

**DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE APRIL 2015 XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE  
IN SOUTH AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF THE *SUNDAY TIMES*  
ONLINE**

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ONLINE**

by

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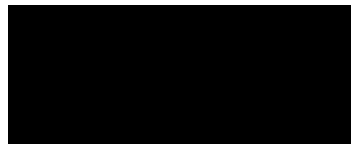
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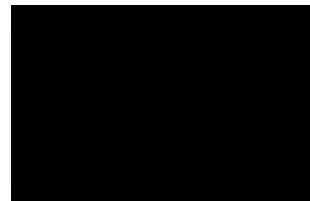
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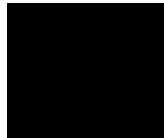


## ABSTRACT

News media play an important role in not only informing the public, but also in shaping public opinion. Whether unconsciously, or consciously, the media frame and set the agenda of news. In doing so, public opinion is also shaped and framed. It is imperative then that news is presented in a fair, unbiased and responsible manner. Media representation, or rather, media coverage of events, people, and issues (and so on) should be examined and analysed by media scholars, governing bodies and civil society at large. This study aimed to critically analyse online media coverage of the April 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Specifically, the focus was on the *Sunday Times E-edition* and its counterpart *TimesLive*. The April 2015 xenophobic attacks resulted in extensive media coverage and prompted global discourse. The study employed a qualitative research methodological approach through a content analysis of the selected articles during. Articles were coded and emergent themes were then grouped and analysed. The findings revealed that although the media under analysis reported on the event in a fair manner, priority was given to news items focusing on violent xenophobic attacks rather than other related news stories (like, for example protest marches). The findings also revealed that the media tended to revert to stereotyped representations of the black foreign national when covering the April 2015 xenophobic attacks.

## DECLARATION

I, Yolokazi Zinhle Nokwe, do hereby declare that the work presented in this dissertation is my own work and findings, except where indicated. All sources used have been duly acknowledged and referenced.



Nokwe, YZ

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my Mother, who was a true academic at heart but never got the chance to fully reach her potential due to ill health. She always prioritised and emphasised the need for education, having been a teacher for over two decades herself before she passed on. She instilled in me a sense of discipline and diligence to navigate through life. I pray that her soul has made roses bloom in its wake and that the clouds have wept its weariness away.

To my grandmothers: thank you for always being there for me and teaching me how to be resilient.

To my paternal grandfather who I hope is watching over brooding clouds, I am sorry you died before I had the chance to fulfil all the promises I made. You indulged my every whim and I pray the universe has placed you at peace.

To my siblings, thank you for making me the proudest sister, for teaching me things you never noticed you were.

To my uncle, Andile Nokwe, who has inspired me to think outside the township we grew up in and to strive towards achieving better things in life through dedication, focus and resilience. Thank you for serving our country in the Army. You epitomise what it is to be a responsible man and always exert the body and mind to achieve its maximum potential.

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## ACRONYMS

African Union	(AU)
Human Sciences Research Council	(HSRC)
South African History Online	(SAHO)
South African Human Rights Commission	(SAHRC)
South African National Editors Forum	(SANEF)

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) defines xenophobia as “the deep dislike of non-nationals by nationals of a recipient state” (Southern African Migration Project, 2001). The April 2015 violence consisted of both verbal and physical attacks on foreign nationals. This resulted in massive media attention, locally and internationally. The media reported xenophobic incidences as early as January 2015 (South African History, 2015). However, it was the April 2015 attacks that catapulted the situation to international criticism and prompted the South African government and citizens to earnestly condemn this behaviour.

The media play a key role as agenda setters based on the issues they highlight and place value on, for example placing certain news stories as cover stories, over a period of time. The media, in this instance of xenophobic violence, was blamed for instigating and perpetuating the violence in how it reported the incidents. It was alleged that Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini incited the violence in his speech at a traditional gathering in which he was quoted to have said “foreigners must pack their bags and go” (South African History, 2015). The Zulu monarch refuted the statement, arguing that the media misquoted and sensationalised his comment about foreign nationals and that it was the media that was responsible for the xenophobic violence. Note that foreigners in this instance referred predominantly to black foreign nationals. For the purposes of this study, foreign nationals and black foreign nationals is used interchangeably.

In an earlier study, Crush (2008), noted how the South African media had uncritically reproduced xenophobic language and statements, repeatedly and was complicit in encouraging xenophobic attitudes among the population. This shows that the media representations of actual events are not always accurate and objective. It is on this premise on which this study investigates the role of the media in the xenophobic violence. This is

achieved through an analysis of the *Sunday Times E-edition* and its live stream counterpart *TimesLive* as well as referencing from existing academic/theoretical reviews in order to assess the role of the media in depicting the xenophobic attacks of April 2015.

While this study acknowledges that there was a wide range of media coverage (print, television and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter) of the xenophobic attacks, this study is limited and structured to focusing on a textual examination of the *Sunday Times E-edition* and its live stream counterpart *TimesLive*. This study focuses on online articles during the period April 2015.

## **1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

According to the Fourie (2008) political leaders like Thabo Mbeki have expressed their dissatisfaction in how the South African media portray government policies and other unsatisfactory action in their reporting. In some cases, such as the reporting of the statement of King Zwelithini suggests, the way media covers a story can prompt not only discourse, but action too. Olorunnisola (2006:1) argues that one of the major consequences that is frequently assumed and hardly scrutinised is the mass media's representation of transformative countries. The then South African Deputy Police Minister Maggie Sotyu expressed concerns about the media portraying South Africa negatively to the world (City Press, 2015).

Online news articles are the most rapid dissemination of news stories on a global scale and therefore have the potential to influence and precipitate discourse on a range of issues. Lacey (2009:12) states that the core objective of media studies should be to move from passive consumption of text and images to an active reading of them. Active reading of news content is when the reader does not automatically assume what she/he is reading to be true merely by virtue of it being published but rather employs a more critical approach which apprehends that there may be nuances and complexities latent in the content. This study focuses on the online coverage of the April 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. In particular, the study is confined to the *Sunday Times E-edition* and its live stream counterpart *TimesLive*.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions that this study aims to answer are:

- How did the media depict the series of events that occurred in April 2015?
- Did the media perpetuate any stereotypes about foreign nationals (for example foreigners steal jobs of South African citizens) in their coverage of the 2015 xenophobic spate of attacks?
- Were the incidents reported in a responsible or sensationalised manner?

### **1.4 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW**

Slater and Rouner (2002:173) explain that the impact of mass media messages on beliefs, attitudes and behaviours is typically explained in terms of social cognitive theory principles. An example of this is the pairing of image and text: a picture of a man burning and a caption that explains the man is a victim while another article may report about the same event but include a picture of the same man carrying a gun and portray him as an instigator. The reality may be that the man fetched a gun for protection when attackers were looting his store. The angle a news article adopts can shape the perception of the reader. Fourie (2008) acknowledges that the application of Barthes's theories plays a crucial role in the systematic and theoretical "pulling apart" of mass media representations as well as analysing the meaning of text. A similar view is shared by Hall (1997:172), who argued that meanings of representation are not rigid but are susceptible to various interpretations by the audience.

O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2007: 72) state that representation is a key concept in media studies and that social reality is actually constructed through a mediation process of representation in the form of language, pictures and images. The media responses to the xenophobic attacks demonstrated the impact that mass media could have on its audiences. Slater and Rouner (2002:173) explain that the impact of mass media messages on beliefs, attitudes and behaviours is typically explained in terms of social cognitive theory principles. Therefore, the bias and objectivity (or lack thereof) in the media coverage is examined in order to determine whether the media had any role in perpetuating the xenophobic attacks. Theories such as gatekeeping, agenda setting and framing question the bias of the news we consume. O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2007:74) observe that media cannot be unbiased or



objective because all representations come from humans, they come from a particular position and therefore are relative. Their views affirm what other theorists or academics argue about the media, put simply: what you see is in the not always necessarily reality.

Fourie (2008) describes agenda setting to be the media's very powerful ability to focus public attention to specific issues by the emphasis placed on events through news coverage. Brown and Walsh-Childers (2002: 460) state that the use of certain messages in mass media are a potentially more powerful way of affecting human behaviour because the 'selling' of a particular message is not obvious but effective.

Newspapers provide various cues about a particular news event through the placement of a report on a page, the page it is printed on and the size of the headlines. When the same cues appear over a period of days, weeks, months, or even longer it can be possible to identify an agenda of a news organisation. This is similar to framing, which, according to Fourie (2008:239), is the selection of certain thematically related news attributes for inclusion on a media agenda, when a particular news object is reconstructed and presented as a news report. Fourie (2008: 52) explains that framing is the selection of some aspect of a perceived reality, making them more apparent in text in such a way to promote a problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and or treatment recommendation for the "prescribed item". These theories inform and guide the analyses of the April 2015 xenophobic attacks news coverage.

## **1.5 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The results of this study cannot be generalised to the media coverage of the 2015 xenophobic attacks across other media channels in South Africa. However, given the similarity of rural municipality in South Africa, it can be used as basis to identify common trends, problems and challenges in delivering cost effective communication and identifying the credible means to do so.

## **1.6 METHODOLOGY**

### **1.6.1 Research Design**

Mouton (1996:107) defined a research design as a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem. He states that the main function of a research design is to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions should be so as to maximise the validity of the eventual results. This study employed a qualitative research approach by conducting an in-depth textual analysis to decode the April 2015 xenophobic attacks in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*. The period of analysis was from April 2015 when the xenophobic attacks occurred.

### **1.6.2 Target Population**

Due to the nature of the study being a qualitative textual analysis, there were no participants to be studied. The specific cases to be examined, however, were news articles in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* during the period April 2015, focusing on xenophobia related stories. The *Sunday Times E-edition* and its counterpart, *TimesLive*, were selected because they have the largest readership in South Africa.

### **1.6.3 Sampling Method**

Swetnam and Swetnam (2010:132) state that a sample is the subset of a population selected to participate in a research study. In this qualitative study, sampling also refers to (probability) sampling procedures which involve some form of random selection of elements from a target population. For the purpose of this study, the focus is on non-probability sampling. In terms of non-probability sampling, elements within the population do not stand an equal chance of being selected as one of the subjects (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2006). Qualitative and phenomenological approaches to research do not aim for generalisability of findings through large representative sample sizes but more focused on the meanings generated by the selected sample. Hence, the researcher used her judgement to select the specific time period as well as newspaper to be analysed. The study analysed stories related

to xenophobia in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* from during April 2015. The study does not focus on other content in the online edition, such as Sports and Entertainment. The units for analysis are obtained from the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* archives.

#### **1.6.4 Measuring Instrument**

Due to the textual nature of this study and the fact that it is a qualitative content analysis, there is no measuring instrument such as interviews and questionnaires. The necessary units of data are part of the public domain, and are already available for analysis on the Internet. Seeing as this study is an in-depth textual analysis, the distribution of questionnaires or conduction of interviews is not required. No consent forms or gatekeepers' letters are required. However, hierarchical coding frames and categories as well as subcategories created from the actual data. The codes are the themes that are prevalent in the data which were strategically extracted using existing theories of the press.

#### **1.6.5 Data Collection**

Yin (2003: 86) suggests that, for case studies, data can be collected through six sources; namely: documents; physical artefacts; participant observations; direct observations; interviews and archival records. For the purposes of this study, two of Yin's (2003) identified sources were used: documentation and archival records. These were selected because of their relevance to the nature of the study. Saunders *et al* (1997: 1) categorise data into two aspects: primary and secondary.

#### **1.6.6 Data Analysis**

The news articles from the April 2015 period were analysed and used as a framework from which calculated conclusions were drawn using one of Yin's (2003: 90) two proposed analytical strategies of case studies: "relying on theoretical prepositions". This strategy was selected due to the limiting textual component of the study. The study analysed the identified news stories and followed a process that included extracting codes and creating

chronological categories whilst preserving the golden thread. The codes are the themes present in the news content. This is further expanded on in chapter three of the study.

Qualitative research is designed to address questions of meaning, interpretation and socially constructed realities (Ridenour and Newman, 2008:3). Rau (1997 cited in Altheide and Schneider, 2013: 79) suggests that for theoretical reasons, a qualitative textual analysis warrants that the researcher follow certain guidelines such as reading studies of the news process and particularly the roles of the news sources and frames and examine the sources which are associated with certain themes and frames.

### **1.6.7 Pretesting**

There was no need for pretesting as resources of data collection are already existing texts. The data was analysed as received.

### **1.6.8 Delimitations/Scope**

Qualitative content analysis can be limited by the fact that coding can be a subjective process. It is also not feasible, with respect to time, to analyse large amounts of data. It is for this reason this study examines only the April 2015 articles in the identified newspapers.

### **1.6.9 Validity and Reliability**

In qualitative research, validity and reliability can be understood through concepts such as dependability and transferability (Elo and Kyngas 2008: 107). Yin (2003:87) states a researcher may use several sources to obtain various measures of the same phenomenon which can increase the validity of the study. Taking Yin's (2003) suggestion into consideration, the analysis is not be limited to text only but also studies the theme, images and tone of the articles. Potter (2013: 136) affirms that the quality of findings is dependent on the quality of data used to generate those findings. Therefore, the researcher has been thorough in this aspect to prevent the error of inaccurate data that may lead to the distortion of findings.

## **1.7 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The study did not pose any threat to any humans or animals. Data was collected from already available sources, being the online newspaper archives. No individuals required anonymity or confidentiality.

## **1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The study did not involve any human participants which would need ethical considerations.

## **1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

### **1.9.1 Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter contextualises and provides a theoretical framework for the study. It provides an overview of understanding xenophobia; media in a democracy; media representation and agenda-setting and framing theories.

### **1.9.2 Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

Chapter three discusses the methodology for the study. The chapter describes the research design; target population; data collection; data analysis and the reliability and validity of the study in detail.

### **1.9.3 Chapter Four: Analysis and Discussion**

Chapter four presents the findings of the study, including a discussion and interpretation of the findings.

#### **1.9.4 Chapter Five: Recommendations and Conclusion**

Chapter five concludes with a presentation of the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

#### **1.10 SUMMARY**

This chapter has contextualised the study and provided a discussion on the research problem; research questions and includes an overview of the research design. Chapter two will present the literature review of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **MEDIA COVERAGE OF XENOPHOBIA**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter provided a background to the study, the research questions and the overall significance of the study. This chapter provides a theoretical framework for understanding the coverage of xenophobia in online media, specifically the electronic newspapers *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*.

Post-apartheid South Africa has been characterised by the emergence of various forms of new media. The increasingly accessible online media content ensures that one can read about local and international events instantaneously thus broadening the scope of information from which public opinion can be formed. South Africa is plagued with various social conditions/ills such as unemployment, crime, poverty and violence even after the democratic era.

Harris (2002:169) states that through the media, prejudice and violence continue to mark contemporary South Africa. In this statement, Harris (2002) implies that the perpetuation of stereotypes is, to some extent, due to new media, to which the modern South Africa has increased access to in various forms. This means that the coverage of issues that are reported on in the media are now produced from various stances and with varying agendas whereas they could have been rigid and limited before. The chapter discusses key literature related to the coverage of xenophobia such as the relationship between xenophobia and media in a democracy, framing and agenda-setting theories.

#### **2.2 CONTEXTUALISING XENOPHOBIA**

Even though South Africa has been a democratic state for over two decades, it has not managed to entirely eradicate itself of some discriminatory attitudes and behaviour. Harris (2002:69) concurs that prejudice and violence are still prevalent in contemporary South

Africa and proceeds to assert that change of political power has made conducive a platform of a range of new discriminatory practices and victims. One such victim is 'the foreigner' who stands at the site where identity and violent practices are reproduced. This study examines the media coverage, specifically *Sunday Times E-edition* and its live stream counterpart *TimesLive*, of the 2015 xenophobic attacks.

Annually, South Africa commemorates its first non-racial and democratic elections in the post-apartheid era on the occasion of Freedom Day, which falls on April 27<sup>th</sup>. In 2015, the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary and commemorative events of this day were tarnished by the news of the fatal xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals, particularly in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The violence was so severe that it ultimately resulted in reported deaths of at least seven people and left several others injured. More than 5,000 people were displaced and several shops were looted and raided (Smith, 2015:1). These xenophobic attacks spurred anti-immigrant sentiments and the annual Freedom Day celebrations of diversity in South African democracy were scrutinised under the media spotlight, both locally and globally.

A basic definition of xenophobia, linguistically, is the merging of two words *xeno* and *phobia*. According to the South African Concise Dictionary (2009:1358) *xeno* is relating to foreign or foreigners while *phobia* is an extreme or irrational dislike of a specified thing. Standard dictionary definitions describe, 'xenophobia' as a dislike, distrust, hatred or fear of foreigners, and characterise the notation as a catalyst of a negative attitude towards foreigners (Wamundiya, 2017:14). Harris (2002:170) offers an opposing view; he argues that definitions that frame 'xenophobia' only as an attitude and do not comment on this mindset's link to abuse and violent retribution towards foreigners are misleading. In light of this, Harris (2002:170) has called for a revision of dictionary definitions of 'xenophobia', warning that the definition is not satisfactorily explained. Concurring Harris's view, the South African History Online (SAHO) (SAHO, 2015), fully defines xenophobia as deep dislike of non-nationals which may result in violent behaviour. Shepherd and Robins (2008:257) offer a more comprehensive definition which explains that:

Xenophobia is the deep dislike of non-nationals of recipient state. Xenophobia, in the psychological sense, is an irrational and debilitating anxiety induced by fear of strangers, foreign things and places. Like all other phobias it afflicts individuals and can be cured or treated by a therapist.



Adam and Moodley (2013: 63) maintain that xenophobia has been prevalent in South Africa since the 1990s. They assert that psychological implications of apartheid persist and manifest themselves in various negative and positive ways and proceed to note that the more powerless and threatened the group members, the greater their need to denigrate others below them. This means that the people who exhibit violent and negative behaviour towards foreigners are financially struggling citizens such as street squatters, street hawkers, who not only compete for limited survival space such as squatter camps, but also for the rare opportunity to discriminate others. Furthermore, Patel and Essa (2015: 49) state that xenophobic attacks in South Africa has weighed in on immigrants who are continuously accused of spreading disease, stealing jobs, and sponging off basic government services like electricity, running water and healthcare.

The 2015 attacks, however, (which this study is analysing) were largely attributed to the Zulu King, Goodwill Zwelithini who, during a speech, remarked that foreign nationals should pack their bags and leave (Mhlongo, 2015). King Zwelithini initially exonerated himself of any complicity, but after the media carefully translated and analysed his speech it became clear that these were indeed his words (SAHO, 2015). The Zulu monarch later denied inciting violence and called for peace, holding the media accountable by claiming that he was misrepresented and that his words were taken out of context and sensationalised.

The news of the xenophobic attacks against immigrants in South Africa, mainly Africans, was received with great condemnation from other African countries and across the globe. According to *News24* (2015), it was highlighted that Mozambique reacted by pelting South African vehicles with stones. Malawi stopped South African nationals entering its country, and Kenya offered to evacuate its nationals from South Africa before the violence spread any further. Nigeria also threatened to close all South African businesses and cut bilateral ties. The African Union (AU) Chairperson and Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe, expressed his shock and disapproval at the horrible xenophobic attacks in a 30 minutes speech (*News24*, 2015). The African media also reacted and the raised concerns of serious implications of these actions on the socio-economic state of affairs.

Landau (2008: 10-15) observes that the South African government has been reluctant about accepting xenophobia as a crisis thus xenophobia and consequently the systematic marginalisation of it has never been granted any serious media attention. However, international media is outside the jurisdiction of South African laws and has not been subject to political restriction about South African political issues, so much so that, it was one of the ways in which the apartheid era came to be known and condemned by the world. The 2015 attacks against foreign nationals were extensively covered. It was only after the online media outlets broadcast responses from other countries that the government was prompted to respond and take action to discourage and chide the citizens for this behaviour (Mkandawire, 2015:200).

Crush (2000:106) states that, while xenophobic attitudes are only being given serious attention by the South African media in recent years, xenophobic behaviour has been prevalent throughout the post-apartheid era. Crush (2000:107) further argues that the media have played an integral part, over the years, in highlighting the myths widely accepted as a reality in South African society; such as foreigners taking the jobs of citizens or bringing crime into the country.

### **2.3 MEDIA IN A DEMOCRACY**

Fourie (2008:70-71) explains the functions of the media in a democratic setting as mass education, nation building and constructive or responsible criticism. This suggests that the media should inform its society about political developments and other important factors contributing to development. The media play a crucial role in a developing country – to politics, to citizens, to democracy. Marr (in Couldry, Madianou and Pinchevski, 2013:186) states that the media hold a unique control over people and as such have the ability to influence and manipulate public opinion on various social issues. McQuail (2010: 79-80) categorises the basic functions of the media as tabulated below (Table 2.1):

Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Provide information about events and conditions in society and the world.</li> <li>❖ Indicate relations of power and facilitate adaptation.</li> </ul>
Correlations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Explain, interpret comment on the meaning of events and information.</li> <li>❖ Contribute to census building and socialise and set orders of priority.</li> </ul>
Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Express the dominant culture, recognise new cultural developments.</li> <li>❖ Forge and maintain commonality of values.</li> </ul>
Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Provide amuse, diversion and the means of relaxation.</li> <li>❖ Reduce social tension.</li> </ul>
Mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Campaign for social objectives in the sphere of politics, war economy, work and sometimes religion.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.1: Basic Functions of the Media (McQuail, 2010: 79-80)**

Wasserman (2016) is of the view that by playing the role of watchdog and holding power to account and by exposing corruption, the media plays a critical role as part of civil society. Coronel (2008:3) maintains that the watchdog media ensures both individuals and institutions whose purpose is to serve the public remain not only transparent but also accountable. The vigilant media, argues Coronel (2008:3), is key to good governance. Given the structures and principles that define a democracy, ideally watchdog reporting should thrive in such an environment. Odugbemi and Norris (2008) further explain that the watchdog role necessitates that the news media keep a check on important and influential sectors of society. It is the journalists' duty to guard the public interest and protect it against corruption, misinformation and incompetence.

Kasoma (2000:83) opines the African media as having a political press and operating as a political tool from onset. He further claims that the government has always been involved in and with the press. Generally, the role of the media in democratisation has been that of a voice of crusaders of change. The openness of the alternative press to the public and its brash perspective to sensitive and critical political issues has had the cumulative impact of the general public to be aware of their rights. As a result of this, it is crucial for the media to distance itself from political relationships where there would be a conflict of interest and for the media to effectively fulfil their role in a democratic polity.

According to Daniel (2010:77), the media's responsibility is to report news truthfully accurately and fairly, according to the South African Press Code, and to keep the public spaces open for debate and dissension, according to democratic theory. Daniel (2010) further elaborates that 'truth' here, is to be understood in journalistic terms rather than in any transcendental philosophical way: that is, reporting the facts, and giving the citizens as many different angles as possible to stories through varied sources.

Blumler and Gurevitch (1995 cited in Olorunnisola 2006:1) suggest that the media in a democracy should maintain surveillance on the socio-economic environment and set meaningful agendas and provide platforms for all shades of views for discourse that is not prejudiced. Olorunnisola (2006:26) offers that the government has played a role in managing the complex relationship between political issues, public opinion in the media, for example, the "priorities' offered in state owned media. In terms of this study, the South African government had purported that the issue that has fueled the violence had little to do with their power but was a direct consequence of the South African media's reporting angles.

Charles (2013:13) states that democracy can only prosper in a climate of information, and that misinformation and disinformation cannot provide the "conditions most fundamentally required to permit a situation in which individual members of society can make informed democratic choices". Charles (2013) further argues that in a democracy, media institutions should generate competent, accurate and well-researched news products that are free from any vested interests. In terms of this study, specifically the reportage of the 2015

xenophobic attacks, Charles's argument is particularly important. It is crucial that journalists be mindful of their reportage when covering stories that could potentially incite violence.

It is useful at this point in the study to focus on the Internet and democracy, given that data for the study was collected from online media. Curran in Curran, Fenton and Freedom (2012:60) argues that we should stop idealising the Internet and rather refer to the medium as the 'internet' (dropping the capital letter). Curran in Curran, Fenton and Freedom (2012: 34) additionally opine that the capitalisation of the word Internet is derived from an era in which the discourse reflecting upon that medium was dominated by the notion that "utopian dreams, mutual reciprocity and pragmatic flexibility led to the building of a transformative technology that built a better world". Notwithstanding, Curran in Curran, Fenton and Freedom (2012) does acknowledge that whilst the media themselves do not deliver democracy, they do have a pivotal part to play in the furtherance of democracy through their approaches of reporting news.

The rise of the Internet over the last two decades has garnered much academic focus and debate (cf. Richey and Taylor, 2017; Hanson, 2015 and Flyverbom, 2011). van Rensburg (2012) examined the how the Internet is used for democracy in South Africa, Zambia and Kenya. van Rensburg (2012:4) argued that the "Internet could play a vital role in keeping the country's (South Africa) healthy public discourse alive". Some of the concerns highlighted in van Rensburg's (2012:16) study included issues related to a lack of government initiatives and motivation "firstly, for the infrastructure to reach the masses of poor South African citizens and, secondly, for the citizens to acquire the necessary skills and training to use the Internet efficiently". In relation to this study, it is important to acknowledge the role of the Internet in a democracy. A deeper analysis of the literature related to the Internet and democracy (or digital democracy) is beyond the scope of this study.

## 2.4 MEDIA REPRESENTATION

The concept of representation has been studied since as early as the time of ancient Greek philosopher Plato, who was among the first theorists who questioned the authenticity of representation. O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2016:75) acknowledge that language constructs the world and reality by naming it, and thus by evaluating it, categorising it, defining it and representing it. The media constitute a language system and thus both language and media are systems of representation. Hall (1997:1) explains that language functions as a representational system which includes signs and symbols. O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2016:75) affirm that representation is a key concept in media studies and simply define the word "representation" as having three meanings:

1. To look like or resemble
2. To stand in for something or someone
3. To present a second time – to re-present.

Orgad (2009:17) asserts that media representation refers to texts (in the broad sense, which includes images) that circulate in the media space and carry a symbolic content: news photographs and articles, advertisements and radio programmes, YouTube videos, blogs, Facebook pages. She then simplified the definition as the process of re-presenting, the process by which members of a culture use system of signs to produce meaning. In light of this definition, it can be argued that representation is an active process of meaning production, the product of which are media representations thus texts and images.

Hall (1997:172) argues that the meaning of representation is not rigid but is susceptible to various interpretations by the audience. Simple factors such as background and context can be considered as perceiving bias. Hall (1997) has been instrumental in the transition from structuralism to post structuralism through his extensive work on media audiences. He emphasised the role of the receiver in the interpretation of texts (Fourie, 2008: 173). In his 1973 article, *Encoding and decoding television discourse*, Hall strived to show how media texts and discourses are not only the product of the media producers but also media users who may consume and understand from the producers intended way. While this study is

not about television, this also applies to how newspapers represent news and how audiences may consume the news based on their understanding.

Camille (1996 cited in Fourie: 2008:205) goes on to say any form of representation, be it in form of writing, was an imitation and always lacking in value when compared to the original.

In relation to representation and reality, Dyer (1993:3) asserts:

This is difficult territory. I accept that one apprehends reality only through representation of reality, through texts, discourses, images; there is no such thing as unmediated access to reality. But because one can see reality only through representation it does not follow that one does not see reality. Reality is more extensive and complex than any system of representation can ever comprehend.

Fourie (2008:216) acknowledges that French social critic Roland Barthes was the first to apply representation from a semiotic perspective in communication science thus in media studies. Stadler and O' Shaughnessy (2007:216) further note that in the modern day, with the ever increasing visualisation of the social world, it becomes more important to have a set of analytical tools whereby academics should try to systematically deconstruct the text to uncover its meaning. Hall (1997: 15) explains that there are two social constructivist approaches that are concerned with representation analysis; namely: semiotics approach and discursive approach. Both these approaches are important to this study, as images and text (words) from the selected news outlets will be analysed.

Fourie (2008:327) explains that media semiotics aims to sharpen our critical awareness of the ways in the media reflect, represent and imitate reality or aspects of reality with the purpose of conveying a specific meaning usually in support of an underlying ideology, point of view, ideal, argument and attitude. Lacey (2000: 238) describes the semiotics approach as relating to the meaning of language and individual texts parole which regard textual analysis as a critical aspect in the cultural analysis of media. Language is essentially a sign system; there are different kinds of signs that range from the written word to sound and images. The semiotics approach is largely influenced by the work of linguistic scholar Ferdinand de Saussure, who first proposed the term 'semiology'. In relation to de Saussure's contribution to the field of semiology, of Leeds-Hurwitz (1993: 4) states:

A science that studies the life of signs within society is conceivable; it would be a part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology; I shall call it semiology (from Greek *semeion* 'sign'). Semiology would show what constitutes signs, what laws govern them. Since the science does not yet exist, no one can say what it would be; but it has a right to existence, a place staked out in advance. Linguistics is only a part of the general science of semiology; the laws discovered by semiology will be applicable to linguistics, and the latter will circumscribe a well-defined area within the mass of anthropological facts.

de Saussure's focus is thus on the system of language (*langue*) as compared to the use of language (*parole*). de Saussure also refers to the sign as having two aspects namely; the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the form which the sign takes and the signified is the concept it represents. de Saussure (in Hall, 1997) further explains that signs have no fixed meaning, but rather change and adapt over a period of time.

The discursive approach is largely influenced by French philosopher Michel Foucault who focuses on the production of knowledge and meaning. Hall (1997: 51) explains that Foucault's discursive/discourse approach is broader than de Saussure's semiotics approach, in that Foucault also acknowledges power and knowledge in relation to history and historical events. Fairclough (1995:17-18) asserts that discourse analysis can be seen as a way to show systematic relationships between socio-cultural practices including languages, visual images and sound effects. Specifically, Fairclough (2001) views media discourse as a one-sided event that has a marked division between producers and interpreters. In other words, with media discourse, the important function is to communicate between the public and private domains. For example, the media (via various news outlets) disseminate news about various issues such as crime, politics, sports, entertainment and the economy. In this study, the focus is on how the media under investigation reported on the 2015 xenophobic attacks.

## **2.5 STEREOTYPES**

Fourie (2008:248) defines stereotyping as the social classification of particular groups and people as often highly simplified and generalised signs which implicitly or explicitly represent a set of values, judgements and assumptions concerning their behaviour,



characteristics and history. Jones and Colman (1996: 843-844) maintain that stereotypes are usually defined as relatively fixed and oversimplified generalisations about groups or classes of people and that in practice, they generally focus on negative, unfavourable characteristics.

In relation to the mass media, Dyer (1993: 11) explains that the word stereotype is almost always regarded as a term of abuse. Dyer (1993: 11) further states that this perception stems from justified objections of various groups - in recent years, blacks, women and gays, in particular - to the ways in which they find themselves stereotyped in the mass media and in everyday speech. Fourie (2008:258) posits that, notwithstanding their fictitious origin and lack of foundation, stereotypes have very real and mainly negative social consequences for the group that is being stereotyped.

As discussed above, stereotypes tend to involve gross generalisations and sweeping statements about groups or classes of people. Blum (2004:260-261) further adds by explaining that stereotypes do not only involve generalisations, but also false or misleading generalisations, that is, overgeneralisations. Blum (2004: 261) highlights that a feature of stereotypes is rigidity or fixedness and that the “fixity or rigidity is not an attribute of the generalisation itself, but of the way it is held by the individual cogniser”. In other words, people belonging to the stereotyped group are seen as essentially the same.

Touwen (2009:3) highlighted that one of the most damning indictments of the media in South Africa is that they perpetuate negative stereotypes about non-nationals leading to xenophobic violence in the country. Whether the media create these attitudes on their own or simply reflect the prevailing attitudes of the day (or both) is a moot point, and, cannot be resolved in this literature review. What this study attempts to provide is reasonable evidence of the type and scale of migrant stereotyping that takes place in media reporting by analysing the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*. Specifically, the study looks mainly at the three of the most common stereotypes related to foreign nationals: *makwerekwere*; job insecurity and illegal residents. This is discussed in the paragraphs below.

### **2.5.1 Makwerekwere**

Nyamnjoh (2006:12) contends that *makwerekwere* “means different things in different contexts, but as used in South Africa it means not only a black person who cannot demonstrate mastery of local South African languages but also one who hails from a country assumed to economically and culturally backward in relation to South Africa.” In relation to South African attitude towards *makwerekwere* Morris and Bouillon (2001) claim that it comes as no surprise that some of the most virulent prejudice directed against black Africans (outside South Africa) is by black South Africans.

The notion of Africa’s fear of itself is conceptualised in the term *makwerekwere* indicating a South African collective identification of ‘we’ against ‘them’ (Matsinhe, 2011:295). A notion that black foreigners are a threat while white foreigners bring in wealth is formulated from this belief. In other words, the South African collective identity can tolerate the white race who are associated with development (they create jobs and investments) and tourism but not the Black race, the majority of whom are nationals from other African countries who are associated with underdevelopment (they steal jobs and compete with South Africans for limited resources) and crime (drugs and corruption).

The *makwerekwere* image and stereotype, with all its dehumanising connotations, takes centre stage in the psyche of the xenophobes as they justify their actions by scapegoating tactics that black foreigners are responsible for rising unemployment (Nyamnjoh, 2006). To answer the questions on xenophobes’ definitions of who a foreigner is in South Africa, Neocosmos (2008) traces this conception to the discourses of exceptionalism perpetuated and maintained by all citizens. The dominant ideology among South Africans is that South Africa is not really an African country but rather its “intellectual and cultural frame of reference is in the USA and Europe” (Neocosmos, 2008:590).

### **2.5.2 Foreign Nationals and Job Insecurity**

A widely-held perception that foreigners are generally detrimental to the economy exists and an allegation that they steal locals’ jobs prevails. According to a Human Sciences

Research Council (HSRC) study conducted after the May 2008 attacks (2008: 45), South African citizens literally feel 'besieged' by a range of socio-economic challenges. This feeling is particularly acute for men of a working age who are struggling to find employment or make a living and feel most directly threatened by the migration of large numbers of working men from other parts of the continent. In this context, the 'foreigner' is the nearest 'other', against which this sentiment can be expressed (Wasserman, 2016:1).

In reality, although some black foreigners do manage to find work, these jobs are mostly underpaid and undesirable. When these unskilled migrants are hesitantly accepted, they mostly fill the low status and poorly paid jobs (Mbetga, 2014:18). Some of these jobs include car-guarding and general security work. The migration of black foreigners to South Africa results from variances or discrepancies in wages and employment opportunities. In some cases, foreigners from other African countries are employed and consequently overworked and underpaid (Mawadza, 2012:107). The fact that some non-nationals have businesses, which helps to reduce the unemployment in South Africa, is often overlooked by the media (Mkandawire 2015:202).

Valji (2003:2) ascertained that, one of the most common refrains in the media about the impact of cross-border migration on South Africa is that migrants "steal jobs." He added that the general impression given is that migrants (mostly illegal) are flooding into the country to find work, despite high unemployment rates of 35%- 45%. As one respondent in a survey conducted by the *Mail & Guardian* complained: "*We have people roaming on the streets with degrees, but they do not get jobs because companies have given jobs to foreigners*" (Wasserman, 2016).

Demands (by South Africans) which have been expressed in newspaper publications to deal with the job situation include the imposition of strict controls on foreign migrations, putting a stop to the issuing of work permits for foreigners, and revoking those work permits that have already been issued (Danso and McDonald, 2000).

In one notorious incident, an irate mob killed two Senegalese and one Mozambican national suspected of being "job-stealing foreigners" (Neocomos, 2008:14). Hawkers and traders are

singled out for particular attention in this regard and are given extensive coverage in the press, with many articles and reports clearly supporting the allegation that “foreigners are unacceptably encroaching on the informal sector and therefore on the livelihoods of our huge numbers of unemployed people” (Mbetga, 2014: iii). Indeed, something needs to be done to change the way South Africans perceive black Africans. One way in which public perception towards black Africans can be changed is through the media.

Responsible journalism that is evidenced based and which refers to accredited research can go a long way in curbing the general perception of black African foreign nationals as ‘job stealers’. Contrary to this perception, Mabila (2013) reveals that there is no conclusive statistics that determine what the overall impact of international migration has been on the labour market in South Africa and it is impossible to conclude how migration affects unemployment. To assume that immigration leads to worsening unemployment among South African citizens is extremely problematic and ignores a growing body of research which argues that migrants create jobs as well as compete for jobs in South Africa. Warstall (2011:2) also argues that the popular notion that migrants steal jobs is weak and disingenuous.

Not all research is good research, of course, but to dismiss the very real debates about labour markets out of hand in this manner only serves to polarise the migration debates even further. Equally concerning are the repeated references to migrants as a drain on the South African resources (Smith, 2015).

The media are to some degree justified in reporting the estimates made by police, government and researchers on the costs of immigration in South Africa, but given the dearth of reliable information, these figures should not be reported without a strong qualifying statement on the lack of reliability of these estimates (Vollehoven, 2015).

### **2.5.3 Migrant Workers as Illegal Residents**

According to Mohamed (2017), it was found out that that newspaper coverage of migrants is mostly uncritical and prejudicial and there is an anti-migrant stance that permeates

articles. Mohamed (2017) further added that the use of certain words such as ‘alien’ and references to immigrants ‘flooding’ South Africa demonstrate a xenophobic stance. Touwen (2009:5) is of the view that, although it is seldom explained in the South African press, the term ‘illegal’ is used to refer to anyone who has overstayed a visa, given false information/documentation to enter the country or to obtain formal documentation, and/or those who have entered South Africa clandestinely. Despite the fact that the term has been widely criticised in academic and non-governmental literature on migration for its criminalising implications —with the terms undocumented or irregular being the preferred terminology by groups like the International Organisation for Migration and the United Nations is widely used in the South African press.

Touwen (2009:5), further highlights that in using this terminology, the press has pre-defined thousands of otherwise law-abiding migrants as lawbreakers and described their very presence in the country as a crime despite the fact that there may be good logistical or financial reasons for why they have entered the country without documentation or overstayed a visa (for example the costs and difficulties in obtaining visas in some neighbouring countries). More importantly, there is no questioning of the legislative framework defining the legality of migration in the first place, despite the fact that the apartheid-era legislation currently on the books, the Aliens Control Act, is rooted in a history of racism and anti-Semitism, which has been challenged on numerous occasions as being in violation of the new South African Constitution (Mabiala, 2013:134).

Valji (2003:4) argues that the *White Paper on International Migration*, a discussion document put out by the South African Department of Home Affairs, admits that the *Aliens Control Act* is not always consistent with the Constitution and other national legislation. This study examines the prevalence of terminology such as ‘aliens’, ‘flooding’ and other associated words in the newspapers under analysis.

#### **2.5.4 Other Stereotypes**

Apart from the above three identified stereotypes, other stereotypes also exist. These stereotypes may not be the most prominent; however, they nevertheless contribute to an

understanding and perception of the foreigner. Criminal syndicates, smuggling and drug-trafficking are usually associated with particular groups of foreign nationals in South Africa, with black Africans being portrayed either as perpetual criminals or more prone to commit serious crime than immigrants from non-African countries. In the process, crime is not only “*racialised*”, it is also “*Africanised*” (Danso and McDonald, 2000).

Patel and Essa (2015) found out that media coverage, for example, associates Nigerians and Moroccans with controlling the drug trade (especially that of cocaine), while Congolese are identified with passport racketeering, Zairians with diamond smuggling and Lesotho nationals with the smuggling of gold dust and copper wire. Mozambican and Zimbabwean women have been portrayed as indulging in prostitution and providing cheap labour, and Mozambicans are alleged to be operating an international car-stealing syndicate (Cowling and Hamilton, 2010).

Thai, Romanian, and Bulgarian women are also involved in these “criminal activities”, and there are regular reports about Taiwanese and Chinese “illegals” said to be responsible for the smuggling of poached contraband, suggesting an additional layer of racial and ethnic bias at play but these reports are not as frequent as stories about crimes committed by African nationals (Danso and McDonald, 2000).

Danso and McDonald (2000:11) found that there is a notable discrepancy in the referring of crimes committed by foreign Western Europeans and North Americans in comparison to those committed by their African counterparts in the South Africa media. This is despite the reality that nationals from non-African countries also commit crimes and/or reside in the country “illegally” without valid migration papers. With regard to this, Hagensen and de Jager (2014:8) highlighted that when African (and to a lesser extent Asian) migrants are associated with a criminal act the event becomes news-worthy, while the same crime committed by a white foreigner is ignored or given less publicity.

## 2.6 AGENDA-SETTING AND FRAMING

Theories such as gatekeeping, agenda-setting and framing question the bias of the news we consume. Walter Lippmann, who pioneered thinking around agenda-setting, argued that the mass media are the principal connection between (a) events that occur in the world and (b) the images of these events in our minds (Dearing and Rogers, 1996: 12). Adding to this, McCombs (2014: 36) maintains that news alerts people to the latest events in the larger environment which is generally beyond one's immediate experience. Apart from the dissemination of the news though, news media also focus public attention and therefore may influence public perception through the selection, structure and presentation of the news. The identification of, and focus on, the key issues and topics of the day and the ability of the media to influence the "salience of these issues and topics on the public agenda has come to be called the agenda-setting role of the news media" (McCombs, 2014: 37).

O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2007:74) observe that media cannot be unbiased or objective because all representations come from humans; they come from a particular position and are therefore relative. Fourie (2008:75) describes agenda-setting to be the media's very powerful ability to focus public attention to specific issues by the emphasis placed on events through news coverage. Brown and Walsh-Childers (2002: 460) state that the use of certain messages in mass media are a potentially more powerful way of affecting human behaviour because the 'selling' of a particular message is not obvious but effective.

Govender *et al* (2014:2279) highlighted that newspapers provide various cues about a particular news event through the placement of a report on a page, the page it is printed on and the size of the headlines. When the same cues appear over a period of days, weeks, months, or even longer it can be possible to identify an agenda of a news organisation. McCombs (2014: 40) further adds that, for example, the front page versus the inside page of a newspaper, the size of the headline and the length of a news story, the amount of time allocated to a news item in broadcast media and analogous cues on websites all communicate the salience of topics on the news agenda. The public uses "these salience cues from the media to organise their own agendas and decide which issues are most important" (McCombs, 2014: 40). Consequently, over a period of time, the public tend to

see these emphasised issues in various news media as most significant or important. The agenda of the news media then sets the tone for the agenda of the public.

In relation to the above, McCombs and Estrada (1997) suggest that this is agenda-setting at a first-level; in other words, focusing on the relationship between media agenda and the public agenda. Kwamena (2003) argues that agenda-setting research is now moving beyond the first-level, linear model where the media agenda directly influences the public agenda. Instead, Kwamena (2003) asserts that now the focal point is on a second level of agenda-setting that focuses not only on the societal issues that the public thinks about but also considers the way the public think about them.

Ghanem (1997:4) states that the second level of agenda-setting focuses on two hypotheses; namely: i) the way/s in which an issue/event/occurrence is covered in the media affects the way/s in which the public think about the said issue/event/occurrence; ii) the way/s in which an issue/event/occurrence is covered in the media affects the salience of the said issue/event/occurrence on the public agenda.

Iyengar and Simon (1993) distinguish the second level of agenda-setting through 'frames'. Entman (1993:55) explains that "frames call attention to some aspects of reality while obscuring other elements, which might lead audiences to have different reactions". The media can, therefore, influence the importance the public attach to issues, events or occurrences through framing. Entman (1993: 52) establishes that:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

The implication here is that through the process of framing, only a small number of attributes are selected. Agenda-setting is similar to framing, which, according to Fourie (2008:239), is the selection of certain thematically related news attributes for inclusion on a media agenda, when a particular news object is reconstructed and presented as a news report. Fourie (2008: 52) explains that framing is the selection of some aspect of a perceived reality, making them more apparent in text in such a way to promote a problem definition,



causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and or treatment recommendation for the “prescribed item”. These theories will inform and guide the analyses of the April 2015 xenophobic attacks news coverage.

It cannot be denied that mass media are powerful tools that have served for decades in informing, entertaining and shaping the minds of generations. Through mass media, consumers are privileged to meet and know the views and personalities of individuals they may not ordinarily have encountered (Fourie, 2008:294). Events that ordinarily would not have been known due to distance or social barriers become public knowledge through the lens of the media.

The power of media though goes beyond informing and entertaining, and this has been a topical issue upon which a number of research has been conducted (Gadzikwa and Jones, 2010:117). In the context of the 2015 xenophobia attacks, the media set the issue for public discussion, and by doing so, they set the agenda in such a way that the public discuss the negative side of foreigners in South Africa.

Over the years, mass media researchers (c.f. McQuail, 2010; McCombs, 2014) have pointed out that mass media messages are not only able to inform their receivers about events and the issues that surround the event but are also able to create a sense of how important such events are or can be by the amount of information provided. Fourie (2008:304) added on to this as he says the omission of certain events and issues and over emphasis of others, establish a particular way for media users to think about reality. For example, in April 2015, almost all types of media were talking about xenophobia: how foreigners were beaten, killed and labelled in South Africa. This sets the agenda for both national and international public perceptions.

The in-depth analysis of events and the continuous but systematic supply of information by the mass media keep viewers not only informed but also give the impression that the information provided is enough to make ‘the right decisions.’ This strategy of continuous and frequent reportage projects an event as being larger and more important than it really is (Dunaway, Branton, and Abrajano, 2010). Media attention to an issue can thus take

various forms ranging from talk show topics, hard news, documentaries or interviews all within a short time frame.

According to Dunaway, Branton and Abrajano (2010), these diverse forms of mass media presentation of events serve as cues that shape public opinion and the creation of unconscious images which influence political as well as socio-economic actions and reactions to issues. Fourie (2008:304) goes on to explain that when different types of publications publish the same stories, at the same, the public will start to think and discuss about those issues.

Birkland (1998: 54) considers how events can influence group and agenda policies through “focusing events” (defined as attention grabbing events that are sudden, causing an immediate harm or with the possibility of posing future harm). Their occurrence in a particular geographical location may trigger reactions from residents in other locations that may fear that a similar event or consequence may befall them. Such fear may attract interest groups, government leaders, entrepreneurs and other members of the public to the problem with an aim of searching for a solution through an advocacy for policy change or amendment.

Dunaway, Branton and Abrajano (2010) in their content analysis of media reportage of immigration in border and non-border towns of South African note the importance of the media in transforming an event into a focal event through its reportage. In their research, they discovered that because media reportage of immigration activities in border towns are more, the residents in those areas identify the event as a focal one reacting to the issue and the migrants as a major threat to their existence.

These authors also noted that states in the border areas cover more issues and events relating to immigration, thus creating the notion that it is the most important problem for the area and the people. The images associated with immigrants, the authors observe, are often very negative, thus inciting a sense of urgency for policy action to prevent what was perceived to be a threat. The results showed that as media attention to immigration issues increased, so did the identification of migrants as being one of the nation’s most important

problems, and so did the activities initiated by the residents in response. In South Africa, xenophobic attacks are believed to have their roots in the continuous influx of foreign nationals into the country.

Similar to agenda setting, Fourie (2008:239) is the selection of certain thematically related news attributes for inclusion on a media agenda, when particularly news object is reconstructed and constructed as a news report. With the same idea, Entman (1993:52), offered that framing is the selection of some aspect of a perceived reality, making them more apparent in text in such a way to promote a problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and or treatment recommendation for the prescribed item. This study uses these theories when conducting a content analysis of the xenophobic attacks in 2015 in South Africa.

## **2.7 SUMMARY**

The literature reviewed provides an understanding of the concept xenophobia, and discusses key theories related to media coverage and media representation. In understanding xenophobia, the literature showed that there are various definitions that exist. What is common among the definitions though, is that xenophobia is a deep dislike of non-nationals by nationals of a recipient state, which may sometimes result in violent behaviour.

The literature reviewed highlights that the media play a crucial role in shaping public opinion. In addition, the literature reveals that the media have an important role to play in a democracy, serving as a watchdog and holding power to account and by exposing corruption. The section on media representation highlights how representation is not rigid but is susceptible to various interpretations by the audience. In addition, the relationship between media representation and semiotics is discussed.

The literature also focused on agenda-setting and framing as a way to understand how the media can shape public opinion. It is important to acknowledge that over a period of time,

the public tend to see issues emphasised in various news media as most significant and important. The agenda of the news media then sets the tone for the agenda of the public. Through the discussion of the outlined theories and concepts, this chapter provided an understanding of how media coverage has the possibility to influence and shape public opinion.

The next chapter outlines the research methodology adopted for this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter reviewed literature around the issue of xenophobia with a specific focus on the events of April 2015. This chapter focuses on the research methodology employed in this study. This study uses textual analysis as a research method. This chapter details the research design and methodology, which includes the data collection techniques, target population, sampling methods and the sample of the study. This chapter also outlines the data analysis procedures that were used to analyse data. Validity and reliability, anonymity and confidentiality, ethical considerations and delimitations are also discussed. During the research the researcher found that that third research question in the introductory paragraph was virtually impossible to accurately conclude in a research of a qualitative nature thus the aims of the third question slightly changed without compromising consistently but maintain validity.

The research questions this study aimed to answer included:

1. How did the media depict the series of events that occurred during April 2015?
2. Did the media perpetuate any stereotypes about foreign nationals (e.g. foreigners steal jobs of citizens) in their coverage of the 2015 xenophobic spate of attacks?
3. Were the incidents reported in a responsible or sensationalised manner?

#### **3.2 PHILOSOPHY/THEORY OF RESEARCH**

In order for one to effectively conduct research, one has to be able to understand the basic theories and philosophies of it. Since theories differ and paradigms shift over time, understanding the various theories enables the researcher to have a tangible framework from which the/she can base an informed and relevant methodology to their specific study. Broom and Dozier (1990:3) state that research can be simply defined as the controlled,

objective and systematic gathering of information for the purposes of describing and understanding. This means that research is the scientific approach to answering questions, providing more reliable to situations than authority, personal experience and historical precedent.

Positivism, Interpretivism and realism are some of the philosophies that can be applied to research and can be briefly defined as follows:

- Positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural science to the study of social reality (Bryman and Bell, 2015:10).
- Interpretivism is an alternative to the positivism orthodoxy. It is based on the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural science and therefore require social scientist to understand the subjective meaning of social action (Bryman and Bell, 2015:10).
- Lastly, realism is two forms, Empirical realism and Critical realism. The former believes that through the use of appropriate methods, reality can be understood. The latter is a specific form of realism which recognises the reality of the natural order and the order the events and discourses of the social world (Bryman and Bell, 2015:10).

This study can be categorised in the interpretivism epistemology as it assesses the representation of media coverage of the 2015 xenophobic attacks in newspapers. The researcher affirms the choice of the interpretivism philosophy by asserting that representation in its fundamental nature renders the content of whatever is being assessed susceptible to the objectivity of not only the receiver of the concept/content but the creator as well.

The chosen philosophy supplements the concept of the Grounded Theory, which depicts this study concisely. It is demanding in the sense that it does not follow the usual procedure for implementing a research project. Biggam (2015: 161) asserts that the grounded theory can be tricky and more challenging in that you do not start off with a very clearly defined set of objectives but rather is an iterative process, building up theory as you go along. You start

with an initial idea that takes you in the direction of the problem or issue, consequently you undertake empirical research; thereafter, depending on what you have read, implement practical work. Through a process of re-examining and revising your empirical work and review of relevant literature to supplement your findings, you will ultimately develop a sustainable theory grounded in your practical research, influenced by reference to appropriate textual context.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Mouton (1996:107) defined a research design as a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem. He added that the main function of a research design is to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions should be so as to maximise the validity of the eventual results. This study employs a qualitative research approach by conducting an in-depth textual analysis to decode coverage of April 2015 xenophobic attacks in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and its live feed counterpart *Timeslive*, focusing on language usage, images selected and tone of the article. The period of analysis is April 2015 when the xenophobic attacks occurred.

### **3.4 QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS**

Qualitative content analysis is one of the several qualitative methods currently available for analysing data and interpreting its meaning (Schreier, 2012). As a research method, it represents a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena (Schreier, 2012). A prerequisite for successful content analysis is that data can be reduced to concepts that describe the research phenomenon (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008) by creating categories, concepts, a model, conceptual system, or conceptual map (Morgan, 1993). The research question specifies what to analyse and what to create (Schreier, 2012).

In qualitative content analysis, the abstraction process is the stage during which concepts are created. Usually, some aspects of the process can be readily described, but it also partially depends on the researcher's insight or intuitive action, which may be very complex

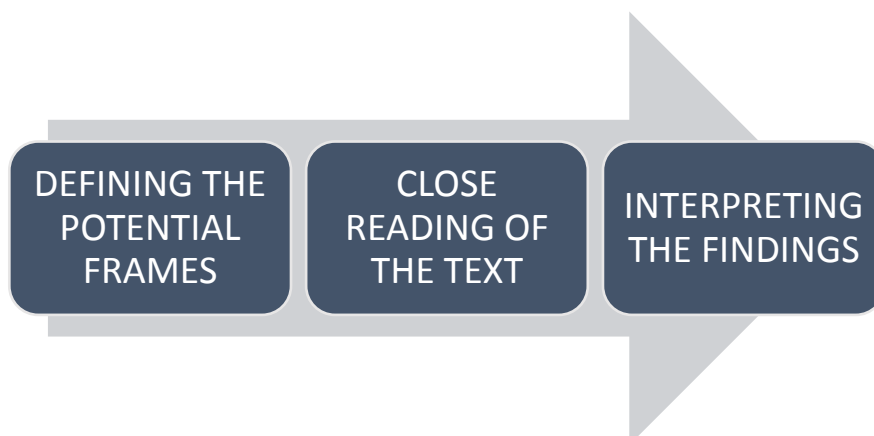
to describe to others (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). From the perspective of validity, it is important to report how the results were created. Readers should be able to clearly follow the analysis and resulting conclusions (Schreier, 2012). Qualitative content analysis can be used in either an inductive or a deductive way. Both inductive and deductive content analysis processes involve three main phases: preparation, organisation, and reporting of results. The preparation phase consists of collecting suitable data for content analysis, making sense of the data, and selecting the unit of analysis. In the inductive approach, the organisation phase includes open coding, creating categories, and abstraction (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008).

In deductive content analysis, the organisation phase involves categorisation matrix development, whereby all the data are reviewed for content and coded for correspondence to or exemplification of the identified categories (Polit and Beck, 2012). The categorisation matrix can be regarded as valid if the categories adequately represent the concepts, and from the viewpoint of validity, the categorisation matrix accurately captures what was intended (Schreier 2012). In the reporting phase, results are described by the content of the categories describing the phenomenon using a selected approach (either deductive or inductive).

### 3.5 TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Ratnam (2014:30) highlights the following three steps in a textual analysis: defining the potential frames, close reading of the text, and interpreting the findings.

**Figure 3.1: Three Steps in a Textual Analysis**





For this study, foreign nationals “taking the jobs” of South Africans and illegal residents were identified as prevalent frames in media reporting of the xenophobic attacks. Furthermore, articles (within the selected timeframe) from *Sunday Times E-edition* and *Times Live* which includes both texts and images are intensively read, analysed and subsequently categorised into different themes. In the final step, the researcher interprets the findings and compares how each edition covered xenophobia adding on to the accumulative knowledge on xenophobia.

Textual analysis can also be called discourse analysis, which analyses cultural artefacts of texts to establish meaning (Flener 2008:14). Textual analysis seeks to answer questions such as what does the author claim? Is it justified? Who is he targeting? In this study, textual analysis refers to words that were used in *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*.

Articles were retrieved from the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* online archives for the specific time period April 2015 in chronological order using the search word xenophobia. The researcher subscribed for a fee of two hundred and fifty rand (R250.00) per month to have access to the online files of The Times Group news publications. Different editions in different days were analysed in order to identify differences and similarities in the coverage of xenophobia.

The *Sunday Times E-edition* is published on Sundays and highlights the prominent news stories of the week and reports conclusive developments on the stories that might have been confirmed on Friday and Saturday whilst *TimesLive* is a minute to minute daily live feed that is updated as and when the news occurs (hence the ‘Live’). The articles were narrowed down and selected for the study, according to the relevance of the content in the articles. After reading through each article, it was determined if the content of every article that included the words xenophobia. The selected articles addressed the xenophobia attacks of April 2015 or issues that were directly related to it.

### **3.6 POPULATION/TARGET POPULATION**

Due to the nature of the study being a qualitative textual analysis, there were no participants to be studied. The specific cases to be examined however were news articles in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* during April 2015, focusing on xenophobia related stories. The Times Group, which own both *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*, were selected because it has the largest readership in South Africa and thus conclusions derived from its content analysis have a significant degree of credibility.

### **3.7 SAMPLING METHOD**

Swetnam and Swetnam (2010:132) state that a sample is the subset of a population that is selected to participate in a research study. In this qualitative study, sampling also refers to (probability) sampling procedures which involve some form of random selection of elements from a target population. A sample is a group of individuals who will participate in the research. TerreBlanche and Durrheim (2007:49) point out that sampling is the selection of research participants from an entire population, and involves decisions, about which people, settings, events, behaviours, and/ or social processes to observe. The aim is to select a sample, which will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions.

For the purpose of this study, the focus is on non-probability sampling. In terms of non-probability sampling, elements within the population do not stand an equal chance of being selected as one of the subjects (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2006). Qualitative and phenomenological approaches to research do not aim for generalisability of findings through large representative sample sizes but are more focused on the meanings generated by the selected sample. Hence, the researcher used her judgement to select the specific time period as well as newspapers to be analysed.

The researcher purposively selected and analyse stories related to xenophobia in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* during April 2015. The study did not focus on other

content in the online edition, such as sports and entertainment. The units for analysis were obtained from The Times Group online archives.

### **3.8 SAMPLE SIZE**

While this study acknowledges that there was a wide range of media coverage (print, television and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter) of the xenophobic attacks, this study is limited and structured to focusing on a textual examination of the *Sunday Times E-edition and TimesLive*. This study focuses on online articles during the period April 2015. The study does not only analyse the content of the articles but also further ventures into analysing various nuances such as pictures, tone and language used in the reporting of the xenophobic attacks. A total of fifteen articles were selected from the *Sunday Times E-edition and TimesLive* publications between the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015. The articles were chosen on the basis of their relevance to the subject matter.

### **3.9 MEASURING INSTRUMENT**

Due the nature of this study and the fact that it is a qualitative content analysis, there is no measuring instrument such as interviews and questionnaires. The necessary units of data are part of the public domain, and were available for analysis on the Internet. Due to this study being an in-depth textual analysis, the distribution of questionnaires or conduction of interviews was not required. No consent forms or gatekeepers' letters were required. However, hierarchical coding frames and categories as well as subcategories created from the actual data were used. The codes are the themes that are prevalent in the data which is extracted using existing theories and concepts mentioned in the literature review such as framing and agenda setting.

### **3.10 DATA COLLECTION**

Yin (2003: 86) suggests that, for case studies, data can be collected through six sources. Some methods as well as their strengths and weaknesses are tabulated below:

Source of evidence	Strengths	Weaknesses
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable: can be reviewed repeatedly</li> <li>• Exact: contains exact information</li> <li>• Broad Coverage: long span of time, events and settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irretrievability: can be low</li> <li>• Biased selectivity: if collection is incomplete.</li> <li>• Access: can be deliberately blocked.</li> </ul>
Archival Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Same as above for documentation)</li> <li>• Precise and quantitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Same as above for documentation).</li> <li>• Accessibility due to private reasons.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.1: Sources of Evidence**

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000: 1) categorise two aspects of data: primary and secondary. Primary data is the data that is collected by the researcher him/herself and secondary data is that which the researcher can obtain from other sources. This study employed both the latter as only articles published by *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* within a specific time frame were qualitatively assessed.

### 3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

Lichtman (2011:62) contends that data analysis is a process that contains both linear and circular dimensions that allow for a logistical systematic analysis and allow for introspection and ruminating. Qualitative data analysis tries to establish how people make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their participation, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the

phenomenon. The aim of the analysis is to examine the meaningful and symbolic content of that which is found within. In this study, the researcher sought to understand how the media covered the issues or the events of April 2015. This is best achieved through a process of a textual analysis of qualitative data. In this research, six steps of data analysis were followed.

Thematic analysis involves a search for themes that develop in relation to the investigation and description of a phenomenon (Miles and Huberman, 1994:50). Themes relating to variables of social capital, reasoned action and tacit knowledge sharing behaviour were identified and coded in the articles (Thomas and Harden, 2008:45). Data analysis was conducted in an ongoing and exploratory design as this research sought to uncover common themes (factors) from how the media covered the issues of xenophobia 2015. The analysis of the data collected articles in *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* proceeded as follows:

### **3.11.1 Step 1: Organising the data**

Information that the researcher noted down from different editions were organised and later analysed into categories and themes identified beforehand. Articles on the same day were labelled and filed into a single folder. Materials dealing with the same data, for instance, those that supported xenophobia were kept together and later compared with each other.

### **3.11.2 Step 2: Generating categories, themes and patterns**

This step simplifies the interpretation of the information. Materials dealing with the same batch of data, for example stereotypes were divided into categories and groups to show similarities and differences for easy identification of the pattern in the study. After identification of the patterns, sub-categories were developed on the categories that already existed.

### 3.11.3 Step 3: Coding data

Data was then coded for easy interpretation. In this stage, the similarities and differences in the information supplied by participants were identified. These two aspects were highlighted and used for interpretation.

First Alphabet e.g. **A** = Month (April)

First number e.g. **A2** = Date of Publication (2<sup>nd</sup> of April)

Second alphabet e.g. **A2P** = Page

Number after P e.g. **A2P1** = Page Number

Last two digits e.g. **A2P101** = Article Number (N/A was used as a substitute to refer to three articles that did not have page numbers).

On articles that appeared on the same day and have the same code =Alphabetical order will be used to differentiate them, for example, **A2P101-B**

Below are examples of the actual texts extracted from the news articles. This is explained in more detail in chapter 4 of the study.

No	Code	Headline	Article Information	Theme/s
1	A12P101	I was crying inside the container while I was burning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marcus died at Prince Mshiyeni General Hospital</li> <li>• The displaced families are living in Isipingo.</li> <li>• The king has never said people must be killed</li> <li>• We need to be aware that as a country we are sitting on a ticking time bomb of them foreigners taking over our country.</li> <li>• The president says not all foreigners are here illegally, and many contributed to the</li> </ul>	Violence against foreigners Resident Status Job insecurity Economic contribution

			growth of South Africa	
<b>2</b>	A13P101	22 arrested for xenophobic violence, Ethiopian victim dies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attacks on foreigners continued this weekend, with two Ethiopian brothers being petrol bombed on Friday evening.</li> <li>• AFP reports that one of the brothers succumbed to his injuries last night.</li> <li>• Meskele said the other brother had severe burns and was "fighting for his life" in hospital.</li> <li>• "This is like a war zone. It's like we are in Syria.</li> <li>• I have never seen such cruelty," Meskele told AFP.</li> </ul>	Violence against foreigners
<b>3</b>	A13P101-B	Xenophobic attacks claim four lives as immigrants shops looted and burned in Durban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Africa, with a population of about 50 million, is home to an estimated 5 million immigrants.</li> <li>• We reiterate that there can be no justification for attacking foreign nationals</li> <li>• Those who are in the country illegally should be reported to the police and they will be returned to their countries of origin in a lawful manner</li> <li>• Some foreign nationals say they are legally in the country, running businesses to provide services for the residents</li> </ul>	South African condemnation of violence against foreigners Resident Status Violence against foreigners

**Table 3.2: Themes and Coding**

#### **3.11.4 Step 4: Testing Emergent Understandings**

This step tests the understanding of the interpretation of the information. In this stage, it was important to determine whether the idea behind each publication was understood. For the purpose of the study, the articles revealed the idea behind the coverage of xenophobia 2015.

#### **3.11.5 Step 5: Searching for alternative explanations**

At this stage of data analysis, it was necessary to initiate alternative ways of interpreting and understanding responses because some words or statements might not be easy to understand because journalists might use unfamiliar words. This was necessary to ensure that alternative ways were found to explain clearly and reflect exactly what the media intended to describe. This will be achieved by asking for clarity from the journalist/author of article where necessary.

#### **3.11.6 Step 6: Writing the report**

This is the stage where important efforts were made to make sense of the recorded materials. Thereafter, the information was compiled and the report on the findings of the study written down. At this stage, it was significant to take all the steps of analysis of data through correct interpretation of the information from different articles. The study analyses the selected news articles and follows a process that includes extracting codes and creating chronological categories whilst preserving the golden thread.

Qualitative research is designed to address questions of meaning, interpretation and socially constructed realities (Ridenour and Newman, 2008:3). Rau (1997 cited in Altheide and Schneider 2013: 79) suggests that for theoretical reasons, a qualitative textual analysis warrants that the researcher follows certain guidelines such as reading studies of the news process and particularly the roles of the news sources and frames and examine the sources which are associated with certain themes and frames. As such, this study attempts to



observe how these themes and frames progressed as the 2015 attacks intensified during the period April 2015.

### **3.12 PRETESTING**

There is no need for pretesting as resources of data collection are already existing texts. The data was analysed as received.

### **3.13 DELIMITATIONS/SCOPE**

Qualitative content analysis can be limited by the fact that coding can be a subjective process. It is also not feasible, with respect to time, to analyse large amounts of data. It is for this reason this study examines only the April 2015 articles in the identified newspapers.

### **3.14 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY/TRUSTWORTHINESS**

In qualitative research, validity and reliability can be understood through concepts such as dependability and transferability. Yin (2003:87) states a researcher may use several sources to obtain various measures of the same phenomenon which can increase the validity of the study. Taking Yin's (2003) suggestion into consideration, the analysis is not be limited to text only but also studies the theme, images and tone of the articles. Potter (2013: 136) affirms that the quality of findings is dependent on the quality of data used to generate those findings. Therefore, the researcher should be thorough in this aspect to prevent the error of inaccurate data that may lead to the distortion of findings.

This study uses online published text which is a public domain that can be accessed by all interested publics at any given time of the day if they have an Internet connection and search using the phrases or selected text analysed in this study. Due to it being an online newspaper analysis it makes it that much more accessible to any party that needs to confirm.

### **3.15 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The study does not pose any threat to any humans or animals. Data was collected from already available sources, being the online newspaper archives. No individuals required anonymity or confidentiality.

### **3.16 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

It is important to mention the ethical aspects of this study. Since this study relies solely on newspaper articles, and the newspapers involved are in the public domain and not a human subject, there are no ethical issues and confidentiality issues that require consideration. Thus, this study is excluded from these ethical issues because the main purpose of ethical issues is to protect the welfare of research participants.

### **3.17 SUMMARY**

This chapter provided an account of the methodology used in this research. It explained the research design used in the study and focused on the rationale for selecting a qualitative research design. This chapter also described the data collection process, codes and themes, reliability and validity/trustworthiness and the process used for data analysis. The research methodology used was appropriate for this particular research taking into consideration the research questions and the subject matter. Chapter four will present the findings of the study, by interpreting and discussing the findings from the articles under investigation.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter explained the methodology and design used in this study. This chapter comprises the analysis, presentation and interpretation of the findings resulting from this study. The findings relate to the questions that guided the research as well research objectives.

The data was obtained from the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* online archives during the period April 2015. The analysis focuses on language usage; images used and tone of the articles. Online sources (from the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*) provided twenty-two (22) published articles relevant to the 2015 xenophobia attacks. The articles selected were published during the period April 2015. The system used to code the twenty-two articles is explained later on in this chapter.

#### **4.2 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS**

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the findings are presented narratively and not scientifically. The previous aspects of this study leading the findings have been a labour intensive process that included coding the articles (discussed in Chapter Three). The researcher selected articles based on their relevancy to the April 2015 xenophobic attacks. The coded articles were tabulated and statements extracted from the articles were used to identify themes. Extracted texts from the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* are presented in italics. Wherever possible direct quotes from the abovementioned sources are included to support the discussion. Only prominent high quality images that were not pixilating were analysed to make emphasis on the key elements of discussion of the study.

McClure and Purdy (2013: 116) offered that at times you derive findings from an exhaustive process of copying direct source text and deleting what is not relevant and altering

grammatical structures. Brown and Day (1983 cited in McClure and Purdy 2013: 117) suggest that researchers attempting to analyse the meaning of representations of texts effectively should exercise the following methods:

- Involve an inductive and deletion process from the text itself from the primary source
- Undertake generalising from the text and analysing the remaining content supplemented by pictures and tone to arrive at themes that capture the gist of what you are aiming to find out.

The findings of this study are rooted in the analysis of the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* online news articles with respect to the April 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Smith (2015:18) suggests that the importance is to also view the media not only as the means to measure perceptions, but also as a platform from which perceptions are created. Primary attention is therefore given to the various ways in which the proceedings and the stakeholders involved (foreign nationals) are described and portrayed in the selected articles. The analysis also scrutinises various representations of black non-South Africans. In particular, the stereotypical language and terms used to describe black non-South Africans.

#### **4.3 IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES**

Relevant articles published during the period April 2015 in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* were firstly coded and then themes were identified. Table 4.1 below outlines the coding system and the emergent themes.

No	Code	Headline	Article Information	Theme/s
1	A12P101	I was crying inside the container while I was burning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marcus died at Prince Mshiyeni General Hospital</li> <li>• The displaced families are living in Isipingo.</li> <li>• The king has never said people must be killed</li> <li>• We need to be aware that as a country we are sitting on a ticking time bomb of them foreigners taking over our country.</li> <li>• The president says not all foreigners are here illegally, and many contributed to the growth of South Africa</li> </ul>	<p>Violence against foreigners</p> <p>Resident Status</p> <p>Job insecurity</p> <p>Economic contribution</p>
2	A13P101	22 arrested for xenophobic violence, Ethiopian victim dies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attacks on foreigners continued this weekend, with two Ethiopian brothers being petrol bombed on Friday evening.</li> <li>• AFP reports that one of the brothers succumbed to his injuries last night.</li> <li>• Meskele said the other brother had severe burns and was "fighting for his life" in hospital.</li> <li>• "This is like a war zone. It's like we are in Syria.</li> <li>• I have never seen such</li> </ul>	<p>Violence against foreigners</p>

			cruelty," Meskele told AFP.	
3	A13P101-B	Xenophobic attacks claim four lives as immigrants shops looted and burned in Durban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Africa, with a population of about 50 million, is home to an estimated 5 million immigrants.</li> <li>• We reiterate that there can be no justification for attacking foreign nationals</li> <li>• Those who are in the country illegally should be reported to the police and they will be returned to their countries of origin in a lawful manner</li> <li>• Some foreign nationals say they are legally in the country, running businesses to provide services for the residents</li> </ul>	South African condemnation of violence against foreigners Resident Status Violence against foreigners
4	A14P101	SA meets ambassadors over xenophobic attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government's priority is to protect the lives of foreign nationals targeted in the latest xenophobic attacks across Durban, Home Affairs Minister Malusi Gigaba said.</li> <li>• The president clearly indicated that first and foremost, we need to protect human life, foreign nationals as well as South</li> </ul>	South African condemnation of violence against foreigners Resident Status Violence against foreigners

			<p>Africans caught up as casualties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He said police have been briefed to protect foreigners under attack regardless of their status in the country.</li> <li>• Our priority is not to verify the status of a person or even deport them, Gigaba said.</li> </ul>	
5	A15P101	Police deploy 800 cops but xenophobia spreads in KwaZulu-Natal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The responsible use of social media can contribute greatly in our fight against crime by making people aware of the consequences of engaging in criminal activity, ways to safeguard themselves and their property against criminals and to help police identify and find suspects," he said.</li> <li>• Since the start of the attacks, 74 people have been arrested on charges of murder, public violence, business robbery, theft and possession of firearms and ammunition.</li> <li>• Over the weekend fresh attacks broke out in the northern KwaMashu and</li> </ul>	Using social media to create awareness Violence against foreigners

			<p>Ntuzuma areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On Monday night the wave of xenophobic violence spread into the central Umbilo suburb.</li> <li>• The violence spread to Verulam, north of Durban, last night when five foreigners were stabbed and assaulted when two shops were looted.</li> </ul>	
6	A15P201	Enersto Alfabeto was beaten, stabbed and set alight in Ramaphosa informal settlement seven years ago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nobody has been arrested for his gruesome murder</li> <li>• Tavenhave became known as the burning man</li> <li>• In all 62 people were killed in little more than 2 weeks</li> <li>• But the police never came here I don't trust the police now</li> </ul>	<p>Violence against foreigners</p> <p>Delay in/or no police response</p> <p>No trust in police</p>
7	A15P501	Flames of hate engulf Durban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethiopian shop owner said.....</li> <li>• Paramedics treated 4 people in the city centre</li> <li>• He was burnt in Dr Pixley Kaseme, said the emergency Medical Service.</li> </ul>	<p>Violence against foreigners</p> <p>Economic contribution</p>
8	A16P101	Khumalo condemns xenophobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kaizer Chiefs assistant coach Doctor Khumalo is shocked about the xenophobic attacks against foreigners in</li> </ul>	<p>Violence against foreigners</p> <p>South African condemnation of</p>



			<p>South Africa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Such attacks can never be condoned, the Amakhosi legend said.</li> </ul>	violence against foreigners
<b>9</b>	A17P101	This is crime, not xenophobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I do not view the attacks in Durban as xenophobic, but purely or largely criminal.</li> <li>• There are lots of foreigners who are being spared because they have nothing to take.</li> <li>• Foreigners stealing our jobs</li> <li>• Let all the perpetrators be brought to book. Crime can never be justified.</li> </ul>	Xenophobia as a crime Job insecurity
<b>10</b>	A17P101-B	Africa strikes back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South African engineers working on mines and at a gas plant in Mozambique have been taken to secure camps after threats of reprisal xenophobic attacks. They were evacuated from their workplaces as several countries begin demanding answers from the South African government about the attacks on their citizens.</li> </ul>	African condemnation of violence against foreigners
<b>11</b>	A18P101	Two men shot dead in xenophobia-hit Jeppestown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two unidentified men have been shot dead</li> <li>• People take cover from a stun grenade and tear gas</li> </ul>	Violence against foreigners

			<p>after a skirmish between locals and foreigners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The death of two men brings to eight the total number of people who died during the xenophobic attacks</li> <li>• KwaZulu Natal police say they have now arrested 78 people in connection to xenophobic violence</li> </ul>	
<b>12</b>	A19P101	SA's xenophobia shame: 'burning man' case shut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The woman sees the killers at least once a week. Her recounting of details surrounding Nhamuave's death has remained consistent for nearly seven years, when she first revealed details of the murder.</li> <li>• At the time she was willing to speak to police.</li> <li>• But the police never came here. Now, I don't trust the police here," she said.</li> </ul>	<p>Delay in/or no police response</p> <p>No trust in police</p> <p>Violence against foreigners</p>
<b>13</b>	A19P501	The brutal death of Emanuel Sithole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bafana loving Mozambique stabbed to death</li> <li>• Suddenly a young man dressed in red started beating him and then stabbed him at the back</li> </ul>	<p>Violence against foreigners</p> <p>Resident Status</p> <p>Fear</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are you</li> <li>• Where are you from</li> <li>• When the journalists rushed the profusely bleeding Sithole to a nearby medical clinic, the staff could do nothing: the doctor scheduled to be on duty that day had not come into work.</li> <li>• A migrant himself, he had been too afraid of becoming a victim of a xenophobic attack.</li> </ul>	
<b>14</b>	A20P101	Xenophobia killing: Emmanuel Sithole killers arrested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three men linked to the xenophobic killing of Emmanuel Sithole have been arrested, with a fourth suspect still at large.</li> <li>• These arrested are believed to be possible because of the help from the community.</li> </ul>	Police action Community response
<b>15</b>	A21P102	Zwelithini, Zuma speak out on violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The king bowed to pressure yesterday and condemned the xenophobic violence, while the president said the ANC had not done enough to address the causes of the scourge.</li> <li>• After weeks of outrage at</li> </ul>	South African condemnation of violence against foreigners

			<p>his comments that foreigners needed to pack up and go, King Goodwill Zwelithini said: "We need to make sure no more foreigners are attacked"</p>	
<b>16</b>	A21P102-B	Botswana hospital suspends patient referrals to South Africa amid xenophobic attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Botswana has suspended routine patient referrals to South Africa, acting on the advice from the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation's as the wave of xenophobic attacks continue in some parts of South Africa.</li> </ul>	African condemnation of violence against foreigners
<b>17</b>	A21PN/A	SA media in firing line for xenophobic coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputy Minister Maggie Sotyu has launched a scathing attack on local media houses for the way they covered the recent violent xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals</li> <li>• What is the media showing to the world about South Africa?</li> <li>• I apologise on behalf of the government on what has happened</li> <li>• Even foreigners who are illegal do not deserve to die</li> </ul>	Government condemns xenophobia Media coverage of xenophobic attacks Resident status

18	A26P101	Xenophobia is a good way to frighten off tourists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why would anyone rush to visit a country ridden with intolerance for foreigners?</li> <li>• The xenophobic horrors that have been visited on this country in the past few weeks are a tragedy in themselves, we all agree.</li> <li>• But they also have the potential to do damage to our tourism industry, one area in which South Africa is doing reasonably well</li> <li>• Domestic tourism is important, but what we are really talking about is what brings money into the country to create wealth and jobs: foreign tourism.</li> <li>• Even the Department of Tourism reportedly expects the number of tourists to decline sharply this year due to the violence.</li> </ul>	Economic Impact
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19	A28P101	SA braces for economic backlash from xenophobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wave of xenophobic attacks in South Africa could provoke reprisals from neighbouring countries</li> <li>• Violence against foreigners could further damage the weak economy</li> <li>• At least 7 people have been killed in the violence and thousands of immigrants forced to flee to their homes</li> <li>• Since the start of the attacks, our country has lost billions of dollars in export foreign revenue</li> <li>• We cannot have these attacks continuing</li> </ul>	Economic impact Government condemns xenophobic attacks
20	A28P101-B	Xenophobia mess is not ours alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As much as we have a problem, our neighbouring countries contribute to this. It's not useful to be critical of South Africa as if we mushroom these foreign nationals and then mistreat them</li> <li>• Even if the minority of South Africans are xenophobic, we would still need to find out what prompted the foreign nationals to come to South</li> </ul>	Xenophobia is a pan-African concern Resident Status

			<p>Africa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About 2000 foreigners have been displaced and are currently living in makeshift camps in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.</li> <li>• Everyone criticises South Africa as if we manufactured a problem</li> <li>• We should ask what caused the foreign nationals to be in South Africa.</li> <li>• He said locals complained that immigrants were taking their jobs as some employers now prefer foreigners whom they pay lower wages.</li> <li>• There are also complaints that foreign nationals benefit from free government services and that they run businesses illegally. There is also an accusation that undocumented foreign nationals commit crime in the country, said Zuma to applause from his audience.</li> <li>• None of these justify attacks on foreign nationals and the</li> </ul>	
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			<p>looting of their shops. We condemn the violence strongly. It is important to emphasise that not all foreign nationals are in the country illegally.</p>	
<b>21</b>	A30P101	SA police arrest nearly 200 immigrants in post-xenophobic attacks raid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 198 illegal immigrants were arrested in a raid in Johannesburg on Thursday, officials said, after a spate of xenophobic attacks that has thrust millions of foreign workers into the spotlight.</li> <li>• Local mobs have targeted immigrant workers from Zimbabwe, Malawi and other African countries in unrest that left at least seven people dead in the past month.</li> </ul>	Police action Violence against foreign nationals
<b>22</b>	A30P101-B	'I am a South African'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Xenophobia will resurface if the government fails to get to the heart of the problem, warned Graça Machel, the widow of former president Nelson Mandela.</li> </ul>	Call for government action

**Table 4.1: Coding System and Emergent Themes**



Table 4.1 indicates how the themes were derived at. Based on the coding of the articles, the following broad themes were identified:

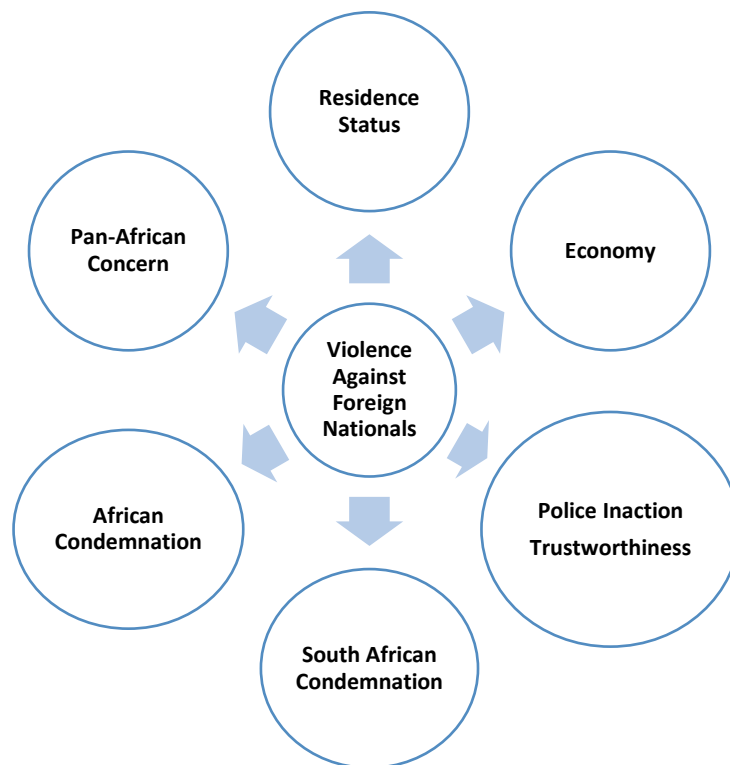
- I. Violence against foreigners
- II. Resident Status
- III. Job insecurity
- IV. Economic contribution
- V. South African condemnation of violence against foreigners
- VI. Using social media to create awareness
- VII. Xenophobia as a crime
- VIII. Delay in/or no police response
- IX. No trust in police
- X. Government condemns xenophobia
- XI. Media coverage of xenophobic attacks
- XII. African condemnation of violence against foreigners
- XIII. Economic impact
- XIV. Xenophobia a pan-African concern

The above broad themes were further grouped (with respect to relevance) and narrowed down as follows:

- I. Residence Status
- II. Economy
- III. Police Inaction/Trustworthiness
- IV. South African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks
- V. African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks
- VI. Pan-African Concern

It was noted that the themes revolved around the broader issue of violence against foreign nationals. The above six themes are diagrammatically mapped in Figure 4.1 below:

**Figure 4.1: Thematic Map**



#### **4.4 ANALYSIS OF THEMES**

The above themes are analysed in the sub-sections below. Each theme is related to the overarching subject matter ‘violence against foreign nationals’. With respect to the overarching subject matter, a number of articles made direct reference to the crimes committed against foreign nationals. For example, articles coded A12P101, A13P101, A13P101-B, A14P101, A15P101, A15P201-B, A15P501 and A16P101 reported on the xenophobic attacks in terms of the severity and the effects on the victims. Some the articles were front cover page stories, with graphics to show the effect of the attacks, or victims in crisis. Given the nature of the study, coverage of violent attacks against foreign nationals is to be expected. The identified themes therefore look beyond the violent attacks and focus on other emergent issues. These themes are discussed in the sub-sections below.

#### **4.4.1 Residence Status**

There were a number of articles (A12P101, A13P101-B, A19P501, A21PN/A and A28P101-B) that made reference to a foreign national as being in South Africa “illegally”. The use of the word “illegal” is a direct reference to the residence status of a foreign national, hence the labelling of the theme. What is evident in the sourced articles is that South African citizens are presented as “us” and non-South Africans are either “foreigners” or “illegal” immigrants. The *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimeLive* represented non-South Africans as outsiders, disassociating South Africans from non-South African dwellers of this country.

Specifically, some quotes from the articles included: “Those who are in the country illegally should be reported to the police and they will be returned to their countries of origin in a lawful manner” and “Where are you from?”

#### **4.4.2 Economy**

Articles related to the theme of ‘Economy’ refer to three distinct aspects: i) job insecurity on the part of South Africans; ii) foreigners contributing to the growth of the South African economy and iii) loss of revenue due to the xenophobic attacks. Specifically, reference is made to articles coded A28P101, A12P101 and A15P501. Quotes from these articles include: “Since the start of the attacks, our country has lost billions of dollars in export foreign revenue”; “Violence against foreigners could further damage the weak economy”; “The president says not all foreigners are here illegally, and many contributed to the growth of South Africa” and “Even the Department of Tourism reportedly expects the number of tourists to decline sharply this year due to the violence”.

Some of the above articles even included that foreign nationals own businesses, which alludes to a widely perceived stereotype that foreign nationals loot the South African economy. Specifically, the articles quoted represented foreigners as threats to job security in statements such as “... foreigners taking over our country” (A12P101) and “...it’s like we are in Syria” (A13P101), which represented the foreign nationals as outsiders, or the other country as different (in this stance, in a negative way as it associates it to a “war zone”).

Attitudes are important in media selling. Warner (2009:64) concurs this by affirming they encompass what one feels, thinks and does. Such wording on these articles may have contributed to negative public perception and opinion around xenophobia and foreign nationals.

Article (A13P101) provided a follow-up to the xenophobic action in KwaZulu-Natal. Specifically, this article covered the estimate number of immigrants in the country, bringing to light that some foreigners are illegal dwellers in South Africa, and the country's stance on them. It further states that some run businesses; providing services to South Africans. This article was also placed on the first page, which may mean that the publisher regarded the article as important. The image attached to the article portrayed a naked child (believed to be a foreign national) playing in what looks like a pop-up pool. The use of this specific image may be to show that foreign nationals have established roots in the country and have integrated (by way of children) into South African society.

#### **4.4.3 Police Inaction and Trustworthiness**

Some of the articles addressed the issue of police inaction in terms of delayed police response to the violence attacks. In addition, foreign nationals interviewed stated that they held little or no trust in the South African police force. The articles coded A19P101 and A15P201 bear reference to this theme. Specific text from these articles include: "But the police never came here; I don't trust the police now"; "Nobody has been arrested for his gruesome murder" and "At the time, she was willing to speak to the police. But the police never came here".

The issues of trust and police inaction stem from a general apathy on the part of the South African government with regards to xenophobia, in general. Crush (2000:106) maintains that, while xenophobic attitudes are only being given serious attention by the South African media in recent years, xenophobic behaviour has been prevalent throughout the post-apartheid era. Crush (2000:107) further notes that governance is also a contributing factor to xenophobia. The above extracts from the articles give the indication that the South African government has not, over the past few years, prioritised xenophobia as an issue of

national importance warranting serious intervention. This is particularly important given that the last xenophobic attacks in South Africa was in 2008, less than a decade ago. The occurrence of a second wave of xenophobic attacks and uprising in 2015 alludes to the South African government and concomitantly the South African Police Services failing to recognise the severity of the problem.

#### **4.4.4 South African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks**

The above-mentioned theme refers to articles that make reference to the condemning of the xenophobic attacks. Some of the articles (coded: A13P101-B, A28P101, A14P101, A16P101 and A21PN/A) explain how South African citizens strongly denounce the violent attacks against foreign nationals. The articles specifically make mention of the then Deputy Minister of Police, Maggie Sotyu. Quotes from the articles include: “We reiterate that there can be no justification for attacking foreign nationals” and “We cannot have these attacks continuing”.

The above mentioned articles show that the South African government strongly condemns xenophobia. Furthermore, they allude to the South African government’s awareness of the severity of the situation and indicate that South Africa is not turning a blind eye to the attacks. The government’s quick response to the attacks could be due to the speed and frequency (updates) at which online media covered the xenophobic attacks. It should be noted that the increasingly accessible online media content ensures that one can read about local and international events instantaneously thus broadening the scope of information from which public opinion can be formed. The nature of online media may have therefore prompted quick government response and the prioritisation of xenophobia as a crisis.

#### **4.4.5 African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks**

Apart from South African condemnation of the xenophobic attacks, African countries also responded to the attacks. Two of the articles (coded: A17P101-B and A21P102-B) relate to reaction from two African countries, specifically, Botswana and Mozambique in response to the xenophobic attacks in South Africa. In article A17P101-B, South African workers in

Mozambique were taken to a place of safety after threats of reprisal xenophobic attacks from Mozambican citizens. The article explains: “They (South Africans) were evacuated from their workplaces as several countries begin demanding answers from the South African government about the attacks on their citizens”.

In article A21P102-B, Botswana suspended patient referrals to South Africa given the xenophobic violence. It is important to note that South Africa is home to many African nationals, particularly from countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Botswana and Nigeria. Attacks on nationals from any of these (or other) African countries by South Africans, may result in reprisal actions.

#### **4.4.6 Pan-African Concern**

It was interesting to note the emergence of xenophobia not being an exclusively South African problem appearing as a theme. One of the articles (code: A28P101-B) focuses on how xenophobia is a pan-African concern and not only a concern for South Africa. In particular, the article quotes the former President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, as stating ““Our brother countries contribute to this. Why are their citizens not in their countries? It is not useful to criticise South Africa as if we mushroom these foreign nationals and then ill-treat them. Some (immigrants) said if you raise your voice in country X you disappear” and ““Everybody criticises South Africa as if we have manufactured the problem. Even if people who are xenophobic are a minority, but what prompts these refugees to be in South Africa? It’s a matter we cannot shy away from discussing”. The above statements by then South African president, Jacob Zuma, was said after Nigeria protested in the wake of the xenophobic attacks. It is important to note that this was part of a speech given by the then South African president, Jacob Zuma, after seven people, including a 14 year old boy, died during the April 2015 attack.

With regard to the death of foreign national Emmanuel Sithole (whose demise was captured by *Sunday Times* photographer, Tebogo Letsie) who, from the picture of him burning was dubbed “The Burning Man”; former South African president Jacob Zuma stated Emmanuel Sithole was residing in SA under a false name and that his real name from his Mozambican

heritage was Emmanuel Josias. Zuma also alluded to the reasons foreigners come to South Africa in the first place, explaining that South Africa is an easier country to thrive in and that the government will take a serious revision into the migration laws and upgraded migration policies as the approach to take preventative measures of limiting the recurrence of xenophobic violence required a more extensive approach than just blaming South African citizens.

Apart from the themes emerging from the articles, the analysis also focuses on any stereotyped representations of foreign nationals.

#### **4.5 STEREOTYPES OF FOREIGN NATIONALS**

Harris (2002: 168) argues that the media have played an integral part, over the years, in instigating the attacks as well highlighting the myths widely accepted as reality in South African society; such as the foreigner taking the jobs of citizens or bringing crime into the country. Harris (2002:169) further states that through the media, prejudice and violence continue to mark contemporary South Africa. The discussion below tests the efficacy of Harris's findings in relation the April 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

What is evident in the sourced articles is the exclusion of non-South Africans as part of South Africa through "othering". South African citizens are presented as "us" and non-South Africans are either "foreigners" or (illegal) "immigrants". The *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* represented non-South Africans as outsiders, thereby disassociating South Africans from non-South Africans. In this context, foreign nationals, are shown to have and share the common characteristic of being "outsiders" and people who "do not belong here (South Africa)". As already discussed, some of the articles allude to the foreign nationals as "business owners" which may contribute to the perception that foreign nationals impact negatively on South African citizens attaining job security. Interestingly, foreign nationals were also represented more positively, as 'African brothers' in some articles.

With reference to matters relating to immigration, two main categories are identified: legal immigrants with proper and valid documents, and illegal immigrants without legal documents. These two major categories have been portrayed in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* during the period April 2015. Some of the language used in the articles under analysis to describe foreign nationals include “[illegal] aliens”, “refugees” and the less common, yet more positive, “African brothers”. Although the motive for the term “African brothers” is not investigated in this study, one may argue that *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* use such a term to promote social cohesion and harmony across South Africa. The use of the word “brothers”, in particular, alludes to a sense of family and belonging. Creating such a perception through their newspapers (and hence, the media) can possibly contribute towards changing (or even reinforcing) public perception and opinion around issues relating to immigration and ‘the foreigner’. It should be noted, however, that the use of the word “brothers” is only an example of how the media could possibly create an environment of social cohesion. A more detailed investigation into how the media plays a role in enhancing diversity and promoting social cohesion is beyond the scope of this study.

It is also noted that the use of the word “foreign” implies that which is strange or unknown. Continuous use of the word “foreign” in the media to describe non-South Africans may imply that such individuals are fundamentally different from South African citizens. By association, that which is foreign and strange tends to be feared and seen as strange. Repeated use of the word, thus, may contribute to segregating (both physically and mentally) non-South Africans from South African society. Below are extracts from the news articles under analysis, where the word “foreign” (or related word) is used:

*A **foreign** child playing in the tent (A13P101)*

***Foreign** shop owners immediately closed their shops (A13P101)*

*It is **foreigners** with businesses (A17P101)*

*Xenophobia is a good way to frighten **foreigners** (A26P101)*

In addition, Harris (2002:69) affirms that prejudice and violence are still prevalent in contemporary South Africa and proceeds to assert that change of political power has made conducive a platform of a range of new discriminatory practices and victims. One such



victim is *the foreigner* who stands at the site where identity and violent practice are reproduced. In addition, the words such as “illegal”, “they” or “them” are often used in reference to foreign nationals. The recurrence of the pronouns “they” and “them” in the discourse implies “othering”. This finding corroborates with the literature reviewed in chapter two, in particular with Matsinhe’s (2011:295) argument that “the notion of Africa’s fear of itself is conceptualised in the term *makwerekwere* indicating a South African collective identification of ‘we’ against ‘them’”. It should also be acknowledged that the representation of the ‘foreigner’ in South Africa, a country historically fraught with discrimination, could also be understood in terms of the country’s political context. The purpose of this study is not explore the political history of South Africa, however, it should be noted that reference to discriminatory and inflammatory language is rooted in South Africa’s political landscape, given the country’s apartheid legacy.

Another stereotyped portrayal of the foreign national in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* include describing foreign nationals as constituting a social threat for many South Africans. In particular, black foreign nationals are portrayed as threatening, dangerous and criminals. Black foreigners have been implicated in a wide variety of criminal activities ranging from running unlicensed businesses to murder. This corroborates Mbetga’s (2014:3) observation that black foreigners are generally often portrayed as victims, targets, criminals and/or abusers of South Africa’s systems.

The themes identified earlier on in this chapter also relate to the stereotype of a foreigner and fears around job security. Example extracts from the articles under analysis include:

*“Foreigners **taking over our country**” (A12P101)*

*“Foreigners **stealing our jobs**” (A17P101)*

The above stereotyped representation affirms the findings of Bekker (2015:238) who found that South Africans feel that the government needs to impose strict controls on foreign migrations and put a stop to the issuing of work permits to foreigners. In addition Bekker (2015) explains that, in various newspaper publications, South Africans have even expressed that existing work permits be revoked. It is therefore evident that there exists strong

(negative) perceptions regarding the foreigner and job security in South Africa. It could be argued that if South Africans continue to feel displaced from the job market due to the employment of foreign nationals, the feelings of resentment may (concomitantly) continue to grow.

The next section examines some of the images used with accompanying xenophobia-related articles during the period April 2015 in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*.

#### 4.6 IMAGES OF APRIL 2015 XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS

In an article headlined “*The Brutal Death of Emmanuel Sithole*” (A19P501) the focus was on the murder of foreign national Emmanuel Sithole at the hands of South African citizens. The caption of the image read: “*Mozambique national Emmanuel Sithole was attacked in Alexandra township in Johannesburg. He later died from his wounds*”. The image used (see below) shows how Emmanuel Sithole tried to defend himself against his attackers.



Source: *Sunday Times E-edition* (19 April 2015)

The image not only shocked South Africans but also people around the world, and brought to light the violence perpetrated against foreign nationals in South Africa. Emmanuel Sithole's defensive stance against his attacker, who was wielding a sharp instrument, brought into stark reality the severity of the violent attacks. The attack, in daylight and in the presence of a newspaper journalist and photographer, indicates that the perpetrators of the crime were so engrossed in doing harm that they remained unaware or oblivious to any legal repercussions.

Another article, headlined "*Flames of hate engulf Durban*" (A15P501) was accompanied by the image (below) of a man crouched while wielding a sharp instrument. The caption of the image read: "*A foreign national holds a knife following clashes between a group of locals and police in Durban*".



**Source: *TimesLive* (15 April 2015)**

The inclusion of the image of a foreign national holding a knife alludes to the idea that foreign nationals are defending themselves against attacks from South Africans. At a glance,

the image may construe a different perception in that it could be seen as a foreign national as an aggressor, or perpetrator of a crime. For example, the African man who is carrying a sharp knife, taking cover around a certain building, in an urban area may be associated as an initiator of violent and aggressive behaviour. It is important that the image is read in conjunction with the accompanying article so that more information is gleaned.

There were many other images published during the reportage of the April 2015 xenophobic attacks. These images generally referred to looting, marches against xenophobia, victims of the attacks and police presence. Below are two examples of the images published in relation to police presence and police action. These two images were used in conjunction with the articles A15P101 (Police deploy 800 cops but xenophobia spreads in KwaZulu-Natal) and A30P101 (SA police arrest nearly 200 immigrants in post-xenophobic attacks raid). Both these images are used to reinforce the 'might' of the South African police force.



**Source: *TimesLive* (15 April 2015)**

The image above shows the then South African Police Commissioner, Rea Phiyega, at a press conference addressing the xenophobic attacks. The inclusion of this image alludes to a presence of authority and official government attention to the xenophobic attacks.



**Source: *TimesLive* (30 April 2015)**

The image above shows the might of the South African police. The number of police officers in the image alludes to the strong policing presence regarding the xenophobic attacks. The strong police presence could serve as a deterrent (to intimidate) to perpetrators of the xenophobic attacks. An analysis of the many images published during the April 2015 xenophobic attacks is beyond the scope of this study. The researcher has included only four images as part of the discussion. The first two images were selected for their impact and the nature of the story. The second two images were selected to highlight the South African police action and presence during the April 2015 xenophobic attacks.

#### **4.7 SUMMARY**

In this chapter, an analysis of the articles was discussed. The analysis discussed how the media (*Sunday Times E-edition* and its counterpart *TimesLive*) reported on the April 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Specifically, the discussions examined how the media depicted the xenophobic attacks that occurred during April 2015 and reportage of any stereotypes about black foreign nationals. The analysis predominantly focussed on the contents of the article; tone of the article; language used and (briefly) on images.

The chapter also identified the emergent themes from the articles under analysis. Each article was coded and then the contents of the article was analysed. Broad themes were identified, and then further defined in terms of relevance to the frequency. Six themes were eventually identified and then discussed. The themes identified included: Residence Status; Economy; Police Inaction/Trustworthiness; South African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks; African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks and Pan-African Concern. Selected images were examined and discussed to understand what meanings they could possibly convey to the public. The chapter then discussed emerging stereotypes prevalent in the articles under analysis.

The next chapter focuses on the recommendations and conclusion of the study.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented and discussed the findings of the study. This chapter concludes the study and discusses the recommendations that have emerged from the data analysis.

#### 5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The research questions that this study aimed to answer are:

1. How did the media depict the series of events that occurred in April 2015?
2. Did the media perpetuate any stereotypes about foreign nationals (e.g. foreigners steal jobs of citizens) in their coverage of the 2015 xenophobic spate of attacks?
3. Were the incidents reported in a responsible or sensationalised manner?

The literature review highlighted key concepts and theories relating to xenophobia and media representation. The literature discussed understanding the concept of xenophobia, the importance of media in a democracy, media representation, agenda-setting and framing and stereotypes.

Chapter three discussed the methodological approach used for this study. This study used a qualitative research paradigm, focusing on content analysis. Articles from the *Sunday Times E-edition* and its counterpart *TimesLive* during April 2015 were analysed. This chapter also outlined the coding system used and discussed the validity and reliability, anonymity and confidentiality, ethical considerations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter four presented and discussed the findings of the study. The analysis focused on how the media (*Sunday Times E-edition* and its counterpart *TimesLive*) reported on the April

2015 xenophobic attacks. The article content, language, tone and some images were analysed and themes were then identified. The chapter also discussed stereotypes of the black foreign national and also, media sensationalism and responsible reportage.

### **5.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions of the study were:

1. How did the media depict the series of events that occurred in April 2015?
2. Did the media perpetuate any stereotypes about foreign nationals (e.g. foreigners steal jobs of citizens) in their coverage of the 2015 xenophobic spate of attacks?
3. Were the incidents reported in a responsible or sensationalised manner?

Coverage of the April 2015 xenophobic attacks in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive* focused on the violence perpetrated against black foreign nationals by South African citizens. The content analysis revealed that the reportage tended to focus on the six themes below:

- I. Residence Status
- II. Economy
- III. Police Inaction/Trustworthiness
- IV. South African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks
- V. African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks
- VI. Pan-African Concern

With respect to theme one, the use of the word “illegal” was used in direct reference to the residence status of a foreign national. What was evident in the sourced articles is that South African citizens were presented as “us” and non-South Africans are either “foreigners” or “illegal” immigrants. This resulted in the “othering” of foreign nationals, disassociating South Africans from non-South African dwellers of this country. The theme ‘Economy’ examined issues around i) job insecurity on the part of South Africans; ii) foreigners



contributing to the growth of the South African economy and iii) loss of revenue due to the xenophobic attacks.

In relation to 'Police Inaction and Trustworthiness', the media reported on how foreign nationals interviewed stated that they held little or no trust in the South African police force. The focus initially, was on lack of police support. Latter articles (and images) however, focused on depicting the 'might' of the South African police force, possibly to curb further violent attacks. Another theme identified, 'South African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks', examined how the media reported on South African reaction to the xenophobic attacks. The coverage indicated widespread South African condemnation of the attacks.

The last two themes identified looked at 'African Condemnation of Xenophobic Attacks' and xenophobia as a 'Pan-African Concern'. Media reportage in this sense focused on firstly how African countries responded to the attacks. Specifically, reportage focused on reprisal attacks on fear for the safety of foreign nationals in South Africa. The media also reported on how xenophobia is not exclusively a South African problem, hinting at a collective African responsibility for the violent xenophobic attacks.

The analysis revealed that there exist certain stereotyped representations of the black foreign national, particularly in terms of the job situation; crime and resident status (illegal citizens). It was noted that media reportage tended to rely on already established stereotypes, rather than making any attempts to deviate from such stereotypes. The word 'foreigner' tended to be used in conjunction with job security, as in foreigners "taking over our country" and "stealing our jobs". The use of the pronoun "our" in several of the articles also resulted in creating a marked distinction between foreign nationals and South African citizens. The "othering" of black foreign nationals, therefore, appears to be quite commonplace in media reportage.

With regards to responsible media reportage and sensationalism, it was noted that given the nature of the incident (violent xenophobic attacks), the headlines and images used reflected the severity of the situation. The findings did not reveal sensationalised reportage with, for example, the aim to maximise newspaper sales. It was found, however, that

reportage of the violent attacks was prioritised over peace marches or marches against xenophobia. This is in keeping with news values and selection of news items, which are guidelines followed by journalists.

#### 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- While the current study took into consideration the manner in which black “foreigners” are represented in the *Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*, it would be valuable broadening this study to incorporate interviews with journalists who write these stories to get more understanding into media representation of black foreigners. It would also be appreciated widening this investigation to include interviews with foreign nationals to understand perceptions around related media coverage.
- Since xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment is not exclusive to South Africa and is on the increase all over the world, it would be useful to examine the role of media in reporting issues around xenophobia. Furthermore, the media can make more concerted and intense efforts to promote cultural diversity and acceptance by the society. The media can do this by not over using the term *foreigners* when reported about non-South African citizens. Granted, there are attempts to foster good relations by referring the foreign nationals as brothers, however, these are very limited and not practised by all publications. Perhaps, the reinforcement and repeated use of positive reference to the process of describing foreign national will have a favourable impacting towards reducing the perpetuation of xenophobia.
- Media is not only important for disseminating information and entertainment but also for shaping the worldview/s of the public. Given that findings revealed emergent stereotypes, it is recommended that media organisations provide training for journalists so that they become sensitised to social issues like xenophobia,

stereotyping and “othering”. This can be achieved through specialised workshops, seminars and symposiums.

- Apart from a focus on the media, it is also recommended that the South African government design and implement interventions that create and maintain a healthy relationship between South African citizens and non-South Africans to ensure peace in the long run.

## **5.5 POSSIBLE FUTURE RESEARCH**

Results of this study produced interesting avenues for future research. It is suggested that the study be expanded to include other news media in South Africa in order to investigate the coverage of the April 2015 xenophobic attacks. It could be useful to compare and contrast how different news media reported on the April 2015 xenophobic attacks. In addition, future research could also explore redefinitions of xenophobia and representations thereof given South Africa’s fraught history with discrimination.

## **5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The media play an important role in not only informing the public, but also in shaping public opinion. Whether unconsciously, or consciously, the media frame and set the agenda of news. In doing so, public opinion is also shaped and framed. It is imperative then that news is presented in a fair, unbiased and responsible manner. Media representation, or rather, media coverage of events, people, and issues (and so on) should be examined and analysed by media scholars, governing bodies and civil society at large. Analysis in this sense does not imply a muzzling of the press, but rather, encouraging members of society to critically engage with media (in this case news articles) content.

The media reportage (*Sunday Times E-edition* and *TimesLive*) of the April 2015 xenophobic attacks in South Africa highlighted the atrocities faced by black foreign nationals in the country. In doing so, the coverage tended to revert to established stereotypes of the black

foreigner in South Africa, as an “illegal” occupant who “steals” jobs from South African citizens. Such stereotyped reporting and “othering” of black foreign nationals may contribute to existing feelings of resentment and anger on the part of South African citizens. If, for example, various news media corroborate each other in publishing the same (or similar) interpretations then significant changes may take place with respect to people’s beliefs, opinions and even behaviour.

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