

BEYOND THE BINARY: UNPACKING XENOPHOBIA AND AFROPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract. South Africa, a country touted as a beacon of democracy and inclusivity, has been plagued by recurring episodes of xenophobic violence and Afrophobic sentiment, resulting in devastating consequences for foreign nationals and African migrants. Despite the prevalence of these phenomena, there remains a dearth of nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics underlying xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. This qualitative desktop and critical discourse analysis research seeks to contribute to filling this knowledge gap by unpacking the conceptualisations, manifestations and intersections of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. Through a critical examination of existing literature, policy documents and media reports, this research reveals the complex and multifaceted nature of xenophobia and Afrophobia, highlighting the ways in which these phenomena are shaped by and intersect with issues of nationalism, identity, citizenship and belonging. The findings of this research underscore the need for a more nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia, one that moves beyond simplistic binary frameworks and acknowledges the complex and multifaceted nature of these phenomena. Ultimately, this research recommends that policymakers and practitioners adopt a more inclusive and intersectional approach to addressing xenophobia and Afrophobia, one that prioritises the needs and experiences of foreign nationals and African migrants and seeks to promote greater social cohesion, inclusivity and justice.

Keywords: *Xenophobia, Afrophobia, South Africa, Critical Discourse Analysis, Nationalism, Identity, Citizenship, Belonging.*

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1. Introduction

South Africa, a country known for its diverse cultural heritage and history of resistance against apartheid, has been grappling with the challenges of xenophobia and Afrophobia for decades. The historical trend of xenophobia in South Africa dates to the apartheid era when the government implemented policies aimed at excluding and marginalising non-citizens, particularly those from neighbouring countries (Crush, 2001; Tella, 2016). However, it was not until the early 2000s that xenophobia began to manifest in violent and deadly ways. In 2008, a wave of xenophobic violence swept across the country, resulting in the deaths of over 60 people and the displacement of thousands more (Misago & Landau, 2023). The violence was characterised by attacks on foreign nationals, particularly those from Zimbabwe, Mozambique and other African countries.

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Since then, xenophobic violence has become a recurring phenomenon in South Africa, with outbreaks in 2015, 2017 and 2019 (HSRC, 2019). The casualties of xenophobia have been devastating, with reports of brutal killings, arson attacks and looting of foreign-owned businesses (Mail & Guardian, 2019). However, xenophobia is not the only form of exclusionary violence that has plagued South Africa. Afrophobia, a term used to describe the fear and hatred of African people, has also structurally come into play (Adejumo-Ayibiowu, 2023). Afrophobia is rooted in the historical and ongoing legacies of colonialism, apartheid and neoliberalism, which have created and reinforced racial and ethnic hierarchies (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). In South Africa, Afrophobia has manifested in various ways, including the marginalisation and exclusion of African migrants and refugees, the perpetuation of negative stereotypes and biases against African people and the failure of the government to address the root causes of xenophobia and Afrophobia (Adejumo-Ayibiowu, 2023).

The intersection of xenophobia and Afrophobia has created a complex and nuanced landscape of exclusionary violence in South Africa. As noted by Crush (2001), “xenophobia and Afrophobia are not separate phenomena, but are intertwined and mutually reinforcing”. This intersection has resulted in the creation of a “hierarchy of humanity” in South Africa, where certain groups are deemed more worthy of rights and protections than others (Adejumo-Ayibiowu, 2023). In a nutshell, the historical trend of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that requires a nuanced and intersectional approach to understanding and addressing. The casualties of xenophobia and Afrophobia have been devastating and policymakers, practitioners and civil society organisations must work together to develop effective strategies for preventing and responding to these forms of exclusionary violence.

Premised on the preceding contextual background, this qualitative desktop and critical discourse analysis study seeks to contribute to filling this knowledge gap by unpacking the conceptualisations, manifestations and intersections of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. Structurally, this study is comprised of several sections, which include, firstly, the contextual background which articulates the trends and nature of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. Secondly, the study provides the research problem coupled with the study gap, research questions, contributions and rationale of the study. Thirdly, the study offers a comprehensive literature review and theoretical framework which covers the definition and conceptualisation of xenophobia and Afrophobia, historical and contemporary contexts of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, critical examination of existing research on xenophobia and Afrophobia, and identification of gaps and limitations in existing research. Fourthly, the study presents the research methodology, discusses the key findings from the literature and presents the conclusion, implications and recommendations of the policy and practice.

2. Research Problem, Study Gap, Research Questions and Justification of the Study

Xenophobia and Afrophobia are complex and multifaceted phenomena that have plagued South Africa for decades. Despite their complexity, these phenomena are often understood and addressed through simplistic binary frameworks that pit “South Africans” against “foreigners” or “Africans” against “non-Africans” (Pietersen, 2022; Machinya, 2022). These binary frameworks not only oversimplify the complexities of xenophobia and Afrophobia but also perpetuate and reinforce existing power dynamics and social

inequalities (Adejumo-Ayibiowu, 2023). The need to move beyond these simplistic binary frameworks is urgent, particularly in the context of South Africa's ongoing struggles with xenophobia and Afrophobia. In 2019, for example, a wave of xenophobic violence swept across the country, resulting in the deaths of over 10 people and the displacement of thousands more (HSRC, 2019). Similarly, Afrophobia has been on the rise in recent years, with reports of African migrants and refugees facing discrimination, violence and exclusion (Mail & Guardian, 2020).

Despite the growing body of research on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, there is a significant gap in our understanding of these phenomena. Existing research has focused mainly on the economic, social and political drivers of xenophobia and Afrophobia. However, it has paid less attention to the ways in which these phenomena are constructed and perpetuated through discourse and language (De Goede, 2017). Furthermore, existing research has often relied on simplistic binary frameworks that pit “South Africans” against “foreigners” or “Africans” against “non-Africans”. These frameworks not only oversimplify the complexities of xenophobia and Afrophobia but also perpetuate and reinforce existing power dynamics and social inequalities (Adejumo-Ayibiowu, 2023). Premised on the foregoing research problem and the study gap, this study seeks to respond to the following research questions:

- How are xenophobia and Afrophobia constructed and perpetuated through discourse and language in South Africa?
- What are the power dynamics and social inequalities that underlie xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa?
- How do simplistic binary frameworks perpetuate and reinforce existing power dynamics and social inequalities in the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia?

This study is justified for several reasons. Firstly, it seeks to address a significant gap in our understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. By examining the ways in which these phenomena are constructed and perpetuated through discourse and language, this study aims to provide a more nuanced and complex understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia. Secondly, this study seeks to challenge and move beyond simplistic binary frameworks that have dominated existing research on xenophobia and Afrophobia. By highlighting the power dynamics and social inequalities that underlie these phenomena, this study aims to provide a more nuanced and complex understanding of the ways in which xenophobia and Afrophobia are constructed and perpetuated. Finally, this study is justified because it has significant implications for policy and practice. By providing a more nuanced and complex understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia, this study aims to inform the development of more effective policies and interventions that address these phenomena.

3. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The extensive literature review and theoretical framework of this qualitative desktop and critical discourse analysis study are significant for several reasons. Firstly, they provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, highlighting the limitations of existing research that relies on simplistic binary frameworks (Phiri, 2021). Secondly, the literature review and theoretical framework demonstrate the need for a nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia, considering the country's complex history, cultural diversity and socio-economic challenges (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). The

study's critical discourse analysis framework, informed by postcolonial and decolonial theories, enables a critical examination of the power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015; Grosfoguel, 2016).

4. Definition and Conceptualisation of Xenophobia and Afrophobia

Xenophobia and Afrophobia are complex and multifaceted phenomena that have been defined and conceptualised in various ways in literature. This section provides an overview of the different definitions and conceptualisations of xenophobia and Afrophobia, highlighting their similarities and differences. Xenophobia has been defined as a form of intolerance or prejudice towards individuals or groups perceived as foreign or different (Misago & Landau, 2023). It involves a fear or dislike of people from other countries or cultures, often manifesting in discriminatory or violent behaviour (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). Xenophobia can be directed towards anyone perceived as foreign, including immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers (Phiri, 2021).

Xenophobia has been conceptualised as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that involves a range of psychological, social and economic factors (Gordon, 2019; Mutanda, 2022). It has been linked to feelings of insecurity, anxiety and fear, often fueled by misinformation and stereotypes about foreigners (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021). Xenophobia has also been conceptualised as a form of “othering”, where individuals or groups perceived as foreign are constructed as a threat to the dominant group's identity, culture and way of life (De Goede, 2017). Afrophobia has been defined as a form of intolerance or prejudice towards individuals or groups from other African countries or cultures (Phiri, 2021). It involves a fear or dislike of people from other African countries or cultures, often manifesting in discriminatory or violent behaviour (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). Afrophobia can be directed towards anyone perceived as African, including immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers from other African countries (Misago & Landau, 2023).

Afrophobia has been conceptualised as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that involves a range of psychological, social and economic factors (Gordon, 2019; Mutanda, 2022). It has been linked to feelings of insecurity, anxiety and fear, often fueled by misinformation and stereotypes about people from other African countries or cultures (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021). Afrophobia has also been conceptualised as a form of “othering”, where individuals or groups perceived as African are constructed as a threat to the dominant group's identity, culture and way of life (De Goede, 2017). While xenophobia and Afrophobia share some similarities, they also have some key differences. Both phenomena involve fear or dislike of people perceived as different or foreign, often manifesting in discriminatory or violent behaviour (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). However, xenophobia tends to be directed towards anyone perceived as foreign, including immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers from any country (Phiri, 2021). Afrophobia, on the other hand, tends to be directed towards individuals or groups from other African countries or cultures (Misago & Landau, 2023). Thus, xenophobia and Afrophobia are complex and multifaceted phenomena that have been defined and conceptualised in various ways in the literature. While they share some similarities, they also have some key differences. Understanding these phenomena is crucial for developing effective strategies to address them and promote social cohesion and inclusivity in South Africa.

5. Historical and Contemporary Contexts of Xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa

Xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa are complex and multifaceted phenomena shaped by the country's historical and contemporary contexts. This section provides an overview of these contexts, highlighting the key events, policies and social and economic factors that have contributed to their development. South Africa's history of colonialism, apartheid and migration has created a complex and contested social and political landscape that has contributed to the development of xenophobia and Afrophobia (Everatt, 2018). During the apartheid era, the South African government implemented policies that restricted the movement and settlement of black people, including migrants from other African countries (Misago & Landau, 2023). These policies created a legacy of xenophobia and Afrophobia that has continued to shape social and political relationships in post-apartheid South Africa.

In post-apartheid South Africa, xenophobia and Afrophobia have been fueled by a range of social and economic factors, including poverty, unemployment and inequality (Phiri, 2021). The country's economic crisis, which high levels of unemployment and poverty have characterised, has created a sense of competition and insecurity among South Africans, which has often been directed towards migrants and refugees (Gordon, 2019; Mutanda, 2022). The contemporary context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa has also been shaped by the country's migration policies and practices (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021). The South African government's migration policies have been criticised for being restrictive and exclusionary and for perpetuating xenophobic attitudes and behaviours (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021).

The role of the media in perpetuating xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa has also been significant (Phiri, 2021). The media has often been criticised for perpetuating negative stereotypes and attitudes towards migrants and refugees, which has contributed to the development of xenophobia and Afrophobia (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021). Recent incidents of xenophobic violence in South Africa, such as the 2019 xenophobic attacks in Johannesburg and Pretoria, have highlighted the need for a more nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in the country (Phiri, 2021). These incidents have also underscored the importance of addressing the social and economic factors that contribute to xenophobia and Afrophobia and of promoting greater social cohesion and inclusivity in South African society. In summary, the historical and contemporary contexts of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa are complex and multifaceted and have been shaped by a range of social, economic and political factors. Understanding these contexts is crucial for developing effective strategies to address xenophobia and Afrophobia, as well as for promoting greater social cohesion and inclusivity in South African society.

6. Critical Examination of Existing Research and Gaps on Xenophobia and Afrophobia

The existing research on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa has been extensive, with numerous studies examining the causes, consequences and manifestations of these phenomena. However, a critical examination of this research reveals several limitations and gaps that need to be addressed. One of the significant limitations of existing research on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa is its reliance on

quantitative methods and surveys (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). While these methods can provide valuable insights into the prevalence and characteristics of xenophobia and Afrophobia, they often fail to capture the complexities and nuances of these phenomena. They tend to overlook the ways in which xenophobia and Afrophobia are shaped by power relations, social structures and cultural norms (Phiri, 2021).

Another limitation of existing research on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa is its focus on individual-level factors, such as attitudes, beliefs and behaviours (Gordon, 2019; Mutanda, 2022). While these factors are undoubtedly important, they do not capture the broader social and structural factors that contribute to xenophobia and Afrophobia. For example, research has shown that xenophobia and Afrophobia are often linked to poverty, unemployment and inequality, as well as to the legacy of apartheid and colonialism (Misago & Landau, 2023). Furthermore, existing research on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa has been criticised for its reliance on simplistic and binary frameworks (Fafiyebi, 2020). For example, many studies have relied on the distinction between “xenophobic” and “non-xenophobic” individuals without considering the complexities and nuances of xenophobic attitudes and behaviours. Similarly, research has often relied on the binary distinction between “South Africans” and “foreigners” without considering the ways in which these categories are socially constructed and contested (Phiri, 2021).

Finally, existing research on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa has been limited by its failure to consider the perspectives and experiences of marginalised and vulnerable groups (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). For example, research has often overlooked the experiences of women, children and LGBTQ+ individuals, who are often disproportionately affected by xenophobia and Afrophobia. Similarly, research has often failed to consider the perspectives of migrants and refugees themselves, who are often best placed to understand the complexities and nuances of xenophobia and Afrophobia (Phiri, 2021). Thus, while existing research on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa has provided valuable insights into these phenomena, it is limited by its reliance on quantitative methods, individual-level factors, simplistic and binary frameworks and its failure to consider the perspectives and experiences of marginalised and vulnerable groups. Therefore, there is a need for more nuanced and contextualised research that can capture the complexities and nuances of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa.

7. Theoretical Framework: Critical Discourses Analysis, Postcolonial and Decolonial Theories

This study employs a theoretical framework that combines critical discourse analysis (CDA), postcolonial theory and decolonial theory to examine the discursive construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. This framework provides a nuanced and contextualised understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin these phenomena. CDA is a theoretical framework that examines the relationship between language, power and social relationships (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). It provides a critical analysis of how language is used to construct and maintain social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms. CDA has been widely used to examine the discursive construction of social phenomena, including racism, xenophobia and Afrophobia (Fafiyebi, 2020; Phiri, 2021).

Postcolonial theory provides a critical analysis of colonialism's legacy and its ongoing impact on social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Said, 2019).

It examines the ways in which colonialism has shaped the construction of identity, culture and knowledge and how these constructions continue to influence social relationships and power dynamics in postcolonial societies (Bhabha, 2018). Postcolonial theory has been widely used to examine the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in postcolonial societies, including South Africa (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). The decolonial theory provides a critical analysis of colonialism's ongoing impact on social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Mignolo, 2011). It examines the ways in which colonialism has shaped the construction of knowledge, culture and identity and how these constructions continue to influence social relationships and power dynamics in decolonial societies (Grosfoguel, 2011). The decolonial theory has been widely used to examine the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in decolonial societies, including South Africa (Phiri, 2021).

The synthesis of CDA, postcolonial theory and decolonial theory provides a nuanced and contextualised understanding of the discursive construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. This framework examines the ways in which language, power and social relationships intersect to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic discourses. It also examines the ways in which colonialism and its legacy continue to shape the construction of identity, culture and knowledge in South Africa and how these constructions influence social relationships and power dynamics. To this end, the theoretical framework employed in this study provides a nuanced and contextualised understanding of the discursive construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The synthesis of CDA, postcolonial theory and decolonial theory examines the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin these phenomena. This framework provides a critical analysis of the ways in which language, power and social relationships intersect to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic discourses.

8. Research Methodology and Design

This study employs a qualitative desktop and critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to examine the complex and nuanced phenomenon of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The qualitative desktop approach involves a comprehensive review of existing literature, policy documents, media reports and online forums to gather data (Flick, 2022). CDA is a theoretical framework that examines the relationship between language, power and social relationships (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). The qualitative desktop method involves a systematic and comprehensive review of existing literature, policy documents, media reports and online forums to gather data (Flick, 2022). This approach is beneficial for examining complex and nuanced phenomena, such as xenophobia and Afrophobia, which are shaped by a range of social, economic and political factors (Phiri, 2021).

CDA is a theoretical framework that examines the relationship between language, power and social relationships (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). CDA involves a critical analysis of language and discourse to examine how social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms are constructed and maintained (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021). CDA is particularly useful for examining the discursive construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia and how these discourses shape social relationships and power dynamics in South Africa. The data collection methods employed in this study include, firstly, a comprehensive review of existing literature on xenophobia and

Afrophobia in South Africa, including academic articles, books and reports (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). Secondly, a review of policy documents related to xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, including government reports, policies and laws (Misago & Landau, 2023). Thirdly, a review of media reports on xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, including newspaper articles, online news reports and social media posts (Phiri, 2021). Lastly, a review of online forums and social media platforms will be conducted to examine the discursive construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021).

The data analysis procedures employed in this study include, firstly, critical discourse analysis, which is a critical analysis of language and discourse to examine how social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms are constructed and maintained (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). Secondly, thematic analysis: A thematic analysis of the data to identify patterns and themes related to xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The qualitative desktop and CDA approach employed in this study is justified for several reasons. Firstly, it allows for a comprehensive and nuanced examination of the complex phenomenon of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa (Phiri, 2021). Secondly, it enables a critical analysis of the discursive construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia and how these discourses shape social relationships and power dynamics in South Africa (Fafiyebi, 2020). Finally, it provides a framework for examining the ways in which language, power and social relationships intersect to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic discourses (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015).

Discussion of the Key Findings from the Literature

The literature review revealed five major recurring themes that are pertinent to the study of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. These themes are: (1) The Complexities of Xenophobia and Afrophobia, (2) The Role of History and Colonialism, (3) The Impact of Socio-Economic Factors, (4) The Construction of the “Other” and (5) The Need for Critical Discourse Analysis.

Theme 1: The Complexities of Xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa

The theme of “The Complexities of Xenophobia and Afrophobia” emerged as a central recurring theme in the literature, highlighting the multifaceted nature of these phenomena in South Africa. This theme resonates with the Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, which provides a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. Postcolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining colonialism's legacy and its ongoing impact on social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Mhlauli, Salani & Mokotedi, 2015). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Postcolonial Theory highlights the ways in which the legacy of apartheid and colonialism has constructed migrants and refugees as “other” (Nicolaidis, 2020). This construction has perpetuated xenophobic attitudes and behaviours, which are often fueled by feelings of insecurity, anxiety and fear (Phiri, 2021).

Decolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining colonialism's ongoing impact on social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Mignolo, 2011). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Decolonial Theory highlights the ways in which the dominant Western epistemology has constructed migrants and refugees as “other” (Grosfoguel, 2011). This construction has perpetuated

xenophobic attitudes and behaviours, which are often fueled by a desire to maintain power and control over the “other” (Fifiyebe, 2020). CDA provides a critical framework for examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, CDA highlights the ways in which language and discourse are used to construct migrants and refugees as “other” (Phiri, 2021). This construction has perpetuated xenophobic attitudes and behaviours, which are often fueled by a desire to maintain power and control over the “other” (Fafiyebe, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021).

The synthesis of findings from the literature highlights the complexities of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. These phenomena are multifaceted and nuanced, involving a range of social, economic and political factors that intersect to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic discourses. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a critical framework for examining these complexities, highlighting the ways in which the legacy of colonialism, the dominant Western epistemology and language and discourse are used to construct migrants and refugees as “other”. In conclusion, the theme of “The Complexities of Xenophobia and Afrophobia” highlights the multifaceted nature of these phenomena in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a critical framework for examining these complexities, highlighting the ways in which the legacy of colonialism, the dominant Western epistemology and language and discourse are used to construct migrants and refugees as “other”. This synthesis of findings highlights the need for a nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, one that considers the complex social, economic and political factors that underpin these phenomena.

Theme 2: The Role of History and Colonialism in South Africa

The theme of “The Role of History and Colonialism” emerged as a central recurring theme in the literature, highlighting the significant impact of colonialism and apartheid on the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. This theme resonates with the Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, which provides a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. Postcolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining colonialism's legacy and its ongoing impact on social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Mhlauli *et al.*, 2015). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Postcolonial Theory highlights the ways in which the legacy of apartheid and colonialism has constructed migrants and refugees as “other” (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021). This construction has perpetuated xenophobic attitudes and behaviours, which are often fueled by feelings of insecurity, anxiety and fear (Phiri, 2021).

Decolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining the impact of colonialism on knowledge production and its ongoing impact on social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Mignolo, 2011). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Decolonial Theory highlights the ways in which the dominant Western epistemology has constructed migrants and refugees as “other” (Grosfoguel, 2011). This construction has perpetuated xenophobic attitudes and behaviours, which are often fueled by a desire to maintain power and control over the “other” (Fifiyebe, 2020). CDA provides a critical framework for examining the language,

discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, CDA highlights the ways in which language and discourse are used to construct migrants and refugees as “other” (Phiri, 2021). This construction has perpetuated xenophobic attitudes and behaviours, which are often fueled by a desire to maintain power and control over the “other” (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021).

The synthesis of findings from the literature highlights the significant impact of colonialism and apartheid on the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. The findings suggest that the legacy of colonialism and apartheid has constructed migrants and refugees as “other”, perpetuating xenophobic attitudes and behaviours. Thus, the theme of “The Role of History and Colonialism” highlights the significant impact of colonialism and apartheid on the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. The findings suggest that a critical examination of the legacy of colonialism and apartheid is necessary to understand and address xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa.

Theme 3: The Impact of Socio-Economic Factors in South Africa

The theme of “The Impact of Socio-Economic Factors” emerged as a central recurring theme in the literature, highlighting the significant impact of socio-economic factors on the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. This theme resonates with the Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, which provides a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. Postcolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining the legacy of colonialism and its ongoing impact on social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Mhlauli *et al.*, 2015). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Postcolonial Theory highlights the ways in which the legacy of apartheid and colonialism has constructed economic inequality and poverty, which in turn have contributed to the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia (Everatt, 2018). For example, research has shown that areas with high levels of poverty and unemployment are often hotspots for xenophobic violence (Misago & Landau, 2023).

Decolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining the impact of global capitalism on social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Mignolo, 2011). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Decolonial Theory highlights the ways in which global capitalism has constructed economic inequality and poverty, which in turn have contributed to the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia (Grosfoguel, 2011). For example, research has shown that the influx of cheap labour from other African countries has contributed to the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia among South African workers (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021). CDA provides a critical framework for examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South

Africa, CDA highlights the ways in which language and discourse are used to construct economic insecurity and poverty, which in turn contribute to the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia (Phiri, 2021). For example, research has shown that the use of derogatory language and stereotypes to describe migrants and refugees contributes to the construction of economic insecurity and poverty, which in turn perpetuate xenophobic attitudes and behaviours (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021).

The synthesis of findings from the literature highlights the significant impact of socio-economic factors on the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. The findings suggest that economic inequality, poverty and global capitalism have contributed to the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. Thus, the theme of “The Impact of Socio-Economic Factors” highlights the significant impact of socio-economic factors on the construction of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. The findings suggest that a critical examination of the socio-economic factors that contribute to xenophobia and Afrophobia is necessary to understand and address these phenomena in South Africa.

Theme 4: The Construction of the “Other” in South Africa

The theme of “The Construction of the ‘Other’” emerged as a central recurring theme in the literature, highlighting the ways in which migrants and refugees are constructed as “other” in South Africa. This theme resonates with the Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, which provides a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin the construction of the “other”. Postcolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining the ways in which colonialism and apartheid have constructed the “other” in South Africa (Mhlauli *et al.*, 2015). The theory highlights the ways in which the dominant group constructs the “other” as inferior, exotic and threatening to maintain power and control (Bhabha, 2012). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Postcolonial Theory suggests that the construction of migrants and refugees as “other” is a legacy of colonialism and apartheid and is perpetuated through language, discourse and cultural norms (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021).

Decolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining the ways in which global coloniality has constructed the “other” in South Africa (Mignolo, 2011). The theory highlights the ways in which the dominant Western epistemology has constructed the “other” as inferior, exotic and threatening to maintain power and control (Grosfoguel, 2011). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Decolonial Theory suggests that the construction of migrants and refugees as “other” is a result of global coloniality and is perpetuated through language, discourse and cultural norms (Fifiyebi, 2020). CDA provides a critical framework for examining the ways in which language and discourse are used to construct the “other” in South Africa (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). The theory highlights the ways in which language and discourse are used to create social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms that perpetuate the construction of the “other” (Phiri, 2021). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, CDA suggests that the construction of migrants and refugees as “other” is perpetuated

through language and discourse, which are used to create a sense of difference and inferiority (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021).

The synthesis of findings from the literature highlights the ways in which migrants and refugees are constructed as “other” in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin the construction of the “other”. The findings suggest that the construction of migrants and refugees as “other” is a result of colonialism, apartheid and global coloniality and is perpetuated through language, discourse and cultural norms. In summary, the theme of “The Construction of the ‘Other’” highlights the ways in which migrants and refugees are constructed as “other” in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin the construction of the “other”. The findings suggest that a critical examination of the ways in which migrants and refugees are constructed as “other” is necessary to understand and address xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa.

Theme 5: The Need for Critical Discourse Analysis in South Africa

The theme of “The Need for Critical Discourse Analysis” emerged as a central recurring theme in the literature, highlighting the importance of critically examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. This theme resonates with the Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, which provides a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. Postcolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining the ways in which colonialism and apartheid have constructed and maintained power relationships and social norms in South Africa (Mhlauli *et al.*, 2015). The theory highlights the importance of critically examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain these power relationships and social norms (Bhabha, 2012). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Postcolonial Theory suggests that critical discourse analysis is necessary to understand how language, discourse and symbolism are used to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic attitudes and behaviours (Mgogo & Osunkunle, 2021).

Decolonial Theory provides a critical framework for examining the ways in which global coloniality has constructed and maintained power relationships and social norms in South Africa (Mignolo, 2011). The theory highlights the importance of critically examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain these power relationships and social norms (Grosfoguel, 2011). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, Decolonial Theory suggests that critical discourse analysis is necessary to understand how language, discourse and symbolism are used to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic attitudes and behaviours (Fafiyebi, 2020; Abioye & Idoko, 2021). CDA provides a critical framework for examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain social relationships, power dynamics and cultural norms (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). The theory highlights the importance of critically examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic attitudes and behaviours (Phiri, 2021). In the context of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, CDA suggests that critical discourse analysis is necessary to understand how language,

discourse and symbolism are used to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic attitudes and behaviours.

The synthesis of findings from the literature highlights the importance of critically examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. The findings suggest that critical discourse analysis is necessary to understand how language, discourse and symbolism are used to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic attitudes and behaviours. In conclusion, the theme of “The Need for Critical Discourse Analysis” highlights the importance of critically examining the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct and maintain xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The Postcolonial Theory, Decolonial Theory and CDA framework provide a nuanced understanding of the complex power dynamics, social relationships and cultural norms that underpin xenophobia and Afrophobia. The findings suggest that critical discourse analysis is necessary to understand and address xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa.

9. Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations

This qualitative desktop and discourse analysis research, titled “Beyond the Binary: Unpacking Xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa”, aimed to provide a nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The study examined the complex and multifaceted nature of these phenomena, highlighting the need to move beyond simplistic binary frameworks that fail to capture the complexities of xenophobia and Afrophobia. The study extracted five major recurring themes from the existing literature, which provided the framework for analysing xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The five key findings are summarised below.

Firstly, the Complexities of Xenophobia and Afrophobia. This finding highlights that Xenophobia and Afrophobia are complex and multifaceted phenomena that cannot be reduced to simplistic binary frameworks. They involve a range of social, economic and political factors that intersect to construct and maintain xenophobic and Afrophobic discourses. Secondly, the role of history and colonialism in South Africa. This finding establishes that the legacy of apartheid and colonialism has played a significant role in shaping xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa. The historical construction of migrants and refugees as “other” has perpetuated xenophobic attitudes and behaviours. Thirdly, the impact of socioeconomic factors. This finding establishes that socioeconomic factors, such as poverty, unemployment and inequality, have contributed significantly to the construction of migrants and refugees as “other” and have perpetuated xenophobic attitudes and behaviours. Fourthly, the construction of the “Other”. This finding highlights that the construction of migrants and refugees as “Other” is a complex process that involves the use of language, discourse and symbolism to create a sense of difference and inferiority. This construction has perpetuated xenophobic attitudes and behaviours. Lastly, the Need for Critical Discourse Analysis. This finding establishes that critical discourse analysis is a crucial framework for analysing the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct the “other” and perpetuate xenophobic attitudes and

behaviours. It provides a nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa.

This study aimed to answer the research question: “How are xenophobia and Afrophobia constructed and maintained in South Africa?” The study's significance lies in its contribution to a nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, highlighting the need to move beyond simplistic binary frameworks that fail to capture the complexities of these phenomena. This study's findings have significant implications for policymakers, practitioners and future research. The study recommends that policymakers and practitioners adopt a nuanced and contextualised approach to addressing xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, one that considers the complex social, economic and political factors that contribute to these phenomena.

The study also recommends that future research adopt a critical discourse analysis framework to examine the language, discourse and symbolism used to construct the “other” and perpetuate xenophobic attitudes and behaviours. This framework provides a nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, highlighting the need to move beyond simplistic binary frameworks that fail to capture the complexities of these phenomena. In conclusion, this study has provided a nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa, highlighting the need to move beyond simplistic binary frameworks that fail to capture the complexities of these phenomena. The study's findings have significant implications for policymakers, practitioners and future research and it is hoped that this study will contribute to a more nuanced and contextualised understanding of xenophobia and Afrophobia in South Africa.

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