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South Africa's Xenophobic Violence against Nigerian Immigrants and Bilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation with Nigeria

Charles Arinze OBIORA¹, B.O.G NWANOLUE² & Marcel Muoebonam ANYIAM³

Department of Political Science, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
Igbariam Campus, Anambra State NIGERIA

Abstract

This paper examines South Africa's xenophobic violence against Nigerian immigrants and her bilateral trade and economic cooperation with Nigeria. The xenophobic attacks have great potential in fuelling hostilities between South Africa and other countries whose nationals have become victims of many years of the uncontrolled dastardly acts. This paper also examined South Africa's xenophobic violence and its effects on economic cooperation and bilateral with To find out how South Africa's xenophobic violence against Nigerian immigrants affected its bilateral trade and economic cooperation with Nigeria, the study relied on the scapegoat theory of intergroup conflict as the framework of analysis. In the research process, the paper adopted the qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Findings in the study revealed that the South African xenophobic violence did not have negative effects on its economic cooperation with Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that the African Union should develop frameworks for sanctioning against any form of xenophobic violence in Africa. Urgent steps should be taken to institutionalize measures and frameworks that counter xenophobic attitudes and all forms of discrimination and inequalities, racism and inherited apartheid legacies in South Africa.

Keywords: Bilateral Trade, Economic Cooperation, Immigrants, Xenophobic, Violence

Introduction

Xenophobia in the African context has its foundation in colonialism and is primarily embedded in the social and political system. This is because colonialism orchestrated arbitrary and faulty demarcation of boundaries of African communities which created divisions among the communities and states thus sowed the seed of divisiveness and disunity (Akinola, 2018). Hence, post-colonial African states have lacked sustainable peace and unity as well as mutual co-existence characterized by xenophobia and communal clashes which undermine political stability and economic development on the continent (Katzellenbogen, 1982).

Particularly, South African xenophobic attitude towards foreign immigrants is deep-rooted and has a connected historic account with migration. Migration in South Africa

dates back to the period prior to the incoming of white settlers during the authorities of Jan van Riebeck in 1642. The black Africans have long started their labour migration before the whites started settling in a place known as South Africa. It was also most likely that wars pushed other Africans into South Africa, apart from the claims of colonial arbitrary demarcation of national boundaries. Also, based on labour agreements, people from India and China flooded the country during the 1800s, and the with the forming of the Union of South Africa in 1910, racial discriminatory rules were implanted authorizing only white immigration in the country (Immigrants Regulation Act of 1913). It is therefore upon this discriminatory foundation that South Africa's immigration conducts was built and developed till the present era (Peberdy, 2006).

However, the lack of adequate protection for African immigrants (who constituted about 75% of total migrant stock in South Africa) (Unah, 2019), and their assets has remained an important concern that questions the deepening level of intolerance and xenophobic attitude among South African people. Peberdy (2010) notes that big cities of South Africa such as Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town and other smaller cities and towns experience horrible xenophobic violence against African immigrants that reside in both the main city and suburbs which led to the killing of many settlers in these areas.

A number of migration policies are in place in to control migration in South Africa. The 1991 Aliens Control Act, termed 'apartheid last act', acted as the bedrock of South African immigration policy all through the 1990s and early 2000s. The Act was reviewed following a wide consultation on immigration administration which led to the development of a Green Paper on International Migration in 1997, and White paper on Refugees as well as on Immigration. These attempts culminated in the production of the Refugee Act in 1998 and subsequently the Immigration Act in 2002 (OECD/ILO, 2018; Crush, 2008b). The Immigration Act of 2002 operated up to fifteen years and conditioned the nature of economic mobility and activities of foreign immigrant in South Africa. However, the Act could not forestall the outbreak of some xenophobic violence that occurred in the period while it lasted. Further, the Department of Home Affairs in 2016 released a new Green Paper on International Migration (DHA, 2016) as well as White Paper in 2017. The papers made claims on how to refocus international migration to be generally favourable and effectively managed in line with the provisions of the Constitution and the 2030 National Development Plan (Crush, 2008b). A Border Management Authority Bill, 2017, was further enacted to regulate cross-border migration in South Africa (Akoob, 2017).

Migration governance in South Africa has important implications for economic cooperation on the continent. Migration policies, for example, have potential to reform the prevailing xenophobic sentiments, attacks and mistreatment of foreign nationals in South Africa and promote friendlier economic cooperation and bilateral relations between South Africa and other countries in Africa. South Africa has active diplomatic relations with many African countries, with established foreign missions and embassies in about 44 countries in Africa. It signed about 99 agreements and conventions with various international unions, and made many official visits to African countries. For example, South Africa made about 21 official visits to African nations in 2015 (either the President or the deputy); while in 2016, it made 11 official visits to African nations (DIRC, 2016).

These moves tended to attract more investments in South Africa as well as economic cooperation with other African countries. South African firms have deeply and massively penetrated almost all the markets in Africa, especially with some prominent and reputable international companies taking the lead, including MTN, Shoprite, DSTV, Stanbic IBTC and many others (Grobbelaar, 2004). The ability of South Africa to be at the forefront in the establishment of NEPAD also helped to boost its trade and investment opportunities in Africa. This means that South Africa is quite on the move to find more economic partners on the continent in order to build closer economic ties through trade and investments (South African Government News Agency, 2010).

However, these developments cannot be fully understood if not examined in the context of the xenophobic challenge which South Africa grapples with at the home front and their effects on its economic cooperation on the continent. This study therefore focuses on the South Africa's xenophobic violence and reasons for the attack on Africans with special emphasis on Nigeria, between 2008 and 2019. Nigeria is chosen among African countries for this study because it essentially has active trade and investment relations with South Africa as articulated by the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO).

South Africa's Xenophobic Violence and Economic Cooperation in Africa

Games (2017), draws the attention to the claims of South Africa as a leading country that promotes intra-African partnership and integration which remains doubtful after the takeover of majority rule in the country. It is argued that South Africa has been portrayed as a leading hegemony in the Southern African region but has continued to fail in that role as shown by the inability of its leaders to foster economic cooperation and regional integration on the continent. In this line of thought, Cotterill (2017) maintains that South Africa has failed to establish strong economic partnership and trade relations between itself and the rest of African nations. This is because owing to the hydra-headed xenophobia practice in the country, many African countries are now apprehensive of maintaining close relations with the South Africa. The eruption of xenophobic attacks against black foreigners in some remote areas and economically backward areas have thus attracted wide range of criticisms and sometimes breakdown of economic relations and cooperation between South Africa and other countries in Africa (Misago, 2017).

It is also appalling that South African immigration policies such as the Border Management Authority Bill, enacted in 2017, has further tightened the access to economic opportunities for foreigners in the country (Akoob, 2017). Although South Africa made some diplomatic engagements with many African countries establishing foreign missions and embassies in about 44 countries in Africa. It signed about 99 agreements and conventions with various international unions, and made many official visits to African countries. For example, about 21 official visits from either the President or the deputy was made in 2015 while in 2016, about 11 of similar visits were made to African nations (DIRC, 2016). These moves tended to attract more investments in South Africa as well as economic cooperation with other African countries. This means that South Africa is quite on the move to find more economic partners on the continent in order to build closer economic

ties through trade and investments (South African Government News Agency, 2010). Unfortunately, the issue of xenophobia has continued to dampen these moves and work against the realization of the economic cooperation being pursued by South Africa on the continent.

It is important to note that South Africa's firms have taken some of their investments to neighbouring countries and beyond such as Lesotho, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Angola, Burkina Faso, etc. The investments include banking, retailing, grocery, super market, business malls among many others which have started entering other neighbouring countries especially shortly before and after the expiration of apartheid as marked by the 1994 election in the country which saw to the installation of black rule. However, South Africa has had little economic ties and investments in these countries for some important reasons. South African investors had limited economic cooperation with French speaking countries due mainly to language barriers as well as wide differences in trade and legal issues. Again, South Africans' attempts to establish strong economic dealings in states in North Africa could not make headway with the excuse that these states are too far away, in terms of location as well as socio-cultural barriers. Private firms operating in the aviation, power, water, ports, and telecommunications sectors however made some efforts to penetrate other African states and establish their business. It is worth noting that in this expansion effort, the state-led power firm Eskom was able to penetrate up to 30 nations in 2000s, but unfortunately it has receded its moves from most of these nations as a result of the nature of business environment which is now more competitive than before (Grobbelaar & Besada, 2008).

South African airways has been outstanding in muzzling the competitive economic environment involved in doing business in other African nations as well as the economic challenges arising at home country, but in all of these the company has continued to be in business. In addition, the state owned Public Investment Corporation (PIC), has been operating in almost all the African countries and has become the biggest asset managing firm in Africa. A number of problems undermine South African trade and investments efforts in Africa, including the poorly developed markets, poor business environment, culture and ethics, the free-market policies on the continent, the challenges of creating the type of products and services needed in African countries, and the economies of scale to be considered in the course of production of goods and services among others. However, South Africa continues to maintain some form of closer business ties with its immediate neighbours such as Zimbabwe, a small country with less than 15 million people. Initiatives regarding trade liberalization on the continent were also commenced and promoted by South Africa, including the 2008 SADC Free Trade Area; the Tripartite Free Trade Area of 2015 responsible for the coming together of about 26 countries from various regional groupings such as SADC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the East African Community (EAC), among others (Games, 2017).

It is believed that South Africa is regional economic powerhouse in Africa and also an emerging power in the global system. This is probably because South Africa has the biggest manufacturing firms in Africa, and has developed its services sector, with fairly

performing capital stock market. The notion that South Africa consumer goods and retailing business are formidable with developed economies of scales in the local South African market tends to scare manufacturers of same line of goods in other countries away as a result of intense market competition. It is in fact assumed that these South African manufacturers had access to more sophisticated branded quality which gives undue market advantage. Meanwhile, since most of these companies such as Shoprite and Pic n Pay are owned by the whites, there have been some apprehensions in various African countries where they have extended their trade and investments. In most cases, and to conquer this challenge, these South African companies making business expansions to new African nations have adopted the process of asset acquisitions which helps them to have advantage of local knowledge in their engagements with the new African market environment (Games, 2017).

On the other hand, South Africa has also exploited some economic advantage from incoming foreign investments into the country, since these companies depend on gaining experience from South African assets, business skills, and their economic legacies in other to promote and achieve their expansive networks on the continent. Some of these companies entering South Africa originate from Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and Argentina, etc. These companies have further deepened the level of competition in African business environment (including retailing, ICT and construction), and in some cases they have outshined South Africa and taken away their business advantage. It is claimed that Chinese firms in South Africa have had great advantage over South Africa as they exploit their labour regulations which give them the opportunity to hire low-cost workers from their country. This makes Chinese firms to have more competitive success in their biddings for contracts in Africa than South African firms (Centre for Chinese Studies, 2006).

Cropley (2010) thus argues that in terms of business competitiveness, South African companies are gradually losing their market advantage over other companies in African markets as a result of the entrance of new competing firms. It is not contested that South African firms possess some competitive advantage, the incoming of foreign companies have reduced its market opportunities. South Africa's trade and investment opportunities as well as its market share in Africa therefore appear to be fast declining in the face of doubling market competition both from the continent and beyond. South Africa has also had weak and ruptured trade relations with many African countries as a result of embedded distrust between the government of South Africa and other African governments.

According to Scheepers (2010), decades of apartheid rule indirectly sowed the seed of xenophobia in South Africa. Although majority of the black South Africans kicked against apartheid, it however flourished and succeeded in planting the seeds of hatred and segregation both in the political, economic and socio-cultural spheres that made South African to be cut off from its African peers. The seeds of apartheid have therefore continued to germinate till present times despite the formal eradication of apartheid in South Africa. This is one of the key reasons why South Africa finds it very difficult to promote effective trade relations and economic integration with other African nations on the continent.

Scheepers (2010) insists that there is only low level of economic cooperation between South Africa and other African nations, and even between South Africa and its immediate neighbours. South Africa had strong reservations for the perceived lack of democratic practice and low level of economic activities in neighbouring countries and as such would rather remain on their own and have little economic cooperation with them. It was believed that President Jacob Zuma implemented 'quiet diplomacy' (like his predecessor Thabo Mbeki did) in its relations with their neighbours despite having made strong demands for the need to engage them drastically and help it conquer their internal challenges. This pretentious approach made it very difficult for effective integration and economic cooperation between the two countries to work out smoothly. The South African dealings with its neighbours example only brings the larger picture of South Africa relations with the rest of Africa nations in terms of bilateral and multilateral relations to clearer picture. Even though South Africa spends its time and sometimes resources taking part in economic fora and signing many trade agreements with other African countries, it hardly oppose the fundamental structural barriers and ideological issues that impede on economic cooperation and integration on the continent. Hence, South Africa only makes little or no significant and real contribution to economic integration and intra-trade cooperation in Africa. Again, the discordant tones and rising feud between citizens of South Africa and other African immigrants had been fostered by the implementation of principles of laissez-faire which always result to violent xenophobic conflicts. More so, the question of national identity and citizenship rights have not been effectively managed and legally addressed as it concerns relations between South African citizens and foreigners. This gap has continued to remain indefinitely and serves as a potent tool to be exploited to mete out discriminatory treatments and attacks to mainly black aliens in South Africa, which shows that the South African government had little or no interest and enthusiasm in changing the ugly trend but instead continues to institutionalize it by its actions and inactions.

Khadiagala (2019) draws attention to the xenophobic attitude in the context of South Africa-Nigeria economic relations. It is claimed that in 2016 Nigerian nationals living in South Africa are up to 30,000. However, the continued xenophobic violence in South Africa has instigated a protracted hostility which could affect the level of economic cooperation between the two countries if not well managed. In some occasions, the xenophobic violence in South Africa had been replied back in Nigeria with some reprisal attacks and payback measures against South African business interests and firms operating in Nigeria. Sometimes this results to estranged diplomatic ties among the both countries, including the case where Nigeria cancelled a World Economic Forum (WEF) conference in Cape Town, as well as temporarily closed South African missions in Abuja and Lagos, and threatened to recall its ambassador in South Africa. Nigerians living in South Africa have most times been the worst victim of major xenophobic attacks in 2008, 2015 and 2019 especially in low-income areas like Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban; although Nigerian are not particularly targeted in the attacks than other black Africans.

It is not clear whether the increasing power tussle between the two emerging Africa's economic giants such as Nigeria and South Africa are implicated in the constant killing of Nigerians in South Africa. However, what is clear is that the both countries are key

economic powers and political power brokers in their sub-regions and have maintained some considerably economic relations and partnerships including the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The both nations have therefore maintained a robust economic cooperation and trade and exchanges, with South Africa being a leading and top investor in most of Nigeria's economic sub-sectors such as ICT, communication, construction/engineering, bank services, retailing, hospitality, asset management, and tourism among others. A comparison of South Africa and Nigeria in terms of their economic investments, trade and technological and infrastructural advancement, it is obvious that South Africa is quite ahead of Nigeria. Nigeria can only boast of having an expansive market structure which can adequately accommodate and cater for the economic interests South African investments and trade expansions in the country (Ebegbulem, 2013).

In a move to further consolidate and strengthen mutual economic cooperation and trade exchanges, South Africa and Nigeria set up the South Africa-Nigeria Binational Commission (BNC) in 1999 was launched the South African and Nigerian governments. The goal of setting up the BNC was to reassess the level of cooperation enjoyed by both nations in all spheres of foreign relations including, diplomatic ties, public affairs, infrastructural development, agriculture, minerals and energy, trade and investments, industrial relations etc. The Commission formally holds its conference two times in yearly with the objective to accelerate the volume of trade and investments between the both countries. The Commission is poised to facilitate a safe and prosperous business environment in the both countries where there will be great opportunities for trade benefits as guaranteed by the quality of ease of doing business. It is forum to achieve extended critical aspirations of economic freedom on the African continent and create atmosphere for a peaceful and safe business environment that can further foster massive intra-African trade and investments. South Africa has particularly exploited the trade benefits accruing Nigerian expansive market to boost its corporations and firms which are now strong economic powers in the economy of Nigeria (Ebegbulem, 2013).

The BNC has given rise to the creation of South Africa-Nigeria Chamber of Commerce, with the biggest firms in South Africa having massive foreign investments in Nigeria under the platform. The companies involved include MTN, Standard Bank, Shoprite, Multichoice DSTV/GOTV, First Rand Massmart, Sun International, South African Breweries, Umgeni Water, LTA Construction, Critical Rescue International, Global Outdoor Semces, Oracle and Airtime, and many others. The key objective of establishing the Chamber of Commerce is to promote trade and investment opportunities in Nigeria for companies from South Africa. It offers guidelines on the conditions and measures to adopt in order to foster South African business interests in Nigeria. This is done by conducting market survey and researches for firms in South Africa on how they can successfully expand their investment and trade interests in Nigeria and be competitive in order to achieve considerably economic gains (Ebegbulem, 2013). Based on the foregoing, it appears that South Africa is far ahead of Nigeria in its bilateral economic relations with many of its quality and lucrative investments in Nigeria. This suggests it has exploited the rich business environment and Nigeria's expansive market opportunities to promote its business interests and capitalist expansions.

South African High Commission Abuja (2015) maintains that South Africa and Nigeria enjoy strong bilateral cooperation and smooth diplomatic relations as exemplified by frequent official visits exchanged between the two countries political leadership. The diplomatic engagement between the both countries dated as far back as 1994 when the High Commissions in Pretoria and Lagos were inaugurated. The Bi-National Commission which forms the platform for trade and investment interactions between the two countries is being co-chaired by the Deputy-President of South Africa and the Vice-President of Nigeria. The Commission has contributed enormously in facilitating economic interests between the two countries as depicted by a number of signed trade agreements, and commitments toward entrenching trade reciprocity, security of investments, and tax reductions. In 2009, at the meeting to commemorate the 10th year of the BNC held 10 -14 November, a Special Implementation Committee (SIC) was launched to promote more friendly economic relations between the two countries.

The BNC thus appears to serve the purpose of a renewed South-South corporation and a springboard to facilitate a rules-based global system. Nigeria has remained a key economic player on the continent and South Africa views Nigeria as strategic partner in West Africa and a strong economic force to reckon with in recalibrating its economic fortunes and achieving the long awaited African goal of integration and the African agenda. Plans are underway by the both countries under the BNC to create security and sustainable business environment in the both countries, harness conflict management strategies, and reform global institutions such as the IMF, United Nations and World Bank towards a more rewarding and egalitarian global system (South African High Commission Abuja, 2015).

On the opposite, some analysts contend that South Africa and Nigeria only maintain economic cooperation but deeply bear the burden of frosty diplomatic relations. These analysts continue to offer explanations to the perceived frosty bilateral relations between Nigeria and South Africa – a factor deemed to be responsible for the incessant attacks and looting of properties of Nigerians in South Africa. Okolo (2008) contends that South African corporations and business solicited and invited labour migrants and skilled workers to the country, and many people from neighbouring countries as well as other farer nations like Nigeria obliged the call. It is this development that resulted to the upsurge in the number of Nigerian immigrants in South Africa, estimated to reach up to 24,000 as at 2011 (South Africa Foreign Policy Initiative, 2013). Nigeria as a country played a key role in leading South Africa out of apartheid, and therefore deserved more friendly and fair treatment from the people of South Africa and not discriminations and incessant attacks. Although there are some pieces of unverifiable claims that South Africans attack Nigerians in their country because some of them they engaged in organized crime (Ebhuomhan, 2010) including trafficking of drugs which started in the 1990s (*Shaw, 1998*)

It is further revealed that the high level of competition between South Africa and Nigeria at the global level regarding some key positions in multilateral institutions may be responsible for the deplorable state of relations between the two countries. This has to do with the struggle on which country among the two becomes the key power broker on the continent. This struggle has manifested in many occasions in the contemporary times. For

example, Nigeria worked against South Africa's intention to change Jean Ping and put South Africa's Home Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. Nigeria continued to give Jean Ping full support to maintain his position as the head of African Union. A similar situation occurred in 2011 when Nigeria worked against the South African backed incumbent Côte d'Ivoire leader, Laurent Gbagbo for the position (Molele, 2012). Although Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs then, Ambassador Olugbenga Ashiru claimed that the fact that Nigeria and South Africa did not share a common position on political matters does not necessarily mean that Nigeria and South Africa are falling apart bilaterally (Aremu, 2012).

Meanwhile, Nigeria's relations with South Africa suffered set back in 2012 following the rejection and expulsion of 125 Nigerians visiting South Africa on the basis of not providing valid Yellow Fever clearance. Nigeria responded this action by expelling 56 citizens of South Africa operating in Nigeria, and this prompted negotiations around the issues of immigration and removal of travel restrictions for the nationals of the two countries in order to facilitate ease of doing business (*South African Foreign Policy Initiative, 2013*).

On the other hand, the Diplomatic Society (2017) examines the level of economic cooperation between South Africa and Algeria. The both countries are seen to be making frantic efforts to achieve mutually beneficial economic partnership and gainful bilateral relations. According to South African Ambassador to Algeria, Dennis Dlomo, there has been a considerable rise in bilateral engagements between South Africa and Algeria with fruitful economic dealings and significant improvements in the quality of trade transactions. However, the Vice President of the International Relations of Forum des Chefs d'enterprises, Mehdi Bendimerad, complained that the South African economic ties with Algeria has been lopsided and tilted to the benefit of South Africa against the economic interests of Algeria. Algeria has not experienced gainful and favourable trade relations with South Africa, despite the existing diplomatic cooperation being maintained between the both countries over the years. This therefore calls for the intensification of economic cooperation among the two countries in order to create larger opportunities where more effective, quality and sustainable business deals can be harnessed. Although there have been many attempts to enhance the trade outlooks and opportunities among the two countries through economic reforms with a goal of entrenching economic diversification in Algeria, these have only benefited South African business interests. Many burgeoning South African corporations have exploited these opportunities to boost their trade and investments and record more capitalist expansion and returns from Algeria, without any significant benefits accruing to the Algerian partners and firms. This therefore means that even though the both countries have had some form of economic cooperation, consolidated in a Bi-National Commission, such thrives on inequality and structural trade imbalances to the benefit of South Africa and detriment of Algeria. There is need to advance more opportunities for an egalitarian trade structure and balances in South Africa- Algeria bilateral relationship which will bring mutual trade benefits for the two partnering nations.

This is important considering that Algeria constitutes the largest export trade partner of South Africa in North Africa, accounting for 43 percent of the totality of South Africa's trade transactions in North Africa from 2011 to 2015. In this period, about R13.4 billion was recorded as their trade value. Unfortunately, the trade imbalance was so pronounced that exports made by South Africa were valued at R13 billion, while which South Africa made from Algeria were only R463 million. Algeria is already blessed with enormous hydro-carbon resources which composed almost all of its export trade. However, it should further engage on drastic economic diversification and explore opportunities in other economic spheres such as agri-business, mining, telecommunication, etc. (Diplomatic Society, 2017).

Amnesty International (2019) maintains that the xenophobic violence is mostly targeted at refugees, those seeking asylum, and migrants and does not harm the citizens of South Africa. Xenophobic attitude comes as a result of hate-speech and xenophobic comments from the South African leadership and key politicians, which in the long run spur conflagrations among the economically oppressed citizens who avenge their anger and venom on innocent African migrants in the country. In 2016 December for instance, the Executive Mayor of City of Johannesburg Herman Mashaba called immigrants residing in Johannesburg "criminals" that hijack the town and described the immigrants as being responsible for the rising acts of criminality in the town. Again, in 2018 November, a federal Minister, Aaron Motsoaledi, alleged that immigrants are creating enormous burdens for the health system in the country.

In this regard, Cook (2019) asserts that South Africa grapples with social problems of many kinds ranging from criminality, xenophobic violence, political violence, civil unrest and corruption. Despite the level of its industrial and technological advancement, economic diversification and high volumes of trade and investments, it still suffers economic setbacks as a result of some global and national issues. Although renewed attempts are made in South Africa to vigorously pursue economic growth, reduce growing unemployment, improve education and health systems, prioritize issues of socio-economic inequality, racism, and xenophobia in order to attract more economic prosperity to the country.

It is confirmed that apartheid left behind many disparaging traces of social discriminations and negativity which has been nurtured and sustained in the system of South Africa for many years despite the frantic efforts at promoting economic development, trade and investments in diverse ways. This problem has continued to negate concrete efforts made at enhancing human rights, democracy and governance system in the country (Palmer, 2017). Challenges of poverty, lack of social equality, unequal access to education and basic services are common among the black population in country which constituted majority of the population in South Africa. The level of racial discrimination has reduced but the economic hardship faced by most black population in the country as well as prevailing income disparity are very alarming. For example, it is indicated that the richest top 10% and top 20% in South Africa control the highest share of income of any country. Socio-economic imbalance pervades the length and breadth of important national life, intercultural-groups, and across geographical distribution, both in urban-rural areas (World Bank, 2018).

Low-income black South Africans populated many informal settlements known as townships, which are densely crowded and where important and basic necessities of life are largely undersupplied including pipe borne water and electricity supply. Land allocation and distribution in these areas are mostly poorly coordinated with high racial discriminations in terms of ownership claims and access to property rights. There have been an established system of land redistribution and reclaims but such has been very unrealistic and always delayed. Only very few land transfers had been completed. Based on this, the small number of whites in South Africa holds claim of ownership of more than 70 percent of landed property in South Africa. This marginalization has brought important queries to the government in demands for restitution over the non-compensation of people for their private lands which the government appropriated. There are also claims that the African National Congress (ANC) had south to adjust the constitution to allow for the appropriation of landed properties without the award of compensation (Palmer, 2017).

Theoretical Orientation

This paper adopts a combination of the scapegoat theory of intergroup conflict. The key proponents of scapegoat theory of intergroup conflict are Hovland and Sears (1940), Kenneth Burke (1945), Katz, et al. (1973), Girard (1987), Binstock (1983), Gemmill (1989), Khanna and Poulsen (1995), Poppe (2001), Hammer (2007) and Glick (2005) among others. Scapegoating is defined as a process by which a group of people express unwarranted feelings of hostility, aggression and frustration upon another group in society. It is a practice of singling out an individual or group of persons for unmerited blame and consequent negative treatment especially when the perceived object of hostility is being caused by other entities (Hammer, 2007). This implies a form of guilt by association based on stereotype about a given group of individuals in society (Poppe, 2001). Many categories of individuals, groups and species can become scapegoated victims based on race, gender, age, family ties, peer group, religion, country of origin, ethnicity, political ideology, etc. (Binstock, 1983). Scapegoating is also applicable in organizations, government institutions, corporations, and various political groups (Boeker, 1992; Gemmill, 1989). In administration, scapegoating is a known practice in which a lower staff employee is unjustly blamed for the mistakes of senior executives. This occurs as a lack of transparency in the upper management (Katz et al. 1973; Khanna and Poulsen, 1995).

The scapegoat theory of intergroup conflict provides an explanation for the correlation between the situations of relative economic problems and rise in aggression, hostility and violent conflicts toward a scapegoated groups who is unjustly blamed for the economic problems they are not responsible for (Poppe, 2001). For example, the study of Hovland (1940) revealed that the racist or anti-black attacks that occurred in Southern part of the United States between 1882 and 1930 show a correlation between poor economic conditions and outbreaks of violence (e.g., lynchings) against blacks. The poor economy induced white people to mete out their frustrations by attacking black Americans.

The act of scapegoating presupposes that the perpetrating group members settle on one specific target to blame for their problems (Glick, 2005). Thus, scapegoating tends to occur when members of a group has experienced difficult, prolonged negative economic

outcomes (as opposed to minor provocations). When negative economic conditions frustrate a group's attempts at successful acquisition of its most essential needs (e.g., food, shelter, job opportunities), groups develop a compelling, shared ideology that – when combined with social and political pressures – may lead to the most extreme forms of scapegoating which are violent conflicts and genocide (Hammer, 2007; Gemmill, 1989).

Scapegoating can also cause oppressed groups to mete out their grievances at other oppressed groups in society. Mostly, the majority groups in society are always found to be the perpetrators of injustices while the minority group is often the victims or scapegoats. In rare cases, minorities may target a different minority group in retaliation instead of confronting the more powerful majority oppressors (Khanna and Poulsen, 1995). In any case, the scapegoated victims always bear the burden of affliction, unsafe, and unprotected by the government authorities in society. They are unfortunate victims of battered ego and often seen hiding from pain (Jung, 1979).

A philosopher, Kenneth Burke used the term 'scapegoat mechanism' in his books *Permanence and Change* (1935), and *A Grammar of Motives* (1945). In Burke's analysis, scapegoating is seen as a psychological relief for the perpetrators. Girard (1987) further extended this Burke's analysis to make an interpretation of human culture (mimetic desire). According to Girard, people desire what other people have and this causes a triangulation of desire and results in conflict between the desiring parties. The mimetic contagion escalates to an unmanageable level where society is at risk; it is at this point that the scapegoat mechanism is triggered (Dumont, 1979). However, when people are contented in society there is less drive to inflict harm on any blamed scapegoats, and people will be responsible for their own economic problems and destiny.

The scapegoat analysis provided great insights on the xenophobic attitude and attacks meted to African immigrants by South Africa citizens. However, its shortfall is that it did not capture implications of the evil acts of scapgoaters against the scapegoats, for example, whether they are sanctioned or received approval and supported by the authorities/government, as well as the legal contexts of their violent conflicts against the innocent people. Do scapgoaters have the backing of the law, and if not, does the law always catch up with them? In addition, scapegoat theory is limited within society and as ignores a more fundamental macro-level analysis of scapegoating in the case of black immigrants and its likely effects on the economic and bilateral relations of the host or destination country.

The scapegoat analysis offers analytical insights on the xenophobic attitude and attacks meted to African immigrants by South Africa citizens. Thus, the South African unemployed street boys composed of local gangsters can be seen as a group of scapegoaters who blame their economic woes of unemployment and social exclusion on the innocent African immigrants most of whom are traders and informal workers, entrepreneurs or small business owners in South Africa. The African immigrants are unjustly targeted, discriminated, abused, inflicted with bodily injuries, harmed, killed and their property torched and looted by these street boys for their economic despair (i.e. transferred aggression) which is fundamentally caused by their own government that have operated economic policies that have created disparities and widespread social and

economic inequality in the country. This clearly holds Gluck's (2005) claim that the perpetrating group members settle on one specific target to blame for their prolonged or embedded economic problems.

In this case, frustrations, grievances and envy over the economic prosperity and fulfillment of African immigrants prompts the South Africans group of scapegoaters to attack them in order to vent their anger and forcefully acquire or reclaim their loss essential needs (e.g., food, shelter, job opportunities). The xenophobic acts in South Africa have resulted to the most extreme forms of scapegoating such as massacre which are violent killings of fellow Africans in South Africa. This aligns with the claims of Hammer (2007) and Gemmill (1989) who opined that extreme forms of scapegoating can result to genocide. In connection with Jung (1979) scapegoat analysis, the African immigrants or scapegoats in South Africa now bear the burden of intense affliction and feel so unsafe, and unprotected by the government authorities. They are unfortunate victims of battered ego and often seen hiding from pain.

Although the scapegoat theory of intergroup conflict did not capture implications or outcome of the evil acts of scapgoaters, for example, whether they are sanctioned by law, reprimanded or received approval and supported of the authorities/government (this is a major limitation of the theory). However, it is obvious that the South African government has played a cover to the activities of scapgoaters in the country because it appears to serve their economic and political interests and purposes: it takes away attention of the people (scapegoaters) from directly attacking the government over its economic failures. Such direct attacks, protests by the people could lead to revolutions and overthrow of government. This explains why the government of South Africa continues to pay lip service to the persistent xenophobic violence in the country and even makes attempt at institutionalizing it by its immigrant unfriendly laws.

Hence, South African government has a critical role in the project of African integration, especially to protect and provide friendly environment for African immigrants, (who are in the country to share their skills, economic potential and scientific knowledge towards Africa's economic development), against xenophobic violence. The South African authorities have obligations to ensure adequate human freedom, security and protection of the rights and property of African immigrants in the country, so that these immigrants will not live in constant fear and danger of the unknown. South Africa actions have direct implications on economic cooperation and migration in Africa, to the extent of encouraging or discouraging intra-African economic migration and integration. Therefore the manner in which the issues constant xenophobic attacks against immigrants in South Africa is handled by the authorities have significant effects on economic cooperation and bilateral relations between South Africa and other African countries.

South Africa's Economic Cooperation with Nigeria

The South Africa-Nigeria Bi-national Commission (BNC) was created in October 1999, by the South African and Nigerian governments. The BNC routinely holds its meeting twice every year in its bid to improve the volume of trade and investments exchanged between South Africa and Nigeria. The Deputy Presidents of South Africa and Nigeria respectively

are in charge of the Commission. During the BNC meetings, critical issues of trade and investment opportunities as it affects the both countries are identified and discussed with effective plans put in place to ensure they are clearly achieved within a defined period.

Importantly, the BNC offers promising platform for strategic partnerships that benefit the both countries. It is very obvious that South Africa and Nigeria bilateral relationship has been largely anchored within the framework of the BNC and this has considerably improved the relations between the both countries (Ngwenya, 2010; Obi, 2015). The BNC serves mainly as a pivot for mutual economic cooperation that will open up opportunities for social and economic development between the both countries. As Banjo (2010) noted, the BNC has become a mending bridge for reviving previously battered and ruptured South Africa-Nigeria relations especially during Nigeria's former Head of State, Sani Abacha and South African's Nelson Mandela. It is believed that the BNC promoted effective diplomatic rapprochement between South Africa and Nigeria during the tenure of former President Olusegun Obasanjo and his South African counterpart, Thabo Mbeki. Hence, the BNC has been positioned to further strengthen bi-lateral economic cooperation and diplomatic relations that can enhance synergy and the pulling of resources by the both countries to facilitate mutually-beneficial speedy and sustainable economic growth and development. Discussions held in October 1999 and April 2000 covered important areas of concern such as the avoidance of taxation on income and capital gains, reciprocal promotion and protection of investments, co-operation in the fields of mining, geology, exploration, and energy (Banjo, 2010).

South Africa-Nigeria Bi-National Commission was hosted by South Africa in Pretoria in November 2009. However, the Conference observed some progress in the economic relations between the both countries. For example, it was announced that Oando, an energy conglomerate based in Lagos had recently been listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and the Nigeria's Dangote Group made a prominent investment of \$378 million in South Africa's cement industry. In 2008, approximately \$2.1 billion was traded between South Africa and Nigeria. By 2012 total bilateral trade grew to \$3.6 billion.

In 2012 83% of trade was taken up by South African imports of Nigerian crude oil. Again, between 2002 and 2012, Nigeria's export to South Africa improved by 750% (mostly increases in oil imports) whilst Nigerian imports from South Africa also improved by 130% within the same period. Essentially, the Nigeria - South Africa Chamber of Commerce have made more commitments in improving and facilitating bi-lateral trade relationships between South Africa and Nigeria. The Chamber of Commerce maintains its Lagos offices in Nigeria and has up to 315 member companies which engage in trade and economic transactions in both South Africa and Nigeria. Particularly, there has been steady and consistent growth and expansion of South African business interests in Nigeria, which have attracted the attention of Nigeria's business owners.

South Africa and Nigeria has really continued to experience improved relations despite the rising concerns for xenophobic attacks against Nigerians and their businesses in South Africa. Hence, through the signing of many bilateral agreements, Nigeria has continued to provide ample business and investment opportunities for many new South African companies despite the rise in xenophobic violence targeted against Nigerians business interests in South Africa (Bello & Hengari, 2013). For example, many South

African companies operate in Nigeria such as the Mobile Telecommunication Network (MTN), with 55.4 million subscribers in 2014 (MTN Group Limited, 30 September, 2014), Shoprite, Stanbic Bank, Digital Satellite Television (DSTV), etc. All these are some of the important South African strategic business interests and investments which have penetrated the breadth and length of the Nigeria's economy. On the other hand, Nigeria big conglomerates such as the Dangote Group of Companies has made investment portfolio worth nearly \$400 million in cement production in South Africa while Oando Oil Company which is an expansive Nigerian company has been listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Moreover, oil trade constitutes about 95 percent of Nigeria's exports to South Africa (Nagar & Paterson, 2012). In October 2000, the government of South Africa increased the quantity of crude oil its imports from Nigeria, thus improving the economic cooperation it has built with Nigeria (Ogoegbulem, 2000).

South Africa-Nigeria bi-lateral economic cooperation has even become more promising with marked increases in the volume of trade recorded between the both countries. For example, trade volume between the both countries increased from ZAR 174 million in 1998 to ZAR 22.8 billion in 2008, representing nearly a quarter of South Africa's total African trade in 2008 (Otto, 2012). South Africa's exports to Nigeria increased from ZAR 505 million to ZAR 7.1 billion and Nigeria's exports to South Africa increased from ZAR 15.7 billion to ZAR 123.6 billion in the same period (Otto, 2012.). The table below shows the trend of trade relations between South Africa and Nigeria between 2001 and 2019.

Table 1: SOUTH AFRICA AND NIGERIA'S TRADE RELATIONS (Total product value in US dollars)

Year	South Africa's exports to Nigeria	Nigeria's export to South Africa
2001	200,818	197,690
2002	258,899	388,976
2003	334,131	589,780
2004	444,618	-
2005	527,689	-
2006	590,647	1,064,802
2007	683,754	1,382,294
2008	955,043	2,617,612
2009	678,080	1,679,175
2010	616,755	1,858,175
2011	791,510	2,669,056
2012	783,591	4,730,798
2013	807,695	4,322,881
2014	971,514	4,897,859
2015	652,575	2,647,456
2016	440,123	1,903,097
2017	432,205	1,828,372
2018	451,877	3,376,376
2019	448,683	3,150,665

Source: ITC Trade Map (2020), Bilateral Trade between Nigeria and South Africa: Total All Products." Available at: https://www.trademap.org/Bilateral_TS.aspx?nvpm=1%7c56%7c%7c710%7c%7cTOTAL%7c%7c%7c2%7c1%7c1%7c2%7c2%7c1%7c1%7c1%7c1%7c1%7c1

The table shows that South Africa and Nigeria have had robust trade relations and economic cooperation despite the reoccurring xenophobic attacks in South Africa. As shown in the table, the value of total products South Africa exported to Nigeria increased from 200,818 in 2001 to an all-time high of 955,043 in 2008, the same year xenophobic attacks in South Africa was at its peak with Nigerians and their business interests in South Africa specifically targeted. In 2008, many Nigerians were killed in South Africa and their shops looted and destroyed. Similarly, the value of Nigeria's exports to South Africa has consistently increased from 197,690 in 2001 to 1,064,802 in 2006 and 3,150,665 in 2019. This continues to show that the xenophobic attacks against Nigerians and other African nationals in South Africa have not had any significantly effect on South Africa's trade relations with Nigeria.

Particularly, Nigeria has enjoyed more favourable terms of trade over South Africa considering the fact that as a mono-product and oil dependent economy, oil constituted most of her exports to South Africa which is more valued than other tradable goods which Nigeria imports from South Africa. Indeed, production base remains constrained within the oil economic thus denying it expansive opportunities in other areas of business endeavours. While Nigeria only makes large exports of oil and perhaps human resources to South Africa, South Africa in return exports finished products such as electrical equipment, machinery, wood, paper, foodstuff, beverages, spirit, tobacco, rubber, and plastics etc to Nigeria (Seteolu and Okuneye, 2015). Due to South Africa's diversified business interests it has many promising and expansive businesses in Nigeria while in contrast Nigeria only had few companies in South Africa. Besides, it has been difficult for Nigerian firms to penetrate the South African economy, and this has raised some concerns and fear that South Africa is dominating Nigeria's market, and not vice versa.

Between 1999 and 2008, up to 20 bilateral economic cooperation agreements were achieved by South Africa and Nigeria under the framework of BNC. Unfortunately, South Africa -Nigeria bilateral relations suffered some set back in the aftermath of the 2008 xenophobic attack on Nigerians living in South Africa and their business. This questioned the long-existing bilateral relations between the two countries which have continued blossoming and expanding especially under the BNC platform without serious attendant effects observed as a result of the recurrent xenophobic attacks. Despite the perceived apprehensions over the xenophobic attacks on Nigerians in South Africans, relations between the both countries did not entirely go sour. In the popular media and political circle, South African politicians and leaders made so much effort to launder the image of the country by insisting that the attacks on Nigerians in South Africa were only targeted on those Nigerians being suspected of aiding and abating crimes such as drug-trafficking, robbery, prostitution among others.

Hence, only a minimal and temporary push backs or setbacks were recorded in the long-existing South Africa-Nigeria's economic cooperation and bilateral relations. For example, the BNC did not have their usual meeting full session meeting from the time of

the 2008 xenophobic attacks till May 2012 when the meeting was reconvened in Cape Town; the latter meetings scheduled to be held in commemoration of the BNC's 10th anniversary also did not hold (Seteolu and Okuneye, 2015). Primarily, the continued xenophobic attacks in South Africa and the posturing of the leadership in the country, which are perceived to be aiding xenophobia sentiments further strained bilateral economic relations between the both countries.

Bi-lateral relations between South Africa and Nigeria fractured in 2012 when 125 Nigerian travellers to South Africa were expelled as a result of not proving a valid Yellow Fever certificates. In retaliation Nigeria expelled 56 South Africans doing business in Nigeria (Agwuchi, 2012). The Nigerian government reacted to this ugly situation by taking a retaliatory measure in which it also deported some 131 South Africans (Alechenu, 2012). This raised some concerns which initiated some discussions between South Africa and Nigeria on how to properly coordinate travel and visa restrictions in the both countries as a means of enhancing bilateral relations and trade. However, South Africa rendered apology through its envoy, Mrs. Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nkqakula who led a delegation to former President Goodluck Jonathan to sort out the issues of the deportation (Fadeyi, 2012). The underlying frosty bilateral relations continued discreetly as demonstrated in the failure of South Africa to recognize of Nigeria at Mandela's memorial service. This generated a lot of skepticisms which many notable Nigerians, stakeholders, intellectuals, the media and civil society groups, criticizing South Africa over their actions as it was generally perceived that South Africa was repaying Nigerians goodwill with evil (Olanrewaju, 2013). However, the fact remains that South African leaders have maintained a given ideological posturing, as in line with the ruling ANC party, which capitalizes on xenophobic sentiments to achieve political power. In fact, the pervasive view amongst South African politicians is that xenophobia does not exist (Crush et al, 2017). They excuse their poor governance and inability to improve their lives of their citizens on the allegation that foreigners (i.e. African immigrants) are responsible for taking the economic opportunities away from the citizens. On this basis, they promise to provide more opportunities to their people by taking away some benefits and rights which are seemingly enjoyed by the foreigners and giving same to the South African indigenes. Hence, any actions against this ideological posturing attract some form of drastic measures to assure the local South Africans that the country is on the right path. The point being made is that South Africa will readily revenge against Nigeria or any other country that takes any drastic retaliatory measures against the meted xenophobic attacks.

On the flip side, in 2012 when the bilateral relations tend to have resurged, the South African government conferred an award of honour to Nigeria's seasoned diplomat, Professor Ibrahim Gambari, in recognition of his contributions as the last chairman of the UN Special Committee against apartheid. Indeed, economic cooperation between the two countries continued to improve in significant ways (see table 2 above). Particularly, many Nigerians continued to move to South Africa in search of greener pastures while economic activities and trade relations improved significantly between the two countries. However, the arm scandal between Nigeria and South Africa in 2014 in which South Africa seized about \$ 15 million from the Nigerian government seriously affected the bilateral relations

between this two countries. Again, South Africa went ahead to seize about \$ 5.7 million hidden inside two briefcases in a Nigerian private jet, and confiscated \$ 9.3 million belonging to Nigerian government. These moves which are calculated attempts at getting back at Nigeria by the South African government almost ruptured bilateral relations between the two countries to an all-time low.

The outbreak of renewed xenophobic attacks on foreigners living in South Africa in 2015, resulted to the killing of eight foreigners. Many stakeholders condemned this attack and kicked against the looting of small businesses owned by Nigerians in the country particularly in Johannesburg. Nigeria recalled its high Commissioner in South Africa and requested that South Africa recall their ambassador in Nigeria. Nigeria also made plans to bring back its nationals home. All these shows that fundamentally, only a minimal and temporary push backs or setbacks were recorded in the long-existing South Africa-Nigeria's economic cooperation and bilateral relations despite the continued xenophobic attacks against Nigerians in South Africa.

Conclusion and Recommendations

South Africa and Nigeria have had robust trade relations and economic cooperation under South Africa-Nigeria Bi-national Commission (BNC) despite the reoccurring xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Nigeria's export to South Africa improved by 750% (mostly increases in oil imports) whilst Nigerian imports from South Africa also improved by 130% within the same period of study. The value of total products South Africa exported to Nigeria increased from 200,818 in 2001 to an all-time high of 955,043 in 2008, the same year xenophobic attacks in South Africa was at its peak with Nigerians and their business interests in South Africa specifically targeted. In 2008, many Nigerians were killed in South Africa and their shops looted and destroyed. Similarly, the value of Nigeria's exports to South Africa has consistently increased from 197,690 in 2001 to 1,064,802 in 2006 and 3,150,665 in 2019. A steady and consistent growth and expansion of South African business interests in Nigeria continued within the period with over 315 member companies which engage in trade and economic transactions in both South Africa and Nigeria.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are expedient and highly important: (a) The African Union should develop frameworks for sanctioning against any form of xenophobic violence in Africa. (b) The governments of Nigeria should petition the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for the gruesome killings and attacks against thousands of their nationals in South Africa.

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Biographical Note

Charles Arinze OBIORA, *PhD.*, is a Professor in the Department of Political Science, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus, Anambra State NIGERIA. He has bias in Public Administration, Public Policy Analysis, Development Studies.

B.O.G NWANOLUE is a Professor in the Department of Political Science, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus, Anambra State NIGERIA. His area of specialty is International Relations.

Marcel Muoebonam ANYIAM is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus, Anambra State NIGERIA. His area of specialty is International Relations