants are an "economic burden" and "steal" the jobs of South Africans. While there is a general feeling that foreigners competing for jobs with the locals is inline with reportages by the "overwhelming majority of newspaper articles" about 66% (McDonald & Jacobs, 2005:295), there is also feeling that they create jobs. Members of NMB strongly agree with previous literature that immigrants are prepared to work for a lower wage. Some of the occupations being referred to include: domestic work, gardening, waitering and construction – jobs that do not feature in the formal economy but form the backbone of the casual labour.

There is a perception among the locals, especially those from informal settlements, that immigrants are better skilled and better resourced and therefore create an environment more conducive to economic opportunity. This translated into the impression that the 'less skilled' locals are displaced by the foreigners because employers want skilled people who are a willing source of cheap labour. A study by the HSRC (2008:43) revealed that the "inclination of employers taking on foreign workers rather than locals has produced significant resentment towards both employers and foreign nationals." employment is therefore a contentious issue and one of the most probable causes of xenophobia.

When the views of NMB residents were compared with SAMP survey of 1999 and 2006, this study shows that the hostile attitudes towards foreign immigrants seems to have dropped significantly from the levels which they were at in 2003, 2006 and



2008. This reduction could be owed to the lessons learnt in 2008. Even though the hatred for the foreign nationals does exist, the suffering of the fellow human being widely publicised by all media might have been an eye opener for many who formed their information regarding foreign nationals in vacuum. This combined with the 2010 soccer World Cup, which has brought to the shores of South Africa all at one time, half-a-million people. Although still in denial, the government also seems to have taken xenophobia more seriously, after they have seen how fatal things can get. Evidence of this is revealed in how quickly it reacted to the post-World Cup attacks in Western Cape. In addition, and in contrast to, there are a number of community level awareness campaigns taking place now more than ever. Even though they do not get enough media support by way of publicity, the steps they are taking might yield some noteworthy results.

Crush (2008:39) observed, “When the SAHRC regrettably rolled up its Roll Back Xenophobia campaign in 2002, the voice of a strong independent critic against the treatment of foreign nationals in South Africa went silent. At that time, it appeared as if xenophobia was finally being acknowledged as a serious problem requiring urgent government intervention.” Nonetheless, whether the sentiment is simply dormant waiting to erupt again or that it is subsiding, only time will tell. Thus far, as evident in the NMB community, xenophobia is alive and still deadly, with community feelings higher than they were in 1999, but lower than the run-up to the 2008. Sporadic incidents still continue to happen in the area, with the author confirming from the Somali Association of South Africa (SASA) that some of their members have fallen victim of xenophobic related incidents. The author is aware of three xenophobia-related murders and robberies in Injoli and Motherwell in November, 2010 alone. According to SASA, this is the lowest number of murder reports in recent years that their office has received.

Moreover, studies have found out that stories on foreign nationals carried by most popularly read newspapers in NMB, *The Herald* and *Daily Sun*, “do not adopt an overwhelming negative tone or intense anti-immigrant perspective” (Achu, 2008: 34). However, the “immigrants are not well-represented” since there are not enough stories or no direct quotes from them to effectively bring across their experiences

and sentiments. Through mentioning immigrants in crime stories and linking them with crime has been damaging to immigrant reputation considering the vulnerability of many migrants in the country. Newspapers presented only partial impression of the big picture and missed opportunities to challenge negative representation of migrants and xenophobia (Lerner et al, 2009:52), while as a consequence, the public consumes such information passively without questioning its substantiality.

There also seems to be a realisation among the NMB public that press representation of foreign nationals is not a true reflection of what the immigrants are. How much that understanding calls for introspection and translates into constructive engagement remains to be seen. In most probable outcomes, it is unlikely that the negative impressions NMB residents thus have of the non-nationals will fade through voluntary critical engagement. However, there is an avenue that the unpopularity of media vis-à-vis representation of foreign nationals avails the government, community based anti-xenophobia organisations, the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and social movements, amongst others, the opportunity to actively engage with the community to dissipate the anti-immigrant stereotypes.

That notwithstanding, the press does not bear the sole responsibility for high levels of xenophobia in South Africa, but it does clearly contribute to the problem in creating reinforcing ideologies, discourses and policies related to cross-border migration and immigrants (Danso & McDonald, 2001:133). Considering the closeness of public perception and media representation of foreign nationals, the pervasiveness and uniformity of the stereotypes across gender, age groups, race and educational background, there is no doubt the media has had profound influence over public perception regarding foreign nationals. It is unlikely that a common negative perception of immigrants happens and triumphs by chance in a country diverse as South Africa. There must be a factor capable of disseminating same or similar information repeatedly and subliminally, if not overtly, for a considerable period of time that ensured, intentionally or otherwise, said information is known to 'all'.

It would be a grave mistake, though, to ignore or underestimate the need for freedom of expression and the right to public information. It would too be a grave mistake to ignore or to try and “cover-up” the feeling of the citizens with regards to, amongst other issues, their opposition to immigration. While presenting accurate information to the public, newspapers need to ensure that they do not contribute unduly to the negativity surrounding immigrants by internalising xenophobic language and uncritically reproducing or giving space to xenophobic reports and comments. It is duty-bound to recognise the need for more balanced information that addresses the concerns of the South Africans but, it should also be willing to actively engage the immigrants without the nationalist bias of the past if the press is seriously concerned about the development and image of the country.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Institution of public awareness campaign**

If South Africa is to fulfill its constitutional mandate, as well as international and regional agreements to protect migrant and refugee rights, it must make greater efforts to educate the public and make them aware of the circumstances that drove the foreigners out of their countries in the first place. There is also need to inform the immigrants of the socio-economic dynamics of pre and post-1994 South Africa. Public awareness can be done through and in cooperation with the mass media. The public needs to be educated about the economic significance of the immigrants regarding the historical and diplomatic link between South Africa and other countries. There needs to be an emphasis on the irrationality of certain stereotypes and beliefs about the foreign nationals.

Education programmes for the immigrant can be instituted at the Home Affairs department. Those who have stayed in the country legally and have permit papers can be targeted for cultural (re)orientation when they come for renewal of their permits to stay in the country. And for the new arrivals, they should not be issued any permit unless they undergo the programme. The foreigners must be educated on two things: firstly the labour system and the law of the country, in which case they

are informed about the existence of labour unions, the existence of minimum wages, employer and employee etc. The Ministry of Home Affairs has to take the task in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour. Secondly, the cultural dynamics and what they should expect if they go to the townships: about poverty, crime as a result of a long history of seclusion and segregation. This is not meant to scare them, but as forewarned is forearmed, it should not come to them as a surprise.

## **2. The Media**

There has been efforts to challenge the prejudices, myths and misinformation regarding immigration and immigrants in South Africa by numerous social awareness organisations. A known fact is that the South African media has never joined forces to lobby against anti-immigration stereotypes. There is, however, a network of those who have a different view to combat portrayals of this issue in the media keeping the public realm in a state dominated by ignorance. The stereotypes and prejudices are anchored quite deeply and will not be assuaged merely by the statistics or more coherent argument. There can be no successful dissipation of the xenophobic perceptions unless the media:

- i. Transform their approach to reporting migrant issues.
- ii. Challenge the negative beliefs about foreigners
- iii. Educate the public
- iv. Report by putting the stories in context
- v. Have specialised (beat) reporters on migration

## **SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Members of NMB who participated in the interviews and focus groups of the study expressed deep concerns about foreign-related criminal activities in Central Port Elizabeth. The area has sizeable foreign immigrants who are running businesses; there are a lot of suspicious activities happening also there. A research on this area will most certainly yield finds that are useful to the wellbeing of the community as a whole.

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## APPENDIX: Questionnaire

### SECTION A:

1. I am a	Male	Female
2. I live in a	city	Township
3. I have contacts with foreign nationals	Yes	No
4. I have foreign friends	Yes	No
5. I am fond of making friends with foreigners	True	False

### SECTION B: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. Do you know “xenophobia”? What does xenophobia mean to you?

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2. Describe your interaction with immigrants?

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3. What do you think are the causes of xenophobia or xenophobic violence?

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4. What would you say about the media in relation to xenophobia?

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5. Do you think xenophobia is increasing or reducing? Why?

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## Section C

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Foreign nationals compete for jobs with South Africans.					
2	Foreigners reduce public services					
3	I get most of my basic information on foreign nationals in the country from the media.					
4	Foreigners deal in drugs.					
5	The culture of the foreigners is unsafe for our country.					
6	Foreign traders exploit customers.					
7	Immigrants worsen health situation in our country.					
8	The media misrepresent foreign nationals.					
9	Immigrants are the reason for the increasing corruption in our country					
10	Foreigners brought bad business such as prostitution.					
11	Foreigners contribute to our economy positively.					
12	Immigrants have under resourced our hospitals.					
13	The media contribute to the xenophobic violence.					
14	Crime has increased because of the foreigners.					
15	I don't feel comfortable when people speak in a foreign language.					
16	Foreign traders destroy local businesses.					
17	Foreign learners are given more preferences in our schools.					
18	The media have negatively influenced my perception towards foreigners.					
19	Most foreigners in the country are illegal immigrants.					
20	I don't mind living in one flat with a foreigner					

Thank you very much