



Xenophobia as a barrier to South Africa's national development plan and sustainable development goals

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Abstract

The prevalence of xenophobia in South Africa has hindered the realisation of the National Development Plan making it impossible to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030. Xenophobic attacks have hindered all efforts to alleviate poverty and hunger. The paper found that xenophobia attacks destroy the ability and capacity of the state needed for the realisation of the National Development Plan for Sustainable Development Goals. Xenophobic attacks in South Africa were found to affect the National Development Plan and prevents it from promoting Sustainable Development Goals because it affects partnerships between locals and migrants in South Africa to work towards achieving sustainable development. The paper found that xenophobic attacks affect foreign national entrepreneurs' businesses, and decide to remove their businesses out of the country. This removal thus loss of jobs and increase unemployment rates and affects economic growth. Xenophobia was found to have substantial negative impact on the environment for business, therefore, affecting the materialisation of the National Development Plan and Sustainable Development Goals in South Africa. Yet, realisation of the National Development Plan Vision 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals depends on securing sustainable environment for business that promote sustainable economic growth. There is need for the state to address xenophobia from its root causes to secure sustainable environment for business, and secure partnerships between foreigners and locals. To collect data and analyse it, the paper adopted a qualitative research methodology with an explanatory approach.

Keywords: Xenophobia; National Development Plan; Sustainable Development; Economic Growth; South Africa

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1. Introduction

South Africa's effort to end poverty and hunger, realise the human rights of all, achieve gender equality and empowerment, and ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources, as spelled in the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030, is far from reach. To achieve and realise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), South Africa established a road map articulated in the NDP 2030 to promote and achieve the 17 goals that make the SDGs global agenda. The NDP Vision 2030, "Our Future Make It Work," was adopted in 2012 to end poverty, achieve zero hunger, achieve good health and well-being by the year 2030. However, due to the prevalence of xenophobia, there has been food insecurity resulting unequal access to land (van den Berg-van and Walsh, 2021). While food is sometimes available in a few municipalities, its distribution has been unequal to some poor black communities. Food has been made inaccessible and unaffordable as my people fail to afford it due to high rise food prices. This situation has worsened hunger, leading many people to develop malnutrition conditions that affect their health and well-being, thus leading to mortality. Numerous people, mostly in the rural areas currently suffer from food insecurity and are at risk of going hungry (van den Berg-van and Walsh, 2021).

Moreover, the establishment of the NDP Vision 2030 aimed to persuade South African policymakers, political leaders, scholars, and local citizens to draw their energies on addressing inequality and growing an inclusive economy with no one left behind, building capabilities that enhance the state's ability to promote leadership and partnerships for sustainable development throughout South African society. In its inception, the NDP Vision 2030 aimed to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth, social inclusion, environmental protection, and sustainable peace and security. The NDP Vision 2030 aims to address the unemployment rates in the country, promote better education for all, and enable citizens to achieve quality and better health services that make them a healthier population. It also aims to lower the cost of living, address corruption in public and private sectors, maintain infrastructure, and have a sound social safety net and a capable state. However, the realization of the NDP Vision 2030 as the enabler of SDGs of achieving economic growth with no one left behind seems to have met a deadlock in South Africa. With five years left to 2030, the possibility of achieving the 17 SDGs goals is farfetched. This has made the South African NDP become an ambitious dream written in the paper but far from being materialised.

One can ask themselves what could be the challenges hindering the operationalisation and realisation of the NDP Vision 2030 to lead to the achievement of the SDGs in South Africa by 2030? While South Africa still faces numerous challenges such as inequality, lack of adequate service delivery, poverty and hunger that hinder materialisation of the NDP Vision 2030, the paper argues that is xenophobia towards foreign nationals is the deadliest challenge. The paper argues that xenophobia is a hindrance factor to NDP Vision 2030 and SDGs in South Africa. it feeds on inequality and corruption which in turn promotes hunger and poverty to locals. The local in their return direct their anger to foreign nationals and their business in the country thus causing violence that affect the realisation of the NDP Vision 2030 for the SDGs. This paper assesses the effects of xenophobia on the NDP Vision 2030, a plan established with the target of achieving SDGs in South Africa by the year 2030.

The structure of this paper is into six main sections. While the first section was an introduction, the second section explained the theoretical framework that underpins the occurrence and prevalence of xenophobia in South Africa. The third section explained the research methodology adopted to collect and analyse data. The

fourth section involved a critical literature review that assessed the root causes of xenophobia in South Africa, its links with poverty and hunger, contributions of foreign nationals to economic growth, and contributions of migrants towards the NDP Vision 2030. The fifth section consisted of a discussion and interpretation of findings. The sixth section consisted of concluding remarks on the paper.

2. Theoretical framework

The theory that underpins this paper is the scapegoat. This theory enabled one to understand the reasons that lead to xenophobia and its effects on the realisation of NDP 2030, thus hindering SDGs in South Africa. Scapegoating means blaming one's sufferings or harsh experiences negatively on an innocent individual or group. It is the act of blaming and often punishing a person or a group for a negative outcome that is due, at least in large part, to other causes (Rothschild et al., 2012). The results of the scapegoating have been mistreatments, frustrations on both victims and perpetrators and hostilities against the blamed individuals. These hostilities have primarily led to heated violence that turned into xenophobic violence. Landsberg, Krüger and Swart (2011) opined that scapegoat theory is linked with prejudices, anger, hatred, and discrimination. This shows that xenophobia becomes a means by which people express hostilities that arise from their frustrations (Landsberg et al., 2011). These frustrations arise from the African National Congress's (ANC) inability and failure to deliver adequate services to the citizens (Niyitunga, 2022). Corruption has become an incurable disease that is prevailing in South Africa and has affected the delivery of adequate services, mostly to townships inhabited by poor black South Africans.

Through scapegoat theory, it was easy to understand that local citizens become frustrated when the government denies them adequate services to meet their basic needs (Marger, 1991). Nationals then see foreign nationals as vulnerable, and they pour their anger on them in an aggressive manner. Because of the rampant corruption within the ANC government officials, nationals presume that their dues have been diverted to foreign nationals who might have bribed them. Moreover, because nationals have less ability to attack the government, they then divert their anger to the foreign locals to send a stern message to the government. However, this diversion has been remarked by violence, therefore turning into confrontations between nationals and foreigners, thus culminating in xenophobia. Niyitunga (2022) argued that xenophobic attacks occur when the government fails to deliver quality services, and therefore, the locals release their anger and frustrations on foreigners. Niyitunga (2022) further argued that instead of locals blaming the ANC ruling party, the anti-migrant and stereotypical attitudes are turned to foreigners. This is because, in their ignorance and naivety, locals think that foreign nationals have taken over what belongs to them, such as jobs and economic opportunities. Harris (2002) argued that locals' anger, frustrations, and aggression are directed towards foreign nationals because they are perceived to commit crimes in the country and take away their jobs.

Scapegoating attitudes lead to xenophobia "when locals turn their anger resulting from whatever hardships they are experiencing against foreigners, primarily because foreigners are constructed as being the cause of all their difficulties" (Duncan, 2012). Scapegoating theory helped locate xenophobia within the failure of the ANC black-controlled political leadership to deliver adequate services that meet citizens' expectations. At the bottom of the delivery of inadequate services is inequality and corruption by the political class, and it will not end soon. One can thus say that if the delivery of services is still inadequate, coupled with high levels of poverty and hunger and limited access to land, xenophobia in South Africa is not ending any soon. The delivery of basic

services is the root cause of the hostility towards foreigners, including, among others, housing, education, health care, and employment (Niyitunga, 2022). As argued earlier, the local citizens perceive foreigners as significant threats to their jobs, employment, freedom, housing, education, and health care (Morris, 1998). The locals thus create a frustration-scapegoat attitude and project their frustrations that result from their daily hardships (Tshitereke, 1999) on foreign nationals. Niyitunga (2023) also argued that the deep gap between the haves and have-nots worsens the frustrations. While the locals hesitate to confront the government, foreigners become their scapegoats. As the locals make up the majority, foreigners, being the minority, become vulnerable and thus their targets (Niyitunga, 2022). Morris (1998) noted that in situations where the majority group finds itself in poverty and hunger due to economic hardships, it is more likely to feel threatened by minorities, especially if they are foreigners.

3. Research methodology

A qualitative approach was used in this study because it is an approach that is preferred in social sciences (Mohajan, 2018). The approach is also said to suit achieving objectives in social sciences (Mohajan, 2018). As the study falls into social sciences disciplines, it was easy to adopt a qualitative research approach to collect and analyse data. This approach fitted well, and data was collected and analysed according to the aim and objectives of this study. Tracy (2013) stated that qualitative approach is preferred to understand reality, build knowledge, and gather information about the world. The approach helped to understand, explain, explore, discover, and clarify situations (Kumar, 2011), feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of local citizens while delivering basic services that fail to meet their expectations. The approach was equally valuable to understand, explain, and explore the experiences of foreign nationals during the xenophobic attacks. Moreover, the approach clarified and explored the effects of xenophobia on economic insecurity by slowing economic growth, promoting hunger, and deepening poverty.

Qualitative research may seek relevant information from newspapers, organisational reports, books of accounts and other relevant written sources (Dalglish et al., 2020). Out of 51 qualitative research articles reviewed and seven pieces of information collected from internet sources, twenty-eight indicated that the prevalence of xenophobia in South Africa is linked to the delivery of inadequate services and the disconnect between government officials and citizens. Out of 15 books, seven book chapters and one conference paper showed that there are immense effects caused by xenophobia on the NDP Vision 2030 and SDGs thus making it impossible for the realisation of the SDGs in South Africa by 2030. The data collected were sufficient to understand factors that make xenophobia a significant hindrance to the NDP and SDGs in South Africa and construct relevant conclusions and recommendations. Through a qualitative approach, it was possible to collect more data and information on xenophobia, NDP, and SDGs in South Africa. It was then possible to understand the scapegoat theory as a theory that influences the occurrence of xenophobia against foreign nationals. This helped me understand in detail the reactions of xenophobia to foreign national entrepreneurship, businesses, and economic activities.

This study involved a systematic literature review to obtain relevant secondary data. A total of 51 published journal articles, 15 books, one conference paper, seven book chapters, and seven websites or internet sources were included in the review. Criteria used to select those readings for review were the year of publication, the methodology used in them, the type of journal that published the article, the type of the conference, and the

publisher that published the book. Articles included in the review were those published between 2005 and 2024, although to trace the history, some readings involved information written in the 1990s. A total of 51 articles were downloaded from the selected journals, and among them, two were published in 1991, one in 1996, one in 1998, two in 2000, two in 2002, and two in 2003. Out of 51 journals reviewed, forty-five articles used qualitative research, while six used quantitative research. The reason for including quantitative research journals was to understand the extent to which xenophobia affected economic growth, people, prosperity, and the environment.

As the study relied on the secondary data drawn from the existing literature, a document analysis technique was applied to review and collect data from these sources. To make this process effective, a checklist that showed what to review and which documentary sources to access was prepared. This helped limit the scope of review, saved time, and increased chances of accuracy. That is to say that qualitative methodology was crucial and significant. Document analysis helped collect data from locals and foreigners who could no longer provide information in person due to different reasons, including death, but had their information documented (Morgan, 2022). Fischer (2006) stated that the document analysis technique is a systematic review of printed and electronic documents in the literature published in the public domain. Through this technique, the production of meaning, understanding, and developing empirical knowledge on xenophobia hindering the realisation of NDP Vision 2030 and preventing the achievement of SDGs in South Africa was made possible.

Document analysis technique in this study took a wide variety of forms of including literature about migration and xenophobia. The positivistic approach to document analysis was to collect factual evidence that affirms the occurrence of xenophobic attacks and their impacts on day-to-day economic businesses and activities. The main positivistic approaches are confirmation of fact, content analysis, qualitative document analysis, and historicism (Denzin, 2017). Mills (2006) stated that these epistemological underpinnings facilitate the basis on which qualitative document analysis is built. Through a qualitative approach and document analysis technique, it was possible to collect data that answered the fundamental questions and confirmed the hypothesis of this study. These questions included xenophobia hindering the realisation of the NDP Vision 2030 and SDGs, scapegoat theory as a primary contributor to xenophobia, and hunger and poverty as one of the primary triggers of xenophobia.

Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) argued that the document analysis process considers a cautious, more focused re-reading and review of the data. The study took a more profound gaze at the selected data and carried out coding and category construction based on the data's characteristics to disclose themes applicable to a phenomenon. It enabled us to ascertain that the content of the documents fits the scapegoat theory underpinning the study. It helped to determine the selected documents' authenticity, credibility, accuracy, and representativeness (Stake, 1995). The documents were assessed for completeness in covering the topic (Patton, 1990). Documents offered contextual information that assisted in recognising the historical origins of xenophobia and helped to designate the circumstances that impact xenophobia to hinder the realisation of the NDP Vision 2030. The comprehensions derived from documents provided the background and context of the study. It provided additional information that served as a means of tracking change and development and verifying findings from other data sources (Atkinson and Coffey, 1997).

4. Literature review

According to Wimmer (2007), xeno means stranger or foreigner, and phobia means fear. Noyoo (2021) stated that the term xenophobia originated from the Greek words *xenos*, which means the stranger as well as the guest, while *Phobos* means the fear. The word “xenophobia,” therefore, means “irrational fear and dislike of foreigners or strangers”. Creswell (2006) and McKnight (2008) said that xenophobia is an intense dislike or fear of migrants propagates hatred towards them. Nyamnjoh (2006) stated that xenophobia is discrimination and domestic attacks towards foreigners or strangers. Noyoo (2021) noticed that xenophobia refers to the attitude of “hostility against non-natives in each population and stated that the concept is different from racism. From the above definitions, it is obvious that xenophobia would, therefore, point to a dislike of foreigners by nationals. Shindondola (2008) opined that the fear of survival caused by the lack of basic services turns itself into severe tension and violence by nationals towards foreigners. For this study, the term ‘xenophobia’ is used to signify attitudes of dislike and fear as well as violent actions towards foreigners. Hence, the concept is conceptualised as the fear or hatred of migrants.

Xenophobia involves negative social representations and practices that discriminate against immigrants, refugees, and migrants (Rukema and Khan, 2013). Xenophobia has emerged as one of the major contributing factors to urban violence in many African countries, and the phenomenon is becoming an urban management challenge that deserves academic inquiry and policy attention (Crush and Ramachandran, 2009). Xenophobia, and its various forms of intolerance and violence (Niyitunga, 2024), is a source of concern because it generates rhetoric that at times provides moral justification for the exclusion of non-nationals from accessing basic services that they may be entitled to, such as public health and education, shelter, potable water, and sanitation. It places migrants, asylum seekers and refugees under challenging situations where their human and labour rights are circumscribed by anti-migrant policies (Nyamnjoh, 2006).

Various surveys on xenophobia that have been conducted in the country during the past decade reveal two disturbing findings. First, urban South Africa exhibits high levels of intolerance and hostility to outsiders that is occasionally reflected by xenophobic attacks on migrant communities, their livelihoods, and properties (Tella, 2016). Second, anti-migrant attitudes have been hardened during the post-apartheid era (Tella, 2016). This is too disturbing because it conveys a different which is contrary to inclusiveness and tolerance, and as well as respect for migrants’ rights (Tella, 2016). Historically, xenophobic attacks in South Africa can be traced back to 1998, when it was reported that some foreign nationals had been killed in a train traveling from Johannesburg to Pretoria (Mutanda, 2017). The incidence of such attacks increased, and the trend continued to escalate to the point where more and more refugees were displaced, assaulted, and killed (Dessah, 2015). The 2008 attacks were by far the most severe and resulted in 1000 displaced refugees, and 60 murder cases were reported (Monson and Arian, 2012).

Misago et al. (2015) reported that xenophobic incidents in 2011, which involved 154 cases, claimed the lives of 99 people, 100 serious injuries, and 1000 were displaced. In 2012, South Africa experienced approximately 238 incidents of xenophobia, with 120 deaths, 154 serious injuries, and 7500 displaced people (Misago et al., 2015). In 2013, South Africa experienced 250 cases of xenophobia, with 88 deaths, 170 serious injuries, and 7000 displaced people. It is estimated that more than 200 foreign-owned shops, boutiques and businesses were looted, and some have permanently closed (Misago et al., 2015). This looting has affected the economic growth, which is the basis for NDP Vision 2030 and the achievement of the SDGs. These attacks

threatened the lives of foreign victims and disrupted daily business, thus impeding economic growth. Economic growth forms the basis of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for SDGs in the global system (United Nations, 2015). The attacks also violate the Bill of Rights in The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Foreigners are often called names such as *makwerekwere*, which is a derogatory term for foreign individuals who do not understand the country's languages. Stereotypes also play a role in xenophobic behaviors, as these labels entail predetermined opinions of a particular group. These labels are held as accurate and result in prejudicial thinking towards the stereotyped group. For instance, blacks were likened to children who could not think for themselves. This patriarchal view can be considered to underpin much stereotypical thinking on the African continent. Xenophobia implies behaviour based on the idea that an individual is foreign to or originates from outside the home community or nation. It is often difficult, however, to differentiate between racism and xenophobia as motivations for negative behaviour (s). Though xenophobia is not linked to racism, De Jongh (2009) argued that it may be the starting point upon which racism can be constructed.

Khumalo (2022) mentions that South Africa has unleashed an extreme attack against immigrants from other countries since 2008. Once again, there is a sense of fear as mobs roam certain areas in search of unauthorised immigration. An example that ignited xenophobic attacks was the recent rape of eight women in the mine dump of Krugersdorp which triggered anger in the entire country, leading to the recurrence of xenophobia. This has made South Africa to be labelled as a country that cherishes hatred against foreign nationals. This is contrary to the African culture of Ubuntu, which states that I live because my neighbour lives, and communalism, an African ideology that states that in Africa, we have things in common. Xenophobia then contradicts the African culture and the African renaissance that mostly makes the South African foreign policy goals towards other African states.

Tella (2016) argued that the causes of xenophobic occurrences in South Africa are linked to isolation and scapegoating hypotheses. These hypotheses are not mutually exclusive to each other but deliver various perspectives in understanding xenophobia. Firstly, the isolation thesis places xenophobia in the administration of the apartheid era. Some scholars such as Crush (2000), Dodson (2010), and Steenkamp (2010) argue that South Africa was isolated from participating in international activities due to the oppressive nature of the apartheid era. Although there were immigrants of white people flowing into South Africa, there were very few immigrants of black Africans into South Africa. Hence, there was minimal contact between South Africans and black foreigners. This isolation made the post-apartheid regime, which brought about democracy, allow a massive flow of immigrants into South Africa. This resulted in nationals (black community) developing a sense of hatred towards their fellow blacks; thus, aggression, unfriendliness, and hatred towards foreigners became unavoidable.

Secondly, the scapegoating hypothesis places xenophobia in South Africa's tendency always to blame foreigners for their failure to achieve adequate quality of basic services that meet the citizens' needs. This means that they attribute their economic hardships and disasters to foreign nationals. Despite the coming of democratic governance controlled by the black community, citizens are still poor, with growing unemployment, limited access to land, chronic hunger, and poverty. Considering this fact, nationals seek a way to vent their resentment, and black foreigners are a prime target (Akinola, 2014). Tella (2016) states that foreigners are easily recognised based on their language, attire, physique, birthmarks, and other traits, which help them form opinions about themselves and us.

Xenophobia has become like collective violence, where nationals gang together against foreign nationals (Zwi et al., 2002). Due to the prevalence of xenophobia, South Africa has been labelled as a country hostile to foreign nationals, making foreign investors who would come to invest fear for their lives and business (Claassen, 2017). Factors that have ignited this prevalence have remained unclear to scholars and policymakers. Unless these factors that feed xenophobia are addressed, xenophobia will continue to affect the country's economic growth and stability, hinder the realisation of the NDP Vision 2030, and thus impede the Achievement of SDGs. From international law and human rights perspectives, Niyitunga (2021) equates xenophobia with a violation of migrants' rights which signifies the failure of migration law in South Africa. Xenophobia is also a threat to peace and social security as its occurrence inflicts fear and insecurity that jeopardise national security. Nel (2005) argued that xenophobia is a psychological problem that induces trauma and hate crime that ignites violent criminal acts committed against foreigners, their property, and belongings.

4.1. Effects of foreign nationals on economic growth

Foreign nationals or migrations are the driving forces of economic growth in the host country. Borrowing from history, the economies of the First World were built by foreign nationals who were taken from Africa during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The developed world has understood the effects of foreign nationals on economic growth to achieve SDGs and has installed the Green Card lottery and any other means to recruit outsiders to enter their countries to affect their economic growth. This, of course, has worked well because, understanding the role of migrants on economic growth, these countries have established migration laws to govern and control foreign nationals and enable them to work to impact the economy. The leading countries in this endeavor are the United States of America (USA), Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom (UK), to name but a few. Hunt (2010) argued that skilled foreign nationals or migrants contribute to economic development because they boost research, innovation, and technological progress. Migrants have been mostly energetic younger people with various skills to work in any sector and establish any business compared with natives and, therefore, contribute to reducing poverty and hunger (Gagnon, 2014). OECD (2012) report showed that in the receiving countries, migrants affect demographic statistics as they increase the size of the population and change the age pyramid.

The same report showed that migrants increase human labour in the receiving countries and increase human capital, which leads to economic growth (OECD, 2012). It is justifiable to argue that migration directly and indirectly affects economic growth. However, in a state of lawlessness and lack of migration law and governance, migrants can promote criminal activities, and illegal migrants can supersede legal ones, leading to violence in the host state. As many foreign nationals enter the host with money and all skills, they can promote corruption to get acquire false business licenses, and false identifications and conduct illegal businesses that affect the lives of the nation, thus igniting violence like xenophobia which in turn retard economic growth. Who is to blame in this situation? The answer is that the local political authorities and the mentalities of the nationals must carry the blame. This has unfortunately been the case in South Africa, where foreign nationals threaten locals because of the failure of migration laws and have targeted foreign nationals for various reasons. The attacks on foreign nationals have not only had effects on the migrants but also on the government and its citizens and on the NDP Vision 2030. Therefore, the failure to understand the rights of migrants, their effects on economic growth, and the government's failure to govern and control migration are

the major factors that keep xenophobia alive and thus affect every effort towards realising the NDP Vision 2030 and SDGs.

4.2. The NDP Vision 2030 and the role of foreign nationals

The NDP Vision was established in South Africa to have achieved the SDGs by the year 2030. The NDP Vision 2030 aims to put citizens together and use their energies and efforts to address pressing issues that entrench poverty and hunger in the country. For this reason, the NDP has nine focal points that guide the country towards achieving the SDGs by 2030. These points include:

- creating employment,
- expanding infrastructure,
- transitioning to a low-carbon economy,
- transforming urban and rural communities,
- improving education and training,
- ensuring quality healthcare,
- building a capable state,
- fighting corruption and improving accountability, and
- consolidating social cohesion (National Planning Commission, 2011).

The above nine targets of the NDP are understood in this study in three elements. The first element is the fact that it involves and concerns of people. At this stage, the NDP targets the creation of employment for the people, improving their education and training, ensures they achieve quality healthcare that promotes their well-being and good health. It also includes consolidating social cohesion that strengthens people and ties them together. The second element is that the NDP advocates for prosperity. At this stage, the NDP targets expanding the infrastructure for business, fighting corruption and corrupt arrangements, and improving accountability. This, therefore, strengthens their ability and enhance the possibility of promoting business activities that lead to sustainable economic growth with no one left behind. The third element is that the NDP aims to protect and maintain the environment and the planet. At this stage, the NDP advocates for a transition to a low - carbon economy, transforming urban that protect the environment and rural communities to building a capable state. The above aims are targeted to have been achieved and realised by 2030.

The NDP's peculiarity in achieving SDGs is interesting in two respects. Firstly, the NDP aligns with the SDGs adopted in 2015, which compelled every state in the global system to follow the global development agenda. Secondly, the NDP relates to South Africa's role in establishing platforms that address any social issues that would affect or prevent the realisation of the SDGs, thus complying with the global demand. The NDP was established to promote interconnectedness and not to leave anyone behind in achieving sustainable income and livelihoods that uplift people in society. One can say that the NDP was established considering the seventeen goals spelled in the UN document.

To understand xenophobia as an inhibitor of the NDP Vision 2030 and SDGs, this article summarised the seventeen goals into three groups. The first group encompasses prosperity, which covers the following goals (no poverty, zero hunger, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovations, infrastructure, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption, and production). The second group encompasses people and covers the following goals (reducing inequalities, good health and

well-being, quality education, gender equality, partnerships and peace, justice, and strong institutions). The third group involves the planet that covers the following goals (climate action, clean water and sanitation, life below water, and life on land).

The prevalence of xenophobia in South Africa's society has affected prosperity, people, and the earth's planet, the three elements of the SDGs. Affecting the three elements of the SDGs means that realising the seventeen goals in the six years remaining to 2030 is undebatably impossible. The prevalence of xenophobia has intensified numerous social problems that have hindered the ability to achieve good health and well-being (people) to conduct economic business that leads to sustainable income (prosperity) that ensures sustainable peace and the maintenance of the environment (planet) for the business. These two goals are fundamental pillars that enable the achievement of the other goals. Xenophobia's social problems thus affect the three elements of the NDP and SDGs. The prevalence of xenophobia has had effects and impacts on the people, prosperity, and environment, thus preventing the realisation of SDGs. The achievement of the SDGs depends on the partnerships between states and their efforts to address world issues such as conflict, violence, and the promotion of peace and prosperity. However, xenophobia in South Africa thwarts these partnerships because it affects the country's foreign policy and its relations with other states (Niyitunga, 2024).

Xenophobia is a significant obstacle to achieving the NDP Vision 2030 because it represents a negative shock that affects the realisation of all aspects of the seventeen goals. Regardless of its nature and intensity, the onset of violence has an enormous impact on society, people, prosperity, and the environment. Xenophobia has led to immediate deaths and injuries that damage the social and productive structures of society. Xenophobia has affected the formulation of development policy and programs that promote economic prosperity, deepening poverty and hunger in South Africa. Xenophobic violence has affected the achievement of sustainable livelihoods that promote a sustainable economy, thus inhibiting prosperity, peoples' stability, and security, as well as affecting the environment for the people and their economic businesses. Xenophobic violence results from the failure of the government to deliver adequate services to the people. The lack of adequate services is linked to the prevalence of xenophobia in South Africa. Inadequate services increase poverty and hunger and cause violence that affects the environment. Violence affects the realisation of basic services such as access to safe water and sanitation and increases the national debt, thus compromising efforts to achieve SDGs. The immediate effects of xenophobia have longstanding consequences on human growth and development, as it has generated poverty traps and increased horizontal inequalities across populations that affect the realisation of the NDP and the achievement of SDGs. Any type of violence reverses economic growth and affects people, prosperity, and the environment (United Nations, 2015).

4.3. Effects of xenophobia on people

The first effect of xenophobia on both NDP and SDGs on the people is that it affects their partnerships. The partnership is an ingredient for the people's prosperity, economic stability, and the protection of the environment because it promotes public participation and engagement. It has been argued that public participation and engagement build a sense of community ownership and responsibility for project activities and increase inclusivity in decision-making, increasing the representation of other vulnerable groups (Blair, 2000). Public participation and engagement provide a commitment to address priorities cross-sectorally and ensure that divergent interests reach consensus (Blair, 2000). Through partnerships, public participation, and engagement, the delivery of adequate services that promote economic opportunity for the people to achieve

prosperity is ensured. Partnerships promote public consultations and various ideas that produce better-informed decision-making regarding the services provided (Blair, 2000). Partnerships would increase public participation that promotes inclusion, transparency, accountability, sustainability, equity, and efficiency. These are all part of the equation of a well-planned economic development that promotes people's prosperity and environment. Unlike mere participation, a partnership implies a more formal "institutional" relationship with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder (Bonga, 2021). Through domestic partnerships, xenophobia and its sentiments would not occur because economic, political, social, and cultural factors receive equal weight, thus promoting the realisation of the NDP and SDGs in South Africa.

Domestic partnerships have been a critical promoter of the economic prosperity of every nation, improving people's livelihoods in industrialised states. Scholars have argued that domestic partnerships and economic growth are inextricably linked (Alfa and Garba, 2012). Domestic partnerships make public and private sector investments to promote economic growth and development (Buch et al., 2014). Moreover, econometric scholars argued that domestic partnerships have a more robust and beneficial impact on sustainable development (Rousseau and Kim, 2007). This is so because domestic partnerships promote public participation and engagement, which address corruption issues in every sector, including the public service delivery framework, thus promoting adequate services that lead to sustainable development. Domestic partnerships create jobs and wealth, boost economic growth, and reduce unemployment and poverty. Domestic partnerships also promote safe spaces in the country that would attract tourism. There are linkages between tourism and economic prosperity. Tourism is a powerful social, economic, and cultural force that provides employment opportunities and foreign exchange in social and cultural aspects (Mudzanani, 2016). It is a social force that promotes international understanding, cooperation, and global networking (Adeleke, Omitola et al., 2008). For this reason, domestic partnerships accelerate sustainable economic growth for all.

However, domestic partnerships in South Africa have remained low, thus threatening the NDP and SDGs. In a situation with a lack of domestic partnership, the realisation of the SDGs and NDP in South Africa becomes impossible because of enormous corruption and inadequate delivery of services. It is through the delivery of inadequate services that the nationals get angry and pour their anger on the foreign nationals. They see foreign nationals as the scapegoats and thus divert all the attention to them, thus the occurrence of xenophobia. This finding confirms that the lack of domestic partnerships in South Africa is a significant obstacle to economic growth and development, thus to prosperity, people, and the environment. With the prevalence of xenophobic attacks in South Africa, social order and security, as well as the protection of migrants' rights, have been jeopardized (Minnar, 2005). Xenophobic violence, on the other hand, affects social stability, which in turn affects not only domestic partnerships but also partnerships with other states. Nayoo (2021) and Niyitunga (2024) argued that xenophobia has negatively affected regional integration and relationships between South Africa and other countries. This finding shows the occurrences of xenophobia in various parts of South Africa against foreign nationals. This has affected domestic partnership (NDP and SDGs element), making the realisation of the SDGs in 2030 impossible.

4.4. Effects of xenophobia on prosperity (economic or business growth)

Xenophobia has impacted the labour market at the workplace thus affecting economic growth. There has been the adoption of labor market policies encouraging employers not to hire foreigners and to lay off migrant workers first if necessary. These policies have had an impact on economic growth. The study findings show

that foreign nationals possess technological skills and abilities used in the labour market to promote economic growth and thus ensure prosperity. In many instances in public and private sectors, trade unions have expressed fears of competition over jobs between local and foreign nationals, and this fear has led to the establishment of harsh conditions that have reduced the number of foreign workers at the workplace. At the bottom line of these fears are economic frustration, high rates of unemployment, and competition over scarce resources, which foreign nationals have scapegoated. Niyitunga (2021) argued that numerous citizens who face harsh poverty and chronic hunger consider foreign co-workers responsible for driving down wages and conditions. Many managers claim that foreigners work harder for less to support this belief and sentiments.

Xenophobic attacks have influenced foreign national entrepreneurs in the country, thus retarding economic growth because they affect business activities and the environment for those activities Tshishonga (2015) noted that xenophobic attacks force foreign nationals to go into hiding or leave their businesses unattended. It has been argued that those who are unable to hide to open their businesses as they see their hardearned properties being looted and burned to ashes (Adeleke et al., 2008). It was also noted that xenophobia discourages foreign investors because they see how foreign nationals and their businesses are treated (Mensah and Benedict, 2016). Xenophobic attacks have reduced the citizens' ability to pursue economic efforts to better their livelihoods, and as a result, this increased economic hardships that have made xenophobia prevalent (Gopal, 2013). It has affected the citizens' means to sustain their means of survival (Obademi and Uadiale, 2004). This affects foreign national entrepreneurs and harms the economy at large, thus affecting the realisation of the NDP and SDGs. Mokoena (2015) stated that most foreign national entrepreneurs contribute to South Africa's value-added tax (VAT) by bulk-purchasing goods from major South African wholesalers. It has been argued that foreign national entrepreneurs contribute to poverty alleviation and economic sustainability (Fatoki, 2016). Xenophobic attacks, therefore, lower VAT collections, less income for property owners who, under normal circumstances, generate income from rental property, and impair poverty alleviation and economic development prospects (Fatoki, 2016). Xenophobic attacks diminish cooperation and impair good working relationships that foreign national entrepreneurs established with the locals, thus rendering their efforts, investments, and hard work futile (Tshishonga, 2015).

Moreover, xenophobic attacks have made the country less attractive to tourists and, as such, have led to potential income loss (Ferreira and Perks, 2016). Mudzanani (2016) stated that xenophobic attacks harm the repositioning of South Africa as a leading tourist destination. The graphic images of attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa are channelled via social media to the rest of the world, scaring tourists from Africa to visit the country and undoing efforts to market South Africa as a tourist destination (Mudzanani, 2016). The propensity for xenophobic attacks has deterred African tourists who comprise South Africa's tourist economy (Mudzanani, 2016). Matthee, Krugell, and Mzumara (2015) stated that foreign investors would invest and run businesses in peaceful countries or in countries where their investments and resources would be safe and secure. Adebisi (2017) further mentions that xenophobic attacks have discouraged and disoriented foreign direct investments due to images of a hostile and investment-unfriendly country resulting from xenophobia. Oyelana (2016) added that foreign investors have become skeptical about investing in or coming to South Africa. This has jeopardised the South African economy and development, thus affecting the achievement of prosperity and the realisation of the NDP and SDGs.

4.5. Effects of Xenophobia on the environment for business

Xenophobic attacks have been noted worldwide as having a substantial negative impact on the environment for business. This has been noted from the vast number of businesses that are affected by xenophobia occurrences. This is supported and evidenced by Tshishonga (2015), who argued that xenophobia not only affects the formal economy but also impacts the operations of the informal economy. Many citizens in South Africa mostly rely on the informal economy for socio-economic survival and prosperity. Macleod (2015) reported that the recent surge of attacks on foreigners living in South Africa has harmed the country's image as a port of investment. Political stability is a significant consideration when it comes to pouring money into a country, and images of the attacks in South Africa are giving some investors pause for thinking.

Sanchez (2015) stated that African countries cannot stop talking about the xenophobic attacks in SA and its extensive economic impact that is already affecting the country. An example was the cancelled concert of artists such as BigNuz, Cassper Nyovest, and Kelly Khumalo, who were about to perform in Zimbabwe and London. However, their concerts were cancelled due to xenophobic attacks that were happening. This has led South Africa's local businesses to fear the future of South African businesses operating in other African countries. Also, the South African government has warned its citizens and its multinational companies operating in other countries to work carefully to avoid backlash.

4.6. Xenophobia: A threat to peace, social order, and security

As Pax Africana means a peace that respect the rule of law and fundamental rights of every citizen in Africa, xenophobia shows a kind of lawlessness and the prevalence of violence in Africa. It means public safety and security seen through the absence of war and violence. It is based on the rule of law, justice, and order instead of the absence of war or conflict. Public safety and security are demonstrated by the absence of any kind of violence whether physical or structural. It means that public safety implies freedom from pain or fear of uncertainty. However, xenophobia reduces individuals' ability to contribute to creation of fear and uncertainty. Moreover, delivering inadequate services promotes chronic poverty and hunger and deprives and eliminates social order and security. It ignites social violence, such as social crimes, social protests, and xenophobia against foreign nationals.

The study findings show that people, prosperity, and the planet or environment depend on peace, social order, and security. The study argues that xenophobia has effects on social order and thus affects any endeavours put in place to operationalise the NDP and SDGs. Social order results from the rule of law that guides people's behaviour, relations, and society. It arises from citizens' social interactions and communal interests (Kurawa, 2012). Social order refers to the critical term in sociology that defines how various elements of society collaborate to maintain the status quo. These elements include societal structures and institutions, social relations, societal interactions, behaviour, and cultural characteristics such as norms, beliefs, and values. Besides the field of sociology definition, the term "social order" refers to the condition of stability and harmony that exists in a society where there is no chaos and disruption. It is also an organised various part of society (Cole, 2019).

Cole (2019) further stated that social order knows no chaos and disorder. Therefore, in the presence of xenophobic attacks in a particular society, some individuals do not comply with societal laws, rules, and regulations. Social order becomes disrupted because there is no unity. In the case of xenophobia, there are no

communal interests where all the community members are united and harmonised. Instead of maintaining a status quo, chaotic measures are persistent. Xenophobic attacks disturb social order, and some areas may end up disorganised, thus affecting people's lives, prosperity, and the planet. Citizens act violently against the immigrants, claiming that they are taking away their jobs and disturbing their economy. This, therefore, affects the economic growth on which the realisation of NDP and SDGs depends.

The findings of this study also indicated that xenophobia affects stability and thus affects people, prosperity, and the environment. Hansson and Helgesson (2003) stated that stability rests on constancy, resilience, and robustness. It can, therefore, be demonstrated that robustness is a limiting case of resilience and that neither continuity nor resilience can be defined in terms of the other. Spacey (2020) defined social stability as the extent to which a society and its institutions remain predictable and reliable. Social stability is a significant societal factor because it allows individuals and groups to plan and conduct their affairs without interruption. The effects of xenophobia on social stability are immense. For instance, xenophobic attacks in South Africa have disturbed social relationships between the nationals and foreign nationals, thus leading to uncertainty in the society. It has promoted social disorder that has resulted in inconsistency, thus affecting people's freedom from fear and wants. Xenophobia has affected the reliability and social relationships between governmental officials and foreign investors. It has made the state to be viewed as a non-conducive environment for economic activities that lead to prosperity. In this case, the country cannot plan or conduct its affairs peacefully because of the disruptions that are caused by xenophobic attacks. These xenophobic attacks disturb the country because peace, order, and security are absent within and outside the country.

5. Conclusion

The NDP was established with the aim of strengthening the possibility of achieving the SDGs by 2030. This, therefore, made the NDP vision a long-term vision and strategic plan for South Africa. Its main objective was to rally the nation around a common set of objectives and priorities that drive SDGs in South Africa. The NDP serves as a uniting factor between ordinary citizens and government officials to influence developmental projects and economic or business activities that promote SDGs in South Africa. The study found xenophobia in South Africa affects the NDP and prevents it from promoting SDGs because it affects partnerships between locals and migrants in South Africa to work towards achieving sustainable development. Xenophobic attacks have influenced foreign national entrepreneurs in the country, thus retarding economic growth as they affect business activities and the environment for those activities. Xenophobia is a destructive force that makes foreign nationals go into hiding or leave their businesses exposed to theft. It makes foreign nationals go into hiding and fails to open their businesses. Moreover, they suffer from trauma as they see their hard-earned properties being looted and burned to ashes. The paper found that xenophobia has a substantial negative impact on the environment for business, thus affecting the materialization of the NDP and SDGs in South Africa.

Achieving the NDP Vision 2030 and SDGs in South Africa depends on promoting economic growth and securing an environment for business. It equally depends on the South African government's ability to address xenophobia so that migrants are governed and their efforts are invested in business activities. Xenophobia disrupts these principles by fostering division and hostility, undermining the communal unity necessary for sustainable development. The paper demonstrates that the occurrence of xenophobia is contrary to the African culture of Ubuntu, which emphasizes interconnectedness and the idea that "I live because my neighbor lives",

and communalism, which highlights shared values and mutual support. In realizing the NDP and achieving SDGs, there is a need for a partnership between nationals and migrants. This is because migrants play a pivotal role, and the state remains at the center of implementing migration laws, providing security, and a conducive environment for business for both natives and migrants. Migrants, if managed and governed well, increase the probability of functionalizing the NDP and realizing the SDGs. The occurrence of xenophobia affects migrants' contributions and limits productivity, deepening unemployment, which in turn is the enemy of SDGs. There is a need for South Africa to realize the role migrants present for the NDP and the realization of the SDGs and secure migrants and their businesses from xenophobes. South Africa needs well-researched, evidence-based input into policy processes with long-term economic, social, and political implications for development.

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