

AN ANALYSIS OF THE STUBBORN SPECTRE OF VIOLENT SERVICE DELIVERY PROTESTS AND ITS LINK TO XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA THE CASE OF ALEXANDRA AND BEKKERSDAL TOWNSHIPS

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Background

Violent service delivery protests are a recurring phenomenon in South Africa. The causes of this phenomenon are elusive, precisely because the spheres of government are structured in such a way that they are aimed at reaching to the masses of the Republic. One of the spheres of government that is *aimed* at reaching out to the people in a more convenient and effective way is the local government, composed of various municipalities. The local municipality is tasked to deliver basic services to the people such as, clean water and sanitation, collection of rubbish bins etc. Despite the fact that the municipality has to deliver basic services to the people, they are a theatre of power contestation from various factions in the African National Congress (ANC) which is a ruling party. As a result, make it difficult for those elected to deliver impartially to all in the society. It therefore means the incapacity of the municipality to deliver services to the people is a relative failure on the part of the government and those deployed to the municipal offices; and they have to be held accountable for this failure either by their constituency or their political parties. This study is a response to the appeals for comprehensive empirical research on understanding the violent service delivery protests in South Africa. It seeks to advise the authorities on how to best respond to this challenge and consequently limit or eliminate xenophobic attitudes towards foreign nationals by South Africans during these protests.

Research Problem

As South Africans demonstrate their dissatisfaction about the lack of service delivery, they engage on other criminal activities. At the centre of violent service delivery protests is the violence meted out on the foreign nationals and looting of their shops.

Aims

Establish the link between violent service delivery protests and xenophobia.

Methodology

The fieldwork study was conducted in the Gauteng province, because it has registered a steady increase in the widespread of violent service delivery protests, particularly in Bekkersdal and Alexandra. Alexandra is a township that first saw the emergence of widespread xenophobic attacks in 2008. The study covered general attitudes of South Africans towards foreign nationals, particularly of African descent, this was done at various levels of the communities. This study employed a case study research design, which helped to establish the link between two variables in both townships. Central answers of this study were sought from people of various standing in the communities, the leaders of political parties, municipal officials, South African Local Government Association (SALGA) officials, and members of the communities. The sample method used in this study was purposive sampling. The data gathered was analysed through content analysis.

Findings

Apparently what sparked xenophobic attacks in Alexandra was the fight between South African and Zimbabwean fellows. Zimbabwean fellows outnumbered a South African and killed him, then the community joined the fight on the side of the South African fellow. The fight escalated to what we know today as xenophobic attacks. It was discovered that there is a gap between the local leadership and the community. Councillors hardly call ward meetings to brief and consult the community about the developments taking place. There is no consultation with regards to the draft and implementation of the Integrated Development Plan. The researcher discovered from the interviews with the community members that the success of delivery of services in the nearby township of Mohlakeng which falls under the Greater Westonaria Municipality has influenced the outbreak of the protest. There is acknowledgement from the participants that there were elements of criminality involved in their service delivery protest. Some attribute this act to the gangsters who seize the moment of anarchy to cause chaos and loot shops of foreign nationals. Others attribute violence as a culture of protests in South Africa, this culture is ascribed to the manner in which Apartheid was brought down in the country from 1960s until 1994. The intended aim of the research project was to establish whether there is a link between violent service delivery protests and xenophobia. The researcher dealt with the in-depth study of xenophobia in Alexandra. The responses from South African participants were that, the 2008 xenophobic attacks were not necessarily xenophobic in their view. They regard 2008 xenophobic attacks as a bold act against indignity. Most said they felt disrespected by the foreign nations who beat up and killed a South African fellow. They alleged that most foreign nationals are not legal in South Africa and thus it is difficult to trace them when they have committed crime. This study has further problematized the understanding and explanation of the concept, xenophobia.

Keywords: integrated development programme, leadership, service delivery, violent protests, xenophobia.

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, the world has been engulfed by a wave of violent and destructive protests, some leading to the overthrow of governments and change of political systems. Popular among these protests is the Arab Spring, which took place predominantly in the Middle East and North African (MENA) regions. Regimes that were overthrown were authoritarian and suppressed any kind of opposition and to some extent failed to meet socio-economic rights of the people. The Arab Spring started in Tunisia, January 2011, and spread all over the region, sparked by the self-immolation of a frustrated young fellow by the name of Mohammed Boazizi. Similar protests have extended to Europe, particularly Eastern Europe with Ukraine and Turkey being heavily affected by this wave of violent protests. Some commentators and political observers have concluded that some of these protests are not focused on change of political systems but individuals at the helm of the governments' administrations. In echoing this position, Ridwan Laher assert that the Arab Spring did not change the realities of the center of power in Egypt through stating:

'Mubarak may have been the powerful figurehead and symbol of despotic and corrupt rule in Egypt, but he is not the system that sustained the undemocratic nature of the Egyptian regime. The systems he created and ran over three decades is still very much in place and, ironically, hidden from the purview of Twitter, Facebook and blogs. It is, therefore, imperative to depersonalize what occurred in Egypt and to engage in a more traditional political analysis that is systemically focused on the politics of power and interests'[1].

Unfortunately for countries like Libya and Syria, among those hit by the wave of the Arab Spring, the protests were so much catastrophic to the extent that they not only overthrew the leadership of Muammar Gaddafi and displaced tens of thousands of Syrian people, but have also made it difficult to rebuild and restore the country to political stability. In Syria, the war is still continuing between the government army forces and the rebels. Although slight progress towards stability has been registered. The arsenal of the Syrian government has been raided by the United Nations (UN) and its nerve gas reserves are being dismantled. In Libya, the rebels have taken the center stage and continue to syphon the country's resources such as oil thriving on chaos. These protests are characterized by elements of criminality, racial prejudice and gender stereotypes. Women were molested in Egypt despite the fight for restoration of democracy. In Libya, some black Africans were attacked by rebels because they were perceived to

be mercenaries. These are some complexities that underscore the causes of protests, leading some observers to conclude that xenophobia characterizes these struggles, [2] when in reality it's just acts of criminality and this is the argument of this paper.

This wave of protests has hit South Africa particularly its economic hub, Gauteng province. Gauteng is ranked number 1 as a province leading with the scourge of violent service delivery protests [3]. During protests, foreign nationals particularly those owning shops in townships are soft targets for acts of criminality, thus leading some commentators to conclude that South Africans are xenophobic. This paper interrogates these nuanced perceptions that can be characterized as prejudices. It draws the knowledge of hindsight from the fieldwork conducted in Alexandra and Bekkersdal townships, located in Gauteng province. The concept of xenophobia is problematized informed by the views from the fieldwork conducted. Politics behind service delivery protests in the Republic are so diverse and complex that to conclude the actions involved as xenophobia, racism and leadership contest would be to narrow the realities involved. There is a plethora of literature from various scholars and politicians of diverse political standing trying to dissect this scourge and arriving at contending conclusions. Scholars from different ideological orientations have contradictory positions in analyzing the scourge of violent service delivery in South Africa. The left argue that what characterizes these protests is not pure criminality as argued by those from the right, but they insist that they signal the failure of liberalism. Adam Habib, an academic from the left suggest that the 'institutional design and the quality of the country's human resources' are the main drivers of service delivery protests [4]. While Joel Netshitenze, an activist and an intellectual in South Africa holds that 'sins of incumbency' is the main problem and can be located at the center of violent service delivery protests [5] Ben Turok, a Member of Parliament, and a senior member of the ruling party, makes a very profound insight about the deficiencies of delivery of services from the government which inevitable translate into the performance of local municipalities. His observation is of paramount importance because he possesses 20 years of parliamentary experience. He observes that 20 years in power, 'the ANC's performance was patchy' [6]. He goes on to elaborate of this fact and identifies the structural deficiencies which led to this observation;

Some departments of state ran fairly well; others barely coped; and a few became bywords for administrative inefficiency and incompetence. This was partly because of the sheer workload involved: systems that had essentially served a white minority were now charged with serving all citizens. This was partly because the administration we had inherited was not entirely committed to the new government; and partly because the new people brought into the state institutions were often inexperienced and even ineffectual' [7].

It is a notable point that too much energy has been invested in trying to understand and explain the phenomena of violent service delivery protests in the Republic. The above views don't even touch the concept of xenophobia and attitudes of South Africans towards migrants, however they give some ideological insights about the scourge of violent service delivery protests in South Africa. Therefore, there is a need to interrogate the concept of xenophobia and realities underpinning it.

Conceptualizing Realities of Xenophobia

Lucky Kunene cited that political and economic reasons underpinned the 2008 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. He states that 'it has been established through research that the 2008 xenophobic attacks that took place in South Africa were planned and orchestrated by certain local leaders who sought to consolidate and accrue political and economic power in the various townships and informal areas where the attacks against foreigners were carried out' [8]. This is a serious indictment to the understanding and definition of the concept xenophobia. It was discovered on the survey conducted in South Africa around the question of xenophobia, that there is inadequate understanding on this phenomenon from various sections of the society. The Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) observed in its Policy Paper series that 'senior officials and politicians seemed bemused and perplexed by the xenophobic violence in South Africa. The media was quick to advance several theories about the mayhem. One focused on historical factors, particularly South Africa's divisive and alienating apartheid past. Another blamed poverty and the daily struggle for existence in many of South Africa's poorer communities. A third criticized the African National Congress (ANC) government for poor service delivery and a failure to redistribute the fruits of the post-apartheid economic boom to the poor. Finally, the country's immigration policies were seen as a fault' [9]. These are the theories devoid of the proper analysis of xenophobia and its complexities. As defined by SAMP, xenophobia means exhibited intolerance and hostility towards outsiders [10]. This definition is open and complex,

thus leads to nuanced understanding of certain realities such as tribalism and racism. In such a complex society such as South Africa, it is problematic to define xenophobia without linking it to other historical realities that spawned the dawn of democracy and rebirth of the society itself post 1994. This is the society that is not uniform and homogenous. The former president Thabo Mbeki was at pains to define who is African in the South African realm because of its vast history of protracted struggle of the settlers and land dispossession of the natives. He asserted that:

I owe my being to Khoi and the San.... I am formed of migrants who left Europe to find a new home on our native land..... In my veins courses the blood of the Malay slaves who came from the East. Their proud dignity informs my bearing, their culture a part of my essence ... I am the grandchild of the warrior men and women that Hintsa and Sekhukhune led, the patriots that Cetshwayo and Mphephu took to battle, the soldiers Moshoeshe and Ngungunyane taught never to dishonour the cause of freedom... I am the grandchild who lays fresh flowers on the Boer graves at St Helena and the Bahamas... I come from those who were transported from India and China.... Being part of all these people and in the knowledge that one dare contest that assertion, I shall claim that I am an African [11].

It is for this reason that Allister Sparks has maintained that South Africa is a society in microcosm [12]. Considering what Mbeki has asserted about the realities and identities constituting the South African society, it would be very simplistic to conclude that violence meted out on foreign nationals and looting of their shops during violent service delivery protest can be characterized as xenophobia. There are other realities such as scarcity of the means of survival that can be attributed to the attitudes South Africans have towards foreign nationals. It is a notable point that there are foreign nationals, of African origin working in the mines of South Africa. These people hardly experience any attitudinal hostilities during normal working hours and after work. In the townships, most shops are owned by foreign nationals and they hardly experience xenophobic sentiments from South Africans. Thus it is not appropriate to conclude that because of the violence meted out on foreign nationals during protests, South Africans are xenophobic.

Apparently, what sparked xenophobic attacks in Alexandra was the fight between South African and Zimbabwean fellows. It was discovered that Zimbabwean fellows outnumbered a South African and killed him. The community then joined the fight on the side of the South African fellow. The fight escalated to be what we know today as xenophobic attacks of 2008. These xenophobic attacks were not organized. However, the environment was volatile for it to emerge. It is a condition that existed and just needed a spark to ignite it. There are some sentiments of xenophobia in Alexandra. These sentiments are attributed to high rate of unemployment especially among the youth. Foreign nationals who stay in Alexandra are not comfortable as they indicated that they are still called names and they have realized the volatility of the environment which needs a spark for the violence against them to erupt. South Africans have stated acts of criminality by foreign nationals in Alexandra as disturbing and think it might lead to another outbreak of xenophobic attacks in the township. They complain about lack of job creation by government in Alexandra. Alexandra is a township of many complexities in terms of services, particularly how the settlement is arranged. In Alexandra electricity is free, whereas sanitation is a problem. Sewerages are running on the streets of Alexandra. Roads are tarred as compared to other townships in the country. The settlement is compressed, thus there are no clear boundaries for yards. Services are delivered fairly well in the township and the people are relatively satisfied with the rate of service delivery in the township. Their major concern is unemployment especially among youth.

Scarcity as a main driver of protests and racial prejudices.

Every society is inevitably characterized by scarcity of resources and thus makes conflict inherent. However as per the innovations and intelligence of human creation, political systems are created to manage this inevitable conflicts among human race. In the modern world, the process to legitimizing the people to be charged with the responsibility to distribute resources among people and manage this inherent conflict is elections, which are held every five years. This process of charging people with the responsibility to manage conflict in the society by distributing resources fairly is marred with competition among political parties and to certain extent treachery is the order of the day. Limitation and scarcity of resources in a society have been underpinning a movement of people from one society to another in quest of a better life. Therefore, it is not by accident that there are foreign nationals pursuing business in most of the communities in South Africa. These foreign nationals have seized business opportunities existing in the South African communities particularly on traditional business pursued by most South

Africans in the form of 'spaza shops' and street trading. This has to certain extent brewed some negative attitudes among South Africans against the foreign nationals. This negative attitudes would come to play during violent service delivery protests, where these shops would be pillaged. This pillage of the 'spaza shops' of foreign nationals has been a major characteristic of protests in South Africa, as it was also evident in the protest that took-place in Bekkersdal township.

During the electioneering process, people's expectations are raised through manifestos and slogans. Politicians make promises seeking to improve the people's lives. According to Green and Luehrmann, [13] answering the question as to 'why do people, especially in groups, turn to aggressive acts of defiance?' assert by using one of the tenets of *Relative Deprivation theory*, that 'to some resorting to violence is a way of dealing with their dissatisfaction over a state of affairs. When facing frustration and unmet expectations, it is argued, people are likely to turn to aggression' [14]. This explanation is to certain extent relevant to the discourse as it directly relates to the people's expectations on matters of service delivery as promised by politicians. They further elaborate on the threats of making promises to the constituencies by politicians and failure to deliver and state that:

'Expectations about changes in lifestyle are also important. If people have little reason to expect anything from society or government, they often remain passive and are largely inactive. But if they are given reason to expect more, especially through sacrifice, their hopes increase. Expectations sometimes end up being dangerously unfulfilled' [15].

In relation to this theory as articulated by Green and Luehrmann, to express better the hopes and expectations of South Africans toiling for a democratic breakthrough which was supposed to usher in a better life for all, Xolela Mangcu state that:

'The people shall govern. Or shall they, really? This is a question that none dared to ask during the days of our revolution, save perhaps for a few radicals on the left. In our romantic idealism we were all convinced of the certainty of that universal truth. We also did not ask it because we believed in a certain kind of South African exceptionalism. We were different from the rest of the African continent, where dictators had lorded themselves over their entire populations. Our civil society was too strong and our consciousness too sophisticated to succumb to centralization. Now with the benefit of hindsight we seem to have been so naïve' [16].

The theory of Relative Deprivation assisted in explaining the phenomenon because its tenets address some elements that can be ascribed as the causes of violent service delivery protests. This theory also assisted in explaining attitudes of South Africans towards foreign nationals whom during these protests, the masses vent their anger on. The view of Green and Luehrmann can be used to justify frustration of South Africans towards foreign nationals by arguing that expectations have a way of increasing in scope and that it is common for people to believe that with hard work and effort, life will get better. If this cycle is broken, and quality of life decreases rather than improves, it can be followed by frustration and disappointment and that people sometimes use public platforms such as sports events and funerals to vent their frustrations. This way of demonstrating frustration and disappointment can even extend to looting of shops owned by foreign nationals in the townships and burning down of important facilities such as libraries, or worst, stop learners from going to school. This desperate measure are taken in order to draw the attention of the political elites to address the grievances of the communities.

What to Make of Service Delivery Protests in South Africa

Violent service delivery protests are a recurring phenomenon in South Africa. The causes of this phenomenon are elusive precisely because the spheres of government are structured in such a way that they are aimed at reaching to the masses of the Republic. One of the spheres of government that is aimed at reaching out to the people in a more convenient and effective way is the local government, composed of various municipalities. This sphere of government is clearly defined by Werner Zybrands as a [17]'sphere of government, consisting of municipalities, is that sphere of government closest to its constituents and renders a wide range of services that materially affect the lives of the inhabitants of each municipality.' The municipality is charged with the responsibility to delivery services to the residents. However most of these municipalities remain a center of power contestation from various factions in the ANC which is a ruling party in most municipalities, thus the power contestation makes it difficult for those elected to deliver impartially to all in the society. It therefore means the incapacity of the municipality to deliver services to the people is a relative failure on the part of the ANC-led government and those deployed on the municipal offices, and they have to be held accountable for this failure either

by their constituency or their political parties. Politicians view violent service delivery protests as a tactic employed by those whom were in the public service and desperately seeking to return to power again through these unrests. This view was captured by Joel Netshitenzhe that 'sins of incumbency' have characterized the ANC and thus have a negative impact on the delivery of services.

'We need to reflect on the issue of whether the 'sins of incumbency' can be dealt with merely as an internal organisational issue! This is because, besides the class dynamics treated above, these sins affect - as we heard during the course of this week - infrastructure spending and payment for work done; delivery of textbooks to poor children; quality of legislation passed by Parliament; and salary demands of lower middle strata in the public service as they demand the narrowing of the wage gap and advancement in the 'middle class' stakes' [18].

South Africa has recorded a steady rise in the numbers of service delivery protests since 2004. In 2004 the accounted numbers of protests stood at 10, in 2012 they dramatically rose to 173 [19]. The causes of these protests elude the policy-makers and the academic fraternity. This has as a result made efforts to resolve this phenomenon difficult. Kunene and Maseng assert that [20] 'causes of service delivery protests in South Africa are seriously complex.' Therefore it means efforts to resolve them would vary according to the specific demands and necessities in one community from another, than just casting a blanket approach. A layman would argue that the causes of this phenomenon are very simple and direct, and state lack of delivery of services. Therefore delivery of services would solve this problem. Questions that arise, are who determines what services should be delivered to the masses how and when, and what are the expectations of the people as far as delivery of services is concerned. Do the people demand what has been promised by political parties, do they get mobilized to fight political battles of some political principals or are they genuine about lack of delivery of services and why is the government not able to deliver services. As South Africans demonstrate their dissatisfaction about the lack of service delivery, they engage on other criminal activities. At the center of violent service delivery protests is the violence meted out on the foreign nationals and looting of their shops, disruption of schools and vandalism of public facilities like libraries. Municipal IQ states the reason behind xenophobic attack that transpired in Alex as, [21] 'the target of dissatisfaction around service delivery and perceived inequity has therefore taken on the face of immigrants, with dire repercussions for foreign communities'. This then begged for a scientific study that would measure the attitudes and perceptions of South Africans towards foreign nationals staying in their communities, how these attitudes relate to lack of service delivery and try to establish amicable ways of resolving contradictions.

What stands out in the violent service delivery protests beyond the various causes as articulated by politicians and academics, is the hypothesis that ordinary South Africans particularly in the rural and remote communities are marginalized from the economic activities of the country and do not receive essential services. Municipal IQ in corroborating this view states that,

'In Ward 9 site of Spook Town and epicentre of protest activity 99% of residents have no access to electricity and more than 25% of residents are not able to access water within 300m of their home. These poor living conditions are aggravated by the fact that in 2011 more than 70% of households were living below the poverty line in this ward. Of concern is that six other Bekkersdal wards exhibit similar conditions of hardship. The problem is that these conditions are concealed by aggregated performance statistics given that seven of Westonia's wards perform very well in terms of access to services income and unemployment' [22].

To better understand this phenomenon, historical account had to be established in order to gauge how the masses perceived delivery of services from the apartheid government despite their struggle for democracy. During apartheid era, ordinary South Africans used to play an important role in the economic activity of the country through, as a practical example, the "spaza shops" and well regulated street trading. The business of street trading was well regulated by apartheid police as they did not allow them to trade on the streets or open pavements. This illegal street trading regulation limited this business to South Africans whom were doing this business in the taxi ranks. After the democratic breakthrough majority of South Africans whom were owning these "spaza shops" lost the market to foreign nationals and this extended to street trading. This has somehow developed xenophobic tendencies among South Africans towards African immigrants. Municipal IQ has quite correctly, but to certain extent captured the causes of violent service delivery protests linking them to attitudes of South Africans towards foreign nationals, that:

'Rather, it is the reinforcing factors that are common. Some are obvious — high degrees of poverty or unemployment — but also less well understood factors, such as perceptions of corruption or perceptions of relative inequality. Residents who are poor (but not necessarily among the poorest in the country or even their municipality) compare themselves unfavourably with better-off residents or local politicians. Such comparisons raise frustration, with an event or series of events then providing a tipping point. Municipal IQ believes that underlying poverty combined with an event or series of events may well explain the violence that has erupted across Gauteng. The relative wealth of Alex residents suggests that, in the case of Alex, it is a sense of relative deprivation or perceived inequality that raises feelings of dissatisfaction. Considering that crime is endemic in SA, it is likely that an opportunist, criminal element is acting to worsen these underlying factors. But in the case of Alex there is a further specific underlying factor that must be recognized. Alex is a highly desirable residence, close to economic activity and a hub in its own right. These benefits make competition for land and housing intense, and therein may lie the truth behind an unwillingness to share with immigrants who often appear more successful' [23].

The by-laws that regulate street vendors are not properly thought-out and implemented. This emerged around October 2013, when vendors in the streets of Johannesburg were forcefully removed from their normal stalls and not given alternative areas to pursue their trade. Even in this type of business, South Africans are locked in competition with foreign nationals. As the rate of unemployment fluctuates but remains at a high level, unemployed and illiterate citizens see 'street trading' as means for subsistence [24].

There is an acknowledgement within both the academic fraternity and the government officials that the nature and sources of violent service delivery protests in the country are very complex and thus makes it difficult to respond adequately to the demands of the residents. There is a general disrespect for the established and existing channels to raise concerns by the residents of various South African communities. There is a persistent call by both the academics and politicians for a constructive engagement with the communities to arrest the widespread nature of violent service delivery protests. This genuine concern has been raised in particular by the Municipal IQ, the web-based data and intelligence service specializing in the monitoring and assessment of all of South Africa's 278 municipalities. It states that 'ongoing work to channel protest towards constructive engagement with authorities needs to continue in earnest in the interest of optimally meeting the needs of communities still struggling with problematic service delivery levels.'

Gap between Leadership and Citizens

It was discovered that there is a gap between the local leadership and the community. Councilors hardly call ward meetings to brief and consult the community about the developments taking place. There is no consultation with regards to the draft and implementation of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Lack of consultation with the communities is a contributing factor towards violent service delivery protests. This leadership distance opens a space and opportunity for opposition parties to misinform the community deliberately to cause chaos. It becomes worse in municipalities like Greater Westonia Municipality which its council is composed of various political parties with a slight dominance of the ANC. It even serves as a point of mobilization by those who want to overthrow the Council, proving right the point made by Joel Nesthitenze. The community would appreciate efforts to consult them with any developments that should take place in their township. Apparently, the Councilors convene ANC meetings and then claim them as ward meetings. This has angered many community members whom some are not politically aligned or not necessarily members of the ANC. This has also worked in the advantage of the opposition parties in mobilizing the community behind their manifestos. In Bekkersdal, some alternatives to cater for expression of the people's views are being sought. There is a parliament that has been launched on the 27th of April 2014. This is where the community raises their concerns with regards to services in the Municipality. This parliament has to find relevance in the community because of the gap between the leadership and the community. This is a platform, not formal or recognized constitutionally, but a means of engaging among community members and Bekkersdal Residents Association.

Success of delivery of services

It was discovered from the interviews with the community members that the success of delivery of services in the nearby township of Mohlakeng which falls under the Greater Westonia Municipality has influenced the outbreak of the protest in Bekkersdal. Many participants made reference to the developments in Mohlakeng and some insinuating that these developments are as a result of ascendance of the District Mayor to this position of

authority that has made Mohlakeng to be as developed as it is. There is some sense of tribalism against the mayor of Greater Westonia and the Xhosa tribe in Bekkersdal. Bekkersdal is dominated by the Batswana tribe but those working in the municipal offices are dominantly Xhosas. This raises eyebrows on the manner used for recruitment and employment in the municipality, as it doesn't reflect correct demographics of the township. This tribal and stereotypes serve as sentiments for mobilization of the community against the local leadership. It is a tool that's being used to pitting community members against each other and gets coined to illustrate nepotism.

Criminality Acts involved

There is an acknowledgement from the participants that there were elements of criminality involved in their service delivery protest. Some attribute this act to the gangsters who seize the moment of anarchy to cause chaos and loot shops of foreign nationals. Others attribute violence as a culture of protests in South Africa, this culture is ascribed to the manner in which Apartheid was brought down in the country. There was a lot of fire-bombing on government owned businesses which was involved in the struggle against apartheid that attracted the attention of the international community to put pressure on leaders of Apartheid to realize and accede equal rights of all in South Africa without any racial prejudice. Sampie Terreblanche's view of inherent structural violence in South Africa is validated and concretised. He maintains that,

'What is beyond dispute, however, is that colonial authorities and white governments in South Africa constantly used their undemocratically acquired political power, their extensive (and often foreign) military power, and their control over labour patterns to institutionalize and perpetuate the exploitation of indigenous people. Not surprisingly, the social injustice enforced and maintained by violent measures regularly provoked fierce resistance and counter violence from the oppressed indigenous groups. It is against this background that we should understand that South Africa's history is one of institutionalized or systemic violence'[26].

People still employ this tactic to voice their concerns in order to attract the attention of the national leadership in government in order to act promptly to the demands of the community. Foreign nationals who are dominantly shop owners in the township become easy targets when the protests erupt. Some of the participants do not regard this as xenophobia as they state that before a protest could erupt, these foreign nationals are treated with respect and the relations are peaceful. The view of Sampie Terreblanche holds firm and better explain this attitude in the South African context. He concludes that 'this systemic violence has caused irreparable harm to the social and cultural structures of indigenous people over a period of almost 350 years. We say that systemic violence has been responsible for nurturing not only a subculture of poverty, but also a subculture of criminality [27]. As the ANC address the apartheid legacies embedded in the South African society, it has to pay attention to uncovering the subculture of violence embedded in this society.

Conclusion

The intended aim of the research project was to establish whether there is a link between violent service delivery protests and xenophobia. This was the central objective of the study. The in-depth study of xenophobia was done in Alexandra Township. The response from the South African participants were that, the 2008 xenophobic attacks were not necessarily xenophobic in their view. They regard 2008 xenophobic attacks as a bold act against indignity. Most said they felt disrespected by the foreign nationals who beat up and killed a South African fellow. They alleged that most foreign nationals are not legal in South Africa and thus it is difficult to trace them when they have committed crime. They accused foreign nationals with serious acts of criminality ranging from mugging to rapes. Some participants indicated that they have a problem with foreign nationals who come to South Africa to provide a skill that most South Africans possess and compete with them at the low cost which then undermines the business of South Africans. They stated skills such as welding and being car mechanics as some of the skills South Africans have, which are practiced by foreign nationals.

In Bekkersdal, the community doesn't have a problem with foreign nationals owning shops. They as well do not regard the looting of shops of foreign nationals as xenophobic. They regard this act for what it is, pure criminality. They stated that communities need to take responsibility of preserving the dignity of protests by dealing with criminal elements which seek to undermine the protests by seizing the opportunity of anarchy to cause chaos. They stated that authorities should not pay too much focus on criminal elements while avoiding key issues raised by the communities when addressing the phenomenon of service delivery protests. From what the participants stated in

responding to questions, there is no relative link between violent service delivery protests and xenophobia. It should be acknowledged that what happens generally during protests is act of criminality. This view is informed by the fact that relations between foreign nationals and South Africans are peaceful and tolerant before the outbreak of protests. The relations are peaceful to the extent that South Africans buy more from the shops of foreign nationals than from those of fellow South Africans. Foreign nationals just become easy targets during the outbreak of service delivery protests. This view problematizes the understanding of the concept, xenophobia.

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