



The Role of Governments, International Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations on Xenophobia in South Africa

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Abstract

This literary study argues that South Africa's three government tiers have failed the majority of the country's citizens in their efforts to provide adequate security and combat xenophobia. This article is based on the study of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and some international organisations (IOs) collaborating with governments to address xenophobia, particularly in South Africa. The study aimed to critically analyse and discuss the role of the government, IOs, and NGOs in combating xenophobia in South Africa. The study utilised a qualitative approach with a historical design. Data were collected from secondary sources, which included books, journals and the Internet and were discussed in themes after performing textual analysis. The available published, reviewed articles were utilised to debate, argue and discuss governments', IOs' and NGOs' role in xenophobia in some African countries. The results revealed that governments, NGOs, IOs and other stakeholders have provided support to ensure economic and social stability, but xenophobia persists in South Africa and several other African countries. One of the government's roles in preventing xenophobia is the provision of adequate security where xenophobic violence occurs. The study explained the governments', IOs' and NGOs' role in addressing xenophobia in South Africa and other African countries, focusing on issues relevant to addressing xenophobia in South Africa. The study was anticipated to inform government programmes and IOs' and NGOs' efforts to alleviate poverty among local citizens in South Africa and prevent hostility towards foreign nationals.

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Introduction

The Commission of the European Communities asserts that as the idea of xenophobia has a close relationship with concepts such as ethnic intolerance and racism, its semantic distinctiveness lies in the fact that it is rooted in national identity, citizenship and a rejection of foreigners belonging to other borders, states or nations (Adeola, 2015; Awosusi & Fatoyinbo, 2019; Oni & Okunade, 2018). More importantly, a host of researchers (Dube, 2019; Dodson, 2010; Hayem, 2013; Laher, 2010; Landau & Misago, 2009; Osisioogu et al., 2022; Misago et al., 2015) claim that behaviours, attitudinal orientations, and prejudices against outsiders or foreign nationals are evidence of xenophobia in African countries including South Africa. In South Africa, to be specific, such attitudinal orientations, behaviours and intolerance are usually caused by a poor socioeconomic state of affairs, political unrest, or concerns about national security (Ngcamu & Mantzaris, 2019; Ngcamu & Mantzaris, 2021a), essentially in the present age of dread attacks. It is unfortunate to note that foreign nationals are often the primary targets of xenophobic violence, with asylum seekers, undocumented migrants, and refugees being particularly vulnerable (Misago et al., 2015; Adeola, 2015; Wroughton, 2022). Adeola (2015: 225), along with Oni and Okunade (2018), also indicated that in Africa, some of the evident signs of xenophobia are the expulsion of foreign nationals, threats of expulsion and, in other instances, violent attacks. According to the United Nations (2022), there have been rising reports of violence against foreign nationals in South Africa and calls for accountability against hate speech, racism and xenophobia harming asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, and mainly those nationals observed as non-South Africans in the country. In addition, the United Nations reports further indicated that discrimination and xenophobic violence have increased and vastly escalated by some mobilised group of people called “Operation Dudula” in South Africa (United Nations (2022)). It must be mentioned that the mobilisation of all kinds of violence in South Africa has been initiated originally through social media campaigns, which have become a platform for mobilising vigilante violence, violent protests, even the murder of

foreign nationals, and arson targeting migrant-owned homes and businesses.

Governments, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations' roles in addressing xenophobia in African countries cannot be over-emphasised. Scholars such as (Misago et al., 2015; Tanui, 2020) posit that each country's government must prevent reoccurring or future xenophobic violence against foreign nationals in Africa. African leaders cannot be held solely responsible for preventing xenophobia, and they require NGOs' and other stakeholders' assistance. The South African Government has attempted to implement lasting solutions to xenophobia on several occasions but has been unsuccessful in preventing hostilities between local citizens and foreign nationals (Misago et al., 2015). Currently, in South Africa, there is a newly created and growing group known as "Operation Dudula", which mobilises young people to fight against criminal activities, mainly targeting foreigners in certain provinces (amaBhungane Reporters 2022; Metelerkamp, 2022). Although the government and law enforcement agencies such as SAPS have attempted to prevent xenophobia and violence against foreign nationals, they have been unsuccessful (Ngcamu & Mantzaris, 2021a; Oyelana, 2016). Operation Dudula's operations constitute xenophobia as they involve the targeting, terrorising, and intimidating of foreigners from countries such as Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Mozambique (Wroughton, 2022). Authors such as (Wroughton 2022 and Ho 2022) recently claimed that around April 2022, a Zimbabwean foreign national was attacked, stoned and burnt to death during one of their operations in Johannesburg. Similarly, on 20 June 2022, Mulaudzi, Lancaster, and Machabaphala (2022) reported that most stalls rented by foreign nationals in the iconic Yeoville market were set ablaze by Operation Dudula members in Johannesburg. The government noted that the locus of these tensions is mainly driven by criminal elements in areas with high levels of poverty and unemployment (defenceWeb 2022; Department of Government Communication and Information System in the Republic of (South Africa, 2010). This is why there is a need for local and international institutions to assume specific responsibilities to support the government in its efforts to prevent all forms of xenophobia in the country. Ngcamu and Mantzaris (2019) noted that

the impacts of these xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals are demoralising to other African nations and innocent South Africans. Most importantly, it has been portrayed by many media networks and scholars as a state-sponsored Afro-phobic war that is politically motivated, fuelled, and influenced by what is known as the politics of populism (Ngcamu and Mantzaris 2021). At this juncture, one could contend that certain politicians manipulate or distort local citizens' mindsets to turn them against all foreign nationals by convincing them that corrupt government officials, including the police, favour foreigners over citizens. As a result, the government's efforts to prevent xenophobia in the country are compromised, as some South African citizens believe that foreigners have the means or influence to prevent officials from fulfilling their legal obligations (Misago et al., 2015). In some African countries, for example, South Africa, the citizens are hostile to foreign nationals because they believe that foreigners are often guilty of selling stolen items, human and drug trafficking and several other criminal activities (amaBhungane Reporters 2022; Metelerkamp, 2022; Ngcamu & Mantzaris, 2021; Government of South Africa 2022a; Human et al., 2020). A host of authors (Bello, 2018; Dube, 2019; Tella, 2016) note that human and drug trafficking are recognised as common crimes committed by foreign nationals in countries such as South Africa, Ghana, and Nigeria, among others. It is disheartening to note that, despite the rising incidence of this type of activity in African countries, governments have taken insufficient action to curtail these illicit behaviours. Security officials, such as police officers, are often bribed to facilitate such activities (Misago et al., 2015). The study was situated within this context.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union/United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (2016) reports that the current concern is the unpredictable effect of globalisation's principle of free trade and international human rights obligations on xenophobia (Adeola, 2015, p. 254). Even though governments have frequently promised to encourage the free movement of business transactions and principles of common humanity, national immigration laws do not address local citizens' insecurities concerning the resulting influx of foreign nationals. The effects are seen in foreigners' access to social welfare and security (Adeola, 2015, p. 254; African Union Commission/AU Department for Social

Affairs 2018; International Organization for Migration [IOM] 2019; OECD/International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018; World Economic Forum/PwC 2017). It is essential to note that in most European countries, the treatment of travellers crossing the Mediterranean Sea, mainly from Africa, Eastern Europe and the Middle East, and Western European states' concerns about the Strasbourg court's immigration policy decisions, evince this paradox and demonstrate the distance between international commitment and national implementation (Adeola, 2015, p. 254; Ojukwu et al., 2019). A similar scenario manifests in African states. A host of authors (Adeola, 2015; Sanni, 2020; Ayodele, 2020; Brankamp and Daley, 2020; Kwet posit that numerous colonial masters imposed strict restrictions on their borders after their former African colonies gained independence; many African countries have experienced xenophobia since the 1950s. "While much focus has been granted to the obligations of individual states in respecting human rights within its borders, little attention is paid to the role of supranational institutions that can address the problem of xenophobia on the continent" (Adeola, 2015, p. 254).

The study explored governments, NGOs, the United Nations (UN), the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU)/AU, and other stakeholders' roles and proactive stances implemented to prevent or address xenophobic violence in South Africa. The study aimed to explore the actions the abovementioned entities implemented to address xenophobia in South Africa. The study also explored various established government plans and programmes that could keep people engaged in one activity or another instead of being aggressive toward foreigners out of boredom. The study formulated and addressed two questions. What are the various roles of the government, NGOs, and international organisations in addressing xenophobia in South Africa? Does the South African Government have any plans or activities to prevent xenophobia in her country? Is there any government programme available that could provide assistance or support to the local citizens, enabling them to lean on it for survival rather than relying on or waiting for government support? These and many other factors would prevent intolerance towards foreign nationals in South Africa. The study's objectives were to critically analyse the government's, NGOs' and international organisations' role in addressing xenophobia in South Africa; to

identify the various government plans that can be used to prevent future occurrences of xenophobia in South Africa; to assess the government programmes and activities that could alleviate poverty among local citizens in South Africa to prevent hostility and aggression towards foreign nationals; to adequately discuss the government's, the United Nations (UN), the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU)/AU, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other stakeholders' role in preventing or addressing xenophobia; and to analyse the manifestations of xenophobia in some African states critically.

Manifestations of Xenophobia in Some African States

As far back as November 1969 in Ghana, the Ghana Aliens Compliance Order (GACO) was established by the Prime Minister, Kofi Busia, to rid the country of undocumented foreigners (Adeola 2015: 255). According to (Adeola 2015), the order stipulated that all aliens residing and working in Ghana without a work permit were required to obtain a work permit within two weeks or leave the country immediately). Aremu and Ajayi (2014: 176) assert that, before the introduction of this Aliens Order, there was a high level of unemployment in Ghana due to an influx of foreign nationals, the majority of whom were from other West African countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Togo. In Ghana, Nigerians comprised most of the foreign nationals in the territory in 1931. These people were exceptionally industrious and prosperous in business, which encouraged many other Nigerians to migrate to Ghana (Aremu and Ajayi 2014; Ademola 2016). This influx of foreign nationals resulted in high tensions and an unacceptable socioeconomic situation for Ghanaians.

The Ghanaian Business Promotion (GBP) and GACO were introduced to respond to Ghanaian citizens' anxiety concerning foreigners. (Adeola 2015: 256). GBP was introduced to give particular preference to Ghanaian citizens (Asamoah 2014). Foreigners were prohibited from participating in some GBP projects in Ghana unless they made a substantial capital investment. Adjepong (2009) and Oni and Okunade (2018) established that after the GACO was implemented, an estimated 900,000 to 1200 000 foreign nationals departed from Ghana. Aremu and Ajayi (2014) note that Ghanaian

citizens welcomed the government's initiative to expel many foreigners to create job opportunities for Ghanaians. However, some criticised this action as being xenophobic.

The issue of xenophobia in the West African country of Gabon cannot be easily forgotten because, in 1978, 9000 Beninese were expelled (Awosusi & Fatoyinbo, 2019; Oni and Okunade, Adeola (2015: 256) emphasised that the reason for this decision was the purported attack on President Bongo and Gabon citizens by the Benin President, Mr Kerekou in July 1978. According to some scholars (Afrique, 2020; The Washington Post 1996-2022), prior to the mentioned events, specifically in May 1977, the President of Benin, Mr Kerekou, accused Gabon officers of attempting a mercenary coup to remove him from power. He also referred to all African leaders who planned to attend the regional summit in Libreville as traitors. This incident led to retaliatory action by the Gabonese President, who banned all Beninese citizens from entering the country. Authors such as (Oni & Okunade, 2018; Adeola 2021: 4; Adeola 2015: 256) assert that "the person of Bongo and the image of the state were [...] merged in the minds of many Gabonese citizens." It was also noted that President Bongo was upset immediately after President Kerekou uttered his accusation at the OAU summit in Sudan. In communication with the Chairman of the OAU, President Bongo stated that the anger of an entire people, which has been controlled for a whole year, literally exploded after the verbal vulgarities and insanities uttered at the OAU (Adeola 2015: 256; Awosusi and Fatoyinbo 2019; Oni & Okunade, 2018). Consequently, approximately 9,000 Beninese citizens were banned from Gabon. In 2014, approximately 4,000 Somalis were arrested in Operation Usalama Watch, initiated by the government with the view to counter terrorism and address security concerns in the state (Adeola 2015, 2021; Awosusi and Fatoyinbo; Oni & Okunade, 2019).

Methods

This was a qualitative study with a historical design. Data were collected from secondary sources that included books, journals, and the Internet, among others, and analysed, planned, and discussed according to themes after textual analysis. The researchers also reviewed relevant articles published in peer-reviewed journals

concerning both developed and under-developed countries. The researchers utilised their expertise in public management and leadership (PML) and information obtained from government publications to analyse and debate issues concerning governments', IOs' and NGOs' role in addressing xenophobia in African countries. Combining this analytical and empirical review framework strengthened the study's discussions, results, and recommendations. The study employed a hermeneutic framework to search for relevant literature, incorporating the analysis and interpreting the results obtained from the existing literature to carry out this review (Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2014). As this review was performed chronologically, the researchers had to plan, effectively execute, and systematically analyse the results based on the chosen framework. They also had to search for relevant literature critically, incorporate the analysis and interpret the results obtained from that literature to discuss the findings. A methodological investigation was conducted between 21 April 2022 and 10 September 2022. The study utilised published materials available in electronic bibliographic databases and various websites and disciplines databases, namely the Applied Social Online Index and Abstracts; Africa Journal Online; European and Asian Journal Online; defence Web (2022); amaBhungane Reporters (2022); Government of South Africa (2013); Government of South Africa (2022a); Government of South Africa (2022b); Human et al. (2020); African Union Commission/AU Department for Social Affairs (2018); International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2019); OECD/International Labour Organization (ILO) (2018); World Economic Forum/PwC (2017). Google Scholar. Keywords and phrases such as xenophobia in Africa, governments' role in combating xenophobia in African countries, and government programmes, activities, and actions regarding xenophobia in Africa were utilised to search for relevant information. The general themes were ascertained and extracted to obtain an overall view of African xenophobia.

Results and Discussion

Each African country has performed its role in preventing xenophobia through its implemented plans and programmes. These are discussed in the ensuing section below:

Xenophobia-related plans and programmes implemented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Regional Office for Southern Africa (UNHCR ROSA)

It is noteworthy that the UNHCR policy could provide a secure and lasting solution for addressing the harmful and discouraging effects of xenophobia on asylum seekers and refugee populations during UNHCR support and programme activities. (Ferris and Donato 2019; Misago et al. 2015:11). However, it must be mentioned that linking a protection strategy to a national government's policy would be more valuable and significant. In other words, if a national government lacks such a policy, as in South Africa, it becomes the UNHCR's duty and responsibility to ensure that they develop a strategic plan (Misago et al. 2015).

The UNHCR ROSA has initiated various collaborations, work relationships and partnerships with pertinent stakeholders to support activities and programmes to address xenophobia (Misago et al., 2015; United et al. Office of the High Commissioner, [UNHCR] 2012). However, despite all such efforts, executing partners and UNHCR employees have reported that UNHCR ROSA lacks a consistent and unambiguous strategy (Misago et al., 2015). The UNHCR ROSA has adopted numerous approaches to address xenophobia, a complex issue. Misago et al. 2015; Magwaza (2018) addressing xenophobia is a challenging task that requires a comprehensive approach. They suggest that interventions should be based on specific objectives and evidence-based principles. The UNHCR ROSA's interventions appear to lack a coherent set of realistic goals and principles. Instead, multiple documents guide the organisation's xenophobia programmes (Misago et al., 2015).

Partners' and Collaborators' Roles in Xenophobia

This section presents a discussion of the UNHCR ROSA's role and responsibilities in dealing with xenophobia, primarily in support or in collaboration with pertinent critical stakeholders in South Africa and the consequences of the collaborations and partnerships established with various public society and government organisations, as well as civil society institutions working in the refugee or migrant sector.

Collaborations and Partnerships with Government Organisations

The UNHRC collaborates with several governments globally to ensure that its tasks, as stipulated in the Refugee Convention 1951, are fulfilled or effectively implemented (Misago et al., 2015; Elie, 2010). Rulashe 2009; UNHCR (2020) conducted a study to show that teamwork requires scientific advice, support and discussions about important issues, including xenophobia. However, despite consultations with several governments to protect foreign nationals against xenophobic attacks, (Brochmann and Hammar) note that it has not yielded any positive results. It must also be noted that despite the UNHCR ROSA's best efforts, there has not been any practical support or adequate government-sponsored response following the 2008 aggression against foreign nationals in South Africa (Misago et al., 2015). The UNHCR ROSA has improved its efforts and diversified its participation in the fight against prejudice against noncitizens and xenophobia (Rulashe, 2009; UNHCR 2020). According to Misago et al. (2015) consultations are ongoing with the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and other key government departments, such as the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). However, the government has yet to respond regarding legislation and policy. New policies or changes to existing policies are required at the state level (Lemke & Harris-Wai, 2015). Despite South Africa being an advanced democratic country and a signatory to several conventions to safeguard all asylum seekers and refugees, many foreign nationals are still threatened by South African citizens.

Collaborations and Partnerships with Public Entities

According to the UNHCR Global Appeal (2003: 156), the UNHCR's South Africa office in Pretoria has regional responsibility for protection, programme and administrative activities in Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and the other Indian Ocean Island States. The UNHCR ROSA works closely with various partners and supports executing anti-xenophobia programmes and activities nationwide (Rulashe, 2009); UNHCR (Global Appeal, 2003). Numerous partners and collaborators in South Africa assert that the best platform for civil

society to effectively engage and collaborate on issues concerning addressing xenophobia is the Protection Working Group (PWG). Misago et al. (2015) and Appleby (2020) found that several agencies, for example, United Nations agencies, faith-based organisations (FBOs), international and local NGOs, trade unions, donors, police and other government representatives often unite in their regular joint meetings. Authors such as (Rulashe, 2009 UNHCR 2020) assert that in most of the meetings held by the entities above, the UNCHR ROSA's PWG takes the lead in discussing and addressing all important issues relating to xenophobia and all matters affecting foreigners in the country. As part of the PWG's mandate to address xenophobia in South Africa, it directly or indirectly unites all institutions and organisations concerned with providing activities and programmes aimed at ensuring the safety, protection and security of all foreign nationals at the country, provincial and grassroots levels (Rulashe, 2009; UNHCR 2020). Through the exchange of information, the PWG has created effective collaborations and partnerships between the UNHCR and other institutions such as COSATU, SAPS, and the United States of America's Embassy, among others. The PWG has also collaborated and partnered with several public institutions that do not engage or connect with the government or the UNHCR, for example, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and FBOs (Misago et al., 2015). The IOM affirmed that if the PWGs had not reached out to partner with FBOs, their efforts may not have been known and recognised. It must also be noted that there is a cordial working relationship between the UNHRC and IOM on several matters concerning xenophobia in South Africa.

Collaborations and Partnerships with the South African Police Service (SAPS)

It is believed that partnering with SAPS is one of the agreed approaches utilised by UNHRC ROSA in addressing or dealing with xenophobia in South Africa. The UNHCR ROSA reports that the working relationships with SAPS have been helpful and encouraging; the partnership meetings and collaboration engagements have always been between SAPS central, the national command and the UNHCR ROSA. Misago et al. (2015: 41) note that these partnerships have resulted in disseminating or reporting

various information relating to xenophobic violence to the police through the UNHCR ROSA xenophobia hotline and SAPS's prompt and decisive response on several occasions to prevent the spread of violent attacks on foreigners were applauded. In contrast to this opinion, authors such as (Ngcamu Mantzaris, 2019; Ngcamu & Mantzaris 2021b) emphasised that the police have not responded as quickly as necessary to xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Oyelana (2016) found that the police and government have not done enough to arrest outbreaks of xenophobic violence in South Africa, and Egwu (2021) opines that the South African Police Service (SAPS) is one of the most brutal policing systems in the democratic world. Although Misago et al. (2021) assert that partnership with SAPS saves many lives, UNHCR ROSA recognised that partnership and collaboration with SAPS have often failed because their response has been tardy. Misago et al. (2015: 42) believe that "for SAPS, the collaboration with UNHCR is about addressing criminal offences committed against any persons and foreign nationals and not xenophobic violence, and a form of hate crime." Morand (2015: 10) also noted that "others deny *xenophobia* by stating that *crimes against* South Africans go underreported and those *against foreign nationals* are over-reported." Similarly, xenophobia, as a SAPS official explains, xenophobia is not a word readily accepted in South Africa (SA). Attacks on foreign nationals are not necessarily xenophobic (Misago et al., 2015, p. 10). The legislative, policy and constitutional framework for policing in SA requires the SAPS to provide equal service delivery to everyone residing in the country, including foreign nationals, as well as prevent and detect crime, protect everyone and their property and respond to all issues relating to hate crimes and xenophobic attacks in the country (Edwards & Freeman, 2021). The South African Constitution stipulates that SAPS ensures that all citizens' fundamental rights are respected, such as the right to equality and freedom from prejudice, dignity, security, life, etc. The SAPS Act No. 68 of 1995 also imposes the following essential objectives on SAPS: "promoting cooperation between the police and communities as well as respect for victims of crime and their needs; the concept 'all people' encompasses non-nationals, as neither the Constitution nor the SAPS Act distinguishes between citizens and non-nationals in this context, and the SAPS has recognised that its constitutional and legislative mandates extend to

all people regardless of their nationality” (Edwards and Freeman 2021: 3). It is also important to note that SAPS’ obligations and powers are an essential part of the legislative framework for immigration in SA (Edwards & Freeman, 2021). The Immigration Act standardises the entry and exit of citizens and non-citizens residing in the country. It grants SAPS autonomous power to arrest and detain people suspected of living in the country illegally. Edwards and Freeman (2021) established that to enhance SAPS’ capacity to function as effective partners in the prevention of xenophobic violence in the country, there is a need to recruit and train officers on issues relating to hate crimes and other xenophobia matters.

The Organisation of Africa Unity/African Union’s Role in Addressing Xenophobia

The African Union (AU) is recognised as the regional organisation responsible for encouraging and maintaining peace and cooperation between the global community and African states. The AU is mandated to address all issues relating to xenophobia nationally and internationally. Adeola 2015: 260) notes that “Under the AU Constitutive Act, the AU is mandated to promote human rights, the sanctity of life, and peaceful co-existence and cooperation between African states, as well as position the continent at an advantage within the international community.” In previous years, the UN, through customs and traditions, has taken several extensive steps to nurture and achieve these goals. The AU has taken significant initiatives for peace and security, economic development, international cooperation, the institutionalisation of democracy and the promotion of human rights in Africa (Adeola 2015: 260; Murithi 2017). Addaney (2018) affirmed that in 2013, the African Union developed a policy agenda for the continent premised upon the need to build an integrated Africa and rightly position Africa in global governance. In the statutory assertion, the AU, as an institutional body, is highly committed and determined to proceed in its worldwide struggle to prevent and address various allied intolerances, discrimination, xenophobia, and racism (UNHCR 2020). It is also essential to state that the African Union Commission, in its 2015 policy document, claimed that the AU is dedicated to this great mission and promoting the statutory declaration. (African

Union Commission [AUC] 2015). However, the document noted that the AU policy document and statutory assertion emphasised the importance of countries combating, struggling with, or fighting against xenophobia by ensuring that Africa takes on worldwide governance or supremacy. This study discussed the roles that governments, relevant institutions within the AU, and other NGOs can play in redressing or addressing xenophobia on the continent.

Churches' Role in Addressing Xenophobia

Churches are widely recognised as places of worship for the believers. However, it is also necessary to note that churches should be regarded as a platform to preach the words of God, focusing on peace, love and acceptance of all people, irrespective of their race or nationality, to combat xenophobia and racism in African countries. In addition to promoting economic justice, peace, inclusivity and racial harmony, according to (Pillay, 2017), The Church must engage on the issue of racism and xenophobia from a biblical and theological perspective (Mashau 2019: 5; Beukes 2021: 9); the Church should not get caught up with the economic order and practice of the day; instead, the Churches need to do proper analysis and speak prophetically into the context; the Church must be able to analyse the context, conduct research and establish the facts about the situation; it is not acceptable that the Churches accept the government's position on racism and xenophobia and rely on the media and social networks to inform their thinking and position on matters (Beukes 2021: 12); the Church must be able to get to the grassroots causes of the issues surrounding racism and xenophobia (Beukes, 2021, pp. 10-16). Scholars such as Beukes (2021: 12) ask, What does Scripture teach us about pilgrims and co-pilgrims, this world, the use of the earth and its resources, economic sharing and solidarity, the care of the poor and needy, the Kingdom of God, justice, peace and righteousness? It is essential to indicate that these are theological words, subject matter, and ideas that churches frequently use when preaching about privilege and power issues. The UNHCR (2020: 9) acknowledged, as a mandatory basic principle of life, in the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights irrespective of race and ethnicity or region affiliation. The church must speak out about injustice,

discrimination, prejudice, inequality, wrongdoing, unfairness, and dehumanising people. Settler and Mpofu (2017) acknowledge that despite significant interest in human mobility, civil society activists, researchers, and policymakers have not paid sufficient attention to the influx of migrants into countries such as South Africa as an African concern. Pillay (2017) thinks that, in this type of scenario, governments should be held responsible and answerable for their integration strategies and immigration programmes. Settler and Mpofu (2017) found that despite significant academic and civil interest in xenophobia, numerous researchers have ignored religious organisations' impact or role in addressing xenophobia in Africa.

Various Established Government Activities and Programmes

Various government programmes and activities, established in collaboration with NGOs and other international organisations such as the UNHCR ROSA, the UN, and the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU), among others, to eradicate xenophobia have been implemented in African countries. For example, South Africa promotes friendliness. The UNHCR, after the recent recurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa, initiated several activities and programmes comprising Peace Education among Refugee and local Community Youth through Sports Activities (implemented by Xaveri Movement in Mamelodi), Self-Reliance Activities for Urban Refugees and Asylums-seekers in Western Cape (implemented by ARESTA in Gugulethu); Ubuntu Has No Borders' Community Radio Programme (implemented by Thetha FM in Orange Farm), and Promotion of Social Cohesion among Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Nationals (implemented by DMPSP in Sasolburg) (Misago et al. 2015: 15).

Concerning the review of Lelope (2019: 45) on government programmes and activities' implementation, various NGOs, refugee and migrant associations, and lawful support groups have been established to address civil issues such as xenophobia. One of these organisations is The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), which provides psycho-social services to asylum seekers and refugees who have fled to SA for safety, as well as those who have been adversely affected by xenophobic violence within the country. Lelope (2019: 45) the Nelson Mandela Foundation is another organisation that organises social cohesion

sessions and community dialogues in violence-affected communities nationwide. (Misago et al. 2015: 27) Mentioned, "the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) initiated the 'One Movement' which is a ...social change campaign that seeks to reverse attitudes that result in discrimination, xenophobia, racism and tribalism."

Government Programmes and Actions that could assist or support Local Citizens

According to a Government of South Africa (2022b), In the report, various government programmes are revealed in the strategic plan for the 2014-2019 electoral terms and the medium-term strategic framework (MTSF). Interestingly, the national development plan's (NDP) initial five-year execution stage is the MTSF. These are arranged into the outcomes, which cover the focus areas identified in the NDP: "Safety and security, economic growth and employment, skills development, infrastructure, rural development, human settlements, local government, environment, international relations, social protection, nation-building and social cohesion." (Government of South Africa 2022a; Government of South Africa 2022b).

To speed up the execution of solutions to essential concerns, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (2014) noted that Operation Phakisa was considered an essential and fast-acting initiative to improve citizens' lives. This is an exceptional programme that deals with matters indicated in the NDP 2030, which include poverty, unemployment and inequality (Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation 2014). Through Operation Phakisa, the government intends to execute programmes better, faster and more successfully.

National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)

This is an agency the government established to facilitate, initiate, implement, coordinate and monitor youth development participation aimed at decreasing youth joblessness and encouraging social unity. This agency focuses on "tailor-made interventions for job preparedness and placement; scholarship provision for those who excel in schools; the scaling up of the Youth

Build Programme for out-of-school youth; the increase of second chance opportunities for matriculants; the intensification of our highly successful career guidance programme” (Government of South Africa 2022b).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Xenophobia in Africa has created several pressing obstacles that have affected many foreign nationals’ human rights, countries’ growth and development, governance and democracy. As this was a broad review not limited to one African country, numerous responses are required to address xenophobia and governments, international organisations such as the OAU/AU, and NGOs such as churches must all perform a role in combating xenophobia. Churches should be able to foresee a nation’s future, whether positive or negative and take proactive measures to address the current circumstances in the country. They must avoid unreasonable reactions or attempts to intervene and fight only when they are forced to do so. The study examined governments, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations’ roles in addressing xenophobia in African countries. The study noted that although numerous governments have made multiple attempts to address xenophobia issues, the interventions’ impacts, in addition to those of international, local, and NGO partnerships, have not been sufficient to combat xenophobia in African countries successfully. Therefore, the study recommends that governments, international organisations, and NGOs not relinquish their efforts. Instead, they should do more by ensuring that refugees’ fundamental human rights are effectively observed and protected in any country where they may reside.

The study recommended that there is a need for the United Nations Assembly (UNA) to reach a consensus and make a decision that the AU will not cooperate with any state on the continent that engages in xenophobic attacks and fails to address xenophobia within its borders effectively. To combat xenophobia in Africa effectively, the Assembly should embrace the resolutions and recommendations made by other African Union organisations, such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR). About the African Union Commission, the study recommended that

regional dialogues should be held on all xenophobia matters and quick deliberations made about the way forward. Similarly, the AUC should develop a model policy for all countries to use to improve national policies regarding xenophobia. The study also recommended that the ACHPR develop a human rights-based approach report specifically on immigration guidelines, strategies, policies and procedures and develop a universal remark concerning xenophobia. Organisations such as the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) should engage all relevant stakeholders in sessional meetings to discuss ways to address or combat xenophobia regionally and nationally.

In South Africa, the UNHCR should continue its responsibilities, role and efforts to address xenophobia, ensure that all align with the 2009 strategic approach established for addressing xenophobia and related issues about intolerance and collaborate with all essential stakeholders. The focus should be on pre-emptive education and awareness campaigns. All UNHCR employees across the globe must be made aware that the UNHCR policy serves as guidance for UNHCR offices worldwide. This is necessary because it has been reported that most of the UNHCR employees seem to be unfamiliar with the best procedures to address xenophobia.

For a sustainable long and medium-term solution, all African governments should provide unified and organised campaigns involving stakeholders, publicising information, and developing content and communication strategies to inform their citizens about the evils of xenophobia. Governments should improve their core service delivery by utilising a variety of communication structures, such as social media, to disseminate information and reach out to as many citizens as possible, especially South Africans.

Ethical Statement

This reviewed article followed all ethical protocols for research without direct contact with animals or human subjects.

Consent for Publication

Not Applicable

Availability of Supporting Data

The study is a review of openly accessible articles in online journal databases.

Competing Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author's Contributions

A.A.O contributed to the conceptualisation and writing of the entire manuscript. The introduction, background, research methodology, reviews and results sections were written by A.A.O.

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