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**THE COVERAGE OF XENOPHOBIA RESEARCH FINDINGS BY THE *MAIL &
GUARDIAN* AND THE *SOWETAN*, 2008-2013**

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**A dissertation submitted to the Department of Media and Society Studies,
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requirements for the degree of BSc Honours in Media and Society Studies**

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Acknowledgements

Declaration

I **Kudakwashe P. Vanyoro** (R122326C) do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original, unaided work. It is being submitted to the Midlands State University Department of Media and Society Studies in partial fulfillment of the BSc Honours in Media and Society Studies degree. It has not been previously submitted to any other university. I duly complied with ethical issues and laws governing intellectual property.

Dissertation title: The Coverage of Xenophobia Research Findings by the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*, 2008-2013.

Signed……………………………………………

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Certificate of Supervision

I hereby certify that I personally supervised this dissertation in accordance with Department Regulations and the University General Regulations

On that basis, I confirm that this dissertation is examinable.

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THE COVERAGE OF XENOPHOBIA RESEARCH FINDINGS BY THE *MAIL & GUARDIAN* AND THE *SOWETAN,* 2008-2013

Abstract

One of the media's core and normative roles is to inform, educate and entertain society. This dissertation unravels this notion. It investigates the coverage of xenophobia research findings in two popular South African newspapers; the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan* from 2008 to 2013. Employing a neo-Foucauldian approach informed by Michel Foucault's theory of discourse, power and knowledge, and using mixed methods, this study calls for more balanced and consistent coverage of xenophobia research findings by the South African press. Second, it calls for greater awareness by journalists of the potential role of research findings in contributing positively to migrant inclusion, and in creating a better understanding of the many dynamics sorrounding xenophobia. It does this by identifying and discussing three key findings. First, that the coverage of xenophobia findings in the two newspapers between 2008 and 2013 was largely a case of classical reactive reporting. The two newspapers reported more on xenophobia and findings only when xenophobia turned violent, as was the case in 2008. Second, that the two newspapers reported 'using' findings more than they actually reported 'on' findings. This suggests that journalists used research in order to qualify their viewpoints, rather than reporting objectively. Third, that there was clear tension between the discourses of 'empirical knowledge' and 'popular perceptions'; evident in a majority of texts I analysed. This exposed the polarisation between popular discourses about migration, which are largely negative, and research, which largley shows that migration contributes positively to the South African economy. This study concludes by providing recommendations for best practice to journalists and researchers working on xenophobia reporting and research respectively in South Africa, setting an important agenda for more research on the 're-presentation of a representation' by the media, more especially when dealing with contentious topics like migration.

THE COVERAGE OF XENOPHOBIA RESEARCH FINDINGS BY THE *MAIL &*

***GUARDIAN* AND THE *SOWETAN,* 2008-2013**

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Abbreviations

ACMS	African Centre for Migration & Society
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CoRMSA	Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa
CSVR	Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
FMSP	Forced Migration Studies Programme
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
LSM	Living Standards Measure
M&G	Mail & Guardian
MDDA	Media Development and Diversity Agency
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SA Media	South African Media
SAARF	South African Audience Research Foundation
SAMP	South African Migration Project
SANCO	South African National Civic Organisation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UBJ	Union of Black Journalists
WCAR	World Conference Against Racism

Chapter One: Introduction to the study

1. Introduction

South Africa is generally regarded as a 'rainbow' nation due to a number of different races residing in the country. However, forging a common South African national identity has remained elusive (Alegi, 2010; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011), as the country can be best understood as a developing idea (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011). Of late, xenophobic attacks continue to recur in South Africa as 'indigenous' South Africans target perceived 'foreigners' whom they blame for their social and economic woes. Both the mass media and the new media in South Africa and across the globe have been awash with stories concerning the recurring xenophobic attacks in the 'rainbow' nation. Academics from political science, sociology, cultural studies as well as media studies have engaged with the discourse of xenophobia from different angles. Most of these academics have focused on the manner in which the media portray xenophobia, migrants and migrant related issues (Smith: 2010).

However, from a media studies viewpoint, there is one issue that is conspicuously absent: the coverage of xenophobia research findings in the mainstream media. These findings are present in the research of institutions like ACMS, SAMP and CSVR. The coverage of these findings in the popular press requires rigorous investigation and detailed analysis. This issue, which epitomizes a representation of a re-presentation, has received very little amount of attention in the academic world of media studies due to its 'unconventional' standing. As such, this forms part of the impetus for carrying out this study.

Hall (1997) has argued that re-presentation is an ongoing process. In this study, I therefore investigate the coverage of migration research findings in two popular South African newspapers, the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan* in the wake of recurring xenophobia. More especially, I interrogate the power contestations that exist in the coverage of marginalized issues and groups when empirical knowledge produced by epistemic

communities challenges popular press discourse, xenophobic attitudes and powerful positions. I achieve this by analyzing press editions of two newspapers from 2008 to 2013 and identifying the relationship between 'empirical knowledge' and 'anti-immigrant' polarized discourses. In this study, I use mixed methods and a neo-Foucauldian framework of understanding discourse as a system of representation (Hall, 1997; Fourie, 2009).

1.1 Background to the Study

South Africa receives some of the largest numbers of foreign migrants in sub-Saharan Africa and the developing world. Consequently, immigration issues have been hotly contested in policy and popular press circles. According to McDonald et al. (2000: 815) and Black et al. (2006) "public sentiment towards foreigners of African origin has a decidedly negative streak in South Africa". Despite the existence of anti-immigrant sentiments being both blown out of proportion by the popular press and underplayed and marginalized by policy makers and greater society (Mattes, 1998), the issue remains a real concern. This is more especially as the prevalence of recurring attacks on foreign nationals, xenophobic attitudes and discrimination on national grounds in townships, cities and informal settlements has come to characterize the 'rainbow nation' (see Harris, 2001; Crush, 2008; Bekker et al., 2008; Misago, Landau, and Monson, 2009). Mbembe (2006) describes this phenomenon as 'nativist revivalism' while Landau (2011) metaphorically refers to it as a process of 'exorcising the demons within'.

On the one hand, xenophobic attitudes and violence in South Africa are sustained by an anti-immigrant public and political discourse. This is the negative manner in which 'indigenous' people and the media talk about perceived 'foreigners' thereby producing images of an 'immigration crisis'. Xenophobic press coverage and prejudiced comments by senior politicians and state officials are very much reflective of the kind of rhetoric that permeates South African public debate about foreign migrants in media, political and policy circles (McDonald et al., 1998; Peberdy and Crush, 1998; Landau, 2011: 9-11). Scholars like Danso and McDonald (2001), Fine and Bird (2002), McDonald and Jacobs (2005) and Bekker et al. (2008) have implicated the media for perpetrating anti-immigrant sentiments through their

negative portrayal of foreign migrants. The general consensus among these scholars is that 'popular' discourse in South Africa is informed by negative stereotypes of foreign migrants. These negative stereotypes about foreign migrants perceive them as the primary cause of crime, vectors of HIV/AIDS, 'stealing' jobs, housing, education and health-care from ordinary South Africans while promoting poverty and moral-cultural decay in urban dwellings (Morris, 1998; Murray, 2003; Tacoli, 2009; Nyar, 2010). Such scapegoated perceptions are largely based on myth rather than fact with no substantive evidence (Black et al., 2006; Misago, 2011) and are successful in creating "a *doxa* in which outsiders are socially excluded" (Crush and Frayne, 2010; Landau, 2011).

On the other hand, xenophobic attitudes and violence in South Africa are continuously challenged by a 'left-leaning' discourse that embraces the positive attributes of foreign migrants, illuminating images of an unresolved 'xenophobic crisis'. This discourse of 'empirical knowledge' is sustained by research findings produced by several South African epistemic communities (like ACMS, SAMP and CSVR) and through civil society. These findings consistently show that migrants are positive contributors to the South African economy and that xenophobia is indeed a crisis in the country. They prove that foreign migrants contribute significantly to the country's development by buying goods and services, importing skills, paying tax and creating jobs through entrepreneurship.

Also, such research has shown that 12% of immigrants employ nearly four people in the informal sector, many of whom are South Africans (see Muller, 1999; Maharaj, 2002; Landau et al., 2005; Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2008). This is a significant contribution in a context where a 2002 estimate showed that the informal sector contributed 7.1 % of the country's GDP and accounted for 22.3% of all jobs (Devey, et al., 2006; Davis and Thurlow, 2009). On a global scale, the World Bank similarly concluded that migration often generates great benefits for migrants and their families. Moreover, it can also "generate substantial welfare gains for migrants, their countries of origins, and the countries to which they

migrate" (World Bank, 2006: 5). In light of this, Maharaj (2002, cited in Adjai and Lazaridis, 2013: 199) reaches the sound conclusion that immigrants are not parasites but are in fact net contributors.

With such myth-busting scientific knowledge in their hands, the popular press often calls on the 'dissenting voices' of social science to comment and provide insight into the migration-xenophobia discourse. Anecdotally, this is remarkably so in times of sporadic and or organized xenophobic violence. In such instances, empirical knowledge challenges negative media, policy and societal perceptions and narratives about migrants which citizens may use to rationalize or sanitize xenophobia. This interaction between 'social science' discourse and 'popular' public and political discourse leads to issue and power contestations within the popular press. This is because empirical knowledge on migration and xenophobia questions the status quo, popular discourse and commonly held perceptions and narratives that portray migrants as threats to citizens' rights and welfare (Crush and Frayne, 2010).

Regardless of these contestations in the mainstream media, it must be noted that negative perceptions and myths about migrants remain "the benchmarks of public debate" (Misago, 2011: 95). Immigration is largely perceived by locals as a crisis whereas xenophobia is relatively not perceived as such. Exclusion as a way of protecting access to resources in South Africa thrives on "the failure to take account of the true characteristics of the other" (Adjai, 2010: 42) especially through 'popular' discourse. Moreover, "migration, xenophobia, and non-racial forms of discrimination remain overlooked or are overtly silenced in scholarly, popular and political discourse" (Landau, 2011: 2). Therefore, despite the empirical soundness and 'reality' of xenophobia research findings, this study submits that these findings, even when operating within more enabling "political opportunity structures" (Polzer and Segatti, 2011: 200) do little to: better the socio-economic and political position of migrants; influence evidence-based migration policy making in South Africa and to eradicate xenophobic attitudes and violence towards foreigners.

Given this background, the essence of this research is, while epistemic institutions have produced research for evidence-based policy outcomes, the eradication of xenophobia and socio-economic and political inclusion of migrants, this can only be achieved if the media either report on these findings or use them to inform their analyses in migration and xenophobia reporting. As Hammersley (2000) argues, mass media coverage of research is one of the most effective means of disseminating research to a wide audience thereby maximizing its impact. Haslam and Bryman (1994: 1) present a similar argument. They posit: "Through the media, social scientists can bring their work to the attention of a broader constituency of people than cannot be achieved through the conventional channels such as journal articles and conference presentations." Given this normative role of the media in reporting research, the need to emphasize the developmental benefits of migration to citizens and policy audiences is an urgent concern in South Africa where migration is a marginalized policy issue that draws weak interests and hostile public opinion.

In this study, I am therefore interested in how xenophobia research findings have been reported in the popular press in order to find out if the media in South Africa are doing enough to alleviate xenophobia through research mediation.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The issue of how people are represented in the media is crucial because it is a prerequisite for equality and democracy (Sjoberg and Rydin, 2008). There is a significant body of literature on media and representation of reality in South Africa (see Danso and McDonald, 2001; Fine and Bird, 2000; McDonald and Jacobs, 2005; Bekker et al 2008). Other scholars (Desai, 2008; Hadland, 2008; Crush et al., 2008 and Smith, 2010) have similarly focused on the portrayal of migrants and migrant related issues in the press using secondary evidence from previous research.

The issue of media coverage of the social sciences is equally significant because research

needs a voice in the public arena to inform public and policy maker attitudes (Haslam and Bryman, 1994). In South Africa, these attitudes are often xenophobic. Yet, little research has been conducted on the coverage of xenophobia research findings in the South African popular press. This gap is more especially apparent, and worryingly so, in South Africa given that scientific knowledge objectively voices the need to include subaltern groups like migrants. Therefore, a study that focuses on the media coverage of research evidence is significant, unique and timely to media and society studies.

My study fills this huge gap in research on, and knowledge about social science mediation by investigating the coverage of xenophobia research findings in the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan* in the wake of recurring xenophobia. This undertaking allows a systematic examination of the various contestations that exist in the coverage of empirical knowledge that challenges 'popular' public and political discourse and commonly held perceptions while, posing a threat to powerful interests.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Xenophobia is a recurring trend in South Africa. While some scholarly attention has been given to its coverage in the media, no research has focused on the coverage of xenophobia research findings to interrogate the contestations that exist between 'empirical knowledge' and popular perceptions as polarized and dichotomous discourses. My research addresses this problem by exploring the coverage of xenophobia research findings in two South African newspapers. This undertaking is necessary in order to develop empirical knowledge in this neglected area of media and society studies.

1.4 Research Objectives

i. To explain the coverage of migration research findings on xenophobia in two South African newspapers: the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*.

ii. To explain the role and place of migration research findings on xenophobia in South

African public discourse;

iii. To establish the tension that exists between polarized discourses of 'empirical knowledge' and popular perceptions of xenophobia in the South African press.

iv. To examine whether the two newspapers are in unison in mediating research findings.

1.5 Research questions

1.5.1 Main research questions

i. How have migration research findings on xenophobia been covered in the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*?

1.5.2 Sub-research questions

i. What is the role and place of these xenophobia research findings in South African media discourses?

ii. Are the two newspapers under study in unison in mediating these research findings?

1.6 Scope of the Study

My research's scope is limited to analyzing press editions from two South African newspapers the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*. First, the time frame under study is from the period 2008 to 2013. This is justified by the fact that xenophobic violence in South Africa seems to have gained prominence and topicality globally from 2008 by resurfacing violently again in 2015, it has drawn equal prominence. This study is not representative of media trends before and beyond the period under study.

Second, this study makes no claim of being representative about all forms of media coverage. It is only representative of research mediation by two newspapers that form the research universe. I do however extend my scope beyond interpreting media coverage, to analyzing other South African institutional practices that speak to the same 'discursive formation' of

xenophobia and migrant alterity. However, I do not do this exhaustively, but to a degree that allows for an 'inter-textual' reading of meaning. This allows my study to provide a sense of the socio-economic and political context and formations that inform the press reporting under investigation.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

My research is limited in terms of two issues. These are generalizability and qualitative methodology. First, my study does not claim generalizability of findings. Its scope is limited to the South African context and press editions of two newspapers. My findings do not reflect 'all media' coverage of migration research findings on xenophobia. Nonetheless, the findings can be used to inform similar studies in other geographical contexts and other forms of media, but they should be used with scholarly discretion.

Last, qualitative methods are limited in how much comparison can be drawn between various forms of coverage. In order to make up for this limitation, I present my data graphically and employ a very basic statistical analysis to understand better the reporting trends. A study of this kind could benefit immensely from more complex statistical methods and packages (like SPSS) that allow for a more rigorous comparison and evaluation of different data sets. Therefore, I acknowledge the need to incorporate more quantitative methods in future studies of this sort.

1.8 Structure of the study

Apart from this chapter, the study is composed of five chapters. Chapter 2 presents the literature review and theoretical framework to the study, tracing the relevant written scholarly material on migration and media studies. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology and methods used in the study. Chapter 4 presents the organizational analysis, tracing the history of the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*, and the current press landscape in South Africa. Chapters 5 introduces and deals with the research

findings. Chapter 6 is the conclusion, providing recommendations based on the findings of the study.

1.9 Conclusion

This study fills the gap in research on the coverage of xenophobia research findings in South Africa. It does this by investigating two popular South African newspapers, the *Mail and Guardian* and the *Sowetan*. The following chapter will provide the literature review and theoretical framework to concretize some of the arguments fore fronted here.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the reviewed literature related to the study, to concretize some of the arguments fore fronted in the first chapter. In the literature review, my focal argument is that there are a lot of power contestations in the coverage of marginalized issues and groups. This is more profound when empirical knowledge challenges popular press discourse, xenophobic attitudes and powerful positions. There are two competing and polarized discourses that are evident in the literature. One is of an "immigration crisis" that is regularly and popularly sustained by government through the media, serving to justify restrictive immigration policies and xenophobia. The second discourse is a rather 'leftist' and progressive one of "xenophobic crisis", sustained by epistemic communities through the use of empirical knowledge and research findings. This polarization is inextricably linked to contestations over power and static ideals and narratives of the nation-state.

In light of this far-reaching argument, I do not limit myself to analyzing practices or reviewing literature surrounding media coverage. I also extend my scope to interpreting and analyzing literature, forms of conduct and practice within South African institutions and state structure. These are constitutive of and address the same "discursive formation" (Cousins and Hussain, 1984) of xenophobia and migrant alterity. The extension to structural-analysis is also qualified by Parker's (2004: 150) convincing argument that "we have to be aware of the ways in which the meanings we study are always produced in their relationship to other texts, the way they are 'intertextual'". This approach then justifies my choice of using Foucault's theory of discourse, power and knowledge, which is explored in greater detail in my theoretical framework.

2.1 Recurring xenophobia in South Africa

Migration scholars like Harris (2001; 2002), Black (2006), Crush (2008; 2010), Landau (2010; 2011) and Misago (2011) have conducted research to try and explain xenophobia and its recurrence in South Africa. Most of this work was written post-1994. WCAR (2001, cited

in Adjai and Lazaridis, 2013: 194) define xenophobia as "attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity". It can either be violent, institutional or structural. In this study, I strongly subscribe to Bourdieu's (1999: 11) concept of symbolic violence. I argue that xenophobia is symbolic violence where symbolic capital in the form of mass communication is used as a means of power to reinforce an institutional and structural form of discrimination (Kamali, 2005; Sjoberg and Rydin, 2008). This position is validated by Hall's convincing argument that "every regime of representation is a regime of power formed" (Hall, ND: 225). It holds true, as the media in South Africa are a heated terrain of identity politics.

Xenophobia and intolerance are a recurrent reality in South African politics (Thakur, 2010) and "foreign nationals have been attacked repeatedly in South Africa since 1994" (Misago, 2011: 96; Adjai and Lazaridis, 2013: 195-196). Harris (2002: 169) argues that "the shift in political power has brought about a range of new discriminatory practices and victims" and the 'foreigner' is one such victim. Foreign migrants are constant targets and victims of xenophobic attacks. Xenophobia manifests itself as a spill over of citizen opposition to migration and a by-product of political scapegoating which blames migrants for the country's unemployment woes. Lerner et al. (2009: 16) submit, "In South Africa, high expectations for employment, housing and other social provisions, coupled with the realization that delivery of these is not immediate, are seen to result in frustration targeted at foreigners." As a result, many grueling accounts of violence against foreign migrants have been recorded between 1998 and 2008 (Crush and Frayne, 2010). Not only is xenophobia a violent phenomenon but it is also manifested in South African practices through the exclusion and discrimination of foreigners in various institutions like banks, hospitals, the Department of Home Affairs, police, and social service providers (Landau, 2010). This observation resonates well with Adjai and Lazaridis's (2013) argument that, under xenophobia, institutions have been used to exclude the 'other' through practice and not by design.

The month of May in 2008 was a remarkably dark period in post-apartheid South Africa. The

'rainbow nation's media was filled with graphic images of violence against foreign migrants; burning shacks and even burning people that left the continent and the whole world shocked (Nyar, 2010). This period undermined the progressive reputation of South Africa among post-colonial states. This argument is reiterated in Adjai and Lazaridis's (2013: 194) assertion that "xenophobia undermines concepts such as the rainbow nation."

The South African Police Service's response to the violence in protecting victims was quite ambivalent and left a lot to be desired. Polzer and Takabvirwa (2010) persuasively show this. Meanwhile, the Thabo Mbeki regime took a denialist stance by underplaying the attacks as criminal and not xenophobic (Landau, 2011; see also comment by Minister of Police Nathi Mthethwa, July 2010 and Minister of Safety and Security Charles Nqakula in Pretoria News, 14 May 2011). Mbeki even went as far as arguing that there is no xenophobia in the country (Amisi et al., 2010). It should be noted that this is the same regime that had also used denialism as a response to HIV/AIDS arguing that HIV does not cause AIDS (Cullinan and Thom, 2009; Amisi et al., 2010).

There is a general consensus in the literature I reviewed that the tendency by public officials in South Africa to reduce xenophobia to criminality is a long-standing discourse in the country, more profoundly within the police service (Polzer and Takabvirwa, 2010). It aims at sustaining other discourses beside those of a xenophobic crisis. This observation reiterates Lindley's (2014:6) argument that "political actors may promulgate a 'business-as-usual' or non-crisis discourse, seeking to deny or *minimise empirical experiences* and objective indicators of severe threat and discontinuity" (italics mine). Similarly, Landau (2011) and Nyar (2010) have shown that much of the blame for xenophobia was placed on a 'third force'. For Lindley (2014), this is an argument often used by states to dismiss systematic violence as merely crime by insulated elites.

Tensions were rife between different schools of thought within the academy, with some scholars like Sevenzo (2010) referring to the attacks on foreigners as 'afrophobic' and not xenophobic. Referring to the violence as 'afrophobia' however fails to adequately explain

why other non-African groups including Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Chinese are targeted. Against this argument, I strongly disagree with Sevenzo (2010) who defines the violence as 'afrophobia'. I contend that such definitional preoccupations are driven by political interests and attempts not to taint the image of Tutu's inclusive 'rainbow nation' by avoiding the 'X-word'. Naming the violence 'afrophobia' makes it possible for government to blame the violence on a third force, a term that largely refers to white racists attempting to stifle the pan-Africanist agenda and the 'African renaissance'. This argument is cemented by Ndlovu-Gathseni (2011: 281) who argues, "The outbreak of xenophobic attacks in May 2008…ran counter to the philosophies of 'ubuntu' and African Renaissance that Mbeki was articulating".

Despite some of these dissensions within the literature, there are some consensuses. For example, many scholars agree on the number of casualties of the 2008 violence. Authors generally agree that 62 people lost their lives, a third of whom were local inhabitants, whereas at least 670 were wounded; dozens raped and more than 100 000 displaced (CoRMSA, 2008; Polzer and Igglesden, 2009; Landau, 2011). Despite the 2008 violence being the most ferocious and intense manifestation of xenophobia in the country in history, Crush et al. (2008) have argued that xenophobia has been a long-standing feature of post-apartheid South African society.

As Misago (2015) shows us from his research (which is well satirized by Zapiro), only one person was brought to book by the South African justice system. Besides that, hundreds of other perpetrators of the violence simply went unpunished. The recurrence of xenophobia and its resurfacing in 2015 starting off in the township of Soweto and manifesting more acutely in Durban and across other parts of Gauteng can be sufficiently accounted for by the culture of impunity underscored by scholars such as Misago. This is because impunity has allowed violence to become one of the ways citizens use to grab government attention to attend to poor service delivery issues, especially in poor townships and informal settlements.

The 2015 wave of violence has also been causally linked to the Zulu King Zwelithini. In his

speech, the king encouraged Zulus to 'remove ticks and place them outside in the sun'. As a result, South Africa has again experienced xenophobic violence and found itself in a dark historical moment. This time around, for scholars like Mbembe (2015), "the cancer has metastized". In what was a foreseeable and inevitable reincarnation of the violence, the 'rainbow nation's image has again been brought to international disrepute. At the time of writing, 7 people had been killed, 3 of which were South Africans, and a thousand more displaced.

What is striking in every instance where there has been xenophobic violence is the media attention that has been given to the violence. This phenomenon is well articulated in the work of Polzer and Segatti (2011). Some politicians, civil society, celebrities and 'ordinary' South Africans have stood up in solidarity condemning the violence. Polzer and Segatti (2011: 200) posit that the violence in 2008 received global media coverage and was debated publicly. They refer to the violence as a 'crisis' which created "political opportunity structures and universes of political discourse" for collective action. Even though Polzer and Seggati's chapter is more focused on civil-society action, it is useful in examining three things. It clearly illustrates the shifting subjectivities that are created through media representations of xenophobia, the conditions of possibility media coverage can shape and the political interests such coverage ultimately serves in relation to the South African nationalist project.

However, their study does not fill the huge gap in the literature and empirical research on the media representations of xenophobia research findings. Instead, there is an extant of studies around the representation of migration and xenophobia as a social problem. My study fills this gap. It does this by examining how xenophobia research findings as a voice have been covered in the two newspapers under study. This is a more relevant scholarly undertaking given that policy-makers and the mainstream media often see migration and migrants as the root of the xenophobia problem, as the government remains in denial about the existence of any such thing as xenophobia in the country.

2.2 The representation of migration and xenophobia

I now turn to reviewing media coverage and the literature in that regard. More specifically, my focus is on the literature around the representation of migration and xenophobia in the South African press. This allows me to present some relative perspective on what scholars have said about the coverage of xenophobia research findings, and safely conclude that no one has paid attention to this area of media studies.

Oronje et al. (2011) argue that the mass media are an important source of information for the general public and policy makers. According to Smith (2010: 2) "the media do not just transmit information to the public, but rather, they also produce certain ideologies and discourses that support specific relations of power". This argument resonates well with- and is recurrent within- some of the literature already examined.

A lot of primary research has been done to try and conceptualize the representation of migration and migrants in the South African press (see Danso and McDonald, 2001; Bird and Fine, 2002; McDonald and Jacobs, 2005 and Bekker et al. 2008). Other scholars (see Desai, 2008; Hadland, 2008; Crush et al., 2008 and Smith, 2010) have used this primary evidence based on discourse analysis (Smith: 2010) to inform their own secondary analyses of media coverage of migration issues. Scholars like De Haan (2000) have particularly argued that migration tends to be seen as problematic, in academic and policy debates, and in the popular press. These conclusions are in concurrence with the work of other scholars like Danso and McDonald (2000). These are convincing conclusions that are based on rigorous qualitative research and years of media monitoring. The South African media, particularly the press, have been blamed for overplaying the migrant dynamic in popular debate where migrants are portrayed as 'flooding' and 'swarming' into the country (Danso and McDonald, 2000). Some have called these images of a 'Human Tsunami' (FMSP and Musina Legal Advice Office, 2007) that feed into negative stereotypes about migrants and sustain negative images of an immigration crisis.

These representations have been characterized into two main facets, through the work of Adjai (2010). Firstly, in what Adjai (2010) refers to as the 'numbers game', the South African media have over the years used unverifiable and often inflated statistics (Black, et al.: 2006). This is in order to fuel anti-migrant sentiments among South Africans. Moreover, politicians and state institutions like the South African Police Service have used numbers to suit their political agendas. Here is a good example. In 1997 the former Home Affairs Minister Mongosuthu Buthelezi used unverifiable, inflated and methodologically flawed HSRC figures to politicize the tightening of immigration controls (Adjai, 2010). Buthelezi (Cited in Crush, 2008: 17-18) argued that the socio-economic resources of the country are under severe strain because of the burden of 2.5 to 5 million 'illegal aliens' in the country. Another example is Pretoria News' (12 July 2007) use of a sensational headline titled "Human Tsunami hits SA". Such hyperbolic representations of migration are commonplace in the South African press.

Adjai (2010) presents a second characteristic. Adjai argues that the press in South Africa does not portray a balanced picture of the marginal relationship between migrants and citizens. In so doing they further aggravate xenophobic sentiments towards foreigners. A survey conducted by SAMP between 1994 and 1998 on 1200 English newspaper clippings in South Africa showed that coverage of international migration by the papers was largely anti-immigrant. This was through the press's use of sensational headlines, its failure to appropriately categorize and differentiate migrants and its use of exclusionary terms like 'aliens' that were found to perpetrate xenophobia (Adjai, 2010).

Crush et al. (2008: 42) thus come to the sound conclusion that: "the media has uncritically reproduced xenophobic language and statements, time and time again. The media has certainly been complicit in encouraging xenophobic attitudes among the population." Smith (2010: 3) agrees with Adjai's (2010) two facets on coverage. In addition, Smith submits that the many studies on press coverage provide four key conclusions which are all of the view that press media articles are anti-immigration as seen by their negative references to migrants and immigrants; are too simplistic and un-analytical with little in-depth analysis; persist in

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using discriminatory labels like "illegal migrants"; and perpetuate negative stereotypes of migrants by using terms like 'criminals', 'illegals' and 'job stealers'.

Therefore, there is a considerable consensus in the literature that the South African press portrays migrants negatively, even though this may not always be in a blatant manner. Despite the existence of this rich analysis on the representation of migration in the South African popular press, little exists on the representation of xenophobia. A few authors like Monson and Arian (2011: 33) however, have written about media coverage of xenophobia in 2008. In their work, they condemn press coverage and press reporting that is highly decontextualized and ignorant of the fact that xenophobia is a recurrent practice in informal settlements. Such coverage, they further argue, presents the violence as "an explosion of organic fury" or an "eruption". Beyond such literature, there is a lacuna.

Smith (2010) has also identified two loopholes in the literature around the coverage of migration and migrant related issues. These gaps in existing studies include: the expanse of analyses that are biased towards print media at the expense of broadcast media; a lack of gender aware media research; and a lack of civil society aware media research. On the second point that Smith suggests (gender), there is an implicit insistence on treating migrants as an un-gendered and homogenous category in many media studies of migrant representation. In addition, Smith (2010: 3) convincingly argues, "the existing research has so far failed to demonstrate that there is a direct link to what was printed in the press and violent xenophobic attacks in South Africa." This is one of the methodological weaknesses within most of the literature that attempts to explain the relationship between xenophobia and press coverage. In other words, the direct correlation between what is written in the press and violence (causality) cannot be proved.

Hadland (2008: 7) thus argues that media complicity in xenophobic violence is difficult to attribute as very few studies attempt to measure the impact of print journalism on aggression or violence. This is a valid argument. Nonetheless, Danso and McDonald (2001: 115) provide a persuasive counter-argument. They contend that while it is impossible to draw causal links

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between anti-immigrant media coverage and anti-immigrant policy making and xenophobia, the two are mutually reinforcing and the media should be more balanced and factual in reporting the issue.

I concur with Danso and McDonald. As much as effects of press coverage on xenophobic practices and attitudes cannot be proved, there remains much to be said about the agenda setting and public-opinion making roles of the press through their coverage. This argument is qualified by Desai (2008) who observes that by the time of the violence in May 2008, a powerful xenophobic culture had been created in the country while the media had become predisposed to migrant stigmatization and stereotyping. In as much as causality is difficult to prove, I argue that it can be inferred from practices as they relate to the prevailing discourse (s) of any given time. It is against such contestations in the literature that Smith (2010) underscores the need for more evidence-based research to understand the effect that print media have on perceptions and attitudes in South Africa.

Finally, little exists on the coverage of migration research findings with a particular focus on xenophobia. However, an array of global literature exists on the role of the media in communicating research in the public health and development sector (see Court and Young, 2003; Fisher and Vogel, 2008; McPhail, 2009; Oronje et al., 2011). Most of this work is biased towards research translation and development communication. As such, it does not adequately tease out the interaction between research findings and popular discourse in the mainstream media. Goslin (1974) has also done some good research showing the different types of research information that may be communicated by the media. These are: statements about planned research; studies underway; findings on a particular study; what is known about a particular area and the policy implications of particular findings.

Beyond this, little exists, especially in the global south, more specifically in South Africa. This study fills this gap in the literature by investigating media coverage of xenophobia research findings and how the two newspapers under study have done it. More importantly, it

seeks to provide a lens through which to read the place of research in popular discourse, when it challenges other more popular discourses. Such an inquiry, I believe, is timely and relevant to the body of literature that seeks to understand discourse, power, and the mediation of knowledge.

2.3 Media framing in relation to migration and xenophobia issues

Even though xenophobia is a recurring problem in South Africa, the media mostly cover xenophobia when it turns violent. In this regard, they play a reactive role in constructing crises (Freemantle and Misago, 2014). As such, it is important to this study to understand how scholars have understood framing, and extract its relevance to this project.

A lot has been written on how the media frame issues in their coverage and how that informs message decoding (see Entman, 1993; Scheufele, 2000 and Norris et al., 2003). Framing is essentially 'selection to prioritize some facts, images, or developments over others, thereby unconsciously promoting one particular interpretation of events' (Norris et al. 2003: 11). Katz (2001: 273) in his review of Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948) argues, "The media not only uphold the status quo, but omit mention of alternative ways of thinking and behaving". In other words, the media can perpetrate xenophobia either wittingly or unwittingly through omission or exclusion of alternative ways of seeing the world. This is possible in instances where the media ignore marginalized subaltern voices such as those of migrants and social science, which may be instrumental in improving tolerance towards migrants. Borges (2010: 223) similarly argues that, using discourse analysis; "the importance given to media discourse derives from its power to give the voice to certain social actors while silencing others". This can be termed 'marginalization by exclusion'.

Using the agenda setting theory by McCombs and Shaw (1972), the literature on media studies is rife with proof that "readers use the important clues that accompany the news to organize their own catalogue of interests, in a process of 'transference of salience' from the media agenda to the public agenda" (Borges, 2010: 223). This is reiterated by Scheufele (1999: 105) who states that "mass media actively set the frames of reference that readers or

viewers use to interpret and discuss public events", who in so doing construct their own individual frames. For Scheufele (1999), frames should be considered in the presentation and comprehension of news. As such, frames ought to be bifurcated into two; media frames and individual frames. Frames can serve either as devices embedded in political discourse in the former and as internal structures of the mind in the latter (Sanders, 1990 cited in Scheufele, 1999). Media frames have more to do with news attributes (what is said and what is left out) while individual frames have more to do with how individuals process information (what is known).

A framing approach is important to this study because frames act as "the bridge between…larger social and cultural realms and everyday understandings of social interaction" (Friedland and Zhong, 1996: 13). This is despite them being largely unspoken and unacknowledged (Chuma, 2012: 316). In a similar argument, Butler (2010: 71), writing on photographs as text, convincingly argues that text is produced "within certain kinds of lines and so within certain kinds of frames". So, any text that yields its frame to interpretation opens up to critique and scrutiny the restrictions on interpreting reality. Frames bring to the fore inter-textuality and allow consideration for the "forms of social and state power… "embedded" in the frame". Methodologically, a framing approach allows for an analysis that socially critiques regulatory and censorious power (Butler, 2010). Doubtless, media frames may encode the intended message but the motives can be unconscious ones (Gamson, 1989, cited in Scheufele, 1999). Motives are instead embedded in relations of power and silently rather than blatantly implied. Butler (2010: 73) thus argues for use of the term 'representability' instead of representation. She defines 'representability' as a phenomenon that cannot be understood by solely examining explicit content because it is "constituted fundamentally by what is left out".

Like Butler (2010), Scheufele (1999: 107) argues that media frames can be influenced by socio-cultural, organizational, ideological or individual variables whereas individual frames are "direct outcomes of the way mass media frame an issue". The media play a proactive role in the creation of frames by giving salience to certain issues, which ultimately determines

what amount of knowledge audiences have at their disposal in making meaning out of their individual frames. This aspect is important in what this study proposes. My central argument is that, when the media use frames that are 'barren' of evidence in their daily reportage about migrants and xenophobia, they increase the likelihood of audiences using their individual frames. These are often limited to what they already know from prevailing discourse.

Butler (2010: 65) further argues that the manner in which photographs of ongoing torture are framed (in the war she writes about) "all suggest that all who took those photographs were actively involved in the perspective of war, elaborating that perspective, crafting, commending and validating a point of view". She terms this "embedded reporting". There is much to be said in this regard about the manner in which the press in South Africa frame their issues and report on xenophobia research findings in relation to socio-economic and political formations.

However, there is need to avoid an overly deterministic appraisal of media power in shaping human attitudes and practices. Media frames do not guarantee positive responses (dominant reading) as they are subject to personal interpretation. Audiences may choose to take an oppositional reading of the message in ways that result in oppositional behavior or attitudes, a phenomenon that is best explained by Hall in his encoding/decoding model.

Given the literature on framing, there is a gap on understanding framing through a lens of xenophobia, using a South African case study. This study fills that gap by interrogating the framing of xenophobia research findings, and identifying example of 'embedded reporting', which may be complicit in reinforcing the nationalist project. This fits in well with my theoretical framework, which allows me to examine how censorious power can influence press reporting.

2.4 Theoretical framework

Using a deductive approach, I understand, interpret and analyse the coverage of migration research findings in *The Mail & Guardian* and *The Sowetan* using Foucault's theory of

discourse, knowledge and power.

2.4.1 Discourse, power and knowledge

Bryman (2004: 71) argues that in deductive theory "The researcher, on the basis of what is known about in a particular domain and of theoretical considerations in relation to that domain, deduces a hypothesis (or hypotheses) that must be then subjected to empirical scrutiny." I pay attention to the argument that Foucault does not explicitly provide a theory of power per se but what he terms an "analytic of relations of power" (Cousins and Hussain, 1984: 225). Consequently, I analyse the press editions of two newspapers as my unit of analysis through a paradigm that conceptualises them as technologies of power and domination (Foucault, 1982).

As discussed in the earlier chapter, by using an intertextual approach, my study also analyses other xenophobic practices in other institutions, as sub-units of inquiry, in order to better contextualise xenophobia and the power relations implied therein. This approach allows me to find the relationship that exists between and among media coverage, discourse and broader structures of South African society that contribute to the "discursive formation" of xenophobia.

Hall on Foucault (1997: 72) defines discourse as "a group of statements which provide a language for talking about- a way of representing the knowledge about- a particular topic at a particular historical moment". The ways in how the press writes about xenophobia research findings undoubtedly provides a language for talking about the topic at a certain time. According to Foucault (1972), nothing has any meaning outside of discourse, and in as much as "physical things and action exists … they only take meaning and become objects of knowledge within discourse" (Hall, 1972: 73). Against this assertion, I analyze media coverage based on Foucault's concept of discourse arguing that empirical knowledge and scientific evidence about migration can only have meaning within discourse (a way of talking

about the issue). This meaning is created through forms of reality that the media represent because knowledge is produced within discourse and not within the things themselves (Hall, 1997). Through the mediation of migration research, language produces 'second order-knowledge' about 'first-order knowledge' embedded in media frames and discourse (a way of talking about the issue). As a result, the message the audience receives becomes a reproduction of empirical knowledge achieved through two processes: one of media representation and the other of individual interpretation embedded within individual frames.

Xenophobia research findings, as knowledge; through the language, frequency and ways in which they are written about and represented by the press in particular moments, produce other subtle forms of knowledge in which scientific evidence becomes a double-representation. Here, the original meaning reflects the *prima facie* empirical knowledge and the second is one is a by-product of multiple meaning-makings by different audiences in a multiplicity of contexts and social interactions. As argued by Haslam and Bryman (1994: 3), when social scientists engage their research with the media, they take on the role of 'subject' in the media's data collection. These knowledge reproductions shape structure and power relations in a society.

I tease out Foucault's notion of knowledge and power which states that "knowledge is always inextricably enmeshed in relations of power because it [is] always being applied to the regulation of social conduct in practice" to particular bodies (Hall, 1997: 75). I achieve this by interrogating how the mediation of xenophobia research findings by the press is related to dynamics of political power and broader formations. This approach allows theorization about the marginality of science in popular discourse, except in times of crisis where campaigns and media coverage of migrant rights and evidence frequent the coverage. This allows thinking about how the media are in cahoots with power systems and structures in the country, vested interests and attempts to refrain from regulating social conduct in the everyday practices (of institutionalized xenophobia) of South African 'bodies' as this is

detrimental to nation building (as seen through impunity).

To Foucault and also for this study, "not only is knowledge always a form of power, but power is implicated in the questions of whether and in what circumstances knowledge is to be applied or not" (Hall, 1997: 76). Using Foucault's banal yet novel paradigm of knowledge and power allowed this research to explain how the usual Newtonian predilection of conceptualizing the relationship between knowledge and power is challenged by national interests in South African popular discourse. Butler (2010: 73) argues that it is essential to the state that power in its operation should not be seen and that it remains "non-figurable". She conclusively argues that certain larger norms that are often racializing and civilizational have structuring effects on what we ultimately and provisionally call reality.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has shown the existing literature and how this study fills the gap in understanding the coverage of migration research findings on xenophobia in South Africa. It has also presented the theoretical framework guiding the study. The following chapter will provide the research methodology and methods used to collect and analyse data.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Methods

3. Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the research approach, methodology and methods that I used to collect and analyse data on the coverage of xenophobia research findings in the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan*. Popenoe (1971) defines research methodology as the analysis of conceptual, logic and research procedures through which data gathering techniques and samples are used in a research.

3.1 Research approach

The study was largely qualitative in nature, but data was analysed and presented both quantitatively (using graphs, tables and basic statistical analysis) and qualitatively (using critical discourse analysis and thematic presentation). This was to some extent a mixed methods approach, based on a case study of two newspapers. Mixed methods are a generally new research methodology. Creswell (2006) defines mixed methods as involving philosophical assumptions to guide data analysis and collection and mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases of the research process.

According to Mack et al (2005), by its non-numerical nature, qualitative research effectively allows for the obtainment of "culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations." Using an interpretivist research paradigm allowed me to infer and interpret different forms of meaning and realities that are constructed through representation and texts by the two newspapers under study (media frames) immersed in social context. This was a fitting complement to the qualitative research process that entails identifying categories, and patterns that emerge from the data under scrutiny (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005: 95).

Meanwhile, quantitative presentation and analysis of data allowed me to analyse descriptive data in a statistical manner and deduce certain trends in the coverage under study.

Quantitative methods are relatively independent of the researcher and are useful in studying large samples, as is the case with my research where I reviewed a total of 674 articles. However, I only used quantitative presentation and analyses limited to my technical expertise. My approach was largely basic because I did not have the capacity or knowledge to derive coding frames that allow more empiricism.

3.2 Unit of analysis

My basic unit of analysis in this study is press editions from two South African newspapers; the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*. This is because they are widely read (as my Chapter 4 will show) and, in the pilot stage, I anecdotally observed that they report more on migration and xenophobia issues than other newspapers. As such, this research makes no claim of being representative about all media as it is limited to a case study of these two South African newspapers. Because of my theoretical framework, I do not limit myself to interpreting this basic unit, but extend my scope to other South African institutions as sub-units as they speak to the same 'discursive formation' of xenophobia and migrant alterity.

3.3 Sampling

In my sampling, I used the non-probability sampling technique of purposive sampling, selecting cases "based on a specific purpose rather than randomly" (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003: 13). Despite my use of a mixed methods approach, probability sampling did not allow me to access the relevant sample, as I was interested on two particular newspapers covering a very distinct issue under a specified time frame.

3.3.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is when the researcher "chooses the sample based on who they think would be appropriate for the study. This is used primarily when there are a limited number of people that have expertise in the area being researched" (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995; Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:206). They are primarily used in qualitative research and entail selecting

units "based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study's questions" (Teddlie and Yu, 2007: 77). As such, I carried out purposive sampling to identify the newspapers and eventually the articles I studied.

The sampling procedure involved two stages. Firstly, I used sample editions falling within the time frame (of 2008 and 2013) and themes (migration and xenophobia) of this study as the initial research population. In the second stage, I screened the relevant editions that spoke to xenophobia research findings coverage from the total purposive sample, towards data analysis.

3.4 Methods of data collection

3.4.1 Archival research

Archival research methods "involve the study of historical documents; that is, documents created at some point in the relatively distant past, providing us access that we might not otherwise have" (Ventresca and Mohr, 2001). These texts often represent forms of social discourse, embodying sedimented and accumulated talk (ibid: 3).

I made use of newspaper archives and databases dating back to as far as 2008. Initially, I thought that I would be able to access the press editions from the two newspapers under study's archive facilities. However, the newspapers did not have online archival facilities and were not cooperating via email. General web searches presented even more difficulties in accurately locating and sampling news articles.

Eventually, I collected all of my data using an online database reference system called SA Media (accessed on www.samedia.uovs.ac.za). I began by searching for the key terms "migration" and "xenophobia" under the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* publications. The time frame I searched for initially was from 1 January 2008 to 30 June 2015.

However, the search only provided articles going to as far as 2013, clearly indicating that the database had not been updated to as far as my research's initial time scope of study. A total of 480 articles from the *Mail & Guardian* and 200 from the *Sowetan* came up from the search, but not all of them were reflective of my research's criteria. I systematically downloaded and renamed the articles according to the date of publication and stored them in my external hard drive. For example, I would rename an article published on 28 May 2009 to 28052009. In the event that two articles had been published on the same date in the same publication, as was often the case, I would re-number them systematically. In such instances, I would rename a second publication from 28 May 2009 to 28052009 (2). In total, I managed to analyse a sample of 476 articles from the *Mail & Guardian* and 198 from the *Sowetan*. These were articles that reported broadly on the key terms 'migration' and 'xenophobia'.

3.5 Methods of data analysis

3.5.1 Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis "stems from a critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice." (Janks, 1997: 329). It is useful in questioning how the positioning of text is related to interests and consequences of power relations through discourse (ibid). Critical discourse analysis "sets out to show that the semiotic and linguistic features of the interaction (communicative) are systematically connected with what is going on socially, and what is going on socially is indeed going on partly or wholly semiotically or linguistically." (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 113).

Once I had collected archival data, I analysed it using critical discourse analysis. In these analyses, I was aware of the chronological and contextual peculiarities in which certain articles were written. This categorization helped me juxtapose when research findings were used in press coverage and how this related to broader issues of power and structure, as well as looking at the contestations that exist between popular and scholarly discourse. This choice of using critical discourse analysis was justified by Parker's (2004: 150) argument that, in

research "when we carry out our analysis…we have to be aware of the ways in which the meanings we study are always produced in their relationship to other texts, the way they are 'intertextual'." A critical discourse methodological approach to data analysis thus allowed my research to "identify regularities that produce certain circumscribed positions for readers" (Parker, date: 150).

3.5.2 Basic statistical analysis

In order to better understand the coverage trends more comparatively, I employed basic statistical analysis, deriving from the quantitative presentation of data I did through tables and graphs. A study of this nature would have benefitted immensely from more complex statistical analysis (like SPSS).

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research approach, methodology and methods that I used to collect and analyse data on the coverage of xenophobia research findings in the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan*. Chapter 4 will present the organizational analysis, tracing the history of the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*, and the current print media landscape in South Africa.

Chapter Four: Organizational analysis

4. Introduction

This chapter briefly examines and analyses the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* organizations to get a clear sense of their history, structure and modus operandi within the prevailing South African media landscape and socio-economic and political context. It slightly takes a political economy perspective to comprehend how the content of the two newspapers is influenced by the sources and nature of funding.

4.1 Introduction and historical background

The *Mail & Guardian* is a weekly South African English newspaper that is published every Friday. Initially known as the *Weekly Mail*, The *Mail & Guardian* was launched by a group of retrenched journalists from *Sunday Express* and *Rand Daily Mail* in 1985. The newspaper established itself as an anti-establishment alternative publication, representing the marginalized voices of apartheid South Africa and exposing the plight of the oppressed and poor working class. Unlike many mainstream publications, it maintained its editorial integrity by fighting for its right to freedom of expression and ignoring the heavy hand of PW Botha's government waiting to descend on the alternative press. According to Radebe (2007: 54) "The history of *M&G* reveals a newspaper that emerged from an anti - establishment tradition, that claimed to be practicing a balanced and objective reporting". This was at the heart of the apartheid regime, and its journalists withstood government persecution, earning a global reputation for the newspaper as a voice for the marginalized working class.

The newspaper along with *City Press* and the *Sowetan* are among the few alternative newspapers that survived beyond the apartheid regime. The attainment of democracy however resulted in a shift in the socio-economic and political context that re-positioned both media and civil society activities. According to Radebe (2007), for many anti-apartheid organizations, victory had been achieved and the need for political struggle was over. Many organizations, including the *Mail & Guardian* changed their market identities from being an alternative to a mainstream commercial publication. Radebe further argues that this change

had profound implications for the newspaper particularly on the manner in which it used to report prominent issues like the working class struggle. It remains critical to empirically find out whether the prevailing socio-economic and political conditions have any bearing on the framing of issues and the selection of news and sources by the newspapers.

The *Mail & Guardian* has grown to a circulation of almost 40 000 and a readership of 233 000. According to Mail & Guardian (2005), the newspaper is targeted at 'serious readers', and interested in a critical approach to politics, arts and current affairs (Radebe, 2007). The publication claims that many of its readers are academics, diplomats, professionals, non-governmental groups and lobbyists. At the time of writing, Zimbabwean media mogul Trevor Ncube who bought majority shares (87,5 percent) in 2002 owned the newspaper through a company called Newtrust Company Botswana Limited. Meanwhile, Guardian Newspapers Limited based in London owned 10 percent of the newspaper's shares. Also, Angela Quintal is the newspaper editor; Chris Roper (former Online editor) is the editor-in-chief while Hoosain Karjieker is the CEO.

Meanwhile, the *Sowetan* was founded in 1932 as a weekly newspaper and it grew out of the *Bantu World.* Tomaselli and Louw (1991: 21) argue that the newspaper grew out of "a belief in molding native opinion so that political developments would follow the course of 'reasoned protest' with the ultimate aim of raising the masses to the 'civilised standards' of the white men". Bantu World was changed to *The World* in 1955 (Radebe, 2007) and according to Tomaselli and Louw (1991); it was less critical of the apartheid policies when compared to the *Rand Daily Mail*, a black-targeted newspaper also. The newspaper approached apartheid with little criticism, but rather an approach to make apartheid work towards positive ends for the black people.

Tomaselli (1987) argues that in the early 1970s, a white editorial director in consultation with

the black director decided the newspaper's content. However, the views of the black editor were hardly reflected in the content (Radebe, 2007). The white editorial director had the final say over content and practically avoided political and international news, opting instead for sport, crime and funeral news (Tomaselli, 1987). Argus Group of Newspapers, a white firm, owned the newspaper. This was, from a political economy perspective, a classic example of white capital controlling media operations with regards to content, as the newspaper's reporting remained in disharmony with black aspirations.

In 1973, black journalists critical of *The World*'s editorial policy eventually formed the Union of Black Journalists (UBJ) calling for white owned newspapers to be more sensitive to the aspirations of the black communities they serve. In 1976, Percy Qoboza was appointed the editorial director and he changed the newspaper's editorial policy to better serve black communities and their aspirations. *The World* gained a reputation for its robust political coverage, following Qoboza's appointment (Radebe, 2007). Tomaselli and Louw (1991) have argued that even though the newspaper covered stories that were of black interest, they took a non-partisan approach by not aligning their views and opinions to any political movement.

Following its critical coverage of the 1976 riots, *The World* was banned with its editor Qoboza arrested in 1997. It was replaced by *The Post Transvaal* that was also subsequently closed down in 1980 leading to the birth of the *Sowetan Mirror* in 1981 (Tyson, 1993). That very year, the newspaper came to be known as the *Sowetan* and it changed into a daily newspaper. Come 1994, the newspaper saw as itself as one that serves black interests and strived towards nation building by restoring pride, promoting peace and economic upliftment in African communities (Radebe, 2007). Radebe (2007: 49) sums up the evolution of the Sowetan in these words:

> The history of the *Sowetan* depicts a publication that has evolved from serving the commercial interests of white capital (Argus) to a newspaper that also served the black people of South Africa (especially during apartheid) and has steadily developed from a tolerant critic of apartheid to an anti apartheid newspaper and ultimately to a

relatively less critical and more tolerant critic of the democratic government.

In as much as funding sources have had a bearing on the *Sowetan*'s content historically, socio-political formations and the transition to a democratic South Africa have influenced voluminously the newspaper's content and agenda. The current editor is Mpumelelo Mkhabela.

4.2 Media ownership patterns in South Africa

There are only two foreign owned media players in the South African press, Independent News and Media and the *Mail & Guardian* owned through Newtrust Company Botswana Limited. The *Mail & Guardian* is owned by Trevor Ncube, who is also the owner of two big weeklies in Zimbabwe, namely *The Zimbabwe Independent* and *The Standard*.

Meanwhile, Dr Anthony O'Reilly, an Irish media mogul, owns Independent News and Media, an international media and communications group that have interests in South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, United Kingdom and India (Radebe, 2007). The company owns seven daily newspapers and nine weekly newspapers in seven out of nine provinces in South Africa. According to Radebe (2007), with the exception of owning newspapers in Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces, it remains by far the biggest foreign-owned media player in the country. Here is a table (4.1) by Radebe (2007) to provide a sense of how much the company owns, and an idea of how much relative market share the *Mail & Guardian* has.

Table 4. 1. Newspapers owned by Independent News and Media (Source: Radebe, 2007: 11)

Newspaper	Province	Language	Circulation
Daily Papers			
Cape Argus	Western Cape		

		English	73 206
Cape Times	Western Cape	English	48 774
Daily News	KwaZulu-Natal	English	51 091
Isolezwe	KwaZulu-Natal	Zulu	57 440
Pretoria News	Gauteng/Pretoria	English	26 038
The Mercury	KwaZulu-Natal	English	39 053
The Star	Gauteng	English	164 364
Weeklies			
Post (Wednesday)	KwaZulu-Natal	English	37 592
Post (Weekend)	KwaZulu-Natal	English	49 548
Pretoria News (Sat)	Gauteng/Pretoria	English	27 164
Saturday Argus	Western Cape	English	103 938
Saturday Star	Gauteng	English	136 191
Sunday Argus	Western Cape	English	103 901
Sunday Independent	National	English	40 151
Sunday Tribune	KwaZulu-Natal	English	109 500
The Independent on Saturday	Western Cape	English	308 000

According to Radebe (2007: 12), "Until recently there were four black groups with interest in the print media interest." One of the biggest black owned local players is Johnnic who acquired the *Sowetan* in 2004, and whose market share is better summed by this table.

Table 4.2. Newspapers owned by Johnnic (Source: Radebe, 2007: 12)

Newspaper	Province	Language	Circulation
Daily Papers			
Business Day	National	English	41 653
Daily Dispatch	Eastern Cape	English	32 806
Herald	Eastern Cape	English	36 409
Sowetan	National	English	154 747
Weeklies			
Saturday Dispatch	Eastern Cape	English	32 806
Sunday Times	National	English	506 147
Sunday World	National	English	144 296

Other major white owned players in the South African print media sector are Media 24 and Caxton.

Table 4.3. Newspapers owned by Media 24 (Source: Radebe, 2007: 13)

Newspaper	Province	Language	Circulation
Daily Papers			
Beeld	Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, North West , KwaZulu-Natal	Afrikaans	101 212
Die Burger	Western Cape, Eastern Cape	Afrikaans	106 499
Volksblad	Free State, Limpopo	Afrikaans	28 207
Daily Sun	National	English	283 738
The Witness	KwaZulu-Natal	English	23 477
Weeklies			
Die Burger (Saturday)	Western Cape, Eastern Cape	Afrikaans	93 964
Rapport (Saturday)	National	Afrikaans	338 702
City Press (Sunday)	National	English	188 546
Naweek Beeld (Saturday)	Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, North West, KwaZulu-Natal	Afrikaans	85 039
Sunday Sun	National	English	164 374

Kaapse Son	Western Cape	Afrikaans	100 615
Soccer Laduma	National	English	200 645

Table 4.4 Newspapers owned by Caxton (Source: Radebe 2007: 14)

Newspaper	Province	Language	Circulation
Daily Paper			
The Citizen	Gauteng	English	100 139
Weekly			
The Citizen (Weekend Edition)	Gauteng	English	100 139

4.3 Staff profile in South African newspapers

In order to understand how news content is structured, it is also important to discuss the gendered and racialised dynamics of staffing, especially in the South African context that is historically marred by gender and racial inequality. Radebe (2007) argues that the demographic profile of staff in many newspapers was one of the crucial changes that came with democracy in 1994. Radebe further argues that many editors prior to 1994 were white males, which was both a gendered and racialised situation. However, with the advent of democracy, this changed quite radically. According to MDDA (2000: 20), "By June 2000 there were 12 black editors out of 30 of the country's major daily and weekly mainstream newspapers, of which two were women." This number has most likely increased quite substantially in 2015. The *Mail & Guardian* has a female editor while the *Sowetan* has a male editor.

4.4 The role of advertisers in the South African media

The South African media very much operate in a capitalist environment, thus they are driven by the universal need for profit maximization and value creation for consumers and various stakeholders (Radebe, 2007). One facet of the propaganda model argues, "the dominant media are firmly imbedded in the market system" (Herman, 2003: 2). This aspect crucially speaks to the one filter of media operations that has to do with the role of advertisers in influencing media content. Chomsky (1989: 8) submits that media content reflects "the perspectives and interests of the sellers, the buyers and the product". Herman (2003: 2) argues that by virtue of their financial prowess, non-media big businesses are thus able to influence media operations and content "with threats of withdrawal of advertising".

In other words, this component of the propaganda model as a filter speaks that; in order to remain financially viable, the media sell audiences to advertisers by aligning their content to that which suits advertiser commercial interests. In this way, rather than being guided by the drive to inform, educate and entertain; the media are guided by the need to create content that allows for commercial influence in order not to scare capital that is their latter-day license of operation. As a result, it is important to examine the role of advertisers through a political economy lens in order to find out how they shape print media content and reportage in South Africa.

At the turn of the apartheid era, there was a shift, as alternative media could no longer attract donor funding and advertisers as much as they used to. Civil society oriented funders moved their attention to nation-building projects in line with the new democratically elected government. As a result, in order to remain relevant, profitable and maintain the audience appeal, newspapers like the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* had to increase their advertising revenue by targeting the most financially viable audiences. Radebe (2007) convincingly argues that because the print media has to respond to advertiser needs, publications serving the working class, the poor and the marginalized will always struggle to attract advertisers. For Radebe, and rightly so, this suggests that for a paper to survive, it has to attract the right kinds of readers who have

the money to advertise or buy the advertisers' goods and services. This influences news content and means that newspapers become elitist thereby marginalizing the poor because they are an unprofitable market segment.

Herman and Chomsky (2002) argue that advertising creates editorial pressures that very often translate to political discrimination. Radebe (2007: 30) similarly argues that editorial staff has to "tread carefully" in publishing public interest articles that may create "financial burden" by offending powerful advertisers. Against this, it can be argued that media content is more reflective of the demands of advertisers than those of the public, at the expense of the working class who are incapable economically to challenge the status quo. Such an analysis can be extended to migration exclusion in the popular press.

4.5 Mail & Guardian and Sowetan readership

This section provides a general sense of the readership of the two newspapers under study using the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) Living Standards Measure (LSM). SAARF segments the population according to geographical distribution, education levels and even class. This table, adapted from Radebe (2007: 58) provides a sense of the readership of both newspapers

Table 4.5. SAARF Universal LSM Descriptors for the *M&G* and *Sowetan* in 2001 (Source: Radebe, 2007: 58)

No	Education level	Geographical location	*Sowetan*	*M&G*
1	Illiterate to matric	Kwazulu Natal and Eastern Cape	1.5 %	0%
2	Illiterate to matric	Kwazulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo Province	5.1%	0%
3	Illiterate to matric	Kwazulu Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo Province	13.8%	0.3%
4	Illiterate to matric	All over South Africa but most live in squatter camps,	18%	4.8%

		backyard rooms and hostels		
5	Illiterate to post matric qualification	Home ownership of cheap homes stands at 77% across the country, 4% in squatter camps 3 % in hostels and 2% in backyard rooms.	19.3%	8.6%
6	No illiteracy, 36% has matric and 2% has university degrees.	18% live in Western Cape, 30% in Gauteng and the remaining ones in other provinces	24.4%	19.8%
7	99% possess matric and post matric qualifications	Urban areas and metropoles	9.2%	12.4%
8	Same as group 7	Strong presence in Gauteng and the Western Cape	4.5%	13.1%
9	77% have matric and better (university degrees, etc)	Townhouses, cluster and houses in metropoles	3.2%	20.4%
10	54% are English speakers, 40% Afrikaans speakers. Four in ten have post matric studies. Most are employed as professionals, 22% are self employed and 80% of this group	80% of this group live in metro city areas, 43% in Gauteng, and 21% in the Western Cape. 92% of this group owns conventional houses with swimming pools and 3% owns townhouses and flats	1%	20.6%

	employ live-in domestic workers.			

According to Radebe (2007: 58-59)

> the implication of these LSMs is that *Sowetan* readers are less educated compared to the more educated groups that read the *M&G*. Even though both of these newspapers are English newspapers, it is obvious from the educational level of their readers that *Sowetan* will use a simpler, more straightforward language that will be easier to read and understandable to its readers. On the contrary, *M&G* may want to use the language that is more sophisticated to ensure that it does not bore its educated readers.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has briefly examined and analysed the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* organizations to get a clear sense of their history, structure and modus operandi within the prevailing South African media landscape and socio-economic and political context. Chapters 5 will introduce and deal with the research findings.

Chapter Five: Data presentation and analysis

5. Introduction

In this chapter, I present and analyze the data I collected from my study. First, I present the overall data I gathered from the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*. I then proceed to discuss the findings, first statistically and then thematically.

5.1 Data presentation

First, here is a summary of the data I collected. From the *Mail & Guardian*, I collected 476 articles, out of which 150 were published in 2008, 49 in 2009, 71 in 2010, 51 in 2010, 66 in 2012 and 89 in 2013. Meanwhile, from the *Sowetan*, out of the198 articles I collected, 126 were published in 2008, 20 in 2009, 17 in 2010, 10 in 2010, 14 in 2012 and 7 in 2013.

Second, I proceeded to classify all these publications into four distinct categories for my own purposes using the following markers:

i.   *Reporting migration-* this referred to articles that contained the key search term 'migration' more generally, and included not only human migration but the term in its general sense (e.g. digital migration, bird migration);

ii. *Reporting xenophobia-* this referred to articles that contained the key search term 'xenophobia' more generally, and included instances where reference was made to xenophobia as a phenomenon, not limited to South Africa;

iii. *Letters to the editor-* this referred to letters written by the public to the newspaper editor that could have made reference to either or both key search terms 'migration' and 'xenophobia'; and

iv. *Research reporting-* this referred to articles that reported on research around xenophobia or that used research findings on xenophobia to inform their reportage. They could have made reference to the key search term 'xenophobia' or both the former and 'migration'.

Third, I narrowed my analysis exclusively to the articles that reported on research around xenophobia or that used research around xenophobia in their reporting, which were marked *research reporting*. From the *Mail & Guardian*, only 14 articles fitted this criterion. This was only 12 percent of the newspaper's total coverage of migration issues. Meanwhile, from the *Sowetan*, only 14 articles fitted this criterion. This was only 7 percent of the newspaper's total coverage of migration issues. From these analyses, I was able to employ a Foucauldian critical discourse analysis, purposively analyzing the 'discursive formation' of text and the nature of reporting (see table 5.1 and 5.2 for summation of data).

Table 5.1. Total *Mail & Guardian* coverage of migration and xenophobia issues from 2008 to 2013

Year	*Reporting migration*	*Reporting xenophobia*	*Letters to the editor*	*Research reporting*	**Total editions on migration related issues per year**
2008	69	65	2	14	150
2009	36	10	0	3	49
2010	42	14	0	15	71
2011	34	5	0	12	51
2012	64	0	0	2	66
2013	67	11	0	11	89
Total editions per category	312	105	2	57	476

Table 5.2. Total *Sowetan* coverage of migration and xenophobia issues from 2008 to 2013

Year	*Reporting migration*	*Reporting xenophobia*	*Letters to the editor*	*Research reporting*	Total editions on migration related issues per year
2008	3	100	15	8	126
2009	0	15	0	5	20
2010	2	15	0	0	17
2011	0	9	1	0	10
2012	4	10	0	0	14
2013	1	6	0	0	7
Total editions per category	10	158	16	14	198

5.2 Data analysis and discussion of findings

5.2.1 A case of reactive reporting

From analysing the above data statistically, my first finding was that the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* reported on xenophobia and research findings in a very reactive manner. This was a classic case of reactive reporting. The two newspapers responded to the prevailing conditions, especially prominent hostilities between migrants and locals, which in turn defined the topic's newsworthiness and relevance. For example, in 2008, the *Mail & Guardian* reported more on xenophobia exclusively (69 times) and migration related issues (150 times) than in all subsequent years. This was the year that the first

major xenophobic violence outbreak took place in 21st century South Africa. Similarly, xenophobia related coverage by the *Mail & Guardian* formed 46 percent of the total *Mail & Guardian* coverage of migration related issues, suggesting a reactive interest.

As my data suggests, on 5 June 2008, the *Mail & Guardian* had 16 stories in one publication that reported on xenophobia (without mentioning or referencing research), and the same scenario also took place on 29 June 2008. Again, inferring from the fact that the worst xenophobic violence took place in May and June of 2008, I concluded that this was also reactive reporting that focused on incidences of violence in that month. Not surprising, besides *letters to the editor* that barely count for actual reporting the *research reporting* category has the least number of publications. There are in fact 57 such publications over 5 years, a meager 12 percent of the total coverage of migration related issues by the newspaper. This is a clear indication that journalists did not use much research to inform their coverage, or did not report much on xenophobia research findings. This also suggests a reactive rather than proactive approach to reporting on both xenophobia and research findings by the *Mail & Guardian*.

I also found a similar scenario with the *Sowetan*'s coverage of xenophobia and research findings. In 2008, the newspaper reported more on xenophobia exclusively (100 times) than in all subsequent years. Xenophobia related coverage from the *Sowetan* formed 51 percent of the newspaper's total coverage of migration related issues. As my data suggests, on 21 June 2008, the *Mail & Guardian* had 11 stories in one publication that reported on xenophobia (without mentioning or referencing research), and the same scenario also took place on 20 May 2008. Even when compared to *letters to the editor*, the *research reporting* category had the least number of publications sitting at 14 such publications over 5 years, a meager 7 percent of the newspaper's total reporting of migration related issues. This is also a clear indication that journalists did not use much research to inform their coverage, or did not report much on xenophobia research findings. As with the *Mail & Guardian*, these trends suggest a reactive rather than proactive approach to reporting on both xenophobia and research findings

This is an interesting finding. "Readers use the important clues that accompany the news to organize their own catalogue of interests, in a process of 'transference of salience' from the media agenda to the public agenda" (Borges, 2010: 223). Scheufele (1999: 105) states that mass media actively set the frames of reference that readers or viewers use to interpret and discuss public events in so doing constructing their own individual frames. The media also play a proactive role in the creation of frames by giving salience to certain issues which ultimately determines what amount of knowledge audiences have at their disposal in making meaning out of their individual frames.

This argument is key in analysing this finding. It suggests that when the press use frames that are 'barren' of migration evidence in reporting xenophobia, they reduce the decoder's chances to appropriately use their 'individual frames' in a way that is not limited to what they already know. Most South Africans' perceptions on xenophobia are based on stereotypes and assumptions. When more press articles are informed by frames of what is commonly known (myth and popular perception) without including empirical evidence, the press become complicit in further excluding migrants in South Africa.

Against this finding, using critical discourse analysis, I argue that when the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* conveniently chose when and when not to use xenophobia research in their reporting, they became part of a certain political agenda that aims to selectively and reactively use knowledge to reconsolidate state political power, order and preserve the 'rainbow nation'. Foucault argues that, "not only is knowledge always a form of power, but power is implicated in the questions of whether and in what circumstances knowledge is to be applied or not" (Hall, 1997: 76). This invokes the concept of ideology defined by Thompson (1990) as meaning constructed in the service of power. This is extremely relevant because mediated ideology has been used by the South African state through the media (like the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan*) to mobilise a range of meanings and practices to establish and sustain relations of domination (Chimni, 2000).

5.2.2 Reporting 'using' findings and not 'on' findings

This was one of the most prominent emerging themes, especially as I sought to remain relevant to my research questions in analyzing the data I collected. One of the key findings encompassed in this theme is that the *Mail & Guardian* did not report on xenophobia research exclusively or objectively. Essentially, this interpretation led me to the conclusion that between 2008 and 2013, the *Mail & Guardian* did not report 'on' findings, but instead it only reported 'using' findings. The newspaper made reference to research in order to qualify or disqualify certain viewpoints, in a rather convenient and newsworthy aspirant manner. From 2008 to 2013, I argue that the newspaper took an 'interdisciplinary' approach to reporting on xenophobia research findings. In contrast, the *Sowetan* reported on xenophobic incidences more exclusively but barely used research findings or reported on them. Between 2008 and 2013, the *Sowetan* did not report 'on' findings, but instead it reported 'using' findings, in a very limited manner however.

First, the *Mail & Guardian* made reference to research findings in order to 'build a story' connected to other proceedings. In other words, the newspaper tended to use research evidence on xenophobia to ground a totally different story on empirical validity. Here is a classic example of one such scenario. On 5 June 2008, the newspaper published an article headlined *Xenophobia: Business in Africa set to take a dive*. This article was concerned with how South African business "was set to take a dive" "following the wave of xenophobic attacks against foreigners in the past few weeks". It was mainly interested in South African business operations in other countries and its possible plight in the light of xenophobia. In passing, it made brief reference to a particular piece of xenophobia research findings from ISS. The journalist, in an interview with one Macozoma, a businessman and president of Business Leadership South Africa, wrote:

> "These attacks will have serious implications for South African business in other countries. Standard Bank's personnel has been threatened in Mozambique," he told the *Mail & Guardian*. "Doing business on the continent is going to be harder." Macozoma cited an Institute for Security Studies assessment of the situation, which states: "What we have seen is what some have termed a perfect storm- the coming together of pent- up frustrations over poor service delivery, lack of leadership and the legacy of apartheid". "If you add into that witch's brew

the culture of violence and general criminality, you have a potent cocktail of explosive material," said Macozoma.

From this except, using critical discourse analysis, I deduced that there was no prima facie interest in reporting on xenophobia research findings per se or in an objective manner. Rather, the article and the news source only made reference to the xenophobia research findings in order to qualify a particular existing viewpoint, paradigm and discourse. As such, the journalist suggested a variegated and multifaceted way of seeing the world, wherein empirics were only used to meet the objective standards of social critique. In this regard, it is safe to argue that there was little interest from the newspaper to report on the research itself, but only to use it as a reference point and most probably create 'moral panic'. As argued by Boin (2004, cited in Lindley 2014: 6) "Political actors may be very active in the construction of a crisis, typically because it serves to justify, or reorient the dominant policy agenda in ways they deem desirable."

I also found this theme outstanding in many other articles. In the excerpt I chose below from the *Mail & Guardian*, my analysis of the whole article led me to the conclusion that certain stories only made reference to research within the set parameters of the 'media frame' in question and the journalist's agenda (which political economy suggests may be informed by politics and economics). In a story headlined *Copy-cat ethnic cleansing* published on 22 May 2008, the journalist only made reference to xenophobia research findings against a certain premise. Researchers as sources were almost only called upon to validate the journalist's viewpoint, instead of objectively unpacking research findings and discussing them independently, against the context they exist in. Also, it is only in the second column of the story that a researcher was called upon to provide their view, against an already existent premised lead, paradigm and discourse. The journalist wrote:

Xenophobia may have been the spark that set Ajax alight this week, but joblessness, crime, a lack of service delivery and soaring prices provided the kindling. Loren Landau of the Forced Migration Studies programme at the University of the Witwatersrand points out that "in some instances, leaders have blamed foreigners to deflect criticism around the lack of jobs and service delivery". Lashing out at foreigners is rather like domestic violence, he says: "A

man who loses his job may go home and beat his wife. He'll feel better for five minutes, but in the morning his wife is bruised and he still doesn't have a job."

The journalist firstly provided their own premise that "joblessness, crime, alack of service delivery and soaring prices provided the kindling", and then validated this viewpoint with a solicited quote in order to justify their argument. In this regard, I argue that the *Mail & Guardian*, or at least in this instance, did not represent research findings objectively or explicitly but only used them as a point of reference and qualification, conveniently framed. The journalist, in this case, preferred the active voice of the researcher, over simply 'throwing in' statistics or actively reporting on a single piece of research.

I further observed that, instead of the *Mail & Guardian* themselves reporting explicitly and proactively on pieces of research, in some instances, they gave researchers space to write opinion pieces or special columns, in order to put some of their findings across. This allowed for researchers to objectively voice out their research, not simply against incidences and existing viewpoints, as was the case in the findings I discussed in earlier paragraphs. I would also argue from my interpretation that the language and tone was very different from instances where journalists would report using findings. Here is an excerpt from an article headlined *Xenophobia: No one is safe*, written by two scholars from ACMS, then FMSP:

> This week the International Organisation for Migration launched a report on the violence and responses to it. With research conducted by the Forced Migration Studies Programme at Wits, it argues that the violence is rooted in the antisocial politics of life in our townships and informal settlements. Based on almost 300 interviews across the country, it shows that local leaders mobilized the violence to claim and consolidate power and further their economic and political interests. There was no third force.

Besides the technocratic language, there was in this article a strong ownership of claims and voice such as "There was no third force". This differs hugely from the second excerpt I cited earlier in this section. This difference also speaks to different agendas and different appeals to knowledge as the journalist in the earlier case only appealed to knowledge to substantiate their premise. Whereas, in this case, the newspaper created the

impression that, researchers are themselves the best to write about their own research. In this regard, it seems to me that it was more 'productive' for researchers to report their findings first hand rather than to rely on journalists, who often used research in an a manner that is expedient to professional concerns of newsworthiness and political correctness.

There are exceptions however, where the newspaper reported research findings through a journalist, while at the same time allowing the researcher to have voice in the story. A case in point is an article published on 11 September 2008 under the headline *A heritage that shames us*. Unlike other stories I analysed in earlier passages, this story took a more biographical tone and immediately allowed the researcher a voice in its progression. The introduction itself is evidence enough:

> The idealism of South Africa's anti-apartheid struggle is in danger of dissolving in the acid of pragmatism, warns Darshan Vigneswaran, a fellow at Wits University's forced migration programme. The country's woes make citizens think they cannot afford to be generous, especially to immigrants seeking a better life. But Vigneswaran who studies migration and xenophobia, points out a complexity: the country's past- steeped in the idea of universal brotherhood- pulls in the opposite direction

There is a notable distinction in the way the journalist involved the researcher in this story, different from earlier excerpts. However, this appreciation does not absolve such text from critique. I argue that, nonetheless, the journalist's assumptions cannot be divorced from this representation of research even in such researcher-journalist 'intimate' reporting. For example, this journalist suggested that because of the country's woes, citizens think, "they cannot afford to be generous". However, this statement was based on the journalists' own assumption that tolerance conflates generosity, which is not necessarily the fact or the researcher's own independent view.

In sum, of all the three facets of research representation presented and analysed here, I conclude that between 2008 and 2013, the *Mail & Guardian* did not exclusively or objectively report on xenophobia research findings. I am made to even question the

existence of such a practice as objective reporting, given that there will always be a voice behind text that is informed by working standards and professionalism (e.g. newsworthiness), personal motives and viewpoints and socio-economic and political context. I safely conclude from these analyses that, the *Mail & Guardian* did not report 'on' findings, but instead it reported 'using' findings, in the few instances that research was actually covered.

5.2.3 Tension between empirical knowledge and popular perceptions

One of the key findings I found emerging from this theme is that there was clear tension between empirical knowledge and popular perceptions in the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* media discourse between 2008 and 2013. Articles in the *Mail & Guardian* that were either written by scholars or that cited research seemed to always suggest a contrary belief system to public and political discourse. As I argued in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, there is anecdotal evidence of strong polarity between popular perceptions and research in South Africa, wherein 'indigenous locals' see foreign migrants negatively even though evidence suggests that migrants are positive contributors. This contestation is nowhere seen clearer than in some press articles of the newspapers under study.

The first article I analysed from the *Mail & Guardian* was published on 5 June 2008 in the comments section, headlined *The curse of African nationalism* and written by researcher Ivor Chipkin. Chipkin took an approach that is more critical of government denialism to xenophobic violence and its responses to xenophobia, which he argued was not impressive. He aggressively began:

> Government's knee-jerk reaction to the pogroms that swept across the country speaks volumes to the politics of African nationalism. *We were told* they were criminal acts in the service of a "third force" agenda. This last term has a particular saliency in the South African context. It refers to white, apartheid agents, working through black stooges to provoke violence and war in black communities. (Italics mine)

I strongly put emphasis on Chipkin's use of the phrase "We were told", in this excerpt. It critically suggests the presence of 'another voice' in this text, a pretext of sorts, and another actor who had been saying something contrary to the reality of empirics (again suggesting the inter-textuality at play). In other words, it implies that there was a competing set of discourses in approaching xenophobia at the time, one of which was in strong opposition to research findings by virtue of its political appeal and expediency. Chipkin proceeded further by arguing:

> The inability to come to terms with the agency of black people is, ironically, the hallmark of African nationalism. It is driven to reduce the actions of blacks to the machinations of others (white racists in particular). Claims of a "third force' are merely instances of this political logic- a refusal to come to terms with the racist nationalism of those committing ethnic cleansing throughout the country.

The second excerpt also suggests that some actors (who have been mentioned in my literature review) were making claims of a "third force" in order to expediently undermine black agency and blame xenophobia instead on the "machinations" of white racists. It is quite clear here that there was no consensus between empirical knowledge and popular perceptions, in this case government ones.

An article published in the *Sowetan* on 4 September 2008 under the headline *Xenophobia deepens* presented similar tensions between research and government popular perceptions. Then president Thabo Mbeki strongly denied that the violent attacks were xenophobic, arguing instead that they were criminal. In a clear ring of denial, he was quoted as saying "When I heard some accuse my people of xenophobia, of hatred of foreigners, I wondered what the accusers knew of my people, which I did not know." This is interesting. Mbeki used inclusive and exclusive phrases like "my people", to disregard the existence of xenophobia in the country, while by implication he suggested that there is such as a thing as 'his people' and 'other people'. His speech revolved around the dangerous dichotomy of insider-outsider.

In that same article, the journalist managed to present research findings by HSRC and ISS showing that a majority of South Africans were in fact xenophobic to disprove Mbeki's denialist claims. Here is an excerpt:

> Research conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Institute for Security Studies I n 1996 and 1997 showed that South Africans were becoming more xenophobic in their attitudes towards migrants generally and illegal immigrants in particular. The survey showed that almost two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) believed that illegal immigration was "bad" or "very bad" for the country.

Again, this analysis suggests that there was strong tension between xenophobia research findings and popular perceptions in the *Sowetan*.

In an article published in the *Mail & Guardian* on 12 June 2008 headlined *Sanco chief in war over RDP houses*, there was an overt contestation between empirical and popular discourse in the text. Locals in the Western Cape township of Du Noon had been repeatedly blaming foreigners for supposedly 'stealing' their RDP housing. As a result, foreigners had been targeted in xenophobic attacks. However, the notion that foreigners were stealing RDP housing belonging to locals was a pure case of scapegoating through myth, stereoptypes and popular perception, as later proved by Richard Dyanti through a fact-finding mission. The *Mail & Guardian* reported:

> ANC MP Rose Sonto, also the head of the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) in the Western Cape, this week repeated unsubstantiated allegations that foreigners are buying government subsidized houses and forcing South Africans to live in shacks. …Following the allegations, the provincial minister of housing, Richard Dyanti, went on a fact-finding mission to Du Noon. Dyanti and 32 officials conducted a door-to-door investigation of 500 houses in the township, and discovered that only one was owned by a foreigner.

Again, this and the earlier excerpt suggest that popular perceptions and research findings were not at par or in agreement in the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* media discourse. These two were polarized and in continuous contestation. This contentions becomes clear

through Sonto who remained convinced, despite evidence to the contrary, that foreign migrants were 'stealing' local RDP housing as he was quoted in his speech saying:

> With no apology, I must say, in what many would regard as being xenophobic, when laying bare the dangerous problem that is creeping into our democracy…many houses in various localities whose refugee status is unknown to us as citizens of this country.

The *Sowetan* also reported an almost similar story on the topic of foreigners 'stealing' RDP housing from locals on 4 June 2008, headlined *Corruption fans the anger*. In this article, the journalist did not attempt to use empirical research to prove whether the claim that foreigners steal migrant housing was true or not. This is also not surprising given the little amount of research used in overall xenophobia coverage by the newspaper.

In an article headlined *Are patriotic fervor and xenophobia two sides of the same coin?* published in the *Mail & Guardian* on 8 July 2010, the writer used research findings by the Gauteng City Region Observatory to disprove popular notions that xenophobic practices and attitudes are the preserve of the poor. The writer stated that "69% of residents have xenophobic attitudes" and "there are no significant differences between the various race, class and other groupings."

In another article titled 'Putting out 'fire next time'' published in the *Mail & Guardian* on 22 February 2010, there was strong evidence of the tensions that exist between discourse of empirical knowledge and popular public perception. While the writer presented evidence from FMSP at Wits University arguing that "immigrants, even "at the bottom of the heap" help to create employment opportunities for South Africans rather than taking away their jobs"; this did not sit well with an 18 year old South African featured in the article. This 'indigenous local' "expressed the standard sentiment: "They must go back to their countries. They do not belong in South Africa." One lady was further quoted as saying "These foreign people come to South Africa with nothing, but tomorrow he has cash, third day he owns a shop and fourth day he has a car. Where do these foreign people get this money?" Besides exposing the tensions between discourses, I am also

critical of the writer's standpoint. The writer stated that perhaps "this makes perfect sense" for people who have just came out of apartheid expecting a better life. I argue that such reporting subtly justified xenophobia, and gave it a moral and rational foothold, ultimately giving salience to the discourse of migrant apathy.

This is a totally different situation when compared to an article written by two FMSP researchers on 8 September 2011 in the *Mail & Guardian*, under the headline *Evicted Somali traders cry foul*. Writing on proceedings in Middelburg, Mpumalanga, at no point did the researchers sanitize xenophobia, or allow themselves to be subjective to the issue at hand. Instead, they allowed their news sources to confront each other through their dissenting views. In one instance, without any form of subjective premise or postscript, the writers quoted Othniel Phasha, chair of the Middelburg Small Business Community Forum representing South African shop owners:

> "Why should townships become dumping sites where foreign people come to promote lawlessness, instead of promoting these townships to the level of the town? If the townships become dumping ground for foreigners, protected by the police, I've got a problem with that."

By not suggesting any rationality behind such comments, the writers allowed the competing discourses to contest without prioritizing a particular point of view. In contrast, the *Sowetan* only had one article on xenophobia that was actually written by a researcher in between 2008 and 2013 (*Discontent runs deep*, 6 June 2008), validating my argument that the newspaper used little research and did not give researchers any active voice in its coverage of migration related issues.

5.3 Discussion of findings

Glasgow University Media Group (1976) argues that the structures of headlines, leads and the overall selection of newsworthy topics are indirectly controlled by the societal context of power relations. The three main findings presented by my study suggest that power relations indirectly control the overall selection of news. Migration discourse, by

its marginalized and contentious nature is one such site of power contestations. This justifies my extension to structural-analysis. As Parker (2004: 150) convincingly argues, "we have to be aware of the ways in which the meanings we study are always produced in their relationship to other texts, the way they are 'intertextual'".

Foucault's theory of discourse, power and knowledge is nowhere more relevant and formidable a framework. Foucault provided an analytical paradigm that allowed this study to conceptualise the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan* as 'technologies of power and domination' (Foucault, 1982). This concept was evident in three of my main findings. My first finding suggested that the two newspapers reported on xenophobia and research findings reactively. Using Foucault's theory of knowledge and power which states that "knowledge is always inextricably enmeshed in relations of power because it [is] always being applied to the regulation of social conduct in practice" to particular bodies (Hall, 1997: 75), I argue that this reactive mediation of xenophobia and xenophobia research findings is inextricably related to dynamics of political power and broader formations. The marginality of science in popular discourse, except in times of crisis implicitly suggests that the media in question are in cahoots with power systems and structures in the country, vested interests and attempts to refrain from regulating social conduct in the everyday practices (of institutionalized xenophobia) of South African 'bodies' as this is detrimental to nation building. In sum, I argue that the two newspapers use knowledge selectively, expediently and through the indirect influence of narratives of the South African nationalist project and identity, which for Alegi (2010) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011) remains elusive.

My second finding is that the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan* do not report 'on' findings (exclusively or objectively). Rather, they report 'using' findings. These are different forms of coverage altogether. By reporting using findings and not on findings, the two newspapers allow themselves more voice in representing research, at times at the expense of the researcher's voice. This facilitates the prevalence of their own discourses, sometimes at the expense and marginalization of other voices, including those of migrants and researchers.

Hall on Foucault (1997: 72) defines discourse as "a group of statements which provide a language for talking about- a way of representing the knowledge about- a particular topic at a particular historical moment". The ways in how the press represents xenophobia research findings undoubtedly provide a language (discourse) for talking about the topic at a certain time. Thus Foucault (1972) becomes key to this finding. He argues that nothing has any meaning outside of discourse, and in as much as "physical things and action exists … they only take meaning and become objects of knowledge within discourse" (Hall, 1972: 73). Empirical knowledge and scientific evidence about xenophobia only have meaning within discourse (a way of talking about the issue) while knowledge is produced within discourse and not within the things themselves (Hall, 1997). Through this mediation of migration research, media language of the two newspapers produces 'second order-knowledge' about 'first-order knowledge' embedded in media frames. As a result, the message the audience receives becomes a representation of a re-presentation (empirical knowledge) achieved through two processes: one of media representation and the other of individual interpretation embedded within individual frames.

Last, my third finding shows that there was tension and polarization between empirical knowledge and popular tensions in the coverage of xenophobia research findings by the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*. This contestation is a clear textual reproduction of the identity politics and xenophobia denialism that exists in South African popular discourse, practice and social interactions. Some of the articles I analysed echo the South African Police Service's response to the violence in protecting victims, which was quite ambivalent and left a lot to be desired (Polzer and Takabvirwa, 2010). The articles also reiterate the Thabo Mbeki regime's denialist stance to xenophobia by underplaying the attacks as criminal (Landau, 2011). Mbeki went as far as arguing that there is no xenophobia in the country (Amisi et al., 2010) despite empirical findings to the contrary.

There is a general consensus in the literature I reviewed that the tendency by public officials

in South Africa to reduce xenophobia to criminality is a long-standing discourse in the country, more profoundly within the police service (Polzer and Takabvirwa, 2010). It aims at sustaining other discourses beside those of a xenophobic crisis. This observation reiterates Lindley's (2014:6) argument that "political actors may promulgate a 'business-as-usual' or non-crisis discourse, seeking to deny or *minimise empirical experiences* and objective indicators of severe threat and discontinuity" (italics mine). Similarly, Landau (2011) and Nyar (2010) have shown that much of the blame for xenophobia was placed on a 'third force'. For Lindley (2014), this is an argument often used by states to dismiss systematic violence as merely crime by insulated elites. All these facets were evident in this last finding.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the research data and dealt with the research findings. The following chapter provides the conclusion, providing recommendations based on the findings of the study.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

6. Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion, providing recommendations to various relevant stakeholders based on the findings of the study.

6.1 Concluding remarks

This study has attempted to investigate the coverage of xenophobia research findings in the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*, 2008 to 2013. Using a neo-Foucauldian theoretical framework that allows an analysis of the discursive formation of xenophobia, this study is interested in the text and power relations that implicitly influence the production of such text in the South African press. This study also uses a mixed methods approach that accommodates both critical discourse analysis and basic statistical analysis.

Through this research I have tried to unpack the various dynamics surrounding xenophobia research findings coverage in South Africa, where migration and xenophobia are ostensibly contentious issues. By taking a distinctively structural and critical approach to media coverage, my research allows for a better understanding of the power relations that shape knowledge mediation and discourses in South Africa.

This study has centred on three questions:

  i.   How have migration research findings on xenophobia been covered in the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*?

  ii.   What is the role and place of these xenophobia research findings in South African media discourses?

  iii. Are the two newspapers under study in unison in mediating these research findings?

Through this research I have come to understand that xenophobia research is largely marginalized in the South African popular press, particularly in the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan*. The press as an actor are undoubtedly implicated in the exacerbation of

xenophobia in South Africa through what can be termed marginalisation by both inclusion and exclusion. This is to say where the media include migrants in their coverage; it is largely for all the negative reasons whereas in most instances they do not report about migrants at all.

My other observation has been that the media wittingly and unwittingly exacerbate xenophobia in South Africa by ignoring xenophobia as a daily occurrence and ignoring knowledge and empirical evidence that can be used to argue in popular discourse that migrants are indeed positive contributors to the socio-economic fabric of the country, what I have called 'implicit-complicity'. Indeed the South African press under study proactively constructs an "immigration crisis" through their coverage whereas they only consistently heed to xenophobia and the evidence thereof when it turns violent. In that regard, their coverage is also expediently reactive in the construction of "xenophobic crisis".

Using a Foucauldian approach qualified by reviewed media theories of representation and framing that allow for intertextuality, this study has shown that the press conveniently construct and sustain two competing and polarised discourses; one of an "immigration crisis" and the other of "xenophobic crisis". This is inextricably tied with the South African nation-building project wherein "immigration crisis" as a proactive discourse is meant to include citizens by justifying restrictive immigration policies and rationalising xenophobia. The reactive discourse of "xenophobic crisis" is functionally mobilised when violence challenges state monopoly over the use of force to an extent detrimental to the image of 'rainbow nation'. This is seen in the ways in how institutional and structural xenophobia that migrants are exposed to everyday are ignored in much of the press coverage studied here.

Both polarised discourses as constructions of crises undoubtedly create "political opportunity structures" or what Foucault called "conditions of possibility" for different actors at different times. As aforementioned, the discourse of an immigration crisis is

seen as functional to the nation building project and allows the state to implement justifiable immigration restrictions on foreigners through the creation of moral panic of an outside threat to the national order of things. This interval is marked by little opportunity for civil society to lobby open-border policies and freer movement using empirical evidence. Civil society in these times is less able to mobilise financially and intellectually to an extent large enough to warrant any change.

Meanwhile, the other discourse of "xenophobic crisis" creates better "political opportunity structures" and awakens "universes of political discourse" that allow civil society groups to name and shame the state for not doing enough towards migrants. This interval is marked by high migrant-sensitive press coverage, campaigns and high demand for research that proves that migrants are indeed important to the South African socio-economic fabric, and xenophobia is not good. In these times, we see the popular press playing a huge role in the construction of "xenophobic crisis". However, because of the inconsistent nature of this coverage that focuses solely on xenophobia as if it were only a violent phenomenon, the media become an agent in the existing power systems that help maintain structure. Indeed there is need for the press in South Africa to report more consistently and positively on immigration issues using knowledge and evidence to shape public opinion in a manner that ultimately influences belief systems responsible for the restrictive immigration policies and migrant apathy that we continue to see in South Africa today.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 To the *Mail & Guardian* and the *Sowetan*

- The *Mail & Guardian* and more especially the *Sowetan* should report more consistently and positively on immigration and xenophobia issues using knowledge and evidence to shape public opinion in a manner that ultimately

influences belief systems responsible for the restrictive immigration policies and migrant apathy in South Africa;

- The editors of the *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* must create a migration reporting desk and encourage journalists to report using facts that are substantiated by empirical research findings;

- The *Mail & Guardian* and *Sowetan* must incentivise responsible journalism for migration reporting with the help of the academy and civil society through awards in order to promote objective and ethical journalism; and

- The two newspapers must discourage and where possible punish negative representations of migrants that are not empirically substantiated , that thrive on stereotypes and that amount to hate speech.

6.2.2 To researchers
- Researchers on migration and xenophobia must make their research more accessible to journalists, especially if it is a popular area of interest; and

- Researchers must take advantage of social media to use participatroy methods of communicating research to a wider audience, and refrain from using over technocratic language for the benefit of the public.

6.3 Conclusion

This study has filled the gap in understanding the coverage of xenophobia research findings in South Africa. Hopefully, it will build into a body of scholarship that tries to comprehend the interplay of discourse, knowledge and power through the media in contemporary society.

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