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A Discursive Analysis of the Construction of Afrophobia
in *TimesLive*, *News24* and *Independent Online* in South
Africa, 2019 - 2022

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS), School of Applied Human Sciences, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College), Durban, South Africa.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

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Date: 7 February 2024

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Date: 7 February 2024

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Glory to JAH one creator!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this PhD thesis to my late parents Andrew Andrea Piroro and Monica Rondina Piroro.

ABSTRACT

Immigration has become a global phenomenon where nearly half of the world's populations are refugees, migrants or asylum seekers. However, the representation of black African migrants has not been fair and balanced leading to studies outlining the negative representation of migrants in the media. Previous scholarship has explored how such reporting could be deemed xenophobic. This study is specifically interested in the phenomenon of Afrophobia, defined as fear of black people or systematic discrimination against people with African ancestry (Dube, 2019).

This study explores the representation of black African migrants in *Timeslive*, *News24* and *IOL* news sites and how the reporting language may be used in the construction of Afrophobic sentiments. The study utilises content analysis to gather data. A total of 66 news articles were purposively selected from the three news sites. The data is grouped according to emerging themes: illegality, undocumented migrants, job takers, criminals and drug dealers.

Critical discourse analysis is used to analyse the discursive portrayal of black African migrants. The focus of the analysis is on how Afrophobia is problematised and transformed into a discursive crisis through the construction of anti-immigrant themes. Representation theory and post-colonial theory conceptually guide this study.

Although the findings of this study generally support earlier studies which argue that the media representation of black Africans is negative, the critical discourse analysis also revealed sympathetic representations available in the news. The study's unique contributions are that it explores the Afrophobic sentiments manifested as prejudices and stereotypes, and systemic discrimination faced by foreign nationals in South Africa, through the online news as they are depicted as criminals, drug dealers and illegal or undocumented people, blamed for social ills in South Africa. It also reveals positive reporting where black African migrants are portrayed as entrepreneurs, employing the local population and adding value to the economy. However, the negative homogenous reporting of black African migrants is still prevalent.

Keywords: Afrophobia, Black African migrant, Discourse, Online News, Representation, South Africa, Xenophobia

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CA	Content Analysis
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
SA	South Africa
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation SOC Limited
SAPA	South African Press Association
SAQA	The South African Qualifications Authority
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
TA	Thematic Analysis

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Chapter 1: A construction of Afrophobia in South Africa in the news: Background and Context

Introduction

In recent years, numerous academic fields have paid close attention to research on xenophobia in South Africa (Danso & McDonald, 2001; Crush, 2008; Pineteh, 2017; Tarisayi & Manik 2020; Kariithi *et al*, 2017; Dube, 2019). The growth of populist political forms in most political spaces, which openly use Afrophobic rhetoric and symbolise an antipathy to any kind of ‘other’ is the bases for the necessity of this study (Karlsson, 2009).

There are several factors that likely explain the increase in Afrophobic or xenophobic investigations, including the effects of the severe economic downturn and the competition on the job market caused by ‘others,’ the exacerbation of the refugee crisis, which has increased the number of migrants in the continent (Pineteh, 2017).

South Africa's image abroad has been harmed by the horrifying acts of prejudice on foreigners (Xenophobia) that took place there in 2008, 2015, 2016, and 2018 and 2022 (Fokou *et al*, 2022). The so-called "rainbow nation," an extraordinary example of an African progressive democracy, is no longer thought to be the destination for black African migrants (Tagwirei, 2019; Pineteh, 2017). Current post-apartheid problems like violent crime, unemployment, and poverty are frequently attributed to the growing immigrant population in South Africa. Ironically, those who perpetrated xenophobic crimes primarily attacked black African migrants who were already weak, and what has been labeled xenophobia may be more correctly termed Afrophobia or ‘black on black racism’ (Mbembe, 2015: 2). Whereas other scholars such as Zhang and Xiong (2019) label such acts as horizontal violence where negative, damaging behaviors are built within the same people. Usually motivated by verbal and emotional abuse, its goal is to isolate and exclude the target.

A new term for attacks and discrimination against black African migrants residing in South Africa is necessary, according to Tagwirei, (2019) especially considering the country’s violent outbursts in September 2019. Unlike the current violent outbreaks in various South African

districts, xenophobia has been around for decades. The continued outbreaks of violence in 2022 have highlighted the fact that black foreign nationals are being targeted, indicating a black-on-black racial component to xenophobia. “The concept of Afrophobia which has been highlighted as a peculiarity with predominantly Africans targeting other Africans” (Tarisayi and Manik (2019: 7). In sum, “xenophobic attacks in South Africa target mostly Africans, thus the use of the term Afrophobia to mean the dislike or fear of Africans by South Africans” (Mbecke 2015: 74).

Waiganjo (2017) instead proposed the term ‘xenophobia-Afrophobia’ to unravel the complexities offered by violence against African migrants. The term ‘xenophobia-Afrophobia’ acknowledges that there is prejudice, fear, and violence against outsiders, much of it is directed against visitors from other African nations. The term Afrophobia is used in this study to explore the nature of online reporting of African migrants of African descent living in South Africa. Given that the majority of the victims of the recent violent outbursts in South Africa were other black Africans from other parts of the continent, Long *et al.* (2015) suggest that the term Afrophobia may be the most appropriate to describe these acts.

Afrophobia may be constructed through language and perpetuated by the media, for example how newspapers report about black African migrants (Fokou *et al.*, 2022). The narrative that is produced by news stories plays a crucial role in communicating either negative or positive image of migrants in South Africa (Landau, 2011; Long *et al.*, 2015). The South African media has portrayed black African migrants negatively, calling them job thieves, criminals, thugs, and illegal immigrants (Kariithi *et al.*, 2017; Mawadza, 2012). Hence according to Landau (2011) newspapers create stories justifying the murder of black African migrants as a cleansing ritual that is necessary for South African societies.

This research aims to investigate how online news sites disclose incidents of violence against African migrants living in South Africa. The researcher using qualitative data from print media stories, decipher how the creation and fusion of news articles about immigrants and Afrophobia have influenced the violence on African migrants in South Africa.

Considering this, the researcher became interested in examining the ways in which the media, especially digital news sites, may discursively construct Afrophobic sentiments.

Xenophobia and Afrophobia: What is the difference?

Xenophobia

Xenophobia has existed throughout Africa since the 1960s. For example, “Ghana's Prime Minister, Kofi Busia, enacted the Aliens Compliance Order (also known as the Aliens Order) in November 1969, with the intention of expelling unauthorized aliens from Ghana” (Sempijja & Mongale, 2022: 4). “The Aliens Order required aliens who lacked work permits [to] get them within two weeks or leave the country” (Gocking, 2005: 156). This law was precipitated by widespread conceptions of immigrants as the source of Ghana's existing high unemployment rates, which remained a source of contention among Ghanaians (Sempijja & Mongale, 2022).

Former President Bédié developed the concept of “Ivoirite in Côte d'Ivoire in the 1990s as a means of responding to the country's worsening economic status and aimed to tie Ivorian identity into socioeconomic and political access” (Sempijja & Mongale 2022: 4). This idea fueled hatred toward foreigners and led to divisions in Cote d'Ivoire. Human Rights Watch¹ (2001) reports that in 1999, between 8,000 and 12,000 Burkinabe citizens were forcibly removed from Côte d'Ivoire due to ongoing conflicts between the two groups. According to Sempijja and Mongale (2022), the Tanzanian authorities deported over 11 000 unauthorised African migrants in 2013. This action was taken to free the nation of criminal elements. (Adeola, 2015), but prior to the expulsion, Tanzania's President had set unauthorised foreigners a two-week deadline to leave the country (Adeola, 2015).

Several academics have studied the subject of xenophobia. Xenophobia has always been a source of tension in social relationships and cohabitation, claims Adebisi (2017). “The name ‘xenophobia’ derives from the Greek phrases *xenos* ('stranger' or 'guest') and *phobos* ('flight' or

¹ Human Rights Watch is an international non-governmental organization headquartered in New York City that conducts research and advocacy on human rights. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/>. [Accessed 20 July 2020].

'fear')” (Adebisi, 2017: 84). The word refers to a dislike for people of other ethnicity or culture (Mthombeni, 2022). Fayomi *et al*, (2015) define xenophobia as the fear or hostility that a person has toward migrants who reside in their country. Some scholars, however, define “it as attack and violent encounters against immigrants who are inhabitants of the country, going beyond mere expressions of fury, contempt, or dislike” (Adebisi & Agagu, 2017: 135).

For this study, the researcher uses a broad definition of xenophobia to describe attitudes, beliefs, and behavior that reject those that are deemed to be different and from a different country (Mlambo, 2023). Numerous academics (Steenkamp, 2009; Solomon & Kosaka, 2013; Tella, 2016) and experts in related fields have diligently undertaken Afrocentric analyses aimed at scrutinizing the reasons (from the perspective of the government as well as other internal and external players) behind the continued violence against migrants, especially in post-apartheid South Africa. This is grounded in the fact that, despite 29 years of democracy in South Africa, violence against other African citizens has remained the dominant force.

The intentional marginalisation and deprivation of black South Africans throughout the colonial and apartheid centuries is also connected to the problem of xenophobia in post-apartheid South Africa (Tewolde, 2020). Violence against the African Other is a manifestation of the historical exclusion of black South Africans from society during apartheid. Black South Africans have historically been excluded from social equality, economic opportunity, and political power. In post-apartheid South Africa xenophobia has prejudices of the in group (local) and outer group (foreigners) (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023).

Regardless of physical attributes, xenophobia, in South Africa, most often specifically targets black African migrants living in a given community. For instance, apartheid and colonialism had a significant impact on racism, whereas African immigration from other countries has an impact on xenophobia (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023). In South Africa (and throughout Africa), attacks on perceived outsiders or foreign nationals are sometimes reported as xenophobia. In most cases, this categorisation has gone unchallenged in South African opinion columns and general news (Mogekwu, 2005).

Sempijja and Mongale (2022) contend further that xenophobes are ignorant about the people they dislike and mistakenly see them as threats due to their ignorance of how to deal with them (Solomon and Kosaka, 2013). Additionally, Misago *et al.* (2015) state that overt forms of interpersonal and group aggression, harassment, discriminatory attitudes and statements, institutional and social exclusion of particular groups, and harassment are all examples of xenophobic sentiments (Sempijja & Mongale, 2022).

This study argues that Afrophobia is a preferable term for the discrimination and violence faced by black Africans in South Africa (see also Freeman, 2020; Mngxitama, 2015). This study demonstrates that using xenophobia to explain attacks on foreigners is somewhat misleading as previous empirical data and news reports, shows that black African migrants are killed and attacked more than any other foreign national in South Africa. For example, over 350 black African foreigners have been murdered in xenophobia attacks in South Africa since 2008 (Misago, 2022).

Hence these attacks should be labeled Afrophobia not xenophobia. The researcher first deconstructs and condemns the concept of xenophobia as applied to the phenomena of hate and harassment of African migrants by local population (South Africans). Rather, the study characterises the phenomenon as a new form of hatred by “black South Africans toward migrants from other parts of the African continent” (Addae & Quan-Baffour, 2022: 1), as will be revealed in the upcoming chapters.

Afrophobia

The lack of a conceptual or causal knowledge of either concept that is well-defined and established is one of the reasons why both xenophobia and Afrophobia are frequently assigned without dispute in academic publications, opinion pieces, and media reportage (Freeman, 2020). The terms are either picked arbitrarily or according to the author’s preferences, politics, or worldview because there is a lack of conceptual clarity. This section’s goal is to explain the differences and emphasize how important Afrophobia is to this study.

Afrophobia refers to a form of racism specifically targeted against people of African descent. It encompasses a range of negative attitudes, prejudices, and actions towards individuals or groups

based on their African heritage or skin color. This form of discrimination can manifest in various ways, including systemic exclusion, stereotyping, violence, media representations and social marginalisation (Pineteh & Mulu 2020).

Afrophobia is defined as prejudice (by Africans) directed at Africans just because they are African (Freeman, 2020). “As a result, its manifestations in South Africa, where black South Africans are considered as the principal perpetrators of violence, can be viewed as a variation on the Fanonian concept of black self-hate” (Freeman, 2020: 17). Scholars (Gqola 2008; Mngxitama 2008) have classified attacks on the African Other that have occurred repeatedly as instances of Afrophobia “the fear and/or dislike of Africans and their culture” (Tafira, 2011: 115) rather than the commonly held xenophobia. Tafira (2011) elaborates on this understanding of Afrophobia in South Africa, contending that the assaults and intimidations directed towards African American migrants signify a contemporary form of racism against fellow African Americans, who are considered members of the community but viewed as socially and culturally beneath them (Addae & Qu uan-Baffour, 2022).

This negative mindset perpetuates the idea that emancipated oppressed people could turn into oppressors as well. Using the infamous 2008 attacks in Alexandra (a township in South Africa's Gauteng Province), Tafira (2011: 116) contends that “while immigrants are defined by their phenotypical appearances (they are seen as those of a darker hue), they are also a racialised group with distinct cultural identities that primarily motivate certain prejudices and discriminations”. Cultural racism, as articulated by Addae and Quan-Baffour (2022), builds on biological racism by condemning and excluding specific groups based on physical characteristics, while biological racism is based on unequal treatment and exclusion of others due to physical characteristics.

Freeman (2020) declares that attacks on ‘whiteness’ are unimaginable under the banner of Afrophobia, considering the depths of colonially generated black self-hatred. Thus, black South Africans commit Afrophobic violence against black Africans (Freeman, 2020). It is against this background that this study focused on the language used by *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL* news sites when portraying black African migrants to examine if it contributes to the construction of

Afrophobia in South Africa. Afrophobia in the media refers to the fear, hatred, or discrimination against African people and those of African descent as depicted or perpetuated by various forms of media. This can include newspapers, television, film, social media, and other forms of communication. African people are often portrayed as criminals, gang members, or involved in illegal activities. This stereotype reinforces negative perceptions and contributes to racial profiling and discrimination in real life (Dube, 2018).

In summary, xenophobia and Afrophobia both hold that apartheid and colonialism, in particular, which apportioned identity and belonging in particular ways, have played a role in the extreme exclusion of African migrants in South Africa. A major feature of Afrophobia is black self-loathing, which helps to explain why certain South Africans may exhibit hostility towards black Africans (Dube, 2019; Tshishonga, 2017). Under the guise of xenophobia, othering is dependent and changeable. Therefore, it can refer to African, Asian, and European Others, as well as some out-groups, as well as South African Others (Dube, 2019).

To determine how digital media contributes to the creation of anti-black African migrant sentiment through news articles, the language used by *News24*, *TimesLive*, and *IOL* is examined. A systematic review is done to elaborate on the media reporting of black African foreigners in South Africa.

Location

This study is conducted via three digital South African news sites: *Independent Online*, *News24* and *TimesLive*. The digital space was chosen for its easy accessibility regardless of where the researcher may be physically located. Furthermore, these sites offer free online access to their reporting. Another factor is the popularity of the online newspapers as it has variety of access points, users using smartphones and tablets can access the news directly. They can access the news instantly. These three digital news sites do offer reach and diverse information, news and opinion voices.

Digital news platforms often shape public perceptions. In South Africa, a country with a complex socio-political landscape, analysing how different groups (black African migrants) are represented can reveal biases, stereotypes, and power dynamics within society. These three

digital sites are primary source of information for many South Africans (Rumney, 2022). Understanding how information is disseminated, who controls the narratives, and what kind of news is prioritized helps in assessing the accessibility and inclusivity of information. Digital news often connects local issues with global narratives. Analysing how South African digital news interacts with global events helps in understanding the country's place in the world and the impact of globalisation on local issues.

Background and Problem Statement

The media as the fourth estate has been blamed by civic and human rights activists for not creating a balanced worldview when it comes to African migrants and immigration in South Africa. Rather the online sites, newspapers, television and radio have been spreading hate, prejudice and Afrophobia (Dube, 2018). South Africa appears to be among the world's most violent countries, based on news reports (Dube, 2018). Significant levels of criminal, domestic, and political violence occur in South Africa (Akinola, 2014).

In more recent times, we are witnessing an increase in violence against black African migrants. Hatred, harassment and prejudice against African migrants has grown after the xenophobic attacks in May 2008, despite efforts to inform, educate, and engage South Africans about this issue (Desai, 2010). Since 2008, there has been no cease to intimidation and violence against African black migrants in South Africa (Tarisayi & Manik, 2020; & Masenya, 2017).

Research shows that media has contributed to this violence by continually publishing negative stories about black African migrants (Ochunu, 2021, Chigumbidza 2019 & Pineteh, 2017).

The media particularly print and digital newspapers and politicians have been blamed for constructing Afrophobic narratives in South Africa (Pineteh, 2017). Public opinion has an equally powerful influence on media organisations as they do. Although the primary purpose of the media is to inform the public, it is well-known in the field of media studies that additionally, it replicates some ideas and discourses that uphold specific power dynamics (Smith, 2008). Therefore, it is critical to look at how Afrophobic discourses are created (or not created) as well as how the media portrays black African migrants to the public. Because of this, it is nearly impossible to comprehend this phenomenon in South Africa without considering online

publications. Previous research has demonstrated that, maybe because of news bias, the media can be careless when covering xenophobia and has even participated in its promotion (Tarisayi & Manik, 2020; Masenya, 2017; Koanene & Maphunyane, 2015).

Language selection is biased; black African migrants can be perceived very differently when they are described using terms like "alien" or "illegal." Press headlines may contain bias since they are meant to grab readers' attention, and many individuals only read headlines (Baker et al., 1996; Schudson, 1989). Repetitive bias in the media can lead to the false belief that, for instance, black African migrants are "criminals" or "drug lords," which can breed Afrophobia.

However, Philo (1983) explains that news is not based on reality but socially created by reporters. "The media's attention on black African migrants and their use of migrants as symbols of crime, drugs and womanizers avoids serious discussion and genuine dialog and clarification of hidden social problems affecting different communities" (Pineteh, 2017:7-8). Press coverage focuses exclusively on how immigrants pilfer employment, neglecting to highlight issues like the lack of appropriate training and expertise among the native population (Pineteh 2017). Consequently, the way in which black African migrants are portrayed lacks nuance and context to provide fair information and emphasize their positive contributions (Kariithi *et al.*, 2017).

With the dawn of the 'Rainbow Nation' in 1994, the constitution gave people who live in South Africa "freedom of expression, rights, human dignity and equality" (Constitution of South Africa, Bill of Rights ss. 7-39). However, in the post-apartheid era, violent and media attacks on citizens of other African states have become a reality that South Africa has learned to accept on occasion, and generally, the topic of Afrophobia is debated on different media platforms. For example, on twitter one finds hashtags created that support the mass deportations and violence against African migrants. According to the Centre for Analytics and Behavioural Change (2022) from October 2020 to January 2022, more than 2.5 million references of the #PutSouthAfricaFirst social media discourse and associated hashtags and keywords have been made by more than 250,000 authors.

Each year "South Africa confronts the ugly reality of barbaric and cruel acts of attacks on black African immigrants. Some have labelled such phenomena xenophobic attacks while others

conclude that this is nothing more than Afrophobia (Black-on-Black conflict and violence directed at other Africans” (Koenane & Maphunye, 2015: 18). In the book *The Invention of Africa* (1988), Mudimbe highlights the detrimental effects of colonialism on the continent of Africa. One way that these repercussions continue to plague Africans is the propensity of some of them (black Africans) to despise other black Africans, especially if they come from different parts of the continent. “In the case of South Africa, the brutal systems of colonialism, racial segregation and apartheid had over centuries inculcated a negative attitude of disdain and hatred of fellow Africans from beyond the Limpopo” (Koenane & Maphunye, 2015: 18-19).

Rationale for the Study and Significance

If the people are ignorant of history, they will not be able to recognize the mistakes that previous generations did. Acquiring knowledge from past errors and betrayals is an essential step towards progress and can aid in preventing the emergence of mindsets that endanger fundamental human rights and dignity for every individual, irrespective of their nationality or ethnic background. Societies that have basic comprehension of history are less likely not to believe in the binary ‘us and them’ ideologies that birth Afrophobia (Somerset, 2015). Hence analysing the language used by digital news sites helps in understanding the contribution of the media in producing Afrophobic narratives that may influence the opinion of the people in regard to black African migrants.

Afrophobia’s representations violate human rights, threaten societal cohesiveness, and disturb peaceful coexistence. Besides, as South Africa is a signatory to worldwide international rights and compassionate arrangements, particularly on displaced people and refuge searchers, commitments to eradicate Afrophobia have both a lawful and ethical constrain. In addition, the media's role as the fourth estate requires it to present a fair picture of Black African immigrants living in South Africa. Because of this, criticism of South Africa's media's apparent hypocrisy toward its fellow Africans has come from all over the world.

The media has a duty to guarantee that they do not contribute to Afrophobic attitudes by depicting generalisations, disguising Afrophobic dialect and discourses or uncritically duplicating anti-immigrant stories and do little to inform the reader about the complexities

surrounding immigration (Ukwandu, 2017). The researcher believes that a more fair and balanced portrayal of black African migrants in the media could help to stop the violence caused by Afrophobia in South Africa. “It is important to the public, media, law and development studies to understand how migrants are treated by the media as there is that interconnectedness between society and the media” (Fine & Bird, 2002: 10).

Previous studies have explored the causes of xenophobia, and little has been done outlining how the media is likely to produce Afrophobic narratives (Pineteh, 2017; Kariithi *et al.*, 2017). Hence, the researcher critically analyses the language utilised by digital news when reporting on black African migrants in South Africa and how the discourse may produce Afrophobic sentiments. This study is unique in that it is particularly interested in the construction of examines Afrophobia sentiments. Previous studies have examined on xenophobia which is slightly different from Afrophobia as explained above. Although many academics have referred to the violence committed against African migrants in South Africa as xenophobia, Afrophobia may be a more accurate term (Chiliza and Stein, 2015).

Is the media to blame for Afrophobic narratives that are filled in the public domains, is the violence against black African migrants caused by past atrocities, as what Frantz Fanon (1963:52) observes presciently that “the colonized man will first manifest this aggressiveness which has been deposited in his bones against his own people. This is the period when [they] beat each other up, and the police and magistrates do not know which way to turn when faced with the astonishing waves of crime” Hence it is important to analyse how online news sites may perpetuate violence through what they publish and sell to the people.

Some studies that have been conducted have failed to contextualise Afrophobia, as these studies generalised the violence against African foreigners as xenophobia (Dube, 2018; Koanene & Maphunyane, 2015). Therefore, this study addresses this gap in exploring specifically the black-on-black stereotypes that may be produced by *IOL*, *News24* and *TimesLive*. Furthermore, this study comes at a time when sporadic attacks on African foreigners are still happening in metropolitan areas of South Africa, hence the need to reveal and understand how the media portray such incidents.

This study is different from preceding studies (Mawadza, 2012; Pineteh, 2017; Koanene & Maphunyane 2015) in the sense that these studies analysed print newspapers not online or digital news. Mawadza (2012) analysed images found in newspaper and how it complements the written text specifically about Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa. Mawadza's study can also be seen as a case study, focusing specifically on Zimbabwean immigrants in SA as a particular group within a specific context. This approach allowed her to provide an in-depth analysis of the media representation of this group and its implications. However, this study not only analyses Zimbabweans but black African migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa who are residing in South Africa.

Pineteh's 2017 study highlights the destructive power of media framing in shaping societal attitudes toward African migrants in South Africa. By portraying these migrants as "illegal aliens" and "demons," the media not only dehumanizes them but also fuels xenophobic violence and exclusionary policies. Pineteh (2017) uses qualitative data from personal interviews with local South Africans (ten South Africans were interviewed), excerpts from familiar political speeches and print media articles. Again, this study did not analyse online news which this study is critically analysing. Pineteh study focused also on "street narratives". However, this study focuses on news publications that are found online (*IOL, TimesLive & News24*),

The study by Kariithi, Mawadza, and Carciotto (2017) provides an analysis of the South African media's portrayal of immigration between 2011 and 2015. It reveals how media narratives often painted immigrants, especially African migrants, in a negative light, reinforcing stereotypes and contributing to xenophobia. The study utilised LexisNexis media content portal searches. The LexisNexis media content portal has been utilised as a source for many major quantitative studies. The data was drawn in annual tranches, using the rubric, Refugee, Asylum-seeker, Immigrant and Migrant (RASIM), as the key search words. The study focuses on the period from 2011 to 2015, which might not account for changes in media representation before or after this period. The study focused on a limited number of media outlets and did aim to capture the diversity of media representation across different platforms, such as online press. Moreover, the study is quantitative focusing on measurable data, counting the frequency of words or themes. It

therefore does not provide deep insights into the context, meaning, or nuances behind these representations (Almeida *et al*, 2017), which this study aims to provide.

Furthermore, the study done by Tarisayi and Manik (2020) focused on online-published articles of South African media in one month (September 2019). The study focused on a limited time, one key weakness is its reliance on content analysis from a single month (September 2019), which may not fully capture the broader trends in media representation over time. Additionally, the focus on online articles for a month may overlook the nuances found in the next month or so. Hence this study is critically analysing this gap by sampling news stories from three biggest online news sites for a period of 2 years to fully grasp a bigger picture of the portrayal of black African migrants in SA news. In other words, this study addresses the research gap, by expanding the time frame, included diverse media organisations, and incorporates more varied methodological approaches such as CDA and content analysis.

From the above studies it is clear much of the research focuses on traditional print newspapers. There is a gap in understanding how new media formats, such as social media, online forums, contribute to the discourse on Afrophobia, hence this study is specifically analysing online news to articulate that which previous studies failed to do. Current studies often rely heavily on content analysis. There is a need for more diverse methodologies to analyse data such as CDA which in this study is used to analyse and interpret data. In previous studies content analysis is mainly used to analyse data, however, in this study it is used to collect and categorise data.

Current studies focused on xenophobia, while xenophobia in South Africa often targets foreign nationals broadly, black African migrants are frequently the primary victims of xenophobic violence and negative media portrayal. This research is focusing specifically on Black African migrants is providing a deeper understanding of Afrophobia as a distinct form of xenophobia that is rooted in racial prejudice as well as socio-economic tensions. This study could reveal biases and stereotypes that are unique to black African migrants, distinguishing them from those faced by other foreign nationals, and uncovering how these narratives contribute to broader societal prejudices.

Studying the representation of migrants in news articles is important for several reasons, as it helps to uncover the broader social, political, and cultural impacts of media narratives. Media representations play a significant role in shaping how the public perceives migrants. Positive or negative portrayals can influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours towards migrants and migration policies. Repeated themes and narratives in the media can create and reinforce stereotypes about migrants, which can lead to prejudice and discrimination (Angu & Mulu, 2020).

The way migrants are represented in the media can influence political discourse and policy decisions. Politicians and policymakers often respond to public opinion, which is shaped by media narratives. Media representations can either legitimize existing power structures by reinforcing dominant ideologies or challenge them by presenting alternative perspectives on migration (Neary & Ringrow, 2018).

Studying media representations allows for the identification of ideological and cultural biases that shape how migrants are portrayed. This can help in understanding the broader social and cultural dynamics that influence media production. By examining how black African migrants are depicted, researchers and the public can become more critically aware of the biases and assumptions that underlie media narratives particularly in news articles.

Media representations can affect how well migrants integrate into society and how they are accepted by the host community. Positive representations can foster inclusion, while negative portrayals can lead to social division and marginalisation. The media plays a role in constructing and reinforcing notions of national identity, often defining who is considered part of the national community and who is excluded (Pineteh, 2017).

Media representations can either humanise migrants by telling their stories and highlighting their experiences or dehumanize them by reducing them to stereotypes or statistics. Studying these representations is crucial for advocating for the ethical treatment of migrants. Media coverage can bring attention to the vulnerabilities and challenges faced by migrants, prompting humanitarian responses and policy interventions. By studying the representation of migrants in news articles, researchers can contribute to a more nuanced and critical understanding of

migration issues, helping to promote more informed, ethical, and just public discourse and policy.

Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study is to increase knowledge about the issue of how black African migrants are portrayed in digital and online news settings in South Africa and expanding the corpus of research on media and Afrophobia. This was achieved by critically analysing 66 news articles published by the three biggest South Africa digital space news outlets, *IOL*, *News24* and *TimesLive*. By analysing these articles, the research aims to comprehend how the language used may construct Afrophobia and may even reveal the balance of power between black South Africans and African migrants.

This study asks questions about the meaning of language used rather than the physical results of distribution and consumption of the news, or the way *IOL*, *News24* and *TimesLive* are marketed and sold as a commodity defined by its economic status. In order to adequately explain what the three digital news site texts have to say about black African migrants living in South Africa, the researcher went beyond simple description, viewing the text as a creative and significant output of the media. The aim of this study helped the researcher express objectives that cement the methods that are appropriate for this investigation.

Objectives

The following section outlines the specific objectives of this study. The objectives summarise the approach and purpose of this study and highlight what this study intends to accomplish. These objectives are important because they establish the project's breadth and depth, assists this investigation in avoiding inconsequential research. It also means that the study methodology and outcomes may be easily evaluated. With the support of these goals, this study will be able to add to the understanding of how African migrants are portrayed in online news.

1. To understand the ways in which South African online newspapers report about black African migrants.

2. To understand the construction of Afrophobia in the selected online news sites through the post-colonial era/perspective.
3. To identify and analyse the dominant discourses, themes and narratives in selected online news sites.
4. To discuss if/ how the representation of black African immigrants reinforces stereotypes and polarisation.
5. To explore the power dynamics in online news sites' reports of black African migrants in relation to South African citizens?

These achievable objectives are interlinked with what this study ought to question about the construction of Afrophobia and the online portrayal of black African migrants in the news. In order to achieve these objectives the study is guided by the following key research questions. In addition to providing direction and ensuring coherence, the following questions also establish the parameters of the study and specify the kind of data that will be gathered (White 2009). The following questions are crucial to this study and highlights serious problems and issues that must be addressed.

Key Research Questions

- 1) In what ways do South African online newspapers report about black African Migrants?
 - a) What discourses are used by *Independent Online*, *Times Live* and *News24* to report on black African migrants?
 - b) In what ways, if any, do articles from these three online sites construct Afrophobia in their reporting of black African migrants?
- 2) How do online news sites reveal power relations between South Africans and black African migrants in contemporary South Africa?
 - a) What are covert and overt messages and meanings in the discourses used in the three online news sites.

Theoretical Framework

In this section the researcher briefly explains the theories that guided this study in explaining, predicting and understanding the phenomenon under study. Within the bounds of critical bounding assumptions, several theories were employed to critically test and expand upon the state of knowledge. The idea behind the existence of the research problem under consideration is introduced and explained in the theoretical context.

A theoretical framework defines the particular viewpoint [framework] that the researcher adopted in analyzing and interpreting the data to be acquired, hence limiting the scope of the pertinent data by concentrating on particular variables. Additionally, it makes it easier to understand ideas and variables in accordance with definitions and creates new knowledge by posing questions or providing evidence to support theoretical presumptions (Torraco, 1997 & Jacard et al, 2010). The principal theories of this research were post-colonial theory (Said, 1979; Fanon, 1968 & S Gandhi, 1998), Representation (Hall, 1997 & 2013). These theories were explained in relation to how they assist in the examination of Afrophobic linguistic produced by *IOL*, *News24* and *TimesLive*.

Post-Colonial Theory

To investigate one of the research issues, the investigator utilised post-colonialism as a development discourse, depicting hegemonic and counter-narratives, and dissecting immigration. Hence, the researcher examined how existing narratives relate to post-colonial perspectives and how the post-apartheid power dynamics between South Africans and black African migrants are shown by online news sites.

The main goal of post-colonial theory is to explain how European colonial rule affected society, politics, the arts, economy, history, and the environment from the 18th to the 20th century. (Said, 1978 & 1993, Gandhi, 1998 & Fanon 1967). Postcolonial theory “takes many different shapes and interventions, but all share a fundamental claim: that the world we inhabit is impossible to understand except in relationship to the history of imperialism and colonial rule” (Al-Saidi, 2014: 96-97).

In a world that has largely been “decolonised,” is post-colonial theory still useful for communication and media studies? In response, the researcher looked at the possibility of strengthening the relationship between communication and media studies and post-colonial studies. The objective was to draw attention to the similarities that already exist between these two bodies of work and suggest fruitful avenues for advancing what some academics refer to as "post-colonial communication and media studies," an area of study that is still in its infancy (Kumar & Parameswaran 2018, Shome 2016 & Kumar, 2014).

Post-colonial theory was initially developed to address the reading and production of literature created in nations that have been or are now under colonial rule (Al-Saidi, 2014). “Post-colonisation is about people and their individual experiences the sense of disempowerment and dislocation from both the colonizer and the colonized perspectives. The idea of Otherness serves as the foundation for much of post-colonial theory” (Al-Saidi, 2014: 98).

The Self and the Other

The researcher seeks to consider how online newspapers describe the Other (black African migrant) politically as well as culturally (Al-Saidi, 2014). This idea is useful to this study, but not in terms of colonial relations, rather by examining how those in power (newspapers) in South Africa construct black African migrants as the *Other*. There may appear to be a disjuncture between using post-colonial theory to interrogate Afrophobia, but this study subscribes to the idea that Othering is not only founded on race relations and is therefore not focused on the binaries of white/black or European/African. Instead, this study explores the negative attitudes of black South Africans towards black African immigrants (Tshaka, 2018).

A crucial concept that aids in our comprehension of how meanings are formed, generated, or reinforced in a text is the formalistic approach (binary opposition), which is applied to comprehend the concept of the Self and the Other (Al-Saidi, 2014). “Binary opposition is the principle of contrast between two mutually exclusive terms which argues that the perceived binary dichotomy between civilized\ savage has perpetuated and legitimized Western power structures favoring ‘civilized’ white men” (Al-Saidi, 2014: 95).

The same is happening between citizens and immigrants, where for instance black African migrants are represented in the media as ‘aliens’, and criminals (Dube, 2018; Kariithi, *et al*, 2017 and Tshaka, 2016). The use of "binaries" in a text helps to create deeply meaningful layers that support and uphold the prevailing ideals of a society or culture (Al-Saidi, 2014). Narratives and discourses based on binaries and dualisms can be dangerous as they characterize people (Hall, 2013). Similarly, CDA reasons that discourse works by ruling in certain ideas as appropriate and ruling out others. In other words, it classifies certain ideas and practices, and categorises them as proper or not (Prinsloo, 2017: 241).

Postcolonial writers (Shome, 2016, Said, 2014, Fanon, 2008, Gandhi, 1998, and Said, 1978) emphasize the significance of studying language features because they are aware that the spoken word, or the unspeakable word, has a lower status than the unspoken or translated word, as in the cases of black African migrants (*Makwerekwere*²) in South Africa and Nigerians depicted in newspaper articles as drug dealers, has a higher status than the untranslated one or the spoken one. This also aids in highlighting the distinctions between the Self and the Other as well as how the Other is portrayed in this study. Importantly, for every powerful discourse there are alternative ones too. We encounter not only Afrophobic and xenophobic discourses but also human ones that insist on human equality and strive for social justice for all and how the online press represent such differences.

Representation Theory

According to Stuart Hall's representation theory, there are several ways in which characters or events in a text might be represented, but there is never a real depiction of them. Just like how black African migrants are portrayed in the media, it might not be the true reflection of who they are or what they do in South Africa. Hence, journalists, writers, editors and columnist try “to ‘fix’ meaning, or way people comprehend events in the text” (Hall, 1997: 21).

² [Offensive or derogatory word for people according to nationality or ethnicity](https://www.macmillanthesaurus.com/makwerekwere). Usually referring to non- South Africa citizens. <https://www.macmillanthesaurus.com/makwerekwere>

It is not about whether *IOL*, *News24*, and *TimesLive* accurately portray reality or not—that would imply that there is only one "true" meaning—but rather about the variety of interpretations that can be drawn from a depiction. According to Hall (2013), representation is made up of what is different, what is present, and what is absent. Thus, meaning can be debated which is why this study analysed language and see if Afrophobia is constructed in the digital news sites.

Hall (1997: 23) argues that a “representation implicates the audience in creating its meaning. Power through ideology or by stereotyping tries to fix the meaning of a representation in a ‘preferred meaning’. To create deliberate anti-stereotypes is still to attempt to fix the meaning (albeit in a different way)”. In this study, the researcher deconstructs the representation of black African migrants and examines how digital news sites may contribute to the spread of Afrophobia by publishing stories that challenge stereotypes from within. She believes that this approach is more effective than trying to destroy stereotypes entirely.

Understanding how people who have similar experiences, cultures, and languages interpret the random combinations of letters and sounds that make up words is crucial. For instance, the word "alien" connotes the idea of a foreigner residing in South Africa. Hall (2013:6) explains that the “objects in the world embody and fix in their way ‘true’ meaning although it is not clear if aliens know that they are aliens”. Hall continues to argue that “the meaning is not in the person, nor is it in the world. It is the people who settle the meaning so firmly that, sooner or later it ends up common and unavoidable” (Hall, 2013:6). However, “meaning is not fixed, all words carry a different meaning at any given circumstances” (Hall, 1997:12). For example, the term "alien" may designate foreign individuals residing in the United States or South Africa, yet in astronomy, the same word designates a made-up extraterrestrial species. Hence it is important to critically analyse the discourses used by digital news sites when dealing with black African migrants to understand if Afrophobic narratives are produced as well.

People are invited to understand and agree with representations in specific ways (Stewart & Kowaltzke, 2007). “However, different interpretations may arise depending on the audience, the more we see elements of representation being repeated, the more it will appear legit or God-established” (Stewart & Kowaltzke, 2007:12). A news story may welcome us to relate to a police

officer (hero), for instance but will question us only to recognise the law- breaking black African migrant. Chapter three elaborates on media representations.

This study focuses on news representations of black African migrants. Media representation refers to the way people, groups, events, and issues are portrayed in various forms of media, such as television, film, news, social media, and advertising (Hall, 1997). The emphasis is on *who* and *what* is being shown in the media, and *how* they are shown. It involves the analysis of the content and the accuracy, diversity, and fairness of these portrayals.

The study does not examine media effects as it is not interested in the influence that media content and media consumption have on individuals' thoughts, attitudes, emotions, and behaviours. The emphasis is on *how* the media portray black African migrants in SA; the types of stories that are highlighted and the language used. Examining whether black African migrants are often depicted in stereotypical ways, such as being associated with crime, poverty, or victimhood. Critically analysing how stories about black African migrants are framed whether the focus is on their struggles, contributions, or challenges, and how these narratives are constructed. Moreover, assessing whether black African migrants' voices and perspectives are included or marginalised in the media narratives.

Methodology of the study

This methodology section explains and discusses briefly (as a detailed discussion of these methods is in chapter four) the data collection and analysis methods that was utilised for this study. The study relied on the interpretivism paradigm because the premise of interpretivism is that reality is subjective, layered, and socially produced (Myers, 1997). That is to say, the only way we can comprehend someone else's reality is through their perception of it, which may be distinct from another person's and influenced by the latter's historical or social viewpoint (Walsham, 1995). This study utilised the interpretivist paradigm because the foundation of this paradigm aligns well with the objectives of this study, and it has its roots in hermeneutics (which is utilised in this study as well).

The study adopts a qualitative approach which interpretivism (Brennen, 2013). It is impossible to provide precise, methodical, or theoretical solutions to complex human issues such as migration,

Afrophobia and media representations of black African migrants in newspapers. They contend that each cultural and historical circumstance is distinct and special, necessitating assessments of the specifically specified, entrenched surroundings (Walsham, 1995). The results cannot be generalised because each study is grounded in unique social, political, economic, and cultural experiences, but they do offer further insight into how people interpret things in a particular setting, contributing to our understanding of human nature (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation (Crotty, 1998). This study's design is hermeneutical textual founded on the idea interpretation of a text or of an object should be done from a variety of angles (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009), enabling a comprehensive analysis of the topic under study (Crotty, 1998). In order to better understand the meanings of texts, works of art, cultural practices, social phenomena, (Afrophobia) and ideas, hermeneutic study stresses subjective interpretations (Crotty, 1998).

Content Analysis

Content analysis is used to collect data from *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL*. Content analysis "is a research technique used to identify the presence of specific words, topics, or concepts in qualitative data like news stories" (Elo *et al*, 2014:1). Researchers can use content analysis to measure and identify the presence and correlations of specific words, themes, or concepts in data (Creswell, 2013).

To collect data using content analysis the news stories are coded into feasible and manageable categories which are further broken down to assist in answering the questions. By categorising the text, the researcher focused on and coded specific phrases or patterns that explain the study's problem.

Purposive Sampling

Data gathering "is significant in research, as the data is intended to add to a superior comprehension of a theoretical structure" (Tongco, 2007: 147). The websites of the chosen digital news sources were picked because they provide a thorough method of accessing previous news stories. The researcher deliberately chose items that were pertinent from the websites.

Every major South African newspaper has an online version, which occasionally has more content than the print version (Plantinga, 2012). “Several print newspapers have launched digital editions that can be accessed on mobile devices for free or on a paid basis” (Plantinga, 2012: 173). Hence it is important to study the digital side of newspapers especially in this information and technology age, where internet has become the source of information to millions of people around the globe. People can access news through their smartphones, laptops and tablets (Roper, Newman & Schulz, 2019: 10-11). “More South Africans (29 million) use mobile phones than radio (28 million), TV (27 million) or personal computers (6 million). Only 5 million South Africans use landline phones and 6.8 million only use the internet” (Newman & Schulz, 2019:1).

The three online sites were chosen because of their broad news offering to the South African society, For example *IOL* site hosts the digital offerings of some of the country's most prominent newspapers including “*The Star* and *Pretoria News*, *The Cape Times* and *Cape Argus* and *The Mercury* and *Daily News*, as well as national business publications *Business Report* and *Personal Finance*. *News 24* publishes news from *City Press*; include *Fin24*, *Sport24*, *Channel24*, *Health24*, *Arts24*, *Parent24*, *Wheels24*, *W24* and *Business Insider South Africa*. Whilst *TimesLive* host *Sunday Times*, *Tshisa Live*, *Sowetan Live*, *HeraldLive* and *Business Day* and many others”. The advantage of these three news websites under investigation is that each parent company's newspapers are all published under a single main website. All *News24* publications, for example, can be found at www.news24.com; the same applies for *Timeslive* and *IOL*.

English is the main language of Southern African political discourse and dominates the digital media as the language of communication and is used by the three news sites under study. Also, many non-English newspapers in the region are owned by English-language conglomerates and they source from the same English-language wire services (McDonald & Jacobs, 2005). With the advent of on-line newspapers, the sphere of influence of the English-language press is only likely to grow in the future (McDonald & Jacobs, 2005).

Purposive sampling “utilises a non-probability strategy which involves the choice of news articles which are viewed as a pertinent populace for the examination” (Bernard, 2011:11).

Purposive sampling is described as an effective model that occurs in a natural setting and enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from high involvement in the actual experiences (Cresswell, 2009). The researcher purposively selected news articles about so called ‘foreign nationals’ or black African immigrants as these were central in answering the research questions.

The researcher also searched for certain phrases and words like; foreigners, migrants, undocumented, illegal immigrants and drug lords. These words were searched because previous studies identified that the media used them to portray black African migrants in South Africa (Mlambo, 2023; Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023). Moreover, these words are the predominant words the researcher has identified in previous research (Pineteh, 2017; Mlambo, 2023) that aids in this study’s sampling and data collection and it is important to acknowledge that in the critical discourse analysis of the language used in the 66 articles sampled, the researcher was open to others words and languages associated in the analysed news articles.

In terms of the temporal sample, articles were purposely chosen from *IOL*, *TimesLive*, and *News24* websites within the period of 2019-2022. This period was sampled because the researcher analysed news stories, and reveals how the newspapers were publishing the immigration issues and how black African foreign nationals, migrants and immigrants were covered by these online news sites. And how the language used constructed Afrophobia or not.

Data Analysis

CDA is used to analyse the collected data. According to Deacon et al. (1999), CDA is a methodical approach that guarantees a high level of reliability in the establishment of a pattern when a study aims to identify forms of representation in media content across time.

CDA, attempted to uncover the nuanced and reflective social critique based on evidence, for it is concerned with how power works in society. CDA is holistic in its approach as it tries to go beyond the words, discourses or text to include the circumstances in which it survives (Prinsloo, 2017).

CDA is “usually implemented to discover patterns of dominance or manipulation in texts” (newspaper stories, television news) (van Dijk, 1995:3). CDA “can be used conversely, paying

particular attention to fundamental societal problems such as immigration, discrimination” and Afrophobia as it reveals how such phenomena, are legitimised and reproduced by text and talk (van Dijk, 1995:19). Therefore, the researcher employed CDA to analyse articles from the digital news sites to explore how social power, abuse, inequality and the way dominance is expressed by the *IOL, Times Live and News24* stories.

CDA worked as the researcher’s toolbox in this study, the idea of a discourse toolbox comes from Siegfried Jäger (2004:1), but the researcher has expanded this approach based on experience and the works of other discourse analysts such as Chilton (2004) and Fairclough (1994). The CDA toolbox was tailored to suit the needs and concerns of this study under the following steps which the researcher explains in detail in the Chapter 4 and mobilised in Chapter 6.

- “Establish the context –Explore the production process
- Code your material
- Examine the structure of the text
- Identify cultural references
- Identify linguistic and rhetorical mechanisms
- Interpret the data
- Present your findings”

CDA assisted in interpreting the data from the news articles, guided by the representation and post-colonial theory tenets. In research, theory is crucial. Research gains meaning, comprehension, and explanation through theory. Theory aids in foretelling facts and locating uncharted territory or potential research areas. Lack of a theory makes it less certain that traits, variables, or data are related.

Structure of the study

This study is organized into six distinctive chapters.

Chapter One: A construction of Afrophobia in TimesLive, News24 and Independent Online in South Africa: A background and context

The first chapter introduces the background to the phenomenon under study and outlines the key research questions to be explored by this study. It also explains briefly the significant literature that was explored on the construction of Afrophobia on online news sites (Ochunu, 2021, Chigumbidza 2019 & Pineteh, 2017, Kariithi *e tal*, 2017, Dube, 2018, Koanene & Maphunyane, 2015).

Chapter Two: Print media coverage of Afrophobia in online news

The second chapter presented literature review that surveys relevant sources within the field of Afrophobia and the media (Ochunu, 2021, Chigumbidza 2019 & Pineteh, 2017). This literature review offers knowledge and background to the study and themes that emanate from the literature were discussed in relation to the objectives of this study.

Chapter Three: Theoretical underpinning of Online news reportage of Afrophobia: A Post-colonial Perspective

Chapter three is the theoretical framework of this study. On this chapter the researcher explored the post-colonial theory which was contextualised within this study. The post-colonial theory (Al-Saidi, 2014; Said, 1979; Fanon, 1968, 2008; Spivak, 1988) explains how the effects of colonisation on societies and cultures and the development of colonial discourses which are found in the post -colonial times in the media even when reporting about black African migrants. CDA aided this study in explaining the use of language as a form of social practice. “All social practices are tied to specific historical contexts and are the means by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested and different interests are served” (Van Dyk, 2002:3)

Chapter Four: Situating construction of Afrophobia in TimesLive, News24 and Independent Online in South Africa: A methodological inquiry

Chapter four outlines the methodology of this study which explains how the researcher gathered and analysed data from IOL, News24 and TimesLive. The chapter explains collection of data

from these three online press using purposive sampling (Cresswell, 2009), where only news stories and opinion pieces with relevance to the study were selected.

Chapter Five: Data presentation

This chapter presents the data from the content analysis to reveal patterns in the content of reporting of black African migrants in *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL*. More specifically, it creates categories, themes, and sub-themes and codes the 66 news articles. The data set consists of 22 hard news articles from each news site (*TimesLive*, *News24* and *IOL*).

Chapter Six: Analytical discussion

The news stories are critically analysed in this chapter. It entails the evaluation of the acquired data to identify themes using logical and analytical reasoning. The chapter interprets themes in relation to the construction of Afrophobia in South Africa, guided by critical discourse analysis (Jager, 2004; Fairclough, 1995) and the two selected theories.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The final chapter presents the synthesised conclusions of the study. It explains the findings in relation to the research questions. Outline areas of further research on the issue of Afrophobia in the press and how black African migrants are portrayed in the media.

Chapter 2 Literature Review: Media coverage of Afrophobia in press and online news

Introduction

The research issue and the data demonstrating the reality of how black African migrants are portrayed in the media were presented in the preceding chapter. It explains the goal of the study and provides an overview of the relevant literature for the study topic. Every technical phrase

that the reader needed to know the definitions were provided. A summary of the qualitative research methods being employed in the study is given in Chapter 1, together with the research questions and theoretical underpinnings or conceptual framework.

News reporting in the press, television, radio and social media can influence people to either support or not support those in power (Castello, 2013). They can also enhance our knowledge of the world around us. However, arguably the information provided in the stories we read and hear are told from specific ideological perspectives (Paterson, Gadzekpo & Wasserman, 2018). Therefore, it is important to critically investigate how pertinent and controversial issues are reported in the news. One of these issues is the reporting and representation of black African migrants in South African media.

The phenomenon of African immigration to South Africa and their experiences in the country (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Mthombeni, 2022; Ramachandran, 2022) is presented early in the chapter to provide a background to the more comprehensive review of public and newspaper discourses of African migration that follows. Another background discussion provided in the chapter explains a brief political economy of South African online newspapers and how they are organised and function.

Starting from the mid-2000s, earlier hardcopies and online newspaper themes are critically analysed in relation to how they have constructed African migration in South Africa (Vanyoro & Ncube, 2018; Masondo & Masondo, 2019). A comprehensive review of the way in which black African migrants have been reported in the past is essential as a benchmark against which to appraise if and how the concepts, themes and discourses have changed or remained the same.

This chapter also review explanations and arguments from different scholars, politicians and media experts whose work explores the narratives of xenophobia, or more particularly Afrophobia, in the South African media and public discourses. Preceding studies (Kgari-Masondo & Masondo, 2019, Dube, 2018, Pineteh, 2017) are critically analysed to contextualise the study's overall objective to understand and analyse how black African migrants are portrayed by contemporary South African online news sites. The review of previous public and newspaper discourses is presented in this chapter.

Afrophobia in South Africa cannot be understood without understanding xenophobia. Hence this chapter present academic arguments and opinions on what constitutes to both xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa and how newspapers have contributed to it in their reporting of African migrants (Mlambo *et al*, 2023; Addae & Quan-Baffour, 2022, Tarisayi & Manik, 2020; Masenya, 201; Kariithi *et al*, 2017). Some scholars appear to use the terms ‘xenophobia’ and ‘Afrophobia’ interchangeably (Kgari-Masondo & Masondo, 2019). And Freeman, (2020:18) argues that “The lack of conceptual clarity means the terms are used either interchangeably or selected based on the author’s preference, politics or worldview”. However, this study subscribes to the term ‘Afrophobia’ because Afrophobia is described as discrimination toward Africans (by Africans) because they are African (Freeman, 2020). As such, its manifestations in South Africa, with black South Africans portrayed as the principal perpetrators of violence, can be viewed as a variation on the Fanonian concept of black self-hate (Fanon 2008).

As one of the study’s objectives is to reveal power relations between South Africans and black African migrants in post-apartheid South Africa (beyond that of the newspaper discourses), this chapter, further, analyses the current status of the Afrophobia through the formation of new anti-migrants movements (#put South Africans 1st & Operation Dudula) and how the media are reporting on this. Furthermore, any literature gaps found in the preceding studies (Kariithi, *et al*; Mlambo *et al*, 2020; Moyo & Mpofu, 2020; Koanene & Maphunye, 2015) are critically analysed to contextualise the study and understand how black African migrants are represented in the media and how news produced by online press may contribute or produce Afrophobia in South Africa.

This chapter generates questions and considerations that appear to be lacking in the available literature about media and Afrophobia in South Africa. It does so by moving beyond the old dichotomies encouraged by previous scholars (Pineteh, 2017; Danso & McDonald, 2008; Mawadza, 2012) where the media particularly the press was seen to be using language that portrays black African migrants in bad light and dehumanize them. For example, black African migrants are represented in the press as drug lords, criminals and problematic people who bring prostitution and human trafficking to South Africa. This study allows for multiple

understandings of the possible role that news media may play in constructing Afrophobia in society.

Black African Migration to South Africa

By the beginning of January 2021, more than 280 million people were believed to be migrants in the world, of which over 19 million are estimated to be in Africa (IOM³, 2021). By mid-year 2020 in Southern Africa there is a population of around 363.2 million people and 6.4 million global migrants, with South Africa being home to about 2.9 million migrants (UN DESA, 2020) and Statistics South Africa (2021) estimating that 3.95 million migrants are in South Africa.

African migration is pushed by unemployment for example North Africans are estimated to be between 5-11 million in Europe making them the largest African migrants in Europe (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021). Although most African migration remain on the continent and around 21 million migrants live in another country and most of them are in search of employment, business opportunities or economical help (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021).

Furthermore, it is important to note that climate disasters will continue to increase vulnerability, hence causing more migration. “The African continent is facing a faster rate of natural disaster events than the rest of the world. From droughts to floods to cyclones to pandemics, the continent faces many natural drivers of instability” (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021). The World Bank⁴ (2021) projects there will be 86 million climate change migrants in Africa by 2050.

³ Established in 1951, write in full on first use here (IOM) is the leading intergovernmental organisation in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. With 174 member states, a further 8 states holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants (see www.iom.com)

⁴ The World Bank (2021). Millions on the move in their own countries: The human face of climate change [online] Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2021/09/13/millions-on-the-move-in-their-own-countries-the-human-face-of-climate->

This migration is driven by pursuit of greener pastures, political stability, and economic opportunities. The survey of literature identified six main reasons for migration to South Africa: a.) poor economies in home countries and the attraction of employment in South Africa, b.) political instability that is coupled with political persecutions, c.) Natural disaster such as drought and famine, d.) Unskilled labour – where those with no formal training can work in the farming sector of South Africa e.) Poverty f.) War – where people are forced to relocate and migrate (Mlambo *et al*, 2023; Pineteh, 2017; Jani, 2018 and Koanene & Maphunye, 2015).

Poor economies in Southern African Development Community and employment opportunities in South Africa

In most SADC countries, the cost of living is way above what the majority of people can afford and according to SADC (2022) the SADC region recorded an inflation rate of 36.5 in February of 2022 and month on month inflation rate registered an increase of 4.1% in February 2022 compared in January 2022. With such figures people will tend to migrate and search for opportunities where they can survive and be able to provide for their families.

And during the Covid-19 pandemic millions of people were pushed to poverty as the economic crisis continued to global vaccine inequality which also led thousands of people look for survival in different parts of the world (Oxfam, 2022).

A number of nations, especially in the Southern African region, serve as the financial pillars of the SADC region. Industrial advancements, in the mining industries in South Africa, Botswana and Zambia, and the oil riches of Angola have been magnets for talented, qualified and unqualified labor migrants from inside the SADC region and beyond (IOM, 2021). South Africa is a middle-income country with an industrialised economy and stable political systems this alone attracts the hearts of those who are suffering from unemployment (Moyo, 2021). The opportunities for semi-skilled labour in the construction, services and mining are key drivers of

[change#:~:text=Taken%20together%2C%20projections%20across%20all,and%20Central%20Asia%2C%205%20milli on.](#) [Accessed 18 December 2021].

migration. “Up skilling trends are on the rise among semi-skilled migrants to South Africa, while commercial agriculture absorbs the large majority of low-skilled migrant labour to the country” (AU, 2017; UNCTAD, 2018: 81-85).

Background traces of the push/pull factors of Black African migration to South Africa: Lessons from SADC and African countries

The migration of black African migrants from the north of Limpopo River is influenced by lack of employment and business opportunities for the youths in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, DRC, Malawi and Lesotho (United Nations, 2022).

For instance, the Zimbabwean economy has been underperforming for the last 20 years which basically leads to brain drain and migration of people to other nations like South Africa and United Kingdom (UK) (The World Bank, 2022). There is no growth in economic activities and inflation has contributed to the fall of the Zimbabwean economy, where basic food is expensive. This leads people to look for better living elsewhere (Odero, 2018). As of 2022 unemployment in Zimbabwe is estimated to be around 75-95 percent (BBC, 2022). Hence Zimbabweans are migrating to South Africa, for better employment prospects in the farming, education and logistic industry (Idemudia, et al, 2013). Zimbabwe is experiencing a liquidity crisis which is the effect of structural deficiencies and distortions prevailing in the economy with governance and accountability remaining an issue hence black Zimbabweans are forced to flee such hardships (Odero, 2018).

Around mid-2000s Zimbabwe had the highest inflation rate in the world of 89.7 sextillion percent (Hanke & Kwok, 2009). Thus it meant the money was worthless, basic food shortages became the order of the day hence every able body person started migrating to neighboring SADC countries (Hanke & Kwok, 2009). Migration to South Africa from Zimbabwe is basically reported on press as a temporary, speedy and typical response to the political and economic crises in Zimbabwe ignoring the ties and history that connects the two countries (Crush *et al*, 2017). According to IOM, (2021) Zimbabwe has the largest number of migrants found in South Africa, estimated to be around 1.5million. However, this figure is unconfirmed and contested with different organisations and scholars. For instance, Tarisayi and Manik, (2020) and Blinder

and Jeannet (2018), believes migration numbers are overestimated by the media. With the United Nations arguing that there are more Mozambicans in South Africa, than Zimbabweans, However, Stats South Africa disputes this statistic (Karombo, 2019). According to Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (Zimstat) 2022, they are 773 246 Zimbabweans in South Africa of which 461 293 are men and 311 593 are women. Nonetheless, all these people migrate for different reasons and some of them flee political violence and arrests (*The Guardian*, 2021).

Over the past two decades Zimbabweans have fled political persecution and political intolerance from the then President Mugabe and South Africa has been the first doorstep to an assumed better world. Just like other developing countries Zimbabwe has experienced an extraordinary migration of able-bodied human resource to SADC nations due to deteriorating economy and political intolerance (Bonga, 2020). Migration TO South Africa is influenced by unemployment of especially the young people, which is the case in Zimbabwe where 70.5 percent people are living in poverty (African Development Bank, 2019).

In Zimbabwe and many other Sub-Saharan countries, political torture and disappearance has become order of the day where citizens are not free to criticize the government in fear of political persecutions, hence this leaves South Africa as ideal land of freedom and peace (World Report, 2021). For example, Zimbabwean black journalists are threatened and killed for writing critiquing the Zimbabwean government, Itai Dzamara a renowned journalist was allegedly killed by the government for protesting against economic hardships and Hopewell Chin'ono, a Zimbabwean journalist and filmmaker, has been persecuted and arrested three times within six months. Such circumstances are what drive both uneducated and educated people to look for opportunities in South Africa (Moyo, 2022).

On the other hand, Mozambicans may not be politically persecuted like Zimbabweans however; they still migrate to South Africa due to poor economy. Black Mozambican migrants are largely male teenagers from rural parts of Southern Mozambique who are driven by poverty and a lack of economic opportunities (IOM, 2020). They are drawn to South Africa by a demand of cheap and unskilled labour, and they primarily engage in agriculture, construction and informal trade (Cardoso, 2008). According to International Organisation of Migration (IOM) 2020 it is

estimated that 11 million Mozambicans are living outside the country with South Africa being one of the destinations. In South Africa over 24 000 work in the mining industry and 80 000 were working in the Mpumalanga farms alone (IOM, 2020).

Natural disasters, diseases, high population growth, low agricultural production, and unequal wealth distribution all contribute to Mozambique's high poverty rate which drives people to migrate to South Africa. And Mozambicans have been moving to South Africa for employment for more than a century. In addition, between 1979 and 1992, nearly 1.7 million Mozambicans fled to Malawi, South Africa, and Zimbabwe to escape the violence (Cardoso, 2008; Amnesty, 2022).

Human rights crimes motivated by armed conflict continued in northern Mozambique, exacerbating the humanitarian catastrophe. Armed groups continued to torch villages, behead civilians, and kidnap women and girls (Amnesty, 2022). Meanwhile, government security personnel operating in the area violated the population's human rights, including enforced disappearances, harassment and intimidation of people, and extortion of money from traders. Internally Displaced People (IDPs) continued to live in horrible conditions, with limited access to food, water, and shelter. The freedoms of peaceful assembly and expression were curtailed (Amnesty, 2022) and this is what is contributing to thousands of people crossing the border to South Africa.

Mozambique economy faces difficulties caused by many factors such as governmental lack of transparency, poor basic infrastructure and unreliable power supply to underdeveloped areas. Additionally, commercial banks charge high interest which makes it difficult for local people to create small to medium business hence they relocate to South Africa, where starting a business is easier and infrastructure is available (United Nations, 2021).

Malawi

Malawi has served as a labor provider since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when minerals such as gold, diamonds, and copper were discovered and exploited in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Zambia (Banda, 2017). Malawians were lured by the relatively higher

pay available in South African mines until the end of the 1980s, when mine migrancy declined. Following this decrease, a diverse group of Malawians continued to relocate to South Africa in search of various occupations in the developing informal sector as well as for trade purposes (Banda, 2017).

According to Nyirongo (2019:24), “Malawian migrants, particularly from Mangochi District, export apparel and electronic things to Malawi, but the majority of them work as laborers in homes, which local locals do not want to do due to the apartheid heritage and thus do not compete for jobs”. As a result, more Malawians are migrating to South Africa in a disconnected manner and without securing a job ahead, which can be interpreted as a sign of desperation, particularly among the youth, as Nyirongo (2019) highlighted that the majority of them do not have work permits. There are 87 000 Malawians residing in South Africa working as domestic workers or gardeners (Pensulo, 2020).

Despite considerable economic and structural reforms to sustain economic growth, Malawi remains one of the world's poorest countries. Malawi has the fourth highest percentage of people living in extreme poverty in the world (The World Bank, 2023). In Malawi, more than two-thirds of the population lives in extreme poverty, Agriculture employs more than 80% of the population, and the economy is subject to external shocks, particularly climate shocks (The World Bank, 2023).

Low agricultural productivity and insufficient commercialisation have resulted in the majority of Malawians experiencing stagnant income growth. Market distortions such as price controls, trade restrictions, poorly targeted subsidies, and limited access to inputs are among the structural issues confronting the sector, limiting investment and export-led growth (The World Bank, 2023).

These consequences are exacerbated by more frequent and catastrophic tropical storms, such as Cyclone Freddy in February 2023, which caused projected losses and damages totaling more than \$500 million (The World Bank, 2023). These are all conditions that drive Malawians to migrate to South Africa to seek better living conditions (The World Bank, 2023).

Democratic Republic of Congo

Among the millions of African migrants believed to be in South Africa, those from Democratic Republic of Congo are estimated to be around 447 000 (IOM, 2021). Mpeiwa and Antara (2018) believe South Africa is home to around 300 000 Congolese students, refugees, and Asylum seekers and business- people. Despite DRC being blessed with different natural resources, it is one of the poorest countries in the world mainly because of conflicts and wars (Mpeiwa & Antara, 2018).

Since the early 1990s Congolese were driven from their homes (due to war) and migrated to neighboring countries and South Africa became a destination for many to settle and look for opportunities. And since South Africa “As a signatory to the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the South African Government has an obligation to grant protection to refugees and other persons in need of protection” (Mpeiwa & Antara, 2018: 8).

Nigeria

Similar to other African migration, the harsh economic activities and social problems in Nigeria are key factors that drive Nigerians to migrate to South Africa and since independence there has been political instability which has led to social upheaval (Ayantokun, 2018). Nigerians that migrate to South Africa are both temporary and permanent migrants and are usually self-employed in the private sector of South Africa, owning saloons, small clothing shops and so forth (Ayantokun, 2018).

Meanwhile according to National Bureau of Statistics Nigeria unemployment rate is increasing with unemployment of people aged 15-24 years old stands at 54 percent and for women it stands at 35.2 with a population of 200 million these numbers are high and people are migrating to Europe, United States and South Africa to either be employed or start small businesses (Utomi, 2022).

Nigerians and Zimbabweans make up the majority of African migrants in South Africa, and their numbers are expanding despite being targeted by xenophobic violence. Various economic

theories have identified factors such as the expectation of greater salaries as influencing on migrants' choice of host nation (Enigbokan, Olukunle & Ogundele, 2015)

Even though it is challenging to determine the precise population of Nigerians in South Africa, in 2016 StatsSA put the number around 30 000 and Africa Check disputed that they are 800 000 Nigerians in South Africa. According to Smuts (2019), it is such misguided statistics that is published in the media and creates tension between locals and African migrants. As such numbers will automatically create a scenario where local people feel their scarce resources and opportunities are being channeled to black African migrants as well as linking migration to criminality (Smuts, 2019).

Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan)

Just like in DRC, there is war in the horn of Africa which is pushing Ethiopians and Somalis down south of the continent. For majority of these people the objective is to reach South Africa, a country where they can work, start a business and move freely without being kept in refugee camps (IOM, 2018). In a study sponsored by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, the IOM (2018) identified key fundamentals that drive migration from Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia to South Africa as, lack of sufficient income, unemployment, personal security threats, and no protection of civil liberties and absence of rule of law. In Ethiopia over 2.35 million people are not employed, and these numbers push people to look for opportunities elsewhere in order to feed their families and in Africa the destination usually is South Africa (Galal, 2022).

The current and continuous drought in the horn of Africa is worsening and has led to widespread of malnutrition, food insecurity and movements of people across the borders in search of better living conditions (Akumu & Frouws, 2017). According to a World Food Programme (WFP) research, one of the main causes of international migration is food shortages and wealth inequality. Drought has also caused populations in Africa to migrate to nations like South Africa, Kenya, and Botswana (Akumu & Frouws, 2017).

Hence the movement of people from Ethiopia and Somalia is mostly influenced by the above conditions and South Africa is seen as a place that can provide better lives and economic

opportunities as it is the only country in the region that allows refugees and Asylum seekers to work (IRIN News, 2011).

After more than 1.8 million people were forced to flee across borders and 1.9 million South Sudanese were internally displaced, the country's already dire position was made worse by the official declaration of famine. According to the most recent data, at least 2,000 Somalis have crossed into Kenya in recent months, and an additional 4,000 have entered Ethiopia since the beginning of 2017, all of them are seeking humanitarian aid. In all, nearly 700,000 people in Somalia have been internally displaced since November 2016 (Akumu & Frouws, 2017).

According to the United Nations (2022), 41 million people in West Africa and Sahel are thought to be unable to buy a basic meal. and the number has quadrupled over the last three years and this drives African migration within the continent. With South Africa, having a stable rainfall pattern and a sophisticated agricultural industry it becomes one of the countries that attract black African migrants (Migration Data Portal, 2022).

From war and displacement to inflation, climate shocks and drought – all made worse by the Ukraine crisis – there are many reasons for the unprecedented food emergency in Africa and according to WFP (2022) since Russia invaded Ukraine the prices of goods and services have surged between 20 and 50 percent in many African countries and it affects mostly the poor who will then embark on migration in search of better lives and opportunities. For example, Somalia is facing water shortages which lead them to cross the border to Ethiopia which is also facing dire consequences of drought which has affected over 2 million people (UN, 2022). Hence, Somalis and Ethiopians migrate to South Africa and other African states in search of life and running away from all the problems in their motherland (WFP, 2022).

Black African migrants migrate for all the reasons discussed above and many other personal reasons. When in South Africa, life is not always what they predicted and thought to be as South Africa has its own problems of unemployment and drought in some provinces of the country as well (Gilbert, 2012; Mahlangu, 2016). However, scholarship shows that black African migrants in South Africa are frequently misrepresented by the news on radio, television, newspapers and politicians (Vanyoro & Ncube, 2018). Such misrepresentations have led to the production of

xenophobic and Afrophobic discourses (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Vanyoro, 2015; Palmary & de Gruchy, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011).

Power relations in South Africa

Afrophobic incidents outline power relations in any given society (Koenane & Maphunye, 2015). No matter how good a country policy or constitution, a black African migrant would not enjoy the same privileges as a citizen. Power relations determine how a foreigner can be comfortable in a foreign land (Koenane & Maphunye 2015). For instance, due to their citizenship Operation Dudula can move around and question the legality of black foreigners in South Africa, meanwhile migrants will never dream of doing such actions, they do not have the power to act in that way. Or even the police preying on undocumented or illegal migrants in South Africa.

In contemporary South Africa, as witnessed above black African migrants have become the scapegoat of the ANC failures to deliver their promises of 1994 as Gumbi (2022) argues that the government failure to provide services to its people has led many to believe that black African foreigners are the problem of unemployment, crime and societal ills. From such narratives black African migrants are stripped of their power and existence as world citizens and news stories reveal that migrants do not have any power in shaping their identity as news mainly portray them in negative representations (Kariithi *et al*, 2017). Therefore, one of this study's questions deals with how online newspapers reveal power relations between local population and African migrants from Africa in the post-apartheid South Africa.

Racial and class divisions in South African culture are profound, and the belief that using violence to resolve social issues is strongly ingrained in the country. This is demonstrated by the attacks against Black African migrants in their residences, places of employment, and places of business (Dlamini, *et al* 2020).

The belief being that if we attack them (black African migrants) they will leave South Africa and go back to their countries. This radical ideology is also influenced by how the media represent black African migrants in news stories perpetuating the idea that they are staying where they are not welcomed (Pineteh, 2017; Kariithi *et al*, 2017).

Kerr, Durrheim and Dixon (2019:1) argue that “xenophobic violence is not caused but instantiated in multiple ways that define the relationship between citizen and black African migrants”. The constructed relationship is based on those who perpetuate violence against African migrants viewing them as undermining the gains of the liberation struggle in South Africa (Kerr, *et al*, 2019). The Afrophobic violence opens a window in understanding how power and knowledge work together and exposes inequality in poor societies (Desai & Walsh, 2010). The media produce discourse of citizenship to articulate the issues of jobs and service delivery heralded by ‘better life for all’ promised by the ANC government, however, the specter of black African migrants and refugee disrupts this fragile relationship (Desai & Walsh, 2010). Hence, “[c]ontrolling knowledge production keeps refugee subjectivity invisible and silent, covering over the gap in meaning for both the state and "citizens" who are still hoping to be served” (Desai & Walsh, 2019: 2). Attacks motivated by Afrophobia have shown a severe lack of hospitality, which has dehumanized both the victims and those who incite hatred and violence (Kgari-Masondo & Masondo, 2019).

The dynamics of the power relationship between black African migrants and South African citizens is even witnessed in studies that are carried out to understand xenophobia where black African foreigners are excluded (Desai & Walsh, 2010). For example, in 2008 after the violence that killed black foreigners in South Africa, the Human Sciences Research Council, (2008) (HSRC), did a study on understanding xenophobia but excluded the voices of black African migrants claiming that “since the study was focused on gaining an understanding of the views of community members about 'foreigners' and xenophobia, the focus groups recruited only South African citizens” (HSRC, 2008, 4-5). However, such exclusions expose the unbalanced power dynamics and serves as another form of violence against black African migrants (Desai & Walsh, 2010).

Furthermore, the way news is produced and packaged when it is dealing with black African migrants exposes how power dynamics are between them and citizens (Tella, 2016). The negative portrayal is predominantly witnessed in newspapers, and this usually contributes to the public discourse and creates a negative power balance between migrants and citizens (Smith, 2011; Tella, 2016). For example, certain black African migrants are still being linked in

newspapers to criminal activity and illegal activities; for example, Nigerians are being linked to drug use, Congolese people to fraud, Basotho people to theft, Mozambican and Zimbabwean women to prostitution, and so on (Tella, 2016). This further gives the public the power to view black African migrants as problematic in society due to the discourses that they are exposed to through the news the newspapers publish (Pineteh, 2017; Kariithi *et al*, 2017). Therefore, it is critical to comprehend the context, history, organizational structure, and viewership of South Africa's press, especially *TimesLive*, *News24*, and *IOL*, since they play a significant role in this study.

Reported reasons for Afrophobia

According to earlier research, there are several reasons why people experience Afrophobia. These include a sense of superiority, a lack of intercultural awareness, a fear of losing one's identity and social standing, a perceived or actual threat to citizens' economic prosperity, and a way of consoling the national self and its boundaries at times of national crisis. (Masanya, 2017; Danso & McDonald, 2000). Black African migrants deemed to be committing crime and the threat to economic opportunities such as owning saloons, shops and jobs contribute to violence against them as they are accused of crime and stealing jobs (Mthombeni, 2022; Moyo & Mpofu, 2020).

Although Zimbabweans, Nigerians, Mozambicans, Ethiopians and so forth migrate to South Africa, they are not typically welcomed as South Africa has its own problems (Dube, 2018, Pineteh, 2017). Unemployment is high amongst the youth and the coming in of black African migrants is seen as a fierce competition to the local unemployed people (Masanya, 2017). According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (2021) the unemployment rate stands at 32.6% and 46.3% amongst those aged between 15 and 34 years. With such high numbers of unemployment, the tension between locals and black African migrants tend to boil and mostly result in violence over what Dube, (2018) and Masanya (2017) term fighting for 'scarce

resources'. This has given rise to movements such as Operation Dudula⁵ and Put South Africans First, which will be covered in more detail later in this chapter, that oppose the hiring of black African migrants in South Africa.

Between 2000 and 2008, an estimated 67 people were murdered in what was described as xenophobic attacks (McDonald, 2008). In an incident that the police characterised as xenophobia spurred by the locals' fear of losing their land, seven black African migrants were killed in Cape Town around the cape flats (Mogekwu 2005). Around 2001, Zimbabweans and other black African migrants who were staying in Zandspruit informal settlement were warned to vacate and when they failed to go somewhere else, their shacks and properties was looted and burnt down (Morapedi, 2007, Masanya 2017).

The media reported that the violence and hate was caused by the way the locals feel and believe the black African migrants were stealing opportunities that are supposed to benefit them (Masanya, 2017). In 2008, approximately 62 people were killed and the attacks were once again described as xenophobia and the main reasons behind the attacks was “psychological categorization processes that are nationalistic rather than superordinate; South African exceptionalism, or a feeling of superiority in relation to other Africans; and exclusive citizenship, or a form of nationalism that excludes others” (Masanya, 2017: 83).

In April 2015, an estimated 7 people died in Afrophobic attacks where violence against black African migrants originated in KwaZulu-Natal and spread to Gauteng province. The then Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini was reported in the media as the one who caused the violence by saying “foreigners should go back to their countries” (Ndou, 2015). On 18 April, Emmanuel Sithole a Mozambican migrant (street vendor) was attacked and killed alongside an Ethiopian.

⁵ Dudula a Zulu word – means to push away (*transitive*) to [push away transitive](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dudula#:~:text=Zulu-.Verb.beat%20back%2C%20to%20drive%20back)) to [repel](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dudula#:~:text=Zulu-.Verb.beat%20back%2C%20to%20drive%20back), to [repulse](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dudula#:~:text=Zulu-.Verb.beat%20back%2C%20to%20drive%20back), to [beat](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dudula#:~:text=Zulu-.Verb.beat%20back%2C%20to%20drive%20back) back, to [drive](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dudula#:~:text=Zulu-.Verb.beat%20back%2C%20to%20drive%20back) back. <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dudula#:~:text=Zulu-.Verb.beat%20back%2C%20to%20drive%20back>. [Accessed 20 March 2022].

Media photographer James Oatway photographed the attack on Sithole (Tromp & Oatway, 2015).

Afrophobic violence occurred in the Eastern Cape later in 2015, displacing over 500 people and looting over 300 establishments. In these attacks black African migrants who were identified as Muslims were the targets (Naicker, 2016). The attacks in Grahams town were instigated by Taxi drivers who accused black African migrants of crime and murders that were taking place. Hence around October taxi drives mobilised people and they attacked the spaza shops owned by Somalis and Ethiopians and the police was accused of participating in the looting of foreign owned shops (Halloran, 2016).

Around 2016, there were Tshwane riots in which South African citizens were not happy with ANC management of the city, however Somalis and other black foreigners businesses were vandalised (Bongani, 2016). With *Daily Maverick* publishing a headline that says: “*GroundUp: Somalis fear for their lives after Tshwane riots*” In the story the paper reported that due to the outbreak of violence over 300 black African migrants were sheltering in the community centres and over 10 people were brutally attacked (*Daily Maverick*, 30 June 2016).

In 2017, an anti-immigration protest was sanctioned in Pretoria and over 136 protestors were arrested. Afrophobic riots against Black African migrants occurred in Durban two years later in 2019. Over 100 individuals attacked Black African migrant-owned businesses, forcing an estimated 50 people to seek shelter in mosques and police stations. Three people are said to have died as a result of the riots. (*BBC News*, 31 March 2019). A speech that was delivered at the 2019 ANC manifesto rally by President Cyril Ramaphosa was blamed for inciting the attacks against black African migrants, although SABC News reported the then deputy mayor of Durban Fawzia Peer saying the president speech was misinterpreted and “Ramaphosa only meant that people should follow the country’s laws and operate legally” (SABC News 27 March, 2019).

News 24 reported in 2019 that over seven people were killed in violence which was believed to be xenophobic in nature, targeting black African migrants from the African continent. The Johannesburg riots occurred from 1-5 September 2019 and around 50 Nigerian business were destroyed, looted and damaged (*News24*, 5 September 2019). An estimated 12 people died due to

the riots and nearly 640 Nigerians volunteered to go back to Nigeria (*Reuters*. 11 September 2019).

Reports of Afrophobic attacks and violence have been recorded in 2020 to present, mainly targeting truck drivers, farm workers and restaurant employees (Grootes, 2021). The 2021 South African unrest⁶ was caused by the arrest of Jacob Zuma and people protested and looted shops including those owned by black African migrants in the name of wanting Zuma to be freed. Trucks were burned and violence was perpetuated on truck drivers who are black African migrants along the Mooi river area (Grootes, 2021).

In mid-January of 2022 reports started to spread of black African migrants being intimidated and harassed by the group of South Africans known as Operation Dudula, mainly in Soweto and surrounding areas of Johannesburg. The Tsietsi Mashinini Centre which houses black African migrants in Soweto was raided by Operation Dudula members and on 12 and 13 February they forcefully removed black African migrants in Hilbrow claiming that the undocumented people are responsible for crime, prostitution and drug dealing (de Villiers, 2022). Nonetheless, Operation Dudula members deny that their movement is focused on anti-black African migrants (as they claim to target undocumented migrants from all races) or Afrophobic “despite their stated aim to unilaterally forcibly evict illegal foreigners from South Africa” (AmaShabalala, 2022).

Since the dawn of the so called ‘Rainbow Nation’ in South Africa anti-black African migration or immigration has been a topical issue in South Africa. Political parties have been built on the backbone of Afrophobia and politicians have been at the forefront of inciting the masses against black African migrants (Addae & Quan-Baffour, 2022). For example, Herman Mashaba, Lindiwe Zulu and Cyril Ramaphosa statements have been by the linked civil societies as

⁶ The 2021 South African unrest, also known as the Zuma unrest or Zuma riots, was a wave of civil unrest that occurred in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces from 9 to 18 July 2021, sparked by the imprisonment of former President Jacob Zuma for contempt of court. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2021_South_African_unrest. [Accessed 21 March, 2022].

contributing to the Afrophobic violence in South Africa (Mabena & Bornman, 2017). It is noteworthy, therefore, that violence directed towards African migrants has existed in South Africa since the apartheid era, and it appears that this violence is merely a carryover from earlier times (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Akinola, 2019; Koenane, 2018).

Operation Dudula and Put South Africans first

Operation Dudula is a group that was birthed by the Put South Africans first movement that gained support on social media and is currently being led by Nhlanhla ‘Lux’ Dlamini. The movement was started in 2021, a few months after the riots and looting that erupted after Jacob Zuma was sentenced to jail (Myeni, 2022). “Dudula translates to “force out” or “knock down” in the Zulu language and expresses the common purpose of organisations like it – to force out African immigrants. According to Operation Dudula, its campaign is driven by the burden placed on public health services, job opportunities and social grants due to an influx of illegal immigrants” (Myeni, 2022: 1).

The question that some South Africans are asking themselves is – how did we get here as a nation to hate people that look like us? Well, the answer(s) to this question are debatable as government, politicians and opinion leaders all have different perspective on this phenomenon. Operation Dudula believes they are being labelled Afrophobic and xenophobic but they are simply being patriotic (Sefularo, 2022). They argue that they are cleaning ‘the rot’ in society that black African migrants bring through drugs and prostitution (Sefularo, 2022).

An estimated “10 million South Africans live below the poverty datum line, while the unemployment rate is almost 40 percent amongst black South Africans” (Statistics South Africa, 2022: 8). Thus, Operation Dudula tends to assign blame for poverty, unemployment, and criminality to black African migrants (Sefularo, 2022).

Nhlanhla ‘Lux’ Dlamini believes the movement is born out of citizen frustrations in failing to get jobs and the government’s lack of action to deal with drugs and criminal elements in black societies. Many regard the ANC government failures to deal with service delivery, unemployment and crime as the primary motivator for the creation of movements such as

Operation Dudula. Although their focus seems to be on how immigrants are depriving locals of opportunities and encouraging crime, the real complaint seems to be about the states' failure to support the economic development of young Black people (Mncube, 2022). Meanwhile Herman Mashaba, the leader of ActionSA and a strong believer of Put South Africans First, highlights the complicated and contested nature of these events as he argues that “movements like Operation Dudula are misdirecting their efforts by focusing on illegal immigrants, when the true basis of South Africa's issues is the ANC government's incapacity to implement competent governance and combat corruption and public service incompetence”. (Mncube, 2022: 1).

Black South Africans feel threatened and vulnerable since they have to compete with Zimbabweans for jobs, Nigerians for small businesses such as clothing stores, saloons and internet shops, and Ethiopians for spaza and tuck-shops (Sefularo, 2022; Gumbi, 2022). These are the reasons that Operation Dudula is taking advantage of and manipulating its members (Gumbi, 2022). “Recent Afrophobic events have been led by criminals masquerading as grassroots activists, claiming that the majority of South Africa’s problems are the result of illegal African immigrants people who do not run mines and banks; people who do not own land; people who have not squandered the country's wealth with their close relatives and associates” (Gumbi, 2022: 1).

Just like Put South Africans First, Operation Dudula contributes to the manufacturing of news that portray black African migrants as societal ills that South Africa has to deal with and when the group is on the news it carries with them negative representation of black African migrants (Amenaghawon & Salawu, 2022). For example, Operation Dudula claims that the strain on hospitals, employment opportunities and social grants due to an “influx of illegal immigrants” is what motivates its effort (Myeni, 2022).

Media messages have the power to influence our thoughts and opinions and repetition in news is crucial in shaping political and social beliefs (Wang, 2018). The language used by Operation Dudula may contribute to the production of Afrophobia as they are often covered by all media in South Africa. The more news attention they receive the more they are likely going to influence the citizens to rise against black African migrants. With derogative language and songs about

black foreigners being sung in their meetings if not controlled this can create a bigger problem for South Africa and the continent at large (Sefularo, 2022; Gumbi, 2022). If media organisations continue to spread the news about Operation Dudula, as well as other negative discourses, they may (inadvertently) contribute to how people view and construct black African migrants.

Previous newspaper discourses about black African migrants in South Africa

This section reviews previous studies on xenophobia, and the news reporting thereof, in order to present the different words, phrases and language that have been utilised when describing black African migrants in South Africa (Amenaghawon & Salawu, 2022; Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Pineteh, 2017; Kgari-Masondo & Masondo, 2019).

Kgari-Masondo and Masondo (2019) utilised auto-ethnography in studying how the SeSotho-SeTswana and IsiZulu languages have been used to promote exclusion and discrimination and fuel Afrophobia in South Africa. Amenaghawon & Salawu, (2022) relied on content analysis to reveal the narratives of the xenophobia violence in 2019 and how the violence was framed, the sources of frames and reports, and the media functions used in the reporting of the attacks in the newspapers. Whilst Tarisayi and Manik (2020) relied on content analysis to expose how online media articles constructed Afrophobia in September 2019. Pineteh's (2017) qualitative study analysed print media articles and political speeches that centre on black African migrants and how the articles contributed to the reoccurrence of violence on African foreigners. Whereas Mgogo & Osunkunle, (2023) used qualitative methods and researched on the views of university students views on the influence of negative stereotypes of African migrants published by the media. Kariithi *et al* (2017) conducted a quantitative analysis of 5,000 newspaper stories to examine how migrants are portrayed in the local media.

These past narratives are presented in themes to contextualise this study which employs a CDA to reveal the meanings of such narratives if found on the online news via *TimesLive*, *News24* and *IOL*. This section is of particular importance in addressing the study's third main objective that seeks to poses a series of hypotheses based on these previous studies, as to why online news sites coverage in South Africa is / is not Afrophobic.

Invasion of Aliens

Since the end of apartheid, the press continues to depict black African migrants as the other and in this case as ‘Aliens’ evidenced by such headlines in Figure 2.1 below:



Figure 2.1 “Aliens Run for their Lives” Headline (*Daily Sun*, 21 May 2008)

Recent studies have explored how the media specifically print newspapers continue to portray migrants, in South Africa, the United States and United Kingdom, as ‘aliens’ (Danso & McDonald, 2001; Kariithi *et al*, 2017; Dube, 2018). This narrative infers that they are from somewhere, they do not belong here (Tarisayi & Manik, 2020). An invasion of aliens has become one of the negative narratives found in the media and this language continues to contribute to the negative portrayal of migrants around the world (Danilova, 2016). The words we use are proof of how we think, which in turn impacts what we do (Nunez, 2014). During a congressional debate⁷ in United States in 1996, Duke Cunningham said, “It is illegal to cross into this country illegally, it is illegal”. Such statement of illegality has permeated the media to

⁷ <https://www.c-span.org/video/?74119-1/english-official-language>.

publish stories arguing that illegal aliens should not be legalised because they are illegal (Ackerman, 2013).

In South African media there appears to be an homogeneous discourse in which all black African migrants have been bracketed into the illegal aliens category regardless of male or female, educated or uneducated, skilled or unskilled or they have work permits on not (Kariithi *et al* , 2017). The use of illegal aliens was so common in the 1990s up to the mid-2000s and the press often reported black African migrants as aliens invading the land, with predominant phrases such as “waves of aliens”, “hordes” and “illegal” when covering immigration (Kariithi *et al*, 2017). Kariithi *et al* (2017) believes that such discourses contribute to the violence perpetuated on black African migrants and would therefore argue that the media consciously or unconsciously produce Afrophobia through these negative discursive labels.

Tabloid publications in South Africa such as *The Daily Sun*, *The Voice*, and *Daily News* produce sensationalism through publishing anti-black African migrant sentiments and even offer freedom to Afrophobic reporters (Long, *et al*, 2015; Kariithi *et al*, 2017). These tabloids tap into populist Afrophobic tendencies among ordinary South Africans and then sensationalise these discourses.

Banjo (2014) points out that the use of the word ‘Alien’ to refer to black African migrants is biased and derogatory and it is against this backdrop that Banjo noticed that headlines with such a name are biased:

“Aliens find refuge at Methodist church” (*Sowetan*, 22 May, 2008)

“You’re not welcome” (*Sowetan*, 22 July, 2008)

“War against Aliens” (*Daily Sun*, 14 May, 2008)

“Bloody end of alien lover” (*Daily Sun*, 09 May, 2008: 2)

Furthermore, according to Banjo (2014), the *Daily Sun*'s strategy was and still is to employ terms like ‘alien’ to create headlines. However, Reggie Moalosi the then deputy editor of *Daily Sun* believes the newspaper tends to use slang just like any other newspaper, he further states that

“Words like ‘aliens’ (used to depict African migrants) and ‘4 by 5’ (human testicles) were adopted simply because our readers connect with such words.” (Banjo, 2014:45-46).

Such media representations and discursive practices creates and ‘us’ vs ‘them’ binary that can arguably fuel Afrophobia (Koenane & Maphunye, 2015; Dube, 2018). This powerful relationship between representation and citizen action supports the need for this qualitative study to establish a relevant and pertinent comprehension of the construction of black African migrants in online news sites.

The reason why Afrophobia is the most appropriate term is supported by the observation that the word ‘alien’ in the South African news media mainly refers to black African migrants. For example, Chinese migrants are acknowledged as bringing development not only to the African continent (Park & Chen, 2009). Some Chinese migrants may not even have proper, legal documents but the press tends to turn a blind eye on them and concentrate on the dark-skinned migrants from their neighboring countries (Pineteh, 2017). As post-colonialism theory then argues that it is no longer about white vs black, but rather it is black vs black in a so called ‘decolonised’ state (Addae & Quan-Baffour, 2022). European and Asian migrants are easily incorporated in business societies and accepted as messiahs who will provide jobs for poor black South Africans (Park & Chen, 2009). Hence it would appear that South Africa is Afrophobic where white migrants are treated differently and hardly face intimidation and violence as compared to black African migrants and this is also witnessed in the news stories published by different media organisations (Koenane & Maphunye, 2015).

Nick Gules, former editor at *City Press* (now editor at *Sunday Times*) said that since the time of the violent attacks in 2008 his paper stopped printing the nationality of criminals because exposing nationality does not necessarily lead to more sales. And words are important. They are a primary tool for conscious, intentional expression (Nunez, 2014). Reporters choose words carefully to produce an image, sensation, or sensory experience. Politicians and their speechwriters produce language with the goal of inspiring supporters, persuading the indecisive and undermining opponents (Nunez, 2014).

Banjo's (2014) study revealed that news stories on criminal activities are filled with information from the police, which as a norm includes nationalities of the accused. This finding is supported by Crymble (2010:27) who indicates that "the South African Press Association (SAPA) merely parrot[s] the police's interpretation of events...which link migration with crime". However, this study acknowledges that when the press prints the nationality of criminals it is not by any means a pure indication of Afrophobia.

Furthermore, participants from Banjo's (2014) study also revealed that editors are to blame as they influence the manner in which black African migrants are criminalised. As noted "The naming of the nationality of a crime perpetrator is either due to the editor's bias against African migrants or an act of unprofessionalism where editors simply copy and paste what comes from the police to cover a word hole without editing the content" (Banjo, 2014: 40).

Job takers or job creators?

Job creation has become a problem for the South African government and the unemployment rate continues to skyrocket leaving many South Africans with no jobs according to Statistics South Africa (2023). "South Africa's unemployment rate was 32.9% in the first quarter of 2023, ranking among the highest in the world" (StatsSA, 2023: 1). It is against this background that black African migrants are viewed as taking the little that is available and worsening the situation of unemployment amongst black South Africans as the ANC government and private corporate have failed to create employment (Kalitanyi & Visser, 2010).

The participation of black African migrants in the economy is an important issue in South Africa and SADC region. However, due to high unemployment rate which currently sits at 35.3% (Statistics South Africa, 2022), the access of black African migrants to national labour markets has become sensitive and political (Budlender *et al*, 2015). The issue has raised political movements in South Africa that believes that only critical skilled black African migrants should be allowed to work as some South Africans believe that African migrants from the North of Limpopo are taking South African jobs (Kalitanyi & Visser, 2010).

Black African migrants are willing to work for meagre wages claims one South African interviewed by ENCA TV. And according to International Labour Organisation⁸ (ILO) migrants earn less than national workers by 13% on average and in some high income countries the gap is 42%. Hence employers may employ migrants as to pay little wages and this can create tension with citizens particularly in urban South African arrears where competition for unskilled jobs is rife (Koenane & Maphunye, 2015).

With every Afrophobic violence outbreak in South Africa, The believe is the same “Makwerekwere are stealing our jobs”. Shops, small businesses that belong to black African migrants are torched; tyres are set alight as excited people jubilee as they search and loot from Mozambicans, Somalis, and Ethiopian businesses. Professor Landau however argues that the claim that jobs are being taken by black migrants is an argument that is made as it justifies killings as rocks becomes weapons.

Nonetheless, Dr Zahra Jinnah (2020), an anthropologist and researcher says “The idea that people are here ‘stealing’ jobs and that they don’t have a right to be here needs to be corrected,” As new insights published by The Migrating for Work Research Consortium⁹ (MiWORC), “They found that 82% of the working population aged between 15 and 64 were “non-migrants”, 14% were “domestic migrants” who had moved between provinces in the past five years and just 4% could be classed as “international migrants”. With an official working population of 33,017,579 people, this means that around 1.2-million of them were international migrants”.

In 2018 The World Bank published a study in which they exposed how black African migrants actually create jobs in South Africa. Black African migrants had a positive impact “on jobs and salaries between 1996 to 2011” and the study revealed that immigrants and locals may actually

⁸ The International Labour Organization (ILO) is devoted to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, pursuing its founding mission that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_763763/lang--en/index.htm. Accessed: 22 March 2022.

⁹ an organisation that examines migration and its impact on the South African labour market

have jobs that complement each other, rather than compete with each other as widely perceived (The World Bank, 2018: 1). The World Bank (2018:1) study further notes that “African migrants tend to venture into entrepreneurship as self-employment accounts for 25% of total jobs for African migrants, compared to 16% for South Africans”.

It is important to acknowledge that we are living in the world where unproven statements are taken as the ‘truth’. For example, that black African migrants tend to take jobs that locals were not willing to do, such statements have not been proven by any study. But they find their way into the media and make headlines. In general, there is a disconnect between perception and reality because knowledge had not been readily available until recently. So a parcel of what has been available and reproduced is based on gossip and recounted prove or myths. This does not, however, imply that we should downplay the significance of the lived experiences of both citizens and migrants. “But it does mean that an opportunity exists for regional, national and sub-national actors in Southern Africa to debunk myths and engage in discourse and policy-making that reflects a more complex reality than the ‘theft of local jobs’ by migrants and refugees” (The World Bank, 2018:1).

Foreign owned small businesses are now an important part of South African economy with Ethiopians and Sudanese mainly found in the retail industry, Malawians in the clothing production, Zimbabweans are visible in the vehicle mechanics and curio-selling activities whilst West Africans are into restaurants and saloons (Kalitanyi & Visser, 2010). It is imperative to acknowledge, though, that the notion of black African migrants being the dominant force in the informal economy is unfounded. MiWORC¹⁰s (2014, 20-29) found that “less than two out of 10 people who owned a business in the informal sector [in Johannesburg] were cross-border migrants”. Peberdy (2015) argues that international migrants do play a positive role in South Africa. “The evidence shows that they contribute to South Africa and South Africans by providing jobs, paying rent, paying VAT and providing affordable and convenient goods.”

¹⁰ The Migrating for Work Research Consortium (MiWORC), an organisation that examines migration and its impact on the South African labour market.

However, the press and the public continue to discriminate and stereotype black African migrants as criminals and drug lords (Pineteh, 2017; Tarisayi & Manik, 2020).

Criminalisation of black African migrants

The media portrayal of migrants has been discussed and debated across the world. Migrants, particularly African and Latin migrants across the world, are labeled criminals even when statistics prove otherwise. For instance, Donald Trump asserted in 2016 that the United States was home to millions of ‘criminal aliens’.: “What we are going to do is get the people that are criminal and have criminal records, gang members, drug dealers, we have a lot of these people, probably two million, it could be even three million, we are getting them out of our country or we are going to incarcerate” (Coleman & Martinez. 2017:694). However, the claim was disputed by Migration policy Institute by saying “only 7% of the 11 million undocumented people in the US have criminal records” (Coleman & Martinez, 2017:1).

This study explores how South African newspapers have been covering black African migrants. Previous studies have exposed how migrants are not welcomed by the press to the extent that even *Daily sun* publish headlines like this; *Foreigners must leave; Daily Sun 24 January 2020; Kasi foreigners shown the gate, Daily Sun 19 September 2019* (see Kariithi *et al*, 2017; Pineteh, 2018). It is through such headlines that one can decode that black African migrants are not typically welcomed in South African communities. Segatti (2012) asserts that since post 1994 the media portrayal of Nigerians, Congolese and Zimbabweans has contributed immensely to the negative stereotypes and newspapers, digital news, social media, radio and Television has portrayed these migrants as a ‘problem’ to the well-being of South Africa. Unproven statistics are juxtaposed with ‘illegal’ migrant’s stories and this creates a narrative that migrants are involved in crime (Graham & Bohmke, 2013). Such a stereotype embeds a discursive colonial representation of othering (Rodriguez & Saglier, 2021).

In a study done by Human Sciences Research Council¹¹ (HSRC) 2020 it was found that the respondent believed black African migrants to be criminals who are taking advantage of the weak justice system and are responsible for the high crime rate. Oftentimes South African press communicate this ‘criminality’ (Patrick 2000). West Africans, particularly Nigerians, are depicted as drug lords who are destroying South Africa with drugs and illegal substances (Gathogo & Phiri, 2009). Within this context the black migrant has become a societal scapegoat for the failures of government and police to deal with such issue. Nonetheless, Madibeng Kgwete (2008: 4) a black South African believes the media is running a campaign against black African migrants to degrade and dehumanise them:

Like other nationals, Nigerians are not saints, but their indiscriminate portrayal as drug lords is extremely unfair. There is no evidence that Nigerians are solely responsible for drug trafficking. In fact, Nigerians have not been involved in some of the biggest drug busts at the O.R. Tambo International Airport and other points of entry into South Africa. It is only when an African is involved in an alleged criminal offence that the nationality of suspects becomes an issue.

Kgwete (2008:4) goes on to say,

In mid-August [2008], a popular (and apparently “black”) South African daily newspaper carried the story of a black woman suspected of having orchestrated the murder of her husband. The article ridiculed the “cheap” and “Fake Nigerian” clothes that the woman wears on her court appearances. [Curiously, we need to consider that] we do also have people wearing cheap Chinese, Indian and even second-hand European clothes, but don’t expect the newspaper to pour the same scorn on non-Africans. It is extremely unfortunate that black newspaper editors are contributing to what Dr. Edward Rhymes called “the continuing miseducation of the Negro.” Dr. Rhymes decries “our disturbing tendency to demonise ourselves and our willingness as a race to accept derogatory titles; yet, today, in

¹¹ The Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa is Africa's largest dedicated social science and humanities research agency and policy think tank. Available at: <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/about/what-we-do>. [Accessed on 22 March 2022]

2008, we are still promoting negative perceptions about Africans and their products and, in the process, fuelling xenophobia/Afro-phobia”.

The above excerpts illuminate the ‘yellow journalism’¹², of the west which mostly covers African continent and Africans as second-class citizens of the world and see nothing good comes from Africans (Rhymes, 2008). And in South Africa the apartheid education of black people was a significant contributor of ethnocentrism, which installed the roots of Afrophobia (Addae & Quan-Baffour, 2022). The apartheid government’s racial separation in schools produced a path of suspicion and animosity for people of other backgrounds and culture (Addae & Quan-Baffour, 2022).

Black African migrant’s criminality starts from the moment they cross the border into South Africa without proper documentation (Solomon & Kosaka 2013). Throughout the world studies have found that migration policies are premised on accusations of criminalisation (Nunez, 2014). As negative stereotypes and prejudice continue to be published in the media and negative sentiments dominate public discourses, more radical responses are being birthed that are anti-migrant but disguised in the discourse of eliminating criminals (Brouwer *et al*, 2017). For instance, from 2010 to 2019, there was an operation called ‘go back home’ which targeted black African migrants to repatriate back to their homes because they were committing crimes and currently there is Operation Dudula which claims to target undocumented and criminal black African migrants (Gumbi, 2022; Myeni, 2022).

In South Africa, politicians have been accused of misrepresenting facts by the media, civic organisations and different scholars (Pineteh, 2017; Amenaghawon & Salawu, 2022). Herman Mashaba leader of ActionSA was once criticised for labelling ‘illegal’ migrants as criminals in 2016. He later said, “I stand by what I said that people who are in our city illegally – whether you are South African or you’re someone from outside – please, when you’re in our city, please

¹² Yellow journalism was a style of newspaper reporting that emphasized sensationalism over facts. Available at: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/yellow-journalism>. Accessed 16 November 2022

respect our laws because if not, then we're going to have a challenge" (Pather, 2016). It is such statements that the media use in headlines and news stories.

In South Africa, black African migrants are treated unfairly by police or government officials, as they are frequently asked for bribes in order for them to live in South Africa (Koanene & Maphunye, 2015). Thabo Mbeki urged people to be vigilant against xenophobia as it may undermine the fruits of a young democracy. However, it seems the people did not listen to the call, as even the police discriminate black African migrants when dealing with their issues which go against the South African constitution which guarantees protection and forbids unfair treatment to anyone. Hence the experiences of black African migrants are filled with joy, pain and prejudice (Pineteh, 2017). For instance, university students from Nigeria have been accused of being funded by drug money (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023). This point to negative news of xenophobic-related violence in the print media while jeopardizing the print media's ability to report xenophobia impartially through positive news coverage (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023).

Contestations on portrayal of black African migrants in the news

Previous studies present differing contentions on the representation of black African migrants in the news. Pineteh and Mulu's (2020) study explores the experiences of Cameroonian migrants in SA against the backdrop of widespread Afrophobia. It delves into how South Africa, despite being perceived as a hostile environment for African migrants due to recurring Afrophobic attacks, has nonetheless provided economic, social, and cultural opportunities that have significantly transformed the lives of many Cameroonian migrants (Pineteh & Mulu, 2020).

Unlike many studies that focus primarily on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, this research provides a more nuanced view. It acknowledges the existence of xenophobic violence but also explores how, despite these challenges, Cameroonian migrants have found opportunities for economic and social advancement in South Africa. This balanced approach contrasts with the dominant narrative that often depicts South Africa solely as hostile to African migrants.

This study challenges the simplistic binary of victimhood versus success by showing how Cameroonian migrants can be both victims of Afrophobia and agents of their own economic and

social advancement. This duality is crucial for understanding the complexities of migration in post-apartheid South Africa.

Pineteh's (2023) study delves into the complexities of racial identity, white privilege, and the violence directed toward African migrants in post-apartheid South Africa. This research is particularly significant because it examines the intersection of race and citizenship in a society where historical and structural racism continues to influence social dynamics.

Pineteh's work is unique in that it addresses the concept of "Afrophobia," a term used to describe the xenophobic attitudes and violence specifically targeting African migrants by other black South Africans (Pineteh, 2023). This violence is framed as an expression of the frustrations and anger of black South Africans who, despite the end of apartheid, continue to face socio-economic marginalisation and structural inequalities. The research critically examines how persistent white privilege in South Africa continues to influence social dynamics, even as black South Africans express their frustrations through violence against African migrants. This analysis challenges the idea of a post-apartheid society free from racial and economic disparities.

The study by Pineteh employs a variety of theoretical frameworks, including critical race theory and post-colonial studies, to analyse the complex social and political landscape in South Africa (Pineteh, 2023). This theoretical richness allows for a more nuanced understanding of how historical and structural racism continue affecting both native black South Africans and black African migrants.

However, it is important to acknowledge that some studies (Pineteh, 2023; Tarisayi & Manik, 2020) tend to generalise African migrants as a homogenous group without considering the diverse nationalities, cultures, and experiences within this population. For instance Tarisayi & Manik (2020) argues that foreign nationals refer to people who are not citizens of South Africa but reside in the country and foreign nationals in SA are frequently the targets of xenophobic violence and discrimination. They do not explicitly explain who the foreign nationals are but rather just include everyone from outside SA as foreigners. This homogenisation can lead to oversimplified conclusions that do not capture the complexity of migrant experiences. This is

why this study acknowledges that African migrants are not a uniformed group but rather they are different (Zimbabweans, Malawians, Nigerians, Congolese, Ethiopians and so forth).

Another shortfall of preceding studies is that they focused on negative stereotypes (Kariithi *et al*, 2017; Pineteh, 2017; Dube, 2018). Research often focuses heavily on negative portrayals, such as the depiction of African migrants as criminals, job stealers, or burdens on society. While these stereotypes are important to address, this focus can overshadow more positive or neutral representations, leading to an incomplete picture. These studies concentrate primarily on mainstream media outlets, such as major newspapers and television channels, neglecting the growing influence of online news where much of the public discourse now occurs. This is why this study is exploring digital news.

Some research (Kariithi *et al*, 2017) is overly focused on quantitative content analysis, counting the frequency of certain terms or themes without delving into the deeper meanings and implications of these portrayals. This can limit the depth of understanding and fail to capture the nuances of media narratives. Hence this study is not only relying on frequency but explores the meanings behind the news texts.

Studies like Tarisayi and Manik (2020) analyse media portrayals within a limited timeframe, often during or immediately after significant events, such as Afrophobic attacks. This can skew findings and miss out on understanding long-term trends and shifts in representation over time. The study by Mawadza (2012) also limited its scope by analysing one group of migrants (Zimbabweans) this is a major shortfall as it does not fully cover the experiences of other black African migrants.

These shortfalls suggest the need for more comprehensive, nuanced, and inclusive research that considers the diversity of migrant experiences, the evolving nature of media platforms, and the importance of intersectional analysis

Challenges and experiences against black African Migrants in South Africa

South Africa is at the forefront of producing and debating the ideology of African renaissance and decolonisation of education (Dube, 2018). Paradoxically South Africa is also known to be an

Afrophobic nation associated with violence against black African migrants (Addae & Quan-Baffour, 2022; Ochonu, 2020). African migrants are deemed the ‘problem’ that South Africa must deal with and the press frequently adopt these stereotypical narratives (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Dube, 2018). The scapegoating of black African migrants is linked to the economic, political and social negative emotions birthed by post-1994 frustrations and it is human tendency influenced by the media to blame the constructed *Other* (Ukwandu, 2017).

This section therefore discusses preceding studies that explored the actual experiences of black African migrants residing in this country (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Addae & Quan-Baffour, 2022). What they face, the struggles and the experiences they face on a day to day basis (Landau, 2013).

Legalities: Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Afrophobia negatively affects the rights of black asylum and refugees in South Africa and hinders their access to services in both public and private settings. Thus, according to Moyo & Mpofu (2020), xenophobic attacks and intimidation directed towards them raises the possibility of systemic intolerance and human rights violations against non-natives, which may limit their access to housing, employment, services, and other facets of daily life. As a result, refugees and asylum seekers experience Afrophobia (harassment by police, intimidation by local people) just like any other African migrant, but because of their traumatic experiences and incapacity to assert their rights, they appear to be more susceptible to prejudice and abuse (Moyo, 2021).

In an effort to reduce the demand on asylum processing, legislative steps have also been taken to limit the appeal of South Africa to asylum applicants. The asylum system is plagued by bureaucratic incompetence, which has long-standing grievances and backlogs of years (Moyo, 2021). In 2019, rejection rates for all asylum cases increased to 96% and in 2020, further barriers were put in place for refugees and asylum seekers, preventing them from engaging in politics in their home countries (Moyo, 2021).

Economic and societal barriers limiting work prospects for migrants

For fear of losing opportunities, jobs and resources, like land, the majority of host communities do not welcome refugees (Ediev, Coleman, & Scherbov, 2014). Inequality and discrimination affect many migrants who live and work in South Africa. Because of their socio-economic origin and nationality, many of them encounter bias and stereotyping when seeking to enter the labor market or look for work. In addition to having unfavorable attitudes about foreigners, Mwamba, (2019: 20-21). notes that “South Africans have a readily accessible set of stereotypes with which to justify or rationalize their negative attitudes”. In South Africa, people have prejudices against Black African migrants because they already harbor unjustified fears and a negative public image of them, believing that they are job takers and a threat to the country's economy (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Pineteh, 2017).

Legal and procedural challenges to migrants' employment in South Africa

The South African law does recognize the intrinsic right to work that is a necessary component of human dignity. The Immigration Act of 2002 allows this privilege to foreign nationals (hence referred to as migrants) who possess valid work permits and legal status. The Act, however, places further limitations on hiring undocumented migrants.

Although South African labor laws safeguard the labor rights of unauthorized migrants, the Act does not guarantee their employment. The Act does not prohibit or deny the employment of migrants, but the act of employing a migrant who is illegal or undocumented in the country. Therefore, the Act leads to social exclusion by denying undocumented migrants the ability to work because their irregular status prevents them from doing so.

The documentation or permit required for migrants to enter, stay, and work in South Africa is delayed by certain officials (Mwamba, 2019). Occasionally, work permit applications are also refused or manipulated. Consequently, it is extremely difficult for Zimbabweans or Malawians or any other African migrant to get employment or keep their jobs in companies when work permits are delayed, officials provide subpar services while issuing permits, and permits are not renewed on time (Mwamba, 2019).

Denial of Migrants qualifications and skills

The South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) must assess the documentation of migrants who possess professional or skill-based qualifications in order to grant them qualification. In terms of the National Qualifications Framework's levels, SAQA seeks to compare and recognize qualifications from other countries with those from South Africa (Landau, 2011). The qualifications and skills that migrants bring from their native countries are, nevertheless, not acknowledged by all South African businesses. As such, they deny them the chance to demonstrate their abilities (Mwamba, 2019; Landau 2011).

It takes time and money to gather, translate, and submit these qualifications or documents to SAQA. As a result, most of black African migrants are unable to obtain jobs that fit their talents or qualifications in a timely manner if they fail to accomplish this and lack the necessary resources (Mwamba, 2019).

Because of their migration permits, some skilled migrants with SAQA continue to encounter difficulties in finding employment. For instance, in the case of engineers and health experts, they must be certified and adhere to all applicable laws and regulations regarding their qualifications in order to be hired (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018). “Due to their lower standards and contribution to the businesses and the South African economy, semi-skilled and low-skilled migrants are less likely to find employment than skilled migrants” (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018:1).

Police harassment

Black African migrants in South Africa are accusing police of using unwarranted force against them and soliciting bribes while conducting routine searches for criminals and illegal immigrants (Isilow, 2013). Landau (2013) believes migrants are harassed by police as some police officers are likely to believe that black African migrants are involved into some criminal activities.

Excessive force is therefore often used when dealing with them. Landau, who has Conducted extensive research on migration, says for fear of retaliation, most migrants are unwilling to register legal complaints against police officers (Landau, 2013).

Several studies have concluded that there is Afrophobia in the police departments across South Africa (Masuku, 2004; Hiropoulos, 2017; Mutandiro, 2020). When there is Afrophobic violence black African migrants struggle to get police protection to the extent that justice services are scarce to them (Hiropoulos, 2017). For example, in 2017 during and after violence targeting African migrants in Gauteng an estimated 136 people were arrested for failing to produce documents. Hiropoulos (2017: 2) argues that “The response by the police, then, focused on removing the victims of persecution rather than the persecutors”.

In 2020 dozens of people who rely on finding jobs outside different hardware stores in South Africa were harassed and chased away by the police in the name of enforcing Covid-19 regulations and most black African migrants were affected (Mutandiro, 2020). During the lockdown only South African citizens were given food aid and parcels and most African migrants had to survive through looking for handy jobs which was difficult as metro police will confiscate their tools and even fire rubber bullets just to disperse them from looking for work (Mutandiro, 2020). However, the police did acknowledge such incidents and believes they are simply enforcing the law they are not discriminating against anyone (Mutandiro, 2020).

Masuku (2004) believes the Afrophobic attitudes in the South African Police Service (SAPS) have been steadily growing due to the number of black African migrants coming into the country. The consequences are not only limited to negative stereotypes and attitudes but sometimes involve intimidation, corruption, ill-treatment and harassment and violence against them (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Hiropoulos, 2017). Chairman of The African Diaspora Forum (ADF) Dr Vusimuzi Sibanda, believes that this is illustrated in how police allow Operation Dudula to intimidate African migrants in the name of cleaning communities of crime and drugs (Qukula, 2022). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to present how Afrophobia may be constructed by the media through publishing certain narratives.

Solomon and Kosaka (2013) support this thinking by explaining that black African migrants do face discrimination when dealing with the police. For instance, Zimbabweans are frequently complaining that the police treat them as criminals and are harassed in major cities like Johannesburg. The police are not trained in diversity and migration hence they have prejudices

when dealing with black African foreigners in spite of transition from apartheid to democracy (Solomon & Kosaka, 2013; Banjo, 2014). Some scholars then argue and say the press is not different from the police in how it deals with black African migrants producing stereotypes that stretch from apartheid era (Dube, 2018). Hence it is imperative to comprehend the framework and background of the online news sites in South Africa and how it is structured and how much readership it attracts through its reporting particularly *Timeslive*, *News24* and *IOL* as they are key in this study.

South African Online Press

It is evident from the previous literature analysis that there are multiple facets to comprehending Afrophobia in South Africa. The online media do cover this phenomenon from different perspectives. The online media has become important in creating discourses that people discuss at a national level. In South Africa alone millions are reading and relying on internet to get news about what is happening around their communities and the world at large. Online media in South Africa is dominated by different digital newspapers and news sites that cover stories of migration, politics, sports and economics. For example, *BrieflySA* deals with celebrity news, politics, *Bizcommunity* publishes economic and business news and *The South African* publishes news about sports and lifestyle.

People are generally moving away from relying on social media for news stories instead they are moving toward their local online publishers. Local publishers are becoming their trusted source of breaking news (Narratiive, 2022). According to the report published in March of 2022 by Narratiive most users of online news websites are young people between the ages of 20-35 years old. With 30.72% of the total market that utilises digital news sources to be between the age of 20-24 and then 60.24% browsers of internet news to be aged 20-35 years old and 82.11% of traffic is from their cellphones with 12.36 page views per unique browser (Narratiive, 2022). Most of the news sites visited are those that carried more local news and this leads to more month on moth growth on their news sites. The following table highlights the largest online publishers in South Africa.

Table 2.1 Top online publishers in South Africa

Top Online Publishers in South Africa		
Publisher	Websites	Readership (Unique South African browsers)
24.com	<i>News24, Business Insider, Netwerk24</i>	18.7 million
Arena Holdings	<i>TimesLive, SowetanLine, BusinessLive</i>	9.0 million
Broad Media	<i>BusinessTech, MyBroadband, TopAuto</i>	8.4 million
Caxton CTP	<i>Citizen, Guzzle, Rekord</i>	6.3 million
The South African	<i>The South African</i>	4.5 million
Portal Publishing	<i>Careersportal, Skillsportal</i>	3.9 million
Primedia Broadcasting	<i>EWN, Cape Talk, 702</i>	3.1 million
The Daily Maverick	<i>Daily Maverick</i>	2.5 million
MediaMark	<i>MSN</i>	2.2 million
Highbury Safika Media	<i>Cape Town Etc, SA Rugby Mag, Carmag</i>	2.1 million
Sabido	<i>ENCA, Etv</i>	2.1 million

(Narratiive¹³, 2022)

News24 is South Africa’s “most popular online publication, followed by *BusinessTech*, *Timeslive*, *The South African*, *Citizen*, and *MyBroadband*. *Independent Online* is one of South Africa's fastest growing digital news sites” (Narratiive, 2022:1). The following section explains the political economy of the three news sites under study.

News24

“The global media conglomerate Naspers launched the English-language South African news website *News24* in October 1998. About 100 of its journalists are headquartered in Cape Town,

¹³ Narratiive is the official traffic measurement partner of the IAB SA and provides accurate traffic statistics for South Africa’s top websites. Available at: <https://www.digitalmarketingcommunity.com/company/narratiive/>.

Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, and Gqeberha and are led by Editor-in-chief Adriaan Basson. *News24*, which had its headquarters in Johannesburg at first, moved to Cape Town in 2001. *Fin24*, *Sport24*, *Channel24*, *Health24*, *Arts24*, *Parent24*, *Wheels24*, *W24*, *Ride24*, and *Business Insider SA* are just a few of its brands” (*News24*, 2023:1).

The global network of media and e-commerce websites Naspers includes *News24* as a part of it. When Internet 1.0 was launched in 2000, it was already well-known in South Africa thanks to a web user interface, according to APP Annie's business intelligence analysis.

News24 is interested in print and distribution, e-commerce, digital media and services, newspapers, magazines, and book publishing. In August 2021, *News24* launched a digital membership program. Customers may access top investigative journalism, comment, analysis, and more for R75 a month. Currently, there are over 75,000 subscribers.

According to Narratiive (2023), *News24* is the top widely read digital news publisher. It has a readership of 11.6 million per month. *News24* has 27.4million visits per month with an average page visit of 2.23 and an average time spent on website is 3 minutes. And according to Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (2023) *News24* has maintained its pole position as the most trusted news source in South Africa with more than 83% of those who took part in the study acknowledging *News24* as a credible and reliable source of news. And according to Narratiive (2023) *New24* has a readership of 12.5 million per month which makes it the biggest in South Africa ahead of *IOL* and *Timeslive*.

Independent Online

The news website *Independent Online*, also referred to as *IOL*, is based in South Africa. *IOL* provides access to the online editions of several South African newspapers, including “*The Star*, *Pretoria News*, *The Daily Voice*, *Cape Times*, *Cape Argus*, *Weekend Argus*, *The Mercury*, *Post*, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, *Isolezwe*, *Daily Tribune*, *Sunday Tribune*, *The Independent on Saturday*, and *The Sunday Independent*” (*IOL*, 2023:1) and their content is generated by digital journalists.

IOL is owned by Sagarmartha Technologies Ltd., a branch of the Sekunjalo Group, which also owns much of Independent Media. Through its subsidiary Sekunjalo Independent Media, the Public Investment Corporation of South Africa controls 25% of the company, with the other 20% controlled by “China International Television Corporation and the China Africa Development Fund”, two state-owned businesses in China. Via this subsidiary, Sekunjalo Investments holds a 55% ownership stake in the company. China International Television Corporation is wholly owned by the state broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV). Prior to 2013, Independent News & Media owned *IOL*.

The oldest news website in South Africa is *IOL* which also serves as a major hub for local news, current affairs, and content. *IOL* has a monthly audience of millions of people who frequent the site and spend a lot of time reading news and information, including breaking news updates and articles in important areas including business, sport, lifestyle, entertainment, and current affairs. *IOL* has 5.58 million readership and 24.9 million pager viewers per month (Narratiive, 2023). However, *IOL* website claims it has a readership of 11 million per month (*IOL*, 2023). According to Similarweb¹⁴ (2023) *IOL* has 14.1 million visits per month, with average page visit of 2.73 and the average time spent per visit is 2:01 minutes. It has nearly half a million followers on Facebook and 595 000 followers on Twitter. *IOL* (2022) website claims that they have 11 million readers and it has averaged over 7.5 million readers each month from January to March of 2022. With an average visit duration of 2 minutes and a bounce rate of 66.07% (Similarweb, 2022).

TimesLive

According to *TimesLive* (2022) it is South Africa second biggest news website, However, Narratiive (2022) places *TimesLive* as the third biggest online paper. According to a report published by Narratiive (2022: 1) “*News24* is the country’s top publication with a readership of

¹⁴ Similarweb Ltd. is an Israeli software development and data aggregation company specializing in web analytics, web traffic and performance. <https://www.similarweb.com/corp/about/>.

12.9 million unique browsers. *BusinessTech* ranks second with 6.4 million unique browsers and *TimesLive* third with 5.5 million”.

Seven days a week, *TimesLive* provides sports, entertainment, opinion, breaking news, and lifestyle content. Arena Holdings publishes it. It was founded in September 2009, and Sthembiso Msomi serves as its chief editor. Fienie Grobler, Phumza Sokana, and Makhudu Sefara are the editors.

Formerly known as The Times, TimesLive is an online publication based in South Africa. The Times print edition was a Sunday Times spinoff that was initially free for subscribers to receive; non-subscribers were first charged R2.50 per publication. Based in Johannesburg, South Africa, it is the second-biggest news website in the country. Arena Holdings has controlled it since November 2019.

The Times of South Africa was a daily printed newspaper that was distributed free of charge to 137,054 *Sunday Times* subscribers five days a week, according to figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations (Narratiive, 2023). It debuted alongside the *TimesLive* website and was South Africa's first completely interactive tabloid newspaper.

In November 2017, Tiso Blackstar Group, the *Times* previous owner, announced that it would no longer be publishing the newspaper in print. *Times Select* a paid daily edition that is exclusively accessible online replaced it at the start of 2018. *TimesLive* is still providing free material. *Times Select* was subsequently renamed *Sunday Times Daily* to more closely mirror its print counterpart, the Sunday Times, the largest Sunday newspaper in South Africa.

Free breaking news, sports, entertainment, and other items are published on the *TimesLive* website along with videos, audio, and photos. Additionally, it houses all of the digital material from *Times Select*, *Sunday Times Daily*, and *TshisaLive* (entertainment and celebrity news). For R1.05 billion in 2019, Arena Holdings purchased all of Tiso Blackstar’s media assets.

TimesLive has a total of 7.4 million visits per month with an average page per visit around 1.77 and an average duration time spent on the site is 1.49 minutes (Similarweb, 2023). According to

Narratiive (2023) *TimesLive* has a readership of 5.88 million per month which makes it one of the most popular news website in South Africa.

Over the past year, there have been drastic changes to the South African media industry. According to the recently issued 2023 *State of Print Media* study from media monitoring company Novus Group, both the global economic crisis and the development of artificial intelligence (AI) have had an impact on how people consume news and information. More people are relying on digital websites for news as they can access stories on their cellular phones and laptops for free and After the COVID-19 epidemic, both print and television news are still declining as sources of information (Roper, 2023).

But there are encouraging signs. News outlets are embracing platform chances to reach new audiences more and more. Although it might be challenging to locate reported figures for many of them, “the number of subscribers to pay-walled and membership-based news sites appears to be increasing. The independent news site *News24* has around 75,000 subscribers, an increase of 53% year over year. Another *Media24* site, the specialised Afrikaans-language *Netwerk24*, had over 95,500 subscribers as of September 2022” (*News24*, 2022:1).

The study delves into how online press portrays black African migrants in South Africa by analysing the language and discourse used by *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL*. 52% of South African adults engage and read online newspapers (*BusinessLive*, 2021). As of January 2023 over 43 million South Africans are active on the internet and an estimated 78% use mobile devices to access the internet and this proportion is likely going to increase to 90% by 2027 (Statista, 2023).

Analysing online news stories is crucial when dealing with migrant representations for several reasons. Online news platforms have a global reach and are accessible to a vast audience. The representations of migrants in these stories can influence the opinions and attitudes of a large and diverse audience (Schmolz, 2019). Online news is often consumed in real-time, allowing for immediate influence on public perception and discourse. The speed at which news spreads online can quickly shape public narratives about migrants hence these three digital sites were selected.

Furthermore, the internet hosts a wide range of news outlets, from mainstream media to independent and alternative sources. Analysing these allows for a comparison of how different outlets represent migrants, revealing biases, ideologies, and differing narratives. Online news stories often include comment sections, social media shares, and user-generated content that provide insight into public reactions and grassroots discourses about migrants.

Online news often allows for reader interaction through comments, shares, and likes, which can provide additional layers of discourse and reveal public sentiment. Online stories can go viral, spreading representations of migrants rapidly across social networks and influencing not just individual opinions but also collective perceptions (Schmolz, 2019). Online news often incorporates multimedia elements such as videos, images, infographics, and interactive content (Schmolz, 2019). Analysing these multimodal forms of communication provides a fuller understanding of how migrant representations are constructed and communicated. Visual representations in online news are powerful and can significantly affect how migrants are perceived. Words found in online news can evoke emotional responses and reinforce or challenge stereotypes (Schmolz, 2019).

Online news consumption is often shaped by algorithms that personalize content based on user behaviour. This can create echo chambers where specific narratives about migrants are reinforced, making it important to analyse the representation within these contexts. Algorithms may also prioritize sensational or biased content, which can distort representations of migrants (Schmolz, 2019). Analysing online news helps to identify these distortions and their effects.

Online news archives allow researchers to track how representations of migrants evolve over time, providing insights into shifting public discourses, policy impacts, and the role of media in these changes (Schmolz, 2019). The vast amount of data available online offers opportunities for both qualitative and quantitative analysis, enabling a comprehensive study of trends, patterns, and the impact of migrant media representations on public opinion and policy.

By analysing online news stories, researchers can gain a nuanced understanding of how migrants are represented in the digital age, how these representations influence public perception, and how they reflect and shape broader societal attitudes and policies.

Conclusion

The focal point of this chapter is to present the narratives and literature that deals with the media portrayal of black African migrants in the newspapers. Paying particular attention to how themes are created when describing black foreigners from the continent of Africa. One of the fundamental features available on preceding studies is the association of black African migrants with crime, illegality and drug dealing.

The term xenophobia is usually used as an umbrella term in defining the hate, intimidation, sometimes violence that migrants face in South Africa however, these trends are exclusive to Africans which makes it Afrophobia not xenophobia (Tella, 2016; Butticci, 2020). Attacks perpetrated by local population in South Africa demonstrate the extent of intolerance targeted at Black African migrants. This chapter engaged this phenomenon through the lens of previous studies and how black migrants face discrimination from the police and public (Dlamini *et al*, 2020; Tella, 2016, Kgari-Masondo & Masondo, 2020). This chapter explains the discourses that describe black African migrants in the press and public spaces, often within an Othering framework that can be connected to Afrophobia (Kariithi *et al*, 2017, Dube, 2018, Koenane & Maphunye, 2015).

A recurring trend from the previous studies showed that most newspapers that target black communities tend to carry lot of negative stories about black African migrants. The assumption is that black foreigners reside in these communities and compete for resources and jobs. This is perhaps why *Daily Sun* gives more attention to black African migrant related issues (Banjo, 2014). Currently, there is a dearth of research examining online news sites and how they portray black African migrants, which this study exposes.

The online media landscape is discussed in this chapter explaining the access and readership that media sites do get from generating local news. *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL* were all explained in terms of how their digital sites are performing in terms of readership and having visitors on their websites. The following chapter three discusses the theoretical framework that informs this study. The theory of representation and post-colonialism is explained in relation to how they ought to explain the phenomenon under study.

Chapter 3 Conceptual Framework

Introduction

The earlier chapter elaborated on previous research about the representation of black African migrants, who has looked at what and what they found. However, this chapter discusses the conceptual framework that informed the study's design and that will aid in the interpretation of data. It presents two theoretical bodies of knowledge related to Othering through the use of language, namely representation theory (Hall, 1997 & 2003) and post-colonial theory (Al-Saidi, 2014; Said, 1978 and 1993; Spivak, 1998 and Fanon 1967) and. The reason for the chapter's description as a conceptual framework, instead of a theoretical framework is that it does not apply a single theory to the understanding of a phenomenon. Instead, discusses "a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that inform and support a study" (Maxwell, 2008:222). For instance, the study is rooted on the online news portrayal of black African migrants in South Africa and how post-colonial era portray those that are different from the citizens, hence the theories of representation and post-colonial are key in this study and how their tenets influence this study as well.

The study objectives are to explore and understand as to why online news coverage in South Africa is Afrophobic (or not). It operationalise this objective by exploring the ways in which three South African online newspapers (*Independent Online*, *TimeLive* and *News24*) report on black African Migrants with a specific focus on the prevalent discourses contained in the reporting.

To address one of the research questions, (How do online news sites reveal power relations between South Africans and black African migrants in the post-apartheid South Africa?) In order to generate discourse, depict hegemonic and counter-narratives, and deconstruct migration, this study will make use of post-colonial theory. To do so, this research analyse the language used when covering black African migrants in the news. And Afrophobia discourses are examined through studying the criteria online media use to select certain words and sources and how the words inform narratives. Hence, this study examines how existing narratives relate to post-

colonial perspectives and how online news sites reveal power relations between the local population and black African migrants in the post-apartheid South Africa.

Representation theory will therefore guide this study by exploring how black African migrants are portrayed in the online newspapers. Hall (1997) argues that “representation is, therefore, bound to language and the way language produces or constructs meaning. It is this link between concepts and language that enables people to refer to either the material (real) or fictional (imaginary) worlds of objects, people and events” (Hall, 1997: 16). “This is how we encode (give meaning to) things through language – how people make sense of the world, and how people can express complex thoughts on places, objects, events” (Hall, 1997: 16), and in the context of this study the reporting of black African migrants, and in what ways do South African digital news sites report about black African migrants?

These two theories are discussed in detail, including their suitability to frame the study. The representation theory assists in understanding how *Times Live*, *News24* and *IOL* texts portray black African migrants to an audience and how people see others, and how people see themselves. Post-colonialism theory offers critical tools to analyse how these three online newspapers unevenly distribute news about black African migrants and consolidate citizen’s power. Postcolonial theory is useful in explaining how people read and understand media texts and national histories; and is thus a significant method of critical humanistic inquiry (Elam, 2019).

Several concerns are raised by representation theory in this work. What key components make up a portrayal of black African migrants? To be more precise, what structural significance does place of origin has when online news highlights the place of origin of the black African migrant group?

For instance, the image of black African refugees in South Africa was associated with ideas of war and escape, and the group was seen as a despicable lot of people who, despite their obvious need for assistance, were not welcome in the country (Pineteh, 2017; Matsinhe, 2011). The potential for conflict stems from the hazy line between a refugee and an asylum applicant at this high level (and in this socio-political era). However, does this conjured image of black African

refugees hold true when the place of origin of this super-ordinate category is connected to the black African refugee group? In theory, this is an intriguing question. How are black African migrants from Africa understood, assuming that there is a social representation of them? Hence below is the discussion of representation theory in response to these fundamental problems and questions.

Representation Theory

The theoretical framework explores the idea of the representation of the Other to identify the aspects that define that Other and, later in the analysis, confirm whether migrants from Africa are confined into it and whether migrants from somewhere else are excluded. Representation provides the space to examine how the representation of black African migrants in South African media differs according to their nationality.

The quality of the mediated world can be gauged by looking at how South Africa approaches the subject of the Other. The Other is not only a "foreigner," but it is quickly evolving into a "symbol" of exclusion and alienation, particularly in language (Couldry & Hepp, 2013). Since "representation as others" involves a variety of concepts, including marginality and alienation, the content analysis in this study uses representation as symbols of inclusion and exclusion as a category for analysing black African migrants in news articles.

Theoretical perspectives of studying representation in the media generally may be under one of the two frameworks – the critical perspectives developed from cultural studies and psychosocial perspectives (Terblanche, Timlin and Ward, 2019). This study however, focuses on cultural studies because its emphasis is on how mass media influence people's perceptions of the world, through an in-depth qualitative analysis. (Luther *et al*, 2017).

Cultural Studies

Through in-depth qualitative investigation, cultural studies concentrate on how representations in the media affect our perceptions of the outside world. Therefore, it is essential to comprehend and identifying societal power to comprehend representation from a cultural studies perspective (Hall, 1997, Terblanche *et al*, 2019). This is true because the meanings created through

representation are intricately tied to power relations and are greatly influenced by the historical and social environment in which they are created (Ronald, Jackson & Hogg, 2010). Simply said, as representations are created by persons in positions of power, they frequently mirror prevailing ideologies or hegemonies.

Easey and Moloney (2019) believes representation theory offers the opportunity to analyse language and how those in power or those who control the media select certain discourse when covering minorities. The theory enables the researcher (this study included) to examine and reveal the power of media portrayals and language in influencing how people perceive and communicate with those from a different social group (Easey & Moloney, 2019). Although the media representation of African migration has received attention from different scholars, this study aims to identify and clarify if the South African online media aid in the construction of Afrophobia through the way they represent black African migrants in news stories.

Stuart Hall (1997) argues that to represent something means to describe or depict it, to place a likeness of it before us in our mind (imagined) or senses (real or material). However, representing something also means to symbolise or stand in for or stands in place of something. “Representation is, therefore, bound to language and the way language produces or constructs meaning. It is this link between concepts and language that enables us to refer to either the material (real) or fictional (imaginary) worlds of objects, people and events” (Hall, 1997: 16). This is how we encode (give meaning to) things through language – how we make sense of the world, and how we can express complex thoughts on places, objects, events, and in the context of this study the reporting of black African migrants.

Representation plays an important part in the investigation of culture, language, communication and society. Foucault (1980:3) describes “representation as a process whereby people from a culture utilise language, or, in other words a framework that sends signs and images all together to create meaning”. Meaning is fluid and regularly changing inside cultural, social, and historical settings (Foucault, 1980). Similarly, Hall (1997:4) explains that “representation is the process by which meaning is created and traded between individuals from a culture using language, signs

and images”. This theory is the cornerstone of this study in exploring how language used by online news sites to portray African migrants may construct Afrophobia.

Representation is an integral part in the process of creating meaning and how it is exchanged between members of a society (Hall, 1997). Hence how black African migrants are represented in the newspapers is important in analysing how online news sites portray aspects of reality and black African migrants. Therefore, studying how migrants are portrayed in the media is important in understanding societal power as meanings generated by these representations in the press are shaped by the historical and socio-cultural context in which they are produced , and they are intertwined with the relations of power (Terblanche *et al*, 2019). Put simply, “representations are produced by those with the power to do so, and as such often reflect the dominant ideologies or hegemony” (Terblanche *et al*, 2019).

This connection between language and power is significant for media research as it is often via mainstream media’s communication systems that some groups’ ideas are legitimised whilst others are delegitimised (Simpson & Mayr 2010). However, prevailing opinions can change throughout time and in response to socioeconomic changes. Therefore, media organizations have influence because their positions, ideologies, and viewpoints can be favoured and extensively disseminated. (Neary & Ringrow, 2018).

To what degree does journalistic content reflect the unequal power situation between newspapers and readers? This is what the study will answer later on as it answers two of the research question - How do online newspapers reveal power relations between South Africans and black African migrants in the post-apartheid South Africa? And what is concealed and what is revealed using specific discourses?

The core process of constructing meaning is arguably two related systems of representations (Terblanche *et al*, 2019). The first system enables people to give meaning to the world by constructing a set of relations and links between things (people, places and so forth) and our conceptual meanings or schemas. The second system allows construction of relations and links between our conceptual maps or schemas, and a set of signs organised into different languages that stand for, or represent, those concepts (Terblanche *et al*, 2019). Think about seeing the sign

below on a building. What meaning is it trying to convey or how should people respond to it? Although it depicts a zigzag-shaped arrow, the context, color, and shape help us to realise that it symbolises or indicates the harmful electricity that is present in this area or fence.

Fig 3.1 Danger Sign



(Terblanche *et al*, 2019: 137)

This illustration demonstrates how we might interpret a visual cue to determine the meaning it represents (Hall, 1997). Both tangible objects, like a warning sign in this case, and intangible or fictional ones might have meanings that can be decoded. These many signs and symbols can all be thought of as a form of language that we can comprehend and decipher. According to Hall (1997:19) “The relation between things, concepts and signs lies at the heart of the production of meaning in language and the process that links these three elements together is what we call representation” However, Using the above picture for instance, it cannot mean the same thing to everyone. Social constructionist argues that a “picture has a different meaning to everyone depending on what they constitute it to mean. In other words, everyone sees things differently” (Umeogu & Ifeoma, 2012:130). Thus, the discussion on the social constructionist theory will be discussed further down in this chapter.

It is within this paradigm that scholars moved from seeing media messages as portrayal of reality (Hall, 1997 & Terblanche *et al*, 2019) to question everything we read, watch or hear on mass

media. Instead, mass media messages are embedded in the ever going process of saturated media stream and producing norms and common sense about people (including migrants) in society (Fursich, 2010). The representations are constitutive of culture, meaning and knowledge about us and the world around us. Beyond just mirroring reality, representations in the media such as in film, television, photography and print journalism create reality and normalise specific worldviews or ideologies (Fursich, 2010; Tomaselli, 1996).

There is no such thing as an innocent word since every word, regardless of how straightforward it may sound, has a hidden, polysemic and vague meaning. The receiver must comprehend the meaning of a word or symbol for communication to have occurred. This study argues that there are factors that affect how meaning is encoded and decoded, and as a result, no two people encode meaning in the same manner. This indicates to this study that construction is an individual activity carried out to fulfill individual wants, aspirations, and desires at a specific period.

There are three main approaches to representation that have developed in cultural studies, namely, the reflective approach, the intentional approach and constructionist approach (Terblanche *et al*, 2019).

Reflective Approach

Hall (1997) believes that the reflective approach is centered on the idea that meaning exists in the idea or person, meaning is ever-present in our material world and language is the mirror reflecting the true meaning as it exists. Therefore, language reflects the truth that is already fixed in the world (Hall, 1997). For example, when newspapers publish stories that depict black African migrants as criminals it is the ‘truth’ that exist in the world that newspapers are simply re-representing. The reflective approach proposes that what we see and listen through the media may be a reflection of genuine life. In other words, the representation is made from what exists in reality (Hall, 1997). This approach considers representation to be an objective depiction of people, places and events (Hall, 2013 & Terblanche *et al*, 2019). Whereas the reflective approach is concerned with what is shown, the intentional approach centers on who is showing it, and why.

Intentional Approach

This approach assumes that meanings are cognizant creations by producers, who force their one of a kind meaning on the world through the language they utilize (Hall, 1997). In other words, representations are stacked with our expectation; we deliberately select subjective depictions of our perception of the world to communicate to others (Terblanche *et al*, 2019). “The intentional theory of representation pretends that words mean what the author intends them to mean. Language expresses only what the speaker or writer or painter wants to say, his/her personally intended meaning” (Hall 2013:15). For instance, when the press publish stories depicting black African migrants as ‘aliens’, drug lords or job stealers, it is exactly what the publisher is communicating that black African migrants are indeed job stealers and so forth. The intentional approach is in fact the opposite of the reflective approach.

However, the intentional approach is flawed, since it does not consider the social nature of language. The essence of language is communication, which, in turn, depends on shared codes and etymological traditions. In this manner, our private, intended meanings got to enter into the rules, codes, and traditions of language in order to be shared and understood. This implies our private thoughts need to compete and negotiate with all the other meanings stored in language, from which our use of the language framework will unavoidably trigger into activity (Hall, 1997).

Furthermore, “both the reflective and intentional approaches fail to take into account the audience’s agency (i.e. their ability to make decisions and play an active role in representation), seeing them as passive recipients of a message” (Hall, 1997:25). The theory is difficult to prove since every individual may have his or her own way of interpreting an event, news, story or image. This limitation is addressed in the social constructionist approach to representation, to which this study subscribes.

Social constructionist theory of representation

Scholars studying cultural media are particularly interested in representations as manufactured images with political overtones. Newspapers produce and distribute a great deal of the tales that are considered relevant in our mediated, consumption-oriented world. “Much of what the public

know is based on the images, symbols, and narratives in newspapers, radio, television, and other media” (Brooks & Herbert, 2006:4). “How individuals construct their social identities, how they come to understand what it means to be citizen or migrant is shaped by commodified texts produced by media for audiences that are increasingly segmented by the social constructions of who belongs and who does not” (Brooks & Herbert, 2006).

Culture can be viewed “as a process through which people circulate and struggle over the meanings of our social experiences, social relations, and therefore, our *selves*” (Byers & Dell, 1992: 91). Just as gender “is a social construct through which society defines what it means to be masculine or feminine, race also is a social construction. Race can no longer be seen as a biological category, and it has little basis in science or genetics. “Identifiers such as hair and skin color serve as imperfect indicators of race” (Brooks & Herbert, 2006:13).

Our society's shifting social, political, and economic demands have led to the creation and modification of the racial classifications that we employ to identify human distinctions. The idea that gender and race are social constructs emphasizes how essential they are to the mechanisms underlying human reality. Working from it, according to Brooks & Herbert (2006), forces us to comprehend the nuanced roles that social institutions like newspapers play in forming our increasingly racially and gendered media culture.

According to Hall (1997), meaning is constructed through language, using representational signs. Language is defined as set of signs, symbols be those sounds, words or whatever else through which we represent other people our concepts, thoughts or feelings. So, language is a representation system involving a process of constructing meaning, making things meaningful” (Hall 2003:18). Language is both the means by which meaning is produced and the means by which symbols and signs are constructed (Hall, 2003).

Meaning is therefore constructed within a culture (Umeogu & Ifeoma, 2012), For instance, traffic signs on the road will have little to no meaning for you if you have not attended driving school or you are not familiar with them because you will not know how to relate to them. Another instance was given by Geraghty, (2005:48) who clarified social constructionist theory of using a photograph. She argues that, “the meaning of the photograph is not hidden or imminent

in the picture but is constructed through a range of signifying practices. During the process of recognition and understanding, we relate what we see to a wider set of understanding”.

That is, if a person sees an image of a bent arrow on a road, He will identify it and be able to connect it to one of the traffic signs, so he will know that the bend is ahead. This will prompt him to hit the brakes in order to prevent skidding off the road. Cultural meanings are not ‘in the head,’ as Hall (2000) points out that meaning is constructed by representation where meaning depends not on the sign, but rather on its symbolic function.

Images of black African migrants are now frequently used to symbolize criminality, illegality, and foreignness due to the widespread use of these photos in narratives about illegal immigrants or criminals. But occasionally, as a first glance at some stories—online or in print—it appears that the photographs are being used arbitrarily, with the result that there is no clear correlation between crime and black African immigration. According to Hall (1997), it is the connection between the signifier, the signified, and the sign. How does it communicate with us using news stories as a language, and what is the end effect? Well, it does communicate with the people because the construction of Afrophobia is through the placement of roles of black African migrants in news stories (Dube, 2018).

Can the word representation be mentioned without referencing its medium, language? Language is one of the ‘media’ that a culture uses to communicate its thoughts, ideas, and feelings (Hall, 1997). Due to the fact that it provides the most condensed and consistent collection of Images within our media system, online newspapers are a tremendously effective method of communication in contemporary society. This study reveals how constructionist theory of representation is actively involved in making meanings out of news stories created by *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL*.

According to the constructionist approach, neither things in themselves nor the individual users of language can fix meaning to the language. Instead, meanings are contextual as the “the particular symbolic fixes a meaning at a particular time” (Hall 2013:15). In other words, meaning is produced in and through language. As Hall (2013) argues, constructionist approach, assumes neither things themselves nor the individual users of language can fix meaning to the language.

Things don't mean. "We are those to construct meaning, using representational systems: concepts and signs" (Hall 2013:.25). He argued that it is not the material world which conveys meaning; it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts.

The constructionist approach is well suited to this study as it helps us understand the cultural power of media by helping us understand the images, stories we are seeing and how the meanings of objects are social constructions and do not have fixed meaning (Grossberg, 2012). For example, if black African migrants are always portrayed in the media as criminals, objectified objects, then those characteristics will always be assigned to what it means to be a black African migrant; however, through the shift in definition of migrant, those meanings can alter and change.

One can analyse the construction of the black African migrant's phenomena in the press through the constructionist approach. Many can look at these news stories about black African migrants and see their hardships and struggles, but others may see black African migrants as determined and hard workers thus inspiring readers to migrate or work hard. The way newspapers portray the lives of black African migrants' impacts reader's definition and opinion of black African migrants.

If representations construct reality, what does it mean for the media-world relationship? The way in which newspapers, radio or television represent the world give meaning to it. Newspapers depict black African migrants in a particular way, tapping into our schemas and conceptual maps, which we then use to interpret the message and produce its meaning (Dube, 2018, Hall, 2003 & Terblanche *et al*, 2019). For example, during apartheid in South Africa, *uMkhonto we Sizwe*¹⁵ could be portrayed as terrorist or freedom fighters depending on the perspective of whoever was reporting on the story. The language used and the choice of words to include or exclude, shapes or constructs our view, judgments and opinions. The more we read stories about

¹⁵ The paramilitary wing of the African National Congress. SA History Online, 2022. *uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) / South African History Online*. [online] Sahistory.org.za. Available at: <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/umkhonto-wesizwe-mk>> [Accessed 11 March 2022].

uMkhonto we Sizwe as terrorists, the more likely people are to believe that is the truth, thereby shaping people's views and perception of the world (Terblanche *et al*, 2019).

Newspapers, Television and radio create reality and it is these institutions that influence how the society perceive what we think (Kimmy, 2022; Tomaselli, 1996). Media operate as a normalising forum for the social construction of reality and newspapers are an important agent in the creation of public discourses. Representation theory helps this study to move beyond comprehending newspaper stories, images and text as simply a representation of reality.

The media representations of minorities have been a central concern for media scholars in the cultural-critical paradigm (Dube, 2018, Koanene & Maphonya, 2015; Tarisayi & Manick 2021). For the past years this research has explained the role the media plays in upholding problematic stereotypes especially in an environment increasingly saturated by media representations.

Cultural media scholarship has often demonstrated that news and entertainment media stereotype non-white, and black African migrants by excluding them from coverage or by offering a limited range of representations (Dixon, Azocar & Casas, 2003; Fursich, 2010). Media imagery across various platforms, from news journalism to fictional movies, has often portrayed minorities as different (Dixon & Josey, 2013). The ubiquity and repetitiveness of the press seem to reinforce the longevity of these representations hence it is important to unpack these narrations and discourses. Since critique of representations often focuses on textual constraints, media content is a major aspect that needs to be questioned here. Media representations are often entrenched and predefined ways of portraying The Other and creating stereotypes (Adams-Bass, Stevenson and Kotzin, 2014). Representation of Others has become an important field for critical-cultural studies (Firsich, 2010).

Othering

Othering is a form of social representation, which is related to stereotypes. Theories of Othering evolved in the post-colonial period of the 1970s and 1980s. "Othering as a concept was first mentioned and elaborated on by Spivak in 1985" (Jensen, 2011:4). She reconstructed how colonial masters in India used formulations of difference to subject the Other. There are obvious

power imbalances when Othering is more likely to occur. Usually, those in positions of power are used against the weaker or excluded group (Hall, 1997).

Othering is the “symbolic degradation as well as the processes of identity formation related to this degradation” (Jensen, 2011: 65). Spivak builds her arguments on Edward Said’s thoughts on Orientalism. Said (1995) discloses ways in which the West constructs identities of the orient solely in opposite to itself (Said, 1995 & 2003). In his work, he regards “difference as a social construction rather than a fact, cultural communities are in that sense imagined communities” (Anderson, 2006:5).

Chakrabarti (2012:2) describes “this logic of distinction as politics of ‘binarism’ inherent in the post-colonial elaboration of the ‘self-other relationship’. In this relationship the own identity is defined through an exclusive moment”. So “Othering is a projection of characteristics that are not defining for the (homogenous) in-group, to the collective of a non-western out-group” (Barnett, 2006:42). This goes hand in hand with Foucault stating, that “relations with others in turn always entail relations with oneself, and vice versa” (Fairclough, 2003: 28). The portrayal of what is deemed normal and other by social institutions like the law, the media, education, and religion, among others, maintains the balance of power. Visual depictions of otherness possess unique cultural authority (Hall, 2003).

Othering refers to limits of self-representations by the out-group while being spoken for or about by for example the mainstream South African media (Kumar, 2011). “Othering is to a certain extent motivated by national identity building membership, for example in the form of citizenship or nationality has an exclusive character as it defines who belongs to the in-group and accordingly also who is part of the out-group” (Wodak & Boukala, 2015:6). “The conditions can be renegotiated when societal conditions change. (Constructed) differences between groups are perceived as a threat to the homogeneity of the in-group which makes it difficult to find a common ground for negotiating” (Mammone, Godin, & Jenkins, 2012:8).

To keep the in-group safe, a hierarchy is established which puts the in-group at a superior position. In recent literature the theories of Othering are applied to migrants that arrive or might arrive in (Wodak & Boukala, 2015). Othering “is a term that not only encompasses the many

expressions of prejudice on the basis of group identities, but it provides a clarifying frame that reveals a set of common processes and conditions that propagate group-based inequality and marginality” (Powell & Menendian, 2016:17). To answer the research question, the concept of Othering will be connected to articles of the news media discourse. The stories of black African migrants displayed will be tested for examples of ‘symbolic degradation’, ‘identity construction’ and ‘binarism’.

Different scholars have analysed how the media portray the inferior The Other and how the balance of power underpin these portrayals (Hall, 1997). For example the use of binary opposites, good vs evil, civilised and uncivilised has its roots in colonial power (Hall, 1997). In a similar vein, Dube (2018) explains that the inclusion and exclusion of black African migrants in certain discourses is explained by the orientalist notion that citizenship identity is superior to all non-citizen cultures, which are presented as delinquents, poor and backward.

Othering and marginality can occur on a group basis (citizens’ vs migrants) or at the individual level (Hall, 1997; Powell & Menendian, 2016). “Black African migrants are likely to experience the discomfort of being in South Africa or with people where they do not feel that they belong” (Dube, 2019). Othering is a broadly inclusive conceptual framework that captures expressions of prejudice and behaviors such as atavism and tribalism, but it is also a concept that points toward deeper processes at work, only some of which are captured by those terms (Hall, 1997). “It is not uncommon, for example, to hear commentators refer to Afrophobia, xenophobia, Islamophobia or ethnocentrism as racism, although religion and ethnicity are not racial categories (Powell & Menendian, 2016:8).

Othering is not to like or dislike someone. It is predicated on the notion, whether conscious or not, that a particular identified group in this case black African migrants threatens the preferred group (Citizens). Instead of interpersonal interactions, politicians and the media are mostly responsible for it. Most of the time, people do not know the people they are Othering, hence Othering is driven largely by newspapers and politicians (Powell, 2017).

Othering is dangerous as it creates hate based on non-factual opinions and discourses constructed by the media to divide people. Drakulic (1993:145) reflects, “I understand now that nothing but

"otherness" killed Jews, and it began with naming them, by reducing them to the other. Then everything became possible. Even the worst atrocities like concentration camps or the slaughtering of civilians in Croatia or Bosnia". As Crang (1998) argues that Othering is a process whereby identities are created in an un-equal relationships and positions. "Othering is self-other distancing and dehumanizes the other, but this does not necessarily have to take the form of affirmation of self-superiority and other inferiority. Although othering often sets up a superior self/in-group in contrast to an inferior other/out-group, it can also create distance between self/in-group and other/out-group by means of a dehumanizing over-inflation of otherness. The other then, is not so much (implicitly) inferior, but radically alien" (Brons, 2015:15).

According to van Dijk (1996:37), "social groups develop socio-political ideological representations of themselves and others in terms of polarisation schema between 'us' and 'them'. In a way that 'us' (the citizens) are represented by the media in a positive way and they (black African migrants) are portrayed negatively". "This concept is formulated by the construction of two different groups, insiders and outsiders" (van Dijk, 1996: 37), "based on four maxims: emphasize our good things, emphasize their bad things, deemphasize our bad things and deemphasize their good things" (van Dijk, 1996: 37-38). "For instance, the press will focus on the criminality of black African migrants ignoring the criminality of South African citizens. The business minded black African migrants who create employment through opening small businesses are ignored and not fairly represented whilst the unemployment of citizens is given attention by the press" (Jani, 2018:93). This study analyses how othering exists in the digital news and how words such as *them*, *us* and *our*, are used when reporting issues involving black African migrants and how this may contribute to the construction of Afrophobia.

The media representation of black African migrants in SA has been a key concern for media scholars in the cultural-critical paradigm (for example, Dube, 2018; Masondo & Masondo, 2019, Tarisayi & Manick, 2020, Kariithi *et al*, 2018). These scholars have demonstrated that news and entertainment media stereotype black African migrants by covering them as The Other in negative way or by offering a limited range of representations.

Media imagery particularly newspapers have often portrayed black African migrants as different and abnormal not only in SA but throughout the world (Adams-Bass *et al*, 2014; Fursich, 2010). It is especially striking that the repertoire of representations of black African migrants that the press offer is often linked to historically established racist imaginaries such as in colonial literature and science (for example, slave imaginary or Orientalism)(Kulaszewicz, 2015). Although in SA, it is no longer about black versus white but rather black on black imaginaries. The national media whether they are public or commercial tend to follow the same model of depicting African foreigners as not belonging to SA (Koenane & Maphunye, 2015).

The chain of these metaphors results in strong emotional charge achieved primarily through suppressing any kind of positive emotions such as empathy or compassion toward migrating people, by representing them as inanimate objects, and further intensified by heightening various kinds of negative emotions, fear for security and life, in particular through the use of natural phenomena, crime, and illegality metaphors (Arcimaviciene & Baglama, 2018:5).

It is through such ideas that the press will likely continue to publish discourse that consequently align black African migrants as The Other that are different from the citizens. This could consequently lead to the myth of moral authority based on the idea of knowing what is right for the Other and how the Other can be punished, usually involving violence.

Curle (2022) believes that there are two steps in the othering process: dividing up a group of individuals into categories based on perceived distinctions such race, ethnicity, skin tone, religion, gender, or sexual orientation utilising a “we vs. them” mentality to cast that group as inferior and exclude them. Focusing on a difference and exploiting it to undermine a feeling of resemblance or connection between people is known as othering. By lowering empathy and stifling meaningful conversation, othering prepares the ground for discrimination or persecution. When it is taken to its logical conclusion, othering can lead to one group of people rejecting that another group is even human (Curle, 2022). Stereotypes create The Other and the process of Othering which is closely related to the regimes of stereotypical representation that is found in newspapers, films and television (Siyad, 2013).

Stereotyping

The term stereotype was first coined by Lippmann in 1922 (as cited in Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick & Esses, 2010) to describe a social group's perceived characteristics. Furthermore, according to Allport (1954:191), a stereotype is an "an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalise) our conduct in relation to that category". Stereotypes inflate and homogenise traits that are seen to be characteristics of specific categories; in other words, these traits are generalised or classified to all individuals forming part of this specific category (Pickering, 2001; Hall, 1997). Stereotyping restricts people to a small number of basic, unchanging traits that are portrayed as being fixed by nature (Hall, 1997).

Categories (or social groups) can be defined by any number of criteria, such as race, gender, nationality, language and so forth (Arnold et al., 2010; Bergh & Theron, 2009). Once these social groups are formed, beliefs or perceptions usually exist about the characteristics, attributes or behaviours of members belonging to that particular group or category (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996; Whitley & Kite, 2006). On the other hand, stereotyping "is threatening, a site of danger, of negative feelings, of splitting, hostility and aggression towards The Other" (Hall, 1997: 238).

A stereotype is "the social classification of particular groups and people as often highly simplified and generalized signs, which implicitly or explicitly represent a set of values, judgements and assumptions concerning their behavior, characteristics or history" (O'Sullivan *et al* 1994:299-300). Not all stereotypes are alike. Some stereotyped groups are disrespected as incapable and useless (for example, black South African males are lazy), whereas others are respected for excessive, threatening competence (for example, Asians). Some stereotyped groups are liked as sweet and harmless (for instance housewives), whereas others are disliked as cold and inhuman (for example, rich people) (Fiske *et al*, 2002; Koanene & Maphunye, 2015).

But there's a lot of misunderstanding about the stereotype issue. Stereotypes have been misinterpreted in their field of study for the last thirty years (Jussim, 2012). Scholars studying stereotypes have concurred that stereotypes do include traditional elements like assigning traits to various social groups, even if there is no widely accepted definition of what constitutes a stereotype (Lee, Jussim & McCauley, 2013; Hall, 1997). Furthermore, the development of

preconceptions might come from a variety of sources rather than just one. For instance, stereotypes can arise as a result of interactions with people in the social context, which includes parents, relatives, the media, peer groups, and educational institutions (Bar-Tal, 1996).

Stereotyping occurs when a media outlet publishes an article suggesting that immigrants are drug dealers and criminals because of police arrests or presumptions made by the public (Pineteh, 2017). Newspapers may run stories that show immigrants as being involved in criminal activity. This kind of attention feeds into the myth that immigrants and foreigners commit crimes (Kariithi et al, 2017).

Stereotypes are an extreme form of representation. They are constructed by a process of selection (Hall, 1997). Certain aspects are focused on and then exaggerated.

At the same time, an evaluation is made and the audience is invited to make a judgment, which is often based on prejudice. Repetition establishes stereotypes and over time allows them to appear 'natural' (Henry 1999:19). "It can be argued that the media with exceptions played a role in strengthening these myths. In other words, in the apartheid years the media's mainly negative stereotyped way of portraying black people contributed to the ideology of apartheid" (Fourie 2016:255).

The same may be said about black migrants in South Africa, according to (Kariithi et al. 2017), who contend that the portrayal of African migrants lacks nuance and context to provide accurate information or emphasize the benefits of immigrants. Dervin (2011:186) notes that, usually, two types of stereotypes exist: auto stereotypes, which regard people's in-group and hetero stereotypes which are related to an out-group ('the other').

This study will consider both definitions but based on previous research (Pineteh, 2017; Mawadza, 2012) it appears that past stereotypes relate to the later to analyse the portrayal of non-South Africans as The Other in *Daily Sun* and *Daily News*. King and Woods, (2001) explains that the signs used to construct stereotypes are usually representative of values, attitudes, behavior and background of that particular group. Stereotyping uses the 'splitting' tactic. It

distinguishes between what is normal and acceptable and what is abnormal and inappropriate. Then, everything that does not fit or is different is excluded or ejected (Hall, 1997).

The social groups that are often stereotyped are foreign nationals for instance black African migrants in South Africa are referred to as *makwerekwere* or *magrigamba* in the South African print media's daily discourses. *Makwerekwere* is a derogatory term used in South Africa to refer to migrants from other African countries (Mario Matsinhe, 2011). It depicts the phonetics of African languages and *Magrigamba* is a term used in South Africa to refer to undocumented immigrants (Mario Matsinhe, 2011). On the one hand, stereotyping is "necessary for the production of meaning, the formation of language and culture" (Hall, 1997: 238).

People tend to think that all stereotypes are negative when they think about them, however this is not true. Positive stereotypes (e.g., Zimbabweans are well educated), negative stereotypes (e.g., Nigerians are criminals), or neutral stereotypes (e.g., Australians enjoy cricket) can all be found in stereotypes (Mullins, 2010; Whitley & Kite, 2006). Examples of the types of stereotypes used to groups can be found in literature. Since every person is different, it is not appropriate to assume that the qualities, attributes, or behaviors of the person who is the subject of a stereotype would match those that the stereotype suggests (Luthans, 2010). These stereotypes that are applied to groups are typically viewed as being overly generalized, rigid, and untrue, and they can harm people's social and personal identities (Pickering, 2001).

Stereotypes are harmful because they fail to acknowledge the distinctions among social groupings and frequently result in erroneous beliefs and improper conduct toward individuals (Bergh & Theron, 2009). Many stereotypes have a kernel of truth; therefore this does not imply that all stereotypes are false (Whitley & Kite, 2006). McShane and Von Glinow (2014) agree, arguing that stereotypes frequently contain some degree of reality rather than being entirely exaggerated or untrue. As a result, when stereotyping, people should avoid making the mistake of thinking that all stereotypes accurately reflect the characteristics of every member of a given group (Brink & Neil, 2015). However, it is important to note what Hall (1997:258) said "Stereotyping in other words, is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order".

Considering the recent decades' globalisation of media coverage, it appears that the mass media is rife with stereotypes and serves as a primary conduit for the acquisition of stereotypes by the general public (Whitley & Kite, 2006). While stereotypes are not the product of the media, they are greatly influenced by it in the creation and perpetuation of stereotypes (Cooke-Jackson & Hansen, 2008). Stereotypical images, headlines portrayed in the media are an everyday occurrence, and these stereotypical representations may cause prejudice towards out-groups such as black African migrants, leading people to have negative and emotional feelings towards members of these groups (Brink & Neil, 2015). Stereotyping creates a boundary between 'normal' and 'deviant', 'normal' and 'pathological', 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable', what/who 'belongs' and 'does not belong' or is The 'Other', 'Insiders' and 'outsiders', 'Us' and 'Them'. All of Us who are 'normal' are made into one 'imagined community' through its facilitation, and all of Them—'The Others'—who are in some manner different are sent into symbolic exile (Hall, 1997).

Us vs. Them

The Us vs. Them hypothesis, which has been employed in numerous studies targeting sociopolitical issues that divide, isolate, and segregate society into various factions, served as the conceptual framework of this study. The formation of the Us vs. Them conceptions was aided by ideologies like racism and nationalism, among other things (Van Dijk 1995). It intensifies the discourse of Us vs. Them, creating inequality and disadvantages between some groups and others as a result of ongoing struggles for control and power (Van Dijk, 1993).

The media is known for creating the notions of who 'we' are providing the models of defining citizens or migrants, male or female, powerful or powerless (Kirsh *et al*, 2016). "Media culture also provides the materials out of which many people construct their sense of class, of ethnicity and race, of nationality, of sexuality, of us and them" (Kellner 1995: 1). As a result, the construction of the Other serves as a political and psychological tool that directly influences the formation of the Self and its "national" identity, fostering a sense of inclusion for the one and alienation for the other (Kirsh *et al*, 2016).

The “images published in the media are vital to the public perception of migration and migrants in ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse societies” (Bennett, ter Wal, Lipiński, Fabiszak, & Krzyżanowski, 2013: 248), as majority of people may have few real contacts with migrants in daily life (Van Dijk, 2000). Through articulating ‘us-versus-them’ relations, media is involved in the re-articulation of (national) identities. “Texts and especially news can be seen as elements of social events that leads to societal change in form of new foci of reporting” (Fairclough, 2003: 8). The media discourse plays a crucial role in mediating knowledge about events and perceived problems, as well as in characterizing occurrences as social problems. (Kim, Carvalho, Davis, & Mullins, 2011). Hence the media has an important role to play as it can be argued that they are responsible for the creation of this imagined community (Anderson, 2006).

Through the domination of South African journalists in the news production process, the local media often lack different perspectives of society. Instead, one hegemonic understanding of society is promoted (Yılmaz, 2012). In this worldview the black African migrant is constructed as antagonistic Other. “Language gains power by the use people make of it and by the people who have access to language means and public fora” (Baker *et al.*, 2008: 280). Selecting the subject matter, vocabulary, and linguistic devices to incorporate into writing are what give journalists their strength. This also helps them define the boundaries of the conversation on different subjects. According to Mensing (2016), when it comes to Othering migrants, a particular perception of them is accepted as the norm.

In short, who are “we”? What has become abundantly evident throughout is that the Other is still a construct of “ourselves,” and every discourse about and with the “other” is, first and foremost, a discourse about and with “ourselves” (Kirsch, 2016). “Because this is the stage (media) on which debates take place and identities are arranged, the media and their role in shaping identities in contrast to others cannot be ignored” (Kirsch, 2016:2-3). This hypothesis helps to explain why black African migrants are referred to as aliens, individuals who do not belong in South Africa and people who are encroaching on the territory that belongs to “us,” the indigenous.

The Good Us vs The Evil Them

Conflicts of dialectic between individuals and organizations frequently occur in society. Studies indicate that the disparity between Us and Them can lead to prejudiced opinions and differences that can change the structures in society (Anderson 2006; Wodak 2008). One of the most critical instruments for expressing one's ideas and opinions toward other people or groups is language use (Taylor, 1981).

Black African migrants are frequently characterised as greedy, profit-driven crooks who prey on the most helpless people among us (Pineteh, 2017; Kgari-Masondo & Masondo, 2019). However, as this study will show, such simplistic representations are not only inaccurate, but often harmful. They simplify the complicated story of human migration into straightforward good-and-evil dichotomies, encouraging terrible policies that endanger migrants while also strengthening criminal organizations (Tinti & Reitano, 2017).

According to Lacan (1973), the "big Other," or the Other by whom we determine who we are, is necessary for newspapers to form the Self, which necessitates the Other, someone who is outside of us and not "us." The self and the other are inherently opposed to one another, and news reports virtually force the practice of "othering" to explain what it is that unites "us" as citizens since "we are not them" (black African migrants). Since anything that is different is at best stereotyped and at worst shunned, this "holding together" might take more extreme forms, such as Afrophobic violence (Kirsh *et al.*, 2016). For instance, the discourse on Othering reached a new peak when news media rearticulated statements of heads of government who referred to migration as a problem in SA in the aftermath of Afrophobic attacks in 2008 (Mammone *et al.*, 2012). By 2010 the discourse reached a populist climax when politicians referred to black African migrants as the societal problem in SA (Dube, 2018; Koanene & Maphunye, 2015).

Newspapers have created a language of "us" vs. "them," classifying black African migrants into a single group by utilizing terms like "criminals," "undocumented," and "aliens." Research has indicated that in South Africa, black African migrants are frequently portrayed as threats associated with 'them', or the minority, in relation to a fictitious "us"—the citizens (Pineteh, 2017 and Danso & McDonald, 2001).

The binary of us vs them

The binary of *us vs them* is part of national discourse, for example, a documentary series on “Britain’s association with the European Union, broadcast by BBC was named Europe: Them or Us thereby creating a binary opposition between Great Britain and the rest of Europe. This shows unmistakably how profoundly these parallels underlie the discourse of self and other and how they are reflected in the media” (Fredrickson, 2002: 8).

Individuals who do not belong to the group 'us' are subjected to the binary representation, wherein they are depicted as two things at different times (Hall, 2013). In addition to being highly educated, Black African migrants—particularly those from Zimbabwe—can make headlines for being both criminals and educated (Mawadza, 2012). Us versus Them. The idea that there are just two categories has become widely accepted in South Africa. We are the righteous ones. These people are awful. Any argument is resolved once you know who's who, whether the subject is politics, sex, sports, or parenting (Marx, 2018).

Language used to identify or characterise foreigners typically reflects social attitudes, opinions, and beliefs about migrants. In the context of South Africa, the phrase "foreigners" or *Makwerekwere* portrays migrants as The Other who enter the nation to take advantage of the possibilities provided by SA at the expense on locals (Matsilele, 2021). As a result of the media's usage of this terminology while reporting on xenophobic incidents, attitudes of hatred connected with such language are reinforced, making foreign nationals living in SA targets of violence and labelled as Others, ‘them’ (Matsilele, 2021). Therefore Othering “is socially and culturally constructed and the “Us vs. Them” mentality stems from our evolutionary need to belong to a group, but studies show it can lead to irrational group favoritism, which ends up dividing society instead of bringing us together” (Powell, 2017).

However, it is of paramount importance to understand the role of colonialism in creating the “us vs them” discourses as well. In this regard, Brunt and Cere (2011) contend that African modern media cultures are intricately linked to the function of colonialism. Therefore, when analyzing media creation in South Africa, it is important to consider the post-colonial power structures that continue to influence it.

This study is concerned with the examination of representations which are supported by post-colonial relations of control. Through the examination of newspaper stories, this study is exploring the connections between media discourses and post-colonial legacies. In any case, media and social settings are not exclusively characterised by post-colonialism, but by commercial goals that are basically concerned with what can be sold (Sabido, 2013). The post-colonial, subsequently, cannot be seen independently from commercial shapes of communication, or from capitalism and the patriarchal order, which too decide (and are constituted by) unequal control relations between gendered subject (Sabido, 2013). Post-colonial Studies should not only be concerned with the study of literary works, but also with the media (Sabido, 2013). “In post-colonial countries, the media were used as important tools in nation-building efforts. Often the media formed a mediated national identity in limited ways by defining the boundaries of a community considered to be part of a nation and by excluding minorities as Others” (Fursich, 2010:113).

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory “is a body of thought primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social impact of European colonial rule around the world in the 18th through the 20th century” (Rathod, 2022: 47). The core tenet of post-colonial theory is that understanding the world we live in without first understanding the history of imperialism and colonial authority is difficult. Post-colonial theory comes in numerous forms and interventions, but it always makes this assertion (Elam, 2019; and Al-Saidi, 2014).

The exploration here is timely and worthy because “post-colonial theory’s finely tuned historicized approach to global power, conflict, culture, politics and economics is indispensable for a discipline that views itself today as global and increasingly finds a home in many former

colonies like South Africa” (Kumar & Parameswaran, 2018: 347). This relates well with CDA which connects this research to a concern with power and power relations, or in other words, the politics of meaning. It has nothing to do with merely finding fault or “criticising” the media. CDA recognises the relationship between uses of language and the exercise of power, which in turn is shaped in line with prevailing conditions in society. It is concerned with how an ideology that privileges one group of people comes to feel natural and how it disadvantages others (in this instance black African immigrants) (Prinsloo, 2017).

The current state of world politics further emphasizes how urgently post-colonial theory, communication, and media studies need to engage in a stimulating conversation. “The world is witnessing today the widespread retreat from progressive global connectedness, with right-wing politicians in the Global North regurgitating colonial discourses (anti-immigration) under the guise of economic nationalism and new-found nativism while right-wing leaders in the Global South invoke the rhetoric of anti-imperialism, disguised as anticolonial nationalism, to justify their imposition of authoritarian forms of governance” (Kumar and Parameswaran, 2018: 347-348).

Media and communication phenomena are deeply entwined in both outdated and modernized global permutations of dominance. Postcolonial theory has examined the ways in which power structures persist in the psychic domain, thereby producing a colonized subjectivity through modified schemas of aspirations and cultural regimes of legitimation. (Al-Saidi, 2014; Said, 1978).

Fanon (2008) has demonstrated how certain aspirational aims were legitimized while demeaning colonised populations and their knowledge systems and lifestyles, by conflating certain types of cultural knowledge and languages with civilisation and others with its absence. Giving us new conceptual vocabulary to explore the workings of a comparable dynamic inside the black African immigration in South Africa as well as the ways in which the country's leading political parties and publications construct and propagate Afrophobia. Thus, this theory fits well with CDA in attempting to understand the power dynamics of citizens and immigrants and how digital news sites expose such interplay.

This study explores how digital news sites describe the Other (black African migrant) politically as well as culturally. The Self and the Other are represented as the colonizer and the colonized (Al-Saidi, 2014: 95). This idea is useful to this study, but not in terms of colonial relations, rather by examining how those in power (*News24, TimesLive & IOL*) construct black African migrants as the Other. However it is important to acknowledge that there might be a disjuncture between using post-colonial theory to interrogate Afrophobia, but the study does so as it is interested in the issue of Othering and in this case it is not about the binaries of white/black or European/African as it was during colonialism, but interestingly it is about the negative attitudes of black South Africans towards black African immigrants (Dube, 2018; Tshaka, 2018).

To understand the concept of the Self and the Other “the formalistic approach (binary opposition) is used which is an important idea that helps us understand how meanings are being shaped, created or reinforced in a text” (Al-Saidi, 2014: 95). The idea of binary opposition, which contrasts two concepts that are mutually exclusive, contends that the false binary opposition between "civilized" and "savage" has supported and legitimized Western power structures that benefit "civilized" white men (Hall, 2013; Al-Saidi, 2014). The same is happening between citizens and immigrants, where for instance black African migrants are represented in the media as ‘aliens’, and criminals (Dube, 2018; Kariithi, *et al*, 2017 and Tshaka, 2016). “The existence of binaries within a text acts to develop often powerful layers of meaning that work to maintain and reinforce a society or culture’s dominant ideologies” (Al-Saidi, 2014: 95-6). Narratives and discourses based on binaries and dualisms can be dangerous as they essentialize (Hall, 2013). Just like CDA reasons that discourse works by ruling in certain ideas as appropriate and ruling out others. In other words, it classifies certain ideas and practices, and categorises them as proper or not (Prinsloo, 2017: 241)

In postcolonial nations like South Africa, nation-building initiatives made significant use of the media. According to Radoli (2019), the media frequently defined the bounds of a community that was deemed to be a part of a nation and excluded minorities as the Other in order to create a mediated national identity in limited ways. Postcolonial theory formulates its critique around the social histories, cultural differences and political discrimination that are practised and normalised by colonial and imperial machineries. According to Young (2001:1-11, 57-69), “post-colonial

critique is concerned with the history of colonialism only to the extent that history has determined the configurations and power structures of the present.” What we see now is a result of colonialism, the division of Africa, how media represent black African migrants around the world and so forth (Rukudwa & van Aarde, 2017).

The colonial narratives influenced and shaped the negative attitudes that black South Africans have towards black African migrants (Dube, 2019). Dube (2019) articulates that White immigrants from Europe and North America are generally preferred by South Africans (across racial, social, and gender divides) over those from African nations. While immigrants from African nations are perceived as rivals for jobs (in both the formal and informal sectors) and as a drain on South Africa's resources, such as housing, white migrants are perceived as tourists or investors.

It is also important to acknowledge that colonialism played a key role in creating these divisions and hatred through installing borders that did not exist before colonialism in Africa. “During this period, European colonizers partitioned Africa into spheres of influence, colonies, and various segments. They partitioned land from European capitals, with limited knowledge of the geography, history, and ethnic composition of Africa. In many African countries, race classes were created and boundaries were created that produced ‘them’ and us” (Gashaw, 2017:1). Underdevelopment, instability, and Afrophobic sentiments have been exacerbated in African states by European imagined racist border designs and the division of African people. For instance, South Africans will believe they are superior to any other African born north of the Limpopo River or outside of South Africa's colonial borders (Gashaw, 2017).

According to Gashaw (2017), the establishment of artificial boundaries restricts the movement of borderland people, forcing them to compete for resources and engage in conflict with other borderland peoples. As a result, there has been an increase in Afrophobic violence in African nations such as South Africa where the fight for jobs and limited resources is between citizens and black African migrants. Moreover, ‘divide and rule,’ ‘direct rule,’ and ‘assimilation’ methods were used by European colonial powers, forcing Africans to give up their social norms, identities, and social order (Gashaw, 2017).

Post-colonial media theory

To address my research question, how do online newspapers reveal power relations between South Africans and black African migrants in the post-apartheid South Africa? I would like to respond to theoretic concepts on; “Post-colonialism as a media discourse, representation of hegemonic and counter-narratives and deconstruction of black African migration” (Macqueen, 2018: 23). To do so, this research analyse the (re)production of migration discourse through studying the discourse of *TimesLive*, *News24* and *IOL* and how the texts inform narratives about black African migrants. Hence, I examine how existing narratives relate to post-colonial perspectives. In the process, post-colonial theories of media should force a reconsideration of the views of traditional media theories (Rodriguez, 2022).

Any foreign culture can be initially experienced through media depictions. It is a place of battle between those who represent and those who are represented, and those mediated spaces are not balanced. “For that reason, post-colonial theory has taken audio/visual media and cinema in particular as a crucial ground to examine colonial relations and their legacy during the post-colonial era” (Rodriguez, 2022:3;) “While the violence of Eurocentric constructs dominates the study of post-colonial media, the field has also taken shape around the complex positionality of the (former) colonized when they reclaim the tools of representation and turn colonial logic on its head” (Al Saidi, 2014:4-5). Colonial connections can be established, replicated, changed, and contested all at once on the intervening terrain that is formed by representations (Rodriguez, 2022).

Newspapers prove particularly appropriate for the study of a visual and textual colonial encounter as they were used by dominant imperial powers to construct the belonging and non-belonging in African colonies (Rony, 1996). “The colonial logics of newspapers are articulated around patriarchal understandings of difference. They construct colonized subjects around violent gendered and sexual tropes, most prominently the image of the “dark continent” portrayed through exotic lands and female bodies up for grabs. This image describes both non-Western women as eroticized objects and non-Western men as violent rapists” (Shohat, 1991: 6). The same method may be still in use however, it is no longer the west versus the south or black

vs white but rather the online news sites in the post-colonial era uses such representations when reporting about black African migrants (Dube, 2018; Rodriguez, 2022).

Crucially, the media particularly the press has continued supporting imperialist and colonial racist ideologies through processes of representation with one category of people at the expense of the Other (Radoli, 2019). “These continued long after the formal end of colonialism and in the early 21st century are remarketed under the guise of news stories, sensationalism and genre parodies” (Rodriguez, 2022:2). This begs the question: What is the colonised subject’s position within such a matrix of spectatorship? In the book *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon (1952/1967) “recounts the competing identifications at work during the viewing of Tarzan in his native Martinique and in the French metropole. While, among the colonized, spectators root for Tarzan, in the metropole, they are always already reduced to the nameless “savages.” Identification shifts depending on the context of colonial spectatorship and constructs blackness as a relationship to whiteness” (Rodriguez, 2021:4).

Xie (1997:9) “contends that post-colonialism gives a restlessness to move past Eurocentric acceptance system, past-colonialist’s binary structures of ‘self and other’, and eventually past any form of racism, xenophobia and so forth”. However, others who oppose post-colonial theory argue that it appears to be more concerned with migrants as symbols than with them as real people or legitimate political concerns (Rukundwa & Van Aarde, 2010). On the other hand, Childs and Williams (1997) contend that post-colonialism is primarily concerned with the tough process of acknowledging the impossibility of recovering "lost" pre-colonial identities and the work of creating a new identity considering this impossibility. This study draws lessons from the term's ideological connection to migration and communication rather than focusing on how it should be understood. In this study, post-colonialism serves as a catalyst for comprehending how migration and media discourse have historically supported Eurocentric narratives over African conceptions in the representation of black African migrants in the press. Therefore, post-colonial studies provide useful tools for analysing how media outlets such as *TimesLive*, *News24*, and *IOL* systematically disperse and reinforce narratives about African American migrants while maintaining power dynamics.

Some preconceptions, like those in post-colonial concepts, are revealed when black African migration is constructed. Black African migrants are occasionally generalized as "criminals," "economic migrants," "illegals," or "foreigners," to put it in the perspective of this research. Sentiments associated with post-colonial categories like "Otherness," "Orientals," and "Subalterns" are reinforced by their isolation from the dominant society (Radoli, 2019). As Rodriguez (2021) discourses that cover those who are powerless has just shifted from global imperialists to local powerful people hence the effects of colonialism are still in use especially in the media production as evidenced by how migrants are portrayed in news, films and television around the world.

Post-colonial approaches to media register the brutality of boundaries and forced displacement in addition to the mechanisms of diaspora adaptation. The "migrant image," as a model for interpreting contemporary art through migration, preserves the ambivalence of traveling experiences and identities as well as the oscillation "between the calamitous and the creative" (Demos, 2013:4). A site of resistance and negotiation with the processes of homogenization, commodification, and dislocation bequeathed from colonialism and ethnic cleansing history is profoundly marked by the aesthetics of migration (Rodriguez, 2021). "The importance of theorizing popular media thus lies not only in the politics of representation but also in the state bureaucracies, infrastructures, aesthetic styles, and economic policies that shape such" (Rodriguez, 2021:12).

Relevance of postcolonialism theory to this study

In addition to examining how ex-colonial powers' writing is used to legitimise colonialism by disseminating stereotypes of the colonized as inferior, this theory also analyses how writers from colonized countries attempt to articulate their cultural identities and reclaim them from the colonizers (Radoli, 2019). Certain scholars of post-colonial studies investigate the way literature from colonising nations appropriates words, pictures, settings, and customs from colonized nations (Al-Saidi, 2014).

This theory provides a perspective in which one country's political and economic influence over another, or direct rule, transforms colonialism into a potent institution of dominance (Lee &

Shultz, 2012; Radoli, 2019). Complex dynamics exist in the societal structures of former colonies. For example radio, television and newspaper depiction of black African migrants is closely related to how black people were treated during colonial times, and the only difference is it is no longer white vs black but rather black on black hatred and violence that has its roots in colonialism. Freire (2017) postulated that the oppressed feel aggressive but remain submissive toward those who oppress them (colonisers) but perpetuate violence on one another, which Freire termed horizontal violence. For example, Dube (2018) argues that many South Africans forgave those that oppressed them but violently attacked black African migrants in the name of jobs and opportunities.

According to Radoli (2019), postcolonial concepts provide decolonised individuals with a negotiation space for equality. Several perspectives on how colonization affected non-European cultures and economy are revealed through reading post-colonialist literature. In hindsight, migration has evolved into a notion that is extensively employed in international organizations and governmental programs as a potential path for growth. According to this perspective, 21st-century black African migrants do not assert that their hardship during the colonial era forced them from their homes (Radoli, 2019; Dube, 2018). Nonetheless, the elements that have attracted migrants from states that send migrants southward are divided into push and pull conduits, wherein unfavorable circumstances in the home state and favorable circumstances in the host state are frequent dichotomies (Al-Saidi, 2014).

In the same way that seeking out alternate career paths, obtaining an education, and being drawn to the West because it was portrayed by the media as "the land of milk and honey," these attributes are swiftly juxtaposed with undesirable elements (Radoli, 2019; Rodriguez, 2021). For example, political unpredictability, unemployment, and civil unrest in African nations such as Lesotho, Zimbabwe, and Nigeria. Mawadza (2012) and Koanene and Maphunye (2015) note that black African migrants' search for alternative social and economic endeavors is associated with a desire for justice and self-determination, even though these instances might not accurately reflect all the relevant variables. These principles should provide migrants the ability to advocate for more aspects of development in their home countries (Radoli, 2019).

To study colonial interactions and their legacy in the post-colonial age, post-colonial theory has identified the media as a critical arena (Rodriguez, 2021). Although the study of post-colonial media is dominated by Eurocentric assumptions and their brutality, the discipline has also developed around the complicated position of the (former) colonized when they retake the means of representation and subvert colonial logic. Colonial relations can be formed, replicated, reconstructed, and contested all at once on the intervening terrain that is represented (Rodriguez, 2021).

The manner in which media representations are anchored in and take part in historical and current colonial power relations are explained in important detail by post-colonial theory. A visual colonial encounter is a particularly good subject for the study of cinema. However, such methods are also prevalent in newspaper representations as well as in the larger network of Orientalist representations. “Orientalism is a network of aesthetic, economic, and political relationships that cross national and historical boundaries” (Behdad, 2013: 12–13).

The essential tenet of this theory is that it is difficult to comprehend the world we live in apart from its relationship to history and those who controlled it before (Al-Saidi, 2014). Post-colonial theory comes in many various forms and interventions. As a result, it is hard to imagine "European philosophy, European literature, or "European history flourishing in a world free of European oppression and colonial experiences. Additionally, it implies that the conquered globe is the neglected epicenter of modernity worldwide (Elam, 2019). “The prefix “post” of “post-colonial theory has been rigorously debated, but it has never implied that colonialism has ended” (Elam, 2019: 4).

Reexamining how the Other is portrayed and challenging ingrained tropes and assumptions about racial and cultural otherness are important contributions made by post-colonial theory (Ponzanesi, 2018). “This implies new interventions on the ways that visual representations are involved in policing boundaries between East and West, between Europe and the Rest, and between the Self and the Other undoing or rethinking the ways that the visual field conveys operation of a mastery that needs to be undone and decoded” (Ponzanesi, 2018:1).

To review our presumptions about media and subjectivity in post-colonial contexts and to thwart the hegemonic tendencies to judge media in various and disparate cultural contexts through Western liberal paradigms or perspectives, post-colonial theories and literature can advance critically important ontological and epistemological platforms (Ibrahim, 2011).

This study's fundamental premise is that post-colonial studies and media studies should be combined to generate fresh insights. The fields can mutually benefit each other more than they already have. In media studies, the post-colonial perspective is still underrepresented. This study combines the two fields to identify overlaps, areas of disagreement, and encourage fruitful dialogue. As Merten and Kramer (2016:8) point out "[i]n a world of ever-increasing complexity, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity are a central means of combining and exchanging ideas"

Post-colonial theory provides a macro-level, historically rooted analysis of power, identity, and culture shaped by colonialism (Spivak, 1988), while media representation theory offers a micro-level, contemporary analysis of how these issues are depicted and understood within media texts (Hall, 2013). Although representation theory is the main theory in this study, post-colonialism theory offers great insight by drawing on Edward Said's concept of 'Orientalism,' which refers to the depiction of Eastern societies as exotic, backward, or threatening in contrast to the West. In the context of migrants, this framework can be used to analyse how media often portrays migrants as 'the Other' alien, dangerous, or inferior reinforcing stereotypes and justifying exclusionary policies.

Media representations often negatively depict migrants, focusing on cultural differences in a way that emphasizes their perceived strangeness or incompatibility with the host society. This can lead to a flattening of migrant identities, reducing them to simplistic and monolithic categories. Post-colonial theory examines how dominant groups control the narrative around migrants, shaping public perceptions and policy (Bhabha, 1994). The media, often influenced by political and economic elites, can perpetuate colonial hierarchies by depicting migrants in ways that serve the interests of the host society, often marginalising or dehumanising them (Bhabha, 1994).

The theory also explores how migrants and marginalised communities resist these dominant narratives by creating their own media representations that challenge stereotypes and assert their identities. This aspect of post-colonial theory highlights the potential for media to be a site of struggle and empowerment.

Post-colonial theory emphasises the continuity of colonial attitudes and structures in contemporary media (Spivak, 1988). For example, the portrayal of African migrants in European or South African media can be traced back to colonial discourses that framed Africans as primitive or in need of civilization. These historical legacies persist in modern portrayals, influencing how migrants are seen and treated.

The reasons behind migration are often rooted in colonial histories, where the exploitation of resources and people by colonial powers created economic and political conditions that drive migration today (Said, 1978). Media representations that ignore this context often perpetuate a skewed understanding of why people migrate. Furthermore, post-colonial theory is concerned with how different forms of oppression intersect (Said, 1978). In media analysis, this means looking at how race, class, and gender intersect to shape the representation of migrants. For instance, African female migrants might be portrayed differently from male migrants, with additional layers of stereotyping related to gender.

Post-colonial theory provides a robust framework for analysing media representations of migrants by critiquing how these portrayals are influenced by colonial legacies, power dynamics, and on-going racial and cultural hierarchies (Bhabha, 1994). It also highlights the importance of recognising the agency of migrants in shaping their own narratives and resisting dominant discourses (Hall, 1997). By applying this theory, this study can uncover the deeper implications of media portrayals and contribute to a more nuanced and equitable understanding of migration and news representations of black African migrants.

Post-colonial theory is highly relevant in studying media representations of African migrants in SA. Post-colonial theory examines the lasting impacts of colonialism on societies, including power dynamics, cultural attitudes, and social structures (Elam, 2019). In South Africa, these colonial legacies influence how African migrants are perceived and represented in the media,

often reinforcing stereotypes or biases rooted in colonial history. Post-colonial theory addresses how colonized peoples have been 'othered' or depicted as fundamentally different from the colonizers (Al-Saidi, 2014). In the South African media, African migrants are often portrayed as "the other," distinct from the local population, which can perpetuate xenophobic attitudes and justify exclusionary practices.

The theory also explores how dominant groups maintain control over cultural narratives. In South Africa, media representations of African migrants can reflect the interests and perspectives of dominant groups, often marginalizing or misrepresenting migrant experiences and voices. This is a continuation of the colonial practice of controlling the narrative to maintain power. Post-colonial theory addresses how power shapes who gets to tell stories and whose voices are heard. In media representations, migrants from post-colonial societies are often depicted in ways that reinforce existing power structures, with limited agency in how they are portrayed (Al-Saidi, 2014). The theory also examines how modern forms of imperialism or neo-colonialism continue to affect former colonies. Originally post-colonial theory was formulated to deal with the reading and writing of literatures written in previously or currently colonized countries. Whether from the perspective of the colonizer or the colonized, post-colonization is about people and their personal experiences: the sense of disempowerment and dislocation. Post-colonial theory is built in large part around the concept of Otherness (Al-Saidi, 2014: 97). The concept of Otherness sees the world as divided into mutually excluding opposites: if the *Self* is ordered, rational, masculine, good, then the Other is chaotic, irrational, feminine, and evil. This construction of the Other is a process of demonization, which in itself expresses the ambivalence at the very heart of authority (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2002: 3). Hence this concept of Othering is relevant to contemporary studies.

For Said, Orientalism is an occidental postcolonial discourse. The Orient is an integral part of European material civilization and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies, and colonial style (Said, 1978: 30). Orientalism refers to the Western approach to understanding, studying, and representing Eastern cultures. Said argues that this approach is deeply rooted in a binary distinction between the

"superior" West and the "inferior" East. Orientalism is not just a collection of misrepresentations but a structured system of knowledge and power that served to justify and perpetuate Western dominance over Eastern societies.

Media often portrays Eastern cultures in a way that reduces them to simplistic stereotypes. For example, Middle Eastern people are frequently depicted as terrorists, religious fanatics, or oppressed women (Al Saidi, 2014). These representations ignore the diversity and complexity of these cultures and instead reinforce negative and monolithic images. Orientalism often frames the East as exotic and mysterious, emphasizing differences from the West. This can manifest in media through depictions of colourful markets, ancient traditions, and mystical religions, often romanticizing or sensationalizing these aspects rather than presenting them in a nuanced or accurate way.

Orientalist media representations frequently imply that Western culture is superior to Eastern cultures. This is done by highlighting perceived "backwardness" or "barbarism" in Eastern societies, often juxtaposed with images of Western modernity, rationality, and progress (Al Saidi, 2014). This creates a binary opposition between the "civilized" West and the "uncivilized" East. The same concept exists in the way black African migrants are portrayed in the South African media. Anyone from the north of Limpopo is viewed as threat to the good of SA and its people (Koenane & Maphunye, 2015).

In South Africa, media portrayals of African migrants might be influenced by global narratives that perpetuate neo-colonial attitudes, such as viewing migrants from other African countries as economic burdens or threats to national security.

Conclusion

This chapter explained the representation theory and how it explores the way media portrays minorities, black African migrants and race. I discussed how representation theory formulates its views towards the media. In summary, post-colonial migration enables the people to grasp the hegemonic narratives created by media from colonial times to the modern era. This discourse gives an example of how contemporary migratory patterns and the so-called "migration crisis"

might be seen as the results of colonisation in areas that were formerly under control of the European and British Empire.

Furthermore, the theory of representation is explained by revealing how the media re-represent minorities such as black African migrants. As witnessed in the chapter 2 (literature review chapter) newspapers create news that is so biased against migration and black African migrants in (Kariithi *et al*, 2017). It is therefore important to explain the conceptual framework that underpins this study. Representation theory (Hall, 2007; 2003) and post-colonialism (Al-Saidi, 2014; Rodriguez, 2021) are the principal theories that guide this study's conceptual framework and are explained in relation to what the study wants to achieve.

The post-colonial hypothesis is analysed as it looks at issues of control, culture, language and how these components work in connection to colonial authority (Western colonisers controlling the colonised). Hence this chapter explained in detail how post-colonial theory is of great use to this study together with the representation theory as both theories help in answering the research questions.

Chapter 4: Situating construction of Afrophobia in *TimesLive*, *News24* and *Independent Online* in South Africa: A methodological inquiry

Introduction

The preceding chapter highlighted conceptual framework which is the foundation through which this study is grounded. The conceptual framework is well articulated to conceptualise the findings of the study within the utilised theories. This chapter therefore outlines the methodological inquiries of this study.

This study analyses online content of *IOL*, *News24* and *TimesLive* to investigate how these newspapers represent Black African migrants and how, through their language, they may construct Afrophobia. This chapter explains the qualitative research approach, interpretive paradigm, the hermeneutics textual analysis and aspects relating to data collection and interpretation. A purposive sampling technique was adopted, selecting 66 online newspaper articles from *Independent Online*, *TimesLive* and *News24*. It further explains the content analysis (White & Mash, 2006) used to collect and code the data and critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Jager, 2004; Schneider, 2013; Chilton, 2004, Fairclough, 1994) applied to the data to reveal the language used in the reporting that speaks to the possible construction of Afrophobia.

According to van Dijk (2006), CDA is primarily engaged in and driven by the concept of comprehending social issues. (And in this project Afrophobia). Hence CDA is used to analyse and interpret the digital news stories so as to reveal the meanings behind the stories that portray black African migrants in the online press. Analysing these stories will help in explaining Afrophobia and contexts in which the online press may play a role of the phenomenon. Lastly, the ethical considerations, and study limitations encountered during data gathering are explained. Research questions are integral and intrinsic to the study's research methodology, as they determine the type of design relevant to the study. Thus, the key research questions that guided this study are:

This chapter serves as the framework into which the theories and practices of this study fit to create the research plan. This foundation guides all areas of this research plan, including the aim of the study, research questions, and instruments utilised and analytical approaches as explained above. The following section explains the research paradigm in which this study is located as it establishes the foundation for the research project.

Research Paradigm: Interpretivism

This study relies on an interpretivist paradigm that adheres to the idea that reality is arbitrary, complex, and socially produced (Pham, 2018). The direct link to this study then is that it is premised on the idea that discourses, and more particularly those that are associated with Afrophobia, are constructed through different news stories. According to Elster (2007: 13) and “interpretivism refers to methodologies that place an emphasis on the significance of individuals’ personalities and involvement in both social and cultural life”. It indicates that research methodologies that take the stance that people’s perceptions of reality are social constructions by human actors are to be distinguished from those of natural science (Eliaeson, 2002; McIntosh, 1997). “Its roots are in the philosophical schools of hermeneutics and phenomenology, and Max Weber, a German sociologist, is generally recognized as having had the greatest effect. Interpretivists examines the meanings and motivations underlying human behaviour, including interpersonal interactions and behaviour” (Whitley, 1984:34).

This study, which examines how black African migrants are portrayed in *IOL*, *News24* and *TimesLive* is qualitative in character. In order to try and address the research issues, this study used an interpretivism approach that required the researcher to engage with and interpret online news articles. In order to find the discourse utilised in reference to and context of Black African migrants, the researcher engaged with the text (news articles) and conducted a comprehensive analysis of the text. The study examined the significant terms and metaphors in the text, which contained Black African migrant, using content analysis and CDA.

Interpretivism by definition emphasizes the value of qualitative data in knowledge acquisition (Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994). Contextual depth is the ultimate goal of this philosophical and research paradigm, which is primarily concerned with the particularity of a particular situation

(Myers, 1997). The usefulness of interpretive research in providing context is well known. This paradigm believes that it is impossible to provide precise, methodical, or theoretical solutions to complex human issues (such as migration) (Myers, 1997). According to Kaplan & Maxwell (1994), every cultural and historical context is unique and unusual, requiring analyses of the particular, deeply ingrained environment. Since every study is based on a different combination of social, political, economic, and cultural experiences, the results cannot be generalized; yet, they do add to our understanding of human nature by providing further insight into how people interpret things in certain contexts (Myers, 1997).

To find or produce a rich and deep understanding of the subject under investigation, the interpretive paradigm depends on inquiry and observation (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). This is strongly related to qualitative data collection techniques. This study used the interpretive paradigm to try to understand how online newspapers portray black African migrants. The inquiry will convert data collected from the chosen news items through direct association with the issue being analysed, which is another way in which the study can be considered to be inside this paradigm. This paradigm holds that the meanings and understandings formed through social and experience developments are how 'realities' are intersubjectively constituted (Angen, 2000).

Relativist Ontology

Ontology, according to Hudson and Ozanne (1988), is the nature of reality, whereas epistemology is the researcher's connection to reality, or the means by which it is observed or understood (Carson *et al.*, 2001). Determining the essential nature of a phenomenon's existence is the aim of ontology. We are discussing a certain type of knowledge that already exists outside of the researcher when we search for answers (reality) to our study questions (Carson *et al.*, 2001). Since news is usually presented in numerous narratives, the study's location within interpretivism is based on the idea of many interpretations, which calls for awareness to potential disparities in interpretations of the news items (Klein & Myers, 1999).

Consequently, interpretivists embrace a relativist ontology wherein a singular phenomenon can be interpreted in several ways rather than a fact that can be determined by a measurement technique (Hammersley, 2013). The ontological orientation is therefore founded on the basis of

questioning the nature of reality. Using an interpretivism approach helps researchers gain a deeper grasp of the event and its complexity in its particular context, rather than trying to generalise the basis of understanding for the entire population (Creswell, 2007). This paradigm sees reality as inter subjectively constructed on meanings and understandings at the social and experience levels (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Hence this study's questioning of words and phrases that are used in the news stories is important as language is a social construction and meaning making is socially constructed.

Hammersley (2013:26) articulates that “since multiple interpretation is developed among humans’ relationship, interpretivist researchers should try to understand the diverse ways of seeing and experiencing the world through different contexts and cultures and try to avoid the bias in studying the events and people with their own interpretations”. Three of this paradigm's advantages are discussed from this angle in the discussion that follows. First off, by critically analysing an event from a range of angles, interpretivist scholars are able to gain a deeper understanding of it within its social context. This study upholds this principal through including critical discourse analysis as an analytical strategy that considers the relationship between text and context. Furthermore, by using critical discourse analysis, researchers can probe and extract information about things that are not visible to us. Specifically, they can gather details on attitudes, sentiments, perspectives, beliefs, values, and prejudices (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007).

Human interests are integrated into research through interpretivism. According to Myers (2008) and Collins (2010), interpretivist methods are predicated on naturalistic methods of gathering data, such as observation and interpretation. Interpretive philosophy also makes extensive use of secondary data analysis. Meaning usually becomes apparent in this kind of research at the conclusion of the investigation.

Hermeneutics is the philosophy of understanding and interpretation. The goal of the philosophical tradition of phenomenology, according to Littlejohn and Foss (2009), is to use direct experiences with events to explain the cosmos. Symbolic interactionism recognizes symbols as culturally-derived social objects with shared meanings (Myers, 2008). Analysing

newspaper symbols through language is crucial because, in semiotic interactionism, symbols stand for the tools used to create reality.

It is the study's objective to investigate the dominant newspaper discourses on black African migrants, expose how online news sites, through language, may construct Afrophobic sentiments in South Africa and as to why online news coverage in South Africa is Afrophobic or not. Hence, the interpretivism paradigm assisted in achieving these goals through some of its key elements or arguments; nature of reality is constructed and that knowledge is generated through meaning and what is specific, unique and deviant (Pizam & Mansfeld (2009). What do newspaper stories reveal about the hierarchies of power within South Africa in the context of Afrophobia? And how interpretations of news stories are contested within different circumstances. For example, South Africans will argue and say the way stories are published by news portraying black African migrants as 'job stealers' and 'drug lords' is true and foreigners in South Africa will dispute, arguing that, not all migrants are dealing with drugs and steal jobs, as some are qualified and possess scarce skills.

It is hard to offer exact, systematic, or theoretical answers to complicated human problems like migration, media portrayal, Afrophobia, and other such issues—as is true with any kind of qualitative study. According to interpretivists, every historical and cultural context is unique and different, requiring analyses of the deeply ingrained and precisely defined context (Chowdhury, 2014). Since every study is based on a different combination of social, political, economic, and cultural experiences, the results cannot be generalized; yet, they do add to our understanding of human nature by providing further insight into how people interpret things in certain contexts (Chowdhury, 2014).

Since this study attempts to provide deeper insight into the South African context of black African migrants' depiction in digital news sites, interpretivism fits the study's scope (and is not a larger international comparative project). According to Kaplan & Maxwell (1994) Interpretivism by definition emphasizes the value of qualitative data in knowledge acquisition. Contextual depth is the ultimate goal of this philosophical and research paradigm, which is primarily

concerned with the particularity of a particular situation (Myers, 1997). Take the explicit and implicit signals found in news articles and reports, for example.

The tendency of interpretivism to adopt a subjective as opposed to an objective ontological stance is another critique of interpretivism (Mack, 2010). As a result, bias may come from the researcher's interpretation, personal beliefs, cognitive processes, and cultural preferences, all of which might affect the research's findings. Nonetheless, content analysis and CDA were used in this study to remove bias. By viewing language as a social semiotic instrument for communication that captures the power relationships within a social group, CDA offers analytical insights into textual analysis. Furthermore, potential bias in data selection is reduced or even avoided by carefully creating a data collection large enough to be a representative sample. This can help improve the ability to describe texts and more thoroughly reveal the consequent statements about how black African migrant stereotypes in digital news sites are perpetuated and developed through media language.

Instead of addressing the problems related to society and personal empowerment, this paradigm focuses on understanding current events (Pham, 2018). Interpretivism, which focuses on people's opinions, motives, and reasoning rather than on quantitative data, use qualitative research methods to better understand social interactions (Chowdhury, 2014; Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994). Interpretivists state that our access to reality is mediated by social constructs such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and tools (Myers, 2008). For instance, this study explores the reality of how Afrophobia may be constructed through newspaper language and how news stories are a manifestation of the author's thoughts and newspaper ideology; therefore in order to reassemble the text's intended meaning interpreters must try to identify the author's perspective or thought process.

Relational Epistemology

How we discover information (that is external to the researcher) and come to understand reality relates to epistemology (Carson *et al*, 2001). "An epistemology is a theory of knowledge concerning beliefs about how phenomena [can] come to be known" (Giacomini, 2010: 131). Pascale (2010) defines epistemology as a discipline that investigates the nature, limits, and

sources of knowledge while providing support for the methods by which knowledge is discovered via scientific inquiry. Thus, epistemology is concerned with the process by which we arrive at our conclusions. Similar to ontology, a researcher may employ a range of distinct epistemologies when conducting a search for knowledge (Giacomini, 2010). Each epistemology is founded on a distinct set of assumptions (theoretical beliefs) regarding the nature of the relationship between the subject(s) of the investigation and the knower (Crotty, 1998).

According to the epistemological approach, research aims to comprehend a particular setting by concentrating on a single and concrete notion (Carson et al., 2001). This method holds that people are inextricably linked to their knowledge; hence there is a direct connection between the researcher and the research subject. Thus, this study adheres to a relational epistemology since it is situated inside the interpretative paradigm. Relational epistemology is the defining feature of this work “knowledge and meaningful reality are constructed in and out of interaction between humans and their world and are developed and transmitted in a social context” (Crotty, 1998:42).

An interpretivist epistemology of organisations places more emphasis on social interactions and how individuals interpret these interactions than it does on so-called objective reality (Capper, 2019). Researchers who subscribe to the interpretivist epistemology assert that phenomena are socially constructed and “exist only in the perceptions of people” and as such, are simply issues to be debated (Capper, 1993; 11).

Theoretical viewpoints, research methodologies, and methods all reflect epistemological presuppositions. Put differently, strategies for designing a successful study will vary based on the researcher's beliefs about what can be learned (ontology) and how to go about learning it (epistemology) (Giacomini, 2010; Crotty, 1998). These choices are supported by a theoretical framework, which is, in essence, a collection of philosophical presuppositions that creates a cogent framework for understanding the connections between the kinds of information we seek and the activities required to produce it (Crotty, 1998). A theoretical viewpoint thus offers an explanatory stance for our goals and actions. For instance post-colonial theory argues that colonialism influences the modern day activities such as the portrayal of the once colonised people in the media and the relationship of the once colonised and the colonisers is still relevant

in how knowledge is acquired (Bhargava, 2013). Furthermore, Hall, (2013) notes that representation is a process that demonstrates how our minds generate meaning through language and this language is constructed within an environment that is influenced by former colonisers (Bhargava, 2013). .

What possible advantage could the concept of epistemology have for this particular study? In our never-ending quest for knowledge about the world, about how South African online news sites construct or may construct Afrophobia, about how black African migrants are signified in the online news and people's role in it; epistemology is a key component of philosophical thinking. However, since research is a crucial means of learning new things, philosophical underpinnings are always involved. For instance, there are philosophical and theoretical underpinnings to every procedure, methodological decision, research topic, and data analysis (Crotty, 1998; Pascale, 2010).

It is thought from an epistemological perspective that the everyday actions of situated human life are the very activities that form meaningful realities, given the transactional and subjective nature of co-constructed meanings present in online news stories. Thus, to engage in the interpretation of such emergent realities, a researcher has to strive to understand these everyday actions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Language itself, a component of cognition, emotion, and social processes, acquires meaning through human contact, claims Gergen (1994). People so constantly interpret what they read and hear in order to make sense of it.

Interpretivism epistemologies are relevant to this study since it attempts to explore the meanings and processes of meaning-making that emerge from online news stories. These individualistic processes demand a non-deterministic approach, meaning one that does not presuppose preconceived categories of the study (Bruscia, 2005). Instead, the strategy should take into account how meanings develop through the many types of interactions and activities that take place during reading news stories about black African migrants in South Africa

Subjectivism serves as the foundation for “the interpretive epistemology, which is founded on actual events. The existence of the world depends on our understanding of it”. (Grix, 2004: 83). For example, regarding trees, Crotty (1998: 43) elaborates, “We need to remind ourselves here

that it is human beings who have constructed it as a tree, given it the name, and attributed to it the associations we make with trees.” It is people that constructed the word migrant, *makwerekwere* or foreigner that the press utilise when dealing with the Other. A migrant or foreigner is not a migrant or foreigner without someone calling him/her a foreigner. Meaning is not discovered; “it is constructed though the interaction between consciousness and the world, consciousness is always consciousness of something” (Crotty, 1998:44).

The interpretative paradigm accepts ideologies without challenging them. According to Crotty (1998), knowledge is created and transmitted within a social context through interactions between individuals and their surroundings. Because of this, understanding the social world is possible only from the viewpoint of people who are a part of it (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Exposing underlying social forces and structures is the aim of interpretivism. Interpretive approaches look at inter-individual relationships and the historical and cultural contexts in which people live in order to understand phenomena from the viewpoint of the individual (Creswell, 2009). Examples of methodology include but not limited to these: hermeneutics (the study of hidden meaning in language which this study will utilise and explain later on in this chapter), and ethnography (the study of cultural groupings over time) are some examples of technique. These methods usually generate qualitative data (Scotland, 2012).

Research Approach: Qualitative

This study is utilising a qualitative approach because it aims to better understand the phenomenon on digital news sites reporting and the construction of discourses around Afrophobia by gathering, analysing, and interpreting data. Qualitative research works with written texts and in this case analysing online news stories from three biggest South African media organisations, the purpose of the study is to interpret these news articles in the sample. Qualitative research is, “the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual material derived from talk or conversation. It is used in the exploration of meanings of social phenomena as experienced by individuals themselves, in their natural context” (Malterud, 2001:483).

The utilisation of qualitative research is stimulating, and in this study, it has provided a greater understanding of communication as a social and cultural practice (Brennen, 2013). It attempts to use language to understand concepts based on people's experiences in order to communicate an awareness of the larger world of human interactions. As Kvale (1996:11) explains, “the subject matter of qualitative research is not objective data to be quantified, but meaningful relations to be interpreted”. Qualitative researchers acknowledge the social construction of reality and consider alternative theories of knowledge. The variety of meanings and realities that researchers present is a reflection of their support and belief in their own active involvement in the research process (Brennen, 2013). For instance the researched believed that Afrophobia may be constructed by the media through the language they use in news stories; therefore, the interpretation of the researcher is predicated on his definitions of words, vocabulary, and other terms.

Qualitative research is an essential component of the field of communication and media studies in the twenty-first century. “Critics of qualitative research perceive it as an attack on reason and truth” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998:7), whereas others contend that “their opposition is framed from a belief that truth can be independent of politics in addition to a desire to distinguish between “hard” science and ‘soft’ research” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1987:8-9). Qualitative researchers frequently respond to the animosity of some social scientists by pointing out that, at their foundation, all research methods are qualitative because researchers are essential to the research process, providing observations, insights, and analyses of the evidence.

When it comes to media studies, quantitative researchers usually perceive communication as a behavioral science that looks at news, information, and/or entertainment from the perspectives of mass communication, journalism, broadcasting, advertising, public relations, visual communication, and new media (Brennen, 2013).

Conversely, qualitative researchers take into account the variety of meanings and values that are produced by media (Brennen, 2022). Instead of concentrating on the impacts or influences of media, they make an effort to comprehend the various connections between media and society (Pauly, 1991). For example what is the relationship of South African online news sites and black African migrants- what is the power dynamics between the two. Similar to 7 Up, the Un-cola,

qualitative methods in media studies research emerged as a viable alternative to challenge the status quo, and “researchers who questioned the dominant social science perspective of mass communication often envisioned communication as a cultural practice, through which issues of power, class, and social identity could be negotiated” (Jensen, 2011:13). According to Pauly (1991), the goal of qualitative research is to clarify the part that mass media plays in these explanations and to make believable the language that a group of individuals use to describe themselves to the outside world.

Since qualitative research is defined by its adaptability, transparency, and context-responsiveness, the processes of gathering and analysing data are not as distinct and sequential as they are in quantitative research (Hak, 2007). As Fossey *et al* (2002:718) puts it: “sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation are related to each other in a cyclical (iterative) manner, rather than following one after another in a stepwise approach”. The method chosen, how it is applied, and which and how many units it is applied to are all influenced by the study's methodology and design (Hak, 2007).

Regardless of the qualitative approach used, the questions that researchers hope to answer, the particular historical context that surrounds those questions, and the theoretical framework they plan to use all have an impact on the methods that qualitative researchers select for their work (Hak, 2007).

Research Design: Hermeneutic Textual Analysis

A research design is a flexible collection of rules that link inquiry methodologies and techniques for gathering empirical data in order to connect theoretical perspectives. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2018), a study design places researchers in the empirical world and links them to particular locations, individuals, organizations, groups, and repositories of pertinent interpretive material.

Additionally, a research design outlines the investigator's approach to the two crucial problems of legitimation and representation. At the start of the study, the research methods and techniques are chosen. A research design outlines the approach, procedures, and other important details of a

project. Experts state that the project's binding agent is the research design (Khanday & Khanam, 2019).

Effective research design aids in the selection of appropriate measuring instruments to assess findings in accordance with the study's goal (Akhtar, 2016). Assumptions that will be examined during the research must be made at the beginning of every study project (Khanday & Khanam, 2019). The research investigated, for instance, the study's premise that Afrophobia may result from the unfavorable portrayal of black African migrants in the South African media. The assumptions are guaranteed to be impartial and devoid of prejudice by a sound study design. Additionally, it states that the assumptions made at the outset of the research (Kumar, 1999) about why press coverage in South Africa is or is not Afrophobic are based on earlier studies that looked at how immigrants are covered in the media during and after apartheid (Kariithi *et al.* 2017, Pineteh, 2017). These assumptions form the basis for the data collected throughout the research.

The fact that research is a human endeavor, formed and impacted by human reasoning, is interesting to highlight. As a result, the researcher used his judgment to develop themes and categories that he then interpreted from the data. According to the interpretative paradigm, there are various realities and reality is socially produced (Adebesin *et al.*, 2011:310). The researcher applied theories (representation and post-colonial theory) and human reason to interpret the meanings of the words and phrases discovered in the pertinent news items. In this type of diagnostic research design, the focus is on identifying the underlying factors that contribute to a certain problem and in this case is Afrophobia and the representation of black African migrants in the online newspapers.

Hermeneutics textual analysis

Hermeneutic research is a vast and diverse field. In order to stay within the confines of the present study and scope, the topic has been significantly narrowed here. Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009) refer to the type of hermeneutics described below as “alethic hermeneutics” in relation to the idea that this kind of inquiry aims to uncover something that is concealed in a particular

phenomenon and in this case, the portrayal of black African migrants and the construction of Afrophobia by online press.

According to Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009), textual analysis is the process of examining a text to ascertain the author's intended meaning. In our regular everyday routines of analysing and making sense of our worlds, such an approach results in deeper comprehension than what first appears (Skoldberg, 2009). “When we perform textual analysis on a text, we make an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of that text” (McKee, 2001:4).

Hermeneutics is one of the most complex theories of interpretivism, with an extensive roots dating back to classical Greece (Crotty, 1998). The general ideas that follow can help comprehend the fundamental epistemological presumptions underlying the current hermeneutic research methodologies. Early Protestant scholars created “hermeneutics as the art and science of interpretation” (Jahn-Langenberg, & Loewy, 2005: 335) for reading ancient religious texts, while early humanists developed hermeneutics to examine classical texts (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). Language, linguistic meanings, and interpretive processes were therefore important from the start and still are. Hence this study is reviewing language used by online newspapers to reveal power dynamics between the majority and minority.

According to Crotty (1998), hermeneutics is the science of interpretation, and it falls under the interpretive paradigm. In this study the intent is to interpret the language used by *TimesLive*, *News24* and *IOL* when covering black African migrants residing in South Africa. The language is explored through discursive approach in order to reveal the hidden meaning if there is. The idea of comprehending news articles from a hermeneutic philosophical standpoint is revealed by this study. The technique of CDA, in conjunction with representation theory and hermeneutics study, analyse the news content of a story to reveal an innovative interpretation.

Indrawati and Sitorus (2023:407) argues that “hermeneutics is deep-rooted in three significances, namely (1) expressing (2) interpreting and (3) translating”. Hence this design is important to this study because interpretation of news texts is key in this study and expressing the rationale of what the data (news texts) presents. “Thus the etymology of hermeneutics has an understanding of the attempt to understand and interpret a text” (Indrawati & Sitorus, 2023: 407).

Two hermeneutic approaches are relevant to human communication in the twenty-first century: text hermeneutics, which uses hermeneutics to comprehend literature, and social/cultural hermeneutics, which uses hermeneutics to examine social culture. It is believed that writing is something that may be examined and observed. According to Fitria (2016), this study is a component of the hermeneutic cycle, which is a translation process that looks for things that are special and vice versa. Comprehending a news article from a hermeneutic perspective is regarded as a tool for comprehending the news text.

According to philosopher Gadamer, comprehension is a component of human cognitive functioning rather than an issue of interpretation technique. This is an attempt to ascertain the veracity of all written works, artistic materials, and sagas (Gadamer, 1990). Every understanding is a product of historical monumental passages, dialectic events, and linguistic events, according to philosopher Gadamer. Then, this presented a chance for hermeneutics to become more widely used. Participation and incoherence—neither abuse nor control, relevant experience nor just knowledge—are the fundamental components of understanding; connecting reason to conversation is not merely a methodological approach (Gadamer, 1990).

Hermeneutics helps us to find the true core and to be open to the meaning of truth. The philosopher Gadamer's point of view closes the work, capturing it like a dialogue while attempting to synthesize the author's and the reader's respective spheres (Gadamer, 1990). In the philosophy of Gadamer, the area of the text, the region of the author's world, and the region of the reader became crucial objectives.

The philosopher Gadamer (1990) demonstrates four main points: (1) “Hermeneutic Prejudice” (Prejudice): This refers to the rigorous and critical analysis that goes into reading and comprehending written material. Human intellect has been shaped and pre-exists reading and understanding created in a new field of thought and reflects fresh knowledge (Indrawati & Sitorus, 2023). Gadamer highlights the importance of having a critical mind when doing an interpretation. Therefore, “it is not free with different translation abilities or prior writing-related interpretations”. However, including bias into an assessment of the translated text's writing.

(2) “Hermeneutical Circle”: According to Gadamer (1990) a circular process must start with understanding in order to achieve understanding's ultimate purpose. For instance, one needs preconceptions about written language in order to comprehend written stuff. A hermeneutic cycle entails that the written material or text must be thoroughly and sporadically understood, that is, it must be viewed as a work of writing and as a whole. On the other hand, each component of the total should also be considered separately. The close connection between the total composition and its components is taken into account during the comprehension process.

(3) “A dialogue conversation” combined with text writing is seen as helpful for forming the subjects and objects of sentences. Understanding can be attained through understanding, which is exactly how equal understanding is thought of.

(4) The philosopher Gadamer made the claim that comprehension is always an event in language, a conversational occurrence, and a story from history. As a result, there is a great deal of hermeneutic disaffection. When read, tested, and used in conversation with other texts, text can become dynamic and meaningful. The printed words in a text acquire meaning when they are given context.

Gadamer's hermeneutics all have a strong ethical foundation. According to Gadamer's (1990) hermeneutics, interpreting the text's content involves upholding the interpretation of truth and understanding, which are inextricably linked. A researcher's unique ethical worth is their ability to grasp the concept of good or proper interpretation in order for the material or news they study broaden society's horizons. Hermeneutic circles are repeatedly used in Gadamer's hermeneutics to carry out the linguistic action in understanding and progress toward improved understanding (Indrawati & Sitorus, 2023). In order to comprehend texts and convey news content to the audience, researchers need assistance from the idea of communication competency. By doing so, researchers are able to acknowledge their limitations as well as the importance of understanding. They then constantly strive to comprehend and interpret information more effectively, creating a space where readers of news stories can reach the horizons of understanding (Gadamer, 1990).

Sampling

Sampling is one of the most important components of research design. Sampling in a research context refers to the process of selecting certain items from a defined population to include in a study. (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013). In qualitative research, choosing participants is based on the study's objectives and is found to be highly subjective (Guest *et al*, 2013).

It is quite rare to be able to get data from every newspaper story that has ever been published when performing research on news articles. An alternative was to choose a sample. The stories that actually take part in the research are the sample. The researcher carefully considered how to choose a sample that was relevant to research questions and objectives in order to make appropriate conclusions from the data. Sampling, which saves time and money, typically allows researchers to obtain enough data to answer the study question or questions without polling the entire population (Shaheen, Pradhan & Ranajee, 2019).

The primary goal of sampling in this study was to make assumptions about how online newspapers represent black African migrants based on data collected from the smaller group (66 news articles). But the choice of the newspaper stories should have been clear, unambiguous, and definite. The study adopts the RASIM corpus linguistics approach, refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants or migrants as developed by Baker *et al* (2008). News stories that included the above words and available on the three news sites were sampled between 2019-2022. The researcher searched these sites using the above-mentioned key words in order to identify relevant articles for this study. Moreover, the sample unit must be adequate in size to be reliable (Guest *et al*, 2013; Shaheen, *et al* 2019). Hence 66 articles were selected because these stories covered areas of the economic, political and social existence of black foreigners in South Africa. Moreover, the years under study produced the highest number of keywords related to this study and through the searching of the three news sites 66 articles produced interesting and relevant data.

Researchers can make judgments about extremely complex circumstances via sampling. Sampling enables researchers to complete research more quickly (Guest *et al*, 2013). Sampling is crucial to the research process, but it is necessary to choose the sample carefully because if it is

not representative, the conclusions extrapolated to the entire population would be false (Patton, 2002). Selected articles that were pertinent were deliberately chosen from the three media websites. Three months was dedicated to collecting research data, which included content analysis (January-May 2023).

Purposive Sampling

The technique of purposeful sampling is frequently utilised in qualitative research (Patton, 2002). This involved identifying and selecting news stories that were related to the phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This study needs to answer imperative questions hence; “purposeful sampling resides on the proposition that information-rich samples were selected to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon” (Shaheen *et al.*, 2016:26).

Whether a quantitative or qualitative methodology is used, sampling procedures are meant to maximise effectiveness and validity, (Morse & Niehaus, 2009). Sampling, however, needs to be consistent with the goals and presumptions that guide the application of either strategy. While achieving breadth of understanding is usually the major goal of quantitative methods, obtaining depth of understanding is usually the main purpose of qualitative approaches (Patton, 2002).

The researcher paid a monthly subscription cost in order to access selected articles, *TimesLive*, R110, *IOL*, R24.99 & *News24* R75) in order to find and choose samples with the most information feasible while making the best use of the limited resources available.

Selection of news articles was possible only after several observational visits to the *IOL*, *News24* and *Timeslive* websites. Finding and choosing a sample that is well-suited to the goal and purpose of this study was made easier by the online visits. The inclusion criteria utilised keywords such as legal, illegal or undocumented migrant or immigrant, foreigner and refugee function as the investigator’s starting points to narrow the selected content for this study. The researcher ignored words such as xenophobia and Afrophobia because the research did not want to limit the search to deliberate connection between only the attacks but more broadly how black African migrants are portrayed in these three digital news sites. Although purposeful samples are typically limited in size, this study's results demonstrate that alternative sampling techniques are

unable to achieve the same level of depth and purpose as purposeful samples (Shaheen *et al*, 2019).

Sampling technique in qualitative research is flexible and evolves during analysis; judgment is utilised to judge if the sample size is sufficient (Patton, 1990). The reason and efficacy of deliberate sampling depend on the selection of instances that are rich in information for in-depth investigation (Shaheen *et al*, 2019). In-depth news articles frequently contain issues that are important to the study, necessitating intentional sampling.

The researched focused on hard news published by *IOL*, *News24* and *Timeslive* between 2019 and 2022. The study excluded all advertisements, reader comments, cartoons, letters to the editor, and images. The sample consisted only of hard news and reports produced by journalists. Recurring Afrophobic attacks in South Africa had an impact on the time period chosen for the articles. For instance, the killing of Elvis Nyathi¹⁶ a Zimbabwean migrant residing in Johannesburg, was attacked and killed because he was accused of selling drugs and being an illegal black African migrant. This time frame offered a solid foundation for analysing whether or not the media actually contribute to the stories about prejudice and hatred. The years 2019-2022 were selected as the time frame is important as it enables a continuation of my Masters' study that explored the representation of black African migrants in the South African print media from 2017-2018. Furthermore, this time is important to contribute to media scholarship continuation as some key studies explored different periods: Mawadza (2012) Pineteh (2017), Kariithi *et al* (2017) Mngomezulu and Dube (2019) Mgogo and Osunkunle (2023), Mthombeni, (2022) and Amenaghawon and Salawu (2022). Hence this study develops from preceding studies to contribute new knowledge in exploring dominant online news discourses on black African

¹⁶ Elvis Nyathi also known as Mbodazwe Banajo was a Zimbabwean economic refugee who resided in Diepsloot, north of Johannesburg in South Africa. He was killed in the Xenophobia in South Africa attacks. Nyathi was beaten and burnt alive by a mob of demonstrators in Diepsloot, Johannesburg on 6 April 2022. Available on: <https://ewn.co.za/2022/07/07/7-men-accused-of-killing-zimbabwean-national-elvis-nyathi-return-to-court>. [Accessed 20 May 2023].

migrants in South Africa, with a particular focus on how the reporting language, may construct Afrophobia in South Africa (These studies were discussed in Chapter 2).

The researcher purposefully selected English online press because English-language digital news often have a global reach, providing coverage of events and issues from various parts of the world. This allows researchers to analyse how Afrophobia is represented and discussed on an international scale, not just within local or regional contexts. English newspapers, especially those from major publications, often shape public discourse and influence how certain issues are perceived globally (De Wet, 2021). Analysing these sources can help researchers understand the broader narratives and stereotypes that may perpetuate Afrophobia.

In South Africa, English is an official language, and English newspapers play a significant role in reporting on local and regional issues. Studying these sources allows this study to explore how Afrophobia is experienced and discussed within African contexts. Language plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions (Hall, 2013). By studying English newspapers, this study can critically analyse the language and framing used to discuss Afrophobia, revealing how it is constructed and communicated to the public.

Overall, English newspapers provide a rich and varied source of information for researchers studying Afrophobia, offering insights into its representation, impact, and the broader societal attitudes surrounding this form of discrimination.

Sample Size

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have revolutionised how we communicated in the past by setting up new socialization structures, systems, and practices, particularly for young people (Ricoy & Martínez-Carrera, 2021). Due to technology's pervasive presence in the society around us, it plays a significant role in citizens' everyday lives. Because of this, it is crucial to understand online newspapers, which have ingrained themselves into people's lives and serve as a means of communication.

The reason for studying online news is because “the traditional press is losing its power as more people read newspapers from their cell phones, computers and tablets” (Nguyeni, 2010:229).

“Some studies in the field of online news have shown that there are socio-technical advantages that have determined the adoption and use of online news such as in-depth and background information, immediacy, 24/7 updates, ability to discuss news with peers, the opportunity to talk back to the media and multitasking” (Nguyeni, 2010:229). In this era because online news is available for free print newspaper circulation has declined (Isyaku *et al.*, 2015). “Daily newspapers in South Africa are down from an estimated circulation of 1 211 887 to 1 051 223” (ABC Q1, 2018:1).

A total of 66 news articles (22 from each site) were purposely chosen from the websites of *IOL*, *News24* and *Timeslive*. 22 news articles were selected because they are feasible and the researcher believes this sample is enough to answer the research questions and enough stories to cover the four year period under study. Online versions were used because they were readily available and offered free downloads upon subscription. Most South African newspapers are moving towards digital spaces because online news is easily accessible. Readers can get their news straight from their laptops, smartphones or tablets in the comfort of their homes without moving an inch (Pentzold, & Fechner, 2020).

Most news sites (including the three under study) still offer free online access to most news stories covering all news stories in brief and some news articles are subscribed to either daily, weekly or monthly (The researcher subscribed as noted above). Compared to a printed newspaper, an online newspaper can be read in greater detail. With only a mouse click, you can read back issues with ease (Pentzold & Fechner, 2020). On the other hand, you need the librarian’s permission in advance to browse through the back issues of a printed newspaper.

We now perceive many things differently as a result of digitalization. The physical items that once represented comfort, news, and lifestyle have given way to screens. Online newspapers might be a little step toward a broader revolution, but their popularity attests to their necessity (Pentzold & Fechner, 2020).

Table 4.1 below gives a description of the data corpus (number of Articles sampled in each month from 2019-2022).

Time/Year 2019-2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>IOL</i>	1		2	5	2		2	2	4	2	1	1
News24		1		4	2	1		1	8	2	2	1
TimesLIVE	2	1	2		1		2	2	7	1	3	1
Total	3	2	4	9	5	1	4	5	19	5	6	3
66 Stories												

The above table shows the number of stories sampled in this study and how many were purposefully selected from each month from 2019 -2022. The sample size was adequate to address the research questions of this study. The objective was to analyse how *IOL*, *News24* and *TimesLive* portray black African migrants via news articles, hence a sample of 66 stories was selected from these news organisations and critically analysed. The sample size was also influenced with resources available as the researcher mainly focused on stories that are free to read and download. A critical discourse and content analysis of the depiction of black African migrants is based on news stories.

Process of Data Collection: Content Analysis

IOL, News24, and TimesLive online publications are the key sources of data obtained through qualitative content analysis.

Content analysis (CA) is one of the social research techniques that is expanding rapidly (Neuendorf, 2002). “Content analysis is a research method for producing meaningful and repeatable inferences from data to their context” (Krippendorff 1980: 21). Neuendorf (2002: 1) extended this definition further by describing content analysis as “the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics”. As a result, CA is an observational research technique used to systematically evaluate the symbolic and real content of every communication that is recorded (Neuendorf, 2002). For instance, while researching the impacts of press coverage of African American migrants of African descent.

As an interpretive technique, qualitative content analysis provides conclusions that are credible, transferable, and conformable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative content analysis is an effective substitute for interpretative paradigms in research.

It is possible to use content analysis to any kind of written text, regardless of the source. Moreover, there are no strict rules that must be observed (Berg, 2001). The assessment of new communication medium, like websites and online newspapers, as well as a portion of data mining techniques has recently been added to the research methodology. It is now an essential component of semiotic analysis and hermeneutics in media studies and critical social science. (Scott, 1994).

There are two categories for content analysis: relational analysis and conceptual analysis. Conceptual analysis establishes the concepts' frequency and existence in a text. Relational analysis looks into the connections between concepts in a text, which is an extension of conceptual analysis (Owen, 2012). Conceptual analysis, as previously said, determines whether concepts exist and how frequently they occur in a text. Relational analysis advances the conceptual comprehension of a text by analysing the relationships between its concepts (Luo,

2019 & Patton, 2002). Generally, when one thinks of content analysis, one thinks of conceptual analysis

In order to locate particular words, themes, or concepts in a given set of qualitative data, such as text, content analysis is utilised. It also helps with data corpus sampling. Researchers can determine and evaluate the frequency, significance, and connections between these specific terms, topics, or concepts using content analysis (Yasemin Besen-Cassino & Cassino, 2023). For example, the researcher evaluated a news story's wording to check for bias or partiality. Researchers might draw conclusions about the meanings found in the texts, the author(s), the audience, and even the culture and historical context of the texts.

Data from *TimesLive*, *News24*, and *IOL* were sampled using content analysis. Unstructured content is categorized or thematically grouped using qualitative content analysis based on trustworthy inference and interpretation. The researcher used inductive reasoning to identify patterns and categorisations from the stories by closely analysing and continuously comparing the data. The research methodology was primarily inductive, with data-driven interpretation. Interpretive research aims to understand the phenomenon being investigated by exchanging meaning with the study population while considering their language, correspondence, association, communication, and surroundings within the context being examined (Walsham 2006). As will be demonstrated by the Critical Discourse Analysis that comes after the CA, this is the case in this study where language is analysed to assess how black African migrants are portrayed in South African online press.

Inductive approach is employed in qualitative research, when data is initially collected and subsequently analysed to derive conclusions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Flick, 2009: 311). Inductive research uses more qualitative analysis methods, such textual analysis, to find patterns and themes in the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). For instance, the study collected news items about Black African migrants and examined each one to determine how the subjects were portrayed. Nonetheless, in qualitative content analysis, logical reasoning need not be ignored (Patton, 2002). Coming up with concepts or variables for qualitative research from theory or

previous research is also very beneficial, especially in the beginning stages of data analysis (Berg, 2001).

The aim is to identify key themes or categories in a collection of text (online stories) and provide an in-depth analysis of the social reality that these themes and categories generate as it is experienced in the South. The latter analysis will be made available through the Critical Discourse Analysis that follows.

According to Busch *et al.* (2012), qualitative content analysis was employed because it is typically thematic in nature. The process of identifying, deconstructing, and summarizing (themes) within data is known as theme analysis (TA), which is a subset of qualitative research analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Themes are analytical by products that are created as a result of and from the creative coding for this investigation. This basically means themes are determined after implementing CDA and then the dominant discourses are revealed through critical engagement with the news site language and then themes are presented thematically. At the nexus of data, analytical procedure, and subjectivity, they are actively constructed by the researcher and reflect a significant amount of analytical work (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Themes are not present in the data, waiting to be identified and extracted by the researcher; they do not passively emerge from the data or coding. The intersection of the researcher's theoretical presuppositions, their resources and analytical skills, and the data itself yields themes. Themes are imaginative and interpretive stories about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Thematic analysis and content analysis are two popular qualitative analysis techniques, and because their applications overlap and their methods are so similar, they are frequently employed interchangeably. The goal of both approaches is the same: to analyse narrative materials using descriptive analysis and text segmentation into manageable-sized content units (Sparker, 2005). But in this study, themes were extracted from the data using content analysis. As will be seen later in the following chapter, the themes that emerge from the data were usually categorized into categories and sub-themes.

Method of Analysis: Critical Discourse Analysis

In its most basic form, data analysis is the process of searching through data for pertinent information. Data must be analyzed, cleansed, converted, and modelled utilizing analytical and statistical techniques in order to do this (Calzon, 2023). Researchers use research data analysis to distill information into a story, which they then analyze to make inferences. Large volumes of data should logically be divided into manageable chunks with the help of the data analysis process (Calzon, 2023). As a result, this study evaluated 66 news pieces using content analysis and CDA to identify themes and create categories that emerged from the stories.

Throughout the research process, from the selection of the research phenomenon to the writing up of the findings, theories can be applied to qualitative investigations at various stages. According to Cleland (2017:63-64), the application of theory can be summarised as follows at various points:

“Theory frames the study questions, develop the philosophical underpinnings of the study, and make assumptions to justify or rationalize the methodological approach. Qualitative investigations relate the target phenomenon to the theory. Theory provides a comparative context or framework for data analysis and interpretation. Theory provides triangulation of study findings” (Cleland, 2017:63-64).

Accordingly, in theory-connected research, theoretical interpretation, discovery, and inquiry like this one all coexist (Mitchell & Cody 1993). These processes include theory creation (creating relational statements and developing a new theory), theory integration (incorporating and testing particular concepts within a particular theoretical perspective), and theoretical selectivity (relating particular concepts to pre-existing theories), according to Schwartz-Barcott et al. (2002). Thus, theories can serve as a research activity's starting point as well as its conclusion. For example the representation theory helps this study to understand if the media portrayals of migrants purposefully incite hostility or do they just reflect the current culture. It is through this theory that the researcher understands that what we see, read or hear on media do not just merely reflect reality but it also shapes it.

Critical discourse analysis “is a strategy for researching the social environment of spoken or written language” (Van Dijk, 2006: 250). It seeks to comprehend how language is employed in practical contexts (Luo, 2019). CDA is “discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (van Dijk, 2015: 465). By conducting such dissident research, the researcher is taking a clear stance and seeking to comprehend, reveal, and ultimately confront the social injustice that black African migrants may be facing in the online media. This further justifies the description of CDA as a social movement of politically engaged discourse analysts (van Dijk, 2015).

CDA, according to Van Dijk (2006:252), aims to understand pressing social issues including migration, racial prejudice, and how black African migrants are portrayed in the media. According to Wodak and Mayer (2009), CDA highlights the necessity of multidisciplinary study to fully understand how language functions in creating and spreading knowledge and structuring social organizations.

The goal of CDA according to Locke (2004), is to methodically investigate the often-ambiguous relationships between discursive practices, texts, and larger social and cultural structures, interactions, and processes. It also aims to comprehend how power dynamics and conflicts shape these texts, events, and behaviours from an ideological perspective. Schneider (2013) thinks that analysing the political undertones of written and spoken language can be done effectively with CDA.

CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power abuse (dominance) in society. Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 260-5) outlined central points of CDA as follows: “1.) CDA addresses social problems. 2.) Power relations are discursive. 3.) Discourse constitutes society and culture. 4 Discourse does ideological work, 5.) Discourse is historical, 6.) The link between text and society is mediated. 7.) Discourse analyses is interpretative and explanatory. 8.) Discourse is a form of social action”. Hence CDA was used by the researcher to review discourses surrounding black African migrant’s representation in the online press and the way dynamics of power are constructed in the online media.

CDA deals with the issues of power and how a dominant group oppresses the other using different tactics such as the media (van Dijk, 2015). It is therefore a relevant form of analysis for this study that seeks to identify dominant discourses in the digital press in online newspapers reveal power relations between South Africans and black African migrants in the post-apartheid South Africa. CDA enabled the researcher to critically analyse assumptions that exists in the news stories that the less critical reader may over-look. The researcher was able to read closely to find spots tone, phrase and language choices expose textual biases about black African migrants.

Unlike linguistic approaches that only focus on language use rules, CDA emphasizes the contextual meaning of language (van Dijk, 2015). It focuses on the social aspects of communication and the manner in which people use language to achieve specific goals (such building a relationship of trust, planting doubt, evoking emotions, or resolving conflict). Discourse analysis was employed instead of focusing on smaller language units to examine larger language chunks, including stories from online newspapers.

The selected sources were analysed on a number of levels, including themes and terminology; words and phrases were checked for euphemistic, metaphorical, and ideological overtones. Grammar: The way sentences were put together—including verb tenses, active or passive structure, the use of imperatives and questions—was examined in order to uncover aspects of the intended meaning and relate it to characteristics, themes, and patterns pertinent to the research questions. The text's structure was then reviewed to determine how it developed a tale or emphasized ideas. The details of the source material and knowledge of the surrounding context serve as the foundation for the researcher's interpretations.

The researcher further utilised CDA by examining any citations or quotations in the news stories. Considered the purpose of these quotations and the possible message the author was attempting to convey. The researcher also analysed the ways in which news stories reveal traditions within a culture because news stories are effective tools for revealing and establishing cultural beliefs and customs. The researched looked for cultural hints in the stories. A text has the power to influence

how a culture evolves or expose the opinions of the text's author (or the group of people the author is representing) (van Dijk, 2008).

As a result, while CDA helps to understand the circumstances and underlying presumptions that give rise to a particular problem, it does not offer definitive solutions to it. Thus, it facilitates the disclosure of "hidden meaning." A rigorous evaluation of what is meant when language is used to describe and explain is made possible by the CDA approach. What is written and how it is expressed in socially accepted circumstances are determined by discourse. "CDA enables the researcher to examine how relations and structures of power are entrenched in everyday language use, and thus how language legitimizes existing social relations and the hierarchies of authority and power" (Deacon *et al.* 2007:154). CDA can do this as it enables an analysis beyond the text and into its relationship with context.

Fairclough (1995) states that the goal of CDA is to establish connections between the features of texts, the production, consumption, and dissemination of texts in discourse activities, and more general sociocultural practices. The objective was to investigate the structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as they manifest in language, both clearly and implicitly. Its secondary objective is not to provide definitive answers, but to extend our own perspectives, help us identify our own shortcomings, and assist us in identifying our own unconscious motives and aspirations as well as those of others. It looks at real-world social interactions with language undertones that are typically protracted.

Nine-step Critical Discourse Analysis

The study adopts a nine step Critical Discourse Analysis toolbox based on the works of Schneider, (2013), Prinsloo (2017), Chilton (2004) and Fairclough (1994). The toolbox adapted was tailored to suit the needs of this study.

Step 1 - Establish the context

The source of the news articles was noted by the researcher (*IOL, News24 & TimesLive*) and how it is important to the bigger picture of the phenomenon under study. Further the researcher noted the language, country, and location of the stories as well as who wrote it (and when), who

published it (and when), and the author's and publisher's names. Although the authors name is of no significance to this study.

Step 2 - Explore the production process

Although the researcher already identified the authors and publishers of the sources, the researcher still needed to conduct a more in-depth background investigation. The researcher considered the type of newspaper the articles are from, for instance, the study is analysing news items (Jager 2004: 175)

Additionally, the researcher made notes on the size of the stories (number of paragraphs) and any other elements of the media that can influence the interpretation of the news articles (Schneider, 2013, Jager, 2004). Step 3 helped this study into coding the data and analysing the coded material.

Step 3 - Code the study's material

In this step, the researcher generates themes from the codes and categories by assigning attributes to certain units of study, such as paragraphs, phrases, or even words. (Jager 2004; Chilton, 2004). "Think of how many of us tag online information like pictures, links, or articles. Coding is simply an academic version of this tagging process" (Schneider 2013:1). For instance, the researcher examined a news article to determine the discourse surrounding black African immigration. Any sentences or phrases in the narrative that address black African immigration and its associated themes (or discourse strands) was marked. The stories and their structure were analysed in the following phase.

Step 4 - Examine structure of the text

Following the collection of materials and the coding of the discourse strands, the researcher looked at the structural components of the texts. The researcher attempted to identify the argument's structure by asking whether the text discusses numerous points one at a time. Does it begin with a counterfactual scenario, and then address that case and the main argument in opposition? At this stage, the investigator conducted a critical analysis of the ways in which the

headers and other layout components direct the argument, as well as the ways in which the introduction and conclusion fit into the overall framework (Jager, 2004; Chilton, 2004).

Step 5 - Identify cultural references

On this step the study's source material context has already been defined (Jager, 2004). The researcher analysed how the argument is influenced by the context. Does the news story make references to outside sources? What significance does the text ascribe to these other sources? By looking at these topics, the researcher was able to ascertain what function intertextuality performs in the context of the overall argument.

Step 6 - Identify linguistic and rhetorical mechanisms

The researcher determined how each statement operated linguistically. Different coding categories were created on digital files in order to do this.

Step 7 - The researcher created word groups

Does the text use vocabulary that is frequently used in the same context? For example, the terms could come directly from business, the military, or overly casual teenage slang. (Fairclough, 1995; Jager, 2004). The researcher looked closely at the nouns, verbs, and adjectives in the news articles to see if there can be any recurring patterns. Such patterns can reveal the type of logic that the text alludes to. For instance, discussing a black African immigration in terms of politics generates a very different logic than discussing the same occurrence in terms of religion.

“Grammar features”: The researcher verified the identities of the subjects and objects in each statement (news story). Analyse patterns, such as the regular usage of pronouns like ‘we’ and ‘they’? The researcher further analysed adjectives and adverbs (Fairclough, 1995; Schneider, 2013).

“Rhetorical and literary figures”: Five elements were examined by the researcher in the news text: proverbs, idioms, similes, metaphors, and allegories and how they are used to support the

main point of contention. “Inviting the reader to entertain certain associations, for instance in the form of an allegory, helps construct certain kinds of categories and relations, which in turn shape the argument” (Jager, 2004:1).

“Direct and indirect speech”: The researcher critically analysed news articles and see if they contain direct or indirect quotations? If so, are they quoted directly or are they paraphrased? In either case, find the original sentences to determine their context and the current meaning in your source material. After this analysis the researcher interpreted the data.

Step 8 – “Interpret the data”

The researcher integrated the findings into this study’s interpretation in order to clarify the discursive techniques and how they functions. This entails combining the researcher’s understanding of assertions and structural elements, then putting the results into the larger context that the study has established at the beginning.

Step 9 - Present your findings

The finally the researcher presented the findings in the best possible way to answer the study’s questions. Relevance was explained and how the result probably plays a key role in new knowledge about the phenomenon. After presenting the findings of the study it is important to present well-articulated and quality findings that can be valid and credible.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research refer to a set of rules that regulate your research techniques and ideas. Among these guiding principles are voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, risk of harm, and results communication. Scientists and researchers are always obliged to adhere to specific ethical norms when collecting data from human subjects. These elements preserve scientific integrity, bolster the study's validity, and protect the rights of research participants.

This study was exempted from the ethics review because it is text-based study with low/non-ethical issues and because there is no possibility of harm arising from the conduct of the research. Additionally, data is collected from a public domain.

Since ethical considerations reflect the calibre and integrity of the findings, they are a crucial component of research (Ritchie *et al.*, 2013). There were no human participants in this study. Data, which will be discussed in the next chapter, is generated from the selected online news sites. Therefore, this study was granted ethical exemption

Nonetheless, the study continued to take validity and reliability into account. The values of morality, sincerity, results, data, and caution were followed throughout this process to reduce the possibility of errors. Since content analysis and CDA entails “replicable and valid methods for making inferences from observed communications to their context,” its application guarantees the validity of the interpretation (Krippendorff, 1980:69).

Ideas that come from other sources are properly attributed with a thorough reference list and in-text citations. There have never been straight quotes taken from someone else’s writing without the use of quotation marks, in-text citations, or references. References and in-text citations are provided for ideas that have been paraphrased from other people’s writings.

Validity and Reliability

Although content analysis can certainly be utilized as a research tool on its own, it was employed in this work as a companion research instrument to minimize biases and increase the validity of the results (Ritchie *et al.*, 2005). When handled carefully, reliability and validity criteria can assist distinguish between high-quality and low-quality research. Validity and reliability of qualitative investigations are significant parts of study quality (Thakur & Chetty, 2020). Additionally, it gives readers confidence in the validity of the study findings. Since the subjectivity of the researcher can have a significant impact on how the data are interpreted, this component becomes especially crucial for case studies including primary data analysis (Thakur & Chetty, 2020).

In addition to being equally significant to quantitative data, qualitative data can also support key study points. However, the question of its accuracy is crucial because it is not quantifiable. The sufficiency of all study resources, instruments, methods, and procedures—including data collecting and validation—is referred to as validity (Patton, 2002). Validity also considers the reliability of the study's methodology, sample plans, data processing methods, and findings (Patton, 2002). A major aspect to ensure is whether the research philosophy is consistent with the research. Maintaining research legitimacy requires an understanding of the underlying needs of research, guidelines for overarching processes, and social rules of ethical research. The researcher made sure the ethics exemption is respected and used as a guide not to distort and falsify data.

Quantitative research includes a measure of reliability, requiring researchers to demonstrate that processes and results have reproducible results. On the one hand, credibility in qualitative research is itself epistemologically counterintuitive and encompasses very different paradigms that are very difficult to define (Russell, 2014). Consistency must therefore be ensured to maintain the credibility of this research. The researcher utilised techniques such as constant testing and comparison of data, and use of tables to record data as to validate the data and as well as to organise the data formally and establish its legitimacy.

In order to carry out effective reliability and validity assessments, the researcher carefully reviewed the literature to determine which procedures were effective and which approaches were not relevant and would have jeopardized the validity and reliability of the research. The researcher carried out two procedures to establish reliability. In the first, the data were entered into a table to give an overview of the data gathering procedure and an updated assessment of the findings as they became available. Utilizing a table to record data allowed the researcher to promptly analyse the findings in light of each news story's record and recognize the research's advancement.

Triangulating the data allowed for the assessment of reliability as well. Systematic triangulation, data triangulation, researcher triangulation, and theoretical triangulation are some examples of data triangulation models. In order to bolster the conclusions drawn from the data gathering and

analysis procedure, we employed theoretical triangulation in this study to analyse previous research in the same area and offer it as a literature review. Furthermore, reliability metrics related to data triangulation offered a thorough comprehension of the research goals and added legitimacy to the study.

Limitations

The study focused on *IOL*, *News24* and *Timeslive* hence ignoring other online publications that contributes to news production in South Africa. The study focused on online publications ignoring the print press which still has influence and power in creating political and societal discussions. The timeframe was 2019 to 2020 which may limit and fail to analyse other previous or after years of Afrophobic violence like 2008, 2015 and 2018 and so forth.

The study excluded other migrants in South Africa, such as those from China, Pakistan, and India, and instead concentrated on black African migrants. The study concentrated on how Afrophobia may be created by the portrayal of black African migrants in internet news, thereby excluding non-black African migrants. Other news-producing media platforms may have also been looked at to increase the scope of the study and the amount of data that was collected.

Conclusion

In this thesis, the aim was to investigate how the South African online press, is portraying the issue of black African migrants. The thesis intended to find out if online newspapers are reporting in a stereotyped manner, through investigating language practices, as well as the media discourses and phrases used in the news articles. The analysis used the method of content and CDA. Through these methods, this thesis investigated a total number of 66 news articles. Theories of representation and post-colonialism theory represented the basis of this thesis and have guided the analysis.

This chapter outlined the study's methodology and provided an explanation of the qualitative investigation that used content analysis and CDA with specially chosen newspaper stories from *IOL*, *News24*, and *TimesLive* to collect data on how Black African migrants are portrayed. The chapter included the procedures for obtaining and evaluating data in addition to outlining the

study's constraints. It also discusses the study's validity and reliability as well as the size of the data sample. Data gathered via content analysis will be presented in the upcoming chapter. The next chapter provides an overview of the categories and topics that emerge from the data.

Chapter 5: Data Presentation

Introduction

This study centers on the representation of black African migrants in the digital news sites and how the language used by these three news sites may construct Afrophobia. The previous chapter outlines the research methodology used to gather data; hence this chapter deals with data presentation.

This chapter presents the data from the content analysis to reveal patterns in the content of reporting of black African migrants in *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL*. More specifically, it codes the 66 online news reports from these sites. The data set consists of 22 hard news articles from each news site (*TimesLive*, *News24* and *IOL*).

This study utilises inductive coding meaning that codes or categories were generated from the data itself, where the researcher looks for themes, patterns, and variations among the codes. Inductive coding is also known as a bottom-up strategy in which the researcher begins with nothing and constructs the code as the researcher studies the dataset (Kaluza, 2023). The inductive method, which is the characteristic of qualitative data analysis, entails asking questions about the extensive data gathered from various sources about a phenomenon (Ravindran, 2019).

Blunt Search Collection

Table 5.1 below shows the first iteration of collecting the data, demonstrating the blunt search that resulted in the collection of 66 articles. The search words entered into *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL* websites were: are 1) Immigration, 2) Foreigners, 3) Immigrants, 4) Migrants, 5) Refugees, 6) Asylum seekers and 7) Illegal foreigner, 8) Undocumented immigrant/migrant, 9) Drug lords/dealers and 10) Criminal foreigners, 11) Spaza Shops and 12) Truck Drivers, Nigerians, Zimbabweans, Congolese, Malawians, Mozambican, Ethiopians, and Somalis. One reason these aforementioned nationalities are used is that previous scholarship found them to be amongst the most reported (Pineteh, 2017; Mawadza, 2012). However, because inductive reasoning is applied in this study, I did not want to be limited to these nationalities so as not to eliminate the possibility that other nationalities are now amongst the most reported. I, therefore,

tested this by first entering the more general search words numbers 1-12 and found that these nationalities remain the groups reported on. To facilitate the identification of applicable articles, slightly different word combinations were used, which can be seen below in the “search words” column – (for instance, Nigerian-Migrant, Foreigner-Zimbabwean). However, this table contains only 39 news articles, 13 from each news site because they represent what is found (key words) in all the sampled 66 news stories. Hence, I only chose 39 articles as they are a representation of the entire population. The remaining 27 that are not included in this table have the same keywords found in the 39 stories placed in Table 5.1 below. Table 5.1 identifies the news article as per the headline. However, the critical discourse analysis will be applied to both the headline and the content of the news story in the following chapter.

Table 5.1 General Search Collection

No.	Search words	News Source	Date:yymmdd	Headline	Length of words in paragraph	Does it relate to the theme
1	Foreigner(s)	<i>News24</i>	2019/09/16	ANC redirects xenophobia narrative as Magashule blames ‘imperialist and colonial’ forces	34 Paragraphs	YES
2	Immigrant/Migrant	<i>News24</i>	2019/09/10	Anti-immigrant attacks spur security crackdown in South Africa	13 Paragraphs	YES
3	Undocumented	<i>News24</i>	2022/11/11	Areas with undocumented foreign nationals a crime hotspot, says Cele	10 Paragraphs	YES
4	Migrants	<i>News24</i>	2019/12/10	Behind the arrests Part 2: Hundreds of migrants detained during xenophobic violence remain in legal limbo	43 Paragraphs	YES
5	Migrants	<i>News24</i>	2019/09/18	Behind the arrests: Hundreds of	47	YES

				xenophobic attack suspects in custody, but is the 'just a crime' approach working?	Paragraphs	
6	Foreigners	<i>News24</i>	2022/02/10	Xenophobia won't create jobs - but foreigners with critical skills might	13 Paragraphs	YES
7	Undocumented Immigrants	<i>News24</i>	2020/09/23	Former president Kgalema Motlanthe criticises SA's treatment of undocumented immigrants	15 Paragraphs	YES
8	Foreigner – Zimbabwe/Mozambican	<i>News24</i>	2019/09/19	German Ambassador: I'm angry about xenophobia	19 Paragraphs	YES
9	Zimbabweans	<i>News24</i>	2019/04/12	Group threatens farmer	25 Paragraphs	YES
10	Migrant-Nigerian	<i>News24</i>	2020/08/14	How fears about jobs drive anti-migrant sentiment in South Africa	17 Paragraphs	YES
11	Refugee	<i>News24</i>	2019/11/08	Landisa: I fled war-torn Burundi in 2006 to find safety in SA. And all I want to do now is leave	22 Paragraphs	YES
12	Undocumented Foreigners	<i>News24</i>	2019/09/10	Magashule: Undocumented foreigners and those who commit crime in SA 'must actually be dealt with'	10 Paragraphs	YES
13	Foreigners/Migrant	<i>News24</i>	2020/05/27	Life has become unbearable for migrants in SA amid coronavirus lockdown	58 Paragraphs	YES
14	Truck Drivers	<i>IOL</i>	2020/11/24	'100% local truck drivers, or else' warn	48 Paragraphs	YES

				marchers		
15	Truck Drivers	<i>IOL</i>	2020/11/27	80% of truck drivers are South African'	28 Paragraphs	YES
16	Undocumented Nigerians	<i>IOL</i>	2022/01/20	Cops arrest two undocumented Nigerians blamed for peddling drugs and possession of stolen vehicles	10 Paragraphs	YES
17	Nigerian	<i>IOL</i>	2020/10/21	Nigerian national gets 6-year prison term for making and selling fake tertiary certificates	15 Paragraphs	YES
18	Foreigners	<i>IOL</i>	2020/01/24	Diepsloot residents demand that foreigners 'behave or leave SA'	12 Paragraphs	YES
19	Foreigners	<i>IOL</i>	2020/10/26	EFF accuses agriculture, hospitality sectors of employing foreigners over locals	15 Paragraphs	YES
20	Ethiopian	<i>IOL</i>	2022/05/21	Ethiopian men in court after allegedly bribing guard with R100K to steal goods for them at Spar, case postponed to find an interpreter	11 Paragraphs	YES
21	Foreigners	<i>IOL</i>	2021/08/21	FAWU urges clampdown on illicit trade but condemns attacks on foreigners	6 Paragraphs	YES
22	Foreigners-Drugs	<i>IOL</i>	2020/09/04	Foreigners caught up in fight between taxi drivers and drug dealers speak	19 Paragraphs	YES
23	Congolese	<i>IOL</i>	2022/04/01	Man, posing as an importer, arrested for fraud for selling fake mineral from DRC	9 Paragraphs	YES

24	Malawians	<i>IOL</i>	2021/03/31	Night of horror for Malawians as attacks on foreigners hit Durban	27 Paragraphs	YES
25	Foreigners	<i>IOL</i>	2021/08/29	One dead in clashes between locals and foreigners in Soweto	8 Paragraphs	YES
26	Immigrants	<i>IOL</i>	2020/09/21	Undocumented immigrants pose threat to SA's national security	14 Paragraphs	YES
27	Foreigners	<i>TimesLive</i>	2020/09/30	Banning foreigners from business in Gauteng townships will be a disaster_ experts	23 Paragraphs	YES
28	Foreign Truck Drivers	<i>TimesLive</i>	2019/08/26	Broken jaw, broken nose, skin burnt off_ foreign truck drivers' nightmare in SA	18 Paragraphs	YES
29	Foreign Truck Drivers	<i>TimesLive</i>	2019/07/12	Home affairs arrests 39 foreign truck drivers in KZN operation	25 Paragraphs	YES
30	Truck Drivers	<i>TimesLive</i>	2020/11/23	MK vets and truck drivers march through Durban CBD	15 Paragraphs	YES
31	Ethiopian	<i>TimesLive</i>	2019/01/06	Where to get an authentic taste of Ethiopian culture & cuisine in Joburg	17 Paragraphs	YES
32	Undocumented Migrants	<i>TimesLive</i>	2020/05/06	Undocumented migrants escape from Lindela as guards refuse to work without protection	5 Paragraphs	YES
33	Undocumented Foreigners	<i>TimesLive</i>	2019/03/03	Undocumented foreigners in SA put a strain on social services	11 Paragraphs	YES
34	Foreigners	<i>TimesLive</i>	2022/06/16	S African minister suggests foreigners are to blame for no	10 Paragraphs	YES

				jobs		
35	Foreigners	<i>TimesLive</i>	2020/09/30	Rights watchdog slams SA for 'robbing foreigners of their lives'	44 Paragraphs	YES
36	Foreigners	<i>TimesLive</i>	2019/09/08	Police arrest KZN man for inciting attacks on foreigners via Facebook	10 Paragraphs	YES
37	Foreigners	<i>TimesLive</i>	2022/09/23	Most crime in SA is committed by South Africans, not foreigners_ Thabo Mbeki	14 Paragraphs	YES
38	Foreigners	<i>TimesLive</i>	2019/09/19	Limpopo chief 'evicts' foreigners	18 Paragraphs	YES
39	Undocumented Foreigners	<i>TimesLive</i>	2022/04/18	Five arrested in Joburg for producing fraudulent home affairs documents	9 Paragraphs	YES

Story topics across online sites that relate to black African migrants

Stories may cover more than one topic, for instance, a story may cover about violence and crime or job topics.

Most of the stories published about black African migrants in these three publications revolved around Jobs (10), crime (18), xenophobia (18) and violence (19). The other articles focused on jobs, and the illegality of black African migrants as evidenced in Table 5.2 below. The table below presents these in descending order from the topic with the highest number of articles to the lowest.

Table 5.2 Story Topics

Topic	<i>News24</i>	<i>TimesLive</i>	<i>Independent Online</i>	Total
Violence	8	3	9	20
Xenophobia	7	6	5	18
Crime	6	5	7	18
Jobs	4	4	4	12
Undocumented	4	2	3	9
Business (Add value)	2	1	1	4
Illegality	0	0	2	2

Identifying Codes and Categories

Coding is the first and most important step in sorting and organising data (Ravindran, 2019). Codes are labels assigned to phrases, expressions, behaviors, visuals, and sentences while the researcher examines the data (Ravindran, 2019). Data topics (also known as domains) are not themes in this sense; they are items mentioned in (say) an interview or newspaper story. Participants frequently contribute different and disparate replies to a topic, yet summaries of topics or domains are frequently presented as themes (Braun & Clarke, 2020).

All 66 news articles are included in this table because this study took an inductive approach that stimulates and encourages researchers to move beyond simply documenting what stories say and into interpretive conceptualisation and abstraction (Ravindran, 2019). Inductive coding allows data to determine themes. This is also known as ‘open coding.’ This is an iterative procedure that includes numerous rounds of examination and refinement. It usually takes longer, but it can be more thorough and exploratory than deductive coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, another reason for including all news articles is that they all contribute to addressing research questions and as the study wants to establish new information about the phenomenon under study, the simultaneous inductive reasoning of being led by the data applies. I do not want to miss out on anything regarding Afrophobia as all the news stories are contributing to the

discourse of Afrophobia. There is no comparative component in the content across the three sources, hence the table is led by the topic and with corresponding categories identified from across all 3 news sites.

The table includes a column to identify the categories, which are ideas that are directly expressed in the text (Ravindran, 2019), and that assist in theme development. To understand the origin of these categories an explanation column is there to provide details about the story as they are selected excerpts from the chosen news story. The explanation column supports the category column in that it also shows how categories are developed from the actual stories – categories emanate from the content found in the explanation column. The supplementary notes column is provided as well to reveal the original source and writers of the news stories. However, this study does not focus on the by-lines but the focus is on the text written and published by *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL*.

Table 5.3 Identifying Codes and Categories

No.	Article Headline from Table 5.1	Data Topic	Category	Explanation	Supplementary Notes. Writers/Reporter(s)
1	ANC redirects xenophobia narrative as Magashule blames 'imperialist and colonial' forces	Crime	Violence on criminal elements Taxi drivers accused foreign nationals of dealing in drugs.	But, he added, "whether you are a foreigner or not, if you commit a crime, the law of the country must be respected and law enforcement agencies must deal with those drug peddlers and druglords – whether they are South Africans, Zimbabweans, Nigerians or any other nationality".	Setumo Stone & Junior Khumalo From: www.news24.com .
2	Areas with undocumented foreign nationals a crime hotspot, says Cele	Crime	Around 12 undocumented foreign nationals were arrested. There are drugs there, there are illegal	We have a way of identifying people in the Republic of South Africa, if they are not in the system, whatever kind of crime	Nhlanhla Mabaso From: www.news24.com .

			people	they commit it will be difficult...so it's a hotspot not only during Christmas but all the time	
3	Undocumented foreigners and those who commit crime in SA 'must actually be dealt with	Crime	Action must be taken against undocumented foreigners and those who commit crime in South Africa must be deported.	We must deal with undocumented foreigners. They must be documented and those who continue doing acts of crime, things not meant to be done in a country they don't belong to, must actually be dealt with," said Magashule.	Tshidi Madia From: www.news24.com
4	Protesters at Nigerian embassy call for foreign nationals to 'go back home'	Crime	The group of about 50 people demanded that human trafficking and the drug trade stop in SA, which they pinned solely on Nigerian nationals	When asked why Nigerian nationals were being solely targeted in the protest, Gcshwari claimed that there was enough "evidence" and that Nigerians were "known" for trafficking and abduction	Alex Mitchley From: www.news24.com
5	Disgruntled Diepsloot residents voice their ordeal	Crime	Illegal Foreigners. undocumented foreign nationals.	Enraged resident Thando Mveli* did not hold back, laying the blame for the community's crime-ridden woes at the feet of government and illegal foreign nationals in the country.	Palesa Dlamini From: www.news24.com
6	Two nabbed with police helmets, riot shields in Hillbrow	Crime	Undocumented foreign nationals/Drug dealing	Police arrested 22 undocumented foreign nationals, two suspects for possession of and dealing in drugs.	Ntwaagae Seleka From: www.news24.com
7	Five arrested in Joburg for producing fraudulent home affairs documents	Crime	Undocumented foreigners allegedly committing fraud and corruption with home affairs	Police have arrested five suspects allegedly involved in a syndicate producing fraudulent documents in	Phathu Luvhengo From: www.timeslive.co.za

			officials	Johannesburg.	
8	Most crime in SA is committed by South Africans, not foreigners_ Thabo Mbeki	Crime	SA must not buy into the notion that foreigners are criminals. Suspected criminals should be arrested regardless of their nationality.	Yes, there are foreigners who commit crimes. You should arrest them and charge them. This is what we should do and avoid labelling other people	Unathi Nkanjeni From: www.timeslive.co.za
9	Ugandan man found dead in KZN after R15,000 ransom demand paid	Crime	Kidnapped and held for a R15,000 ransom.	The family of a 43-year-old Ugandan man who was kidnapped and held for R15,000 ransom is reeling after the discovery of his remains in a sugarcane field at Camperdown in KwaZulu-Natal.	Nonkululeko Njilo From: www.timeslive.co.za
10	Alleged drug smugglers bust with R6.9m worth of heroin in KZN	Crime	Mozambique The suspects, who are foreign nationals.	Police received intelligence regarding the suspects who were transporting drugs from Mozambique to Empangeni.	Suthentira Govender From: www.timeslive.co.za
11	Nigerian syndicate victims lost R100m: Hawks	Crime	Foreign nationals aged between 33 to 52 were arrested in Cape Town in connection with “internet scams, money laundering and international wide-scale financial fraud”.	The suspects in this investigation are alleged to have ties to a transnational organised crime syndicate originating in Nigeria	Aron Hyman From: www.timeslive.co.za
12	Cops arrest two undocumented Nigerians blamed for peddling drugs and possession of stolen vehicles	Crime	Undocumented Nigerian nationals police blame for supplying drugs	A 40-year-old undocumented Nigerian was arrested on Thursday, January 5 while driving a Gold Nissan NP 200 with large quantities of narcotics in Standerton	Sisipho Bhuta From: www.iol.co.za
13	Undocumented foreigners arrested for allegedly creating fake	Crime	Five foreigners believed to be in South Africa illegally have been	Mokheseng said the men had official stamps and were able to create a matric	Botho Molosankwe From:

	matric, marriage and university certificates		arrested after they were allegedly found creating fake documents ranging from matric to marriage certificates.	certificate with top marks. “They were also able to give you top marks for whatever qualification from a university of your choice and print you a certificate	www.iol.co.za
14	Foreign nationals linked to romance, Bitcoin scams arrested in Pretoria	Crime	The net is closing in on 419 scammers, this is amid two foreign nationals (Nigerians) nabbed by Interpol and Hawks.	The two foreign nationals are alleged to be part of a cult known as the Air Lords who are said to be rivals of the Black Axe movement. The suspects will be charged, detained and extradited by Interpol,	Ntombi Nkosi From: www.iol.co.za
15	Nigerian national gets 6-year prison term for making and selling fake tertiary certificates	Crime	A Nigerian national, who owned a salon and an internet cafe, has been handed a six-year jail sentence for making false tertiary qualification certificates and selling them	Edmond Okechuku, 45, appeared in the Piet Retief Magistrate’s Court on Monday where he was sentenced for fraud and forgery. Captain Dineo Sekgotodi of the Hawks in Mpumalanga said Okechuku was arrested last October during an intelligence driven operation put in place to intercept his criminal activities	Botho Molosankwe From: www.iol.co.za
16	Man, posing as an importer, arrested for fraud for selling fake mineral from DRC	Crime	A Congolese national, has been arrested after he allegedly posed as an importer of a valuable mineral from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and sold approximately 20kg of it to a client	Police spokesperson Robert Netshiunda confirmed that the Mountain Rise have arrested a 43-year-old man in connection with a case of fraud.	Mercury Reporter From: www.iol.co.za

			in Pietermaritzburg		
17	Illegal refinery with R3m gold-bearing material raided in Westonaria	Crime	Limpopo police arrested three foreign nationals allegedly involved in illegal mining	The suspects, two Mozambicans aged 31 and 45 and a 25-year-old Zimbabwean national, are facing charges of illegal mining, possession of explosives and contravention of the Immigration Act.	Brenda Masilela From: www.iol.co.za
18	Ethiopian men in court after allegedly bribing guard with R100K to steal goods for them at Spar, case postponed to find an interpreter	Crime	Two Ethiopian suspects appeared at the Secunda Magistrate's Court on Friday for allegedly bribing a security guard who works at Spar with R100 000, in exchange for him stealing goods worth R250 000 at the supermarket	Ayela Carbo, 47, and Temsngo Gabor, 42, are said to have approached the guard on April 13 and allegedly asked him to steal from the storeroom and deliver the goods to their shops	Brenda Masilela From: www.iol.co.za
19	Group threatens farmer	Violence	This follows protests allegedly sparked by the fact that the farms employ six Zimbabweans on their workforce	The "trouble-causers" have also been ordered not to burn tyres, logs, trees, plantations, building structures or any substance on the farms.	Sharika Regchand From: www.news24.com .
20	Violence against foreigners linked to South Africa's failure to address urban legacy of apartheid	Violence	Since the beginning of September, at least 12 people have died as armed groups raided foreign-owned businesses in parts of Johannesburg and Cape Town.	While foreigners are the primary targets, South Africans have not been spared. World-renowned musician Yvonne Chaka Chaka tweeted that her daughter's shop had also been damaged in the melee	Nanjala Nyabola From: www.news24.com
21	Pietermaritzburg magistrate slams attack on Malawian	Violence	Attacks on foreign nationals can't be condoned, a Pietermaritzburg magistrate said on Tuesday when he denied bail to a man	Khumalo said that the offences the man and woman committed are very serious and attacking foreign nationals is prevalent.	Sharika Regchand From: www.news24.com

			who assaulted and robbed a Malawian man.		
22	Police on high alert as 'deadline' looms for foreign shop owners to close unlicensed shops in Durban	Violence	Police are on high alert in townships north of Durban, as the "deadline" for foreign shop owners to shut down their unlicensed businesses looms	Social media posts, claiming that foreign nationals were behind the abductions of young children, appeared to have spurred on the locals to attack foreigners.	Mxolisi Mngadi From: www.news24.com
23	We don't sleep here at night' - Mozambican nationals about attacks in Tembisa	Violence	Fear has tightened its grip on Vusimuzi informal settlement in Tembisa, as attacks on foreign nationals continue.	According to them, the informal settlement was peaceful during the day but changed at dusk as mobs ransacked shops and damaged properties. Many foreign nationals have since fled, leaving their wares behind to be looted.	Ntwaagae Seleka From: www.news24.com
24	Xenophobic attacks: 'I go to Malawi with a heavy heart'	Violence	From Monday, March 25, a barrage of attacks on Malawians left 249 displaced, living at a transit camp adjacent to the Sherwood Community Hall	Following the rogue act, violence erupted in the community, with Malawians singled out and ousted from their homes. Locals lashed out at many of their innocent African neighbours saying they were responsible for job losses and criminality in the area	Kaveel Singh From: www.news24.com
25	Behind the arrests Part 2: Hundreds of migrants detained during xenophobic violence remain in legal limbo	Violence	The violence has abated, for now, and many traders who hail from outside South Africa have reopened their businesses	But hundreds of migrants remain trapped in the legal system - swept up during the mass arrests that followed violent looting, despite being victims of the violence.	From: www.news24.com
26	Broken jaw, broken nose, skin	Violence	South African authorities should	One of them, who had a pistol in his hand,	<i>TimesLive</i> reporter

	burnt off: foreign truck drivers' nightmare in SA		urgently intervene to stop the unlawful, unprovoked, and violent attacks and harassment of foreign truck drivers and bring the perpetrators to justice	ordered me to tip all the coal in my truck on to the road and to leave the truck and go back to Zimbabwe. I tipped over the coal and ran away	From: www.timeslive.co.za
27	Immigrant shop owners in Durban fear for their lives after attacks	Violence	MK Vets are accusing immigrants of taking jobs from South Africans and selling drugs.	Zibuse Cele, leader of the protest group, said the protesters wanted immigrants to go back to where they came from so that there could be job opportunities for local youths.	Nokulunga Majola From: www.timeslive.co.za
28	Police arrest KZN man for inciting attacks on foreigners via Facebook	Violence	A 27-year-old man has been arrested by KwaZulu-Natal police for allegedly inciting attacks on foreign nationals - even identifying them by name - in Underberg	The man, who lives on a farm in the southern Drakensberg, is alleged to have written a post on Facebook inciting the Underberg community to attack all foreign nationals and their businesses in the area	TimesLive reporter From: www.timeslive.co.za
29	Rights watchdog slams SA for 'robbing foreigners of their lives'	Violence	It reveals that the number of foreigners killed in a wave of deadly violence last year was under recorded, with attacks also occurring in schools.	Migrants are not responsible for service delivery issues. Government must stop brainwashing citizens to think migrants are at fault	Graeme Hosken From: www.timeslive.co.za
30	Violence follows gay asylum seeker in SA	Violence	Foreigners are always soft targets. But when you are a foreigner who is gay, you are the softest of soft targets.	They know me. I don't know how they know me, but they know me. I never stayed with them, but they have my full name, they have my picture. I don't know how this happened, but they know me," he said,	Jan Bornman and New Frame From: www.timeslive.co.za

				describing how the violence always seems to find him, no matter where he flees.	
31	Diepsloot residents demand that foreigners 'behave or leave SA'	Violence	Violence and looting of shops erupted in Diepsloot when angry commuters demanded that foreign nationals "behave or leave the country" following the murder of a police captain at the weekend	Captain Oupa Matjie was allegedly shot by a foreign national as he responded after a robbery tip-off	Yethu Dlamini From: www.iol.co.za
32	FAWU urges clampdown on illicit trade but condemns attacks on foreigners	Violence	The Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU) on Thursday condemned this week's killing of foreign traders accused of selling counterfeit and expired products but called on authorities to stage a clampdown to protect the local economy	"We call on local citizens to cease with and desist from further attacking foreign nationals because we believe that every evidence of fake and expired goods, counterfeit and smuggled products, and illegally manufactured foodstuff and other products must be reported to law enforcement agencies, consumer commission and other authorities," said the union's general secretary Katishi Masemola.	Thembelihle Mkhonza From: www.iol.co.za
33	Foreigners caught up in fight between taxi drivers and drug dealers speak	Violence	Some were in favour of taxi drivers taking the law into their own hands to deal with drug pushers and users while others felt remorseful about the outcome	I came here in 2013 after I fled Zimbabwe because of lack of jobs and poverty. Yes, I do admit that I am here illegally, but I really had no choice. "It is bad that side (Zimbabwe), especially for women. But I don't sell nyaope. I don't like	Sakhile Ndlazi From: www.iol.co.za

				nyaope and I don't want my children to do nyaope. So why are our own brothers and sisters attacking us and trying to kill us (for nyaope)?	
34	Stabbed in the back for being a foreigner	Violence	The multiple-stabbing in the back of Malawian national Edward Kanyemba on Saturday in Diepsloot, north of Joburg, was a message to the country that crime targeted specifically at foreign nationals was xenophobia.	They never stole his money nor any of his possessions he had in the bag he was carrying. The vicious stabbing was a hate crime targeted at someone who clearly did not come from South Africa	Shannon Ebrahim From: www.iol.co.za
35	Night of horror for Malawians as attacks on foreigners hit Durban	Violence	When Elias Twaibu, 30, returned home to Malawi after becoming a victim during the 2015 attacks on foreign nationals, he did not think that he would come back to South Africa, let alone suffer the same fate.	I came here because of the economic situation at home. I wanted a better life, so I travelled to Durban, but after being attacked and treated like a criminal, I thought it would be best if I went home	Kwandokuhle njoli From: www.iol.co.za
36	One dead in clashes between locals and foreigners in Soweto	Violence	One person has allegedly been shot dead in White City, Soweto during a clash between locals and foreign nationals	Gauteng SAPS spokesperson Colonel Lungelo Dlamini said he believes the altercation between the locals and foreign nations was sparked by the article that was published in The Star about foreign owned spaza shops who sell fake and expired good	Chulumanco mahamba From: www.iol.co.za
37	Peace restored after series of xenophobic attacks in Vredenburg	Violence	After a series of attacks on foreign nationals in Vredenburg in Saldanha Bay Municipality, peace	On Thursday Mayor Marius Koen said in a press release: "All foreign-owned businesses within the area of George	Mwangi Githathu From: www.iol.co.za

			is reported to have returned to the area.	Kerridge have been completely looted.” Detailing the looting Koen said: “One house shop has been burned to the ground, 15 container shops, 23 shops, and one hardware shop have all been vandalised and looted.	
38	Right2Know blames Mashaba, Ramaphosa, Zwelithini for attacks on foreigners	Violence	The Right2Know Campaign has blamed the recent attacks on foreigners squarely at the feet of government.	Foreign-owned shops were looted, car dealerships were torched and a metro police officer was injured during the chaos. The chaos spread to other parts of Joburg and throughout the province.	Botho Molosankwe From: www.iol.co.za
39	ANC redirects xenophobia narrative as Magashule blames ‘imperialist and colonial’ forces	Xenophobia	Magashule says the proliferation of drugs and the recent violence against foreign nationals could be the work of imperialists and colonialists wanting to sow rifts between SA and the rest of the continent	Instead, the party has blamed the violence on criminal elements, on the scramble for scarce economic resources and on attempts by “third forces” to destabilise the country.	Setumo Stone & Junior Khumalo From: www.news24.co.za
40	Behind the arrests: Hundreds of xenophobic attack suspects in custody, but is the 'just a crime' approach working?	Xenophobia	It is a daily record of murders, rapes, kidnappings, and more. But for this period, it was made even longer, by row upon row of the names of those rounded up during the xenophobic attacks.	These are arrests often demanded by a public desperate to see law and order restored, after the violence that claimed at least 12 lives, and shattered many more, along with the shop windows of migrants and South African citizens alike.	Sarah Evans From: www.news24.com
41	Former president Kgalema Motlanthe	Xenophobia	Former president Kgalema Motlanthe has bemoaned South	What started in the hope for a better future, these	Lizeka Tandwa From:

	criticises SA's treatment of undocumented immigrants		Africa's treatment of undocumented immigrants, saying the country largely excludes migrants from society.	treacherous journeys to build a new life are often met with racism, segregation, xenophobia, discrimination and further violence. The critical question is, 'Are we treating these migrants differently to how Uncle George was treated?'" the former president said.	www.news24.com
42	Immigrants less likely to commit crime, more likely to create jobs for South Africans, report finds	Xenophobia	Immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than South Africans, the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) has found in a report. The new report explored the claims fuelling anti-foreigner sentiment, which has seen immigrants blamed for a range of social and economic problems in South Africa and reinforces xenophobic sentiment	South African socio-economic problems are not caused by immigrants, but by poor governance and corruption. Many politicians, public officials, and other high-profile people regularly make anti-immigrant statements that fuel xenophobia. The number of migrants in South Africa is grossly exaggerated.	Nicole McCain From: www.news24.com
43	How can we celebrate Africa Day while in the shackles of Afrophobia?	Xenophobia	Groups of people with no other identification except for bibs that read "community safety" aggressively pounce on suspected foreigners, grabbing men, women, children demanding "asylum" and money with threats of arrest or even deportation.	The media and politicians continue to fuel stereotypes and incite violence and hate.	From: www.news24.com
44	Landisa: I fled war-torn Burundi	Xenophobia	On the TV you heard the citizens	The government is trying and is forcing us	News24 reporter

	in 2006 to find safety in SA. And all I want to do now is leave	bia	saying, "Why, is our government are you forcing us to live with these people? We don't want to live with these people. We are forced to live with them. We tried, but it doesn't work. These people, they need to go	to stay with South Africans but they don't want us. We are staying in the community but they don't want us.	From: www.news24.com
45	'Not in our name' - Taxi associations in motorcade through Tshwane to condemn xenophobic attacks	Xenophobia	Different taxi associations led a motorcade through Tshwane on Tuesday, as a demonstration against xenophobia and to clear their names in the violence that broke out in the capital city last month	We are saying no to xenophobia and, in the same breath, we are saying no to drugs as well, irrespective of nationality	Alex Mitchley From: www.news24.com
46	The fueling of xenophobic tensions is not helping in the fight against human trafficking	Xenophobia	Foreign nationals in South Africa are being blamed for human trafficking	What is not helping in the fueling of xenophobia/Afrophobia in the human trafficking fight is comments that come from government officials. This was evidenced in the Minister of Finance's press conference utterances earlier this year, where he was heard saying that his vision for a post-Covid-19 economy is one wherein the restaurant and hospitality industries are compelled by law to hire black South Africans and not foreign nationals.	Nkanyiso Ngqulunga From: www.news24.com

47	Telling the complex story of 'medical xenophobia' in South Africa	Xenophobia	The phrase "medical xenophobia" is often used to describe the negative attitudes and practices of South African health care professionals towards refugees and migrants. It is used whenever foreign nationals are denied access to any medical treatment or care.	Many migrants seeking care in South Africa's public health system do face challenges arising from being "foreigners". But there are other grounds beyond citizenship or legal status on which medical care might be denied. Not all cases of poor treatment are "medical xenophobia".	Kudakwashe Vanyoro From: www.news24.com
48	Legacy of apartheid a deeper reason' for xenophobic attacks, Naledi Pandor says	Xenophobia	Perceptions that black migrants take up black jobs and displace black workers have caused increased deterioration in the relationship,' the international relations minister says	Pandor told the diplomats that the legacy of apartheid, which caused economic inequality in the country, was to blame for the attacks on Africans by locals, among other explanations...	Zingisa mvumvu From: www.timeslive.co.za
49	Xenophobia turns migrants into scapegoats	Xenophobia	Foreigners in SA have been targeted by people who believe they are responsible for crime and 'steal' jobs that South Africans should have.	Now, just more than a year later, the online army of trolls that back these xenophobic messages is calling for a march on the Nigerian embassy on Wednesday September 23 2020 over "drugs and human trafficking". This comes after a march was planned on August 29 with similar intentions, though nothing came of it.	Jan bornman From: www.timeslive.co.za
50	Buthelezi begs angry crowd to calm down as he speaks against xenophobia	Xenophobia	Protesters from various hostels in eastern Johannesburg marched along Jules Street on September 8 2019. Carrying	During the gathering in Jeppestown, Buthelezi begged the crowd to calm down, saying the xenophobic attacks had already set South Africa on a path	Penwell dlamini and alon skuy From: www.timeslive.co.za

			weapons, including knobkerries, the men sang, 'foreigners must go back to where they came from'.	to isolation.	
51	Mona Monyane on facing xenophobia slurs at school	Xenophobia	I was born in Zimbabwe because my parents were activists and they were exiled. When kids at school found out, they legit called me 'lekwerekwere'	Actress Mona Monyane has opened up about xenophobic slurs hurled at her during her younger years when her schoolmates found out she was born in Zimbabwe	Chrizelda Kekana From: www.timeslive.co.za
52	Sisulu says NGOs roped in to find causes, solutions to xenophobia	Xenophobia	While it is believed that the recurring xenophobic violence in the country since 2008 results from economic hardships and competition for scarce resources like jobs and business opportunities, the government says it has yet to figure out what exactly causes it.	Sisulu told the gathering that when the recent violence erupted against Malawians in Durban, the department met with African countries diplomats. "Since 2008, we have not been able to get to the bottom of what is happening in South Africa and to stop this	Sihle Mavuso From: www.iol.co.za
53	The truth is that xenophobia is rampant in SA	Xenophobia	Loveness James, 22, and her friend Marriam Mbambichi, 25, both from Malawi, spent a night at Sydenham police station last week following a flare-up of xenophobic violence in the Durban suburb.	What happened in Durban last week to hundreds of Malawians, where three were killed and many attacked, was criminal and xenophobic. As was the stabbing on Saturday of Malawian Edward Kanyemba in Diepsloot, a township north of Johannesburg. He was stabbed multiple times simply for being a foreigner.	Shannon ebrahim From: www.iol.co.za
54	Protesters turn back patients and migrants at	Xenophobia	Doctors Without Borders (DWB) has decried an ongoing	Hostility to serving migrants in SA's health facilities has	Kgaugelo Masweneng

	Kalafong hospital		“xenophobic” protest outside Kalafong Provincial Tertiary Hospital stopping patients, especially migrants, receiving healthcare services.	been intensifying, fuelled by inflammatory and political statements from government officials, including Limpopo health MEC Dr Phophi Ramathuba, who was recently recorded berating a Zimbabwean patient in a health facility, claiming migrants are overburdening the health system, said DWB.	From: www.timeslive.co.za
55	We’re not xenophobic, says South African First president Mario Khumalo	Xenophobia	Accusing the state of rewarding illegal immigrants with jobs and business rather than deporting them, Khumalo said the ANC government has put the security of the country and its people at risk	Mass deportations because a lot of people came illegally. Home affairs are compromised. They keep selling documents.”	Mahasha Rampedi From: www.iol.co.za
56	Xenophobia inciting poster condemned	Xenophobia	Various organisations and political parties have come out against a poster that has been making the rounds on social media that encourages South Africans to kick out all foreigners on Tuesday and for there to be a mass deportation of them.	The poster calls for foreign owned shops to be closed and for there to be a fight against the “abnormal influx of illegal foreigners in our country” and that hospitals and schools were overwhelmed and townships were overpopulated.	Mphathi Nxumalo From: www.iol.co.za
57	How fears about jobs drive anti-migrant sentiment in South Africa	Jobs	About a third (30%) of the general public said that the violence was caused by foreigners stealing jobs from hardworking South Africans.	Other economic causes cited were the alleged unfair business practices of foreign-owned small businesses and that immigrants used up resources (such as	Steven Gordon From: www.news24.com

				housing).	
58	Pretoria Immigrants Deny Stealing South Africans' Jobs After Anti-immigrant Group Ransack Stalls in Marabastad	Jobs	The immigrants insist they are not taking jobs from South Africans but working hard to make a living in the business area.	They claimed that the informal traders in Marabastad were undocumented foreigners who did not pay taxes and demanded they close their stalls.	Lerato Mutsila From: www.news24.com
59	Operation Dudula brings its campaign against foreign nationals to Cape Town	Jobs	Operation Dudula made its way through the Cape Town CBD, along with associated organisations, to extend its campaign against foreign nationals.	They claim foreigners are taking jobs from South Africans and contributing to crime in the Western Cape.	Jenni Evans From: www.news24.com
60	South African minister suggests foreigners are to blame for no jobs	Jobs	The high unemployment rate in South Africa has led to locals often blaming foreigners for taking jobs 'meant' for them.	Fikile Mbalula, South Africa's transport minister, has suggested that "Pakistanis and illegal foreigners" are a contributing factor to high unemployment in the country.	Thabi Myeni From: www.timeslive.co.za
61	Maimane weighs in on immigrant job quotas: 'We can't solve our challenges without honesty	Jobs	Maimane, who weighed in on government plans to introduce a law governing job quotas for foreign nationals, said challenges could not be solved without honesty.	I think where SA has failed is it allowed dictators to balloon in its own Sadc neighbourhood. While they failed to intervene there, they ended up with a scenario where unskilled immigration is taking place in the country," said Maimane	Unathi Nkanjeni From: www.timeslive.co.za
62	80% of truck drivers are South African'	Jobs	The National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight and Logistics Industry has said by far the majority of truck drivers in SA, who fall under their jurisdiction, are	The bargaining council reacted to comments made by the All Truck Drivers Foundation (ATDF), which claimed this week that about 80% of truck drivers employed by SA companies were	Karen Singh From: www.iol.co.za

			local citizens.	foreign nationals. The ATDF has embarked on protest action, demanding foreign truck drivers vacate their jobs by December 1, or the companies employing them would be targeted.	
63	100% local truck drivers, or else' warn marchers	Jobs	FOREIGN truck drivers have been given an ultimatum to vacate their jobs at the beginning of December or face mass disruptions.	They demanded that South African trucks not be driven by foreign nationals. "The foreign registration trucks must be driven by foreign truck drivers, as happens in other countries such as Namibia.	Sakhiseni Nxumalo From: www.iol.co.za
64	Migrants add value to economy	Add Value	After the recent spate of attacks on foreign and locally-owned shops in South Africa, policymakers are now trying to regulate industries in which foreign businesses can or cannot operate.	He believes Zimbabweans run parts of the South African and British economy. Whether fact or not, this just shows the skill set and hard work ethic of Zimbabweans.	Kizito Okechukwu From: www.iol.co.za
65	Salga KZN believes immigrants contribute to local economies	Add value	It is undeniable that immigrants contribute significantly to the economy of KZN. It is crucial, therefore, to harness what is positive and form partnerships with immigrants to improve community safety, as well as that of the immigrants,	Immigrants are often, unfortunately, easy targets for internal frustrations, he said. However, migrants in South Africa make up such a small number in percentage terms, that it is challenging to blame them for social ills that have long been existing in South Africa..	Steven Makhanya From: www.iol.co.za

66	Xenophobia won't create jobs – but foreigners with critical skills might	Add Value	Excluding foreign nationals from certain jobs would amount to discrimination and clearly be unconstitutional. A foreigner with a legal right to be in the country has the same rights as any citizen.	Whatever approach is adopted, what's important to bear in mind is that job reservation will not create any new jobs but a smooth, quick process of getting people with expertise in the areas we're lacking it will.	Busi Mavuso From: www.news24.com
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Generating Themes

Table 5.4 presents themes (emanating from categories from Table 5.3 above) that describes a broader overarching idea of the phenomenon under study. Themes are usually something that connects several codes (Turner, 2022), where a code is a phrase or word which represents a single idea (Bogetz *et al.* 2017). Categories (presented in table 5.3 above) are words or phrases that describe a group of codes. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a theme is a conspicuous feature of the data that is captured in a systematic manner, irrespective of whether that theme embodies every aspect of experience. Though identifying a pattern might entail noticing frequency, it is primarily about meaning making, not underscoring quantity.

Despite the fact that categories and themes are distinct—they are used for different purposes in the research process (Morse, 2008). However, in this study a category is essentially a collection of related data, and this arrangement allows researchers to discover and characterise the category's properties (Morse, 2008). This allows the category to be defined, then compared with other categories, or, if large in scope, broken into smaller categories, and its pieces identified and described.

In contrast, a theme is a significant essence that runs across the data. The theme in research appears repeatedly, sometimes in the foreground, sometimes in the background, and sometimes in conjunction with other tunes, just like a theme in opera does (Morse, 2008). The difference between a theme and a category is that the category refers mainly to a descriptive level of content and can therefore be seen as an expression of the manifest content of the text, whilst the

theme is the expression of the latent content (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). A theme captures an important aspect of the data in relation to the research objective.

In this section, I narrow down the search to categories and themes that are generated from the data. The categories presented in Table 5.4 below have been selected on the rationale that these are the areas where there were the most prominent relations and linkages with recurring themes as witnessed on Table 5.3. In essence, I identified these by collecting themes and sub-themes together and those with the highest number of commonalities were selected.

At the point where all 66 articles were read without any new categories emerging, the list of categories was deemed to have reached saturation. The collected categories were grouped into 5 broad final categories: 1) Crime, 2) Violence, 3) Xenophobia, 4) Jobs and 5) Add value and these categories were also developed from table 5.3. Themes and sub-themes were therefore developed from the categories established from the stories. Although Afrophobia is central to this study the media rarely use this term hence xenophobia was used in searching and coding the data. The following chapter 6 will discuss and analyse the themes in terms of the concept of Afrophobia as discussed and defined in the introduction chapter 1.

In addition, this table 5.4 recorded whether each article mentioned any of the broad categories allowing all 66 articles to be divided into five different categories: those that mention crime exclusively, those that mention violence exclusively, those that mention xenophobia and those that mention neither jobs nor add value explicitly. These codes enabled analysis of whether themes varied by the focus of articles. To systematically quantify manifest content, every article was read line by line and coded to indicate whether each of the five thematic categories in the coding frame was mentioned. The coding framework recorded the category, main theme, sub theme and reference to the article which provides a snippet of the data (news story).

Table 5.4 Themes Generated from Categories

Category: Crime			
Category	Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Reference to the Articles
1. Crime	Drug dealing. Committing Crime in South Africa.	Violence. Foreign Nationals or Citizens	If you commit a crime, the law of the country must be respected and law enforcement agencies must deal with those drug peddlers and drug lords – whether they are South Africans, Zimbabweans, Nigerians or any other nationality Available From: www.news24.com
	Undocumented foreign nationals. Illegal people residing in the Building	Drug Dealing Illegality	The building is a well-known drug den. “There are drugs there, there are illegal people, the building can collapse anytime From: www.news24.com
	Undocumented foreigners. Illegal Foreigners must be dealt with	Criminal Activities	We must deal with undocumented foreigners. They must be documented and those who continue doing acts of crime, things not meant to be done in a country they don't belong to, must actually be dealt with From: www.news24.com
	Drug Dealing Human Trafficking blamed on Nigerians	Nigerian Nationals	The group of about 50 people demanded that human trafficking and the drug trade stop in SA, which they pinned solely on Nigerian nationals From: www.news24.com
	Illegal Foreigners. Undocumented foreign nationals. Violence in the community	illegal door-to-door raids	He believed the bloodshed could have been avoided had government intervened. Makete admitted that community members had been conducting illegal door-to-door raids in search of undocumented foreign nationals. From: www.new24.com
	Undocumented foreign nationals Arrest of 22 illegal	Drug dealing	Police arrested 22 undocumented foreign nationals, two suspects for possession of and dealing in drugs. Two illegal liquor outlets were closed and liquor confiscated. Three more suspects were arrested for business robbery at Joubert Park

	foreigners		From: www.news24.com
	Undocumented foreigners. Producing Fake documents	Fraud	police received information about undocumented foreigners allegedly committing fraud and corruption with home affairs officials by unlawfully producing personal documents in a flat in Marshalltown in the Johannesburg CBD From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Foreigners. Most crime is committed by South Africans not Foreigners	Not all foreigners are criminals	We need to walk away from the false notion that the bulk of crime in this country is caused by foreigners. It is not correct. The bulk of crime in this country is committed by South Africans. From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Kidnaping. Foreigner from Uganda Killed	Ransom demanded	The family of a 43-year-old Ugandan man who was kidnapped and held for R15,000 ransom is reeling after the discovery of his remains in a sugarcane field at Camperdown in KwaZulu-Natal. From: www.timeslive.co.za
	A trio of drug dealers arrested for dealing in Heroin	Foreign Nationals	A trio of alleged drug smugglers have been arrested while transporting heroin worth nearly R7m from Mozambique to Empangeni. The suspects, who are foreign nationals, were placed under arrest for being in possession of drugs From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Foreign Nationals Committing internet scams and fraud	Scam, Money Laundering	Hawks spokesperson Col Katlego Mogale said eight foreign nationals aged between 33 to 52 were arrested in Cape Town in connection with “internet scams, money laundering and international wide-scale financial fraud From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Foreign Nationals arrested in connection to Fraud and Scamming	Scam Nigerian Nationals	The net is closing in on 419 scammers, this is amid two foreign nationals (Nigerians) nabbed by Interpol and Hawks. From: www.iol.co.za
	Drug dealing by Foreigners in South Africa	Undocumented Nigerian Nationals	Two undocumented Nigerian nationals police blame for supplying drugs in Standerton and Volksrust have been arrested in an operation conducted by Standerton Crime Intelligence and Ermelo K9.

			From: www.iol.co.za
	Fraud Nigerian Foreigner producing fake certificates.	Nigerian National	Nigerian national gets 6-year prison term for making and selling fake tertiary certificates A Nigerian national, who owned a salon and an internet cafe, has been handed a six-year jail sentence for making false tertiary qualification certificates and selling them From: www.iol.co.za
	Congolese foreigner arrested for being an importer of minerals.	Congolese National	A Congolese national, has been arrested after he allegedly posed as an importer of a valuable mineral from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and sold approximately 20kg of it to a client in Pietermaritzburg From: www.iol.co.za
	Arrested Mozambican and Zimbabwean involved in Illegal mining	Illegal mining Undocumented	The suspects, two Mozambicans aged 31 and 45 and a 25-year-old Zimbabwean national, are facing charges of illegal mining, possession of explosives and contravention of the Immigration Act. From: www.iol.co.za
	Arrested Two Foreign Nationals for bribing charges	Bribery Ethiopian National	Two Ethiopian suspects appeared at the Secunda Magistrate's Court on Friday for allegedly bribing a security guard who works at Spar with R100 000, in exchange for him stealing goods worth R250 000 at the supermarket. From: www.iol.co.za
Category: Violence			
2. Violence	Zimbabweans are taking jobs. Resulting in protests and violence	Zimbabweans	This week 'troublemakers' blocked the main road to a farm in Donnybrook, disrupting farming operations and preventing workers from going to work. This follows protests allegedly sparked by the fact that the farms employ six Zimbabweans on their workforce From: www.news24.com
	Foreigner business torched and burnt	xenophobic violence	Since the beginning of September, at least 12 people have died as armed groups raided foreign-owned businesses in parts of Johannesburg and Cape Town From: www.news24.com
	Foreign National	Malawian	Attacks on foreign nationals can't be condoned, a Pietermaritzburg magistrate said on Tuesday when

	assaulted. Violence on foreigners should not be allowed	National	he denied bail to a man who assaulted and robbed a Malawian man. From: www.news24.com
	Foreign Shop owners threatened by loacts	Unlicensed business Foreigners abducting girls	Police are on high alert in townships north of Durban, as the "deadline" for foreign shop owners to shut down their unlicensed businesses looms. Social media posts, claiming that foreign nationals were behind the abductions of young children, appeared to have spurred on the locals to attack foreigners From: www.news24.com
	Foreign Nationals attacked and local property owners warned against renting to foreigners.	Foreigners must go Illegality	On Friday, all spaza shops owned by foreign nationals remained shut. Local resident Elizabeth Williams, who rented property to a foreign national to run a spaza shop, said she and other landlords in the area were given stern warnings by their neighbours not to continue renting their properties to foreigners. From: www.news24.com
	Malawians attacked and 249 left homeless	Attacked Ousted	A barrage of attacks on Malawians left 249 displaced, living at a transit camp adjacent to the Sherwood Community Hall. This after a rogue act of criminality by one Malawian allegedly against one South African. From: www.news24.com
	Migrants left in a dilemma after mass arrests	Undocumented. Migrants with no proper visas deported	But hundreds of migrants remain trapped in the legal system - swept up during the mass arrests that followed violent looting, despite being victims of the violence. Many more were arrested and deported, allegedly without due process - not because they were violent looters, but because they did not have the proper documentation. Meanwhile, many of those responsible for the violence are free to roam the streets. From: www.news24.com
	Foreign Truck drivers under attack and government should intervene	Go back to Zimbabwe	South African authorities should urgently intervene to stop the unlawful, unprovoked, and violent attacks and harassment of foreign truck drivers and bring the perpetrators to justice From: www.timeslive.co.za

	Black African migrants are accused of taking Jobs	Migrants are dealing in illegal drugs	MK Vets are accusing immigrants of taking jobs from South Africans and selling drugs From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Facebook post leads to violence against foreign nationals	The man behind the Facebook post Arrested	The man, who lives on a farm in the southern Drakensberg, is alleged to have written a post on Facebook inciting the Underberg community to attack all foreign nationals and their businesses in the area From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Foreign Teachers and pupils are attacked for being a foreigner in schools	Foreign teachers/pupils attacked. Xenophobia rising in schools.	Xenophobia is rising in schools, with foreign children and teachers violently attacked and taunted by SA children. From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Gay Foreigners still attacked and discriminated against	Attacks on LGBTQIA+ refugees is prevalent in South Africa	Despite South Africa's progressive constitution, in reality for LGBTQIA+ refugees it is as bad here as the rest of the continent. From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Foreigners accused of killing a police officer	Robbery, violence and looting	Violence and looting of shops erupted in Diepsloot when angry commuters demanded that foreign nationals “behave or leave the country” following the murder of a police captain at the weekend From: www.iol.co.za
	Foreign traders attacked and killed accused of selling fake products	Selling counterfeit and expired products	The Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU) on Thursday condemned this week's killing of foreign traders accused of selling counterfeit and expired products but called on authorities to stage a clampdown to protect the local economy. From: www.iol.co.za
	Foreign Nationals accused of selling fake and expired products	Confrontations between locals and foreigners.	Gauteng SAPS spokesperson Colonel Lungelo Dlamini said he believes the altercation between the locals and foreign nations was sparked by the article that was published in The Star about foreign owned spaza shops who sell fake and expired good From: www.iol.co.za
	Foreigners accused of Drug dealing	Taxi drivers dealing with	Some were in favour of taxi drivers taking the law into their own hands to deal with drug pushers and

	by taxi drivers	drug dealers	users while others felt remorseful about the outcome From: www.iol.co.za
	Malawian attacked for being a foreigner	attacks on foreign nationals	When Elias Twaibu, 30, returned home to Malawi after becoming a victim during the 2015 attacks on foreign nationals, he did not think that he would come back to South Africa, let alone suffer the same fate. From: www.iol.co.za
	Malawian attacked for being a foreigner	Hate Crime	The multiple-stabbing in the back of Malawian national Edward Kanyemba on Saturday in Diepsloot, north of Joburg, was a message to the country that crime targeted specifically at foreign nationals was xenophobia. From: www.iol.co.za
	Foreign National business looted and vandalised	Shops looted	On Thursday Mayor Marius Koen said in a press release: "All foreign-owned businesses within the area of George Kerridge have been completely looted." Detailing the looting Koen said: "One house shop has been burned to the ground, 15 container shops, 23 shops, and one hardware shop have all been vandalised and looted. From: www.iol.co.za
	Foreign owned business looted and incinerated	Foreign owned business targeted during the violent chaos	Foreign-owned shops were looted, car dealerships were torched and a metro police officer was injured during the chaos. The chaos spread to other parts of Joburg and throughout the province. From: www.iol.co.za
Category: Xenophobia			
3. Xenophobia	Blaming Foreign nationals for drugs is the work of imperialists to divide South Africa with the rest of the continent	Violence against foreign nationals is caused by colonialists	Magashule says the proliferation of drugs and the recent violence against foreign nationals could be the work of imperialists and colonialists wanting to sow rifts between SA and the rest of the continent From: www.news24.com

	Migrants attacked during xenophobic violence	Migrants arrested	<p>It is a daily record of murders, rapes, kidnappings, and more.</p> <p>But for this period, it was made even longer, by row upon row of the names of those rounded up during the xenophobic attacks.</p> <p>From: www.news24.com</p>
	Undocumented immigrants not given enough opportunity in South Africa	economic refugees and asylum seekers	<p>South Africa's undocumented migrants, economic refugees and asylum seekers look for hope and opportunity in South Africa. Yet they have been largely excluded from our society. There is a rush to send the oppressed back to their troubled homes, rendering them stateless beings floating between borders.</p> <p>From: www.news24.com</p>
	Hate against foreigners perpetuated by the media and politicians	Stereotype, Hate	<p>The media and politicians continue to fuel stereotypes and incite violence and hate.</p> <p>From: www.news24.com</p>
	Us vs Them. South Africans do not want to stay with foreigners	They must go back to where they come from these foreigners	<p>The government is trying and is forcing us to stay with South Africans but they don't want us. We are staying in the community but they don't want us.</p> <p>From: www.news24.com</p>
	Lawlessness. Taxi drivers refute that they are against foreigners but against drugs	Drug Dealing	<p>Taxi operators previously distanced themselves from the violence, saying that their protest was against drug dealers, after one of their drivers was shot and killed when he accosted an alleged drug dealer in August.</p> <p>From: www.news24.com</p>
	Human Trafficking. Foreign nationals must not be employed in restaurants and hospitality industries	Foreign nationals taking Jobs	<p>What is not helping in the fueling of xenophobia/Afrophobia in the human trafficking fight is comments that come from government officials.</p> <p>This was evidenced in the Minister of Finance's press conference utterances earlier this year, where he was heard saying that his vision for a post-Covid-19 economy is one wherein the restaurant and hospitality industries are compelled by law to hire black South Africans and not foreign nationals.</p>

			From: www.news24.com
	Medical Xenophobia foreigners face challenges when seeking health care	Legal status	Many migrants seeking care in South Africa's public health system do face challenges arising from being "foreigners". But there are other grounds beyond citizenship or legal status on which medical care might be denied. Not all cases of poor treatment are "medical xenophobia". From: www.news24.com
	Apartheid is to blame for tensions between foreigners and locals.	Economic inequalities causing violence against foreigners	Pandor told the diplomats that the legacy of apartheid, which caused economic inequality in the country, was to blame for the attacks on Africans by locals, among other explanations From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Foreigners are attacked because they take jobs and involve in crime.	Criminal Activities	Foreigners in SA have been targeted by people who believe they are responsible for crime and 'steal' jobs that South Africans should have. From: www.timeslive.co.za
	South Africa is being isolated because of xenophobic attacks.	Attacks against foreigners	During the gathering in Jeppestown, Buthelezi begged the crowd to calm down, saying the xenophobic attacks had already set South Africa on a path to isolation From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Kwerekwere because I was born in Zimbabwe	Foreigner for being born outside South Africa	I was born in Zimbabwe because my parents were activists and they were exiled. When kids at school found out, they legit called me 'lekwerekwere' From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Government not sure how to deal with violence against foreigners	Malawians attacked	Sisulu told the gathering that when the recent violence erupted against Malawians in Durban, the department met with African countries diplomats. "Since 2008, we have not been able to get to the bottom of what is happening in South Africa and to stop this From: www.iol.co.za
	Malawians attacked by locals	Female foreigners from Malawi	Loveness James, 22, and her friend Marriam Mbambichi, 25, both from Malawi, spent a night at Sydenham police station last week following a flare-up of xenophobic violence in the Durban

		attacked	suburb. From: www.iol.co.za
	Foreigners face fears accessing public health	Migrants. Medical Xenophobia.	If migrants are fearful for their safety when entering or leaving health facilities, and if health workers are placed under pressure to behave as immigration officers, the consequences will be felt across the population From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Illegal immigrants	Jobs	Accusing the state of rewarding illegal immigrants with jobs and business rather than deporting them, Khumalo said the ANC government has put the security of the country and its people at risk From: www.iol.co.za
	Influx of illegal foreigners populating schools and hospitals	Foreign owned shops must be closed and deportation of foreigners	The poster calls for foreign owned shops to be closed and for there to be a fight against the “abnormal influx of illegal foreigners in our country” and that hospitals and schools were overwhelmed and townships were overpopulated. From: www.iol.co.za
Category: Jobs			
4. Jobs	Foreigners are stealing from South Africans.	Foreign owned business is taking opportunities away from South Africans	About a third (30%) of the general public said that the violence was caused by foreigners stealing jobs from hardworking South Africans. From: www.news24.com
	Locals accuse foreigners of stealing employment opportunities	Immigrants believe they work hard and do not take opportunities away from Locals	The immigrants insist they are not taking jobs from South Africans but working hard to make a living in the business area. From: www.news24.com
	Foreigners are blamed for all problems in South Africa	Taking Jobs and committing crime	Carrying the banners of Operation Dudula, the All Truck Drivers Forum, which advocates for all truck drivers operating in the country to be South African, and the advocacy group, Put South Africans First, the organisations claimed South Africans were being done out of jobs, particularly in the service industries, in favour of foreign

			nationals From: www.news24.com
	High unemployment is due to illegal foreigners and Pakistanis	Illegal foreigners Pakistanis	Fikile Mbalula, South Africa's transport minister, has suggested that "Pakistanis and illegal foreigners" are a contributing factor to high unemployment in the country. From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Failure to deal with dictators around SADC contributes to illegal immigration	Unskilled immigration	I think where SA has failed is it allowed dictators to balloon in its own SADC neighbourhood. While they failed to intervene there, they ended up with a scenario where unskilled immigration is taking place in the country," said Maimane From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Locals dominate the trucking industry	Foreigners are not dominating the truck driving opportunities	The National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight and Logistics Industry has said by far the majority of truck drivers in SA, who fall under their jurisdiction, are local citizens. From: www.iol.co.za
	Foreign Truck drivers threatened to leave their jobs by December	Foreigners Locals	FOREIGN truck drivers have been given an ultimatum to vacate their jobs at the beginning of December or face mass disruptions. From: www.iol.co.za
Category: Add Value			
5. Add Value	Small Business in South Africa dominated by foreigners	Zimbabweans Hard work Skill set	He believes Zimbabweans run parts of the South African and British economy. Whether fact or not, this just shows the skill set and hard work ethic of Zimbabweans. From: www.iol.co.za
	Local people against Afrophobia violence	Immigrants are welcome but no to drugs	Different taxi associations led a motorcade through Tshwane on Tuesday, as a demonstration against xenophobia and to clear their names in the violence that broke out in the capital city last month. We are saying no to xenophobia and, in the same breath, we are saying no to drugs as well, irrespective of nationality.

			From: www.news24.com
	Discrimination of foreigners from certain jobs may be unconstitutional	Employment opportunities	Excluding foreign nationals from certain jobs would amount to discrimination and clearly be unconstitutional. A foreigner with a legal right to be in the country has the same rights as any citizen. From: www.news24.com
	Foreigners are not criminals	South Africans do commit a lot of crime	Former president Thabo Mbeki says South Africans must stop blaming foreigners for all crime. SA must not buy into the notion that foreigners are criminals From: www.timeslive.co.za
	Migrants contribute positively to the economy	Improve the relationship of migrants and local population.	It is undeniable that immigrants contribute significantly to the economy of KZN. It is crucial, therefore, to harness what is positive and form partnerships with immigrants to improve community safety, as well as that of the immigrants From: www.iol.co.za
	Migrants create job opportunities	Migrants are self employed	Migrants are less likely to be unemployed, they are more likely to create work in the informal sector. Moreover, 11% of migrants classify themselves as “employers” and 21% as “self-employed”. For non-migrants, only 5% are employers and 9% are self-employed. So rather than taking jobs, migrants are net job-creators, a trend our country desperately needs. From: www.news24.com
	Black African migrants less likely to commit crime	Migrants may create jobs	Immigrants less likely to commit crime, more likely to create jobs for South Africans. South African socio-economic problems are not caused by immigrants, but by poor governance and corruption. From: www.news24.com
	Migrants create jobs. Migrants do not place a burden on government services	Migrants population is exaggerated	The ISS report found that the immigrant population is much smaller than commonly believed and does not place a burden on government services such as healthcare and education. In addition, the report found that instead of taking jobs from South Africans, as is widely believed, immigrants are more

			likely to create jobs From: www.news24.com
	Treating migrants unfairly	Migrants being excluded from the society	Former president Kgalema Motlanthe criticises SA's treatment of undocumented immigrants South Africa's undocumented migrants, economic refugees and asylum seekers look for hope and opportunity in South Africa. Yet they have been largely excluded from our society. There is a rush to send the oppressed back to their troubled homes, rendering them stateless beings floating between borders. From: www.News24.com
	Undocumented migrants do get health services.	Black African migrants have access to HIV treatment.	In spite of these challenges, frontline health care providers were doing their best to provide health services to black African migrants. They bypassed institutional and policy-related barriers to registering and treating undocumented migrants, non-native speaking migrants and migrants without referral letters. Frontline health care workers provided services, including HIV treatment, to black African migrants who are often at the receiving end of xenophobic sentiment and violence. From: www.news24.com

Conclusion

This chapter presents a rigorous content analysis approach in organising the data under study and initiating the analysis to answer the research questions. The chapter is structured according to four tables. Each table presents the different stages of the content analysis process from search words to theme development. Table 5.1 is based on the general blunt search of data via the three digital news sites. Table 5.2 story topics are generated from the blunt search and this table presents story topics that relate to black African migrants in South Africa. Table 5.3 presents categories that emanate from the data set and finally Table 5.4 is organised to show themes that are generated from categories on the previous Table 5.3. The discursive analyses of these main themes are presented in the following Data Analysis chapter (Chapter Six).

Chapter 6: Analytical Discussion

Introduction

An interaction between representations in traditional and online media is progressively influencing how people perceive social reality. The public's image of migrants and refugees, as well as immigration policies, is influenced by media representations (Smets & Bozdag, 2018). Therefore, one of the most important topics in media and communication studies has undoubtedly been how migrants and other minorities are portrayed in various media (Smets & Bozdag, 2018). Thus, this study critically analyses how *News24*, *Timeslive* and *IOL* report on black African migrants residing in South Africa.

A sizable component of the media representations research has been on African migrants in South Africa (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Jani, 2018; Dube, 2018; Pineteh, 2017). The vast amount of academic research that has already been done on how migrants are portrayed in the media suggests that there are well-established framing patterns and a systematic bias in how migrants and refugees are portrayed in various contexts (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Kariithi *et al*, 2018).

Studies on how migrants and refugees are represented in the media across different countries like United States, South Africa and United Kingdom reveal that, despite contextual variations, they are frequently denied the right to speak for themselves and are instead portrayed by others, most frequently as 'threats' to cultural values, the economy, and security or as 'victims' (Tshishonga, 2015; Koenane & Maphunye, 2015). *TimesLive*, *News24* and *IOL* were chosen because in 2022 Oxford University's Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism¹⁷ ranked *News24* as the most trusted source of news in South Africa, *TimesLive* and *IOL* were in top 10 of the trusted source of news. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight how black African migrants have been

¹⁷ The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism is a UK-based research centre and think tank founded in 2006, which operates Thomson Reuters Journalism Fellowship Programme, also known as the Reuters Fellowship. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/about-reuters-institute>. [Accessed 15 August 2023]

portrayed in online news stories produced by three biggest online media organisations in South Africa.

This chapter presents the analysis of findings to reveal if and how the patterns of representation of black African migrants in South Africa construct Afrophobia. In examining how Afrophobia may or may not be constructed in the reporting, the chapter will; analyse the discourses used by *Independent Online*, *Timeslive* and *News24* to report on black African migrants, and the power relations that can be identified between South Africans and black African migrants within these discourses, which includes the identification of both overt and covert messaging. A critical discourse analysis is conducted that is influenced by the study's guiding theories, including representation theory (Hall 1997; 2013), othering theory (Hall 2013), stereotype theory (Hall 2013), and post-colonial theory (Said, 1978 and 1993; Spivak, 1998 and Fanon 1967). Critical discourse analysis is used to analyse the story, the main protagonist, and the information being reported. The analysis explores geographical origin of the stories, most frequent terms, the main themes identified in the previous data presentation chapter, language (including metaphors), the description of black Africa migrants in the news stories as well as description of action.

The headline, content of the news story, and subject positions are all taken into consideration when analysing the news articles that were chosen for this study. Stated otherwise, the categories or sorts of individuals and activities, as well as the ways in which they are characterised, in addition to discursive strategies. It's critical to recognise the "action" of words in discursive analysis, as well as the words that are employed to characterise the acts or activities that they imply have been "done." The use of expressive, colourful, or detailed language can be a sign of a well-developed argument, or an emotional appeal. The examination will also take into account power dynamics and ideological inclinations, especially as they relate to how the reporting exposes the person in charge and degrees of influence. Discourses are embedded in institutions that can reveal these relations (for example, medical, legal, or social justice discourses) and so these links will also be identified.

Geographical origins of stories

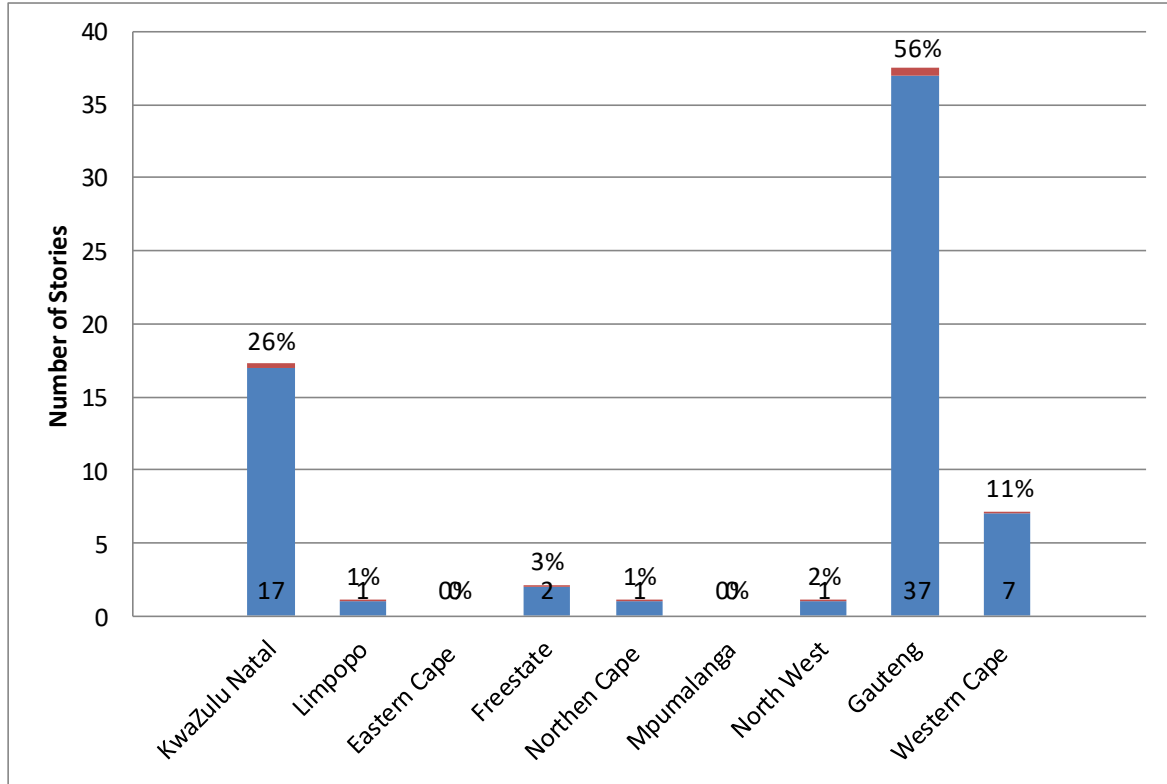
The geographical origin is an important part of CDA. In step 1 of CDA (as explained in Chapter 4) the researcher should note the language, country, and location of the stories as well as who wrote it (and when), who published it (and when), and the author's and publisher's names. Some of this information is provided in the data presentation chapter 5.

Although not definitive given that they are online stories, the geographic sources of the stories provide a hint as to whether there is a greater online media bias or where the phenomenon is more prevalent (Gomo, 2010). However, this in combination with other elements above might assist to explain some of the results. At a national level, black African migrant stories accounted for 56% with Gauteng (this includes Pretoria and Johannesburg) and KwaZulu Natal leading at 26% respectively. These percentages are based on events (stories are based on what happened in communities that falls under these provinces) that took place in these two provinces. This could be attributed to a number of reasons such as high number of black African migrants in these provinces and also that these provinces host capital cities where most of the media are located. Western Cape accounted for 11%, Eastern Cape 0%, Free State 3%.

Limpopo 1% and Mpumalanga 0%, given that these provinces are the main entrance points for black African migrants, the coverage of Limpopo at 1% and Mpumalanga at 0% provinces along the borders of Zimbabwe and Mozambique offers an interesting pattern. There was a huge migration of economic refugees from Zimbabwe, Malawi and Congo during this period (2020-2022) (World Migration Report 2020¹⁸) but they were more stories coming from Gauteng and national media. This pattern can indicate a concentration of media in the nation's capitals or a disregard for immigration issues in these provinces. As shown below on figure 6.1.

¹⁸ This volume builds on the previous report, the 2018 edition, by providing updated migration statistics at the global and regional levels as well as descriptive analysis of complex migration issues. Published by International Organization of Migration.

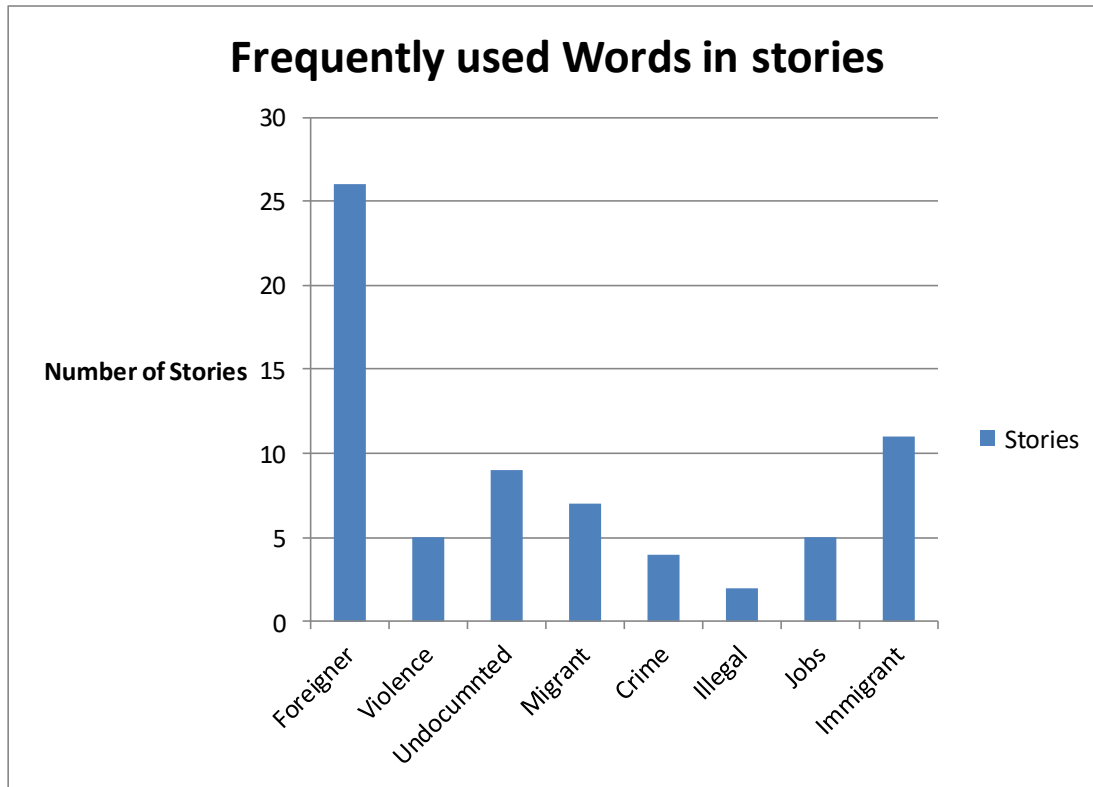
Figure 6.1 Geographical distribution of origin of stories



Most Frequent Terms

While this study undertakes a qualitative analysis of the finding, it is revealing to present the terms used most frequently in *IOL*, *News24* and *TimesLive*, as a background to the qualitative discourse analysis presented below. They include: foreigner, violence, undocumented, migrant, crime, illegal, jobs and immigrant. The following graph highlights the most common words/phrase found in stories.

Fig 6.2 Frequently used words describing black African migrants.



The word “foreigner” was found in 26 articles, including headlines and stories. Non-South Africans (whether they may have residency or refugee status) are still largely described as foreigners. “Foreigner” is mostly used in the South African online media to refer to non-white migrants in general and with negative connotations often associating with negative events and behaviour, as if they were all part of the same social category of non-South Africans. The term “immigrant” was found in 11 stories and arguably denotes neutrality (Kwan, 2022), but carries negativity in the South African context as it is mostly aligned with illegality of black African migrants (Kariithi *et al*, 2017) (to be discussed later in this chapter).

“Undocumented” was the third most used word in these articles as it was found in 9 articles. The word was used whenever the online press described black African migrants without proper documentation (work permit, refugee status or visas) to be in South Africa. The word is usually associated with negativity such as criminality, theft, and other social ills and problems which

may influence hostile attitude towards black African migrants (Pineteh, 2017). “Migrant” was found in 5 stories. The word was mostly used when describing the experiences of black African foreigners in South Africa. The researcher noted that the word migrant is sometimes used interchangeably with the word immigrant. News stories do not acknowledge the difference as defined by Amnesty International (2023: 1) “migrants to be people staying outside their country of origin, who are not asylum seekers or refugees. Some migrants leave their country because they want to work, study or join family, for example”. Similarly Gogol (2024:1) explains that “[migrants move willingly for reasons like employment or education and may return home and Immigrants move with the intention of permanent settlement, undergoing a legal process for visas or green cards”.

“Job(s)” was most frequently referred to when reporting described black African migrants as people who take employment opportunities from the locals. This is a theme that is common in the representation of black African migrants in the media (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023; Kariithi *et al*, 2017). For instance, Mgogo and Osunkunle (2023) noted that university students felt African students end up staying for long and getting academic jobs which they are supposed to get and this may lead to Afrophobic violence.

“Violence” is a word that is found in stories reporting about black African migrants either as victims or perpetrators of violence. African immigrants are not the only ones afflicted by xenophobic practices; this situation is widespread. The xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals are peculiar to South Africa in terms of their ferocity and violence (Rugunanan & Xulu-Gama, 2022). According to Chaskalson (2017), xenophobic attacks frequently target foreign small business owners, including those of Spaza Shops.

In South Africa foreigners are associated with “crime”. Frequently, while covering crime and violence, the media print in particular has classified immigrant nationals based on broad prejudices. For example, migrants from Nigeria have frequently been portrayed as drug dealers and smugglers, Zimbabweans as mostly undocumented immigrants, and Somalis and Ethiopians as vendors of expired goods (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023).

Moreover, besides being associated with crime black African migrants are labelled as “illegal” migrants who are in South Africa without proper permits and visas. Regardless of their legal status, they are typically perceived as ‘illegal,’ which suggests that they lack proper documents (Danso & McDonald, 2001). Senior government ministers and officials have accused "illegal immigrants" of committing crimes or taxing the state's resources excessively (Choane *et al.*, 2011). A construction like this ignores the variety of reasons why black African migrants relocate—some are migrants, immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers, among others (Rugunanan & Xulu-Gama, 2022).

The derogatory term "alien” was only found in one story; *Alien waiter' tweet raises concerns about xenophobic violence*. ‘*A waiter serves a hamburger at a Wimpy restaurant. A patron who visited Wimpy at Clearwater Mall caused a Twitter storm when she labelled a female Zimbabwean waiter an alien* (Timeslive 13 October 2020). The term was used in the Alien Control Act during apartheid¹⁹, leading one to assume it is out-dated, but it is still found in South Africa newspaper reporting. This word arguably dehumanises black African migrants as being from another planet invading South Africa, and do not deserve sympathy but instead should be removed from society as they are not part of us. The science fiction alien associated with catastrophic terminology elicits feelings of fear and invocation of territorial defence from us to the Other.

The word *kwerekwere* word was found in one story. It is not listed in the frequently used words however, it is worth noting because it is a word popular in black South African townships and it is loosely used to refer to black African migrants that migrate from the north of Limpopo (Matsinhe, 2011); *I was born in Zimbabwe because my parents were activists and they were exiled. When kids at school found out, they legit called me 'lekwerekwere'* (TimesLive 6 July 2020). *Kwerekwere* is used to differentiate black South Africans from black African migrants as

¹⁹ Translated from the Afrikaans meaning 'apartness', apartheid was the ideology supported by the National Party (NP) government and was introduced in South Africa in 1948. Apartheid called for the separate development of the different racial groups in South Africa. Available at: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/history-apartheid-south-africa>. [Accessed 2 February 2024].

the word refer to those that speak a different language and they are dark skinned meaning they are not citizens but foreigners who speak funny language. The term *kwerekwere* is a parody of the noises allegedly made by non-citizens when speaking in their languages, many of which are more similar to indigenous South African languages than English, French, and Portuguese (Maluleke, 2016).

Aligned to the examination that newspaper reporting may construe Afrophobic sentiments, as opposed to broader xenophobic sentiments, non-black African migrant in the media fall within the category of sports, business, tourists and investors while the black African migrants are generally viewed as illegal, criminals, job seekers, drug dealers annihilating their positive contribution to the economy (Koanene & Maphunye, 2015). In the next sections this study analyse how black African migrants are reported in the online press.

Critical Discourse Analysis

The prevalence of prejudice and negative sentiments against black African migrants is influenced by the stereotypical and negative dominant news stories found online, which contributes to social exclusion and conflict in society, as discussed in Chapter Two. Victimisation, depoliticization, dehumanisation, marginalisation, homogenisation, and de-individualisation of black African migrants are the outcomes that promote exclusion (Pandir, 2020) and may lead to Afrophobia. The following section presents the critical analysis that illustrates the aforementioned. The CDA is structured according the previously identified themes.

Theme 1- Illegality and documentation of black African migrants

The idea of being illegal and undocumented has a significant role in determining how people feel towards black African migrants. It not only encourages prejudice and marginalisation of the group, but it also contributes to the dehumanisation of black African migrants (Rugunanan & Xulu-Gama, 2022). The study notes that the online media uses the terms “undocumented” and “illegal” interchangeably to refer to someone who is in South Africa without proper documentation such as work or refugee permits. For example, *IOL* 18 May 2022 published a story:

Gauteng police uncovered a refinery with gold-bearing material with an estimated value of R3 million illegally operating in Zuurbekom, Westonaria. Nkwalase added that the suspect was a foreign national without proper documentation. In another similar incident, Limpopo police arrested three foreign nationals allegedly involved in illegal mining. The suspects, two Mozambicans aged 31 and 45 and a 25-year-old Zimbabwean national, are facing charges of illegal mining, possession of explosives and contravention of the Immigration Act.

This story contributes to the narratives that not only are black African migrants in South Africa without legal documents, but what is highlighted is that they are committing crime. Inclusion of the alleged offender's nationalities serves to distance the person from South African society, reminding the reader that they are the 'Other' to South Africa. Further to this, stating these two countries signals Afrophobia; discriminating people of Africa and the African diaspora. Use of legal discourses such as "facing charges" and "contravention of the Immigrant Act" suggests punitive measures encouraging the policing of migrants.

The researcher agrees with Tshaka (2016) who argues that such portrayal is not against foreigners in South Africa but certain foreigners who are black African hence this is not xenophobia but Afrophobia. "Xenophobia is fear of the other; Afrophobia is fear of a specific other—the black other from north of the Limpopo River. If foreigners generally were the main target, those who are anti-foreigner would no doubt have sought out all foreigners and made it known that they are not welcome in this country" (Tshaka, 2016:1).

It is important to identify subject positions in critical discourse analysis as they "evolve in socio-cultural practices. We identify with them because they offer us viewpoints and classificatory schemas to think and act in concrete situations" (Törrönen, 2001:315). The following excerpt shows this:

South African First (SAF) president Mario Khumalo, whose political party is behind the #PutSouthAfricanFirst hashtag, says the government has failed to enforce the country's immigration laws, give locals access to business spaces and punish corporates which

flout labour policies. Accusing the state of rewarding illegal immigrants with jobs and business rather than deporting them, Khumalo said the “ANC government has put the security of the country and its people at risk. Close the borders, start deporting people. Mass deportations because a lot of people came illegally. Home affairs is compromised. They keep selling documents”. This came as President Cyril Ramaphosa told Parliament this week that his government would review immigration and its impact on economic activity. “We need to understand that we must respond to the frustration of our own people at the violation of immigration laws and other regulations by those companies that employ foreign nationals illegally” (IOL 30 August 2020).

Through quoting Marion Khumalo’s the reader is encouraged to take on his subject position, to the exclusion of those he is accusing of “violations”, suggesting potential bias in the reporting by only providing voice to the SADF. As explained by Michel Foucault, subject positions are partly produced by power. When we identify with and use subject positions we participate in the meaning-making on “what kinds of identity forms and world views should be considered as natural and truthful in particular situations” (Törrönen, 2001:315, see also Shapiro, 1992: 3; Fairclough, 1992: 55).

No matter what their legal status, the term “our people” distinguishes “foreign nationals” from South African citizens. Discursive techniques aim to accuse the government of “risking the security” of South Africans, where the nation's unemployment rate is attributed to foreigners. This language use affirms previous studies that foreigners steal jobs (Dube, 2019; Tshishonga, 2015). The call to “deport them” *en masse* serves to highlight the severity of the perceived problem in that many foreign nationals are here “illegally” thus suggesting otherness and that they do not belong in South Africa.

In 2009 the United Nations adopted the term “irregular migrant” instead of illegal migrant. This term is more neutral and does not carry, for instance, the stigmatisation of the term “illegal”. European parliament “Calls on the EU institutions and Member States to stop using the term

“illegal immigrants,” which has negative connotations, and instead to refer to “irregular/undocumented workers/migrants”²⁰. Describing migrants as “illegal” violates their inherent dignity and basic rights, undermining their diverse experiences as workers, families, and the elderly. Propagating dehumanising language can position people as targets of hatred and threaten their right to life.

The manipulative use of legal discourse and words such as “illegal” and “violations” is misleading because it connotes criminality. While presence in South Africa without proper documents is a civil offense, it is not a criminal one. It is legally inaccurate because it is akin to calling a criminal defendant “guilty” before a verdict is rendered and it is legally imprecise because it implies finality even though immigration status is fluid and, depending on individual circumstances, can be adjusted. Finally it is technically inaccurate because it labels the individual as opposed to the actions the person has taken and the expression ‘illegal migrant’ should never be used because a person can never be ‘illegal’, only *acts* can be [my emphasis]. Illegality as a status is only applied to migrants and used to demean them in the public eye and deny them their rights. People convicted of the most egregious crimes are often not portrayed as ‘illegal’, despite the illegality of what they have done.

Even with several major news organisations deciding to reduce or ban its use, the term “illegal immigrant/foreigner” is still the phrase newspapers most often use to describe black African migrants living in South Africa. For example *TimesLive* 12 November 2022, published a story, “*There are drugs there, there are illegal people, the building can collapse anytime*”. In the United States newspapers like *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Associated Press* have banned the use of the word “illegal immigrant” when referring to migrants without proper papers arguing that it lacks precision and broadly labels a larger group (Guskin, 2013).

²⁰ Paragraph 159, European Parliament resolution about fundamental rights in the European Union 2004-2008, 14 January 2009.

South Africa claims to be home to millions of undocumented migrants from the rest of Africa despite the absence of reliable evidence to support this claim. In contrast to ActionSA²¹ leader Marcia Barron, who tweeted, “With an estimated minimum of 15 million illegal immigrants in South Africa, according to South Africa Home affairs (probably a lot more) that makes up between 20% and 25% of our population,” former president Mbeki believed that there were 3–4 million Zimbabweans. The illegality of black African migrants has become topical in South African stories to the extent that migrants feel they are all termed undocumented as evidenced in this story “*Not much is being said about how foreigners are going to be helped. This could be due to the assumption that we are all undocumented, but that is not the case.*” (TimesLive, 20 May, 2020).

TimesLive, News24 and IOL frequently categorise both legal and illegal migrants in the same manner when reporting on them, giving the appearance that all black African migrants are undocumented, furthering the spread of prejudice:

We must deal with undocumented foreigners. They must be documented and those who continue doing acts of crime, things not meant to be done in a country they don't belong to must actually be dealt with, If government must deport people, then they must actually do so” (News 24 10 September 2020).

The use of language in this extract leads the reader to believe that all “undocumented” people are automatically involved in criminal activities. Some further examples that also allude to this automatic association include: “*Two undocumented Nigerian nationals police blame for supplying drugs in Standerton and Volksrust have been arrested in an operation conducted by Standerton Crime Intelligence and Ermelo K9*” (IOL 20 May 2020).

²¹ ActionSA is a South African political party established in 2020 by former mayor of Johannesburg, Herman Mashaba, soon after he left the Democratic Alliance. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ActionSA>. Accessed 20 Sep. 2023.

This study notes that there has been some shifts in the language applied to those at the heart of the immigration debate, as words like “undocumented” (instead of “illegal”) are more frequently used. Politicians and migrants human rights advocates are in debate over which words are better to use when describing migrants in general. With some arguing that “illegal immigrant” is correct in describing those who are in the country with no legal papers. Proponents of the term “illegal immigrant” argue that the phrase is correct and precise and better than the derogative “illegal alien”. For example, the *New York Times* Public Editor Margaret Sullivan maintains that “the term “illegal immigrant” should be used because it is clear, brief, accurate and descriptive, and it “gets its job done in two words that are easily understood.”

Proponents of the phrase “illegal immigrant” also oppose the alternative term “undocumented” because it obscures the legal reality of the issue and is misleading. In its statement justifying the use of the term illegal immigrant, for example, the *Associated Press*²² claims that terminology like undocumented and other terms like it minimise the gravity of someone's illegal presence in the country, making it seem like a matter of minor paperwork. Furthermore, the *Associate Press* asserts that the term undocumented is misleading, stating that many illegal immigrants are not undocumented at all; they may have a birth certificate and passport from their home country, as well as a South African driver's license or school ID. What they lack is the basic right to be in South Africa.

Media reporting also appears to have adopted the term “undocumented” (as is discussed above in the most frequent terms section. The following extract is an example:

Police Minister Bheki Cele says areas with undocumented foreign nationals are crime hotspots. During the raid, around 12 undocumented foreign nationals were arrested. “We have a way of identifying people in the Republic of South Africa, if they are not in

²² The Associated Press is an American not-for-profit news agency headquartered in New York City. Founded in 1846, it operates as a cooperative, unincorporated association, and produces news reports that are distributed to its members. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Associated_Press.

the system, whatever kind of crime they commit it will be difficult...so it's a hotspot not only during Christmas but all the time. News24, 12 November 2022.

Yet, meaning is created relationally and not simply based on the choice of one word over another. The discursive technique in referring the Police Minister convinces the reader as to the legitimacy and prevalence of 'the problem' by aligning the reporting with institutional policing. As discourses are embedded in institutions here we clearly see that politicians tend to have power to make statements that may not be true as they do not provide solid evidence to back their statements. "Subject positions are relational categories that obtain their situational meaning in relation to other possible subject positions and discourses. In identifying with subject positions individuals take, more or less explicitly, a stand against competing positions, which mainly happens either by strengthening one's own position or by weakening competing positions" (Törrönen, 2001: 316). In this case the undocumented foreign nationals are in a weakened position.

In this story published by *News24* on 8 April 2022:

Residents argued that ministers, MECs and law enforcement officials have failed poor communities like Diepsloot, leaving residents with no choice but to defend themselves against undocumented foreign nationals. Enraged resident Thando Mveli did not hold back, laying the blame for the community's crime-ridden woes at the feet of government and illegal foreign nationals in the country. Diepsloot was rocked by protests this week as residents demanded better policing and a greater police presence. Residents claimed undocumented foreign nationals were driving up crime.

The use of emotive words such as "crime-ridden woes" and "enraged" are deliberately selected, and arguably elicit sympathy for the local "poor communities" who are the subject in the story, and feel abandoned by the police. The claim that "undocumented" foreign nationals were responsible for one of the world's highest crime rates is not borne out by statistics. However, the media sensationalise news stories and makes exaggerations.

The labels the online press use to refer to black African migrants are not merely neutral descriptors but often implicitly come with various associations or value judgments, which can, in turn, frame and influence political, social and economic debates. For instance, undocumented foreigner carries the negative connotations of criminality and illegality.

CDA examines the specific words and phrases used to describe migrants. For example, terms like illegal immigrants or economic migrants carry negative connotations and frame migrants as lawbreakers or burdens on society. These lexical choices reflect and reinforce dominant ideologies that view migrants as threats or problems rather than individuals with rights and human dignity.

Theme 2 - Criminality of black African migrants

South Africa and other African countries may decide that different approaches to undocumented status have distinct legal ramifications, and they may use different technical names in their regulations to differentiate between the categories. What is critical is that the terminology and expressions used in public discourse, which is what the public sees, are not stigmatising, as illustrated by the following news reports in which black African migrants are portrayed as criminals or migrants participating in criminal acts. The right of black African migrants to have a place (belonging) is undermined by certain narratives of criminality with the possibility to prompt violence and discrimination against any migrants whether they are illegal or not (Pineteh 2017). Black African migrants are associated with fraud, scamming, drug dealing and producing fraudulent documents as evidenced in these stories:

Police have arrested five suspects allegedly involved in a syndicate producing fraudulent documents in Johannesburg. The group was allegedly producing false documents, including birth certificates, death certificates, university and college certificates, IDs and passports. Police spokesperson Lt-Col Mavela Masondo said police received information about undocumented foreigners allegedly committing fraud and corruption with home affairs officials by unlawfully producing personal documents in a flat in Marshalltown in the Johannesburg CBD (Timeslive 18 May 2022).

Social media has given ordinary South Africans a platform to voice their anger, most arguing that foreign nationals (mostly from West Africa) are responsible for the increase of human trafficking cases in the country. (News24 29 September 2020).

Undocumented foreigners arrested for allegedly creating fake matric, marriage and university certificates. Five foreigners believed to be in South Africa illegally have been arrested after they were allegedly found creating fake documents ranging from matric to marriage certificates. (IOL 16 October 2022).

The use of the words “allegedly” and “believed to be” may overtly appear to demonstrate caution and fairness on what is reported. But one may ask the question as to what the covert messaging is and whether the report may be fairer after the facts are proven. In the abundance of reporting that migrants are all-too-often also criminals, these reports only add to this overarching narrative.

Due to their illegal status in the nation, undocumented immigrants are by definition criminals who also commit other types of crimes. In March 2002, for instance, the ANC's former Director General Home Affairs made the astounding assertion in front of Parliament that “it is quicker to charge these criminals for their false documentation and then to deport them than to pursue the long route in respect of the other crimes that are committed” Approximately 90% of foreign individuals who are in South Africa with fraudulent documents, that is either citizenship or migration documents, are involved in other crimes as well (Crush & Williams, 2002).

Suspected members of a “transnational organised crime syndicate originating in Nigeria” arrested in SA are believed to have scammed lovelorn victims to the tune of R100m, the Hawks said on Tuesday. Eight people allegedly linked to a global criminal network were arrested in a massive operation in Cape Town on Tuesday morning. Hawks spokesperson Col Katlego Mogale said eight foreign nationals aged between 33 to 52 were arrested in Cape Town in connection with “internet scams, money laundering and international wide-scale financial fraud (Timeslive 19 October 2021).

The net is closing in on 419 scammers, this is amid two foreign nationals (Nigerians) nabbed by Interpol and Hawks. The two suspects aged 39 and 42 were arrested in an

early morning multi-disciplinary joint operation in two locations around Pretoria led by Interpol assisted by Hawks' Serious Commercial Crimes Investigation's 419 Provincial Task Team and Tactical Operations Management Section. (IOL 28 September 2022).

Nigerian national gets 6-year prison term for making and selling fake tertiary certificates. A Nigerian national, who owned a salon and an internet cafe, has been handed a six-year jail sentence for making false tertiary qualification certificates and selling them. Edmond Okechuku, 45, appeared in the Piet Retief Magistrate's Court on Monday where he was sentenced for fraud and forgery. (IOL 21 October 2022).

Once more identifying Nigeria as the origin of a crime constructs a negative, criminalised image of people from the country (see also Mawadza and Crush 2010). Black African migrants are associated with scamming and fraudulent activities (Dube, 2019). The above extracts, with words like “massive”, “global criminal network”, “international wide-scale financial fraud”, “multi-disciplinary joint operation” demonstrates that often the reported *scale* [my emphasis] of the crime (in this case fraud) may covertly function as a fear appeal by informing the public on the insidious prevalence of the crime.

It is important to keep the public informed so as to ward against becoming victims themselves, and scamming and defrauding does exist. However, it easy to forget that it exists across a wide spectrum of society and social structures, when the stereotype of the ‘scamming Nigerian’ is perpetually included in reporting (Dube, 2019). Categories (or social groups) can be defined by any number of criteria, such as race, gender, nationality, language and so forth (Arnold *et al.*, 2010). Once these social groups are formed, beliefs or perceptions usually exist about the characteristics, attributes or behaviour of members belonging to that group or category (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996; Whitley & Kite, 2006). On the other hand, stereotyping “is threatening, a site of danger, of negative feelings, of splitting, hostility and aggression towards the Other” (Hall, 1997: 238). And in this case Nigerians.

Danso and McDonald (2001) demonstrate how immigration reporting perpetuates the belief that black African migrants are primarily responsible for South Africa’s crime rate. Newspapers depict black African migrants in a particular way, tapping into our schemas and conceptual

maps, which we then use to interpret the message and produce its meaning (Dube, 2018, Hall, 2003 & Terblanche *et al*, 2019). For example, news or incorrect scoops that declare -without checking- that the perpetrator of a crime is of foreign origin or news articles indicating that foreigners are more likely to be dealing with drugs. These narratives are frequently confirmed by news stories, which is subsequently spread online, fuelling erroneous yet deeply engrained anxieties (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023).

Moreover, Zimbabweans, Congolese and Mozambicans are also involved in illegal mining.

A Congolese national, has been arrested after he allegedly posed as an importer of a valuable mineral from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and sold approximately 20kg of it to a client in Pietermaritzburg (IOL 1 May 2022).

The suspects, two Mozambicans aged 31 and 45 and a 25-year-old Zimbabwean national, are facing charges of illegal mining, possession of explosives and contravention of the Immigration Act (IOL 18 May 2022)

From being portrayed as drug dealers to being involved in illegal mining, black African migrants are in the news for all the wrong reasons. This study notes that online media facilitates the construction of ‘symbolic internal borders’ by portraying a negative image of black African migrants that is specifically linked to social ills issues, developing the idea of black African migrants as a social problem. This form of reporting arguably strengthens the “Border Spectacle”, or the practice of representing black African migrants in a way that focuses on illegality and exaggeration, and on the sense of otherness to legitimate their exclusion in positive representations and a sense of non-belonging (or being from outside the South African border).

Objective data on migration contradicts the media's portrayal of the situation. The then minister of Justice and Correctional Services Minister Michael Masutha²³ (2017: 1) notes “only 7.5% of

²³Institute of Security Studies. 2017. Statements by Gauteng’s police head promote xenophobia and could provoke violence against foreigners.[online] Available at: <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/do-foreigners-really-commit-sas-most-violent->

people in South African prisons were foreign nationals. This suggests that most people committing crimes across the country are South Africans and not foreign nationals. While there are undoubtedly foreign nationals committing crimes, there is no evidence that most of them commit crime, or that they are responsible for most crime”. Additionally, the tendency has been to leave out of the stories on migration all those who are non-African. For instance, *the suspects, two Mozambicans aged 31 and 45 and a 25-year-old Zimbabwean national, are facing charges of illegal mining*. In this story there is no report about who purchased these illegally mined minerals, the prominence is on black Mozambicans and black Zimbabwean.

Neutral terms like “refugees” or “asylum seekers” were less commonly used, which skewed the representation towards a criminal or threatening portrayal. News stories framed migration as a security issue, with migrants depicted as threats to national security, public order, and cultural identity. The analysis showed how certain newspapers linked migrants to criminal activities, often without substantial evidence, creating a narrative that associated migration with crime.

Theme 3 Black African migrants as drug dealers

Negative portrayals of immigration in the media and public discourse enhance anti-immigrant party voting likelihood as well as prejudice and mistrust against migrants. In contrast, those who are exposed to politically correct news regarding immigration are more likely to favour relaxed immigration and border security regulations (Djourelova, 2023).

Within this framework, academics have shifted from perceiving media messages as accurate representations of reality (Hall, 1997 & Terblanche *et al*, 2019) to critically analysing everything we read, see, and hear in the media. Instead, messages from the mass media are ingrained in the continuous process of creating a saturated media landscape and norms and common sense toward individuals in society, including migrants (Fursich, 2010). Besides increasing prejudice and support for anti-immigrant leaders and policies, negative portrayals of black African migrants as

[crimes#:~:text=This%20suggests%20that%20most%20people,are%20responsible%20for%20most%20crime.](#)
[Accessed 2 December 2023]

drug dealers in the online media can heighten discrimination in socio-economic transactions. For example, news narratives that most Nigerians are drug pushers are dominant (Kariithi *et al*, 2017).

Stereotypes about black African migrants and crime not only take root in public opinion and popular myth but can also be critical for public policies and shape political behaviour. Such stereotypes in South Africa include, for instance, foreigners are crooks, involved in sophisticated crime and, are fuelled by the media (Pineteh, 2017; Kariithi *et al*, 2017). Black African migrants are commonly stereotyped as more likely to become involved with crime. In “*accusing Nigerian nationals of being solely responsible for human trafficking and the drug trade in South Africa*” the media is confident that the crime in South Africa is caused by Nigerians. In the absence of statistical evidence, such media discourses reinforce Afrophobic sentiments about the black African migrants’ presence in South Africa.

A small group marched to the embassy in Pretoria accusing Nigerian nationals of being solely responsible for human trafficking and the drug trade in South Africa. When asked why Nigerian nationals were being solely targeted in the protest, Gcshwari claimed that there was enough "evidence" and that Nigerians were "known" for trafficking and abduction (News 24 25 September 2020).

The comment from the protestor reveals the power of stereotypes in that they liken what Nigerians are “known for” (in other words, stereotype), with actual hard “evidence”. According to Hall (1997), it is the connection between the signifier, the signified, and the sign. How does it communicate with us using news stories as a language, and what is the end effect? It does, however, communicate with us as the portrayal of black African migrants in news reports contributes to the creation of Afrophobia (Dube, 2018).

The drivers targeted foreign nationals after taxi driver Jabulani Baloyi was gunned down last month in Pretoria, allegedly by a drug dealer. Violent protests erupted as the taxi drivers accused foreign nationals of dealing in drugs! “whether you are a foreigner or not, if you commit a crime, the law of the country must be respected and law enforcement agencies must deal with those drug peddlers and druglords – whether they are South

Africans, Zimbabweans, Nigerians or any other nationality” (News24 16 September 2020).

The above is a rare report in that it appears to place all people, South African, Zimbabwean and Nigerians fairly, where the message is that anyone dealing in drugs are to be punished regardless of nationality or legal status. The report does not use derogatory and provocative language. When reporting on crime and violence, the story avoided categorising black African migrants based on broad prejudices.

According to Hall’s (1997) theory of representation, there is frequently an inaccurate portrayal of historical events, persons, locations, and events in media texts. Why? Since there can never be a single, authentic meaning any interpretation can always be challenged.

Individuals who enjoy status and social influence may try to impose their preferred narrative or interpretation on media texts in an effort to propagate an ideology (Hall, 1997). Examining the meanings and messages sent by the media exposes the political stances, slants, and points of view of those who produced it hence perception is reality. This term resonates true for many people who take everything they read and see at face value. In a world impacted by media, experts suggest that how people are portrayed in the media may form attitudes, frequently in negative rather than positive ways (Villafane, 2017). When non-South Africans are arrested for drugs the media emphasises that foreign nationals or undocumented foreigners are involved in drug dealing. This study found that a significant portion of news stories tied to immigration or migrants centred on some form of unlawful activity including drug dealing and illegal mining. Nigerians are specifically referred to as drug lords and dishonest businesspeople (Mawadza & Crush 2012). An example is:

Two undocumented Nigerian Nationals police blame for supplying drugs in Standerton and Volksrust have been arrested in an operation conducted by Standerton Crime Intelligence and Ermelo K. A 40-year-old undocumented Nigerian was arrested on Thursday, January 5 while driving a Gold Nissan NP 200 with large quantities of narcotics in Standerton. IOL 8 January 2022.

This study found that not only Nigerians, but Mozambicans are also stereotyped as drug dealers.

Police received intelligence regarding the suspects who were transporting drugs from Mozambique to Empangeni. An operation was put in place to act on the information. The vehicle with three occupants was spotted and it was stopped so that a search could be conducted. Upon searching the vehicle, police discovered 23 bags of heroin hidden in the [load bed] of the bakkie. Each bag weighed 2kg and the estimated street value of the recovered drugs is R6.9m. The suspects, who are foreign nationals, were placed under arrest for being in possession of drugs (Timeslive 21 November 2021)

In the current South African context, the moment one reads: “*The suspects, who are foreign nationals*” the signified is black African migrants as the suspects. Foreign nationals refer to black African migrants in South African context as supported by Mgogo and Osunkunle (2023: 4) who argue “South Africans no longer regard white people as foreigners”, thus supporting this study’s argument that Afrophobia defines the current discrimination, not Xenophobia.

There were, however, minimal instances where non-South African are framed as the subject of the story in that they are quoted, allowing ‘their side’ to be heard in the accusations of drug dealing. For example:

Foreigners caught up in fight between taxi drivers and drug dealers speak. I came here in 2013 after I fled Zimbabwe because of lack of jobs and poverty. Yes, I do admit that I am here illegally, but I really had no choice. It is bad that side (Zimbabwe), especially for women. But I don’t sell nyaope. I don’t like nyaope and I don’t want my children to do nyaope. So why are our own brothers and sisters attacking us and trying to kill us (for nyaope)? (IOL 4 September 2020).

The above story is a counter narrative because it describes the lives and viewpoints of black African migrants who have traditionally been marginalised, stereotyped, or silenced in news reports. This is a rare instance of the inclusion of the subaltern migrant voices as a counter position. Exposure to and reading of counter-narratives can promote fairness by validating the experiences and viewpoints of black African migrants. The story gives the subaltern opportunity

to speak (Spivak, 1988). In this case black African migrants can be considered the subaltern which refers to:

the group that is excluded from society's established structures for political representation and therefore denied the means by which people have a voice in their society. It literally refers to any person or group of inferior rank and station, whether because of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion. Some thinkers used it in general sense to refer to marginalized groups and the lower classes – a person rendered without agency by his or her social status (Bhagwat & Arekar, 2018: 39).

Theme 4 - Black African migrants and violence

A few preceding studies have highlighted how the South African print media's perpetuated negative stereotypes and its adoption of derogatory names – *amakwerekwere*, *amagrigamba*, aliens, illegal immigrants, to represent migrants from other African countries, are contributing factors toward on-going xenophobic violence (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2023). The extract below sums up the fear and terror that many people from the African diaspora face in South African communities:

Walking on the streets of downtown Joburg you are compelled to be alert and ready. Groups of people with no other identification except for bibs that read "community safety" aggressively pounce on suspected foreigners, grabbing men, women, children demanding "asylum" and money with threats of arrest or even deportation. If one refuses to cooperate they go as far as to lift your sleeve to check for the South African vaccination marks. No one has answers on these community security "officers" who are terrorising African migrants. Migrants are now compelled to carry around their identification documents and are harassed to produce them in a manner that perpetuates apartheid-like dompas sentiments (News24 25 May 2019).

However, there is still a gap in understanding how black African migrants are represented as *victims or perpetrators* of violence in different local communities. This section aims to contribute to addressing that gap. Violence against black African migrants in South Africa

stretches back to apartheid days (as explained in previous chapters), migrants have faced violence and looting of their business from time to time. It is against this background that this study argues that Afrophobia, not xenophobia, is prevalent in South Africa because these violence acts are particularly targeting black African migrants and rarely affects white or Chinese migrants. For instance, in his study Dube (2019) notes that Nigerians and Zimbabweans were the most disliked black African migrants in South Africa evidently contributing to the debate that Afrophobia is prevalent.

The following extracts present a sympathetic stance towards the foreign nationals who are (unfairly) and “violently attacked”. Including a story of innocent children and teachers serve as a counter narrative to much of the reporting that focuses on incidents where violence may be perceived as acceptable, if the foreign national was engaged in criminal acts.

Protesters from hostels in Johannesburg march in 2019. Carrying weapons, including knobkerries, the men sang: “Foreigners must go back to where they came from”. Xenophobia is rising in schools, with foreign children and teachers violently attacked and taunted by SA children. Researchers say a grade 10 Cape Town girl from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) narrowly survived one such attack. They say Nathalie (not her real name) was beaten so severely on August 27 2019, shortly after she was elected a class monitor, that she was hospitalised for nine days. She was severely beaten by fellow pupils who thought a non-national was undeserving of being elected to such a position. (Timeslive 30 September 2020).

Ugandan man found dead in KZN after R15,000 ransom demand paid. The family of a 43-year-old Ugandan man who was kidnapped and held for R15,000 ransom is reeling after the discovery of his remains in a sugarcane field at Camperdown in KwaZulu-Natal (Timeslive 28 August 2019).

Attacks on foreign nationals can't be condoned, a Pietermaritzburg magistrate said on Tuesday when he denied bail to a man who assaulted and robbed a Malawian man. Magistrate Nitesh Binessarie said that Thabo Mchunu (45), who has a string of previous

convictions including for robbery and theft, can be regarded as a menace to society considering his past conduct (News24 2 December 2021).

The consequences of South African's actions against the foreign nationals resulting in hospitalisation and death further serves to depict the "menacing" consequences of Afrophobic attacks in the above extracts.

However, an argument could be made that taken-for-granted and out-of-sight discursive processes depict black African migrants as othered helpless victims. At the same time, even if benevolently enacted, employing these prevalent discourses of helplessness and othering can have negative real-world consequences for the ways in which the mainstream views black African migrants, suggesting they are incapable of helping themselves, and impeding full participation in society:, thus denying them power as they are robbed of their basic necessities:

A barrage of attacks on Malawians left 249 displaced, living at a transit camp adjacent to the Sherwood Community Hall. This after a rogue act of criminality by one Malawian allegedly against one South African. Following the rogue act, violence erupted in the community, with Malawians singled out and ousted from their homes. People's belongings were taken. They were pushed out of their houses. Some were beaten. "Blankets, mattresses and money was stolen from us," Saka told News24 on Tuesday. (News 24 2 April 2029).

The inclusion of a mother's voice in the below extract serves to humanise and appeal to sympathy for the foreign nationals in the below story. The discursive technique of a pregnant mother enduring "a night of horror" appeals to the reader's emotions to identify with the fear she felt, that could be said to be a universal fear for one's family. And that she describes the event in her own words draws the reader in:

Night of horror for Malawians as attacks on foreigners hit Durban. Police moved 50 people, including babies, displaced in a xenophobic attack at Burnwood informal settlement in Durban to Sherwood Hal. At 2am they were interrupted by loud bangs on the door, which was eventually forced open. "They started shouting, and telling us to leave, they kept chanting that we must leave their country, they hit and kicked my

husband. All I could think of was my unborn baby, my water breaking and me giving birth in front of people who wanted us dead,” she said. (IOL 31 March 2021)

The deliberate use of the evocative term “hate crime” signals that the violence was uncalled for and purely based on xenophobia, but as I argue, more specifically Afrophobia as it was perpetrated against a Malawians national.

The multiple-stabbing in the back of Malawian national Edward Kanyemba on Saturday in Diepsloot, north of Joburg, was a message to the country that crime targeted specifically at foreign nationals was xenophobia. They never stole his money nor any of his possessions he had in the bag he was carrying. The vicious stabbing was a hate crime targeted at someone who clearly did not come from South Africa. (IOL 3 April 2020).

The reporter’s intentions may be honourable. Black African migrants have experienced adversity, and representing groups as traumatised victims can draw much needed attention to their plight.

While the NPA and the police strategise over the criminal cases, the hundreds of migrants who have been arrested in recent weeks face an equally uncertain fate. Lawyers said similar scenes were played out in the last two weeks, to those of the August 7 arrests. Xenophobic violence also flared up then, as an armed mob reportedly marched through the Johannesburg CBD looting shops and attacking foreigners. The police arrested scores of migrants, suspected of being in the country illegally. (News24 18 September 2019).

The following stories reveal black African foreigners being attacked by South Africans. The discourse used *News24*, *Timeslive* and *IOL* tends to highlight that whenever there is a conflict or societal problem, citizens tend to take their frustration on foreigners particularly those with spaza shops and businesses. The online press tends to use discourse that can be alarming where words are often associated with violence and war: “assaulted, violence, targeted, under attack, violent looting, damaged, torched, raided, and burned to the ground”. Additionally, their helplessness is further presented in their sense of abandonment from the South African government:

The government is trying and is forcing us to stay with South Africans but they don't want us. We are staying in the community but they don't want us. They, the politicians, are also hypocrites because when they need to win the elections, when they need to win something from the citizens, they blame us. Our shops are looted, our jobs are taken, and our husbands are being killed there on the roads (News24 8 November 2019)

Foreign-owned shops were looted, car dealerships were torched and a metro police officer was injured during the chaos. The chaos spread to other parts of Joburg and throughout the province. By Monday evening, 91 people had been arrested and many foreign-owned shops remained closed as owners were scared of being attacked. Many others stood empty after being looted and burnt (IOL 2 September 2020).

All foreign-owned businesses within the area of George Kerridge have been completely looted. One house shop has been burned to the ground, 15 container shops, 23 shops, and one hardware shop have all been vandalised and looted. Foreign nationals living in informal settlements like George Kerridge, Tsitsiratsitsi, Better Life, Smartie Town and Ongegund have received direct life threats and an instruction to leave Vredenburg within the next 24-hours. Meanwhile, in Middelpoort, Saldanha vandalism has occurred and foreign nationals been made subject to life threats. (IOL 10 July 2020).

There are nuances in the stories of violence against foreigners. In some stories it can be read that South African's violence against foreign nationals is almost condoned. While the reporting may not intentionally be condoning the violence, the attention given to embedding the narratives in the discourses of 'law and order' and 'a sense of community' may inadvertently do so. The following story demonstrates how Diepsloot residents who are angered about the murder of a policeman and who feel abandoned by the government 'take the law into their own hands'. The story includes their threats of "how crazy" they can be in "making someone pay", which could arguably spur on mob or hive mentality where individuals feel compelled to join a large group, adopting the behaviour of that group.

Violence aimed at foreign nationals erupted in Diepsloot township, Johannesburg in the wake of the murder of a police officer last Friday. The community believes foreign

nationals in the area committed the crime. Violence and looting of shops erupted in Diepsloot when angry commuters demanded that foreign nationals “behave or leave the country”. Community leader Mogomotsi Morake said they always protected foreign nationals when they committed crime from being stoned by the community, but the killing of their police captain was a “wake-up call to fight crime. They killed a police officer who was doing his job going to arrest criminals. We will show them how crazy we can be. This is our community and we will protect our servants as much as they protect us. We want these foreigners to be physically removed from our community. The government must do something or else someone will pay. (IOL 24 January 2020).

Right2Know blames Mashaba, Ramaphosa, Zwelithini for attacks on foreigners. The chaos erupted over the weekend after residents went on a rampage following a blaze at a building that claimed three lives in Jeppestown. Foreign-owned shops were looted, car dealerships were torched and a metro police officer was injured during the chaos. The chaos spread to other parts of Joburg and throughout the province. By Monday evening, 91 people had been arrested and many foreign-owned shops remained closed as owners were scared of being attacked. Many others stood empty after being looted and burnt. IOL 2 September 2019.

The use of terms like “the chaos spread” metaphorically illustrates the mob or hive mentality mentioned above, as it indicates action where more people join, gaining momentum into a powerful force.

Previous studies have emphasised that migrants are presented in a narrow range of ways, using terminology which repeats negative stereotypes presenting them as a ‘problem’ to be solved. The following stories outlines how black African migrants are presented as a problem directly or indirectly. For instance, whenever there is a report of violence black African migrants are involved. Such a representation can create tension between citizens and black African migrants. Even when migrants are the victims the online stories the emphasis is on undocumented migrants and violence. Said (1978) argues that media representations are based on bias and stereotypes and Hall (1997) believes that through the media, power relations are brought out and new

identities and representations are continuously created. For this reason, power dynamics and representation in the media are inextricably linked to one other (Hall, 1997). For example:

Hundreds of migrants remain trapped in the legal system - swept up during the mass arrests that followed violent looting, despite being victims of the violence. Many more were arrested and deported, allegedly without due process - not because they were violent looters, but because they did not have the proper documentation. Many of them were denied police bail as the authorities tried to keep migrants behind bars until the violence abated, one family who was arrested were victims of the violence - they were kidnapped and dragged along by a looting mob. They were told by the police they were arrested for their own safety, only to discover they were being charged with public violence. Meanwhile, two migrants were burned beyond recognition. (IOL 18 December 2020).

Despite being affected by the violence black African migrants still suffered in the hands of police by being arrested and deported. South African officials are quick to deport them without due process. The law is subverted by the police by denying bail to migrants “*Many of them were denied police bail*”, Everyone has a right to apply for bail under section 59 of Criminal Procedure Act. This highlights that black African migrants do not have power because no citizen would have been hold without bail. “*Hundreds of migrants remain trapped in the legal system*” This means that when something or someone is trapped, they are unable to move or get out of the circumstance or location. Trapped in this context further communicate a feeling of limitation or imprisonment in country that claims to be democratic and signatory to international law that gives rights to everyone living in it.

The online press is indeed exposing the power relations between citizens and migrants. The intolerance of those that do not have ‘proper documentation’ is alarming as the former President of South Africa Kgalema Motlanthe said “*There is a rush to send the oppressed back to their troubled homes, rendering them stateless beings floating between borders*” (News24 23 September 2020).

One person has allegedly been shot dead in White City, Soweto during a clash between locals and foreign nationals. Soweto West police spokesperson Sergeant Khalipha Mvula said he could not confirm that someone was shot after a foreign nation opened fire in self-defence when locals tried to loot his shop. the altercation between the locals and foreign nations was sparked by the article that was published in The Star about foreign owned spaza shops who sell fake and expired good. That's the whole thing that sparked this so the people are attacking these shops (IOL 29 August 2021).

The Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU) on Thursday condemned this week's killing of foreign traders accused of selling counterfeit and expired products but called on authorities to stage a clampdown to protect the local economy. FAWU's call comes after violent attacks on spaza shops in Soweto on Wednesday left three people dead. (IOL 30 August 2021).

Fear has tightened its grip on Vusimuzi informal settlement in Tembisa, as attacks on foreign nationals continue. On Friday, all spaza shops owned by foreign nationals remained shut. (News24 13 September 2020).

Police are on high alert in townships north of Durban, as the "deadline" for foreign shop owners to shut down their unlicensed businesses looms. The North Region Business Association sent a letter to foreign nationals who are among the shop owners last week, telling them to shut down their businesses in Inanda, Ntuzuma and KwaMashu by Thursday Social media posts, claiming that foreign nationals were behind the abductions of young children, appeared to have spurred on the locals to attack foreigners. (News24 16 May 2020).

Black African migrants are portrayed as people who are contributing to social ills happening in South Africa just by their mere presence and the news stories used discourses that contribute to stereotypes for example ‘*unlicensed business*’ the story did not tell the readers if indeed the business are not registered or the news story is simply othering the migrant. The story did not research to find out if foreigners are abducting young children. Such publications prove what Hall (1997) noted; that there is no reality in the media rather everything we read is manufactured

to suit a certain ideology or to expose power relations between the majority and the minorities. Post-colonialist theorists such as Shohat and Stam (1994) contend that the European media portrayed black people in a negative light and the same is happening now to black African migrants but the difference is not a broader prejudice, but the bias is black on black (Dube, 2018).

A 27-year-old man has been arrested by KwaZulu-Natal police for allegedly inciting attacks on foreign nationals - even identifying them by name - in Underberg. The man, who lives on a farm in the southern Drakensberg, is alleged to have written a post on Facebook inciting the Underberg community to attack all foreign nationals and their businesses in the area. (Timeslive 8 September 2020).

In the above story the report is fair in the sense that it is exposing that no one is above the law. Even black African migrants are protected by the law in South Africa. However, the story may expose how Afrophobic sentiments are popular within South Africans. As noted by Mgogo and Osunkunle (2023), the media publishes stories that may incite Afrophobic violence. Words such as “attack all foreigners” may have deeper negative consequences. The story is saying attack all foreigners, Tshishonga (2015: 165) argues that “xenophobia in South Africa is not generally directed at all people perceived to be foreign nationals but it is Africanised as Afrophobia with black African foreigners being the exclusive target for xenophobic attacks and violence”.

Further the absence of black African migrant voices as sources in these stories can deprive the audience of a complex or nuanced understanding of migration issues. Politicians that are anti-immigration are mainly used as sources in news covering black African migrants. It can also have negative consequences for migrant integration and for the personal well-being and security of migrants and their sense of belonging. This, in turn, can undermine the extent to which migrants feel that they belong in South African society, even when they have been living in South Africa for a long time. Black African migrant voices are less likely to be present in stories which tend towards more negative views of migration and migrants as people taking away jobs and economic opportunities from local people (Pineteh, 2017).

CDA explores how language in news constructs an ‘us versus them’ narrative, where migrants are depicted as outsiders who are fundamentally different from and often in conflict with the host society. This othering can lead to exclusionary attitudes and policies

Theme 5 - Black African migrants as Job takers

Black African migrants compete for already scarce jobs and funds, increasing poverty, unemployment and insecurity, putting South African’s employment at risk. Consequently, “instead of blaming their government for not delivering on the promises of 1994, some South Africans blame foreign black African immigrants for taking their jobs, resources, women, space and even their houses” (Ukwandu 2017: 50). The representation of African migrants is not multi-faceted and contextualized to present balanced information or highlight the positive contributions (Kariithi *et al.*, 2017). Issues such as lack of proper qualifications and skills amongst the locals are not pointed out in the press as the effort is entirely on how migrants steal jobs (Pineteh, 2017). Thus, essentially, a multiplicity of factors intersect in contributing to Afrophobia in South Africa as evident in the following stories:

About a third (30%) of the general public said that the violence was caused by foreigners stealing jobs from hardworking South Africans (News24 14 August 2020).

The word “stealing” that is associated with the “foreigners” is set up in juxtaposition with the “hardworking South Africans” thus favouring the South African plight. This sort of messaging may (inadvertently) convince people the “spring cleaning” and “sanitising” (Timeslive 23 September 2020) undertaken by the perpetrators of this violence is fair, thus further fuelling Afrophobic sentiments. The act of giving a house a thorough cleaning in the spring is known as spring cleaning. Such texts may be interpreted that South Africa has to clean the dirt (black African migrants). They are people not needed in the country.

The below excerpt appears neutral in its reporting that protestors are angry and targeting foreign informal traders. But if one compares the way in which ‘hard work’ is expressed between this excerpt and the excerpt above, a more covert message may be read. South Africans are *defined* as hardworking in the previous excerpt, yet the one directly above is not so affirmative of this as a

characteristic of foreign nationals, but rather *they themselves* “insist” they are “working hard” [my emphasis].

Foreign informal traders are being targeted by a group of protesters accusing them of stealing jobs from South Africans. The immigrants insist they are not taking jobs from South Africans but working hard to make a living in the business area. The angry crowd demanded that the hawkers return home because they were taking jobs from locals (News24 27 June 2022).

The below excerpt, however, corrects the narrative that foreigners are stealing or taking jobs from the local population by providing solid evidence that majority of truck drivers in South Africa are citizens not black African migrants.

The National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight and Logistics Industry has said by far the majority of truck drivers in SA, who fall under their jurisdiction, are local citizens. The bargaining council reacted to comments made by the All Truck Drivers Foundation (ATDF), which claimed this week that about 80% of truck drivers employed by SA companies were foreign nationals. (IOL 27 November 2020).

Including the Transport Minister’s statement that foreigners are to blame moves the accusations expressed by locals to those with power at an institutional and governmental level, thus providing credence and legitimacy to the popular claims that foreign nationals are contributing to high unemployment by taking away jobs and economic opportunities from South Africans. According to Hall (2013), there are often extreme power disparities in places where stereotypes are prevalent. Usually, power is used against the weaker or marginalised group. In this case black African migrants are powerless and they are stereotypically portrayed by the powerful in society.

Fikile Mbalula, South Africa’s Transport Minister has suggested that “Pakistanis and illegal foreigners” are a contributing factor to high unemployment in the country. South African Minister suggests foreigners are to blame for no jobs. The high unemployment rate in South Africa has led to locals often blaming foreigners for taking jobs ‘meant’ for them (Timeslive 16 June 2022).

However, what is encouraging is that the reporter for the following story appears to be aware, and makes public this misuse of power:

What is not helping in the fueling of xenophobia/Afrophobia in the human trafficking fight is comments that come from government officials. This was evidenced in the Minister of Finance's press conference utterances earlier this year, where he was heard saying that his vision for a post-Covid-19 economy is one wherein the restaurant and hospitality industries are compelled by law to hire black South Africans and not foreign nationals (News24 29 September 2020).

The trucking industry appears to be an area where the tension is significantly felt. The report below, breaks with the more popular focus of reasons for why locals are angry with the foreign nationals, and instead appears to tell the ‘other side of the story’:

A foreign truck driver in hospital after his truck was petrol bombed in Durban while he slept. Groups of people claiming to be South African truck drivers have thrown gasoline bombs at trucks and shot at, stoned, stabbed, and harassed foreign truck drivers to force them out of the trucking industry. Many foreign truck drivers have lost their jobs, despite having valid work permits, or have been unable to return to work due to injuries or damage to their trucks. The N3, the main route between Johannesburg and Durban, where protesters have burnt trucks. “One of them, who had a pistol in his hand, ordered me to tip all the coal in my truck on to the road and to leave the truck and go back to Zimbabwe. “They demanded to see my licence, shouting that all foreign drivers must fall.” More than 200 people, mostly foreign truck drivers, had been killed in such incidents the country since March 2018. (Timeslive 26 August 2019).

Including that the foreign nationals did indeed have “work permits” signals that the violence was utterly unwarranted and the ‘usual excuse’ of ‘illegality’ is not the case here. The reported action of the South African protestors upon the foreigners is shown to be severe in that “more than 200 people, mostly foreigners, had been killed in the country since 2018”. The quote by a foreign national in the story positions him as the protagonist of the story with which the reader may identify, or feel sympathy towards. If one it to consider this in the light of post-colonial theory in

this case African migrants are given the voice here, making their presence known and contributing to the discourse of migration (Ponzanesi, 2019). The inclusion of “*shouting that all foreign drivers must fall*” implies that black African migrants are an economic threat to South Africa as they are able to compete with locals. This discourse illustrates moral panic and the unwanted presence of ‘outsiders.’

The group of hostel dwellers has maintained that they want foreign nationals to leave. The government must come speak to the people and explain what it is going to do with the foreign nationals who are here illegally. The residents were angry about jobs allegedly being taken by foreign nationals, unhappy about foreigner involvement in drug dealing and that free government housing is being provided to foreigners. (Timeslive 8 September 2019).

This moral panic has surfaced in the media reports on the impact of black African migrants in South Africa, and it connects to the point above on hive mentality. The issue of housing is one that has elicited panic. The quote above shows that black African migrants are accused of getting free housing ahead of deserving legitimate and poor South Africans. The South African government is called upon to address the situation and review the housing policy which is accommodative of non-citizens while locals do not benefit. In other words, the South African government ought to put in place policies that ensure service delivery to its citizens, not ‘outsiders’, in this case the black African migrants.

Immigrant shop owners in Durban say they fear for their lives after looting and vandalising of their businesses on Monday and Tuesday. On Tuesday, protesters who said to be Umkhonto we Sizwe military veterans, known as MK Vets, with members of the People’s Revolutionary Movement, shut down businesses owned by immigrants in the Berea area, demanding that the owners go back to their countries of origin. MK Vets are accusing immigrants of taking jobs from South Africans and selling drugs. Zibuse Cele, leader of the protest group, said the protesters wanted immigrants to go back to where they came from so that there could be job opportunities for local youths. (Timeslive 4 November 2020).

The stories are portraying migrants taking away their jobs simultaneously blaming black African migrants of dealing in drugs. The moral panic pertaining to jobs is abundantly clear in the data. “*MK Vets are accusing immigrants of taking jobs from South Africans*” There is anecdotal evidence in the media that migrants are job stealers, in general, migrants do not appear to take employment opportunities from locals as all the stories fail to provide figures and statistics to prove their narratives. In South Africa, one migrant worker generates approximately two jobs for locals (Kaziboni, 2022). And most jobs are occupied by local population:

The protesters are unhappy that the farm has employed six Zimbabweans and are demanding they be fired. Anderson and his sons farm cattle, have a dairy, a sawmill and plantations. They employ between 350 and 380 people. He was told by them “in no uncertain terms” to dismiss all his Zimbabwean employees, otherwise there would be trouble on April. (New24 12 April 2019).

The report includes a quote that uses intimidating language, “*otherwise there would be trouble on April*” It is intimidating Zimbabweans or the owner of the farm. Such language is threatening and disturbing. The theme of unemployed South Africans is recurring hence; it could be argued that moral panic is created around the discourses of unemployed to which most locals are prone. The use of the transitive verb *dismiss* in “*dismiss all his Zimbabweans employees*” again emphasises that the migrant problem in South Africa is caused mainly by Zimbabweans.

Maimane, who weighed in on government plans to introduce a law governing job quotas for foreign nationals, said challenges could not be solved without honesty. On Monday, home affairs minister Aaron Motsoaledi defended job quotas for foreign nationals, saying the proposed law aims to equalise foreign-owned companies and locally-owned businesses. He told Newzroom Afrika it was not fuelling anti-immigrant sentiment. “Absolutely not,” said Motsoaledi. “These laws will protect everyone equally, whether you are a foreign national or not.” He said hiring illegal immigrants remains illegal and employment laws cannot protect them. (Timeslive 23 February 2022).

This moral panic buttresses claims that black African migrants are a negative cost to South Africa because of the benefits they are said to receive. However, there is no positive cost frame to mention the money migrants contribute to the South African economy.

All the above stories analysed explicitly shows what post-colonial theory argues. The theory highlights how colonial stereotypes and racial hierarchies continue to influence media portrayals of migrants. These portrayals often depict migrants as ‘others’ or as threats, reflecting a legacy of viewing non-Western peoples through a colonial lens. Post-colonial theory recognizes the intersectionality of migrant” identities, including race, ethnicity, class, and gender. News representations often simplify or misrepresent these complex identities, failing to capture the multifaceted experiences of migrants where different migrants are just grouped as ‘foreign nationals’. For instance in stories like these “*Aaron Motsoaledi defended job quotas for foreign nationals*, (Timeslive 23 February 2022. “*The group of hostel dwellers has maintained that they want foreign nationals to leave*” (Timeslive 8 September 2019).

Post-colonial theory provides tools for deconstructing and critically analysing media narratives, uncovering the underlying assumptions, biases, and power relations that shape how migrants are represented. Post-colonial theory helps in understanding how media representations can influence migration policies and public debates, often reinforcing policies that reflect colonial power dynamics, such as migration laws, immigration restrictions, and integration challenges. This can be witnessed in this story, “*Maimane, who weighed in on government plans to introduce a law governing job quotas for foreign nationals, said challenges could not be solved without honesty. On Monday, home affairs minister Aaron Motsoaledi defended job quotas for foreign nationals, saying the proposed law aims to equalise foreign-owned companies and locally-owned businesses*”. (Timeslive 23 February 2022).

Post-colonial theory provides tools for deconstructing and critically analysing media narratives, uncovering the underlying assumptions, biases, and power relations that shape how migrants are represented. For instance, in this story “*The group of hostel dwellers has maintained that they want foreign nationals to leave. The government must come speak to the people and explain what it is going to do with the foreign nationals who are here illegally. The residents were angry*

about jobs allegedly being taken by foreign nationals, unhappy about foreigner involvement in drug dealing and that free government housing is being provided to foreigners. (Timeslive 8 September 2019). Media representations influenced by post-colonial dynamics can shape public attitudes towards migrants, often perpetuating fear, prejudice, and hate. Understanding this helps in analysing the broader social impact of these representations.

Post-colonial theory challenges the dominance of Eurocentric perspectives in media, which often marginalize or misrepresent migrants from non-Western countries in this case Zimbabweans, Malawians, Nigerians and so forth. By critiquing these narratives, the theory advocates for more balanced and nuanced portrayals. Furthermore the theory critiques the "Orientalist" view, where the East is depicted as exotic, backward, or threatening. This perspective is often applied to migrants, reinforcing stereotypes and justifying exclusionary attitudes and policies. For example in this story *“The residents were angry about jobs allegedly being taken by foreign nationals, unhappy about foreigner involvement in drug dealing and that free government housing is being provided to foreigners. (Timeslive 8 September 2019).* The story is not based on any factual information that foreign nationals are selling drugs or they are benefitting from government housing.

Postcolonial theory is crucial for understanding the complex, often problematic ways in which migrants are represented in the media, particularly those from formerly colonized regions. It offers a framework for critically analysing these representations and advocating for more accurate and fair portrayals.

Theme 6 - Migrants adding value to South Africa (positive reporting of black African migrants)

Of the 66 news stories sampled only 10 stories explicitly outline the positives that black African migrants contribute to the South African economy. Danso and McDonald (2001) identified that there is a pervasive belief in immigration reporting that foreigners are primarily to blame for South Africa's unemployment. However, on the contrary, black African migrants are playing a significant role in the most dynamic sectors of the economy (The World Bank, 2018). According to Dr. Jean Misago, a researcher at Wits' African Centre for Migration and Society, the organization has been working to refute the myth that all foreigners are drug dealers. Just like

South Africans, there are good and bad foreigners, so it's important to recognize that not all foreigners are criminals (Nxumalo, 2019). A recent World Bank²⁴ study found that between 1996 and 2011, immigrants in South Africa contributed positively to employment and wages for natives, creating about two jobs for every immigrant worker. The study supports the beneficial effects of immigration on the labour market in a number of ways. Since locals and black African migrants are not exact substitutes, the evidence indicates that they may specialise in different areas that increase total production. Contrary to popular belief witnessed in some articles above, foreign and native workers may actually do complimentary duties, meaning that they do not always compete for the same employment

The excerpt below also ‘appeals to an authority figure’, as was shown with the Ministers in the section above, but this time to legitimise the argument that not all foreigners are criminals. It goes further by placing the blame for the majority of crime on South Africans. Thabo Mbeki’s call to avoid “labelling” people reveals the power of stereotyping which contributes to the Afrophobia. He ends by referring back to the historical contribution of foreigner’s in South Africa’s fight to end apartheid, thus aligning the foreigners with a positive narrative:

Former president Thabo Mbeki says South Africans must stop blaming foreigners for all crime. SA must not buy into the notion that foreigners are criminals. Suspected criminals should be arrested regardless of their nationality. “We need to walk away from the false notion that the bulk of crime in this country is caused by foreigners. It is not correct. The bulk of crime in this country is committed by South Africans. “Yes, there are foreigners who commit crimes. You should arrest them and charge them. This is what we should do and avoid labelling other people.” SA could not have an immigration policy which chased away foreigners, the former president said. Foreigners made a huge contribution

²⁴ The World Bank. 2018. New Study Finds Immigrants in South Africa Generate Jobs for Locals. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southafrica/publication/new-study-finds-immigrants-in-south-africa-generate-jobs-for-locals#:~:text=PRETORIA%2C%20November%2013%2C%202018%20%E2%80%93,a%20new%20World%20Bank%20report>.

to the country's freedom and people died in Mozambique for supporting SA (Timeslive 23 September 2023).

The following excerpt specifically presents the positive contribution of black African migrants to the economy:

Migrants add value to economy. Zimbabweans run parts of the South African and British economy. Whether fact or not, this just shows the skill set and hard work ethic of Zimbabweans. A few local township business owners told me that they enjoy working with the Somalians because they have taught them many skills, such as pricing strategy and bulk buying - even teaming up with them to buy goods in bulk to sell at cheaper rates. A former South African MTN executive that was in Dubai recently to host a telecoms conference said one of the lessons learnt is that it's economically healthy to encourage immigrants because they add value where locals cannot or will not do the jobs. South Africa should aim to attract more foreign skills and entrepreneurs (IOL 3 October 2019.)

Media practices can motivate empathy, acceptance and peace between groups when they intend to promote a culture of co-existence or “partnership” in their portrayals of minority and vulnerable groups (Mthombeni, 2022; Freeman, 2020), This is evident in the two excerpts below. The media is both part of the problem and the solution, for media representations can produce effects toward the inclusion or exclusion of black African migrants.

Excluding foreign nationals from certain jobs would amount to discrimination and clearly be unconstitutional. A foreigner with a legal right to be in the country has the same rights as any citizen (News24 10 February 2022).

It is undeniable that immigrants contribute significantly to the economy of KZN. It is crucial, therefore, to harness what is positive and form partnerships with immigrants to improve community safety, as well as that of the immigrants (IOL 2 April 2022).

Additionally, the two excerpts above embed this call in terms of legal discourses, by calling upon the South African constitution. The use of the adjective “undeniable” rather emphatically makes

the point that immigrants contribute to the economy. These three articles highlight that migrants are thus neither a burden to the public purse nor are they a panacea for addressing fiscal challenges. Migrants arrive with skills and abilities, and so supplement the human capital of South Africa.

Migrants boost output and employment of the host country, create new opportunities for native workers, provide skills needed for economic growth, generate new ideas, stimulate international trade, and contribute positively to long-term fiscal balances. For example in this article:

Research from the Migrating for Work Research Consortium suggests that while international migrants are less likely to be unemployed, they are more likely to create work in the informal sector. Moreover, 11% of migrants classify themselves as “employers” and 21% as “self-employed”. For non-migrants, only 5% are employers and 9% are self-employed. So rather than taking jobs, migrants are net job-creators, a trend our country desperately needs. Unfortunately, the ANC has no incentive either to implement immigration reform or to disseminate the truth about immigration in South Africa because they rely on foreign nationals in the country to bear the brunt of South Africa’s need to blame someone for the pitiful state of our nation (News24 18 April 2019).

The above report’s association with scientific discourse, in that the statistics are based on research by a reputable consortium serves to provide legitimacy to its argument that international migrants are more likely to create work in the informal sector. They additionally assign culpability to the South African government for using international migrants as scapegoats for unemployment who “bear the brunt” for the “pitiful state of the nation”.

Similar to the excerpt above, the following two reports also expose the myth that black African migrants take jobs from locals, refer to official reporting for legitimacy and assign blame to poor governance:

Immigrants less likely to commit crime, more likely to create jobs for South Africans. South African socio-economic problems are not caused by immigrants, but by poor governance and corruption (News24 15 September 2020).

The new report explored the claims fuelling anti-foreigner sentiment, which has seen immigrants blamed for a range of social and economic problems in South Africa and reinforces xenophobic sentiment. The ISS report found that the immigrant population is much smaller than commonly believed and does not place a burden on government services such as healthcare and education. In addition, the report found that instead of taking jobs from South Africans, as is widely believed, immigrants are more likely to create jobs (News24 15 September 2022).

Once again, a former South African president is referred to in a sympathetic message. Not only does the message also frown upon South Africa's treatment of migrants but its use of emotive words and metaphors emphasise the humanitarian need to welcome migrants. Motlanhe's message is embedded in a humanitarian discourse of non-exclusion. Yet it is interesting to note that a deeper reading still others the migrants, as phrases such as "stateless beings floating between borders" could be read as robbing them of agency.

Former president Kgalema Motlanthe criticises SA's treatment of undocumented immigrants South Africa's undocumented migrants, economic refugees and asylum seekers look for hope and opportunity in South Africa. Yet they have been largely excluded from our society. There is a rush to send the oppressed back to their troubled homes, rendering them stateless beings floating between borders. Motlanthe said South Africa's treatment of immigrants exposed fault lines in society. News24 23 September 2020.

The two stories below demonstrate how online publications have started to emphasize how pockets of South African society treat migrants with dignity. Despite its history of xenophobia, the taxi business is demonstrating support for black African migrants in these stories. The same is true for medical practitioners who treat migrants regardless of their country of origin. These stories dispel the myth that locals and black African migrants cannot coexist together. According

to Mawadza (2012) one of the most common xenophobic stereotypes in South Africa is that public services (including hospitals and clinics) do not treat black African migrants, however the story exposes that no one living in South Africa is excluded from receiving health care.

Different taxi associations led a motorcade through Tshwane on Tuesday, as a demonstration against xenophobia and to clear their names in the violence that broke out in the capital city last month. We are saying no to xenophobia and, in the same breath, we are saying no to drugs as well, irrespective of nationality (News24 17 September 2019).

Frontline health care providers were doing their best to provide health services to black African migrants. They bypassed institutional and policy-related barriers to registering and treating undocumented migrants, non-native speaking migrants and migrants without referral letters. Frontline health care workers provided services, including HIV treatment, to black African migrants who are often at the receiving end of xenophobic sentiment and violence (News24 11 December 2019).

These examples are rare instances that recognise the beneficial impact that migrants may have on South African communities. This is a welcome shift in the face of the dominant negative discourses about black African migrants.

How CDA and Hermeneutics influenced the interpretation of this data

Hermeneutics helps identify the deeper meanings within a text, while CDA analyse the implications of these meanings in terms of power and ideology. For instance, hermeneutics revealed a narrative of fear surrounding migrants, while CDA analyses how this narrative reinforces certain power structures or policies. Hermeneutics and CDA can be complementary approaches when interpreting the representations of migrants in the media. By combining these methodologies, this study gained a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how media constructs and conveys meanings about migrants.

CDA of news stories about black African migrants in South African news involves examining how language is used to construct, maintain, or challenge power dynamics and social inequalities. CDA is concerned with the way media narratives can shape public perceptions, reinforce stereotypes, and influence societal attitudes toward migrant groups (van Dijk, 2008). The stories were scrutinized using CDA, the specific language used to describe black African migrants, such as the terms “illegal immigrants,” “foreigners,” or “drug lords.” These labels can carry negative connotations and dehumanise migrants, framing them as outsiders or threats to the national identity as witnessed in the stories analysed.

The use of words like violence, illegal and undocumented to describe migration can create a sense of urgency and fear, suggesting that migrants are overwhelming the country, which can fuel xenophobic sentiments. News stories often frame black African migrants as a “problem” to be solved, focusing on issues like crime, unemployment, or strain on public services, rather than highlighting their contributions or the challenges they face. Migrants are frequently portrayed either as victims of xenophobic violence or as perpetrators of crime, with little room for more complex or humanizing narratives that reflect their lived experiences.

CDA revealed how the media reflects the ideologies of dominant groups, such as political elites or the state, which may have vested interests in portraying migrants negatively to justify restrictive immigration policies or to divert attention from other social issues. This is evident in some of the stories in which politicians were quoted arguing that migrants are a problem in SA ignoring the failures of government to address issues like crime and unemployment. CDA allowed this study to explore how language, power, and ideology manifested in news intersect to shape public perception.

CDA assesses whose voices are amplified in news coverage (Nurjannah, 2017). Are black African migrants given the opportunity to tell their own stories, or are their experiences narrated by others? The analysis of the 66 news articles looks at how news media, as part of the broader institutional framework, reinforces or challenges existing power structures and ideologies surrounding migration. CDA reveals underlying stereotypes and biases (Nurjannah, 2017) that influence how black African migrants are represented. It examines whether media perpetuates or

challenges negative stereotypes, as witnessed on the news stories the media continues to portray them as ‘problem’ and something must be done to stop this ‘problem’. Through this approach, CDA reveals the complexities of media representations and their broader social implications, offering insights into how African migrants are constructed within public discourse.

Hermeneutics aligns with CDA in emphasising the historical and cultural contexts in which news stories are produced (McKee, 2001). In its examination, this study considers the specific circumstances surrounding news coverage, such as the political climate, the socio-economic conditions, and public sentiment at the time of reporting (Crotty, 1998). For instance, this study’s time frame is located during some incidents of violence against black African migrants in major cities of South Africa and also during elections which influenced how news is reported.

Hermeneutics encouraged this study to go beyond the literal meaning of news texts and explore the underlying messages, assumptions, and ideologies. For example, a story about African migrants might not just be about migration but also reflect deeper fears about national identity or economic security as witnessed on this story, “*Foreign informal traders are being targeted by a group of protesters accusing them of stealing jobs from South Africans. The angry crowd demanded that the hawkers return home because they were taking jobs from locals (News24 27 June 2022)*”. Hermeneutics involves reconstructing the meaning of a text by considering what it says explicitly and what it implies. This might include considering what is left unsaid or how certain narratives are constructed to serve particular purposes (McKee, 2001).

While hermeneutics provides a broad interpretive framework, CDA offers a detailed analysis of the language used to represent migrants. Hermeneutics interpreted the symbolic meaning of a news story, while CDA broke down how specific language choices contribute to this meaning and its ideological impact. Hermeneutics provided a reflective, ethical lens through which the representation of migrants can be viewed, while CDA focused on the concrete ways in which power and ideology are embedded in these representations. Together, they offered a comprehensive analysis of both the moral and political dimensions of media texts.

Hermeneutics gives a comprehensive view of the text’s meaning, while CDA critically evaluates its implications for society. For example, hermeneutics explored the emotional and cultural

resonance of a media narrative about migrants, while CDA analysed how this narrative supports or undermines certain policies or power dynamics. Hermeneutics offered insights into the subjective experience of interpreting media texts, while CDA explored how these interpretations are shaped by and contribute to broader social and political discourses.

Hermeneutics provided a reflective, ethical lens through which the representation of migrants can be viewed, while CDA focused on the concrete ways in which power and ideology are embedded in these representations. By combining hermeneutics and CDA, researchers can achieve a deep, contextualized, and critical understanding of how migrants are represented in the media, considering both the broader meanings and the specific power dynamics at play.

In summary, hermeneutics and CDA work together by providing a comprehensive framework for analysing news representations. Hermeneutics offers a deep contextual and interpretive understanding, while CDA focuses on the power dynamics and ideological aspects of discourse. Together, they provide a robust approach to uncovering the complex ways in which news media shapes and is shaped by societal forces

Conclusion

This qualitative study of *News24*, *Timeslive* and *IOL* provides insight into how the media typically covers black African migrants in a negative light. Most news stories mentioned foreigners in relation to drug use, crime, taking jobs and violence. This chapter described how the media covers black African migrants and how articles are written without providing proof to allegations that foreigners are criminals or illegal immigrants, drug trafficking and violence are receiving more attention thereby fostering the perception that black African migrants are a problem in South Africa.

The way the news is reported reveals how journalists, and those they include in their stories present migrants as the Other. Online Newspapers are crucial for disseminating information and influencing the perception of black African migrants in South Africa. One could claim, in response to the study's questions, that the way in which black African migrants are covered by publications fosters stereotypes and may construct Afrophobia.

Additionally, the study's application of the representation theory revealed that Afrophobic violence in South Africa has been exacerbated by negative media portrayal of black African migrants. The accounts presented in these three online news organisations are probably adding to the unfavorable opinions that the locals have about black African migrants. According to some South Africans through news articles in the sample, cleaning out Black African migrants is necessary to deal with criminals and illegal foreigners. It is important to acknowledge that the online news also utilise sympathetic discourses when reporting about how black African migrants do suffer from violence and looting of their businesses. Although the sympathetic language also constructs a narrative of helplessness and weak human beings who need help from government.

The following conclusion chapter will directly respond to each of the study's research questions by summarising and synthesising the study's findings and result in an analytical conclusion.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Introduction

Using data from 2019 to 2022, this study examined the representation of black African migrants in news articles from *News24*, *Timeslive*, and *IOL*. This research aimed to identify the popular online news narratives surrounding black African migrants and how language may construct Afrophobia narratives and sentiments in South Africa. Drawing from the study's findings, this chapter offers recommendations and conclusions that might be taken into account when contextualising media coverage of Afrophobia in South Africa.

The study was guided by various theoretical frameworks including Post-colonialism (Said, 1985; Said, 1981), Othering (Hall, 2013), Stereotype (Hall, 2013), and Representation theory (Hall, 1997). All of theories explain ways in which language influences the common discourses. Language shapes people's perceptions of the people they read about in the media and "discourses tell who we are and what our relation to reality is" (Törrönen, 2001: 322).

It can be concluded that most frequently black African migrants are negatively represented in the news. However, there has been a shift of language used by online news from that which was utilised in preceding studies. The stories tend to focus much on the illegality or the documentation of black African migrants. In some instances, news articles are even using different names such as asylum seeker or refugee to identify the different black African migrants in South Africa. Whereas other studies (Pineteh, 2017; Kariithi et al, 2017) articulated how the media reported as if all migrants are the same utilizing the word 'Foreigner'. In addition to negative stereotyping and accusatory discourses there have been sympathetic and positive discourses in the news. Where black African migrants are getting their voices in the stories and contributing to how they are portrayed.

The key research questions of this study were as follows:

- 1) In what ways do South African online newspapers report about black African Migrants?
 - a) What discourses are used by *Independent Online*, *Times Live* and *News24* to report on

- black African migrants?
- b) In what ways, if any, do articles from these online newspapers construct Afrophobia in their reporting of black African migrants?
- 2) How do online newspapers reveal power relations between South Africans and black African migrants in the contemporary South Africa?
- a) What are covert and overt messages and meanings in the discourses used in the three online news sites

This chapter summarises and synthesises the study's conclusions based on the main findings generated in the analysis, according to each of these key questions and objectives.

Black African migrants in news stories (In what ways do South African online newspapers report about black African Migrants?)

Black African migrants are portrayed as criminals, drug dealers, scammers, job takers, and people who are in the country with no legal papers. Phrases such as undocumented foreigner, undocumented immigrant and illegal foreigner(s) are popular and widely used by *News24*, *Timeslive* and *IOL* when covering stories involving black African migrants. All these words describe black African migrants.

The terminology used by *News24*, *Timeslive*, and *IOL* to refer to various groups of black African migrants (illegal foreigners, undocumented immigrants) are not only neutral or objective descriptions. Instead, the selected words to explain social and political environment can not only impact political discussions and beliefs, but they may already include implicit ethical judgments about how to structure and transform South Africa. But this does not mean that the media should give up on accurately characterising the society or abandon critical study of the terms used by the online press as being overdone and overly sensitive political correctness. Rather, it means that how the online media perceives the world is inextricably linked to people's ideals. Rather, it indicates that the values and the way that online news sites perceive the world are closely related.

What constitutes justice in immigration will determine, in part, how the online news sites portray various migrant categories. “Language shapes people’s perceptions. Discriminatory language in reference to undocumented migrants in the public discourse leads to perceptions and actions which negatively impact their daily realities” (Crépeau & Vezmar, 2021: 1).

This study noted that online news coverage encouraged, legitimised, and sanctioned xenophobic attacks by publishing further justification for attacking migrants. The stories deemphasize the violence against black African migrants by highlighting the high unemployment and lack of opportunities amongst the local population as the reason for violence. The narrative of drug dealing is explained as the reason for the violent attacks against them or the selling of expired and fake products. Nonetheless, when the violence and looting of black African migrants’ shop occur the very same products that the citizens ‘claim’ to be expired or fake is looted.

The media and community frequently use criminality as an excuse to disparage black African migrants. It is true that there are a lot of black African migrants involved in crime, but they are also a lot of local criminals in South Africa. The researcher stresses that the media, among other social agents, has a responsibility to address crime. According to the research, nationality prefixes should not be used by the media when reporting on crimes unless absolutely required to reduce negative preconceptions about black African migrants.

The numerous problems in South Africa that are primarily attributed to black African migrants (crime, taking jobs, dealing in drugs), the media is one of the many centers of power. As such, they should make use of this power to dispel myths and alter deeply held beliefs or ideals that are counterproductive to peace and progress. They should live up to that expectation by condemning violent behavior against any human being, regardless of race or ethnicity, as they have a developmental role to play in the nation.

As witnessed in chapter six, it has become commonplace for the news sites and society to attribute problems facing South African society to black African migrants. Some government officials have also fallen victim to this mythological discourse. South Africa would still have issues even if all black African migrants were to be deported today. It is imperative that the media dispel such enchanted notions by holding the government accountable for its broken

commitments. Furthermore, even though South Africa has some of the greatest immigration regulations in the world, the government have not been able to successfully enforce them, allowing foreigners to travel the nation undetected. The media has a responsibility to expose these shortcomings as blaming migrants will only fuel animosity and strife within the community rather than bring about any positive changes.

The media reports news based on events and, as a mediator in society, provides analytical views on those events. The researcher noted that in many news articles, including public officials, politicians have made statements that can contribute to the development of Afrophobia.

Black African migrants are blamed for societal ills and ANC government failures which they too have no control over. Substantiation of this is explained by Landau (2011: 9-10) “As for crime, the army is helping the police to get rid of crime and violence in the county. However, what can we do? We have one million illegal immigrants in our country who commit crimes and who are mistaken by some people for South African citizens. This is the real problem” (Landau, 2011: 9). Accordingly, this statement is convinced that black African migrants are a problem since most of them are scammers, robbers, thieves that should be taken care of. Evidently black African migrants are blamed for everything that goes wrong. It is for this reason that this study argues that all these news narratives may construct Afrophobia because people’s memories, perceptions of the world, insights, decisions, and actions are all affected by language (Marian, 2023). The use of fear appeals and emotive language may serve to encourage Afrophobia in representing black African migrants, but they can also be discursively used to report sympathetically

The Othering of black African migrants

The study found that the resentful Othering of migrant groupings is in fact levelled at Black African migrants. Black African migrants are fiercely condemned and accused by movements like Operation Dudula of robbing South Africans of economic and employment possibilities. Stories are published where discourses such as “they take our jobs”, “they must go back” are used by *News24*, *Timeslive* and *IOL*. In the articles the study noted that populism thrives by creating an apprehensive dislike between the people and a despicable “Other”. Here the “people” (citizens) are characterised as the good-natured, hard-working citizens who have been let down

by the coming of black African migrants. The despised Other can be accused of a myriad of crimes: corruption, masterminding internet scams and fraud or being contributing highly to the general degeneration of society.

Black African migrants are portrayed as the weak that needs governmental help. Stories covered during the Covid-19 portrayed black African migrants as the Other that requires help and taking away the little resources meant for citizens. One way that the process of Othering works is through discursive practices found in the news articles that create distinctions, making people into obvious Others (foreigners). However, it is predicated on an imbalance of power that makes it possible to classify individuals and identify them as distinct from one another. Othering is not just a result of people's or groups' unfavorable opinions. Instead, Othering is the outcome of a vast, historically developed set of beliefs that become believable due to power dynamics (Akbulut & Razum, 2023).

The othering of them leads to discrimination based on media categorisation which contributes to the construction of anti-migrants which will fuel Afrophobic sentiments. Moreover *News24*, *Timeslive* and *IOL* tend to ignore nationalities of those who commit crime when they are South Africans. The nationality of those that perpetrate violence is not mentioned in these stories only the victims' nationality is exposed. When South Africans are committing acts of violence against black African migrants their nationality is ignored by the news. For instance *Thabo Mchunu (45), who has a string of previous convictions including for robbery and theft, can be regarded as a menace to society considering his past conduct (News24 12 February 2020)*. The story does not include that Thabo is South African. The decision to report migrants' nationalities in the various articles of my sample appeared to be a deliberate move, designed to accentuate their separation from South African citizens. By associating nationality with overtly derogatory imagery, this aim is made clear; nevertheless, in some narratives, the nationalities of migrants are disclosed even when such knowledge is not necessary to comprehend the story, thus demonstrating the specific fabrication of Afrophobia. Othering creates the Other both epistemologically and discursively, providing justification for treating 'the Other' differently, usually with disdain.

Migrants taking employment opportunities

This study's merit is that it offers a comprehensive analysis of how online news articles produced by *News24*, *Timeslive* and *IOL* use language that may be interpreted as Afrophobic by portraying black African migrants as job takers. Those who enter South Africa and steal jobs from the country's youth and impoverished citizens. The verbal text that appears in these news sites has powerful impact to readers. Stories are reported in a way that may contribute to construction of Afrophobic narrations. Black African migrants are highlighted as people taking jobs from the local population through some news headlines. Making black African migrant's presence illegal and dangerous is the focus of attention. The many black African migrants who are legally and documented in the country as engineers, doctors, teachers, students, traders, and tourists are hardly mentioned. The news articles use metaphors to convey the idea that South Africa needs a '*spring cleaning*' of black African migrants and that the country is fighting a losing "war" to keep the migrants, who are also portrayed as less human. There are situations where the black African migrants are threatened, suggesting that they do not belong here.

Power dynamics between locals and migrants

While it may be difficult to conclude that online press has a direct influence on Afrophobia, *News24*, *TimesLive* and *IOL* reporting is negative towards black African migrants and has a huge potential to influence Afrophobic violence. This is evident in how black African migrants are side-lined in news reports that deal with positive activities in South Africa. Whenever there is violence and acts of criminality black African migrants are involved even when they are victims. The conflict between these two groups is always highlighted and the black African migrant is always the weaker one who is in the country illegally or operating unregistered business.

The social interactions are based on one group the citizens attributing social ills to the so-called undocumented migrant. This is made worse by the news reports that use police or anti-migrant individuals as their source claiming that places with black African migrants are crime ridden. Even when there are riots and black African migrants are robbed of their businesses the media reports that undocumented migrants are selling fake products. Black African migrants do not have the power to shape their narratives as they do not own or control the media. As Michel

Foucault says subject positions are partly produced by power. “When we identify with and use subject positions we participate in the meaning-making on what kinds of identity forms and world views should be considered as natural and truthful in particular situations” (Törrönen, 2001:315-316; Fairclough, 1992: 55).

Some migrants are deported without due process as evidenced in these stories presented in chapter six. Some lose their businesses they do not get any compensation, the police will ignore any reports made as the police will side with the communities in castigating black African migrants as the problem (Pineteh, 2017). Whereas migrants such as Greeks and Bulgarians are perceived as valuable contributors to South Africa (Tshaka, 2016). Right or wrong, there is a belief that they can be somewhat contribute positively to the economy (Tshaka, 2016). While Nigerians are in the news with drugs and crime. It is against this background that the researcher argues that reporting is more accurately defined as Afrophobic than xenophobic. The attitudes shaped by colonial narratives may be influencing such actions where white people are seen as saviours, people who can create jobs and opportunities for the locals hence the treatment is different (Tshaka, 2016; Dube, 2019).

Black African migrants lack power to defend themselves when the media say they are job stealers hence their identity in South Africa has been portrayed negatively due to their lack of power that citizens have. As Torrönen (2001:314) argues “Our identity could be constituted in many alternative ways, but by hailing ideologies we embrace and compartmentalize ourselves into social roles that maintain the continuity of the primary institutions of capitalist society (church, school system, law, family, army and so on)”. However, in this case it is not about the capitalist but social system that has not accepted black African migrants hence their identity is controlled by the elites those who own the media.

The power dynamics can be seen via the online media articles where those that are deemed to have power like the former colonisers are not treated as migrants but rather as investors, but the black African migrant is always a suspect of either drug dealing or not having legal papers to be in the country. The Othering of black African migrants exposes the unequal power relationship

between the two groups. The othered (black African migrant) is helpless and should go back where he came from.

Post-colonial theory suggests that the power imbalances established during colonial times often persist in the post-colonial era, with former colonizers maintaining economic, cultural, and political dominance. This dominance can manifest in how migrants are treated, perceived, and integrated into society. Construction of the ‘Other’, post-colonial theory highlights how migrants are often constructed as ‘others’—outsiders who are different from the dominant local population. This process of othering is rooted in colonial attitudes that viewed colonized peoples as inferior, exotic, or threatening, and these perceptions can continue to influence how locals view migrants.

Media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of migrants. Post-colonial theory helps analyse how media representations often reinforce colonial stereotypes, depicting migrants as threats or burdens rather than as individuals with complex identities and contributions to society. Post-colonial theory argues that even after formal colonialism ended, economic relationships between former colonies and colonizers remain unequal (Said, 1993). Migrants from post-colonial countries often find themselves in low-wage, precarious jobs, replicating colonial patterns of economic exploitation. The power dynamics in the labour market often reflect colonial hierarchies, where migrants are disproportionately represented in less desirable jobs, facing discrimination and exploitation. This reflects the continuation of a colonial mentality that views certain groups as inherently suited for menial labour.

The power dynamics analysed through a post-colonial lens can explain why social cohesion and integration between migrants and locals are often fraught with tension as witnessed in news stories analysed above. The lingering effects of colonial attitudes and power structures can create barriers to genuine integration and mutual respect. Hall (1997) argues that the media representations are not just about images or narratives but are deeply implicated in the power relations and historical legacies of colonialism. This is witnessed in the following story “*Walking on the streets of downtown Joburg you are compelled to be alert and ready. Groups of people with no other identification except for bibs that read —community safety*” aggressively pounce

on suspected foreigners, grabbing men, women, children demanding —asylum and money with threats of arrest or even deportation. If one refuses to cooperate they go as far as to lift your sleeve to check for the South African vaccination marks. No one has answers on these community security —officers who are terrorising African migrants. Migrants are now compelled to carry around their identification documents and are harassed to produce them in a manner that perpetuates apartheid-like dompas sentiments (News24 25 May 2019). Such activities used to happen during colonial and apartheid times in South Africa, where black people were harassed and intimidated for not carrying their national identification cards (Dube, 2018). Orientalism is a framework of knowledge that constructs the East as the exotic, mysterious, and inferior "Other," which in turn justifies western imperialism and control (Said, 1978). While Orientalism specifically addresses the East, its concepts can be applied more broadly to understand how colonial tendencies are found in today's representation of black African migrants in the news.

Positive reporting of black African migrants

Black African migrants are rarely shown in a positive light or as making beneficial contributions to South Africa. For instance, Zimbabweans are portrayed as having critical thinking abilities and a strong work ethic. Somalis are portrayed as having solid management skills in small and medium-sized businesses. In this case, South Africa acknowledges the contribution of black African migrants. In other instances, the news websites dispute accusations that black African migrants are criminals, as covered in Chapter Six. As a result, despite the unfavourable stereotypes attached to the black African migrants, their contribution to South Africa is acknowledged in part.

The study meets the goals it set out to critically examine the representation of black African migrants in *News24*, *Timeslive*, and *IOL*. The research findings indicate that the majority of metaphoric constructions are negative, with a small number of positive representations.

Contribution to the field of study

This study provides a detailed critical discourse analysis of how black African migrants are reported in selected digital news sites moving away from preceding studies that focused on print newspapers. As early as 2000 studies were researching how migrants in South Africa are

portrayed in newspapers (Danso&McDonald, 2001; Mawadza, 2012). Hence this study realized the need to critically analyse digital news as online news is becoming more popular in the 21st century. The study focused on 2019 to 2022 as there were some sporadic violence targeting black African migrants in major cities like Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town and also with the birth of anti-migrant movements like Operation Dudula and #PutSouth Africa1st it is interesting to find how digital news sites reported about black African migrants.

Through discursive analysis the study has provided new knowledge on how Afrophobia may be interpreted from online news articles thus moving away from past studies that focused on the negative portrayal of migrants and xenophobia. The study contributes to the discourse of Afrophobia which is a growing area of interest in media, sociology and communication studies (Dube, 2019). This study further contributes to the literature of digital news sites and how the content produced by digital news sites may contribute to the construction of negative perception of black African migrants in South Africa.

Studying Afrophobia and media representations contributes uniquely in several ways. It helps identify and analyse the ways in which media perpetuates biases and stereotypes against black African migrants. This exposed pattern of misrepresentation or negative framing that reinforce prejudices and impact public perception. By exploring media portrayals, researchers can uncover how these representations affect cultural identity and social dynamics within African communities and in broader society. This can lead to a deeper understanding of the societal impacts of media narratives. Overall, this field of study contributes to broader discussions about race, representation, and the role of media in shaping societal attitudes and values.

The study offered a detailed analysis of how South African online media outlets discursively engage with topics on Afrophobia, which could reveal specific patterns or trends in media reporting. This contextual understanding can help in distinguishing between local and global influences on media portrayals of black African migrants. The study provides a detailed analysis of the specific experiences and material conditions of black African migrants, offering a nuanced understanding of how this group navigates life in South Africa.

By examining the news representation of migrants, the study sheds light on the persistence of Afrophobic attitudes and practices in the post-apartheid era. It highlights how historical and contemporary forms of Afrophobia continue to affect migrant lives.

The research adds to the broader literature on migration and Afrophobia by providing a case study of black African migrants in South Africa. It contributes to understanding how migration dynamics play out in contexts with entrenched Afrophobic attitudes. It critically examines how negative and dehumanising language is used to perpetuate Afrophobic attitudes. This historical perspective helps to understand the continuity and transformation of Afrophobic attitudes over time.

By analysing the framing of African migrants, the study sheds light on the broader socio-political implications of Afrophobia. It discusses how negative portrayals impact social cohesion, migration policies, and the treatment of migrant communities. The study's focus on the dehumanising language used to describe migrants provides insights into how such narratives contribute to the marginalisation and exclusion of these communities. It highlights media news contribution to how black African migrants are perceived in SA.

Media representations shape public perceptions by constructing narratives around xenophobia. Analysing these narratives helps understand how stories are framed, which stereotypes are perpetuated, and how black African migrants are portrayed, influencing societal attitudes.

Overall, the study's unique contribution lies in its detailed analysis of the representation of black African migrants in online news and its implications for understanding and addressing Afrophobia in a post-apartheid context. By focusing on Afrophobia, these studies highlight how race intersects with issues of migration. They reveal how African migrants are treated differently than other migrant groups, often facing compounded discrimination based on both their racial and migrant status.

Moreover, the results prove that South African online media texts specifically construct a negative representation of black African migrants. Therefore, exhibiting Afrophobia which is a bias and a form of discrimination against people of African origin. This is the reason why this

study articulated this form of representation as Afrophobia not xenophobia as the latter targets anyone perceived as foreign or different from the dominant social group, regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality.

Afrophobia was studied separately from xenophobia in this study because it involves unique historical, social, and cultural dimensions that require distinct attention. According to the postcolonial theory, Afrophobia is deeply rooted in racial hierarchies that were constructed to justify the exploitation and dehumanization of African people (Dube, 2018). These hierarchies persist in many societies, leading to specific forms of discrimination that are not fully captured by the term xenophobia. Hence post-colonial theorists, drawing on the work of Michel Foucault, argue that knowledge and power are deeply intertwined. The way the West "knows" and represents the rest of the world is not neutral but is shaped by power relations. The West's control over knowledge production through media allowed it to define the identities and histories of colonised peoples in ways that served Western interests (Said, 1978). However, in the South African context it is no longer about the west vs the rest of the world but between citizens and black African migrants.

Post-colonial theory explores how black African migrants are often portrayed as others in media and public discourse. This othering process depicts them as fundamentally different and alien to the host society, which can perpetuate stereotypes and justify exclusionary practices. The portrayal of African migrants often associated with poverty, danger, or illegality, serves to reinforce their marginalisation.

The representation of black African migrants often draws on colonial stereotypes that depict Africans as primitive, backward, or uncivilized. These stereotypes are rooted in colonial discourses that justified the subjugation and exploitation of African peoples (the west as civilised and the east as barbaric). In modern media, these images are often repurposed to portray migrants as a threat to social order, economic stability, or cultural purity in their host countries.

Afrophobia involves specific stereotypes and forms of cultural representation that are unique to black African people and their diaspora. These stereotypes are often tied to skin colour, perceived inferiority, and cultural differences that are distinct from the broader fear of foreigners.

For example, the preceding studies even noted how local South Africans can use skin colour to determine a foreigner, the darker you are the higher the chances you will identify as a black African migrant (Congolese, Nigerian, Malawian or Zimbabwean). Studying Afrophobia separately allows for a more nuanced understanding of how these intersecting identities are reported in the online news.

In essence, Afrophobia is studied separately to address the unique and specific challenges faced by people of black African descent, challenges that are not fully captured by the broader concept of xenophobia.

Limitations of the study

Because it is one of the few that examines the formation of Afrophobia in such detail, this study is inherently limited in several respects. The study's focus on how black African migrants are portrayed in internet media between 2019 and 2022 may be the reason it fails to analyse how these migrants are portrayed during other pertinent time periods. A study on how non-black migrants, such as Chinese, Pakistani, Indian, and white Europeans, are portrayed in online news is just as important as the study on black African migrants.

Suggestions for future research

The analysis of news from radio and television may have been added. Pictures or photographs and cartoons could have been added to increase the scope of this study.

While the study examined how black African migrants are depicted in digital news, it would be beneficial to expand it to include interviews with the reporters to gain additional understanding of how migrants are portrayed in the media.

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22 January 2024

Mr. Clifford Jani (218086376) School Of Applied Human Sc Howard College

Dear Mr. Clifford Jani

Original application number: 00011834

Project title: A critical analysis of the construction of Afrophobia in South African online newspapers before and after the 2019 general elections

Amended title: A Discursive Analysis of the Construction of Afrophobia in TimesLive, News24 and Independent Online in South Africa, 2019 -2022

Exemption from Ethics Review,

In response to your **amendment** application received on 08 January 2024, your school has indicated that the amendment has been granted **EXEMPTION FROM ETHICS REVIEW.**

Any alteration/s to the exempted research protocol, e.g., Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. The original exemption number must be cited. For any changes that could result in potential risk, an ethics application including the proposed amendments must be submitted to the relevant UKZN Research Ethics Committee. The original exemption number must be cited. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE:

Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years. I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mbongeni Shadrack Sithole Academic Leader Research School of Applied Human Science

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