Rethinking Xenophobia in the Wake of Human Insecurity in South Africa

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 Abstract

This paper analyses the impact of xenophobic attacks which have rocked South Africa over the past few years, arguing that it has exhibited another human insecurity turning point. The traditional state-centric security conceptions that focus primarily on the safety of the state from military aggression has shifted attention to the security of the individuals. The xenophobic violence which was witnessed after South Africa attained independence in 1994, led scholars of international relations to surmise that the human security conceptual framework should advocates for a paradigm shift of attention from state security approach to a people centered approach to security. The main objective of this paper, therefore was to assess the effects of the xenophobic attacks which erupted periodically and affected the political and economic security sectors of South Africa. This paper adopted a qualitative approach and made use of documentary search, observation methods and in-depth interviews. The paper also revealed that xenophobic attacks against foreigners in South Africa had affected peaceful traditional relations which were in existence between immigrants and the citizens. This article concluded that peace and security in South Africa was under threat, and the African National Congress government needed to formulate new immigration laws that regulated the influx of foreigners to avoid xenophobic attacks. This study, therefore advocates for constructive engagements where both migrants and citizens participate equally in the economic sector in South Africa, as opposed to a situation where foreigners dominate. These would be migratory measures to resolve the differences between migrants and the citizens.

1.1. Introduction and Background

In the last quarter of the 1990s, South Africa grabbed international news headlines because of xenophobic attacks on illegal immigrants. South Africa first witnessed the xenophobic attacks in March 1990, in Hlaphekani near Giyani the capital of the former Gazankulu Homeland. The South African citizens burnt about 300 illegally built huts belonging to illegal Mozambicans immigrants (Reitzes, 1997, Solomon, 2003). In October 1994 fighting erupted in one of South Africa's squatter camps, Imizamo Yethu Squatter Camp in Hout Bay, between Xhosa fishermen and illegal immigrants of the

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Ovambos from Namibia. In late December 1994 and January 1995, a campaign dubbed Operation Buyelekhaya (Go Back Home) began in Alexandra Township. Xenophobia campaigns of that time became premised on intimidation and terror and they succeeded in getting rid of illegal immigrants in most townships (Minaar & Hough, 1996). In another incident in 2000, three foreign traders, a Mozambican and two Senegalese, were chased through the carriages of a train by a mob of locals shouting xenophobic slogans (Solomon, 2003). They were hounded onto the roof of the train where one fell off and was hit by another train, whilst the other two were electrocuted by the overhead electricity cables.

However, xenophobia did not always take the form of popular violence in South Africa. According to Rothchild (1999), criminal elements viewed illegal immigrants as easy targets for manipulation. Knowing that illegal immigrants were unwilling to report their attackers because of the fear of being deported, criminal gangs took advantage of their situations by depriving them of their human rights (Solomon, 1996). The security of the illegal immigrants was exploited in different ways. For instance, Minaar and Hough (1996) noted that "in one of the South Africa's towns, Kangwane illegal immigrants were killed for muti (magic potion) to ward off evil spirits" (p. 123). Since these illegal migrants had no identification documents and no family members in South Africa to report them missing, such killings were difficult to resolve. Many illegal immigrants suffered at the hands of both South African white commercial farmers and South African black citizens. White commercial farmers used to offer illegal migrants jobs but later they instigated their arrest and deportation in order to avoid paying wages. The employment of illegal immigrants was turned into cheap labour because those who did not want to pay for services rendered simply reported their presence to the police (Rothchild, 1999, Minaar & Hough, 1996).

South Africa has a long history of migration. The migration system before 1994 was regulated and monitored by immigration laws which addressed labour needs and the economic and security interests of the white minority government. South Africa's Independence in 1994 brought in a new immigration dispensation that attracted various immigrants from all over Africa, Asia, Western and Eastern Europe among other parts of the world (Matlosa, 2001). Of the total number of migrant workers who entered South Africa between 1997 and 2000, 13 000 migrant workers came from other African countries, while 7 000 migrant workers came from the rest of the world. Among the foreign migrant workers, 40 percent were destined to Gauteng Province, whilst the others settled in equal numbers in the Orange Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga provinces. However, the human security

aspects remained a dilemma in South Africa, with the migration policy being required to establish a balance between national interests and the human rights of immigrants (McDonald, 2002).

1.2. Literature Review and Analysis

1.2.1 Xenophobia: A Manifestation of Human Insecurity

Human security as a term encompasses the concept of conflict prevention. It draws other terms used more broadly in the contemporary global discourse, such as responsibility to protect, human development and xenophobia. In human security aspects, xenophobia can be treated as the 'crisis end' of terms such as human rights and human development (Martin, 1999, Matlosa, 2001). According to Booth (1994), security is the absence of physical violence. Some minority tribes in South Africa were mistaken as foreigners. The Pedi, Venda and Shangaans minority tribal groups of South Africa suffered xenophobic ostracisation after being mistakenly identified as foreigners from neighbouring countries. In other instances, they were threatened with deportation to their countries of origin because of this. Whilst human development is viewed as material development and improved living standards, this was not the situation of minority tribes in South Africa (Solomon, 1996; Leiotta, 2002).

Wheeler (2000) propounded that xenophobia was viewed as a sentiment confined to individuals at the lower end of the socio-economic and the educational spectrum of the society and must be closely related to the notion of sustainable peace, which is the ultimate goal of conflict prevention. Initiatives by the government of South Africa in 1997 to incorporate immigrants to become citizens were premised on promoting peace and security in the region. The conflict prevention discourse had its origins in a political ethos rooted in the collective action of countries in a geographical region. Conflict prevention attempts to break vicious circles of instability, including subsidiary tools of early warning and analysis which rapid responses should have stopped the xenophobic attacks perpetrated against foreigners in the period 2001 and 2004. Despite the fact that conflict prevention has roots in civil activism, focus should be on the nation state to provide security to all individuals through institutional reforms, especially of the security sector and the judiciary, so that the strategic human security proponents can be improved (Leiotta, 2002).

It seemed the South African government had failed to uphold the principle of the 'responsible to protect'. According to Bellamy (2009), "the Canadian Prime Minister, Jean Chretien, announced the creation of an International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) at the United Nation's Millennium Summit in 2000" (p. 204). The ICISS was charged with finding a global consensus on humanitarian intervention. In 2001, the ICISS, chaired by Gareth Evans and Mohamed Sahnoun,

delivered a landmark report entitled "The Responsibility to Protect", which stated that states have the primary responsibility to protect their citizens. The United Nations (UN) principles, which deal with the protection of citizens under UN ICISS 2001: xi, were not adhered to by the South African government since it was a signatory to the United Nations Charter. The brutality against minority groups such as the Pedi, Shangaans and Venda was a security threat. The UN article on the 'Responsibility to Protect' states that, when a state is unable or unwilling to protect the citizens, the international body has to intervene to protect the vulnerable. This involved not only the responsibility to react to humanitarian crises, but also the responsibility to prevent threats such as xenophobic attacks (Bellamy, 2009).

According to Wheeler (2000), the xenophobic attacks were perpetrated by the Zulu and Xhosa tribes. It was revealed that the Zulu tribe posed more xenophobic threats than any other groupings. This perception was closely related to the fact that the Zulu tribe was associated with Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), a belligerent political party in South Africa. The IFP hard-line stance towards illegal immigrants was clearly illustrated in October 1998 when the party's youth brigade threatened to take action against illegal immigrants (Krause, 1996). The human security concept, in terms of the security of citizens and individual immigrants, became a nightmare in South Africa due to the unwelcome stance taken by tribal groupings, such as the Zulu, Xhosa and Afrikaans.

1.2.2. The challenges of Xenophobia in South Africa

The government of South Africa has remained on high alert in an attempt to prevent the outbreak of xenophobic attacks. However, challenges of illegal migration caused political and economic threats to both citizens and migrants. South African citizens exhibited xenophobic attitude in the period 1997 to 2003 towards both legal and illegal immigrants (Solomon, 1996). Matlosa (2001) posits that "there was the reality of the new South Africa for foreigners, strangers, those with darker skins or higher foreheads" (p. 85). The foreigners, who were referred to as "darker skins or higher foreheads" included Nigerians, Ethiopians, Zimbabweans and Mozambicans. It was the arrest and detention of suspected hard-core criminals from these groupings that caused South African citizens to feel threatened by foreigners. It was interesting to note that foreigners were not the only ones targeted by the authorities; even the Venda, Shangaans and Pedi were picked up, harassed, intimidated and at times, thrown into transit camps after being mistakenly identified as illegal immigrants (Matlosa, 2001).

Although there was need to control the influx of illegal migrants into South Africa, the country's xenophobic tendencies torpedoed the vision of the African Renaissance, which was being advocated

by then President Thabo Mbeki (Matlosa, 2001). The human security of the minority tribes was at the mercy of the country's Police and Home Affairs officials. The Shangaans tribe of the Northern Cape Province were at many other times detained after being mistakenly suspected to be Zimbabwean or Mozambican migrants. There was a perception in South Africa which connotatively associated darker skinned people or people without the right South African accent as non-South African citizens. Matlosa (2001) posits that "the black people with dark skin and those who were not able to pronounce certain Xhosa and Zulu words were suspected to be foreigners" (p. 98).

Human migration remains a major international problem caused by global economic and political dictates among other human security provisions. South Africa's poor immigration laws failed to unmask the illegal immigrants who were a threat to peace and security of the country's sovereignty (Matlosa, 1999). Despite that, there was high human migration in the SADC region, and South Africa remained a fertile ground for political and economic migrants who preyed on the vulnerabilities created by human insecurity factors. Migration of people from different parts of the world to South Africa was influenced by the robust economic growth of the period 1997 to 2007. South Africa's "independence" in 1994 resulted in a democratic governance system that gave immigrants a new lease of life to secure jobs in nearly every sector of the economy ahead of citizens. According to Leiotta (2002), South Africa's economic worth to migrants was its economic exchange value because the 'cash nexus' dominated it. It was before 1994 that the immigration system was determined by considerations of the pursuit of profits on the part of recruiting agencies. The migration of people from South Africa's neighbours was exacerbated by political, social and economic related incidences. Matters (1999) refers to this phenomenon as "wage employment for purposes of survival". The 1997 economic growth in South Africa led the government to eliminate restrictions on the free movement of people across the borders. The country experienced an increased number of migrants who were running away from unemployment, economic stagnation or decrease in earning for those employed, disappearing job security, increasing poverty, tribal conflicts, increasing marginalisation and exclusion of the socially deprived groups (Bellamy 2009). Consequently, more nationals drawn from the SADC grouping were pushed to South Africa by poverty and unemployment levels which were beyond marginalisation. According to Crush (1998), an ever growing number of people were excluded from meaningful participation in the economic and social activities of the society.

1.2.3. Research Design and Methodology

The research was mainly based on a qualitative research method, with a strong bias towards documentary analysis of the South African government's immigration policy documents. In addition,

textbooks, journals and survey reports about the xenophobic attacks in South Africa and its effect on the human security provision were also consulted. Information from secondary data was augmented with data collected through in-depth interviews. Data was triangulated with information sourced from research reports, academic textbooks and journals, as well as newspaper articles. The use of desk and internet search provided essential material on the approaches to human security aspects through assessing what caused xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Therefore, the researcher also relied on government publications of South Africa dealing with policy formulation processes and implementation.

1.3. Findings and Analysis

1.3.1. South Africa's Migration Policy

South Africa's migration policy remained ambiguous since 1994 due to delays by the Department of Home Affairs, to publish a White Paper on Migration Policy by 1997. This resulted in lack of clear immigration policy guidelines, resulting in ad hoc reactive and uncoordinated responses to illegal immigration. It also led to confusion among civil servants who wanted an explicit policy framework to deal with migrants. South Africa's open door policy on immigration policy framework after 1994 was a political move to accommodate immigrants from neighbouring countries who had assisted during the armed struggle against the apartheid regime (Crush, 1998).

The South African government's Draft Refugee White Paper of 1999 notes that, in 1996, the Department of Home Affairs offered permanent residency to SADC citizens who met the following criteria:

- Those who were demonstrating or providing evidence of continuous residence in South Africa from 1 July 1991.
- Those who were engaging in productive economic activity (either formal sector employment or informal sector).
- Those who were in a relationship with a South African partner or spouse (customary marriages included).
- Those who had dependent children born or residing lawfully in South Africa.
- Those that did not commit any criminal offence as cited in Schedules 1 and / or 11 of the Aliens Control Act of 1991, (Act 96 of 1991 as Amended).

An official statement by the South African Department of Home Affairs (1997) noted that about one million SADC citizens qualified for permanent residency under the government instituted amnesty.

Yet, by October 1997, only 84 815 applications had been received by the department. Melander (1997) notes that only a few immigrants met the conditions listed above as most of the illegal immigrants regarded the registration of foreigners as a ploy to identify them for deportation and repatriation. Reitzes (1997) also propounded that the low turnout by the immigrants was a deliberate move to resist any machinations by government to account for their existence in South Africa. This was despite radio and newspaper publicity by the Department of Home Affairs in all major languages including English and French.

Due to the low turnout, the South African Department of Home Affairs extended the deadline for applications indefinitely. According to Waldner (2008), the extension of registration of immigrants set a bad precedent to the country's immigration laws as it became counter-productive to halt illegal immigration. The result of this decision by the South African government was an increase in illegal immigration flows into the country.

Waldner (2008) asserts that "Pretoria embarked on soft measures such as accommodation of immigrants through amnesties and the granting of permanent residencies while it was on the one hand trying to tighten the immigration laws" (p. 212). Amongst the government's measures was an attempt to increase repatriation and deportation of illegal migrants to their native countries. This meant sacrificing some of the human rights of the immigrants in the broader belief of providing South African citizens proper human security meant to maintain peace and security of the country. This included jobs, food, political and economic space among other demands made by the foreigners (Melander, 1997).

According to the UNDP (1998) Report on Poverty in Africa, there were 6 348 illegal Mozambican households which did not have more than three years of formal education and they had no work skills outside those of subsistence agriculture. This assertion was contrary to Reitzes' (1997) view that South Africa had a highly educated illegal immigrant population. It was necessary to have a cautious approach to extrapolating figures of the educated illegal immigrants in South Africa, although there were some educated immigrants from countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi and Tanzania among others. The Mozambican migrants comprised people without identification documents, while immigrants from countries such as Zimbabwe and Zambia were highly educated (MacDonald, 2000). According to the World Bank Report of 2000 on 'Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?', the illegal immigrants were generally active in the sectors of the South African economy such as agriculture, construction, informal trading, domestic and hospitality industries. The presence of large numbers of

illegal immigrants working on farms in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, and on sugar plantations in KwaZulu Natal posed a threat to unemployed South African citizens. Melander (1997) propounded that, farmers in the country opted to employ immigrants over locals due to the fact that the former provided cheap labour. These immigrants were easily exploitable as they feared being exposed to the government and were not in a position to join trade unions. The hospitality sector was also characterised by an increased presence of illegal immigrants as reported by the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (SACCAWU) (Solomon, 2003, p. 252). The Tea Room and Restaurant Industrial Council confirmed this report and alluded that the majority of the illegal immigrants were Mozambicans and Zimbabweans. SACCAWU reported in 2000 that, the illegal immigrants were prepared to work for low wages, thereby undermining labour unions' efforts to fight for better wages and conditions of service from the employers. According to Solomon (2003), Café Zurich in Hillbrow dismissed twenty local waiters and replaced them with Zaireans who worked for very low wages.

The immigrants caused huge challenges to the human security development of the country which saw workers' unions raising serious security concerns. Some of the challenges included commercial crimes. Between January and September 1997, 152 immigrants were involved in commercial crimes to the value of R517 986 870, which constituted 19.6 percent of all commercial crimes over the same period. De Vlerter (1997) notes that due to the crimes committed by the immigrants, the National Operational Police Policy portrayed illegal immigrants as 'South Africa's Number One Enemy'. Between 1997 and 2007, illegal migrants in South Africa exposed the citizens to a lot of human insecurities due to illicit deals which weakened the social, political and economic facets of the country. McDonald (2002) highlighted that, a total of one thousand (1000) guns were confiscated from the illegal immigrants in 1999. Also in the same year, 22 121 kilograms of dagga, 5 422 mandrax tablets and 110.2 kilograms of cocaine were confiscated from illegal immigrants who were arrested and prosecuted. All this led to an escalation of human insecurity in the country.

In 2000, the South African Police's Organised Crime Unit further estimated that 90 percent of the local cocaine was controlled by illegal immigrants. The drug trade threatened to ruin the South African's good relations with other countries after it became clear that the country had been turned into a top drug conduit. The drug trade had further threatened peace and security of the country since social and economic developments were greatly retarded. According to Solomon (2003), South Africa had become one of the most important conduits for drug trafficking to Western Europe among other places. In fact, Narco-trafficking to Western countries caused serious political problems as po-

litical favours were bought (corruption) for drug trafficking to prosper. There was also serious loss of productivity caused by movement of informal capital. Socially, there was disruption of family life. All these had ripple effects on the South African citizens' peace and security frameworks, thus endangering human security of individuals in that country. McDonald (2002) revealed that, about 60 percent of illegal immigrants who were moving from Mozambique to Swaziland in early 2000 and entering borders were armed. It was said that, once inside the country, the smuggled weapons were either used in the commission of violent crimes by illegal immigrants or were sold or rented out to South African criminal syndicates. South Africa continued to suffer from crimes related to politically associated violence. This greatly affected the economy through reduction of investor confidence and state security apparatus needed to be heavily funded in order for them to cope. This further exhausted the already stretched state resources. These new political and economic challenges were to be solved in order to improve the lives of the poor individuals (Crush, 1998).

1.3.2. The nature of human insecurity in South Africa

Illegal immigration instigated an escalation of human insecurity in South Africa. For example, in 1998, illegal immigrants from Mozambique were said to have been hired as assassins for various crime syndicates. The illegal Mozambicans were hired because it was difficult to track them down as was the case with local criminals (De Vlerter, 1997). In one case, the South African intelligence (NIA) busted a criminal syndicate and revealed to the nation that taxi bosses in the province of Mpumalanga had hired 40 Mozambicans as assassins to eliminate rival taxi bosses. These incidents affected South Africa's domestic security stability.

Illegal migration did not only impact adversely on employment opportunities, but also had negative implications for the South African government in its provision of adequate education, health, housing and pension fund which were the most critical human security needs for the country's citizens. Reitzes (1997) illustrates that there were busloads of Swazi and Basotho children who were crossing into South Africa to attend schools located close to the borders, and this placed an inordinate burden on South Africa's overstretched education resources. Rothchild (1999) argues that "the phenomenon of immigrants attending schools in South Africa's border regions were even stretched in greater heights in areas like Johannesburg where an estimated 80 000 children of illegal immigrants burdened an already overcrowded schools" (p. 178).

Another aspect of human security that was greatly affected was the health of illegal immigrants. The immigrants were, in most cases, in poor health, greatly malnourished and conduits of ailments such

as yellow fever, cholera, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. This resulted in health facilities being burdened as the immigrants sought medical assistance from local hospitals and clinics. They were also responsible for spreading diseases in the country, thereby overburdening the health infrastructure. South Africa's security was greatly compromised by the uncoordinated movements of people with no immigration documents which allow them to cross borders (Leiotta, 2002).

Naturally, the South African citizens were unhappy with the economic developments that were taking place in their country as a result of the influx of immigrants. Their country had been turned into a refugee destination and a haven for illegal immigrants. As indicated on the two tables below, 73.6 percent of the South Africans felt that the illegal immigrants were either unwelcome or very unwelcome in that country. The findings were reinforced by the surveys conducted by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) which also indicated that the South Africans wanted a ban on immigrants.

Table 1: Whether the influx of illegal immigrants is good or bad analysed by province

PROVINCE	GOOD	BAD	NEITHER	UNCERTAIN
Northern Cape	3	78	8	11
Western Cape	3	81	14	2
Mpumalanga	8	60	26	6
Eastern Cape	10	79	6	5
KwaZulu-Natal	14	64	15	7
Free State	16	70	11	3
Gauteng	18	56	16	10
North West	30	56	12	2
Limpopo Province	37	56	3	4

Solomon Hussein, Illegal Immigration into South Africa, 2003.

South African citizens were negatively inclined towards any immigration policy that welcomed newcomers into the country. The table shows the highest level of opposition to immigration recorded by any country in the world where comparable questions were asked (Matters, 1999, pp. 354-365).

The findings on citizens' views on the illegal immigrants indicated that foreigners were unwelcome in South Africa. The table below shows the responses which were quite uncompromising on refusing the immigrants entry into the country.

Table 2: What is your view in general on the so-called illegal immigrants that come to South Africa from other countries?

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE %
Very welcome	3,2
Welcome	12,6
Neither	7,0
Unwelcome	35,8
Very unwelcome	37,8
Don't know	3,6

Solomon Hussein, Illegal Immigration into South Africa, 2003.

This assessment indicated that, the South African citizens felt that the country's immigration laws were not strict enough to protect them against competition for employment, food security and many other human security facets caused by aliens (Magardie, 2000).

While the concept of human security was then defined as useful and embedded in the state policy discourse on security in nearly all SADC countries, in South Africa, it remained a contested issue because of xenophobic attacks against immigrants during the period 1998 to 2005 (Magardie, 2000). The provision of human security to the citizens in the SADC region was affected by different levels of governance systems found on each member state. Every member country was more interested on national interests than regional interests. Booth (1994) defines "human security as the absence of threat to human life, lifestyle and culture through the fulfilment of basic needs" (p.43). Although this definition of security was greatly guided by the feminist agitators contributing to the new security thinking, it did not take cognisance of the individual security. This definition sought to place the security concerns of the ordinary man and woman on the street at the very core or any security strategy (Booth, 1994). The human security thrust which broadens the security agenda that include non-military threats such as xenophobia, shortage of food, lack of transport system, lack of health facilities and shortage of jobs creation for the young people was the panacea to the threat of instability in the country and the region.

In an effort to address and approach the security discourse, the former South African President Nelson Mandela, when addressing 1997 United Nations stated:

> "It is true that hundreds of millions of politically empowered masses are caught in the deathly trap of poverty, unable to live life in its fullness. Out of this, are born so-

cial conflicts which produce insecurity and instability, civil and other wars that claim

many lives and millions of desperate refugees. Out of this cauldron are also born ty-

rants, dictators and demagogues". (Jenkins, 2001, p. 89)

This broad thinking on security made great strides in sustainable economic development to achieve political, economic and social well-being for all the people of Southern Africa, especially those of South Africa. The security and peace perception was based on a people-centred approach to security because the human security transcended to the individual security levels. On the same note, poverty was also considered to be a structural problem in Southern Africa during the period 1997 to 2007. About 45% to 50% of the total population lived in abject poverty and most of the people faced chronic food insecurity (World Bank, 2000). In most cases, about three quarters of poverty-stricken people were concentrated in the rural areas, in the so called marginal regions characterised by unfavourable climatic conditions, which received little and irregular rain, had poor infrastructure and infertile soils prone to erosion (IFRRI / WUR / IFAD, 2002). Poor communities in most SADC states were further characterised by limited access to education and social services, vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and an unbalanced family structure with proportionally more women and young children (FAO, 2000). This served as a brief survey of the evolution of the concept of security from a narrow military-centred security, to a wider more holistic approach to peace and security. In fact, human security in turn, held implications for traditional perspectives of sovereignty and suggested that it needed to be recast in light of global change for peace and stability in societies (Magardie, 2000).

1.3.3. Migration Dynamics in Southern Africa: Regional Context of Migration

While Southern African economies have co-existed because of cross-border migration, they also exhibited considerable inequalities and imbalances. The uneven development in the SADC member states had implications for labour markets and migration. Despite the political boundaries inherited from colonial rule, the regional cross border migration had become ingrained in the socio-economic fabric of the SADC as a whole. Due to the regional economic and social links created by the interstate migration, the basis for regional politics and anthropology remain anchored on a single regional economy (Amin, 1995). Although migration had helped to weave the economies of the SADC region together, it also caused consequences of unequal development and exploitative relations that existed during the period 1997 to 2007. It was the regional cross-border migration which caused human insecurity of individual citizens in SADC whilst, on the other hand, it benefited South Africa which was already relatively more industrialised than the other regional states (Jauch, 1997).

1.3.4. Typology of Migrants

It is imperative to identify the various types of migrants during the period 1997 to 2007, and to understand the relationships between the different categories which caused the cross border movements in the SADC region. According to Reitzes (1997), this is vital since the population displacements at either intrastate or interstate level caused a lot of human insecurity to the citizens of the SADC region, whilst on the same note weakening peace and security of member states.

1.3.5. Contract Migration

Contract migration remained one of the most glaring features of the political economy of the SADC region that was traceable to the pre-colonial period (Matlosa, 2001). What caused the uneven penetration of capitalism in the SADC region, resulted in the emergence of the one of the regional states, South Africa, as a key locus of capital accumulation. The South African economic development in late 1990s led to other SADC member states to be relegated to the status of labour reserves. According to Reitzes (1997), "the fundamental law of capitalism simply means capital attracts labour, skilled or unskilled but the need for labour depends on the extent of capital concentration and the differentiation of production" (p.87). This assertion indicated that other SADC member states were just labour sources which provided South Africa with a pool of extra-cheap labour and a captive market for the country's manufactured goods. Contract migration in the SADC region suggested that an agreement was supposed to be drawn up between a migrant job seeker and the employer. The contract which was supposed to be drawn up between a prospective foreign labourer and an employer, was supposed to state the agreed position where the employer was to pay foreign workers a certain remuneration, and on the other hand, the contract labourers were to undertake to work for the employers for a fixed period of time after which they were supposed to return to their country of origin (Matlosa, 2001).

Contract migration, especially in the South African mines and farms had been dominated by mostly rural male folk from mainly SADC states with minimal educational achievements, and they usually came from poor backgrounds. The foreign migrant labourers were not concerned about the remuneration but rather they were concerned with getting some money to support their families back home. There was less or low involvement of female folk in labour migration in the period 1997 to 2007. This movement of migrants to South Africa from most SADC states caused a lot of insecurity in terms of food security, the health security, social security, political security and economic security. It was the migration of male folk from SADC states to South Africa that left agricultural activities in the hands of women and children and the result was relatively food and economic insecurity. Regarding

health insecurity, these male migrants brought and spread a variety of diseases, depending on the circumstances of livelihood they had to adopt in their foreign environments. In terms of the human security of the individuals, there was a catastrophe for all the citizens of the region because even some South African citizens endured ostracisation from the employers who preferred cheap foreign labour which they were able to manipulate easily by under paying them (McDonald, 2002).

1.3.6. Asylum Seekers

The majority of communities in Southern Africa share a common history, cultural heritage, language, religion and other social bonds that transcended colonial boundaries. In most instances, as these communities struggled for daily survival, borders did not matter to them, since they considered them as irrelevant. This made illegal migration during the period 1997 to 2007 very easy although it was risky at times where individuals had to cross crocodile-infested rivers such as the Zambezi and the Limpopo Rivers. They crossed borders under stringent state security and military surveillance at the boundaries (Crush, 1998). Asylum seekers and refugees remained a potential threat to the security of the SADC region. It was often that the country from which the asylum seekers and refugees fled was also suspicious about the activities of the migrants within their host country. Asylum literally means a sanctuary or place of refuge. Asylum-seeking refers to a quasi-legal process where one state grants protection to a national or nationals of another state (Dodson, 1999). Most asylum seekers who entered South Africa between 1997 and 2005 were looking for employment opportunities rather than political freedom. The concept of peace and security in the SADC region remained a contentious issue because nearly all member states have, one way or the other, housed both refugees and asylum seekers from one or two regional states. According to Matlosa (2001), the SADC region had the highest number of refugees and asylum-seekers compared to other African sub-regional groupings. The primary difference between refugees and asylum-seekers is that the rights of asylum seekers belong to states and not to individuals although the United Nations Article 14 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 does give individuals a right to asylum. But as the declaration took the form of a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, it is not legally binding on states (Booth, 1994). The number of asylum seekers who entered South Africa, during the period 1997 to 2007, were not able to be determined because nearly all SADC member states had their citizens' flight to that country as political refugees. Matlosa (2001) further propounds that the majority of the migrants were economic refugees. The human security aspects in South Africa among other regional countries became greatly compromised.

1.3.7. Economic Migrants

Not all migrants seeking protection or shelter in another country fall under the definition of a refugee according to United Nations Charter, Article 1A of the Geneva Convention of 1951. One of the fundamental criticisms of the 1951 Refugee Convention is that it is unclear about what constitutes persecution and the emphasis on the individual rights negates the concept of group persecution. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) the criticism is unfair because there is no internationally acceptable criterion for determining whether a person has a well-founded fear of persecution. In this respect, it is civil and political rights that are relevant to the field of human rights which deals with the relations between the individual and the state. The criterion may also be fulfilled when economic, social and cultural rights are violated, particularly if the applicant fears discriminatory measures (UNHCR Handbook, 2009).

However, every person who has been or will be faced with a human rights violation in his or her country of origin cannot be considered a refugee. There is an important prerequisite which stipulates that the violation must reach a certain degree of severity before it is classified as persecution. The human rights violation must also be motivated by one or more of the five causes of persecution referred to in the UN 1951 Convention, which include race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group and political opinion (Matters, 1999).

From 1999 to 2007, there was mass movement of Zimbabweans to South Africa and Botswana. The movement to the two neighbouring SADC countries by mainly Zimbabweans blurred the distinction between what is a refugee and an economic migrant. Economic migrants fit neither in the category of refugees or asylum-seekers because they fall outside the specific mandate of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). According to Matters (1999), lack of human security in some SADC member states was based on a "false distinction" between a forced and an economic migrant. Zimbabweans moved in large numbers to South Africa in search of some form of employment. To stress that the movements of Zimbabweans into South Africa and Botswana were solely for economic opportunities, the Regional Office for Southern Africa of the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) coined the term 'migrants of humanitarian concern in 2007'. This assertion put Zimbabwe onto the international spotlight as a failing state whilst other critics called for even military intervention to rescue the people from what was defined as an induced political and economic mismanagement of affairs by the sitting government (UNHCR, 2009). However, South African citizens were economically and politically threatened by the presence of immigrants who had invaded nearly every sector, including those areas reserved for citizens. A similar situation existed in the domestic sector in 2004, where the South African Domestic Workers Un-

ion (SADWU) reported that there was an increase in the number of Zimbabweans, Mozambicans and Malawians. The SADWU organisers also reported that, Zimbabweans and Malawians were prepared to work for very low wages and were not interested in joining workers' unions. On the other hand, employers preferred to employ illegal immigrants as opposed to South Africans. The presence of Zimbabweans and Malawians in most informal sectors of the South African economy was a cause of concern for the Chamber of Hawkers and Informal Business (ACHIB) based in Johannesburg. Xeno-phobic attacks against immigrants stemmed from South African citizens' disgruntlement over the domination of immigrants in the economic sector of the country.

1.4. Conclusion

Human migration in the SADC region continued to fail to establish the extent to which the move-ment of people threatened peace and security of the host countries. South Africa and Botswana re-mained the fertile ground for both political and economic migrants who preyed on the vulnerabili-ties created by poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, lack of democracy and political intolerance. The push factors of immigrants to South Africa included, among others, the growth of economic ac-tivity witnessed in 1999, and the elimination of restrictions on the free movement of people across the borders with its neighbours, running away from growing unemployment, disappearing job secu-rity and political exclusion. The immigrants who were flooding South Africa, especially from Zimba-bwe and Mozambique during the period 1997 to 2007, were taking advantage of border security lapses and the movement was also instigated by the Mozambican political crisis and the general election contestation that had hard-hit Zimbabwe. It was mainly political and economic marginalisa-tion and exclusion of the social groups of people in many SADC countries which fuelled migration to South Africa and Botswana. The economies of these two host countries were stable and able to sus-tain their citizens.

Although, there was a need to control the influx of immigrants into South Africa as a way of preserv-ing its economy and security of its citizens, the measures instigated the xenophobic tendencies where the virtues of Pan-Africanism were ignored. South African citizens felt disadvantaged by the foreigners, who encroached into many economic domains, which were reserved for locals. Hence, the xenophobic attacks which followed were a sign of dismay against migrants. The xenophobic at-tacks which erupted in South Africa in early 2000 were organised by the citizens who accused the government of not doing enough to economically protect them from foreigners' manipulation. The xenophobic attacks were mainly confined to the individual citizens who were occupying the lower end of the socio-economic and educational spectrum of the society in South Africa. It was supposed

to be viewed in close relation to the notion of peace and security of the South African citizens due to various vulnerabilities exacerbated by poverty and lack of job security.

The South African government should come up with a revised national White Paper blueprint on immigration matters which include new refugee management concepts, compatible border control and entry policies, efficient readmission and return policies and then labour agreements as a migration alternative. The South African government needs to consult extensively with other SADC member states to revisit the June 1995 Draft Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, in member states. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and African Union protocols on refugees and asylum seekers, the host country should build refugee camps to be able to provide security to those vulnerable to human insecurity.

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