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Migration, Governance and Violent Exclusion:

Exploring the Determinants of Xenophobic Violence in Post-Apartheid South Africa

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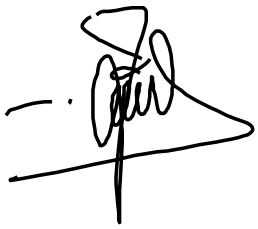
Dissertation in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Migration and Displacement Studies, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand

April 2016

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Jean Pierre Misago



11 April 2016

Dedication

To family members and all other victims of violent discrimination.

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Abstract

Responding to inadequacies and limitations of current causal explanations for xenophobic violence which has become a long standing feature in post-Apartheid South Africa, this study proposes a *Governance Model of Xenophobic Violence* that provides a comprehensive empirically-based and theoretically informed causal explanation. It is a multivariate empirical and integrated theoretical explanatory model that identifies and explains the roles of - and the complex interplays between - the key determinants of xenophobic violence consisting of underlying causes, proximate factors and triggers. The six key determinants the model identifies are: deprivation, xenophobic beliefs, collective discontent, political economy, mobilization and governance. This study argues that these determinants and their interconnections in a value-added process constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of xenophobic violence. I call it the *governance* model because of the predominant role governance plays in the occurrence of xenophobic violence.

With underlying causes (deprivation, xenophobia and collective discontent) already established, the study pays particular attention to the often missed proximate factors and triggers (the political economy of the violence, mobilization and governance). It is through the findings on these new factors that the study introduces new empirical and theoretical insights and innovations to the understanding of, not only, xenophobic violence in South Africa but also collective violence generally. First, this study argues that xenophobic violence in South Africa is just 'politics by other means and by doing so brings to the fore the often missed centrality of micro-politics and localised political economy factors as key drivers of collective violence particularly communal violence.

Second, the study argues that that the triggers of xenophobic violence and of collective violence generally lie in the mobilization processes and not in the grievances and ensuing discontent as argued by many theoretical approaches to collective violence. The study suggests a new theoretical model, the *Mobilization of Discontent Model*, which captures the increasingly recognised centrality of mobilization as a trigger of collective violence.

Third, the study argues that governance is a key determinant of xenophobic and collective violence but not necessary in ways often assumed or prescribed by time-honoured and widely accepted theoretical predictions, particularly those contending that collective violence and other forms of contentious collective action tend to occur in societies where mechanisms of social control have lost their restraining power. By demonstrating that local governance deliberately facilitated the occurrence of xenophobic violence in areas where it occurred by providing what I term *micro-political opportunity structures*, the study calls into question the common understating of the relationship between governance and collective violence and reveals some aspects of this relationship that are either misunderstood or undetected until now.

The *Governance Model of Xenophobic Violence* this study proposes is an innovation that clearly illustrates the poverty of most explanatory models of collective violence, which makes it an appropriate tool for integrating empirical and theoretical knowledge from different disciplines and for identifying gaps in existing scholarship.

I. INTRODUCTION

XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE: RETHINKING METHODOLOGICAL, THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR CURRENT UNDERSTANDINGS

1.1 SETTING THE SCENE

Xenophobic violence has become a longstanding feature in post-Apartheid South Africa. Since 1994, tens of thousands of people have been harassed, attacked, or killed because of their status as outsiders or foreign nationals. The violence was most intense and widely scrutinised in May 2008. Indeed, the May 2008 violence, that started in Alexandra Township on 11 May 2008 and quickly spread to other townships and informal settlements in the country, was unprecedented in its intensity, ferocity and rapid geographic spread (Misago *et al*, 2009).

Graphic images of violent attacks on foreign nationals (e.g. scenes of knife- and stick-wielding aggressors, wounded victims, burning houses, and even a burning man) were seen around the world. These scenes "were soon replaced by images of people who had fled in fear of their lives to seek refuge in churches and police stations, eventually to be re-housed in tent settlements like those housing famine or war refugees" (Dodson, 2010:3). In less than a month, 135 separate violence incidents (Bekker *et al*, 2008) resulted in at least 62 people dead; 670 wounded; dozens raped; more than 100 000 displaced; and millions of Rand worth of property looted, destroyed or appropriated by local residents (CoRMSA, 2008). Most victims were African foreign nationals but a 'third were South Africans who had married foreigners, refused to participate in the violent orgy, or had the misfortune of belonging to

groups that were evidently not South African enough to claim their patch of urban space" (Landau, 2011:1).

After initially denying the crisis and offering unheeded appeals for calm, the government deployed the army forces to contain the violence in June 2008 (Ibid). However, while the violence subsided with the deployment of the army, it did not end there. Indeed, despite government's claims to the contrary (Black Sash, 2009), violence against foreigners continued post-May 2008 and was increasingly reaching 'disturbing proportions' (DAC, 2012). Attacks on non-nationals continue to be regularly reported resulting in rising cases of murder, injuries, threats of mob violence, looting and the destruction of residential property and businesses, as well as mass displacement (CoRMSA, 2011; UNHCR ROSA, 2013[1]; UNHCR ROSA, 2015).

Perhaps not surprisingly, the unprecedented nature of the May 2008 violence triggered a frenzy of analyses and commentary as scholars, policy analysts and government officials attempted to make sense of what was happening in the multiracial 'rainbow' nation (Fauvelle-Aymar *et al.,* 2011; see also Nieftagodien, 2011). The initial official denialism and apparent public surprise (despite many and clear warning signs) were immediately followed by reactionary attempts to explain the causes of the violence. Initial reactions were understandably speculative and based on inaccurate or outdated information, political rationales and ideological stances rather than empirical evidence (Fauvelle-Aymar *et al,* 2011). As such, these explanations (that included 'afrophobia', 'third force', poor border control, poor service delivery, poverty, unemployment, corruption - see for example HSRC, 2008; Landau and Misago, 2009) failed to take into account many underlying historical and socio-political causes as well as specific factors that triggered violence in some areas and not in others.

[1]Unpublished UNHCR stats on data compiled from the UNHCR xenophobia hotline and Communique by UNHCR's Munyaneza Alphonse at the Protection Working Group meeting of 22 January 2013.

Realising that initial reactions and explanations did not adequately explain the occurrence of violence, discussions and debates (among scholars, political actors and practitioners) continued over the root and immediate causes of the violence, the effectiveness of the responses provided and appropriate measures to be put in place to prevent future occurrences. Debates have led to several competing causal explanations that detail broad economic, political, historical, structural and attitudinal factors (see for example Crush *et al*, 2008; Neocosmos, 2008; Sharp, 2008; Pillay, 2008 and Dodson, 2010). While valuable in providing the historical, political and socio-economic context in which the violence occurred, these explanations similarly "falter when faced with empirical or logical interrogation" (Landau 2010:215) as they fail to account for i) the appearance of violence in some areas while others with similar socio-economic conditions remained calm; ii) the specific targeting of certain groups of foreign nationals and the murders of so many South African citizens and iii) the timing, location and diffusion of the violence.

Indeed, as this study clearly demonstrates, existing explanations evidently maintain only a tenuous relationship with empirical reality (with regard to the occurrence of the violence) and actually reveal a methodological and analytical 'laziness' - or at least a lack of analytical rigour - characteristic of hurried analysts who impose a priori explanations to current phenomena without substantive or empirical backing (Horowitz, 2001). Disappointingly, these explanations rarely attempt to answer those 'deceptively' simple but critical questions that illuminate the occurrence of the violence: how, when and where; 'why here and not there'; 'why now and not then'? (See details on these questions in Horowitz, 2001). Analytically, this thesis argues that the poverty of existing explanatory models lies in a twofold repertoire of analytical blind spots: i) the lack of empirical backing as indicated above; and ii) incompleteness as most offer reductionist, one-factor explanations for such a complex social phenomenon and as such can be at best partial or incomplete. Perhaps most

importantly, they all suffer from blindness to their own shortcomings particularly with mono-causal explanations claiming to be all encompassing (i.e. identifying only one factor among many but invalidly claiming to explain the entire process leading to the occurrence of the violence thereby claiming to account for all the elements of the violence causal chain).

Further, a review of the literature reveals that most of the existing research, by virtue of its focus on establishing (if unsuccessfully) '*Why*' xenophobic violence occurred, has neglected those questions that are critical in understanding the occurrence of the violence. The '*How*' question is particularly important if we want to identify and understand processes through which conditions and attitudes lead to or translate into mass violent attacks. Few attempts have been made to establish the link between those general structural factors or even the pervasive xenophobic sentiments and the outbreak of the violence. Only by answering the '*why*' and '*how*' questions are we able to understand and identify all the key determinants (i.e. the underlying factors, and proximate causes and the triggers) of the violence. Similarly, even fewer efforts have been made to explore xenophobic violence and its determinants in relation to established conceptual and theoretical frameworks (Crawely, 2011).

While acknowledging that, since 2008, the violence has received increasing scholarly attention, this limited nature of current explanatory models call for i) a reassessment of our current understanding of the phenomenon and the empirical, theoretical, and methodological assumptions on which it is based, and ii) further academic enquiries that move beyond generalisations, provide theoretically informed and empirically based explanations. There is indeed a recognition that "No one has yet fully explained either the prevalence of a culture of xenophobia in South Africa or the particular outbreak of that culture into specific acts of brutality in May 2008" (Dodson, 2010:11).

With the above in mind, the thesis aims to provide an original empirically based and theoretically informed explanation of xenophobic violence in South Africa by identifying all the key determinants of the violence. In other words, the thesis identifies - and provides an empirical and theoretical grounding and analysis for - both the necessary and sufficient conditions that need to be present - and processes that need to take place - for the occurrence of xenophobic violence.

With a specific focus on the occurrence of the violence (and not on prevailing xenophobic sentiments), and using extensive and comparative empirical data, the thesis argues - and demonstrates the need - for an alternative analytical framework capable of simultaneously identifying the underlying causes, proximate factors and triggers of violence in areas where it occurs. Identifying these factors helps providing an explanation that moves from attitudes to action (xenophobic violence in this case) by considering determinants emanating from both structure (in terms of institutions) and agency (in terms of incentives and opportunities).

I argue that accomplishing this task requires adopting appropriate and innovative methodological and analytical approaches that privilege a qualitative and comparative multi-case study approach and a micro-level analysis of the drivers of the violence. By privileging an analytical approach that focuses on the micro-level relations of power, interests and structures among actors, these approaches help research to move beyond 'unhelpful' generalisations and correlations (often generating from macro-level, quantitative and ecological analyses) and to reveal the most proximate variables and processes that combined to trigger the violence.

Indeed, these innovative approaches enabled this study to develop a *Governance Model of Xenophobic Violence* that provides a comprehensive empirically-based and theoretically informed causal explanation. It is a multivariate empirical and integrated theoretical

explanatory model that identifies and explains the roles of - and the complex interplays between - the key determinants of xenophobic violence consisting of underlying causes, proximate factors and triggers. The six key determinants the model identifies are: deprivation, xenophobic beliefs, collective discontent, political economy, mobilization and governance. This study argues that these determinants and their interconnections in a value-added process constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of xenophobic violence. I call it the *governance* model because of the predominant role governance plays in the occurrence of xenophobic violence. Indeed, while making it clear that all determinants are important and each plays an indispensable role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence (i.e. xenophobic violence would not happen if any of the determinants were missing), the model also shows that governance plays a predominant role not only because of its critical contribution as an element in the causal chain but also, and most importantly, due to the significant roles it plays in the making and the effectiveness of other co-determinants.

With underlying causes (deprivation, xenophobia and collective discontent) already established, the study pays particular attention to the often missed proximate factors and triggers (the political economy of the violence, mobilization and governance). It is through the findings on these new factors that the study introduces new empirical and theoretical insights and innovations to the study and understanding of, not only, xenophobic violence in South Africa but also collective violence generally. By doing so, the study contributes to broader contemporary and interdisciplinary (particularly social psychology, sociology and political science,) scholarly debates in collective violence research in at least three significant ways:

First, challenging - and addressing the weaknesses of - the commonly used macro-economic explanations, this study argues that xenophobic violence in South Africa is just ‘politics by

other means' as/and its instrumental motives are located in the local political economy and micro-political processes at play in affected areas. By doing so, the study brings to the fore the often missed centrality of micro-politics and localised political economy factors as key drivers of collective violence particularly community or group-based violent conflicts.

Second, the study argues that that the triggers of xenophobic violence and of collective violence generally lie in the mobilization processes and not the in the grievances and ensuing discontent as argued by many theoretical approaches to collective violence. Theoretical perspectives reviewed and rich empirical evidence presented in building up to this argument enable the study to suggest a new theoretical model that captures the increasingly recognised centrality of mobilization as a trigger of collective violence: *the Mobilization of Discontent Model*. This model specifically focuses on - and explains the - triggers or processes that intervene between the potential for collective violence and its actualization.

Third, the study argues that governance (and more specifically local governance) is a key determinant of xenophobic and collective violence but not necessary in ways often assumed or prescribed by time-honoured and widely accepted theoretical predictions, particularly those contending that collective violence and other forms of contentious collective action tend to occur in societies where mechanisms of social control (particularly institutional leadership and authority) have lost their restraining power. By demonstrating that local governance (formal or informal) deliberately facilitated the occurrence of xenophobic violence in areas where it occurred by providing what I term *micro-political opportunity structures,* the study calls into question the common understating of the relationship between governance and collective violence and reveals some aspects of this relationship that are either misunderstood or undetected until now.

By giving a useful overview of the multiplicity of the empirical causal factors, their interconnections and their individual theoretical backings, the explanatory model this study proposes clearly illustrates the poverty of most explanations for collective violence and this makes it an appropriate tool for integrating empirical and theoretical knowledge from different disciplines and for identifying gaps in existing scholarship. By providing a complete explanatory model, this study adds realism, power and depth to the otherwise truncated research on - and analysis of - xenophobic violence in South Africa and collective violence generally.

Indeed, the analysis of xenophobic violence in South Africa offers an opportune entry into contemporary scholarly debates over explanatory models for (other types of) collective violence and provides this study with useful insights and tools to identify gaps and demonstrate that current models equally miss or overlook critical variables/determinants or misinterpret their role or contribution in the violence causal chain. This study therefore seeks not only to identify missing links in the xenophobic violence causal chain but also, using extensive comparative primary data, to put to empirical test common explanations and mainstream theoretical approaches to collective violence.

Finally, in addition to its scholarly significance, the thesis presents potential practical relevance and implications. By clearly identifying the main and critical elements of the causal chain, the study implicitly identifies critical areas where intervention efforts could be targeted in order to stop on-going -and prevent future- xenophobic violence in the country. As Misago *et al*. (2015) note, responses and intervention strategies to address xenophobic violence in South Africa have largely been ineffective because they are not evidence-based. Interventions have failed to stop on-going or prevent future violence because they are not informed by a clear understanding of key causal factors or determinants.

The remainder of this introduction proceeds through two sections. Based on a literature review, the first section provides a brief overview of xenophobic violence global dimensions and theoretical approaches. After showing that xenophobic violence is a global phenomenon that affects migrants in both developed and developing countries, the section discusses how the literature qualifies different theoretical approaches to xenophobic violence, evaluating their explanatory value and utility to this research as well as introducing boarder theoretical debates in which this study is embedded or with which it engages. The second and last section provides an overview of the structural organization of the thesis, summarizing the main points and arguments of each chapter and explaining how the overall thesis argument will be constructed throughout.

1.2 XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE: GLOBAL DIMENSIONS AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES

1.2.1 Xenophobic Violence and Its Global Dimensions

Xenophobic violence generally refers to any acts of violence (by local communities, groups or crowds) targeted at foreign nationals or 'outsiders' because of their being foreign or strangers. It is a clear and explicit targeting of foreign nationals or outsiders for violent attacks whatever other material, political, cultural or social forces that might be at work (Dodson, 2010). Its main characteristics include murder, assaults causing grievous bodily harm, looting, robbery, arson attacks (burning of people and property), displacement, intimidation and threats, harassment, eviction notices, etc.

This type of violence is a worldwide phenomenon. As Crush *et al* (2009) note, numerous studies have documented the escalation in public violence against ethnic minorities in both developed and developing countries. In the North, particularly in Eastern and Western

Europe, an upward trend in recorded racist and xenophobic crimes has been recently documented in countries such as Russia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, France, Ireland, Slovakia, Finland and the United Kingdom.

Rupert (2006) for example notes that a 2002 UNHCR survey in Moscow revealed that an overwhelming 58 percent of Afghan asylum-seekers had been targeted in brutal attacks with crude weapons like metal chains, gas cylinders, bats and beer bottles. He further notes that the frequency of xenophobic violence was even higher for African refugees, 77 percent of whom reported being attacked in the previous month. Similarly Crush *et al* (2009) cite a more recent assessment by the Moscow Bureau for Human Rights indicating that the level of xenophobic violence in 2007 rose by almost a third compared to the previous year with the number of fatalities rising by 20 percent. The number of victims increased by nearly two times the figure recorded for 2006. Crush *et al* (2009: 10) further indicate that "Numerous studies have documented the escalation in public violence against ethnic minorities in Western Europe during the previous decade. Some of the most high profile incidents included arson attacks on residences occupied by asylum-seekers and immigrants in places like Lubeck, Hoyerswerda, Rostock and Molln."

In the South, the most recently affected countries include South Africa, India, Dominican Republic, Libya, Malaysia and Thailand. Below are a few examples that describe the nature and extent of the violence in the south (Crush *et al*, 2009). In India for example, increasing xenophobic antagonism has been directed at irregular migrants from neighbouring Bangladesh and other minority groups including Indian Muslims and Indian Bengalis who are increasingly viewed as a threat to national or ethnic cultural well-being and security (Ibid). In September 2008, xenophobic violence in northern Assam resulted in more than 50 deaths and the displacement of more than 10,000 Muslim migrants (Sushanta, 2008).

In Libya, unprecedented anti-immigrant violence was witnessed in September 2000. It erupted in Zawiya west of Tripoli and quickly spread to other areas like Zahrah and Benghazi. "On September 25, a mob of around 1,000 Libyans reportedly attacked and set ablaze a locality occupied by Ghanaian migrants" (Takeyh, 2000). According to the World Refugee Survey (2001), several hundred migrants (including 50 Sudanese and Chad workers) were killed and some 20,000 African migrants fled Libya (USCRI, 2001). Xenophobic violence similarly has become a perennial feature in post-Apartheid South Africa as I indicated earlier and will discuss further in Chapter III. In sum, this brief overview clearly indicates that xenophobic violence is a worldwide phenomenon that affects migrant communities in both developed and developing countries.

1.2.2 Theoretical Approaches to Xenophobic Violence

This section discusses how the literature qualifies different theoretical approaches to xenophobic violence, evaluating their explanatory value and utility to this research as well as introducing boarder theoretical debates in which this study is embedded or with which it engages. It shows while dominants theoretical models make significant contributions to the understanding of xenophobic and collective violence, they fall short when applied as sufficient explanations and need supplementation.

Despite its global and growing dimensions, xenophobic violence does not seem to have attracted as much 'targeted' theoretical attention as have other types of collective violence particularly political and ethnic violence. As this section shows, attempts at theoretical explanations and predictions of xenophobic violence often borrow either from the 'theorizing' of other types of violence, or from 'generic' main stream theories of collective violence briefly discussed below.

There appears to be as many theoretical approaches to conflict and collective violence as there are scholarly/academic disciplines. Indeed, most academic disciplines (e.g. psychology, sociology, biology, anthropology, political sciences, etc.) have put forward different explanatory frameworks to make sense of conflict and/or collective violence (see DeKeseredy *et al*, 2006). Analysts have grouped theories from different disciplines into many categories according to many different purposes and criteria including their levels of analysis, such as macro vs. micro theories [see Conteh-Morgan, 2004], their intrapersonal vs. societal factor considerations (sociobiological vs. social-structural vs. psycho-cultural approaches [see DeKeseredy *et al*, 2006], and their aspect-specific explanatory focus (e.g. deprivation vs. mobilization/organisation theories that specifically focus on the occurrence of collective violence [see Snyder, 1978 and Aya, 1979]).

For present purposes, I consider the latter categorization because the two lines of theorizing (deprivation and mobilisation approaches) in that category i) have received much more attention than most others in recent times (Horowitz, 2001); ii) present arguments that contain and address most of the main alternative theories' central ideas (Snyder, 1978); and iii) capture relevant debates about the critical determinants and triggers of collective violence, which is indeed the object of the study. Debates about the relative merits and explanatory value of deprivation and mobilization theoretical approaches currently dominate the literature on collective violence causal factors and despite their differences, these approaches attracted the attention they did particularly because they share a useful and significant "corrective to earlier theories: they emphasize the collective rationality in contrast to earlier theories that postulated that collective violence was irrational" (Horowitz, 2001:35).

Despite their popularity and contribution however, I argue that these approaches and their imbedded theories are still not adequate explanations for the occurrence of collective violence

and by extension of xenophobic violence. Their limitations lie in their reductionist or isolationist approach i.e. their claims that one factor can fully explain collective violence in isolation of other societal conditions and processes. As I show in this discussion, when applied as sufficient explanations, these approaches, taken singly or on combination, are ultimately inadequate and in need for supplementation. As Sen (2008) rightly notes, the causal mechanisms of collective violence are more complex than reductionist approaches are capable of accounting for. The following brief overview of these approaches highlights the main arguments made by associated theories, their explanatory advantages and weaknesses as well as theoretical gaps and/or empirical questions left unanswered.

1.2.2.1 The Deprivation Approach

The central argument of theories in this approach, also known as *discontent model* (Snyder, 1978) or *'volcanic' model* (Aya, 1979), is that generalised objective and/or perceived deprivation in political, social or economic welfare leads to collective discontent or mass anger that eventually erupts in collective violence (Ibid). All the theories in this approach cannot be reviewed here. The following is a brief outline of the three most commonly used and most relevant for present purposes. These are functionalism, realistic conflict theory and relative deprivation theory.

1.2.2.1.1 Functionalism

The functionalist theory explains collective violence not in terms of the causes it depends on but in terms of its purpose and motives. Durkheim (in Coser, 1967:140) notes that "The determination of function is necessary for the complete explanation of the phenomena. To explain a social fact it is not enough to show the cause on which it depends; we must also, at least in most cases, show its function in the establishment of social order."

While the immediate consequence of collective violence may be harm to the victim, there may be positive functions (both latent and manifest) for the actor, the group or the society. At both individual and group levels, violence can serve as an alternative avenue for achieving individual and societal goals when legitimate means are perceived to have failed (Straus *et al*, 1973). As an indicator of severe underlying social discontents and maladjustment in the community (Coser, 1967), collective violence is often seen as a legitimate attempt to protect or restore 'threatened' social, structural and material orders. It is motivated by the pressing need for redress of grievances (Aya, 1979).

1.2.2.1.2 Realistic group conflict theory

A variation of functionalism is the *realistic group conflict theory*, which, focussing on social-structural sources of group difference, stipulates that violent conflict between groups is rooted in a clash of competing group interests, be they economic or claims to social status and privileges (Brief *et al*, 2005). While group interests may clash over a wide variety of valued goods, including claims to social status and privileges, Sniderman *et al* (2004:3) argue that "… on most realistic conflict interpretations, the core of group conflict is the clash of competing economic interests." Realistic conflict explanations take the key explanatory mechanism to be economic competition and presume the driving motive is a desire to be materially better off (Ibid). Insko *et al* (1992:273) similarly note that according to realistic group conflict theory, out-group rejection and/or hostility "flows from intergroup conflict over real issues such as territory, jobs, power, and economic benefit." The theory suggests that group competition over resources and opportunities can lead to group tensions and ultimately violent group conflict (Sniderman *et al*, 2004).

1.2.2.1.3 Relative deprivation theory

Relative deprivation is a perceived discrepancy between people's value expectations - in the sense of the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are entitled - and their value capabilities - in the sense of the goods and conditions they think they are capable of getting and keeping -, i.e. the disparity between expectation and gratification (Gurr, 1970). The relative deprivation theory suggests that experiences of deprivation, as an individual or a group level experience, and concomitant feelings of frustration and alienation arise when there is a discrepancy between value expectations and value capability as reflected in the social and physical environment. Horowitz (2001:37) notes that:

> Intellectual origins of relative deprivation literature lie in the psychological conceptualization of individual aggression as the product of anger produced by frustration, where frustration results from impediments placed in the path of goal - directed behavior. […] On this view, violence does not stem from impulses generated by participating in a crowd - still less could it derive from some primal instinct or unresolved problems in childhood - but rather is always instigated by an external thwarting agent. The expression of anger, emotion, is not then irrationally produced. Rather, violence is, in this paradigm, a response to a grievance.

Where deprivation is widespread and extreme, the possibility for violence is greater (Conteh-Morgan, 2004), and "the potential for collective violence varies strongly with the intensity and scope of relative deprivation among members of a collectivity" (Fortman, 2005:7; see also Snyder, 1978). The scope and intensity of the relative deprivation on some criterion produces the variations in collective discontent which, according to the theory, is a major determinant of collective violence (Snyder, 1978; Aya, 1979). In Gurr's own terms:

"Discontent arising from the perception of relative deprivation is the basic, instigating condition for participants in collective violence" (1970:13).

While still popular, the use of classical psychological theories of relative deprivation and frustration-aggression as explanations of collective violence leaves many analysts not entirely satisfied with their explanatory power. Indeed many have criticised the theory for its tendency towards psychological reductionism (see for example Waddington *et al*, 2005 and Sen, 2008), and its inability to conclusively illuminate how affective dimensions or emotional processes experienced at an individual level lead to collective violence acts (Seedat *et al*, 2010).

Generally, (Aya, 1979) notes that, despite its popular use, the deprivation approach or model (and the theories it represents; some of which are outlines above) has been heavily criticized on methodological and empirical grounds particularly for failing to address important substantive questions relating to how discontented individuals come to undertake collective action. The model fails to explain the links between individual propensities and the occurrence of collective violent events or the passage from individual and collective discontent to collective violent action (Ibid), particularly given the non-conclusive evidence on attitude-behaviour consistency (Wicker, 1969 in Snyder, 1978).

Further, according to Aya (1979), theories in this model fail to specify the conditions under which expectations may be frustrated without producing violence. "[...] they simply assume a direct connection between frustration and revolt, and thus beg the question they profess to have answered" (Ibid: 57). Many analysts have indicated that there is little or no relationship between variations in relative deprivation and the pace and timing of collective violence (see for example Snyder, 1978; Aya, 1979; Sen 2008 and Oberschall, 2010).

Many analysts have used the deprivation approach and variables to explain xenophobic violence in South Africa (see for example Pillay, 2008 and HSRC, 2008) but as the discussion in chapter III shows, these explanations fall short when faced with logical and empirical interrogation. Using empirical evidence, this study echoes the limitations (of the deprivation approach) mentioned above and agrees with Crush *et al*, 2009:16) that "[W]hile there is an understandable reductionist tendency to view anti-foreign violence as a direct product of the material deprivation and competition amongst poor South Africans, this does not explain why all poor communities did not explode in May 2008"; and with Tshitereke (1999:4) that "violence is not an inevitable outcome of relative deprivation."

1.2.2.2 The Mobilization[2] Approach

Theories in this approach were developed partly as a response to the above-outlined conceptual and empirical limitations of the deprivation theories (Snyder, 1978). The core argument of this approach, also referred to as the *political model* (Aya, 1979) is that it is the organization or mobilization of discontent that triggers collective violence rather than just discontent or grievances themselves. As Snyder (1978:514) notes, "[...] organizational variables are crucial in transforming the subjective states into collective events and [...] violence would not generally occur in situations which are comparable except for the absence of such mechanisms". The most prominent theories in this approach include resource mobilization, rational choice and elite manipulation theories.

1.2.2.2.1 Resource mobilization theory

Used mainly to explain political collective violence (see for instance Tilly, 1978), the theory posits that collective action flows from groups vying for political positions and advantages. It

[2] 'Mobilization' here refers broadly to all activities aimed at recruiting and persuading individuals to participate in collective action/violence.

"is simply politics by other means" (Gamson, 1975 in Useem, 2010:216). Collective violence is "used as strategy employed to extract benefits from those who control or own resources" (Bekker *et al*, 2009:22); or as "a way of securing influence in the political process for groups without routinized access, a mode of 'aggressive political participation (Muller, 1979 in Horowitz 2011:38).

According to this view, collective violence is not, or at least not only, a response to deprivation. Piven *et al* (1991:439) note that "one insignia of resource mobilization work is the argument that there is little or no relationship between variations in relative deprivation and the pace and timing of collective violence." Proponents of this view argue that deprivation and the resulting discontent are a 'constant' that cannot adequately explain the occurrence of collective violence only in certain places and at certain times. Summarizing their arguments, Piven *et al* (1991:439) writes:

> […] Oberschall argues asserts that "Grievances and disaffection are a fairly permanent and recurring feature of the historical landscape" (1978:298), suggesting a "constancy of discontent" (McAdam, *et. al*., 1988), which in turn justifies shifting "from a strong assumption about the centrality of deprivation and grievance to a weak one" in explanations of collective violence or protest.

This is not to say that grievances or discontent are not important or invoked but "they want political mobilization via association, formal or informal, to be galvanised into action" (Aya, 1979:49). Resource mobilization theory pays more attention to how violence is organized and how and why individuals participate (Horowitz, 2011) and indeed resource mobilization theorists (see for example Zald *et al*, 1979) have long insisted on the primacy of organizational variables for the occurrence of collective violent action.

1.2.2.2.2 Rational choice theory

According to this theory, instead of being irrational outburst, collective violence represents the outcome of a *rational choice*. Collective violence is instrumental to a goal; however vaguely formulated the goal may be (see for example Gamson, 1975 and Oberschall, 2010). It is simply one option among a continuum of political actions (Chabal *et al*, 2005); a deliberate effort undertaken for discernible reasons (Aya, 1979). Arguing in the same vein as the resource mobilization perspective, the theory conceives of collective violence as an act of collective and rational decision-makers that mobilize their followers and promote their causes with the best available strategies informed by cognitive material and socio-political resources at their disposal (Kitschelt, 1986).

While organization or mobilization can exert a systematic influence on the actor's decision concerning participation in collective violence (Hechter *et al*, 1982), the rational choice theory stipulates that "an individual will join collective violent action only when he expects the benefits of his participation to exceed the costs; when the net value of doing so is positive, that is when benefits [collective and/or individual] of such activity outweigh costs" (Ibid: 442). The benefits ought not only be material or economic rewards. Social, political or 'identitive' or emotive incentives are equally important (Muller *et al*, 1986).

1.2.2.2.3 Elite Manipulation Theory

The central argument of the theory is that collective violence often results from the manipulation of masses by the elites for their (elites') economic and political interests. Understanding that "groups rarely organize themselves without some sort of political leader that is able to harness and bring critical issues to the forefront of individual consciousness" (Gerring, 2009:12) , elites often strategically mobilize existing - or purposely created -

popular discontent into collective action for maximum political gain (Ibid). Elites "create opportunities with issues and crises to advance their interests and goals" (Oberschall, 2010:181). Elites can be elected or self-appointed leaders, political party leaders or specific interest groups. Tilly (2003) refers to them as '*political entrepreneurs'* or '*violence specialists'*. The search for causes and triggers of collective violence needs to include the understanding of instrumental motives of local elites or political entrepreneurs.

In sum, the mobilization approach argues that "whether individuals ever organize to pursue common interests or redress shared grievances is highly problematic rather than inevitable, as is often assumed (Snyder, 1978:504). Therefore the organization of discontent becomes a central explanatory variable particularly insofar as it helps to account for how individuals come to participate collectively (at the same place, time, and often for the same purpose) in large-scale violent acts (Ibid). As Snyder (1978) notes, the general merits of the mobilization model lie in their greater attention to dynamic processes (e.g. interactions among groups) and their attempt to address questions that are 'logical necessities' in explaining collective violence but are underemphasized in most other theories: how does collective violence occur?

Despite the merits however, the model is not without weaknesses. Critics argue that the model's shortcomings lie in 'its excessively centralized conception of mobilization', which makes it extremely difficult to account for apparently spontaneous events that lack evidence of any organizational base (Snyder, 1978:506). In addition, I argue that the model's inability to specify what societal conditions the capacity for mobilization depends on, and exactly what organizational variables are at play renders it an inadequate explanation for the occurrence of collective violence. For example, while specifically stipulating that it is the mobilisation of discontent that triggers collective violence, the model fails to acknowledge the contributing role of discontent and its causal factors in the violence causal chain.

In conclusion, the discussion above clearly shows that while dominant theoretical models contribute to the understanding of collective violence, they fall short when applied as sufficient explanations. As indicated earlier, their main weakness lies in their reductionist approach that attempts to explain collective violence solely in terms of deprivation or mobilization. The causal factors they put forward are important but neither works on its own, nor can provide a full and adequate explanation for the occurrence of collective violence. I agree with Sen (2008) who opines that approaches to explaining violence should avoid isolationist models because individual factors, not matter how important they are, cannot provide an adequate understanding of the causation of such a complex phenomenon in isolation of other societal conditions and processes. As Sen argues, "A solitarist approach is, in general, a very efficient way of misunderstanding nearly everyone [or everything] in the world" (Ibid: 7).

Indeed, this thesis shows that both deprivation and mobilization are important determinants of xenophobic violence (deprivation as one of the key underlying causes and mobilization as the trigger) but are not sufficient explanations when applied individually or even in combination. They need supplementation i.e. they require the effect of other indispensable underlying and proximate factors to produce xenophobic violence. The combination of these determinants produces the multivariate explanatory model (*the governance model of xenophobic violence*) I advocate for in this thesis.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THESIS

The thesis consists of two main sections. The first section comprises three chapters (I, II and III) that present the study's contextual, conceptual/theoretical, methodological and empirical foundations. The second section consists similarly of three chapters (IV, V and VI) which, while essentially empirical, are in fact a rich blend of literature and empirics: they are

structured around three main bodies of literature this study's empirical findings contribute to. These are i) micro politics and the local political economy of collective and xenophobic violence, ii) mobilization as a trigger of collective and xenophobic violence, iii) the role of governance in the occurrence collective and xenophobic violence. The chapters undertake a comparative analysis of multi-case study data and 'confront' the findings with existing relevant theoretical and empirical literature. In so doing, the chapters start underlining the study's overall contribution to this body of knowledge that (the contribution) will be summarised in the seventh and concluding chapter.

After the introduction and the methods chapters, the thesis becomes a painstaking analytical exercise that i) identifies and discusses the key determinants of xenophobic violence in South Africa; one at time and chapter by chapter (i.e. each determinant with a specifically dedicated chapter); and ii) examines the interconnections between these determinants; all building towards what I argue is a reasonably complete list of key determinants of xenophobic violence. These determinants and their interconnections form what I term the *governance model of xenophobic violence*. I argue that the model provides a comprehensive empirical and theoretical explanation of xenophobic violence that not only accounts for all the key determinants but also explains their interconnections. The model recognizes that in the violence causal chain, interconnections between determinants are as important as the determinants themselves.

The model introduces new empirical and theoretical insights and innovations to the study and understanding of, not only, xenophobic violence in South Africa but also collective violence generally. Indeed, by giving a useful overview of the multiplicity of the empirical causal factors, their interconnections and their individual theoretical backings, the model clearly illustrates the poverty of most explanatory models of collective violence and this makes it an

appropriate tool for integrating empirical and theoretical knowledge from different disciplines and for identifying gaps in existing scholarship. The model indeed bridges previous and newly identified strands of empirical and theoretical knowledge in the field. While evidence from this study of xenophobic violence in South Africa provides strong support for my propositions, more research evidence from other contexts and preferably other similar types of collective violence is needed for their consolidation. That said however, the study argues that the model is already fairly applicable to other types of communal violence although it may require adaptation to respond to peculiarities of each type.

The following is a brief overview of the chapters and their contributions to the thesis arguments.

Chapter II: Methods and Methodology: Researching the Determinants of Xenophobic Violence

The chapter discusses the methodological and analytical choices the study makes. It argues that explaining xenophobic violence in South Africa requires methodological and analytical approaches capable of simultaneously identifying the underlying causes, proximate factors and triggers of violence. It shows that achieving this requires adopting appropriate and innovative methodological approaches that privilege a qualitative and comparative multi-case study approach and a micro-level analysis of the drivers of the violence. After these epistemological arguments, the chapter provides a detailed account of - and the rationale behind - the methodological choices and preferences with regard to research design, site selection, sampling, data collection and data analysis techniques.

Chapter III: Xenophobic Violence in Contemporary South Africa: History, Morphology and Common Explanations

This chapter provides a historical and contextual background and a detailed account of the dimensions and nature of xenophobic violence in contemporary South Africa. It pays particular attention to the May 2008 violence (as it is the main object of the study). It situates the May 2008 attacks within an extended history of xenophobic violence in South Africa and of violent conflict within the country's townships and informal settlements. The main objective of the chapter is however to provide a critical review of current common hypotheses and explanations provided to account for the causes of the violence.

It argues that these common accounts, whose main emphasis is on general structural, historical and macro-economic conditions, are not logical scientific explanations and maintain only a tenuous relationship with empirical reality. The chapter's obvious argument is that these general conditions of socio-economic and political deprivation (real or perceived) affect most of the country's townships and informal settlements and can therefore not explain the outbreak of the violence in specific locations at specific times. Another weakness this chapter identifies is that even some of the explanations that have some plausibility only offer reductionist, one-factor causes to explain such a complex social phenomenon and as such can be at best partial or incomplete. Deprivation is a factor or an important determinant but not a sufficient explanation on its own.

Chapter IV: Micro-Politics and Political Economy of the Violence

The limited explanatory value of these broad and general conditions suggests that only by looking at local conditions and dynamics can we get better insights into specific conditions and processes that fuelled the violence outbursts in communities where they occurred. Using extensive empirical evidence, this chapter identifies two main local factors that are directly linked to the occurrence of xenophobic violence. These are micro-politics and the localised

political economy of the violence. This chapter specifically analyses the role played by these two factors to foster and prevent violence in affected and non-affected areas respectively.

By showing that violence against foreign nationals was organised and led by local groups and individuals attempting to claim or consolidate power and authority needed to further their political and economic interests, the chapter challenges the commonly used macro-economic explanations and argues that the violence is just 'politics by other means' as/and its instrumental motives are located in the local political economy and micro-political processes at play in many of the country's towns, townships and informal settlements. The chapter provides evidence to support this argument through the discussion and identification of i) distinguishing localised socio-economic and political dynamics of violence affected and non-affected areas to establish why violence occurs in some locations and not in others, and ii) roles and motivations of key players.

The chapter shows that, by adopting the 'most similar systems' approach, this study is able to explain the absence of the xenophobic violence in potentially volatile locations. It proves that the absence of xenophobic violence in potentially volatile areas is explained by the nature of local authority and community leadership characterised by popular trust and legitimacy, non-receptiveness to violence as well as genuine intent and ability to represent and look out for the interests and safety of all residents. In so doing, the study answers, as promised, the important but often overlooked '*where*' or '*why here and not there'* question.

Through these discussions, the chapter makes a three-fold methodological and empirical contribution to the understanding of xenophobic violence in South Africa and collective violence in general. First, it further reveals -and addresses the weaknesses of- the commonly used macro-economic explanations; second, it highlights the need for alternative and more appropriate methodological and analytical approaches to study xenophobic violence and

collective violence in general; and third, it reveals the uniqueness of this study which, by adopting the 'most similar systems' approach, is able to explain the absence of the xenophobic violence in potentially volatile locations. While the 'political economy' is not a new concept in the literature on collective violence, the chapter contributes to global debates in this discipline by bringing to the fore the often missed centrality of micro-politics and localised political economy factors as key drivers of communal violence.

Chapter V: Mobilization as the Trigger of Xenophobic Violence

This chapter takes the analysis of the drivers of xenophobic violence a step further to establish how local socio-economic and political dynamics as well as violence entrepreneurs' instrumental motives translate into collective violent attacks. It bears repeating that only by answering the 'why', 'how', 'where' and 'when' questions, can we truly identify all the determinants of xenophobic and collective violence or at least all the key elements of the causal chain. Following the previous chapter that answers the 'where' and 'why' questions, this chapter focuses on '*How*' violent attacks on foreigner nationals occurred and by doing so, identifies the real triggers of xenophobic violence.

Drawing from extensive empirical data for this study and from global theoretical and empirical literature, the chapter argues and proves that the triggers of xenophobic violence in South Africa (and of collective violence in general) are located in the mobilization processes. The chapter reveals that, while local or micro-level socio-economic and political circumstances or dynamics are important elements in heightening tensions and creating collective discontent, anger and resentment towards foreign nationals, it is the mobilization of this discontent and not the discontent itself that triggered the May 2008 xenophobic violence and similar attacks that preceded and followed it. I argue that mobilization is the vital *connective tissue* between discontent or grievances and collective violence.

Further, by showing that the triggers of the May 2008 xenophobic violence are rather embedded in the mobilization processes, this chapter *usefully provides a corrective to my earlier analysis* (Misago, 2011) whose conclusion situated the triggers in the micro-politics at play in the country's poor informal settlements and townships. It reveals that the main mobilization techniques and processes that triggered the May 208 xenophobic violence include: i) mobilization by rhetorical means (e.g. haranguing and inciting crowds in mass community meetings and spreading purposely engineered rumours), ii) mobilization by setting an example or starting the violence and asking others to join; iii) door-to-door mobilization, and iv) patronage or the hiring of 'area boys' to attack the target group.

As such, this chapter adds a new and critical element or determinant in the understanding of xenophobic violence in South Africa and of collective violence in general. It highlights the often missed or taken-for-granted defining role mobilization plays in triggering xenophobic or collective violence by proving that without mobilization, a targeted collective violent act is not possible or is at least highly unlikely.

Finally, theoretical perspectives reviewed and rich empirical evidence presented in this chapter enable me to suggest a new theoretical model that captures the increasingly recognised centrality of mobilization as a trigger of collective violence: the *Mobilization of Discontent Model.* The new model specifically focusses on -and explains the- triggers or processes that intervene between the potential for collective violence and its actualization. Unlike other theoretical models reviewed earlier, this model does not intend to be all encompassing; in other words it is not an attempt to account for all determinants of collective violence. It is a model that specifically focusses on one key determinant and intends to lay bare its mechanics or modalities. Its scope is therefore intentionally limited since no one theory or model can explain every element of the collective violence causal chain.

Chapter VI: Local Governance and Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

The chapter takes the analysis of the determinants of xenophobic violence further by examining societal conditions the capacity for mobilization depends on i.e. the conditions under which mobilization for xenophobic violence is likely to succeed or fail. One defining condition the study identifies is local governance. Building on Chapter IV, this chapter provides additional evidence and extends the analysis to further demonstrate that favourable governance factors provided a favourable platform or socio-political opportunity structure for mobilization to take place and eventually succeed while violence non-receptive leadership prevented it despite mobilization attempts.

It proves that local governance played a defining role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa by providing a favourable political opportunity structure in two significant ways. On the one hand, local governance provided locally based and generated socio-political opportunities (which I term *micro-political opportunity structures*) for the occurrence of xenophobic violence in areas where it occurred. On the other hand, in areas where institutional local authority was weak or absent, violent alternative governance by non-state actors defined new forms of social control and authority that saw violence as, not only a tool to consolidate their power and legitimacy, but also as a 'legitimate' means of protecting or restoring threatened local socio-economic and political orders.

By demonstrating that May 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa occurred both in areas where the local authority was present and strong and in areas where it was weak or absent, and drawing from studies elsewhere, this chapter critically reviews and challenges widely accepted and time-honoured theoretical predictions that collective violence and other forms of contentious collective action tend to occur in societies where mechanisms of social control have lost their restraining power.

The study's findings in this chapter are both empirical and epistemological. Empirically, the study identifies governance as one of the critical determinants of xenophobic and collective violence (as summarised above). Epistemologically, the study lends evidence-based support to voices that are increasingly calling for a review of the foundations of the current understanding of -and approaches to- legitimate governance and its core functions of social control and political order.

Through this chapter, the study supports voices that demand a review of the outdated state-centric approach to governance and an approach that recognizes non-state systems of governance (Landau *et al*, 2010). A more accurate understanding of governance and its multiplicity of modes, nodes, levels and actors would provide a more solid foundation for a better analysis and understanding of the causal relationships between its (governance) factors and the occurrence of different types of collective violence.

Chapter VII: Conclusions: Towards a Governance Model of Xenophobic Violence

The concluding chapter first revisits the main arguments and findings of the study and summarizes its contributions to the methodological, empirical and theoretical literature not only on xenophobic violence but also on collective violence generally. Second, it brings together all the elements of the xenophobic violence causal chain discussed in previous chapters in a multivariate empirical and theoretical model I call *the governance model of xenophobic violence.* The model provides what I argue is a reasonably complete outline of the key determinants of xenophobic violence (i.e. the necessary and sufficient conditions) and explains their interconnections or the value added process leading up to the occurrence for the occurrence of xenophobic violence. I argue that the model is applicable to other types of communal violence although it may require adaptation to respond to peculiarities of each type.

II. METHODS AND METHODOLOY: RESEARCHING THE DETEMINANTS OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the methodological approaches and analytical frameworks the study adopts and the reasons behind these choices. Dictated by fairly obvious epistemological imperatives, the choice of these approaches and frameworks responds to methodological and analytical weaknesses of past research that particularly failed to explain why xenophobic violence erupted in some areas and not in others and how existing anti-foreigner sentiments translated into mass violent attacks.

The chapter argues that explaining xenophobic violence in South Africa requires methodological and analytical approaches capable of, not only, simultaneously identifying the underlying causes, proximate factors and triggers of violence (i.e. all the key determinants) but also examining and explaining the complex interplays or interconnections between those determinants. To this effect, the study adopts a qualitative and comparative multi-case study methodological approach to -and a micro-analytical framework of- the drivers of the violence. By privileging an analytical approach that focuses on the micro-level relations of power, interests and structures among actors, these approaches helped the study to move beyond 'unhelpful' generalisations and correlations (often generating from macro-level, quantitative and ecological analyses) and to reveal the most proximate variables and processes that combined to trigger the violence.

Only by blending a micro-level analysis of people's spatialised subjectivities with broader insights into institutional structures and regimes of control and regulation, we can identify specific determinants of the violence and reveal the degree to which 'local' space is a

material, symbolic and political resource (see Allen 1997; Agnew 2005; Davis 1998 in Landau and Misago, 2010). Further, while obviously responding to peculiar demands of current research, the methodological and analytical approaches this study adopts also attempt to speak to broader methodological issues in social science or more specifically in collective violence research.

The remainder of the chapter proceeds through three sections. The first section defines the scope of the study by discussing the conceptual distinctions and causal linkages between xenophobia and xenophobic violence. The seconds discusses the study's methodological and analytical choices and their justification. The third provides a detailed account of the methods and techniques used to collect and analyse data that inform this study's conclusions.

2.2 XENOPHOBIA AND XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE: CONCEPTUAL DISTINCTIONS AND CAUSAL LINKAGES

This section discusses the epistemological necessity to - and analytical utility of - understanding the conceptual differences between xenophobia and xenophobic violence. With the reminder that xenophobia denotes negative attitudes towards the 'other' while xenophobic violence is just one of many forms of manifestation of those attitudes, the discussion in this section shows that xenophobia and xenophobic violence are two conceptually and empirically distinct but causally linked notions and phenomena. This conceptual distinction is epistemologically important because studying and understanding xenophobia (attitudes) requires methodological and analytical approaches that are different from those required for xenophobic violence (behaviour). A clear understanding of the terms and their conceptual and empirical distinctions helps to clarify the scope of this study and the rationale behind the methodological choices it makes. The following gives a detailed discussion of these two concepts and phenomena, highlighting their differences but also their causal linkages.

2.2.1 Xenophobia

While xenophobia (as an attitude) is the not the primary object of this study, it is critical to understand its meanings, origins and dimensions particularly in South Africa because, as this section and subsequent chapters show, pervasive xenophobic climate in the country certainly constitutes a 'collective mental state' and a psychological 'raw material', mobilization for xenophobic violence builds on (Bostock, 2010). By definition, xenophobia is inevitably one of the determinants of xenophobic violence.

2.2.1.1 Meanings

Despite its widespread usage, xenophobia remains an ambiguous and contested term in popular, policy and scholarly debates. The interchangeable or complementary use of similar terms such as nativism, autochthony, ethnocentrism, xeno-racism, ethno-exclusionism, anti-immigrant prejudice and immigration-phobia (Crush *et al*, 2009) further demonstrates this conceptual vagueness. Some scholars consider it to be intense dislike, hatred or fear of others (Nyamnjoh, 2006); fear of difference embodied in persons or groups (Berezin, 2006); attitudinal orientation of hostility against non-natives in a given population (ILO *et al*, 2001) or hostility towards strangers and all that is foreign (Stolcke, 1999).

Despite the different lexicon used, these different conceptualisations clearly indicate that xenophobia broadly refers (and this is the definition this thesis adopts) to attitudes and prejudices that reject, exclude and often vilify persons or groups based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity (ILO *et al*, 2001).

It is important to note that, as Crush *et al* (2009) rightly point out, while xenophobia generally affects all categories of migrants, different migrant groups may experience it to varying

degrees depending on their cultural, racial and ethnic make-up, class composition, migration status or location. Xenophobia is usually perpetuated through a dynamic public rhetoric that actively stigmatizes and vilifies some or all migrant groups by playing up the 'threat' posed by their presence and making them scapegoats for social problems. In other words, even in societies or countries where xenophobia or negative attitudes are widespread, they are directed and felt differently by different categories of outsiders usually depending on the perceived 'threat' their presence poses to the local socio-economic orders.

2.2.1.2 Xenophobia in South Africa: Nature and scope

Xenophobia is a worldwide phenomenon, a social reality which many human beings and societies are capable of and/or affected by across the globe. Research evidence reveals the existence and indeed the rise of anti-migrant sentiments and practices in immigrant receiving countries in both developed and developing countries (see for example the European Social Survey 2002-2003; Coenders *et al*, 2004; the 2000 Eurobarometer Survey; Crush *et al*, 2009).

In South Africa, since the 1990s, studies consistently document strong negative sentiments and hostility towards foreigners amongst the general public and government officials (see Dodson 2010; Crush, 2008; HSRC, 2008; Joubert, 2008; Nyamnjoh 2006). Research shows that xenophobic attitudes cut across race, gender, class, ethnic and religious divides. Danso and McDonald (in Nyamnjoh, 2006:38) note that in South Africa: "Anti-immigrant sentiment is not only strong; it is extremely widespread and cuts across virtually every socio-economic and demographic group." Although there are examples of hospitality, tolerance, and South Africans defending non-nationals' rights (Misago *et al*, 2015), there is strong evidence that South Africans are generally uncomfortable with the presence of black and Asian non-nationals in the country. This is reflected in various statistics, produced at both national and local levels:

- 25% of South Africans nationally favour a total ban on immigration and migration, considerably more than in other countries in the region (Crush, 2000);

- 20% of South Africans feel that everyone from neighbouring countries living in South Africa (legally or not) should be sent home (op cit.);

- In a 1998 survey, SAMP found that 87% of South Africans felt that the country was letting in too many foreigners (op cit.);

- In a Wits university survey of residents in inner city Johannesburg (2004), 64.8% of South Africans thought it would be a positive thing if most of the African refugees and immigrants left the country. By contrast, few see ridding the country of its white population as a priority (Misago *et al*, 2015);

- A 2011 IDASA survey confirms that negative attitudes towards foreign nationals and particularly migrants from other African countries are still as strong and pervasive as they have always been: "South Africans who are opposed to immigrants exhibit various forms of xenophobia citing that immigrants weaken society and threaten the health of the nation" (IDASA: 2011:6). As in 2008, around a third of people would be willing to take action against foreign nationals in the country: 32% would be willing take action to prevent foreign nationals from moving into their neighbourhood, 36% from operating a business in their area, 32% from sitting in class with their children and 31% from becoming co-workers (Ibid); and

- A 2014 survey by the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) revealed that "levels of xenophobia and intolerance of foreigners are increasing in Gauteng", as "thirty-five percent of all respondents said we should send all foreigners home now."[3]

Even more telling perhaps is Crush's suggestion that xenophobic sentiments are worse in South Africa than in other countries: "South Africans are the least open to outsiders and want the greatest restrictions on immigration" (Crush, 2008:1). Within this population, he notes that a third of South Africans would be willing to take action against foreign nationals.

Such hostility is reflected in policies along with popular attitudes. Although the country has progressive asylum legislation - at least on paper - South Africa's immigration regime reflects anti-foreign sentiment. In 2010, the South African government amended the Act of 2002 rendering it even more narrowly protectionist and restrictive in terms of labour market access and asylum than it had already been. These changes were implemented in mid-2014. According to then Minister of Home Affairs Dlamini-Zuma, the recent legislative changes were designed to 'stop the spread of organised crime, trafficking in persons and corruption' as well as to accelerate employment creation for South Africans (Dlamini-Zuma, 2011), creating the impression that migration is a major source of both crime and unemployment and perpetuating stereotypes of migrants as a threat to South African jobs, prosperity, and security. In 2011, the government began to shut down refugee reception offices - situated in the country's major urban centres - with plans to move all of them to the borders. Motivated, presumably, by a bid to stem the perceived 'flood' of asylum seekers at the point of entry rather than continuing to allow people already 'into' the country before assessing their claims (Amit, 2012; CoRMSA, 2011).

[3] http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/xenophobia-on-the-rise-in-gauteng-1.1735336#.U_7fvcWSzZN

Xenophobic violence in South Africa must be understood against this background of a generalized intense xenophobic climate in the country. Such a climate fuels and is in turn fuelled by negative perceptions, myths and rumours about immigration and immigrants in the country. As discussions in subsequent chapters will show, these beliefs played a critical role in the outbreak of the violence as they 'primed' the population in ways that legitimated the attacks both before and after they occurred. Even with no substantive evidence communities and their leaders were convinced that a foreign presence constituted a serious threat to their lives and livelihoods (Misago, 2011). The Congress of South African Trade Unions COSATU for instance argued that it was "shocking and disturbing to see that some workers and residents of poor communities believe their problems are caused by foreign nationals … who are themselves victims of the same unemployment, poverty and crime" (Connolly, 2009:2).

While recognizing the role of perceptions (in this case xenophobic beliefs and attitudes) in driving collective action, these tensions have long existed in communities that only recently mobilized against outsiders or have never done so. If anything, these are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the violence. Despite its intensity, a xenophobic climate does not sufficiently explain incidents of anti-outsider violence. In other words, xenophobia (or negative attitudes toward foreign nationals and other outsiders) alone cannot explain the occurrence of the violence. Indeed, as Brubaker *et al* (1998:426) remind us, "violence is not a quantitative degree of conflict but a qualitative form of conflict, with its own dynamics". They argue that "even where violence is clearly rooted in pre-existing conflict, it should not be treated as a natural, self-explanatory outgrowth of such conflict, something that occurs automatically when the conflict reaches certain intensity, a certain temperature" (Ibid).

It is similarly important to note that existing psychological research is inconclusive with regard to the relationship between attitudes and behaviour: attitudes are not necessarily a good

predictor of behaviour (Ajzen *et al*, 1997; Kraus, 1995). In South Africa, while, as this brief review of literature shows, negative attitudes towards foreign nationals are consistently high across different sections of the country's population, manifestations of violence and acts of discrimination differ significantly across locations. Hence, attitudes alone cannot explain why certain forms of violence tend to happen in certain types of communities and not in others. Violent and discriminatory actions against 'outsiders', while often linked, to varying degrees, to existing negative attitudes, can have various and more direct motivations or triggers.

This does not mean that attitudes are not important. Indeed, as evidence shows, such an intense xenophobic climate has the potential to be - and was indeed - "exploited to initiate violence"[4] and provided a necessary fertile ground for the May 2008 and earlier violence against foreign nationals and outsiders. However, the inability of xenophobia alone to explain the occurrence of violence means that it can only be one factor (or determinant) among many others this study intends to identify: the factors that help translate these pervasive negative attitudes into mass violent attacks. Indeed this study is not about explaining these attitudes but rather about explaining how, why, where and when these long-lasting and pervasive attitudes translate into xenophobic violence whose conceptual and empirical meanings are provided in the next section.

2.2.2 Xenophobic Violence

Xenophobia manifests in various forms, ranging from everyday street-level abuse to discrimination and harassment by government and private officials and recurring bouts of popular xenophobic violence in varying intensity and scale. This study focuses on the latter form of manifestation: xenophobic violence.

[4]Government of South Africa. Report of the Task Team of Members of Parliament Probing Violence and Attacks on Foreign Nationals in pursuance of a National Assembly resolution, 13 May 2008.

Xenophobic violence is one of the many types of collective violence. Collective violence broadly refers to "the instrumental use of violence by people who identify themselves as members of a group - whether this group is transitory or has a more permanent identity - against another group or set of individuals, in order to achieve political, economic, or social objectives" (Krug, 2002:215).

Two elements of this definition are important. The first is '*collective*'. As Gerring (2009) validly opines, in this definition, '*collective*' refers to a group of individuals that possess a shared identity. This shared identity can be a variety of characteristics, be it sex, race, ethnicity, religion, income, or political ideology, to name a few. This group does not need to be quantifiable in size, but must be widely recognized as a definable group. The act of violence can be executed by either a large population from the group, or by smaller numbers on behalf of the larger group that supports them. Talking about ethnic riots for example, Horowitz (2001:14) notes that such violence is carried out by a fraction of people but a great many group members are "willing to condone the violence and provide a sympathetic explanation of it because it is an extreme manifestation of their own feelings." The second element in the definition refers to the actual '*violence*'. The act, whether intended or not, must involve some sort of substantial human death or injury toll, property damage, or a smaller incident designed to have large social and economic implications. With this in mind, it is worth noting that sometimes a simple threat of violence can be harmful enough to inflict substantial socio-economic damage, and thus would fit this definition (Gerring, 2009).

In line with the above and as indicated earlier, xenophobic violence generally refers to any acts of collective violence (by local communities, groups or crowds) targeted at foreign nationals or 'outsiders' because of their being foreign or strangers. (Dodson, 2010) reminds us that xenophobic violence is an explicit targeting of foreign nationals or outsiders for violent

attacks despite other material, political, cultural or social forces that might be at play. South Africa's xenophobic violence is mainly characterised by atrocities including murder, assaults causing grievous bodily harm, looting, robbery, arson attacks (burning of people and property), displacement, intimidation and threats, harassment, eviction notices, etc.

Like other types of collective violence, xenophobic violence involves passion (high levels of anger are displayed and atrocities committed) and calculation; a mix of impulsive and instrumental elements (see Horowitz, 2011). While it reflects the tensions or pervasive xenophobic climate and generalised negative attitudes towards outsiders, it also involves elements that may bear only a tenuous relationship to such tensions such as instrumental motives of organizers and "the presence of criminals eager to take advantage of a violent situation" (Lambert, 1951 in Horowitz, 2011:14). "Violence is neither a perfect crisp dramatization of antecedent conflict nor a wholly autonomous process that bears no relationship to enduring sources of tension" (Horowitz, 2001:14). This helps further illustrate the difference but also the relationship between xenophobia and xenophobic violence.

For acts of violence against foreign nationals or outsiders in general to be described as xenophobic, the bias nature of the violent acts must be established. In other words it has to be established that the dislike of, hatred of, or negative attitudes towards foreign nationals/outsiders provided the motivation, in full or in part, for the instigators and/or perpetrators to organize and/or carryout the violent acts. With this in mind, are we justified to refer to violent attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa as xenophobic violence? The answer is 'Yes".

Indeed while recognizing that not all violent or criminal acts committed again foreign nationals in the country are necessarily or always bias-motivated, ample research evidence reveals that the regular mass or communal violent attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa

are indeed xenophobic. Research evidence establishes the bias nature of these attacks by not only illustrating the clearly specific targeting of groups and individuals because of their foreign origin but also and perhaps most importantly by revealing that driving 'undesirable' foreign nationals out of communities and the country is usually the intention of instigators and perpetrators (see detailed discussion in chapter III).

To conclude this section on distinctions and linkages between xenophobia and xenophobic violence, the discussion above clearly indicates that these two notions and global phenomena are conceptually and empirical different despite their causal linkages (xenophobia inevitably being an element in the xenophobic violence causal chain). Both xenophobia and xenophobic violence are contemporary realities in South Africa, but as this study is about understanding the determinants of xenophobic violence (and not of xenophobia), this conceptual clarification is particularly important as it helps delineate the scope of the study and informs the methodological choices/analytical tools the study makes/uses.

2.3 THE NEED FOR A QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND A MICRO-ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

There are currently unresolved epistemological debates on what constitutes appropriate methodological and analytical approaches to collective violence, each side marshalling their preferred methods as the best, if not the only acceptable, tools to be used if what is sought is an accurate understanding of - or a complete explanation for - different types of collective violence. Scholars in the field give divergent and often competing answers to questions about the types of data required (quantitative vs. qualitative); questions to be addressed, units of analysis, etc. (Horowitz, 2001). Indeed some scholars and analysts advocate for quantitative methods and a macro-analytical framework (see for example King et al, 2004 and Mansley, 2014); others contend that qualitative methods and a micro-level analysis are more

appropriate (see for example Gerring, 2007); while others opine that only a combination of those approaches can provide a complete explanation of collective violence (see for example Sidney, 1978 and Varsheny, 2008).

In agreement with Mansley (2014:61) that "the level of analysis at which a piece of research is positioned decides the methodological approach", I argue that, while different approaches (on their own or in combination) can certainly make valuable contributions to the understanding of collective violence, appropriate approaches will always be dictated by the research questions and goals. In other words, the appropriateness of the methodological approaches and/or analytical frameworks is determined by the questions the research seeks to answer. In the following brief sections, I illustrate my point while also explaining the considerations informing the study's decision to choose a qualitative and comparative multi-case study methodological approach and a micro-analytical framework to investigate the determinants of xenophobic violence in South Africa.

2.3.1 Quantitative vs. Qualitative Methods

This study finds the qualitative and comparative case-study methodological approach the best suited to achieve its aim of identifying the causal factors and processes of xenophobic violence in South Africa. Indeed, as Tong (1991) notes, in social science, scholars use quantitative methods to measure the level of collective violence in terms of frequency (number of events), extent (size of area affected, proportion of population actively involved), severity (number of people killed), magnitude (actor-day participation) or in a composite index derived from all the above. As such, these methods primarily attempt to explain how much violence will characterize groups, societies and nations, and the like. They are used in "input-output" studies that "specify some "outcome" variable (frequency or magnitude of

violence) in terms of prior characteristics of groups, areas" (Snyder, 1978:524; see also Mansley, 2014).

Proponents of these methods particularly praise them for their receptivity to big questions about patterns and variations over time and/or across societies (Mansley, 2014) but admit their limitations with regard to causal inferences. Indeed many scholars (Snyder, 1978; Varshney, 2008 and Mansley, 2014) note that the methods' inherent problems include an indwelling causal determinism, an absence of agency and a neglect of immediate situational factors.

The admission above adds to the ammunition critics of the quantitative methods already have in arguing that only qualitative methods are better equipped to deal with demands of research that aims to establish collective violence causal mechanisms. They correctly argue that focusing on *how much* - rather than *how* - collective violence occurs cannot help in understanding the process of causality (Snyder, 1978; Varshney, 2008). I share the opinion that, with their specific focus on -and efforts to understand- "the interactions of individuals with each other and the immediate ecological environment (Berk, 1974 in Snyder 1978:526); qualitative case studies remain the best way of understanding causal mechanisms (Varshney, 2008). Quantitative methods "do not allow scholarly intimacy with any of the empirical cases. As a result, we can't quite figure out the process through which a given outcome occurs. And without understanding the process - what led to what - it is hard to sort out causal mechanisms" (Ibid: 8). It is for this reason that this study, whose aim is to identify the causal factors and processes of xenophobic violence in South Africa, adopts a qualitative and comparative case-study methodological approach with a micro-analytical framework discussed below.

2.3.2 Macro- vs. Micro-analytical Framework

This study adopts a micro-analytical framework because it is better equipped to explain not only situational dynamics, individual motivations and group processes but also and most importantly when and how these lead to collective violence (Mansley, 2014). Most scholars agree that macro-analysis cannot specify the causal mechanisms that link structural/macro factors with varied levels and the varying spatial distributions of collective violence. Mansley (2014:64) for example argues that "aggregate figures, typically used in macro-analysis, can describe 'inputs' and 'outputs' of collective violence but not what happens in between … They cannot explain why only a small proportion of a population commits violence, nor why those who do are only violent only part of the time".

Similarly, Varshney (2008) notes that datasets are not about causes; they are a way to describe the empirical universe and once the distribution of violence is ascertained, other causal inquiries must be launched. "Causality firmly resides outside the dataset" (Ibid: 12). Further, (Varshney 2008) correctly opines that, while macro-factors may vary over time, they are by definition, for any given point of time, a constant for the entire nation or province, and "a national or provincial constant cannot logically be called on to account for intra-national or intra-provincial variations" (Ibid). Talking about methodological approaches to ethnic violence, Bertrand (2008) argues in a similar vein that macro-structural factors can explain the emergence of clusters of ethnic violence but they cannot explain why violence emerges in some locations and not in others. That macro-factors cannot explain the occurrence of violence in some locations and not in others is indeed evidence that "group violence has local theatres" (Varshney, 2008:13) and investigations into its determinants require a micro (group or community level)-analytical framework.

Analysts identify two main weaknesses of the micro-analysis of collective violence: the inability to explain changing patterns of violence in space and time and concerns over the generalizability of findings. Mansley (2014:63) notes that "Micro-studies typically address questions of how the violence happens rather than how much violence occurs. They cannot explain changing patterns of violence in space and time […] Micro-studies of collective violence generally focus on single episodes of crowd behaviour, making generalising from their findings problematic." These weaknesses are not a concern to the present study because i) the study aims to explain the causal mechanics and not the spatial and temporal variations of xenophobic violence in South Africa; and ii) the study uses a multi-case study comparative approach to address the generalizability concerns.

2.3.3 Violence Episode as a Unit of Analysis

Within the micro-analytical framework, and in line with the multi-case study approach, the study uses the violence *episode (*and not the violence *incident)* as its unit of analysis. The study chooses the *episode* (which other scholars refer to as *event*; see for example Shorter *et al*, 1974 and Tong, 1991) over the *incident* because the violence episode is made up of one or more incidents, and the study is interested in identifying the causes of the violence outbreak in specific areas and not of individual incidents the violence consisted of. I agree with Tong (1991) that when the study's concern is the etiology of the origins of collective violence, choosing the uprising episode or event rather than all its related incidents is more appropriate. He correctly argues that "socioeconomic factors at the time of the uprising are a better explanation of the reasons for collective violence than are subsequent incidents" (Ibid: 29). I share his view that it is imperative to analyse the factors that precipitated the first uprising and not the individual incidents the same uprising consisted of (Ibid).

In most of the case studies or areas selected for this study, violence lasted several days and consisted of multiple incidents. This study is the analysis of the casual mechanisms that led to the outbreak of the violence in those areas and not of individual incidents that made up those violence episodes. Although the study is also interested in understanding the diffusion or the spread of violence within or across areas, its primary focus is to explain the causal factors at the beginning of xenophobic violence in selected affected areas and not of subsequent incidents.

In sum, I hope the discussion above provides valid reasons for the study's methodological and analytical choices. I have argued in this discussion that investigating the determinants of xenophobic violence in South Africa requires a qualitative and comparative multi-case study methodological approach and a micro-analytical framework that uses the violence episode as the unit of analysis. The following sections explain how these approaches were applied throughout the study.

2.4 DATA SOURCES AND THE USE OF SECONDARY ANALYSIS

2.4.1 Data Sources

As mentioned earlier, the study's aim is to provide empirically based and theoretically informed explanation of the occurrence on xenophobic violence in South Africa. Empirically, it seeks to identify critical elements of the causal chain and, theoretically, to put to empirical test common explanations and mainstream theoretical approaches to collective violence and build an explanatory model for xenophobic violence in South Africa and hopefully elsewhere.

To achieve these objectives, this study uses qualitative data collected by the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS)[5] for its study titled '*Baseline Study on Violence against Foreigners in South Africa'* conducted from August to November 2008. Commissioned by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) in the wake of the May 2008 violence, the study sought to provide evidence-based explanations of the attacks and recommendations for preventing future occurrences. Accepting that xenophobic sentiments are rooted in a range of macro and micro-level factors and that they are not unique to South Africa, the key question the study aimed to address is why, in South Africa, this 'dislike' turned into mass violent attacks and killings? In other words, how do attitudes translate into violence? Or, what are the conditions and factors that enable xenophobic attitudes to translate into the violent attacks witnessed in May 2008 and before? To this end, the baseline study's specific objectives included:

- Assessing xenophobic incidents between January 2007 and June 2008;
- Identifying root causes behind xenophobic violence (rather than xenophobia generally);
- Identifying specific causes behind the violence;
- Identifying events and actions which triggered the attacks;
- Establishing profiles of the victims and perpetrators;
- Exploring gaps in the immediate interventions to prevent or stop the violence, and
- Making specific recommendations for appropriate interventions by various stakeholders.

[5] Formerly known as Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP).

The baseline study, whose research methods and design are described in the following section, concluded with the submission of two separate reports to respective funders.[6]

2.4.2 On the Use of Secondary Analysis

The current study is a secondary research or a secondary analysis of this already existing data from the study described above. As the discussion below shows, this secondary analysis was prompted by the need to broaden the scope of the baseline study by asking the data new questions; interrogating, extending and/or correcting earlier conclusions; and subjecting the data to a more theoretical and academic analysis and engagement. By doing so, the study or this secondary analysis broadens the original research's relevance beyond the South African locale and contributes to the global literature and discourses of xenophobic and collective violence.

Secondary research means that the researcher is not gathering or creating his/her own empirical data but is using existing data that someone else has collected, recorded and analysed. Although not conducting primary research, it is recommended to use primary sources or original raw data.[7] I have full access to -and authorization to use- the study's original data consisting of audio-recorded interviews or their transcripts and written interviews and field notes. While a number ACMS staff were involved in different aspects and stages of the project, I played a leading role in terms of conceptualisation, data collection and analysis as well as report writing.

[6] The two reports are titled: '*Towards Tolerance, Law, and Dignity: Addressing Violence against Foreign Nationals in South Africa'* and '*May 2008 Violence Against Foreign Nationals in South Africa: Understanding Causes and Evaluating Responses'*

[7]The Flinders University of South Australia (2006). *Writing A Research Proposal*. Study Skills Brochure Slc/06/2006. Available online at http://www.flinders.edu.au/slc_files/Documents/Brochures/research_proposal.pdf

Secondary analysis is a further analysis of information that has already been obtained. Steward *et al* (1993:4) note that,

> Such an analysis may be related to the original purpose for which the data were collected, or it may address an issue quite different from that which prompted the original data-gathering effort. It may involve the integration of information from several sources or a reanalysis of the data from a single source. [...] Secondary analysis is a research beyond the informational need that prompted the original gathering of the data.

Qualitative data 're-use' provides a unique opportunity to study the raw materials of the recent or more distant research to gain more insights particularly for methodological and theoretical purposes (Moore, 2006). Moore further argues that qualitative secondary data analysis "can be understood, not so much as the analysis of pre-existing data; rather as involving a process of re-contextualizing, and re-constructing, data" (Ibid: 2)

The current study shares with the baseline research an important objective: to provide research-based explanations of the violence with particular focus on identifying underlying causes, proximate factors and specific triggers. This is particularly important because it means that the original research has generated enough and relevant data to satisfy the current study's informational needs. However, albeit with comparable objectives, the two studies differ considerably in terms of analytical approaches and purposes. Indeed the initial analysis for the two above-mentioned donor reports was largely descriptive and focused on providing policy, intervention/response, or advocacy relevant conclusions and recommendations. This secondary analysis goes beyond that and subjects the data to a more theoretical and academic analysis and engagement. By doing so, the study broadens the original research's relevance

beyond the South African locale and contributes to the global literature and discourses of xenophobic and collective violence.

To achieve that, the secondary analysis asks the data new questions, interrogates the conclusions of earlier analysis and generally situates the study in a scholarly domain where findings are compared and contrasted with existing empirical and theoretical literature. This secondary analysis asks the data the following two main new questions:

- Where and how does xenophobic violence occur? While the previous analysis mainly focused on '*who'* and '*why'* questions, this secondary analysis adds the critical '*how'* and *'where'* (i.e. why here and not there) questions to better understand the triggers of the violence and their interactions with other factors and underlying conditions and to explain why violence occurs in some areas and not in others.

- What does the analysis of xenophobic violence in South Africa tell us about the current methodological, empirical and theoretical understandings of xenophobic violence elsewhere and the understanding of causal mechanisms of collective violence generally? By answering this question, the study particularly situates its conclusions within -and contributes to- broader interdisciplinary debates in collective violence research.

These and other new questions help this secondary analysis not only to broaden the scope of the baseline study but also to interrogate and extend its earlier conclusions or build on them to reach new and more convincing or better argued explanations. In some instances, interrogating earlier analyses and conclusions led to significant correctives.

Concerns about secondary analysis studies usually centre around potential limitations they may face particularly when the primary data do not meet the demands or satisfy the

informational needs of the secondary analysis. Fortunately these concerns do not apply to the present study. I decided to reuse the data precisely because I was satisfied that they contained all the information needed to answer all the questions I want answered for this secondary analysis.

2.5 BASELINE STUDY: RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

As noted earlier, the May 2008 attacks stimulated a range of speculative and largely ahistorical pronouncements, indictments, and expositions from political and community leaders, scholars, media, and civil society. Explanations abounded regarding the root and immediate causes, as well as appropriate strategies for short, medium and long-term interventions. Many of the recommendations were based on outdated or inaccurate information, and if implemented, could at best have been ineffective, at worst dangerous in exacerbating rather than resolving existing xenophobic sentiments and related violence (See Misago, Landau and Monson, 2009). The baseline study was therefore prompted by the need to provide empirically based explanations and recommendations to enable effective and sustainable interventions.

Realising the methodological weaknesses (that consequently led to scientifically flawed explanations) of some studies that drew conclusions from quick interviews about people's attitudes and perceptions (see for example HSRC, 2008), the baseline study sought to be a deep and careful forensic enquiry into the underlying causes and triggers of the violence. By attempting to get a comprehensive understanding of the historical and contemporary social, economic and political configurations of affected and non-affected areas (see the broad range of themes probed in Annex I), the baseline study was able to unearth critical factors that triggered the violence or in which the triggers were immediately embedded. Such critical elements are often missed by studies that limit their investigations to macro-level factors and

to superficial layers of asking respondents "what do you think caused the violence in this area?"

2.5.1 Research Methods and Design

The study used the qualitative methodological approach. The approach suits best the nature of this investigation consisting of collecting information on the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours of the target population (see Cresswell, 1998). For comparative and corroboration purposes, the research adopted a multiple-case study design by collecting data from 11 selected sites (see site selection below). Multiple cases strengthen the results by replicating the pattern-matching, thus increasing confidence in the robustness of the findings (Yin, 1993 in Tellis, 1997). They are a powerful means to create a more accurate picture or understanding of the phenomenon because they permit replication and extension among individual cases (Eisenhardt, 1991). Further, Eisenhardt rightly notes that:

> Replication simply means that individual cases can be used for independent corroboration of specific propositions. This corroboration helps researchers to perceive patterns more easily and to eliminate chance associations. [...] Different cases often emphasize complementary aspects of a phenomenon. By piecing together the individual patterns, the researcher can draw a more theoretical picture (Ibid: 621).

The study chose the design to "achieve the benefits both of in-depth qualitative research to explore the meanings, relationships and contestations within a specific research site, and the insights of comparative perspectives across research sites" (von Holdt *et al*, 2011:2).

2.5.2 Site selection

The study collected primary data from 11 research sites in Gauteng, Western and Eastern Cape Provinces; the three provinces most affected by xenophobic violence in May 2008 and

in the recent past. To understand the drivers of the violence, we selected nine sites where xenophobic violence occurred between January 2007 and June 2008, and two sites with largely similar communities but where the presence of foreign nationals had not led to significant violence.

This 'most similar systems' approach was critical in understanding why violence occurred in some areas and not in others as it helped particularly in documenting variations in relevant variables. As Snyder (1978) notes, investigating the determinants of collective violence requires an appropriate research design that is able to obtain information on several settings, across which variation in those variables can be observed. The approach allowed the study to identify the most significant distinguishing factors that account for the presence of the violence in some places and its absence in others. I agree with Horowitz (2001: xiv) that

> No enquiry into riots [in this case xenophobic violence incidents] should fail to account for their absence. The study of violence proceeds most fruitfully when it asks those deceptively simple questions that illuminate the violent episode: Why here and not there? Why now and not then?

The sites in Gauteng were Itireleng and Atteridgeville in Tshwane; Diepsloot and Sector II and Sector V (non-affected) of Alexandra in Johannesburg; and Ramaphosa and Madelakufa II and Madelakufa I (non-affected) in the Ekurhuleni. The two sites in the Western Cape were Masiphumelele and DuNoon (in Cape Town). Motherwell was the only research site in the Eastern Cape.

As mentioned above, we selected the nine violence affected sites because they had experienced significant incidents of xenophobic violence in the recent past (between January 2007 and June 2008). We selected the two non-affected sites in order to establish why

violence did not break out in areas with demographic and socio-economic conditions similar to those of neigbhouring affected areas. The following provides a brief description of the violence or violence related matters at each site.

Even though violence against foreign nationals had been occurring in other places around the country for several months, the eruption of violence in ***Alexandra Township*** in Johannesburg was the spark from which the violence in May 2008 quickly spiralled around the country at an unprecedented scale and rate. Given Alexandra's size and diversity, there are a range of different sectors within the settlement. Not all of them experienced violence. We selected two neighbouring sectors for our study: ***Sector 2,*** the area most affected by the violence and ***Sector 5***, in which foreign nationals were not attacked or evicted. Given that both sectors have very similar underlying socio-economic profiles and political histories, comparing these two sectors gives us significant insights into what specific factors lead to or prevent the occurrence of the violence.

In ***Sector 2***, attacks on foreign nationals started on 11 May 2008 and subsided by 18 May. Foreign nationals' shacks and shops were looted and destroyed; foreign nationals were stopped on streets and in taxis, assaulted, beaten. Many were killed and many more injured. Women were raped. Attackers carried guns and other traditional weapons and sang: "They must go. … Mayiphume inunu [*animals must get out]*", said a South African woman who witnessed the attacks. According to another resident, at least "42 people died, some were South Africans, many of them were not identified."

All foreign nationals, irrespective of their nationality, age, gender, legal status, or length of stay in the area were attacked. South Africans coming from other provinces were also attacked; Shangaans and Vendas from Limpopo Province were the most affected. South African women married to foreign nationals were also attacked and had to flee to the police

station with their husbands. During the violence, most foreign nationals fled to the nearby Alexandra police station where they stayed for three and a half weeks before they were moved to government-provided shelters. Their houses, shacks and businesses were looted and later appropriated ('attached') by local residents.

In ***Diepsloot,*** a township located in the north of Johannesburg, attacks on foreign nationals started on 14 May 2008 and lasted five days. Local residents destroyed, looted and burnt down businesses and houses belonging to foreign nationals. Some South Africans belonging to minority groups such as Shangaans and Pedis were also attacked, deliberately or by mistake. The violence resulted in serious injuries but no deaths were recorded. The displaced fled to the local police station.

In ***Ramaphosa Township*** (Ekurhuleni), violence started on 16 May 2009 and lasted five days. Like in other affected areas, the violence targeted all foreign nationals residing in the area regardless of nationality, age or gender. "In the first place they wanted to kill only men but later on they turned to women also. They started beating up women and children, in fact some were killed", stated a South African woman respondent. Ward committee members reported that twelve people including five South Africans were killed, several injured and hundreds displaced. Some of those killed were burned alive. Other sources estimated the number of deaths to be between 27 and 30. All sources confirmed that South Africans also died during the violence. Some were mistaken for foreign nationals and others were killed by foreign nationals because they [foreign nationals] were fighting back. No rape incidences were reported. Shacks, houses, property and businesses belonging to foreign nationals were looted, destroyed, burnt down or appropriated by local residents. According to respondents, violence stopped only when all foreign nationals had left Ramaphosa. The victims initially sought

refuge at the nearby Reiger Park police station. Subsequently some returned to their home countries while others changed places of residence.

Violent attacks against foreign nationals in ***Madelakufa 2*** (commonly called ***Madela 2***), a mixed settlement (30% formal and 70% informal housing) area in Tembisa, Ekurhuleni, started on 16 May 2008 and lasted about a week. Foreign nationals and South Africans of minority groups (e.g. Shangaans from Venda and Bushbuckridge) were hunted down, beaten and their shops and shacks vandalised. According to the local councillor, three people died as a result of the violence and many were seriously injured. Women and children were not physically attacked, although they also were asked to leave the area. Most of the victims fled to the Tembisa police station for safety. Others ran to nearby townships to stay with friends and some went back to their home countries (e.g. Mozambique). Like in Alexandra, a non-affected site ***Madelakufa 1*** (***Madela 1***), an informal settlement close and similar to the affected Madela 2, was selected in an effort to find out why violence occurs in some places and not in others.

The violence in ***Itireleng***, an informal settlement situated in Laudium on the west of Tshwane, occurred in February 2008 and resulted in looting and burning of all foreign-owned business of residential property. No deaths were recorded but some foreign nationals sustained serious injuries. Attacks targeted all foreign nationals irrespective of their nationality, gender, age, legal status or length of stay in the area. All foreign nationals were forcibly displaced from the area. Some fled to nearby townships such as Laudium and Erasmia and others ran to the police station for safety. According to a local Councilor, about 300 foreign nationals were later housed at the Laudium Community Centre where they were provided with assistance for a number of days.

Attacks on foreign nationals in ***Atteridgeville*** (a township also located in Tshwane) started on the 18th of March 2008 and lasted for a week. Armed with hammers, knives, knobkerries, sticks or axes, attackers targeted all foreign nationals regardless of their legal status, gender, age or nationality. The attackers reportedly first looted and destroyed shops owned by foreign nationals and then went on to attack foreign nationals in their shacks and kill them and/or loot, destroy or seize their property. A male Zimbabwean victim and survivor of the violence reported: "They did not mind the stands. If they knew that there was a foreigner they would come and take property: fridges, television sets. Some were set alight in the shacks because they were slow to move out. They would come with sticks, knobkerries and axes." According to the Atteridgeville CPF Chairperson, five people were killed during the violence, including two South Africans; approximately 150 shacks and shops were burnt down, destroyed or vandalized and 500 foreign nationals were displaced and sought refuge at Atteridgeville police station and nearby community halls.

Masiphumelele, a township in the Cape Town, experienced at least two major waves of xenophobic violence in the recent past. The first was in 2006 and mainly targeted Somali and Ethiopian traders. It consisted mainly of looting and destroying shops and other businesses owned by Somali and Ethiopian nationals. The second was in 2008. It started on 22 May and consisted not only of looting and vandalism of businesses and property owned by all foreign nationals but also of assaults and threats that pushed all foreign nationals to flee the township.

Like Masiphumelele, ***DuNoon*** (another township in Cape Town) experienced two waves of violence against foreign nationals living in the township. The first wave was in 2001 and the second in 2008. In 2001, violence concentrated in the informal area of the township and all foreign nationals were attacked and chased from the area. In 2008, attacks on foreign nationals started in the evening of 22 May and ended after a few days when all foreign

nationals had left the area and their property, including their houses and businesses, had been looted and destroyed. Respondents reported that a few people were injured but there were no deaths or rape cases. The attackers, mainly young people, initially targeted foreign owned businesses but all foreign nationals ended up leaving due to threats and fear. The displaced were housed in a local communal hall.

Motherwell has a long history of sporadic attacks on foreign business owners since 2000. The main wave of violence against foreign nationals in the area occurred in February 2007 when all Somali-owned shops (over 100 shops) were systematically looted and destroyed following the death of a local young man allegedly shot by a Somali business owner. Following the violence, all Somalis and other foreign nationals left the area. Only a few Somali business owners had returned by the time of the fieldwork in 2008. The area did not experience any violence in May 2008 because there were no foreign nationals living there, apart from a few Somali business owners that the residents found useful.

2.5.3 Population and Sampling

The population of the study consisted of local South African residents, foreign nationals and key informants consisting of government officials and representatives of different organisations operating in selected areas. The study particularly included both perpetrators and victims of the violence to get first-hand information on the dynamics and meanings of the violence from the perspective of those directly involved. The study used different sampling strategies to reach relevant respondents. For key informants, it used purposive sampling as some key informants were selected in advance, while others were identified during the course of fieldwork at the sites. For community-based interviews, the study relied on snowball and convenience sampling techniques.

This study's respondents included South African residents of the selected townships, foreign nationals who resided or used to reside in the same locations, relevant government officials, community leaders, and representatives of different civil society organisations operating in the selected areas. The research team conducted individual interviews with local residents and affected non-nationals living in the community and/or in government-created Centres of Safe Shelter (CoSS). The team also conducted interviews with an extensive range of key informants, including local government officials, police, civil society and community leaders (e.g. ward council members, street committee leaders, Community Policing Forums (CPFs), and *Izinduna*[8]). The research team also organised focus group discussions including specific groups of women, men, and youth. On many occasions, individual respondents and focus group members included perpetrators and victims of the violence.

At each site, the team conducted an average of eighteen interviews with local residents (of different age groups and gender); six with non-nationals; seven with key informants, and two focus groups (of five to ten members). In total, over 437 people (including 190 individual South African respondents, 65 foreign national respondents, 67 key informants, and 115 focus group participants) participated in the study.

2.5.4 Data collection techniques and instruments

A team of 5 researchers (of which I was the leader) conducted data collection and transcription. We recruited team members with relevant research experience and different language skills (to enable communication in languages in which respondents were comfortable) and trained them in specific methodological approaches and ethics. We used the same team of researchers in all selected sites not only to build experience and improve

[8] Local Zulu tribal Chiefs

familiarity with the research instrument and process but also to allow them to have a comparative perspective in their investigation. Data collection consisted of conducting open-ended individual and focus group interviews. Depending on the preference of the respondents, researchers recorded interviews by digital voice recording or only in writing. The pilot study we conducted in Itireleng (part of Laudium, near Pretoria) illustrated the need to conduct interviews with local residents first to identify the main issues before speaking with key informants (especially authorities at different levels), foreign nationals and focus groups. Following this strategy in all research sites allowed us to verify facts and obtain further details on issues raised by the communities of local residents.

As for the research instrument, the study used in-depth, open-ended questions that evolved as the research project proceeded. The interviews remained relatively unstructured to allow respondents to draw the discussion toward relevant details and to allow the research team to explore inconsistencies and surprises that emerged. This was a conscious strategy to avoid imposing *a priori* assumptions (such as those expressed by various opinion makers during the attacks) upon the findings. The table in Annex I details the themes probed during the interviews with different groups. For some of the themes, the research team tested specific hypotheses and assumptions drawn from the literature and/or relevant public discourse. In others, there was too little available information to develop concrete hypotheses. Indeed, most of the initial hypotheses were disproved as other explanations emerged during the course of the research.

2.5.5 Data Analysis

The study used the comparative content analysis technique to analyse and compare the information collected from respondents across sites. Content analysis is a method of analysis used in qualitative research in which collected information is systematically examined by

identifying and grouping themes and coding, classifying and developing categories.[9] As Singleton *et al* (1993:381) notes, "The basic idea in content analysis is to reduce the total content of a communication to a set of categories that represent some characteristic of the population under study". It calls for engagement in a critical selection and definition of content categories (Ibid). During the analysis, I[10] defined and analysed categories that were thematically relevant to the study based on frequency and intensity of appearance in respondents'' narratives. I analysed interview transcripts from each site by grouping information into themes. I then compared themes and related key findings across sites to identify site-specific dynamics and emerging cross-cutting patterns.

2.5.6 Ethical Considerations

The study observed all the necessary ethical protocols and considerations including confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent. It was indeed granted clearance by Wits ethics committee (protocol number: H080810). While all issues were given due consideration, the main ethical concern at that time was vulnerability as for some respondents, interviews may have presented risks of re-traumatisation, social or legal risks (e.g. for perpetrators of violence, undocumented migrants, etc.). To minimize such risks, the research team made it very clear to every respondent that participation in the study was entirely voluntary and anonymous. Respondents were informed of how the information collected for the study will be used, and asked to judge for themselves whether they felt that participation would constitute a threat to them. If they felt threatened, they would be asked not to participate in the study. The anonymity of the interviews meant especially to provide protection for any non-citizens who were undocumented and wished to participate in the study.

[9] www.cirem.org.uk/definitions.html
[10] The data was collected by a 5 member research team but as project coordinator and research team leader, data analysis was my responsibility.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Given the study's broad scope and limited time frame, there may be gaps in the data collected. However, by addressing the common methodological blind-spots characteristic of past research, the study was successful in revealing critical insights into the multiple drivers of the violence. This success allowed an attempt, for the first time, at a comprehensive explanatory model for xenophobic violence in South Africa i.e. a model that accounts for all the key determinants (all necessary and sufficient conditions) of the violence. It also points to the potential fruitfulness and appropriateness of the study's methodological and analytical approaches for research into collective xenophobic violence and collective violence in general.

III. XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICA: HISTORY, MORPHOLOGY AND POPULAR EXPLANATIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a historical and contextual background and a detailed account of the dimensions and nature of xenophobic violence in contemporary South Africa. It pays particular attention to the May 2008 violence (as it is the main object of the study). It situates the May 2008 attacks within an extended history of xenophobic violence in South Africa and of violent conflict within the country's townships and informal settlements. It demonstrates that investigating and understanding xenophobic violence in South Africa requires situating it within a context of not only pervasive xenophobia and strong negative attitudes towards foreign nationals but also of an extended history of socio-political tensions and chronic communal violence particularly in the country's poor and marginalised areas.

In addition to this descriptive account, the chapter builds on the introduction to provide a more detailed critical review of common hypotheses and explanations that were provided by scholars, analysts, political leaders, media, civil society and other commentators to account for the causes of the violence. It argues that these common accounts, whose main emphasis is on general structural, historical and macro-economic conditions, are not logical scientific explanations and maintain only a tenuous relationship with empirical reality.

The chapter's argument is that these general conditions of socio-economic and political deprivation (real or perceived) affect most of the country's townships and informal settlements and can therefore not explain the outbreak of the violence in specific locations at specific times. As Fauvelle-Aymar *et al* (2011) observe, common explanations offer broad structural factors that cannot explain the occurrence of violence against foreigners in certain

areas and not in others, when all socio-economic indicators and levels of anti-migrant sentiment are comparable. Another weakness this chapter identifies is that even some of the explanations that have some plausibility only offer reductionist, one-factor causes to explain such a complex social phenomenon and as such can be at best partial or incomplete. The chapter clearly indicates that deprivation is a factor or an important determinant of xenophobic violence but not a sufficient explanation on its own.

3.2 HISTORY AND NATURE OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICA

3.2.1 Xenophobic Violence in a Context of Regular Violent Conflicts

The May 2008 violence occurred in a context of not only pervasive xenophobia throughout the country (as discussed earlier) but also of an extended history of regular experiences of violent conflicts (including violent crime, communal violence, vigilantism and violent service delivery protests) within the country's townships and informal settlements. This section briefly discusses the nature of these violent conflicts and their similarities and possible links with xenophobic violence.

3.2.1.1 Violence: A 'Legitimate' Means of Solving Problems

Xenophobic violence in South Africa cannot be understood in isolation from the more general history of violence in informal settlements and townships in South Africa. As Kynoch (2005) notes, violence has been a persistent feature of townships life since the inception of these settlements characterised by decades of social and economic disadvantage, repressive policing, criminal predation and a consequent recourse to vigilantism. Many analysts (see for example Hamber, 1999 and Kynoch, 2005) have pointed to a "culture of violence" where violence is endorsed and accepted as a socially legitimate means of solving problems and

achieving both 'justice' and material goals. Kynoch (2005:496) for example asserts that in those areas, "violence frequently became a normative means of pursuing material interests, resolving conflicts and seeking justice". Similarly, Misago *et al* (2009:10) state that, "Although it is inappropriate to speak of any culture in homogeneous or universalised terms, there can be little doubt that violence has gained a level of social acceptability rarely seen elsewhere in the world."

Much of the contemporary violence resembles and intersects with the violence witnessed during the country's political past. (Hamber, 1999 in Misago *et al*, 2010:26) notes that:

> During the Apartheid era, the threat of violence - whether 'vertical' (state against citizens) or 'horizontal' (citizens against one another or rival political and social factions against each other) - saturated the lives of South Africans residing in the volatile, tightly policed townships. […] In the wake of the ANC's unbanning and Mandela's 1990 release, vertical violence was largely overshadowed by horizontal, inter- and intra-community violence enacted largely through armed conflicts between supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

As Kynoch (2005) notes, within these seemingly political conflicts were embedded criminal dimensions by groups that pursued personal material gains and not political goals and the end of apartheid did not necessarily signal the end of their personal empires. He states:

> […] politicized hostilities and the continuing deterioration of law and order structures in the final years of apartheid gave birth to various groups that engaged in criminal violence and provided favourable conditions for well-established criminal networks.

> These elements were unlikely to put down their guns and relinquish power simply because politicians declared the fighting to be over (Ibid: 493).

Similarly, Hamber (1999) argues that current levels of violence and its multiple manifestations have been built on the legacy of the structural violence of the past. He notes that the structural violence effected by the state through repression and legislated inequalities of resources and opportunities in the Apartheid era has created a climate in which all forms of social existence - including housing, education, jobs, wages, and service delivery - are politicised.

> The result is that the socially sanctioned use of violence to solve problems has saturated South African life. This manifested itself most dramatically in the 1990-1994 period prior to the first democratic election and is continuing to play itself out in the post-apartheid era (Ibid: 118).

It is also important to note the role of violent masculinities (Kynoch 2005), tensions between South African ethnic groups and the involvement of the youth in the violence. All these dimensions of historic violence were seen in the May 2008 xenophobic attacks in which perpetrators justified their violence by reference to the politics of housing and employment allocation and protecting 'our women', and where criminal opportunism was certainly evident.

3.2.1.2 Ethnic Tensions and Violent Youth

The xenophobia directed at foreign nationals speaks, to at least some extent, to the history of tensions between local urban residents and internal migrants in townships. Historically, hostel-associated violence has often been ethnic in nature, (Kynoch, 2005) and the widespread involvement of hostel dwellers in the May attacks may bear some relation to this history. This

begins to provide some explanation for the targeting of Pedi-, Venda- and Shangaan-speaking citizens, who were commanded to 'return to Limpopo' during the progress of May 2008 violence.

Similarly, there is a long history of youth violence in townships and informal settlements. As early as the 1950s, young thugs referred to as 'tsotsis' formed street-corner gangs and large portions of urbanized youth turned to crime (Kynoch, 2005). After diminishing in the face of politicised student movements in the late 70s, youth gangs re-emerged in 80s and 90s and indeed student groups themselves were not immune to exploitation by individuals with malicious intent. The criminalization of the urban youth led in turn to inter-generational conflicts, leading in some cases to the formation of vigilante groups claiming to protect residents against criminals (Ibid, see also Hamber, 1999). Young people formed the vast majority of the perpetrators of the May 2008 violence.

3.2.1.3 Vigilantism and Violence as Crime Fighting

While the pre-1994 violence was perceived as political and consequently given a shared sense of legitimacy and nobility (Kynoch, 2005), violence in the post-1994 period is often justified by the discourse of 'crime-fighting'. According to Harris (2001:47),

> Today, purely criminal motives remain largely subsumed beneath the crime-fighting banner. Just as vigilantism in the 1980s was defined through political intention, thereby blurring and politicising a range of other motives, fighting crime remains, for most, the primary explanation of vigilantism in post-apartheid South Africa.

Vigilantism in the name of crime-fighting has a documented long history in South African townships and informal settlements (Harris, 2001; 2003). As Misago, et al. (2009:12) note, before 1994:

> ‘Political’ community justice was meted out in the form of People's Courts or ‘Disciplinary Committees’ that were often little more than kangaroo courts. Executions by ‘necklacing’ were a particular visible form of vigilantism and usually enacted against people perceived to be political opponents. However, it must also be recognized that much that passed as ‘political’ was merely individuals using their anger opportunistically to eliminate opponents, achieve revenge or impose control through intimidation.

There is research evidence that vigilantism has in the past enjoyed and continues to enjoy considerable support (Hamber, 1999) and remains common within poor urban communities. Harris (2003) argues that crime-fighting vigilantes vary from spontaneous gatherings to organized groups and “in the present, vigilante violence is typically presented as a response to fighting crime. It is justified (by vigilantes themselves) as a response to a failing criminal justice system [which is often perceived as protecting criminals at the expense of law-abiding citizens’ rights] and ‘legitimised’ as filling a policing gap."

Within this context, vigilante violence is often linked to a perceived failure in policing due to experiences of police inefficiency, corruption and collusion with criminals. And this is of course exacerbated by the Apartheid-era legacy of mistrust of the police and criminal justice system by black township residents (Harris, 2001). Historical precedents for community forms of policing in the absence of adequate state policing include the establishment of self-defense units (SDUs) in the late 1980s. This well-intentioned initiative was however vulnerable to criminal elements who, in some cases, turned the policing structures into opportunistic rackets (Ibid). The same trends seem to have permeated trough to the current community policing forums (CPFs), which, like the police, are perceived to be actively part of the ‘crime-problem’. In certain areas, CPF members abuse their positions for their own ends,

or kangaroo courts totally misuse the CPF banner to legitimate their activities. Vigilantism is therefore also seen as a necessary and inevitable reaction to the failure of CPFs to address crime (Harris, 2001:45).

Viewing violence from this crime-fighting angle gives it a social construction, which sees foreign nationals as criminals and attacks against them as a form of social law enforcement. There is a widespread belief that most crime in the country is committed by foreign nationals and in the absence of reliable data, presumptions often pass as facts. "Building on the perception that foreign nationals are an inherent social and political threat, this perspective codes the May 2008 attacks as a form of control; a legitimate form of vigilantism designed to protect the South African national territory" (Misago, et al. 2009:12).

According to Harris (2001), vigilantism is rendered even more attractive by its 'redistributive ethos'. Where the state justice system holds up rehabilitative justice as an ideal, the 'community justice' of vigilantism is often compensatory and retributive. According township residents,

> […] violence and money co-exist as a way to instil justice and, importantly, ensure compensation for the complainant. The immediacy of vigilante 'justice' coupled with a perception that vigilantes are able to return belongings or extract financial compensation (via violence) is an argument commonly made in support of their methods (Ibid: 21).

From this perspective, the looting and appropriation of property seen during May 2008 attacks may be interpreted as 'compensatory justice' rather than pure criminality. Of course, the flipside of such an interpretation is that much criminality may pass unnoticed under the rubric of such a 'justice' (Misago, *et al*., 2009).

3.2.1.4 Violent Community Protests

Xenophobic violence in South Africa should also be understood in a context of regular and increasingly violent community service delivery protests. In fact many xenophobic violence incidents were recorded in areas that had previously experienced violent public service delivery protests and in many instances community protests often include elements of xenophobic attacks on foreign-owned businesses (von Holdt *et al*, 2011). Community service delivery protests are widespread across South Africa particularly since 2004 and have become increasingly violent, characterised by the destruction of public and private property, barricading of public roads with burning tyres, vandalism of structures and objects (e.g. rubbish bins, service vehicles) representative of state service provision, and confrontations between armed police and stone-throwing crowds (Ibid). For instance, over 5,000 legal and over 800 illegal violent community protests were recorded in the 2004/2005 financial year (Atkinson, 2007).

Like xenophobic violence, violent service delivery protests tend to occur in impoverished urban areas plagued with evident lack or inadequate service delivery, organisational problems within municipalities, failings in responsiveness and communication between residents and the state, and perceptions of corruption, nepotism and self-enrichment among the representatives of the local authority. As von Holdt *et al* (2011:6) note:

> [..] community protests and xenophobic violence were associated with each other; in some cases the community protests were primary, with xenophobic attacks taking a secondary form as an adjunct to the main activity; in others xenophobic attacks were primary, but were either sparked off by community protests, or took place in a context of frequent such protests.

Similarly, the simultaneous occurrence and combination of anti-government service delivery protests and anti-foreigner violent attacks may probably explain the speed with which the media and other commentators connected government performance and service delivery failures to the xenophobic violence of May 2008 (see later discussion on common explanations of xenophobic violence).

To sum up, the above discussion provides the context within which xenophobic violence in South Africa occurs. It shows that violence against foreign nationals should be analysed and understood within a context of an extended history of a communal violence crisis experienced in the country particularly by the residents of the numerous poor townships and informal settlements. The following section is an overview of the history and nature of xenophobic violence in post-apartheid South Africa.

3.2.2 Episodes of Xenophobic Violence in Contemporary South Africa

As Misago *et al* (2010) note, xenophobic violence has been an on-going reality in post-1994 South Africa, and has steadily increased throughout the recent past in townships and informal settlements. For most interested observers, the government's apparent lack of preparedness for large-scale xenophobic attacks and widely held perception that they 'appeared out of nowhere' were incomprehensible. The same authors indicate that, "in the weeks and months leading up to May's outbreak, indicators of violent xenophobic sentiment and intent were clearly evident to government agencies as well as communities. Eviction notices and threats of violence had been publicly issued, and police and authorities had been notified" (Ibid: 38). The following provides a brief description of the nature of the main xenophobic violence episodes recorded prior to May 2008, during May 2008 and post-May 2008.

3.2.2.1 Xenophobic Violence Episodes Prior to May 2008[11]

In Post-apartheid South Africa, episodes of xenophobic violence targeting foreign nationals were reported as really as in 1994 when, during the so-called 'Operation Buyelekhaya' (Operation go back home), youth claiming affiliation with the local ANC, South African Communist Party (SACP) and South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) destroyed, looted and burned foreign-owned homes and property and evicted foreigners from Alexandra Township, Gauteng Province (Monson, 2011). Similarly, in 1998, two Senegalese and a Mozambican were thrown from a moving train in Johannesburg by a group of individuals returning from a political rally at which migrants and refugees were blamed for the levels of unemployment, crime and HIV/AIDS in South Africa. In 1999, The 'Malamulela Social Movement' members robbed self-employed Mozambicans and ransacked their premises in Vosloorus (Gauteng).

Violence against foreign nationals continued in early 2000. In 2000, a vigilante group assaulted Mozambicans and burnt their possessions in Alexandra, while in Zandspruit (Gauteng) local residents South attacked Zimbabweans living in the area. In 2011, Local residents in DuNoon (Western Cape) attacked and chased away all foreign nationals after an Angolan allegedly stabbed a South African citizen to death. In 2002, local residents Mabopane (Gauteng) attacked foreign traders running businesses from the local train station. In 2004, in Delft South (Western Cape), two Somali traders were shot; one of them died on the scene and the other got seriously injured. The attackers fled the scene without taking anything from the shops. In the same year, local residents in Diepsloot (Gauteng) stoned and burned down houses and property belonging to Zimbabweans during a service delivery protest over housing. In 2005, Zimbabwean migrants and Somali refugees were attacked and

[11] Adopted and adapted from *ACMS-OCHA Xenophobic Violence Incidents Database, August 2012*. Unpublished

beaten in Bothaville (Free State), while in Olievenhoutbosch (Gauteng), groups of South Africans chased foreign Africans living in the township's Choba informal settlement from their shacks, shops and businesses.

The violence intensified from 2006. Indeed, contrary to sporadic incidents reported in the past, since 2006, attacks on foreign nationals became a regular occurrence in many areas across the country, (particularly in Gauteng and Western Cape Provinces) and started resulting in increasing number of deaths and mass displacement of foreign nationals from affected areas. For example, in May 2006, 60 to 70 shops owned by Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Somali and Ethiopian nationals were attacked, looted and some torched in different areas and sections of the Schweizer-Reneke Township (North West). The displaced victims took refuge in a nearby Mosque. In July 2006, Somali shop owners in a township outside Knysna (Western Cape) were chased out of the area and at least 30 spaza shops were looted and vandalised. By August 2006, within a period of just over a month, between 20 and 30 Somalis were killed in townships surrounding Cape Town (Western Cape). During the same month, local youth groups, allegedly 'hired' by local business owners, looted and destroyed shops owned by Somalis and Ethiopians in Masipumelele (Western Cape). The victims of the attacks were displaced and stayed in a government-provided shelter for three months. Similarly, and in the same month of August, the South African Business Forum of Diepsloot (Gauteng) issues letters warning Somali shop owners to leave the area or face consequences. Later on, following the warning, foreign-owned shops were torched.

In 2007, violence continued unabated. Incidents were reported in Motherwell (Eastern Cape) in February 2008 where, violence reportedly triggered by the accidental shooting of a young South African man (by a Somali shop owner) resulted in the looting of over one-hundred Somali-owned shops in a 24 hour period. At least 400 Somalis were displaced from the area.

In May 2007, shops owned by Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Somali and Ethiopian nationals were attacked, looted and torched in Ipelegeng Township (North West). In September, after a service delivery protest in Delmas (Mpumalanga), residents attacked and looted 41 shops owned and staffed by foreign nationals in the area. One death and two serious injuries were reported, and 40 non-nationals took refuge at nearby mosques and with friends elsewhere. In October, after a clash between a Zimbabwean and a South African family went awry in Mooiplaas (Gauteng), the local population retaliated by attacking the migrant community, killing two people, brutally injuring 18 and looting 111 shops.

Attacks on foreign nationals intensified even further in early days of 2008 leading up to May 2008. The violence became increasingly big scale and resulted in increasing number of foreign nationals killed or displaced. At least three major incidents were reported in January 2008. In Duncan Village (Eastern Cape), two Somalis were found burned to death in their shop. Police later arrested seven people in connection with the incident after finding them in possession of property belonging to the deceased. In Jeffrey's Bay (Eastern Cape), after a Somali shop owner allegedly shot dead a suspected thief, a crowd of residents attack Somali-owned shops, and many Somali nationals were displaced and sought shelter at the local police station. In Soshanguve (Gauteng), one foreign national was burned to death, three others killed, 10 seriously injured and 60 shops looted in retaliation for the alleged robbery of a local store by four non-nationals. Subsequently, residents called for all foreigners to leave the area, which many did.

In February 2008, violence incidents were reported in Laudium (Gauteng), Valhalla Park (Western Cape) and Kroonstad (Free State). In Laudium, at a community meeting in the informal settlement of Itireleng residents were encouraged to chase non-nationals out of the area. Shacks and shops belonging to non-nationals were burnt and looted. Foreign nationals

were displaced and took refuge at a nearby community hall. In Valhalla Park, residents forcefully evicted at least five Somali shop owners from the area, injuring three after having apparently 'warned' the shop owners to leave three months before. In Kroonstad, one foreign national was seriously injured and 80 shops ransacked after a Somali shop owner retaliated with force against two drunken locals who attempted to rob him. Police arrested 39 alleged perpetrators.

In March 2008, two major incidents were reported in Gauteng and one in Western Cape. In Atteridgeville (Gauteng), at least seven foreign nationals were killed in a series of attacks that took place over a week. The deceased include Zimbabwean, Pakistani and Somali nationals as well as a South African who was mistaken for a foreign national. Approximately 150 shacks and shops were burnt down, destroyed or vandalised. Approximately 500 people were displaced and sought refuge elsewhere. In Diepsloot (Gauteng), three Zimbabweans were killed and their shacks burnt down. In Worcester (Western Cape), a large group of Zwelethemba informal settlement residents went on a rampage, destroying foreign-run shops and leaving a large number of foreign nationals homeless.

In April 2008, foreign national were attacked in Diepsloot (Gauteng) where 30 Zimbabwean-owned shacks were destroyed after a community meeting and in Mamelodi (Gauteng) where, in a similar pattern to the attacks in Itireleng and Atteridgeville, residents went from house to house, attacking non-nationals and setting alight the shops and houses abandoned by non-nationals. This was again violence on a major scale, resulting in large numbers of displaced non-nationals. Fifteen shacks and spaza shops were reportedly burned down in the area, with a 9 year old girl burned to death in her shack. Gauteng community safety departments said they had "received reports ... that these incidents are linked to other xenophobic incidents in

Tshwane and that this violence is about to explode and spread to other informal settlements …" (Bekker *et al*, 2008:20)

The discussion above indicates that xenophobic violence has been a long standing feature in post-apartheid South Africa and has steadily increased leading up to May 2008. Using reports in the print media, Bekker *et al* (2008) counted the number of xenophobic violence incidents prior to May 2008 and indicated that during the ten years leading up to the violence in May, Gauteng, the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape had the largest number of incidents in the most number of places. "In Gauteng, incidents occurred in 28 places, the Western Cape in 14 places, and in the Eastern Cape in 10 places. Reported incidents included shack burnings, shop burnings, and killings. […] Reported incidents increased from the late 1990s, accumulating sharply during the years 2005, 2006, 2007 and the first four months of 2008 …" (Ibid: 21).

According to Monson (2011), the apparent shock and surprise expressed particularly by government officials in the wake of the May 2008 attacks are incomprehensible as they implicitly represented anti-foreigner attacks as a new phenomenon in the country. Monson notes that this kind of amnesia precludes questions on topics such as government's (and other relevant stakeholders') institutional memory and their failure to manage risk and put in place appropriate preventive and response mechanisms (Ibid).

3.2.2.2 The May 2008 Violence: Timeline, Morphology and Reactions

3.2.2.2.1 Introduction

With no exhaustive record of the quantitative and qualitative nature of violence incidents (Monson *et al*, 2011:26) researchers, using different sources particularly media reports, provided summary estimates of the May 2008 xenophobic attacks and the damage they

caused: in a period of two weeks (11-26 May 2008), foreign nationals were attacked in at least 135 locations (Bekker *et al*, 2009) and these attacks led to at least 62 dead (including 21 South Africans), hundreds wounded, dozens raped, over a hundred thousand people displaced and millions of Rand worth of property looted, destroyed or appropriated by local residents (CoRMSA, 2008).

The violence started in Alexandra Township on 11 May 2008 and quickly spread to other townships and informal settlements across country. Although violence against foreign nationals was well a familiar phenomenon in South Africa (see previous section), the May 2008 wave was unprecedented in its intensity, rapid geographic spread, ferocity and harm (Misago, 2011). Graphic images - of knife- and stick-wielding aggressors, wounded victims, burning houses and even of a man being burned alive - made it into headline news around the world (Dodson, 2010). "These were soon replaced by images of people who had fled in fear of their lives to seek refuge in churches and police stations, eventually to be re-housed in tent settlements like those housing famine or war refugees" (Ibid: 1). Most victims were African foreign nationals but a 'third were South Africans who had married foreigners, refused to participate in the violent orgy, or had the misfortune of belonging to groups that were evidently not South African enough to claim their patch of urban space" (Landau, 2011:1).

When several appeals to restore peace went unheard, and responding to a request from an overwhelmed police force, the then South African President finally approved the deployment of the South African National Defence Force after nearly two weeks of murder and looting. However, when the army arrived, most foreign nationals and other targeted outsiders 'had already been cleansed from their hostile communities and the belligerents silently slipped back into the townships' embrace' (Landau 2011:1). Many of the displaced migrants returned to their home countries (on their own or through government assisted repatriation exercises)

while others (estimated at 20 000) remained in temporary tented camps (termed shelters of safety) for several months until all but one camp were dismantled in the end of 2008 (Monson *et al*, 2009).

After a detailed chronology and description of the main violence incidents, the discussion in this section provides a brief descriptive overview of other main characteristics of the May 2008 violence focusing on i) the identity of perpetrators and victims, ii) the rapid geographic spread of the violence, iii) the symbolic message of the violence, and iv) immediate reactions and responses by different actors. This overview serves as a build up to the discussion of - and helps understand the origin of - popular explanations and their limitations.

3.2.2.2.2 Timeline and morphology of the May 2008 Xenophobic Violence[12]

Date	*Place and description*
11 May	*Alexandra, Johannesburg (GP*[13]*):* An armed, angry mob carrying weapons of various types attacks foreign nationals in their homes and work places, assault and evict them and then loot, destroy or appropriate their homes and property. Two men are killed (1 Zimbabwean, 1 South African) and two foreign women are raped, one by four men; 60 people are injured.
12 May	*Alexandra, Johannesburg (GP):* Violence continues with same intensity: a further 56 people are injured; one foreign man is shot dead, 7 people are treated at nearby clinics for gunshot wounds, two new rapes are reported. Residents blockade London Road from 6pm and clash with police units deployed to monitor the situation. Police respond to live fire with rubber bullets and teargas, 27 attackers are arrested. An estimated 1,000 displaced people take refuge at Alexandra Police Station.
13 May	*Alexandra, Johannesburg (GP):* Violence continues despite the presence of *the police.* Two teens shot and one stabbed. Hundreds of local residents armed with sticks and rocks conduct a door-to-door eviction of foreigners in Ext 7. Police stoned and fired upon with handguns. The number of arrests reaches 66 and 150 injured foreigners are treated at Alexandra clinic.

[12] Timeline adopted and adapted from *ACMS-OCHA Xenophobic Violence Incidents Database, August 2012*. Unpublished
[13] GP: Gauteng Province

14 May	*Alexandra, Johannesburg (GP):* Residents burn looted possessions on a pyre; armed mobs are still roving the area with many residents standing by their doors displaying their identity documents to avoid being targeted. Locals move into homes vacated by the displaced. "In the evening, 200 metro police vehicles and 10 armoured vehicles lined the streets, and another clash between police and an aggressive crowd of about 2,000 residents took place on London Road. Police responded to live fire with rubber bullets" (Monson, 2011:31). The government condemns the attacks for the first time but the Minister of Safety and Security states that the violence is not a crisis. *Diepsloot, Johannesburg (GP):* With violence still ongoing in Alexandra, attacks erupt in Diepsloot, another township in northern Johannesburg. Two unconfirmed deaths were reported and one man was injured after an angry mob of about 150 people blockaded the entrance to the township with burning tyres, rubbish bins and tree trunks. Displaced foreign nationals take shelter at the Metro Police offices and a social development centre in the area.
15 May	*Alexandra, Johannesburg (GP):* Sporadic violence continues; 5 perpetrators are arrested and there are reports that Shangaan, Venda and Xhosa speaking South Africans were targeted along with foreign nationals. *Diepsloot, Johannesburg (GP):* Several Somali and Pakistani-owned businesses are looted and destroyed and several shacks belonging to foreign nationals are burnt down. Clashes between perpetrators of the violence and the police leave 5 people seriously injured. Thirteen people are arrested and police escort foreign nationals out of the area. Twenty-three displaced foreign nationals take refuge at a local Methodists Church. *Olifantsfontein, East Rand (GP):* 32 foreigners attacked, robbed and told to return to their countries after being blamed for the recent rise in food prices. Police then charge the victims with illegal immigration and process them for deportation.

16 May	*Alexandra, Johannesburg (GP*): On this sixth day of the violence, a mob conducts another door-to-door eviction of foreigners in Extension 7; angry mobs also arrive at the police station and demand that foreign nationals staying there leave. Violence subsides in this area on this day although a gunshot victim was found on 18 May. *Diepsloot, Johannesburg (GP):* Violence continues in this area, local residents burn immigrants' household possessions and foreigners continue to leave the area. *Ramaphosa, East Rand (GP):* Five days after the first attacks in Alexandra, violence breaks out in Ramaphosa, a township near Reiger Park. Foreign nationals are attacked and chased from the area. *Thokoza, East Rand (GP):* Attacks spread to Thokoza on Friday 16 May. Local residents burn two foreign-owned shacks and chase foreigners from the area. Seven people are arrested and 300 displaced foreigners take refuge in the local community hall. *Kwathemba, East Rand (GP):* Informal settlement residents attack and loot foreign-run shops. The attacks take place on the area where Pakistanis immigrants had converted RDP houses into shops. *Emlotheni and Emandleni, East Rand (GP):* A mob attacks and robs foreign nationals in the informal settlements of Emlotheni and Emandleni near Benoni. There are 12 injuries, and a woman is gang raped. *Fisantekraal, Durbanville (WC[14]):* A Somali shopkeeper is killed and his brother wounded by armed robbers.

[14] Western Cape Province

17 May	*Tembisa, East Rand (GP):* mobs attack and loot shops owned by foreigners and ethnic minorities - including 'Shangaans' and Zimbabweans - in the Liliba section, and burn down 15 shacks in the Kanana section. *Lebohang (MP[15]):* Violence against foreign nationals breaks out. *Jeppestown, Johannesburg CBD (GP):* At least one foreign-owned shop and a home are stoned and burgled by a mob. *Katlehong, East Rand (GP):* looting and destruction of houses and property belonging to foreign nationals take place in the vicinity of the Zulu-Sotho hostel. Two people are killed and 18 shacks razed; 29 people are arrested for public violence and the displaced are sheltered at the Thokoza police station. *Lwandle, Strand (WC):* Somali shop owners receive 'eviction notices.' *Cato Crest, Durban (KZN[16]):* A group of men beat, rob and tell Mozambicans living in the informal settlement to go back to their country. Victims report that the police refused to come to their rescue or take their statements. *Emlotheni and Emandleni, East Rand (GP):* A foreign woman is reportedly raped by 11 men. A non-South African man is hacked with an axe and nine Mozambican men are attacked by a mob.

[15] Mpumalanga province
[16] KwaZulu-Natal province

18 May	*Ramaphosa, East Rand (GP):* The situation worsens. An angry mob kills at least four people; one of them is wrapped in a blanket and set alight. "Another man, a Mozambican father of three – Ernesto Alfabeto Nhamuave – dies after being bludgeoned, doused with petrol or paraffin, and a mattress and clothes spread over him as he is set alight. His brother, who was attacked by the same men, pretends to be dead in order to escape. […] The iconic images of Ernesto Nhamuave – first engulfed in flames, and then flailing weakly, coated in white by a fire extinguisher, at the feet of police officers – has come to symbolise the inhumanity of the May attacks" (Monson, 2011: 39). *Tembisa, East Rand (GP):* Violence continues in the area. Mobs burn at least 50 shacks and kill 4 men in different parts of the township. One Mozambican is beaten to death in front of his wife in Phomolong; a Zimbabwean and a Mozambican man die after their throats are slit in Madelakufa informal settlement. The Mozambican, Walter Ntombela, a shop steward for the National Union of Metalworkers South Africa (NUMSA) who had been a union member for 10 years, is stabbed with pangas and beheaded while resisting his attackers so that his wife and children could escape. Seven people are arrested and detained at Tembisa police station. *Emandleni, East Rand (GP):* A South African man is burned beyond recognition when his house is set alight during a rampaging mob's search for foreigners. A foreigner is shot in the head and a South African employer burned alive in his home after being accused of hiring foreigners instead of local people. *Jeppestown, Johannesburg CBD (GP):* Attacks and looting continue in foreigners nationals are told and forced to leave the area. *Hillbrow, Johannesburg (GP):* Locals attack street vendors. *Cleveland Informal Settlement, Johannesburg (GP):* Two people burnt and three beaten to death; 50 hospitalised. 15 shops vandalised and looted, 10 cars burned. - 300 people flee to Cleveland police station. *Katlehong, East Rand (GP):* Foreigners in Moleleki section are told to leave peacefully after a community meeting at which the decision to chase them away was taken. *Thokoza, East Rand (GP):* Foreign-owned shacks are razed and a mob went about ordering Shangaan- and Venda-speakers to leave. At least 50 foreigners sought refuge at the Thokoza police station on Sunday, and by Monday 800 people were sheltering at the local community centre, causing a food shortage. Three hundred people were also sheltering at the Vosloorus police station. *Ramaphosa, East Rand (GP):* Violence continues and gets worse in this area. At least four people are reported killed by a marauding mob; one of them is wrapped in his own blanket and set alight. Another man, a Mozambican father of three – Ernesto Alfabeto Nhamuave – dies after being bludgeoned, doused with petrol or paraffin, and a mattress and clothes spread over him as he is set alight. His brother, who is attacked by the same men, pretends to be dead in order to escape.

	Cleveland, Johannesburg CBD (GP): Two foreign nationals are burnt, three beaten to death, and 50 hospitalised, many with gunshot and stab wounds; 15 shops are vandalised and looted and 10 cars burned. Three hundred foreigners flee to the Cleveland police station. *Hillbrow, Johannesburg CBD (GP):* Local residents attack street vendors, and 1,500 to 2,000 foreigners flee to Jeppe police station. Police disperse a crowd with rubber bullets after being fired upon. Eight people are arrested for public violence. *Makausi, East Rand (GP):* Five foreign nationals are killed after local residents tear down and burn their shacks, and throw rocks and petrol bombs at police, who were unable to enter the settlement and had to fire into the area from the side-lines. *Dukathole, East Rand (GP):* Violence breaks out; local residents barricade the roads, smash vehicles and loot shops belonging to foreign nationals. A witness reports seeing stabbed, mutilated and burned people. Police arrest 4 community leaders for inciting the attacks at community meetings. Six hundred displaced foreigners are sheltered at Primrose police station. *Jerusalem informal settlement, East rand (GP):* A mob of 500 in attempts to loot foreign-owned shops and confronts the police with gun fire *Zandspruit, West Rand (GP):* Mob destroys foreign-owned shacks and shops and pelts police with bricks. *Kya Sands, West Rand (GP):* Violence erupts after a foreign national is accused of stealing a South African woman's jewellery. The violence continues the following day and spills over to Zamimpilo and Randfontein. *Tudor Shaft, West Rand (GP):* violence against froing nationals flares and requires the intervention of heavily armed police. *Kagiso, West Rand (GP):* a meeting among foreign nationals alarms local residents and prompts a mob of about 1000 people to start attacks. *Du Noon, Cape Town*: 30 Somali spaza-shop owners receive 'eviction letters'.
19 May	*Ramaphosa, East Rand (GP):* Attacks on foreign nationals continue. Homes, vehicles and other property belonging to foreigners are vandalised and set alight. One foreigner dies after being beaten with a slab of wall and set alight, and another compatriot after being stabbed and crushed with a block of cement. Another foreigner is shot in the head. In addition, the hacked and burned body of a Malawian national is discovered on a sandy road. Displaced foreign nationals from are transported from the local police station to Elspark and Reiger Park Community Centres and two churches in the area.

	Marathon Informal Settlement, East Rand (GP): A mob chases foreigners out and burns their homes to the ground. *Kagiso, West Rand (GP):* A mob of around 1,000 people starts attacking foreigners. *Mayfair, Johannesburg CBD (GP):* Several single Somali mothers and children flee to the local mosque after being threatened by a mob at their home.
20 May	*Umbilo, Durban (KZN):* Hostel dwellers attack and rob a Nigerian-owned tavern and its patrons. *Claremont, Durban (KZN):* Local vendors and hair salon owners order foreign nationals to vacate their shops. A Congolese man is severely beaten by taxi drivers who attack street vendors and informal businesspeople at the Claremont taxi rank. *Ramaphosa, East Rand (GP):* More foreign-owned dwellings were torched and three people are injured in a standoff between residents and police. Two Mozambican miners are killed and two seriously injured after being beaten with steel poles when a mob raided a hostel in Reiger Park. *Tembisa, East Rand (GP):* Three foreigners are shot and wounded and seven people arrested for public violence. At least seven people are reportedly dead and at least 65 informal homes had been razed across the township since violence started in this area.
20 May	*Leslie and Embalenhle townships (MP):* Foreigners' shacks and shops are burned and looted. The victims are mainly Zimbabweans and Somalis. *Muvhango settlement, East rand (GP):* Hundreds of foreigners are attacked, displaced from the area and seek refuge at the local police station. *Joe Slovo informal settlement, East rand (GP):* One foreign national is hacked to death and two critically injured in attacks by local residents. *Springs, East Rand (GP):* foreign-owned dwellings are torched in Springs, some with the aid of petrol bombs. Many foreigners displaced from Gugulethu Everest settlement, and 150 displaced from Duduza take shelter at Springs Police station.

21 May	*Ramaphosa, East Rand (GP):* A further four people are killed and six arrested. This brings the total deaths in this area to 14 on the same day that then President Thabo Mbeki approves army intervention to help curb the violence in Gauteng. *Cato Manor, Durban (KZN):* A Malawian man is shot dead and two other foreign nationals seriously injured by a mob at the Cato Manor police station where about 500 foreigners had taken refuge. *Sebokeng (GP):* Confrontations and lootings break out and hundreds of foreigners flee the area. Villiers (FS[17]): Local youths loot Pakistani-run shops, leading to 22 arrests. *Mabopane (NW[18]):* Chinese and Pakistani traders running businesses from the station were attacked. *Kenville, Durban (KZN):* A mob petrol-bomb a Malawian homed and rob 15 South African and 3 Malawian homes. *Bottlebrush Informal Settlement, Durban (KZN):* Xhosa-speaking attackers loot homes and beat foreigners, causing 200 to 300 foreign families to take refuge at the Chatsworth police station.
22 May	*Kenville, Durban (KZN):* Violence continues in this area; homes belonging to Foreign nationals were burned down and 2 foreigners injured in the process. Mohlaletsi (LP[19]): A group of local residents in attack the rental homes of foreigners, breaking down their doors and demanding money. A Mozambican man is stabbed in the shoulder and 81 Zimbabweans, Ethiopians and Mozambicans take refuge at the local police station; 11 assailants are arrested. *Du Noon, Cape Town (WC):* Mobs loot shops and displace foreign nationals after an aborted anti-xenophobia meeting organized by the local authority. One Somali is killed and 14 foreigners are injured. Over 500 displaced foreigners seek refuge at the local police station and emergency centre in Milnerton. *Masiphumelele, Cape Town (WC):* A mob of youth loots shops and throws stones at foreigners. The victims of the attack are evacuated by the police to the Soetwater holiday resort.

[17] Free State province
[18] North West province
[19] Limpopo province

	Witlokasie, Knysna (WC): Five Somali shops are looted and set alight. Around 120 foreigners seek refuge at the town's police station. *Zwelihle & Overhills, Hermanus (WC):* Foreign-owned shops are vandalised and 250 foreigners including Zimbabwean, Angolan and Somali nationals are displaced and housed at Zwelihle Community Hall and the Mt. Pleasant mosque. *Namahadi, Frankfort (FS):* Locals broke into and looted foreigners' shops. Five arrests made; 3 of minors. *Ga-Rankuwa and Shoshanguve, Pretoria (GP):* Eviction notices are issued to foreigners, especially business owners to leave Ga-Rankuwa and at least one shop looted and burned in Shoshanguve. *Atteridgeville, Pretoria (GP):* Local residents loot and burn one foreign-owned shop.
23 May	*Khayelitsha, Malmesbury, Philippi, Kuils River, Mitchell's Plain, & Nyanga Cape Town (WC):* Violence characterised by looting, vandalising and burning down foreign-owned property continues and foreign nationals leave the areas in big numbers to seek shelter at police stations and community halls. *Ocean View, Cape Town (WC):* Locals threaten arson if displaced foreigners are housed in their community hall. *Umlazi (KZN):* A Malawian is robbed of household possessions; 8 people are arrested and most of the goods recovered. *Quarry Heights, Durban (KZN):* Five foreigners are injured in assaults. The displaced claim that assailants had a list of all foreign nationals living in the area. *KwaMsane, (KZN):* A foreign family shot at by a motorist while attempting to drive back to Mozambique. *Okasie, Brits (NW):* Foreigners' shops are looted and burned down. Forty nine people are arrested and 35 foreign nationals accommodated at the Okasie police station.

24 May	*Actonville, East Rand (GP):* The police have to break up a fight between local residents and foreigners in. On this day, their violence has claimed three lives in this area. *Shoshanguve and Atteridgeville, Pretoria (GP):* Anti-xenophobia march organized by the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) is cancelled due to threatened reprisals. *Kraaifontein, Philippi, George, Hout Bay and Kuils River, Cape Town (WC):* Foreign-owned shops looted and burned. Foreign nationals are displaced from the areas. On this day, an estimated 10 000 foreign nationals had been displaced and accommodated at different shelters in the Western cape province. *Ramaphosa, East Rand (GP):* The police manage to calm the unrest that includes the burning of a vehicle and several shacks. This is the last day of violence in the area. *Johannesburg CBD, (GP):* Civil society organisations and members of the public organize a march against xenophobia starting from Constitution Hill in Hillbrow. *Lethlabile, Brits (NW):* Two Pakistani residents are stabbed and their bakkie set alight while Pakistani and Mozambican-owned shops are looted and burned down. *Mothutlung village (NW):* A 200-strong mob loots Mozambican-owned spaza shops. *Ipelegeng, Schweizer Reneke (NW):* A man is stabbed and a South African woman pepper-sprayed for working for a Bangladeshi employer.
25 May	*Tembisa, East Rand (GP):* A mob destroys shacks belonging to foreign nationals in Madelakufa settlement; police arrest 41 assailants. In nearby Ivory Park, local residents burn and loot foreign-owned shelters; 25 of them are arrested. *Masiphumelele, Cape Town (WC):* The local community publicly apologises to the foreigners attacked and displaced and asks them to return. Community representatives go door to door retrieving stolen goods. *Cato Manor & Inanda Durban (KZN):* one foreigner is robbed of household possessions in Cato Manor and another stabbed and one robbed in Inanda. Eight people are arrested in connection with these crimes. *KwaNdengezi (KZN):* Five Mozambican men are assaulted and robbed of a welding machine; 2 perpetrators are arrested. *Pretoria (GP):* President Mbeki condemns the attacks in a national address.

26 May	*Phomolong, Rustenberg (NW):* Police arrest 5 people for inciting violence against foreign nationals. *Pretoria (GP):* Safety and Security Minister declares violence declared under control. Final official statistics: 1,384 suspects arrested; 342 shops looted and 213 burnt down; 62 people reported dead, 21 of them South African citizens.

3.2.2.2.3 Perpetrators and targets/victims of the violence

In addition to its unprecedented nature of ferocity and harm, the May 2008 xenophobic violence was also characterised by differing -if often inaccurate- opinions on the identity of perpetrators and their targets or victims. Most commentators (see for example Bekker *et al*, 2008) identified 'angry Black young men' as the perpetrators of the May 2008 violence. While it is indeed true that Black young men formed the majority of perpetrators in affected areas (predominantly Black townships and informal settlements), this study found evidence that local residents both males and females and of different age groups participated in the violence in many cases.

In Alexandra for example, respondents reported that a significant number of community members, men and women, young and old participated in the attacks. Respondents revealed that women were also actively involved in the attacks especially in pointing out where foreigners lived. One respondent for example stated: "What can I say? I would say they do not like them. Even women, normally the first person during any violence is always a woman. This violence was no different, it was mothers who were leading and pointing out where foreigners live." Similarly, in Itireleng, female respondents admitted that they participated in the violence alongside their male counterparts. For example, a 20-year-old female respondent in Itireleng reported having participated: "This was started by few people and we all joined… Some of us do not have real reasons why we fought." Nieftagodien (2011) notes that women mostly participated in looting and occupation of appropriated houses or shacks.

Other commentators, particularly government officials and instigators of the violence themselves, attributed the attacks to 'faceless' or 'anonymous' mobs or criminals (for example Polzer *et al,* 2010). While indeed the violence in some cases involved large crowds, this study provides evidence that the violence was orchestrated by identifiable individuals and/or groups with specific interests (see later section on key players and their motivations for details). As Monson *et al* (2011) note, the reference to a faceless collective perpetrator or anonymous mobs as the perpetrators of the violence was an attempt to erase the individual agency and responsibility even when some atrocities committed required individual actors and volition. Some murders for instance "clearly required an individual actor to wield the blade that slit a throat or severed a head" (Ibid: 37).

The identity of targets or victims of the violence was also a subject of unfounded opinions. Chief of these was the view that the May 2008 xenophobic violence was a large scale 'black-on-black' affair implying that only Black foreign migrants were the targets or the victims of the violent attacks. This view was informed by - or intended to support - the 'afrophobia' hypothesis advanced by some analysts to explain the violence (see details Misago, 2011). While the majority of the victims were indeed Black migrants from other African countries, there is ample evidence that foreign nationals from beyond the continent's borders (e.g. Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Chinese) have repeatedly been targeted by xenophobic attacks before, during and after May 2008 (Ibid). This study provides evidence that in most affected areas, at least in areas covered by this research, all foreign nationals irrespective of their nationality, age, gender or immigration status were attacked. South African citizens, spouses or children of foreign nationals were also not spared. Some South Africans belonging to minority groups from other provinces were also attacked deliberately or by mistake. In Diepsloot for example, respondents reported all foreigners were attacked along with Tsongas

and Pedis. A local female respondent stated when asked who the target of the violence in Diepsloot was:

> All foreigners because the locals would point to the shacks belonging to foreigners and the attackers would burn the shacks. The attacks were widespread and some of the locals were not spared. Zulus ended up attacking the Pedi saying they should go back to Petersburg. They [perpetrators] were fighting everybody, women, men and children. Sometimes they made mistakes; they would attack Tsonga people thinking they are from Mozambique.

Similarly, all foreigners, irrespective of their nationality, age, gender, legal status, length of stay in the area were attacked in Alexandra, Sector II. Some respondents believed that only men were targeted but there was evidence that women were also beaten and raped as a news editor at a local radio station confirmed: "They suffered a lot; one woman was raped twice in the same night by different perpetrators." South Africans coming from other provinces were also targeted and attacked; Shangaans from Venda were the most affected. Further, South African women married to foreigners as well children from such mixed marriages were also attacked and had to flee to the police station with their husbands. The members of men focus group in Alexandra (most of whom were among the perpetrators) reported:

> In most cases there are mixed marriages here. If we enter to attack a Zimbabwean who is in this case your father there is no way you cannot be affected, even if your mom is a South African. There were lots of cases that happened because the woman was a South African and married or cohabiting with a foreigner. Some of these women ended up at the police station.

Like in other affected areas, respondents reports all foreigners were targeted and attacked in Itireleng. A female local respondent stated: "They attacked every foreigner, children and women…. They were all attacked. Luckily, no one died in this area. Though someone was caught at the grounds and they poured petrol on him and they also forced him to drink petrol." It appears then that the target of xenophobic violence in South Africa is not only Black immigrants or foreigners in the nationality sense but those individuals and groups considered 'outsiders' and associated with significant realistic and symbolic threats to local socio-economic orders.

3.2.2.2.4 Reactions to the rapid spread of the violence

As indicated earlier, the May 2008 violence was characterised by a rapid geographic spread. Bekker *et al* (2008) note that, in a period of just two weeks, 135 violence incidents were recorded in different locations across the country. As the timeline above shows, the violence spread quickly in informal settlements and townships in Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal provinces. This rapid geographic spread and the perceived significant levels of coordination and orchestration led many inside and outside the government to believe that the attacks were the act of a 'third force', referring to clandestine and counter-revolutionary militias of the Apartheid era (Landau, 2011). With no tangible evidence, the claim was quickly withdrawn by the same sources. Other attempts to explain the diffusion of xenophobic violence were dominated by the 'copycat' approach or imitation fostered mainly by geographic proximity and media (see for example Bekker *et al*, 2008).

While there is evidence of cooperation and collaboration among some neighbouring communities, this study also provides evidence that that some communities close to affected areas managed to resist violence and even actively mobilized to fight off the pressures from their neighbours. It is also certain that media visibility was not restricted only to affected

communities. There is therefore a need to problematize the notion of the agentless spreading of violence. As Monson *et al* (2011) argue, how the violence was reported often hid the agents and interests behind it. Were there some kind of uncontrollable demonstration effect or diffusion, we could not explain how some communities close to affected areas managed to resist violence. As Braun (2008) argues in a different context, the most critical factor in the diffusion of collective violence is neither geographic proximity nor the media but rather a combination of 'social similarity' and political structures. The social similarity approach stipulates that only like-minded individuals and groups are likely to emulate or adopt collective violence observed elsewhere (Ibid). Given the demographic and economic similarities in many of the affected communities, there were undoubtedly similar pressures and opportunities available (Fauvelle-Aymar *et a*l, 2011). I share Braun's view that, "the effect of geographical distance is actually caused not by geographical proximity as such, but by the fact that proximate areas tend to be socially similar" (Braun, 2008:29).

3.2.2.2.5 Xenophobic violence: a hate crime with a symbolic message

Many analysts (see for example Harris, 2004) rightfully note xenophobic attacks are hate crimes that should not be seen as isolated individual incidents, because they are 'message crimes' intended to speak to the entire 'hated group'. The nature of the violence described in the timeline (particular the burning of people to death) reveals a clear symbolic message that goes beyond the often used criminality discourse. Like any other types of hate crime, xenophobic incidents communicate to foreigners that they are unwelcome in a particular neighbourhood, community, school, or workplace, and serve a threatening and warning function beyond the particular incident and those directly involved.

The violence conveys a clear message that structures or people that are associated with or represent the hated group may also be attacked. This was clearly evident in May 2008 when

South African citizens, spouses or employers of foreign nationals were also targeted. Simplistic dismissals of the xenophobic violence as pure criminality obscures the 'message-quality' of such a hate crime, which strives to instil fear and acts as a warning that resonates beyond the individual incident and points towards the possibility of future violence (Harris, 2004).

The message was very clearly received, at least by those victims of the violence living in government-provided shelters of safety and who were being told to return to areas from which they were displaced as the government attempted a reintegration process and threatened to close the shelters. A Zimbabwean displaced from Alexandra for example stated: "I can't go back to Alexandra. If I go there I'm selling my life. If the government close the refugee camps and send us back to Alexandra we will be dead the same night. It's not safe anymore for us." The displaced victims were highly resistant to returning to their previous places of residence where the community that ousted them would see that they have ignored the loud and clear message to leave.

3.2.2.2.6 Immediate reactions and responses

Perhaps not surprisingly, the May 2008 violence was also characterised by chaotic immediate reactions and responses by different actors including government at different levels, political parties, the police, civil society, the media and ordinary members of the public. Landau (2001) summarises the official government responses as confused, contradictory, and often overtly ideological. He notes that: "During the violence, the government first denied the crisis and then blamed criminal elements, opposition parties, and 'sinister forces'. […] Amidst the confusion, statements from perpetrators and ordinary township residents made it clear that the impetus for the violence was their own" (Ibid: 1)

That, in most affected areas, violence went on for several days before subsiding points to the inability of the police and other relevant local authorities to stop the violence and/or preventing it from spreading to news areas. Indeed as Misago *et al* (2010:165) note, "the intensity and rapid geographic spread of the May 2008 violence stretched the capacity of the normal law and order enforcement institutions and necessitated the use of the army to control the attacks. It was the first wide-scale domestic deployment of military since 1994." In most affected areas, attacks stopped only after all foreign nationals had left the areas and there were no more businesses to loot. Indeed, this study finds that in terms of immediate response to the threat and outbreak of violence, local leaders and police were in most cases reluctant to intervene for different reasons including i) the fact that they shared the same attitudes with the general community and also wanted foreign nationals to leave; ii) fear of victimization; iii) fear of losing legitimacy and political positions (see details in Misago *et al*, 2010).

The role of the police was limited to escorting foreign nationals to police stations and other places of safety rather than protecting them and their property in situ. Similarly, community leaders and the local government did nothing to prevent or stop the violence. As will be discussed later, some were involved in or supported the violence. Even those who were not supportive did not want to be seen helping the unwanted foreign nationals for fear of losing legitimacy or their lucrative leadership positions. Further, a number of high level government officials and political leaders attempted to address and engage with people in affected areas but these meetings were, in most cases, abruptly interrupted as people did not want to hear appeals to stop the violence (Ibid).

The violence was also characterised by other state's interventions that, deliberately or otherwise, supported the intentions of perpetrators - to remove foreigners from communities and country- and further criminalized the victims (Monson *et al*, 2009). Indeed, in addition to

the police privileging evacuation rather than providing protection to people where they lived, Home Affairs officials raided some shelters to check the victims' immigration papers and those who were found without papers were deported. Home affairs further organised 'voluntary' repatriation buses for victims who wished to return to their home countries (Ibid). Monson *et al* (2009) question the possibility of a truly 'voluntary' repatriation in a context of escalating violence, little prospect of return to communities of residence; and a lack of protection and welfare guarantees.

Although characterised by much 'chaos' due to a lack of coordination and communication among different stakeholders, the civil society reaction, in terms of immediate humanitarian response to the May 2008 violence was generally laudable: NGOs (local and international), UN agencies, faith-based organisations and individuals proffered volumes of donated food, clothes and other goods and services to the displaced populations (Igglesden, *et al*, 2009).

In addition to contributing to the humanitarian assistance effort by the civil society, ordinary members of the public generally reacted to the violence by condemning the attacks, distancing themselves from the perpetrators and expressing solidarity with the victims. As Dodson (2010:1) notes, "Shamed by association with their fellow citizens' display of barbarism, South Africans of all races took to the streets in protest marches reminiscent of the antiapartheid struggle. They carried placards with slogans such as 'Shame On Us', 'Join the Fight Against Xenophobia', 'Don't Touch My Sista', and 'No Black in the Rainbow?'.

A closer look at the public reaction however reveals a somewhat 'hypocritical' sympathy by the country's rich and middle class. As just mentioned above, during the violence, the country's rich and middle class residents expressed outrage, condemned the violence, organised solidarity marches and contributed abundantly to the humanitarian relief but, in at least two occasions (in Gauteng and Western Cape), they resisted government's efforts to

build safety shelters (for the victims of the violence) in their wealthy neighbourhoods. While many may have been sincere in their expression of solidarity, the fact that some refuted the idea to accommodate victims in their close vicinity begs the question of how really genuine the sympathy of many was, and is probably further evidence of the pervasive anti-immigrant sentiments in all spheres of the society.

The media (particularly television, radio and newspapers) reacted to the May 2008 xenophobic violence by offering widespread coverage and reconstruction of events and their possible explanations. Monson *et al* (2011) identify key elements characterising the media reporting of facts, reconstruction and interpretation of events: i) the media offered a decontextualized coverage which constructed the May 2008 attacks as new and unexpected form of social instability in South Africa when in fact there is nothing new about anti-foreigner violence in the country; ii) similarly the media portrayed 'xenophobia' as a psychological pathology and the attacks as a moral crisis; two depoliticising ideas that obscure important historical continuities and the political economy of the violence; iii) coverage erased individual agency with continual reference to a spontaneous, chaotic mob or collective actor from which individuals or rational agendas cannot be distinguished; and iv) coverage duplicated the erasure of agency "through analogies of natural disaster and communicable disease that construct affected communities as victims overtaken by a natural force of one kind or another, rather than acting with true agency according to specific local or personal agendas" (Ibid: 52). This study echoes the authors' view that this media reconstruction and explanation/interpretation of the violence were highly flawed on almost all accounts.

3.2.2.2.7 Conclusion

In sum, this discussion of the May 2008 violence describes the unprecedented magnitude and intensity of the May 2008 mass attacks on foreign nationals and South African minority groups living in many informal settlements and townships across the country. In addition to the atrocious nature of the attacks, the discussion also reveals other important characteristics of the violence. These include i) the violence rapid geographic spread best explained by 'social similarly' rather than the 'copycat' hypothesis; ii) the hate crime symbolic message the violence carries and conveys to the victims and those associated with them; iii) initial reactions characterised by confused and inadequate response by government at different levels; iv) laudable humanitarian assistance by civil society; v) generally sympathetic - if somewhat hypocritical - pubic response; and vi) a widespread but rather decontextualized and agency-erasing media coverage and interpretation of events. The highly flawed media interpretation of the violence was informed by - and/or informed - some of the popular - if equally limited - explanations of the violence reviewed in the section after next.

3.2.2.3 Xenophobic Violence post-May 2008

As discussed earlier, violence against foreign nationals in South Africa did not end in May 2008. In ensuing days and weeks, sporadic episodes continued and the media reported at least 10 violence incidents during June 2008[20]. In the following months and years, attacks on non-nationals continued, resulting in rising cases of murder, injuries, threats of mob violence, looting and the destruction of residential property and businesses, as well as mass displacement. In every single year since 2008, violence has claimed more lives than it did during the May 2008 attacks.

[20] ACMS-OCHA Xenophobic Violence Incidents Database, August 2012. Unpublished

Indeed, CoRMSA (2011) reports that since mid-2008, almost every month there has been at least one attack on groups of foreign nationals in the country; and that between mid-2009 and late 2010, there were at least 20 deaths, over 40 serious injuries, at least 200 foreign-run shops looted and more than 4,000 persons displaced due to violence targeting foreign nationals. In 2011, at least 120 foreign nationals were killed (five of them burnt alive), 100 were seriously injured, at least 1,000 displaced, and 120 shops/businesses permanently or temporarily closed through violence or selective enforcement of by-laws (UNHCR ROSA, 2013)[21]. In 2012, the number of violence incidents increased: the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Southern Africa Regional Office (UNHCR ROSA) reported at least 250 incidents resulting in 140 deaths and 250 serious injuries.[22] In 2013, UNHCR ROSA recorded an average of three major violence incidents per week[23] with attacks regularly reported in many areas across the country during 2014. There were an estimated 300 incidents of violence against foreign nationals, an estimated 200 shops looted and 900 persons displaced between January and March 2014 (Ibid). The South African Police Services (SAPS) were overwhelmed by the increase in violence against foreigners and required support and assistance from all relevant government departments.[24] In 2015, violence continued in many parts of Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo provinces. Information from the police indicate that 16 people (9 in Gauteng and 7 in KwaZulu Natal) were killed, more than 6 000 people displaced and hundreds of businesses looted and destroyed (UNHCR ROSA, 2015).

While violence once seemed concentrated in the townships around the country's big cities, it is now increasingly spreading across the country's nine provinces and into rural areas. The

[21] Unpublished UNHCR statistics on data compiled from the UNHCR xenophobia hotline.
[22] UNHCR ROSA (2014). UN Protection Working Group Meeting Minutes. 7 March 2014
[23] Communique by UNHCR's Alphonse Munyaneza at the UNHCR Protection Working Group meeting of 22 January 2013. Please note that these figures do not include incidents that occurred after March 2014. Information is not available at this state.
[24] UNHCR ROSA (2014). UN Protection Working Group Meeting Minutes. 7 March 2014

most affected provinces remain the Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Eastern Cape where some locations and sub places have become scenes of repeated occurrences of violent attacks.[25] In all provinces, this violence occurs mostly (but not exclusively) in poor and economically marginalised informal settlements where citizens (many of whom are themselves internal migrants) and immigrants meet amidst poor living conditions and a general scarcity of public services, employment and business opportunities.

In sum, while the post-May 2008 violence has been on smaller scale (compared to the May 2008 attacks), the above overview shows that it is again steadily increasing and spreading to all provinces and is claiming more lives than it did during the May 2008 attacks. Although most foreign nationals living in poor urban areas regular receive threats and live in fear, most of post-May 2008 violence has been mostly targeted at foreign nationals (particularly Somalis, Ethiopians, Pakistanis) operating small businesses in townships and informal settlements. There is empirical evidence that violence against foreign traders is mainly organised by local business associations who claim to be fighting what they perceive to be 'illegitimate' foreign business competition (Segatti, 2011).

3.3 POPULAR EXPLANATIONS AND THEIR LIMITATIONS[26]

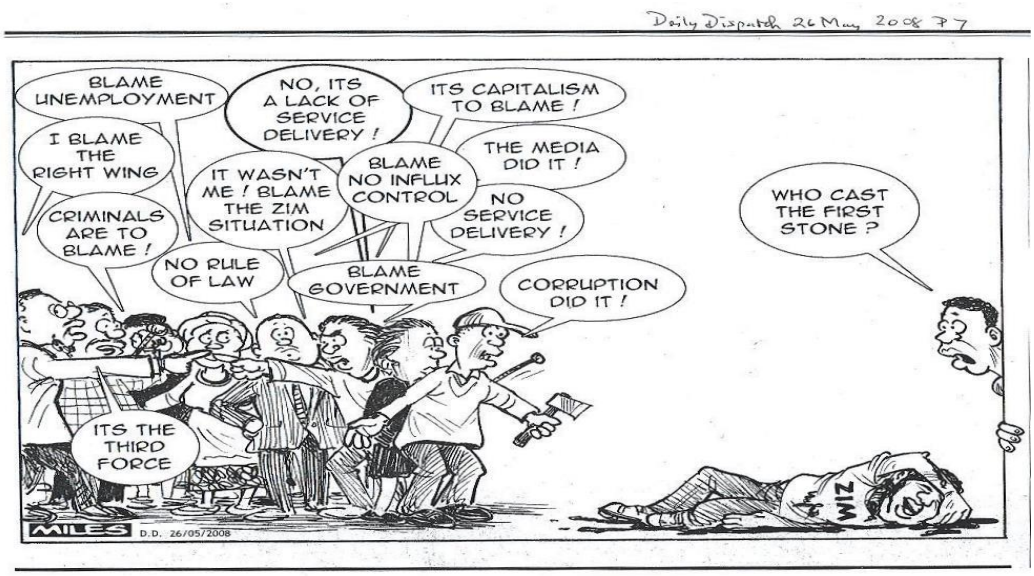
3.3.1 Introduction

As noted earlier, the 2008 May events stimulated a great variety of descriptive, ideological and analytical explanations from government officials, political and community leaders, scholars, media, civil society and individual commentators attempting to account for the root and immediate causes of the violence. Some of these explanations and analyses "were

[25] ACMS/OCHA -Xenophobic violence incidents database 1994_Aug2012 (Unpublished)
[26] I published some material in this chapter in a different form in Misago (2011).

produced immediately after the events and merely provided the public with descriptive or contextual elements" (Fauvelle-Aymar *et al*, 2011:56). These initial reactions ranged from 'Afrophobia' or self-hatred among the country's black residents, third force, deeds and misdeeds of past and current political systems, relative deprivation and ensuing frustration, poor border control resulting in 'human tsunami', competition for resources and opportunities, to rising food and basic commodity prices (Landau and Misago, 2009, HSRC, 2008). The cartoon (Figure 1) below encapsulates much of the explanations provided during the violence and clearly shows that the causes of the violent attacks had become anyone's guess.

Figure 1: Cartoon illustrating causal common explanations of the May 2008 xenophobic violence[27]



As the section below shows, most of these popular explanations were generally based on inaccurate information, informed by political rationales and ideological stances rather than empirical evidence or prior comprehensive research (see also Fauvelle-Aymar *et al*, 2011).

[27] Source: Daily Dispatch, 26 May 2008

As time went by, and realising that initial reactions did not adequately explain the occurrence of violence, discussions and debates continued (among scholars, policy makers and civil society organizations) and research proliferated as a continuous effort to identify the real causes behind the violence and eventually propose effective measures to prevent future occurrences. Competing explanations and analyses, based on various methodologies and reflecting different intellectual legacies emerged from these debates and research (Ibid). These analyses detailed broad political, historical, structural and attitudinal explanatory factors (see for example Crush *et al*, 2008; Neocosmos, 2008; Sharp, 2008; Pillay, 2008 and Dodson, 2010).

While valuable in providing the historical, political and socio-economic context in which the violence occurred, these explanations similarly "falter when faced with empirical or logical interrogation" (Landau 2010:215) as they fail to account for i) the appearance of violence in some areas while others with similar socio-economic conditions remained calm; ii) the specific targeting of certain groups of foreign nationals and the murders of so many South African citizens and iii) the timing, location and diffusion of the violence. While there can be no doubt that the causes of the violence "lie in a complex of economic, political, social, and cultural factors, both contemporary and historical" (Dodson, 2010:4), the main weakness of these explanations lies in their inability to establish a direct empirical link between these common structural factors and the occurrence of the violence in specific communities at specific times.

The following section provides a critical overview of these analyses (and others explanations that followed) grouped into three main categories: i) economic and material, ii) historical, political and institutional, and iii) psycho-social. It shows that these explanations maintain only a tenuous relationship with empirical reality (with regard to the occurrence of the

violence) and actually reveal a methodological and analytical 'laziness' - or at least a lack of analytical rigour - as they rarely attempt to answer those 'deceptively' simple but critical questions that illuminate the occurrence of the violence: how, when and where; 'why here and not there', why now and not then?' (see Horowitz, 2001).

3.3.2 Economic and Material Explanations

Economic and material explanations of xenophobic violence in South Africa emphasize competition between citizens and the increasing number of poor African migrants over scarce resources and opportunities, particularly at a time of high unemployment and record food and basic commodity price hikes, as the main cause of the violence (see for example Silberman *et al*, 2008; Glaser, 2008 and Dodson, 2010). In line with Tilly's observation that "analysts often refer to large-scale causes (poverty, widespread frustration, extremism, resource competition and so on) proposing them as necessary or sufficient conditions for whole episodes of collective violence" (2003:20), explanations generated by the media, political leaders and academics, focused on material and economic conditions in affected communities (Bekker *et al*, 2009; Crush *et al*, 2009).

More specific accounts often drew attention to inequality, poverty, unemployment and other particular aspects of material deprivation caused by discriminatory policies and practices of the apartheid regime but also by the new government's poor service delivery efforts. Underlying almost all these offerings was a presumption, captured in the work of Crush *et al* (2009:16), that, "the failures of the government to deal with endemic poverty, joblessness, lack of shelter and basic services had led to the scapegoating of foreign migrants by frustrated citizens." The following is a review of the predominant accounts in this category.

3.3.2.1 Competition for scarce resources and opportunities

Residents of violence affected areas, their leaders and some analysts believe that the violent attacks on foreign nationals were caused by the fierce and 'illegitimate' competition for scarce resources and opportunities between locals and foreign nationals in a context of high levels of poverty and unemployment. According to respondents, the competition is more bitterly felt and resented around jobs, housing, business opportunities, women and public services such health care and social grants.

Talking about competition for jobs for instance, many residents of affected areas believe that foreigners are 'stealing' jobs that naturally belong to citizens. They argue that employers prefer to hire foreigners because they can settle for low wages (sometimes R30 per day when citizens charge R150 for a day's work). An Itireleng respondent for instance stated:

> […] When a white man takes five people for employment, about three are foreigners and two South Africans. On arrival at the firm, a white man asks 'how much do you want?' Foreigners always quote a small amount. …When South Africans state their money, which is normal, employers say 'no,' they will employ foreigners because they accept small money. The result is high unemployment of South Africans because Whites have resolved that the best is to hire foreigners.

Similarly, a Madelakufa II respondent reported: "Yes, they work for lower wages. I charge R150 when I do garden for my client. A migrant does not mind to accept R50, so it's a problem to be a South African."

Analysts agree that competition for jobs between citizens and foreign nationals is real and that, as Dodson (2010:6) argues:

> There is also some validity in the idea of immigrants "stealing jobs" - not because employment is a zero-sum game, but because immigrants, especially those not legally permitted to work in South Africa, can be employed at lower wages and without the statutory benefits and protections attached to the employment of citizens, and thus compete unfairly with South Africans in certain low-wage sectors of the economy. A high rate of unemployment (officially 24.5% in the third quarter of 2009), especially among black South Africans, exacerbates the intensity of competition for jobs in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy.

With regards to business competition, some community members, particularly local informal business owners, complain that foreigners undermine local business to the point where businesses are closing down because they cannot compete. Reports from Masiphumelele in 2006 and Motherwell in 2007 identify this as the primary factor behind outbreaks of xenophobic violence. For example, Misago *et al* (2009) provide research evidence that, in Masiphumelele, the August 2006 xenophobic violence was stimulated by a build-up of tensions over business competition between Somali and locally owned businesses. Respondents reported that the number of Somali-owned shops had significantly increased in that year and this resulted in the downfall of businesses owned by local residents, who were not able to compete with the relatively cheap prices offered by Somali traders. Subsequently, local business owners mobilised to organise the attacks on Somali shops. "The looting and destruction of Somali shops was carried out by groups of youths, but all respondents report that it is common knowledge that they were 'hired' to do so by the local business owners" (Ibid: 21).

Along with community members in affected areas, academics and analysts also emphasized competition for resources and opportunities as the main cause of the violence. For instance,

CRAI (2009:6) cites the competition in the job market and the informal business sector as one of the main causes of the violence:

> Migrants may, in some cases, compete favourably with South African Blacks for employment because of the relatively greater opportunities offered in other countries prior to the end of apartheid. In addition, certain migrants engage in petty trading, which some South Africans consider to be unfair competition.

Similarly, according to Sharp (2008 in Dodson, 2010), poor -and still largely Black- South African nationals attacked foreign Africans whom they perceive as competing with them for jobs, housing, and other services and resources to which they themselves feel entitled. At the community level, this resented competition produces what Bond *et al* (2008) describe as an "ethnicised political economy in which microeconomic friction is displaced into hate-filled nationalism" (Dodson 2010:5).

3.3.2.2 Rising Food and Commodity Prices

Record increases in the price of food and other basic commodities in the months preceding the attacks[28] led a number of commentators to link the attacks to increased economic hardship within communities. For instance Geffen wrote in June 2008: "Soaring food and basic commodity prices have worsened poverty and the perceived competition within townships for resources in recent months. This could have increased the level of xenophobic violence." (Geffen, 2008:3).

[28] According to senior economist Tema Nkgasha Pieter, from January 2007 to January 2008 the Consumer Price Index for Food year-on year increase was 13.4%. Food categories making the largest contribution to this increase included grain products, milk, cheese and eggs, fats and oils, fruits and nuts and vegetables. Staple food items continued to increase at a relatively high rate. Brown bread increased at 16.21% and white bread at 19.92% year-on-year. The prices of a 5kg bag of super and special maize meal increased by 22.29% and 28.00% respectively, year-on-year. See South Africa Press Association (Sapa) newspaper article "Food prices soaring" of Feb 28 2008. Available on line at http://secure.fin24.com/Economy/Food-prices-soaring-20080228. Visited on 26 June 2010.

Like the competition for resources discussed above, these factors may explain tensions but are not plausible scientific explanations for the occurrence of the violence. As all communities were equally affected by rising costs but violence only occurred in some, prices really explain almost nothing. Moreover, while there were those who blamed foreigners for exacerbating the situation by 'stealing' South Africans' jobs and businesses or putting too much demand on existing supply, most respondents understood that the increases were a result of a global economic crisis and not the presence of foreigners. Further, many of those in affected areas reported that foreigners were helping to make life easier during the trying economic times. A respondent in Madelakufa II, for example, stated that:

> Foreigners assisted us in this regard. Even though prices went up, foreigners made it possible for food to be affordable. They sold things in small quantities so that even the poorest of the poor is still able to buy vegetables. I do not understand where they bought their stock… somehow they were able to sell food cheap.

Similarly, in Masiphumelele and DuNoon near Cape Town, communities pressured leaders to bring back displaced Somali traders because they were not coping with high prices imposed by local traders. As such, changing material circumstances neither explain localized violence nor general levels of hostility. Indeed, many local residents were grateful for and made use of foreign owned businesses. That said, competition between these shops and other, more expensive (and South African owned) outlets does point to an important motivation for the violence as mentioned earlier.

3.3.2.3 Service Delivery Failures

A number of scholars linked the outbreak of violence to poor 'service delivery': the government's failure to build state-funded houses, provide water or create the jobs citizens

felt they deserved (Joubert, 2008). Similarly, CRAI (2009:6) cites the "failure of the government of South Africa to meet post-apartheid expectations with regard to economic conditions and service delivery" as one of the causes of the violence against foreign nationals witnessed in May 2008. It argues that:

> […] democratic transition in South Africa heralded great promise for South Africa's black population, but substantial positive economic change has been achieved only for relatively few, leading to widespread frustration amongst the population and a tendency to jealously guard against any perceived encroachment (Ibid: 6).

The link between frustrations over poor service delivery and xenophobic violence is not difficult to make. Most of the violence affected areas had a recent history of violent protests and clearly, the repertoire of dissatisfaction across much of South Africa includes burning tyres, destroying property, and various forms of economic sabotage witnessed during the xenophobic attacks. Moreover, Joubert (2008) correctly notes that government officials have sometimes blamed foreigners for poor service delivery citing an increasing strain foreign nationals put on public services and difficulty to adequately 'plan' for their communities due to seemingly unpredictable mass influxes. In a number of instances, protests that began by demanding electricity, water, or houses ended up with foreigners being robbed and beaten (Landau *et al*, 2008). That violence broke out in relatively deprived and poorly serviced areas provides further credibility to such narratives.

However, in line with Fauvelle-Aymar *et al* (2011) findings, this study finds that it was not necessarily the most under-serviced areas or communities that mobilised to attack foreigners in their midst. For instance, there was no violence in Sector V of Alexandra (commonly known as Setswetla), where conditions are visibly worse than in neighbouring Sector II (the most affected area in Alexandra). In Sector V, there is no formal housing, no electricity and

most residents still use bucket toilets. As woman living in Sector V describes the conditions there:

> The community is throwing stools, faeces in these drains, it is rotten. People are sick inside these shacks. You know even little babies are sick because of the living conditions we live in. When you eat, someone will come with a bucket of urine and pour it next to your door, you end up losing appetite. You cannot even breathe…

Another (male) respondent in Sector V thought that perhaps better service delivery and better living conditions in neighbouring Sector II may have motivated the violence. He responded when asked why in his opinion violence occurred in Sector II and not in Sector V, his area:

> It may look the same but it is better there; there is electricity in Sector II. At least if you remove a foreigner you inherit a house with electricity. A person who attaches it may even find a fridge, a TV, a radio … because they were also after foreigners' belongings. There is no electricity here. So they [potential perpetrators] knew there are no TVs or radios.

Similarly, comparing violence affected and non-affected areas in Tembisa, the study finds that the area affected by the violence (Madelakufa II) was better off in terms of service delivery compared to the non-affected Madelakufa I. In terms of housing for example, Madelakufa II was a mixed settlement with formal and informal housing while Madelakufa I was 100% informal (shacks).

While poor service delivery may have played a role in heightening tensions and delegitimising political leadership in many of the affected communities, it is difficult to analytically link material conditions and frustration over poor service delivery to xenophobic violence. In many instances, areas that were among the most visibly deprived did not turn on

foreign nationals or outsiders. The example above shows that it was not necessarily the most objectively poor or deprived who turned on foreign nationals in their midst. Fauvelle-Aymar *et al* (2011) also confirm that it was not the worst off and most 'legitimately' frustrated who took up arms to attack foreigners.

3.3.2.4 Mass Influx and Inadequate Border Control

Related to economic explanations is another commonly repeated explanation: "the 'human tsunami' across permeable borders" (Misago, 2011:91). Many analysts believed that the government's failure to control its borders resulting in mass influx of illegal foreigners in the country was a factor that precipitated the violence. Some speculated that the violence was triggered by a human 'tsunami': a mass influx of immigrants (particularly from Zimbabwe) during the period (weeks/months) preceding the violence. For example, the Institute of Race Relations argues:

> Poor policy decisions and simple incompetence in border policing contributed directly to the presence of a large illegal population in South Africa. Without adequate legal standing in the community, these people became easy or soft targets for mob violence (Cronje, 2008:1).

Talk of a new, mass influx only exacerbated long standing fears among South Africans that the "country is being 'flooded' by millions of irregular migrants from the rest of Africa" (Crush *et al*, 2009:16). The words of one Alexandra respondent capture these anxieties:

> The government is now pampering them and taking care of them nicely; as long as the foreigners are here we will always have unemployment and poverty in South Africa […] there was no poverty and unemployment in South Africa before the influx of foreigners […] There is too much of them now, if the government does not do

> something people will see what to do to solve the problem because it means it's not the government problem, it is our problem.

A HSRC (2008) study echoed the same sentiment with the finding that a feeling of a country and communities under 'siege' was an important cause of the violence:

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

Fauvelle-Aymar *et al* (2011) note that the protagonists of the 'mass influx' hypothesis imply or evoke the notion of '*threshold of tolerance'*, often mobilised by anti-migration tenants in Europe and elsewhere to justify anti-immigrant violence. The '*threshold of tolerance'* hypothesis is "based on the assumption that the greater the numbers and the diversity of migrants in a general context of deep dislike and multiple negative assumptions, the more violent the reaction" (Ibid: 60).

While there is evidence that migration had increased as a result of the crisis in Zimbabwe (Crush *et al*, 2010), this study finds no substantive evidence that those areas where violence occurred were particularly more affected by the increased inflows. Rather the study finds that the areas most affected in May 2008 xenophobic violence were not necessarily those hosting the highest numbers of foreigners. This finding has been confirmed by the statistical evidence (see Fauvelle-Aymar *et al*, 2011). Further, this study shows that most of those who were attacked and evicted had lived in the same areas and communities for years and were not part

of a new wave of migration. Finally, while the numbers of foreigners may have increased, these increases were in line with general population growth. Such growth has undoubtedly heightened pressure on existing resources, but there is no evidence that population had reached some kind of 'tipping point' or that violence affected communities had reached the threshold of tolerance referred to above.

In the same vein, other analysts have shown that the argument that the state was not doing enough to control the movement of people into the country is not entirely true. Landau (2011:3) notes that, while in the minds of many, no amount of state action could be enough, "[…] the 300,000 people it deported in the year prior to the attacks rank it among the world's leaders [and] that Johannesburg's police officers spend thousands of hours per year questioning, arresting, and detaining foreigners suggests more than a mild interest in immigration control."

While perceptions of accelerating in-migration may have heightened tensions and anxieties among some communities, population dynamics, like the other above-mentioned factors, affected most communities across the country and therefore do not provide an acceptable, plausible explanation for the violence. Population dynamics or inflows of immigrants are another broad structural variable that cannot account for "the territorial variations in appearance or intensity of xenophobic violence" (Fauvelle-Aymar *et al*, 2011:60).

3.3.2.5 Theoretical underpinning of economic explanations

Theoretically, these material and economic explanations are generally informed by the deprivation theoretical model outlined earlier. (Bekker *et al*, 2008:30) correctly note that these explanations fall "overwhelmingly within the relative deprivation approach. Here, perpetrators are viewed as frustrated individuals (due to unemployment, poverty, lack of

services, perceived unfair competition, etc.) who convert this frustration into aggression". They identify (real or perceived) inequality and poverty as key explanatory factors to the violence. Pillay (2008:94) opines that the increase in inequality since the end of Apartheid has led to "perverse cultures of entitlement and experiences of relative deprivation, which lie at the root of social instability". Pillay (in Fauvelle-Aymar *et al*, 2011:59) further observes that "legitimate expectations and unmet basic needs' create that specific type of frustration conducive to identifying immediate soft targets in foreigners whenever service delivery issues emerge."

Another and more direct application of the model is the suggestion that one of the drivers of the violence was the perceived assessment of South Africans' own socio-economic position in comparison with that of foreigners and outsiders, particularly with regard to "high levels of structural unemployment due to a qualification gap in the labour market which explains more specifically the frustration of South African youth" (Altman in Fauvelle-Aymar *et al*, 2011:59). According to Reenen (in Lau *et al*, 2010:9) "such explanations highlight the social comparison element that pits one or several individuals against another or others perceived to have more, ultimately producing the raw emotions that trigger violence as a means of redress." The following Ghanaian's account (of an incident when his shop was looted during the May 2008 xenophobic violence) illustrates how this comparative element, the emotional basis of relative deprivation can fuel conflict and violence: "in the beginning they don't have a problem with you and then they see your business going up. That's when they get jealous and ask, 'Why do you foreigners come here and open businesses?'" (Nicholson *et al*, 2008:8).

In conclusion, the discussion above clearly shows and confirms other analysts' observations that "violence is not an inevitable outcome of relative deprivation" (Tshitereke, 1999 in Harris, 2002:3) and that "[W]hile there is an understandable reductionist tendency to view

anti-foreign violence as a direct product of the material deprivation and competition amongst poor South Africans, this does not explain why all poor communities did not explode in May 2008" (Crush *et al*, 2009:16). This confirms findings elsewhere in the world. In Germany, for example, Braun (2008) found no direct causal relationship between unemployment, quality of life or immigration flows with the outbreak of the violence against foreign nationals. He found rather that xenophobic violence on the local level arose more from social disorganization and political opportunism rather than from poor living conditions and ethnic competition. Similarly, Arnold's (2009:36) research on ethnic violence by skinhead groups in Russia concludes "against those theories that depict violence as a response to a poor economic situation."

Despite the lack of definitive empirical backing, economic and material explanations for collective violence persist because the connection between poverty and group violence seems obvious particularly when violence occurs in poor and unequal societies as it often does. As Sen (2008: 8-10) puts it:

> "… the connection has appeared to be so obviously credible that the paucity of definitive empirical evidence has not discouraged the frequent invoking of this way of understanding the recurrence of violent in countries with much poverty and inequality. […] The claim that poverty is responsible for group violence draws on an oversimplification of empirical connections that are far from universal. The relationship is also contingent on many other factors, including political, social and cultural circumstances, which make the world in which we live far more complex.

I agree with Sen that "It would be a huge mistake to see economic inequality and poverty as being automatically responsible for violence – indeed, it would be just as serious a mistake as the assumption that inequality and poverty have nothing to do with the possibility of

violence" (Ibid: 14). Economic and material deprivation can therefore only be one element among many in the collective violence (or in this case xenophobia violence) causal chain.

3.3.3 Historical, Political and Institutional Explanations

For many analysts, the causes of the xenophobic violence in South Africa lie in factors related to the country's past and current political and institutional configurations, which shaped and continue to shape "the coding of unregulated (and even regulated) human mobility as a threat to insiders' economic and physical well-being and national (or even sub-national) achievement " (Landau, 2011:5). These configurations also continue to reinforce the use of individuals' immutable geographic or cultural points of origins to determine and/or claim rights and entitlements (Ibid). The factors often cited include the legacy of apartheid, the impact of post-apartheid nation-building efforts and "the failure of national rebirth" (Landau, 2011:12).

CRAI (2009:7) for instance argues that the legacy of apartheid and isolation created a fertile ground for xenophobic violence in several ways:

> First, it created radicalized notions of identity and worth, which encouraged black South Africans to see themselves not only as inferior to whites, but also as separate from the rest of the continent. Second, it encouraged separation and compartmentalisation of various populations as a means of governance and discouraged integration or contact between groups. Finally, it institutionalised violence as a means of communicating grievances and achieving political ends.

Similarly, Jaynes (2008) opines that the devaluation of - and violence against foreign nationals - is a product of South Africa's history of apartheid which excluded and dehumanised certain racial, national and ethnic groups and reinforced a notion that separation

and exclusion are both legitimate and integral to the functioning of the state and the wellbeing of its citizenry. Apartheid South Africa considered itself separate from and superior to the rest of the African continent in racial and socio-economic terms (South African *exceptionalism*) and this understanding has informed current pervasive negative attitudes and hostility towards foreign nationals particularly those originating from other African countries (CRAI, 2009).

Other analysts link the violence to the post-apartheid nation-building efforts. They argue for instance that post-apartheid immigration policies and practices have reinforced "a deep suspicion of those who move" (Landau, 2011:5) and have constructed the foreigner as the 'violable alien' (Misago *et al* 2009) in trying to build a new national identity and protect the new citizenry (Peberdy, 2009). Peberdy (2009 in Landau, 2011:6) argues that "...the state's restrictive and exclusionary immigration policies include all immigrants - black and white - in order to protect the new members of the 'new' South Africa." Post-apartheid South Africa has regularly spoken, through its political leaders, "of the nation as a body that could be bolstered or, more regularly, contaminated by outsiders" (Landau, 2011:6). A former Minister of Home Affair Affairs expressed the sentiment shared by many when he stated: "South Africa is faced with another threat, and that is the SADC ideology of free movement of people, free trade and freedom to choose where you live or work. Free movement of persons spells disaster for our country"[29].

In addition to official policies and discourse, the media also played a significant role in portraying foreign nationals negatively, which reinforced prejudice (CRAI, 2009). As many South Africans do not actually have extensive personal experience or encounters with foreigners, they rely heavily on third party information, especially from the media. "For

[29] Keynote Address, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Minister of Home Affairs, Southern African Migration Project Conference, 'After Amnesty: The Future of Foreign Migrants in South Africa', 20 June 1997

instance, depictions of migrants coming in ‘waves’ and ‘hordes’ and references to ‘job stealers’ and ‘aliens’ dehumanise migrants and increase the likelihood of violence” (Ibid: 6)

Some analysts view this foreigners’ predicament as inevitable. Dodson (2010:6) for example notes that:

> [the] construction of a new, non-racial sense of South African national identity after the end of apartheid inevitably meant the creation of a new oppositional “other,” and that this “other” is essentially defined as “non-South African” (Murray 2003; Peberdy 2001, Reitzes 2002). The clearest, most present manifestation of this “other” is those foreign Africans actually living in South Africa, described by Murray (2003:460) as “the ultimate strangers - the new helots - within the social landscape of South African cities”.

Within this context, anti-foreigner attitudes and violence are “seen as being rooted in Black South Africans’ acquisitions of full citizenship rights and their subsequent jealous protection of those rights and benefits against perceived threats of undermining and usurpation by noncitizens” (Ibid). Hosting non-citizens is perceived harmful to poor South Africans, the majority of whom have expressed willingness to take action against their presence (Crush *et al*, 2008) and “high levels of support for strong, citizen-led measures to be rid of them” (Landau, 2011:6).

With regard to the failure of national rebirth, analysts argue that the violence against foreign nationals is caused by the government’s failure to realise citizens’ social and economic rights since 1994, i.e. the failure of the government to meet post-apartheid expectations with regard to economic conditions and service delivery (CRAI, 2009). The democratic transition heralded great promise in terms of socio-economic betterment for the majority of Black South

Africans but little has changed: According to CRAI, (2009:6), "substantial positive economic change has been achieved only for a relatively few, leading to widespread frustration amongst the population and a tendency to jealously guard against any perceived encroachment.'

Many other analysts share this view. CoRMSA (2008:15): for instance opines that: "At one level, these attacks are not an immigration issue, but rather a sign of widespread disaffection with South Africa's transformation: with the state's apparent inability to create jobs or provide services and the resultant alienation of people from the country's politicians." Similarly, Jaynes (2008) argues that many South Africans now see economic inequality as the country's largest source of division and that xenophobia and related violence cannot meaningfully be tackled without also dealing with the economic situation of the poor communities in which much of such violence occurs.

In addition to frustration over unmet socio-economic needs, other analysts view xenophobic violence as also an illustration of the absence of effective and trusted mechanisms through which people with legitimate frustrations can resolve conflicts and concerns (CoRMSA, 2008). As Landau (2011) notes, during President Thabo Mbeki's administration, poor citizens increasingly saw the political elite, and the government institutions far removed from their concerns over jobs, services, and security. These frustrations led the ruling African National Congress to replace the seemingly elitist Thabo Mbeki with the more populist Jacob Zuma in April 2008 and,

> With Zuma's ascendance came the sense that South Africa's wealth would finally be redistributed to disadvantaged citizens rather than dedicated to continental, pan-Africanist fantasies. In the streets refugees were told that they would soon need to trade in their 'Mbeki papers' for something else or, better yet, simply leave the country (Ibid: 12).

Growing frustration over unmet expectations and the perceived government's inability and unwillingness to protect and promote citizens' interests created a sense of crisis in the new dispensation and an opportunity window for local political and economic leaders to mobilize the poor to attack foreign nationals whom they already blamed for much of their misfortunes (Landau, 2011).

To conclude, it is only logical to realise that, while valuable in providing a relevant context, historical, political and institutional factors alone cannot account for the variations in occurrence and intensity of violence against foreign nationals. Like economic and material conditions discussed earlier, these factors affect all the country's poor townships and informal settlements, most of which did not mobilize to violently attack, kill and remove foreign nationals from their areas and communities.

3.3.4 Psycho-social Explanations

Analysts also put forward psycho-social factors as explanations for the May 2008 violence. One of them is *cultural stereotyping* resulting from the South Africans' new direct contact with foreign Africans as immigration into the country increased (Dodson, 2010). According to Harris (2002), mutual stereotyping between South Africans and foreigners essentializes and exaggerates cultural differences and thus gives rise to prejudice and conflict. As discussed earlier, prejudice and strong negative attitudes provided a fertile background for violence mobilization.

Another explanatory factor put forward is the *culture of violence*. Some analysts see collective and xenophobic violence in South Africa as a manifestation of a 'culture of violence' entrenched by a history of militarism (Lau *et al*, 2010, see also earlier discussion). Another

related explanation is *historical trauma* cultivated by the apartheid legacy (Seedat, 2010). According to Lau *et al* (2010:7),

> Xenophobic violence, a peculiar form of "black-on-black" violence, represents the spill over of repressed trauma, as manifest in the transfer of anger and hatred of the former "colonial masters" onto an equally or more vulnerable "other" through physical acts of denigration. Contexts that are defined by limited opportunities and scarce resources offer a fertile bed for the displacement of frustration onto the "other", who is perceived as lacking entitlement to the rights and privileges supposedly reserved for nationals.

Once again, these factors do not seem to be plausible explanations due to empirical evidence that the presence of 'undesirable' foreign nationals in areas renowned for public violence and violent crime did not necessarily lead to the foreigners' violent exclusion (see Misago et al, 2009). This study also shows (see earlier discussion) that xenophobic violence in South Africa is not exclusively a 'black-on-black' affair.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated that xenophobic violence in South Africa can only be understood within a context of not only pervasive xenophobia and strong negative attitudes towards foreign nationals but also of an extended history of socio-political tensions and chronic communal violence particularly in the country's poor informal settlements and townships. It further provided a brief overview of the nature and history of the violence, describing its unprecedented atrocities, dimensions and meanings (material and symbolic); and providing a timeline that clearly indicates that violent attacks of foreign nationals have

become a long standing feature in contemporary South Africa as they neither began nor ended in May 2008.

Finally the chapter provided a critical review of common or popular explanations put forward to account for the root and immediate causes of the violence. It showed that, while valuable in explaining the socio-economic and political context within which violence occurred, the proposed economic, political and psycho-social explanatory models offer general and structural explanatory variables that fall short as scientific explanations (for the occurrence of the violence) because of their two main weaknesses. First, these factors are long-standing and common across most of the country's towns, townships and informal settlements and, while they may have contributed to generalised tensions, they cannot account for i) the occurrence of violence in some areas and not in others with similar socio-economic conditions, ii) the specific targeting of certain groups of foreign nationals and iii) the timing, location and selective diffusion of the violence. Second, most of these models offer reductionist, one-factor causes to explain such a complex social phenomenon and as such can be at best partial or incomplete (Sen, 2008). The main reason for this is the fact that "they remain at the structural contextual level, external to the local circumstances of each individual outburst and accordingly lacking any understanding of local conditions" (Bekker *et al,* 2008:31). These explanations ultimately point to general elements of socio-economic and political deprivation that are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the occurrence of xenophobic violence.

It is with this in mind that this study adopts different methodological and analytical approaches (a qualitative comparative multi-case study methodological approach and a micro-level analytical framework) that allow for the search and identification of the specific factors, mechanisms and immediate causes that triggered the outbreak of violence in particular locations at particular times. Only by looking at local conditions and dynamics can we get

better insights into the specific reasons and immediate causes behind violence outbursts in communities where they occurred.

IV. MICRO-POLITICS AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE VIOLENCE: LOCAL DYNAMICS, ROLES AND MOTIVATIONS OF VIOLENCE ENTREPRENEURS[30]

4.1 INTRDODUCTION

If the general structural factors and conditions are necessary but not sufficient conditions, where then do we find an explanation for the appearance of violence in specific locations and particular times? The limited explanatory value of these broad and general conditions suggests that only by looking at local conditions and dynamics can we get better insights into specific conditions and processes that fuelled the violence outbursts in communities where they occurred.

Using extensive empirical evidence, this chapter identifies two main local factors that are directly linked to the occurrence of xenophobic violence. These are micro-politics and the localised political economy of the violence. This chapter specifically analyses the role played by these two factors to foster and prevent violence in affected and non-affected areas respectively. By showing that violence against foreign nationals was organised and led by local groups and individuals attempting to claim or consolidate power and authority needed to further their political and economic interests, the chapter challenges the commonly used macro-economic explanations and argues that the violence is just 'politics by other means' as/and its instrumental motives are located in the local political economy and micro-political processes at play in many of the country's towns, townships and informal settlements. The chapter provides evidence to support this argument through the identification and discussion of i) distinguishing localised socio-economic and political dynamics of violence affected and

[30] I published parts of this chapter in a different form in Misago, J.P (2011). 'Disorder in a Changing Society: Authority and the Micro-Politics of Violence' in Loren L. B, ed..*Exorcising the Demons within: Xenophobia, Violence and Statecraft in Contemporary South Africa.* Wits University Press, Johannesburg.

non-affected areas to establish why violence occurs in some locations and not in others, and ii) roles and motivations of key players.

Through these discussions, the chapter makes a three-fold methodological and empirical contribution to the understanding of xenophobic violence in South Africa and collective violence in general. First, it further reveals - and addresses the weaknesses of - the commonly used macro-structural explanations; second, it highlights the need for alternative and more appropriate methodological and analytical approaches to study xenophobic violence and collective violence in general; and third, it reveals the uniqueness of this study which, by adopting the 'most similar systems' approach, is able to explain the absence of the xenophobic violence in potentially volatile locations.

4.2 LOCAL DYNAMICS AND THEIR IMPACT ON XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

While all studied sites were affected by the structural factors discussed earlier, the study reveals that, compared to non-affected areas, the sites affected by xenophobic violence in May 2008 shared a number of additional characteristics directly linked to the outbreak of the violence. Sharing the same view, Nieftagodien (2011:109) argues that:

> […] notwithstanding many common features, there were important local peculiarities that triggered the violence, shaped its form and determined its perpetrators. These issues called for attention to be paid to the local in order better to comprehend the particular configuration of forces that caused xenophobic attacks to erupt in certain areas.

These peculiarities not only link violence affected areas but also and perhaps more importantly distinguish them from those (areas) without violence. They include: i) high levels of violent crime, ii) heightened ethnic divides and tensions, iii) a pronounced history of

organized violence and vigilantism, and iv) favourable local authority and community leadership conditions. The following is a detailed discussion of these factors and their link to the outbreak of the violence.

4.2.1 High Levels of Violent Crime

Respondents in areas affected by xenophobic violence in 2008 reported higher levels of violence crime compared to those in non-affected locations. Even with not police records to support their claims, they believe that incidents of violent crime such as rape, armed robbery, housebreak-ins, car hijacking and murder are more frequent in their communities. For example, in Alexandra Sector 2 where the May 2008 violence started, respondents and local authorities, including the police, agreed that crime was a big concern in the area. Some spots such as London Road in the area had been declared 'no-go areas' at night. One respondent did not feel safe in the area. She stated:

> Personally, as a young female student, I am not safe in this area. Local boys are very rude; they don't have manners of approaching people, they talk anyhow. So, it's not safe to walk at night. Another issue is the issue of crime. There is a lot of crime in this area. Thugs take women's bags and cell phones. On weekends you will hear that someone was shot dead. So the main issue that affects me and my friends is crime.

Similarly, violent crime is a major concern for many residents of Atteridgeville as one local respondent reported:

> The people here are alright but the young generation is not good, they are violent. This place has too much crime especially on weekends, when a person goes to work around 5 a.m. they can be raped, robbed or even killed. The most dangerous area is the

> cemetery and the passages where people walk. Even in the afternoon, you can be stopped and robbed. In the evening you cannot walk around, especially on weekends.

Respondents in Ramaphosa also reported that violent crime is a serious problem in the area. One respondent for instance responded when asked about the main problems residents face in the area:

> Big problems, its crime because they steal and all that stuff and they are killing each other and they're raping children,… you see it's like that you see even in the night at 6 'o clock already like yesterday it was maybe …I don't know…it was past 8 'o clock and we all heard gunshots over there, it's scary man because we can't even sit here outside. No we must just be inside the house.

In Motherwell, violent crime was also one of the main challenges residents of the area faced on a daily basis. Respondents reported that frequent criminal activities included robberies, rape, car hijacking, house break-ins and the vandalism of public infrastructure to steal iron and copper to sell to scrap yards. Residents complained that because there are no tarred roads, taxis operating in the area dropped them off far from their houses and walking to or from home in morning or evening hours made them easy crime targets.

In non-affected areas, at least those sampled for this study, crime was a concern for the residents but respondents reported lower levels of violent crime and related atrocities. In Alexandra Sector V for example, respondents reported that the main criminal activities include pick-pocketing, robberies and cell phone theft. There were no reports of organized or violent crime. One respondent for example stated: "There is largely nothing to steal here, you have few cases of those walking drunk at night being robbed on weekends." Another respondent added: "Thugs normally pick pocket people and take cell phones. They also do

house break-ins sometimes. Similarly in Madelakufa I, crime is also mentioned but does not seem to be a major concern. Asked about crime in the area, one respondent for example responded: "It is normal that in such a place you will find criminal elements. We used to have crime, a lot in this place, but now if it is committed; it is possible that it is people from outside, who are from the township."

Given the poor state of police statistics, the study was not able to confirm whether the dangers and violent crime levels referred to by respondents in affected areas do actually exist. The study can however confirm that in those areas where xenophobic violence occurred, fears and perceptions of high violent crime levels were more acute. And it appears that what matters most for popular mobilisation is impressions and perceptions and not necessarily realities.

The link between high crime levels or perceptions thereof and attacks on foreign nationals is not particularly difficult to make as residents attribute much of this crime to foreign nationals and believe communities are justified to take action given the government's perceived inability or unwillingness to deal with the situation. Indeed this study confirms that, even with no substantive evidence, many citizens maintain the same spurious links between crime and immigration made regularly by the police and government officials. The lack of evidence does not seem to bother those with such strong beliefs. It is rather often twisted to reinforce another belief (and perceived crime) that most foreigners are in the country illegally with criminal intent and hence cannot be traced if they commit crime. One Itireleng respondent for example stated: "But most of them came under the fence; they did not go through normal processes. These people's records are not in Pretoria, they have no fingerprints, and they steal cables and so on and no one can say it is them. There is no evidence because their details are not recorded in Pretoria." An official at the Alexandra SAPS Victim Support Unit argues in a similar vein. She stated:

> But the real issue was crime. The stats government gives us are misleading. They show that South African citizens are the majority in prisons. It's because all South Africans have documents and have had their fingerprints taken; this way they always get caught when they commit crime. If all foreigners were documented and the police had their fingerprints; they will be more in jail than South Africans. Go and check at any police station; they have a lot of unresolved crime cases; a lot of dockets, because even when they collect fingerprints at crime scenes; on a stolen and recovered car for example; they won't find any matching fingerprints in their records; … then who are these people committing these crimes? The only foreigners who get arrested are the ones with proper documents.

Other studies have similarly confirmed the strong belief among the country's citizenry that most crime in the country is committed by foreigners. HSRC research for instance shows that, residents, particularly men, perceive foreign nationals a serious and direct threat, arguing that,

> […] foreign nationals are widely involved in crimes in the township ranging from housebreaking, to murder and rape, even arguing that foreign nationals are able to access 'supernatural' powers to bolster their capabilities. Foreign nationals are also seen as particularly brutal and violent as it is believed that they do not have social attachments to the people they live with (HSRC, 2008:35).

As mentioned above, for some respondents, communities were justified to take action because the government was not doing enough to protect the country from these 'illegal criminals.' An Itireleng respondent lamented: "South African freedom is poor, how can people enter this country without IDs? So if government is failing to stop them at the borders, we shall stop them here in Itireleng. We are not the police; we do not ask for passports, they are forged anyway."

HSRC study similarly finds that the alleged failure of police and government in general to address crimes committed by foreigners leads some to advocate violent forms of retribution against foreign nationals. One of the study's respondents stated:

> That is why we saw the need to take the law into our own hands… you find a foreigner who has raped a three year old girl being released…it's better to kill these kinds of people and the police will want to charge us for murder, they discount the fact that this person raped a child and destroyed her future (HSRC, 2008:36).

Some respondents did not however think that crime was necessarily committed only by foreigners particularly because crime rates did not go down after foreigners were removed from their communities. An Itereleng respondent for example stated:

> When foreigners were here, they said foreigners are responsible. Foreigners are gone but every day we get reports that someone was robbed and beaten. They still do house break-ins at night; we wake up without food and money. Foreigners are gone; they can't keep telling us it is foreigners who are committing crime.

This view is shared by a minister at a local church who thought that "crime (and the risk of being arrested) is the last think a poor migrant who is trying to survive and to find ways of supporting his family back home would want to be involved in." The police also confirmed that most crime in Itireleng was committed by local South African citizens although some foreigners were also involved; most of the time working with or for South African ring leaders.

Police in other local stations also confirmed that there was no evidence to suggest that there were a lot of illegal migrants and that most crime was committed by non-nationals in their respective areas of jurisdiction. A senior police officer in Alexandra Sector 2 for example did

not believe there were a lot illegal immigrants in the area as they conducted regular raid operations in collaboration with Immigration Office from Home Affairs to check those who don't have papers or permits allowing them to be in the country. The police spokesperson at the same police station also refuted allegations that most crime is committed by foreigners although some may be involved. She stated: "in most cases suspects are traced back in KwaZulu Natal, and this is evidence that most crime in the area is committed by South Africans." The lack of evidence-based link between crime and foreign migrants is a clear indication that perceptions can be a more powerful tool for popular mobilization than empirical realities.

4.2.2 Ethnic Divides and Tensions

In addition to high levels of violent crime, the areas affected by the May 2008 xenophobic violence were characterised by ethnic rifts and tensions. In most instances, these tensions emerged from the presence of dominant ethnic groups that claimed ownership of the place and treated other South African and foreign ethnic groups as outsiders with few rights or entitlements to the place. The most heightened ethnic tensions were particularly reported in Itireleng, Sector II in Alexandra, Madelakufa II in Tembisa, and Masiphumelele.

In Madelakufa II for instance, respondents reported simmering tensions among people coming from different areas, with the dominant group (Xhosas) threatening other minority groups. One respondent for example stated when asked how people coming from different areas related: "That is another question; you see here there is a group that I won't mention that thinks it owns this place. You see I am Sotho; there is this thing that 'you Pedis'. We have that kind of tension here. If I recall the xenophobic violence, there were statements that 'you Pedis are next'." The leaders of the Tembisa Community Policing Forum (CPF) also

confirmed that tribalism was rife in Madelakufa II and that 'Xhosas feel they are running the show.' One of them stated:

> In Madelakufa II there is this thing of tribalism. They are Xhosas in fact. They are the ones who feel they are running the show there. These are people who perpetrated crime during those days. Like they said to other people "You must pay us protection fee", you must know about that, R 500. Most of the people that live in that area are Xosas, people from Eastern Cape; they feel they are holier than Thou.

Similar tensions were reported in Itireleng where, according to respondents, Pedis (the dominant group) believed that the area belonged to them and that they were the only true natives. Though these tensions had not developed into all-out violence, there had been open clashes since the removal of foreigners in February 2008. Xhosas believed Pedis were plotting to remove them from the area, as one respondent (a male from the Western Cape, who had been living in Itireleng since 2003) stated:

> The people from Pietersburg have Apartheid; they keep telling us that this area belongs to them and we must go back to Cape Town. They say we have no right to be here, […] so our living conditions cannot be described as cordial. People from Pietersburg seem to forget that Pretoria and not Pietersburg; is the capital city for all of us. So their Apartheid is short-sighted. They also threatened to throw us out, but so far there hasn't been violence. The only violence in the area was against foreigners. Now these people from Pietersburg have met and resolved Xhosas and Zulus must go. So we had meetings at the gate and we confronted them as to where this is coming from. Then they distanced themselves and accused a lady that she is the one who wrote that. So we cannot fight a woman and this ended there and there. We suspect they are still planning on how to remove us. They are starting to organise themselves.

In Masiphumelele, respondents reported serious tensions among South African ethnic groups coming from different regions of the country. According to respondents, the dominant group (Xhosas from Eastern Cape) did not like and regularly threatened to forcefully remove from the area people from other ethnic groups. According to a local the Councillor, "there are serious tensions among different ethnic groups with the majority Xhosas claiming ownership of the place and threatening other groups. The dominant group is Xhosas from Eastern Cape and they don't like people from other ethnic groups. People are claiming ownership of the territory."

Using Alexandra as an example, Nieftagodien (2011) shows that the May 2008 violence occurred in areas with an extended history of ethnic tensions or tensions between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', which have evolved within a framework of official politics of exclusion. He notes that:

> [T]he process of defining 'insiders' and 'outsiders' has been integral to local politics for decades, and has on occasion led to active attempts to exclude 'outsiders' from the township. At the centre of this politics is the notion of 'bona fide' residents. It is a definition of urbanised Africans rooted in state legislation to distinguish between those Africans who qualified for the privilege to live in the urban areas and those who were consigned to a life of migrancy (Ibid: 110).

The regular influx of thousands of 'illegal' migrants, internal and foreign, generated considerable antipathy towards the newcomers who the 'bona fides' perceived as intruders and whose exclusion and indeed removal could only be seen as legitimate (Ibid).

The May 2008 xenophobic violence speaks, to at least some extent, to this history of tensions between different ethnic groups or between local urban residents and migrants in townships in

general. These tensions and the underlying local exclusionary politics help to "explain the mobilisation by people who imagine themselves or make claims to be 'insiders' against a range of people categorised under the rubric of 'outsiders'" (Ibid: 109). This also begins to provide some explanation for the targeting of Pedi-, Venda- and Shangaan-speaking citizens, who were killed or commanded to return to their places of origin during the progress of May 2008 violence.

4.2.3 History of Organised Collective Violence and Vigilantism

This study finds that the areas affected by the May 2008 xenophobic violence have a long and more pronounced history of organised collective violence and vigilantism compared to non-affected areas. According to respondents, the affected areas have long been scenes of repeated incidents of organised violence including taxi, gang and political violence, vigilantism or mob justice and violent protests over poor service delivery.

For instance, Sector 2 of Alexandra is notorious for multiple incidences of taxi violence (bitter and deadly taxi violence and rivalry over operating routes) as well as political violence between ANC and IFP parties. Most respondents recalled the political violence that erupted in the area before the 1994 elections. In the words of one respondent, there was a lot of organized violence in the area. He said: "In 1992 there was a fighting between ANC and IFP. This area is called Beirut. It's happening here, there is lot of violence in this area." According to respondents, the early 1990s political violence resulted in Zulus/IFP removing ANC members and other ethnic groups from the area. Most of the removed groups have now permanently settled in other parts of the township such as Sector 5 or Setswetla while some came back after the violence subsided as another respondent confirmed: "In 1990 there was political violence. I ran away to Soweto with my family and came back in 1995. First it was about Zulus killing Xhosas; then later they said they were killing ANC supporters."

In Diepsloot, organised violence, particularly taxi violence, violent service delivery protests, vigilantism and mob justice, was similarly a regular occurrence. Respondents were particularly concerned by rampant vigilantism and most justice. Mob justice in the area generally involved beating and burning criminal suspects to death. According to respondents, 5 to 6 suspected criminals were burnt alive in 2008. "They burnt a lot of people this year, I think about five of them" said a respondent, resident of the area. As is always the danger with community justice, innocent people got falsely accused and beaten up as one respondent reported: "but sometimes they do make mistakes like they beat up wrong people and found out later that they beat up a wrong person." According to the local ward councillor, mob justice is mostly encouraged by the absence of the police and an ineffective justice system. In his words:

> Mob justice is caused by community frustration; there is a problem with the justice system; a killer, a rapist would back into the community tomorrow, out on bail. That person is a danger to the community. There is also poor police visibility here. The nearest police station is in 13 kilometres from Diepsloot. Because of the wide radius and shortage of transport, we wait for 4 to 5 hours for the police to come when we request their intervention. They are too far away.

In Madelakufa II, vigilantism and mob justice appeared to be the norm in this community particularly when dealing with crime. A respondent stated when asked how the community dealt with crime:

> If they find a suspect, they beat him. He is lucky if police get him still alive. But it also has to be said that it depends on who it is that committed the crime. If it is Xhosa, he will only be sent to police station, no one will beat him up, and he gets protected.

> There is one guy who was accused of raping a child. He was not beaten. This is not right. All others get beaten.

In Masipumelele, mob justice was similarly rife as community members preferred resolving their problems themselves signaling the lack of trust in existing conflict resolution mechanisms including the police and the justice system. Suspect criminals got beaten to death or their hands chopped off. “If the street committee does not arrive, he [the suspected criminal] will be lucky if he survives”, confirmed a local church Reverend.

In Atteridgeville, the lack of trust in local community leadership, the police and the judicial system in general leads community to resort to vigilantism and mob justice particularly when dealing with crime reported to be a major problem in the area. In the words of one respondent: “The community does not usually want to externalize issues because they know that if they take the person to the police he will be out the following day. So if a criminal is known to be causing havoc in the community, they go and attack that person or even kill them.” According to another respondent, community members take the law into their own hands because they do not trust the police. This respondent explained: “The police are also criminals you cannot trust them. They always want money from us, that’s why even when the community catches a criminal they punish the person themselves.”

Given the extent to which organised violence had become an accepted and preferred means of resolving real or perceived problems and conflicts in these areas, it is no surprise that communities mobilised for violence against foreign nationals whom they considered as criminals and whose presence was perceived as a threat to their lives and livelihoods. Seen from this perspective, xenophobic violence is just another form of organised collective violence, which (organised collective violence) these communities believe is a legitimate and

effective means for achieving social justice and law enforcement particularly in the face of seemingly 'uninterested' relevant institutions.

4.2.4 Favourable Local Authority and Community Leadership Factors

In addition to high levels of violent crime (real or perceived), heightened tensions among ethnic groups and a history of organised collective violence, the study finds that areas affected by xenophobic violence in May 2008 were further and most importantly characterised by favourable or permitting local authority and community leadership factors. Indeed, the study finds that these areas were characterised either by absent/weak or complicit institutional leadership. The following paragraphs explain how these leadership factors permitted or provided the means and incentives for the attacks.

4.2.4.1 Absent or weak institutional authority and leadership

The study finds that most of the areas affected by the May 2008 xenophobic violence (at least most of those sampled for this study), were characterised by absent, weak or (perceived) illegitimate official, institutionalised local authority or local government represented by ward councils. The local government was obviously not able to exercise bestowed authority and rule of law in affected areas where it was absent, weak or considered illegitimate by local populations.

This was evident in Sector II, Alexandra, where the late ANC councillor did not have authority in an IFP stronghold where the real authority was exercised by 'Indunas'. Even the local SAPS agreed that 'indunas' controlled what happened in their stronghold, particularly the hostels. Asked whether it is true that the police were reluctant to intervene in hostels when there was crime or when meetings inciting or planning xenophobic attacks were taking place there, a representative of Alexandra SAPS responded: "It is important to understand that the

hostels have the dynamics of their own, there are 'Indunas' and we have to acknowledge them. We give the '*indunas*' the responsibility to come to us when there is a problem." Similarly, local government was absent in Masiphumelele where the Democratic Alliance White councillor avoided interactions with the local black community, said to be 100% ANC. She did not attend any community meetings even when invited. In her own words: "I try to stay away from Masi because I want to avoid politics." In Itireleng, the Indian ANC councillor was considered equally illegitimate by the 100% black population of the informal settlement.

In Madelakufa II (Tembisa), respondents reported that the ANC councillor had lost power and authority to the '*amabhaca*' group, the majority of which is believed to belong to the UDM party. The group is believed to be behind the xenophobic violence in the area. Similarly, the local leadership and power in Atteridgeville was in the hands of GACA (Gauteng Civic Organization) whose chairperson Jeff Rabothlale had named the place "Jeffsville" after his name as he claimed to be the founder of the informal settlement in 1991. "Jeffville is the name of this place and it is widely known by most people. GACA is a civic organization that governs this area", said Jeff in an interview with the research team. According to a local CPF member, GACA operated as an 'untouchable' group with huge influence in the community and which often acted in parallel or against the local government authority to protect their interests. He stated: "They are influential in the community; you need to get a buy-in from them. You can't do anything in the community without involving them. The problem is that they are parallel structures operating parallel to the government; they are like a government on their own."

Other observers have also noted the absence of official leadership in communities affected by xenophobic violence. For example, a representative of Africa Unite, an NGO involved in

addressing xenophobia in Masiphumelele and DuNoon, shares the view that the lack of leadership is the main concern in these communities. In his words:

> The government has a big role to play, but they are not doing it. They must encourage people, there is no leadership, and the councillor is voiceless. There is lack of leadership, councillors have lost, they have a higher voice but they are silent. They are hardly known by the community, they don't interact with the community. Then, when there is trouble, it is difficult to address the community because they are not known by the community.

As alluded to above, the study finds that in the absence of - or presence of weak and illegitimate - official leadership and local government, other political configurations and informal leaderships have emerged to provide 'protection', services, and avenues of interest articulation. In many affected areas, these structures have largely appropriated authorities that should, constitutionally, belong to local government. Elsewhere they operate as 'untouchable' parallel leadership structures, forging their own laws and regulations (see also Monson and Arian, 2011). Examples of these informal leadership groups include the '*Comrades*' in Itireleng, '*Izinduna*' in Sector II, Alexandra, the Masiphumelele Development Forum (MDF) in Masiphumelele, and the 'Advisory Centre' in DuNoon. In these areas, even for those commonly known community structures such as Street Committees, Block Committees, Community Policing Forums (CPF), SANCO, etc., the local government represented in theory by ward councils has no say in their membership, the nature of their mandate, or the character of their operational and disciplinary procedures. As the following section (role and motivations of key players) shows, attacks on foreign nationals were in many areas instigated by these informal leadership groups to claim or consolidate authority and legitimacy needed to further their political and economic interests.

4.2.4.2 Present but complicit community leadership

The study finds that violent attacks on foreign nationals in May 2008 also occurred in areas with a relatively strong and legitimate presence of official elected community leadership particularly ward and street committees. In those areas, the community leadership permitted the occurrence of the violence in a number of ways. It either i) directly organised the violence and/or was actively involved in the attacks, ii) was complicit with instigators/perpetrators and sanctioned their actions, iii) passively encouraged or tolerated the violence, or iv) did not make any effort to prevent the attacks despite visible warning signs.

As evidenced in the following section, ward and street committees were behind the violence in Alexandra Sector II, Diepsloot, DuNoon, Madelakufa II and Ramaphosa. In Alexandra for instance, the community leaders' role was not limited to the planning of the violence; they led and were actively involved in the actual carrying out of the attacks. The members of the men focus group were surprised when we asked what leaders did to stop the violence. One member said: "No, you are missing the point. Leaders were with us at all times. They directed us on where to go and when." Another member, who participated in the attacks, testified further: "Every time they entered the site, they wanted South Africans to join. Even myself I joined but I was at the back. I was not carrying sticks and spears like the leaders in front." Similarly, respondents reported that in Ramaphosa, the violence was organised and led by the ward committee. It is indeed the committee that called the meeting and called upon the community to start fighting all foreigners in the name of self-defence. One Respondent who participated in the attacks stated: "It was a normal community meeting called by our leaders. It was said we must approach Amashangane because they are fighting us. We must go and fight them also. We went to them straight and war broke out. We killed some and some of our people

were killed." Mode details on the involvement of community leadership are provided in the following discussion on key players, their roles and motivations.

In sum, the discussion above shows that favourable local authority and community leadership factors (i.e. absence, weakness or complicity) provided a socio-political opportunity for the occurrence of the xenophobic violence in May 2008. Absent or weak leadership allowed the emergence of violent informal leadership groups that orchestrated the attacks to further their political and economic interests while present and relatively strong leadership used its clout to mobilize community members for the violence.

4.2.4.3 Community leadership in non-affected areas

The role played by favourable leadership factors in fostering violence is further illustrated by the role leaders played to prevent violence in non-affected communities. As indicated earlier, in an attempt to understand the reasons why violence broke out in some communities and not in others with geographic proximity and relatively similar socio-economic conditions, the study looked at two non-affected areas in Alexandra and Tembisa, two of the most affected townships in Gauteng province. The two studied non-affected areas are Sector V or Setswetla in Alexandra and Madelakufa I in Tembisa. At first glance, these areas looked primed for violence. Apart from their close proximity to -and comparable socio-economic conditions with- affected areas, violent elements from neighbouring sectors attempted to start or influence attacks on foreign nationals in those communities. However, their attempts were thwarted by resistance from communities and their leadership. Although such resistance was rarely shaped by altruism or solidarity with foreign nationals but rather by interests and self-protection, the study finds that it was a community leadership, non-receptive to violence, that prevented violence in these two areas.

4.2.4.3.1 Leadership in non-violent Sector V, Alexandra

Sector V, also known as Setswetla, is one of the areas least affected by the May 2008 xenophobic violence in the greater Alexandra Township. The main reason for choosing to investigate this site was to understand why foreigners were not attacked in Setswetla, which within a walking distance from Sector II, the epicentre of the May 2008 violence. Confirming the analysis presented above, the discussion below shows that the explanation is found in the nature local leadership and its interactions with the community it represents.

All respondents reported that perpetrators of the violence in Sector II attempted to attack foreigners in Setswetla (they actually attacked a few shops at the entrance of the informal settlement), but the community leaders negotiated a 'deal' with them. The terms of the deal stipulated that organisers of the violence in Sector II would not attack foreigners in the area, but 'comrades' or community leaders would remove foreigners themselves. It was agreed that the organisers would come a few days later to check whether the 'comrades' had kept their promise and all foreigners had been removed from the area. Residents and leaders alike reported that they negotiated the deal not because they loved and wanted to protect foreigners but because they wanted to protect themselves. Setswetla is a mixed community, and it was believed that outsiders would not have been able to distinguish foreign nationals from South Africans, meaning South Africans would inevitably have been attacked in the process. Asked why foreigners were not attacked in Setswetla, a resident of the area responded:

> The way I know it is that people from outside came but the block committees went up there next to the river to stop them from entering this area. A deal was made that block committees will remove foreigners themselves without assistance and method used up

> there. There was an agreement that yes, there are a number of foreigners in this area but we shall remove them ourselves. This deal was out of fear that people from outside will even attack South Africans as they do not know the difference.

Another responded confirmed this view: "The main reason is that it is difficult to differentiate between *amashangane,* the Mozambicans and locals from Giyani. People were afraid that if Zulus come here to remove foreigners, they won't be able to know the difference. Even South Africans may get affected." One of the community leaders further gave a similar explanation:

> As leaders we were concerned that if the foreigners are attacked the whole Setswetla will go into flames, if one shack is attacked. The attackers didn't know who the foreigners are and they were going to attack South Africans as well. We told the attackers that we will call the meeting and ask the foreigners to leave and they [attackers] can call us later and come and check if that has been done. We called a meeting and we told the foreigners that they needed to leave Setswetla and come back when the violence has gone down.

After the deal was concluded, community leaders called a community meeting and indeed asked foreigners to leave. Most foreign nationals went to the police station and came back after the violence had subsided in the greater Alexandra. They returned to find their property intact and belongings in place, as the rule of law had not broken down in Setswetla to the same extent as it did elsewhere in the township. A foreign resident, who returned after the violence had subsided in other areas confirmed:

> It [violence] happened that side, and then a meeting was held, the leaders gave us two days to leave his area, and some of us ran and slept at the police station. … Most foreigners left the area; some went to the police and would come back during the day

to check on their property. There are some who did not leave; some families decided to send children and other family members away and leave at least one member of the family behind to look after the house and property.

Respondents indicated that there were some internal elements who were enthusiastic to collaborate with perpetrators in attacking foreigners. They were however discouraged by the deal brokered by local leaders.

In sum, the community leadership played a crucial role in preventing violence in this area and in addition to the difference made by leadership, there are also a number of other lessons to be learned from comparing Setswetla to Sector II (the most affected area in Alexandra). First, service delivery cannot explain violence: as indicated earlier, Setswetla is worse off in terms of development and service delivery. Second increased number of immigrants or population diversity does not equal an increased risk of violence: Setswetla is more diverse than Sector II in terms of language groups and population composition. There are also more foreigners in Setswetla than in Sector II. Third: xenophobic attitudes are not a good predictor of violence against foreign nationals: residents in both areas expressed deep-seated negative perceptions and attitudes towards foreign nationals living in their communities and in the country in general but violence occurred only in one.

4.2.4.3.2 Leadership and non-violence in Madelakufa I, Tembisa

Established in late 1980s, Madelakufa I is an informal settlement located a few hundred metres away from the Tembisa Municipality offices. It is separated from Madelakufa II (the location most affected the May 2008 violence in that area) only by a road passing through but falls under a different ward council. Like in Setswetla, respondents, both local and foreign reported that community leaders, with support from the police, played a crucial role in

preventing violence against foreign nationals. Groups from Madelakufa II attempted to attack foreign nationals in the location but were stopped by the community and the leaders after they had agreed in a meeting that they did not want violence in the area. A local resident stated when asked why foreigners were not attacked in the location:

> Leaders here met and resolved that what we see in other areas, we certainly do not want to see it happening here. We started this area with foreigners and we said nothing has changed and we see no reason why we should fight foreigners. We had a general meeting and we agreed as the community that no one would be attacked and no one would be told to leave the area. Another factor here is that leaders are very much respected. If you are a leader you must respect the community and the community shall respect you. When our leaders say we do not want this, we also do not want violence. For us to ensure that this violence does not happen, we decided to close entrances to Madela I.

Foreign respondents living in the area confirmed that community leaders were instrumental in preventing xenophobic violence. They were very appreciative of how community leaders protected them and how they handled the situation in general. One foreign respondent stated: "there was a meeting on Friday when the comrades from that side, Madela 2 came here and tried to convince the comrades here to lead the campaign in forcing the foreigners to leave, but what happened was they told them that 'we have struggled with these people for so long, we cannot turn against them". Another foreign respondent confirmed further and expressed his gratitude to the community leaders:

> In my opinion, here we value so much the work of the street committees in this place; they work for us. During the times of the trouble, they were not sleeping; we have neighbors that are in the street committees, they were not sleeping for the whole time.

> They [attackers from the neighbouring location] did not do anything here, and that is because of the work of the street committees; they did not want trouble. They were patrolling at night, blocking all the entry points into this place until the violence was over. We thus did not experience much trouble. You see here there are two or three main entry points into the settlement. We would hear them at night ... we would be asleep by then; they were telling us not to come out of our houses, that we should sleep. We would sleep until the next day, knowing that the street committees were working.

While there seems to have been an element and solidarity and good relationship between locals and foreign nationals in Madelakufa I, the resistance to xenophobic incursions was similarly organized as a form of self-protection. As in Setswetla, there were fears that attackers would not be able to differentiate foreign nationals from South Africans, meaning the whole community would have been affected. A local respondent stated:

> We asked them how they will differentiate between migrants' shacks and South Africans' shacks. We also reminded them that, this is an informal settlement and the shacks are close to each other, if they burn one shack, the whole place catches fire. […] Yes, they did come in here, but as the men of this community, we formed barricades and stopped them from entering this place. There are only 2 entrances, one is the side of the police station and the other is the side of the green sale, vegetable stand. So they decided to use the vegetable stand. We were waiting there at that entrance and we reasoned with them.

Having noted the role of the community leaders in preventing violence in this location, we still asked if there were other fundamental differences between Madela I and Madela II (which was affected by the violence). The two locations are in close proximity and under

relatively comparable socio-economic conditions. Respondents believed that tribalism and leadership crisis were the main distinguishing factors that enabled violence in Madela II. For one of the local leaders for instance, tribalism was the main difference. In his words: "So in Madela II, tribalism is very strong although it is sometimes hidden under party affiliations." Another respondent added leadership crisis to tribalism:

> In Madela II there is a big mix of people who themselves are not united, leadership and community is not on the same page. They do not get along. There are Pedis, AmaShangane, Zulus and Xhosas and within these people there is a leadership crisis. All these groups are fighting for the control of the committees. That is why you found that foreigners found themselves in big trouble because they did not take part in these committees. Then foreigners from Mozambique also had their own leadership. They all refuse to be controlled by the other groups and that is why violence erupted. Instead of solving this as leadership, you must remember I told you that leadership is fragmented on ethnic lines, violence erupted. Now thugs took advantage of the situation and they started spreading statements that AmaShangane must go. […] I'll tell you why. In Madelakufa II there is this thing of tribalism.

This discussion shows that, as in Setswetla, leadership played a critical role in preventing violence in Madelakufa I. Trusted community leaders successfully mobilised the community to stand against violence. In these two communities -and arguably in other potentially volatile areas that resisted the violence - the critical factor preventing violence were the composition of the community and the ability of leadership to represent and look out for the interests and safety of all residents. Self-serving leaders in affected communities either underestimated the security risks attacks of foreigners posed for their entire communities (as demonstrated by the

murder of 21 South African citizens) or determined that their interests would be served by the violence.

To conclude this section on leadership factors, this study finds that, on the one hand, favourable local authority and community leadership factors (absence, weakness or complicity) provided a socio-political opportunity for the occurrence of the xenophobic violence in May 2008 in affected areas (I provide a detailed discussion on the political opportunity structure and its role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in Chapter VI). On the other hand, the study shows that the presence of a trusted, legitimate and 'not-violence-receptive' leadership was instrumental in preventing xenophobic violence by not only discouraging potential perpetrators from within but also and most importantly by successfully mobilizing communities to stand against actions and influence from outside violent elements.

By concluding that the absence of xenophobic violence in potentially volatile areas is explained by the nature of local authority and community leadership characterised by popular trust and legitimacy, non-receptiveness to violence as well as genuine intent and ability to represent and look out for the interests and safety of all residents, the study answers the important but often overlooked '*where*' or '*why here and not there'* question. This is a significant methodological and empirical contribution to the understanding of xenophobic violence in South Africa and collective violence in general. Indeed, most studies on xenophobic violence in South Africa and on collective violence elsewhere have almost exclusively focused on areas affected by the violence and have, according to many collective violence scholars, understandably produced limited or inaccurate causal explanations that cannot account for the absence of the violence in similar environments.

According to Piven *et al* (1991:443) for example, most studies on collective violence provide limited theoretical and empirical explanations because:

> […] they give in to the temptation to ignore the places, times, and populations in which nothing happened. When conflict is at issue, why waste time writing the history of harmony? The simple answer: an explanation of protest, rebellion, or collective violence that cannot account for its absence is no explanation at all; an explanation based only on cases where something happened is quite likely to attribute importance to conditions which are actually quite common in cases where nothing happened.

The authors use examples of Tilly's (1975, 1986) studies on violent protests in France, Italy and Germany and Gamson's (1975) study of "Challenging Groups" in America to show how many studies tell stories of groups who protested and areas that were affected by the violence but fail to explain why groups who could have violently protested did not and why areas that could have been affected were not (Ibid). In a similar vein, talking about ethnic riots, Horowitz (2001: xiv) argues that explanations of collective violence that fail to account for its absence will always fall short: "No enquiry into riots should fail to account for their absence. The study of violence proceeds most fruitfully when it asks those deceptively simple questions that illuminate the violent episode: Why here and not there? Why now and not then?"

4.3 VIOLENCE ENTREPRENEURS' ROLES AND MOTIVATIONS FOR VIOLENCE

4.3.1 Introduction

As mentioned earlier, attacks on foreign nationals in May 2008 were carried out in most areas by large crowds of ordinary members of the public, men and women, young and old. This led most commentators to attribute the violence to 'faceless' or 'anonymous' mobs or criminals. As the discussion below shows however, this study finds that, behind the masses, there were

identifiable groups and/or individuals who acted as masterminds or instigators of the violence for specific interests. It confirms Monson *et al* (2011) argument that the reference to a faceless collective perpetrator was an attempt to erase agency and responsibility of key actors behind the violence. Indeed, this study finds that the reference to 'faceless mobs' or 'anonymous community members' as perpetrators of the violence was often made by instigators themselves or their complicit local leaders as a strategy to shield themselves from accountability. This section first discusses the identities of these instigators or entrepreneurs of the violence before discussing their motivations.

4.3.2 Identifying Violence Entrepreneurs

As alluded to in previous sections, the study finds that in all affected areas, the attacks on foreigners were carefully organised and led by different local community leadership structures (formal or informal) and/or known influential groups. In Alexandra Sector II for example, the study finds evidence that the attacks were planned and led by local leaders particularly 'Indunas' and the local CPF. Asked whether the community leaders were involved, a news editor at a local radio station responded:

> They were involved, even if they can't come out and admit it openly; they were not surprised, they were happy; when I called them, they did not want to come on air to address people. They were also saying: 'they [foreigners] should go'. […]There were secret meetings at Madala Hostel. It's a dangerous place, people have guns; the police are also scared to go there. Meetings are still going on at night. No warning was given, foreigners were told 'go or get killed'; women were raped.

Similarly, a worker at a local SAPS Victims Support Unit also reported that planning meetings were organized by community leaders: "Meetings were held that side… from 1st to

8th Street. It's probably in those meetings where attacks were organized; but in the end the whole town bought in. Apparently meetings were organized Indunas and CPF. The CPF chairperson is still being investigated by NIA: the National Intelligence Agency." The community leaders' role was not only limited to the planning of the violence; they led and were actively involved in the actual carrying out of the attacks. The members of the men focus group were surprised when we asked what leaders did to stop the violence. They said: "No, you are missing the point. Leaders were with us at all times. They directed us on where to go and when." One member of the group who participated in the attacks testified further: "Every time they entered the site, they wanted South Africans to join. Even myself I joined but I was at the back. I was not carrying sticks and spears as the leaders in front."

In Itireleng, attacks on foreign nationals were organised and led by the '*Comrades*'. The "Comrades"; are self-elected leadership group that called itself the "Sub-Committee for Development". They had chased the official ward committee from the office at the 'gate'[31]. The remaining ward committee member operated from her private home. She still provided services such as registration for indigence grants but most people went to the 'Comrades' - the now more powerful parallel structure - for services. Asked how comrades were elected, one respondent said: "We have no idea, we started seeing comrades operating …they elected themselves. We no longer see our leaders, we see comrades." Similarly another respondent stated: "We did not elect this committee; they volunteered to help the community with any arising matters such as crime, water, conflict in the family, etc."

Respondents were unanimous that it was the "comrades" who organized and led the attacks on foreigners and that some of them were among the arrested. One respondent for instance stated: "The leaders at the gate led the fighting of foreigners. They had no option; they must

[31] The main entry point into the informal settlement

do what the community wants. If they don't, we shall remove them. Some of them at the gate were arrested and they later came back. Police know they are the ones who led attacks on foreigners". "Comrades were chasing people left and right", reported another respondent. According to another respondent, the comrades also raided South Africans' homes in search for hiding foreigners: "We also suffered; comrades from the gate came into our houses and broke our doors looking for foreigners."

The local police confirmed that some comrades were among the arrested. They were held in custody for a week or so but on the day when the court hearing was to take place, the community organized a protest march to the court to get them released. All the suspects were released on that day as the court ruled that (in the words of a local police official) "the charges be partially withdrawn pending further investigation". Efforts to speak to the investigating officer were not fruitful but it was evident that no "further" investigation was being carried out and some residents were annoyed about it. "This nonsense of comrades coming back without being charged is unfair, it sends signals that it is OK to attack foreigners", sated a visibly unhappy respondent. Respondents also reported that local authorities (particularly the councillor) supported the protest to get the comrades released. In the words of one respondent: "When Atteridgeville police arrested the comrades, Councilor told people that if they can go to police station to demand that people be released, they will be released. The councilor advised them that if they can go there and tell the police that they did this as a group not as individuals."

In Madelakufa II, respondents reported that the attacks were organized and led by a group called '*Amabhaca*', whose members were part of the local street committees. Amabhaca is a sub-clan of the Xhosa ethnic group. One respondent stated: "Amabhaca were responsible. Amabhaca is a sub-clan of the Xhosa's but I do not know how to separate Amabhaca from

Xhosas but here they do. Amabhaca speaks their Xhosa with a Swaziland influence. Police came and arrested a number of them. Some came out on bail some who did not have money remained in jail." Asked about the 'Amabhaca' group and its involvement in the violence, the local Councilor did not want to put the blame on the entire group but confirmed that some group members may have participated in the violence. In his words: "it's a faceless group. We know there are some individuals in the group that have unruly behaviours but I can't say it's the whole group; I can't generalize and say it them who organized the attacks but some of them may have been involved."

Foreigners who were victims of the attacks were also convinced that community leaders were involved in the planning of the attacks and that the violence could have been prevented if they had stood against it. One foreign respondent stated:

> [...] they sat down and planned. They are street committees. This would not have happened were the street committees doing their job. They were in meetings with the street committees, and they did this thing, and the street committees just stood back […] it would not have happened. Remember that in Madelakufa I, this thing did not happen because the street committees and members of the community stood together and said no one was going to come in and kill another human being. But here, since the street communities did not stand up to the violence, people came and did what they liked with us.

Attacks on foreign nationals in Ramaphosa were organised and led by the local *ward committee*. It is indeed the committee that called the meeting and called upon the residents to start fighting all foreign nationals in the name of self-defence. A man who participated in the attacks stated: "It was a normal community meeting called by our leaders. It was said we must approach Amashangane because they are fighting us. We must go and fight them also. We

went to them straight and war broke out. We killed some and some of our people were killed." A ward committee member confirmed:

> On Friday, they [foreigners] started beating locals, they killed one person. On Saturday evening the killers who had disappeared came back to continue their job; they were beating up locals because they were beaten in Alex. On Sunday morning we tried to defend ourselves; we came together to decide to chase them away because they were killing us. […] what happened? We beat them; we were not going to talk to them nicely; we went where they were gathered; we went to their shacks and burnt them.

In Diepsloot, respondents reported that violence was instigated by '*Comrades*' or local community leaders. According to respondents, the community in Diepsloot is led by a number of different leadership structures including block committees, the CPF and SANCO. The distinction between these structures did not seem clear to most respondents as some individuals were simultaneously members of different structures. "We had SANCO but I do not know where it ended but now it merged with CPF. CPF and SANCO is one thing", said one female respondent. The members of these structures are all commonly known as 'comrades'. According to respondents, the 'comrades' are responsible for everything that happens in the area and are the primary authority for dispute resolution since the community had lost trust in the ward councillor said to be incompetent.

According to both local and foreign respondents, the attacks were organised and led by the 'comrades'. The 'comrades' started by checking identity documents of people suspected to be foreign nationals and those found to be non-South Africans were attacked. One respondent stated: "They would come and ask to see your identity document and if you did not have it they would beat you up while others took anything of value they could see." Another

respondent confirmed: “It was the ‘comrades’ and the community joined in since it was something discussed at the meeting led by the ‘comrades’.”

In Atteridgeville, respondents indicated violence against foreign nationals was orchestrated by the Gauteng Civic Association (GACA) and its chairperson Jeff Rabothlale. According to respondents, GACA had taken over the local authority and dominated the community leadership in the area. Its leader named the place “Jeffsville” after himself, as he claimed to be the founder of the informal settlement in 1991 and confirmed that is organisation governed the space. He stated: “Jeffsville is the name of this place and it is widely known by most people. GACA is a civic organization that governs this area. This area was started in 1991.” There exist other civic organizations such as the Atteridgeville Civic Organization (ACO) but they are reportedly not as powerful and influential as GACA. Official leadership structures, including the CPF subcommittees and street/block committees, seemed to operate under the authority of GACA, which they recognised was very influential in the community. The chairperson of the local CPF for example stated: “They are influential in the community; you need to get a buy-in from them. You can’t do anything in the community without involving their leaders. The problem is that they are parallel structures operating parallel to the government. They are like a government on their own.”

Most respondents including local residents, foreign nationals and some local leaders had no doubt that the attacks were organised by GACA or Jeff’s office. “Some community leaders wanted to benefit” according to the ACO chairperson. A male Zimbabwean national believed the violence was organised and led by Jeff’s people. He said:

> Yes, he is the one whose name was given to the settlement. This Jeff guy was taken by the police for questioning and came to tell his people to stop. They were Jeff’s people because what makes me say they were Jeff’s people is that there was a meeting and

> when they came back they were complaining that the foreigners take their jobs and started attacking foreigners.

In Masiphumelele, the two waves (1996 and 2008) of violence against foreign nationals were carried out mostly by groups of youths but as all respondents reported, it is common knowledge that they were 'hired' to do so by a local local business association (*Siyakha Business Trust*) that was unhappy with the competition from increasing numbers of foreign (largely Somali) traders. Led by Siyakha Business Trust, local business owners held several meetings to discuss 'unfair' competition and the removal of Somali and Ethiopian shop owners. A male local respondent stated when asked about the perpetrators of the violence: "It is not business people who loot the Baraka shops. What they do, which is important, is that they buy the youth to loot the shops of Baraka and evict them. They target unemployed youth to do this on their behalf."

The police arrested a number of local businesses owners who were involved in the violence but were released them without charges after intervention by the former Provincial Premier, the MEC of Community Safety and the local SAPS Commander. A representative of the local South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) Branch confirmed:

> They were arrested but released because the Premier and MEC negotiated with the police. The South African shop owners said they can't speak to the Premier unless their people arrested are released. The Premier met the Station Commander in Ocean View and they were released and negotiations started.

Some respondents reported that in addition to business owners, some local leaders were also directly involved in the attacks. The local councillor for example believed that some street committee members were involved not only in organising the violence but also in looting. She

said: “A street committee member called Captain was one of the people who looted Somali shops.”

In sum, the discussion above shows that, although the violent attacks on foreign nationals in May 2008 and those that preceded them attracted massive and relatively voluntary public participation, they were instigated by known leadership groups (formal or informal) or individuals often referred to in the literature as ‘violence entrepreneurs’ (Della Porta, 1995; Guichaoua, 2013) or ‘violence specialists’ (Tilly, 2003). As discussed in later sections, the study finds that violence entrepreneurs had little difficulty co-opting or getting acquiescence and support from participating masses who already held deep-seated negative attitudes and resentment towards foreign nationals. As the discussion below shows however, instigators’ actions were rather motivated by their own political and economic interests than the greater public good or the general welfare of their respective communities.

4.3.3 The Political Economy of Violence

The interests behind attacking and removing foreigners from communities are diverse and not always immediately evident. However, by closely looking at -and analysing- the motivations of instigators discussed above, the study provides answers to the *‘why’* question. It finds that violence was just ‘politics by other means’: instigators organised the attacks as an attempt to claim or consolidate the authority and power needed to further their political and economic interests. Indeed, organising attacks on and removing ‘unwanted’ outsiders has proved to be a highly effective strategy for earning people’s trust, gaining legitimacy and expanding a client base and the revenues associated with it. The finding is in line with the earlier mentioned ‘elite manipulation theory’ stipulating that elites often strategically mobilize existing - or purposely created - popular discontent into collective action for maximum political and economic gain (Gerring, 2009; Oberschall, 2010). The following paragraphs illustrate this

point by showing that - and explaining how - instigators' instrumental motives influenced the May 2008 violent attacks and those that preceded them.

4.3.3.1 Power struggles over community leadership

The study finds that areas affected by the xenophobic violence were beehives of power struggles among numerous formal and informal groups for community leadership supremacy. The areas were characterised by fierce competition for the control of the community leadership and the ensuing economic gains.

As the discussion below shows, understanding the motives behind the violence against foreign nationals in South Africa requires an equally clear understanding of the political economy of community leadership in most poor townships and informal settlements across the country. In an environment of general deprivation and unemployment, community leadership -in its formal and informal manifestations- is an attractive alternative vocation. Indeed, it is one of the few forms of paid employment or income-generating activities available to low skilled, poorly educated residents. According to respondents, it is common knowledge that ostensibly voluntary leaders often charge for services, levy protection fees, and sell or let land and buildings, and take bribes in exchange for solving problems or influencing tender processes.

In Atteridgeville for example, respondents reported that the leading leadership group, the Gauteng Civic Organization (GACA), charges for services and charges can be substantial depending on the nature of the case. One respondent stated:

> The other issue is that, when you have a problem and you go to the office down there, they will ask you how much you have and when you go to the police station, they don't charge you anything. So that is totally wrong and we are being robbed in this

> place by these committees. Let's say, I fought with my neighbor, then I feel that, the only people who can bring a solution are committee members, when you get there, they will ask you to give them R20 first, before you can talk.

Another respondent confirmed and added that charges are case dependent and can be a substantial amount of money: "It all depends upon the severity of the case; let's say I sold you my space and you want to pay half; then we have to go there to sign and make payment arrangements and the office may charge 10% of the deal."

In Diepsloot, local leaders charge for their services and community members who are not able to pay do not get their problems attended to. A female respondent explained why most community members did not report their problems to the comrades anymore: "You see, these people were fine at first but now when I go to them; say I have a problem with my husband, they do not react immediately unless I pay them R50. That's why even when people have problems they do not go there because they would not be having the money."

In Madelakufa II, respondents complained that CPF attempted to charge people and households a varying amount of money for their supposedly 'voluntary' services. On respondent stated: "In the township they have CPF's. Here they wanted R5 to pay those patrolling at night. People refused." The CPF Chairperson confirmed that, apart from the newly government introduced R300/3months vouchers, CPF Sub-Committee members did not get paid and survived on 'community compassion', which may be just what the above respondent was referring to. A local Councillor further acknowledged that there were some leaders who were corrupt and demanded protection fees from foreigners. He responded when asked how foreigners acquire shacks in the location: "There is no mechanism in place; sometimes they use corrupt committee members who grant space without the knowledge of authorities; foreigners also pay protection fees to those leaders."

In Itireleng the ‘Comrades’ claimed to be volunteers but they rarely did anything for free. All respondents reported that comrades charged for their services and even demand protection fees from all residents. One respondent stated:

> They claim to be volunteers but they sometimes charge for their services and demand bribe from people. They also demand people to pay a protection fee of R5 each shack, which some community members refuse to pay. You see, when you go to them and tell them about any problem that you have, they normally want a bribe from you before they can help you. …We report to them issues like crime …I can say mostly crime or if we have problems with running water. When you go to them before they can go and hunt those thugs, they want a bribe from you before they can help.

In Masiphumelele, most residents accused community leaders of not being helpful to the community and believed that they were there to enrich themselves. The following words of one respondent expressed feelings shared by many:

> We have them [leaders] but there is nothing they help us with. When you want a house, they sell you land which I think is very unfair…. the first thing they do is to enrich themselves by selling us land. Even if someone sells you a house, they say for the house to be changed into your name, you must pay. The next thing you find is that the house [ownership] has not been changed; nothing has been done. I think the leaders are crooks.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the profitability of community leadership positions not only leads to a deliberate confusion of roles and mandates but also attracts considerable infighting and competition for power and legitimacy among different groups present in affected areas. According to respondents, the same individuals held positions in different leadership groups

and groups even those with specific mandates involved themselves in solving all sorts of problems community members brought to them. In Diepsloot for example, the distinction between different leadership structures including Block committees, CPF and SANCO did not seem clear to most respondents as some individuals were simultaneously members of different structures. "We had SANCO but I do not know where it ended but now it merged with CPF. CPF and SANCO are one thing", reported one respondent. In Madelakufa II, some street committee members were also members of the CPF and vice-versa and the roles and mandate of the two structures were not clearly defined. Respondents reported that CPF, whose mandate is -according to the local CPF leaders - 'exclusively fighting crime', got also involved in solving socio-economic issues.

Respondents in violence affected areas reported fierce competition (for power and legitimacy) and mistrust among different leadership groups present in their locations. A woman respondent in Madelakufa II for instance was worried that there will be no solution to the problems the community was facing as long as infighting among leadership groups continued. She stated: "I do not see what they are doing. They fight amongst themselves. A councillor may have his own people within these committees. [….] There is no solution. The committees are working into two different groups. They can have two meetings at the same time. These people are fighting amongst themselves at the grounds."

Similarly, in DuNoon, the local SANCO, which the other local leaders call a 'family business' constantly battles the ward council when negotiating development projects with donors. Indeed respondents reported that there was a lot of infighting and power struggle among leadership structures particularly SANCO and the ward council. They particularly fought over who should be in control of development project tender processes from which they greatly benefit. The councillor believed SANCO was just a corrupt family business. He

stated: “There is no SANCO in DuNoon; this SANCO thing belongs to one family to enrich themselves. The way they are corrupt; they have each 10 houses. I report this corruption to the provincial government but nothing happens. They are led by Thandiswa Stokwe; people are paying rent to them some since 1996.” The helplessness expressed by the ward councillor is a testimony that the local government was not the main power holder in this area.

In Motherwell, community leaders were at loggerheads with the local councilor and often mobilized the community for marches and violent protests to remove her from office. One respondent stated:

> The community is very unhappy with counselor Linda Mlomo. They want the counselor to go. We are complaining about tar roads, we need tar roads so that taxis can come inside and drop us nearer to where we live. We need a school in this area and we are still waiting. People are not prepared to wait any longer. So there was a march to the counselor’s office. It was our committee members who organized us; they called a meeting and we went to the office. People were throwing burning tires at that container [office], and then Linda Mlomo called the police.

Similarly, there were paralyzing competition for power and mutual mistrust between the Comrades and the ward council in Itireleng. The ‘Comrades’ committee accused the ward council of being corrupt, nepotistic, incompetent and causing divisions in the community; and in fact they believed that it was the Indian Councillor who was ‘blocking’ the development of the area as he intended to get residents removed and give the place to his Indian friends to build in flat blocks. The ward council on the other hand believes that the ‘comrades’ are a bunch of criminals who ‘hijacked’ the community leadership for personal interests and one committee member stated: “They [comrades] sold migrants’ shacks and property, they took the money for themselves. Migrants are allowed to visit their families but they must pay

between R20 - R30 to them to visit their families. No one at the moment knows where the money goes." Another member was certain that it was the comrades who were behind the attacks on foreigners but he did not want them to know that he suspected them.

In conclusion, this discussion shows that areas affected by xenophobic violence were characterised by fierce infighting for power and legitimacy among different groups present in affected areas. Given economic gains and revenues associated with such political power and authority, these struggles are perhaps not surprising. The discussion also shows that struggles to control leadership positions can - and indeed often - lead to popular mobilisation and conflict. Further, as evidenced in the next section, where the mobilisation is based on anti-outsider sentiments, this can lead to xenophobic violence.

4.3.3.2 Violence against foreign nationals as a leadership consolidation tool

For the above-mentioned local political players, organising attacks on -and removing the- 'unwanted' foreigners from affected communities has proven one of the most successful strategies for earning people's trust while gaining additional legitimacy, clients and revenues. Indeed, groups wanting to win the leadership competition - and claim or consolidate monopoly of local power and authority - capitalised on residents' feelings, fears, negative attitudes and resentment towards the presence of foreign nationals in their areas by offering their services in 'resolving' a bitterly felt problem. Whereas the police and the official local authority had evidently, at least in the popular imagination, proved unable to address crime and other community problems, community leaders (current or aspiring) were able to demonstrate superior efficacy in 'crime'-fighting and greater empathy with community concerns with their swift and strategic strikes. Demonstrating solidarity with the masses feeling neglected or abandoned by the local authority or other leadership groups earned them

popular legitimacy as the only 'true' leaders of the polity. The case of *Itireleng* illustrates this point.

According to respondents, the comrades, the informal leadership group in Itireleng, were a group of unemployed youth who saw community leadership as employment opportunity and income-generating activity. Not only they charged local residents for services (see earlier discussion) but also organized and led attacks on foreign nationals for direct and indirect personal economic interests. Given the lack of public trust in the local authority and pervasive resentment towards foreign nationals living in the area, the comrades used the removal of foreign nationals to earn popular legitimacy as community leaders. Consequently, by helping them consolidate their community leadership monopoly, the violence was indirectly a useful tool to expand their client base and economic revenues it represents. One respondent for example responded when asked who the comrades were:

> We don't know. They are unemployed youth. At times they came and said they helped us to remove foreigners and therefore we must contribute R5. Look we are suffering, why should we support people who left their homes in Johannesburg. When they left their homes they said they are coming here to work, so why should we support them?

In addition to benefiting from the consolidated leadership monopoly, the comrades acquired direct financial gains from chasing foreigners away from the location. Indeed, as indicated earlier respondents reported that the comrades sold houses/shacks and property evicted foreigners left behind and charged them R20-R30 for family visits. "They [comrades] sold migrants' shacks and property; they took the money for themselves. Migrants are allowed to visit their families but they must pay between R20-R30 to them to visit their families", one respondent stated.

Events that preceded the violence show that organizing the attacks was a strategic move for the comrades. Respondents unanimously reported that violence against foreigners in Itireleng immediately followed a community meeting organised by comrades in the night of 17 February 2008. This meeting had however been preceded by a series of other meetings in which the issue of foreigners was discussed. One respondent narrated what she remembered about the events:

> In the 3rd week of January 2008, there was a meeting with the MEC, Metro Police, SAPS Sup, Sup Brits and Department of Home Affairs (DHA). The meeting was to address the concerns and complaints about security and safety. The comrades said the community is complaining about the influx of migrants in the community; that they are used as cheap labour and are responsible for the crime in the area. They complained that some of the migrants are illegal and do not have IDs or papers.
>
> On the 30th January, another meeting was held with SAPS, DHA, MEC and the comrades. The MEC made a commitment that 20 people will be trained as wardens in order to deal with the safety and security in the area; confirmed that SAPS and DHA would raid the area at night to check for the illegal migrants.
>
> Two weeks later, on 17 February, while the police were still preparing for the raids, the comrades convened a meeting without informing the Councilor or the police. In the meeting people were asked what their views were about foreigners in the area. It was decided in the meeting that the foreigners should be driven out of the community. The attacks then started.

Why did the comrades anticipate the raids that were being prepared by the police and the DHA? To this question, the comrades, who did not want to admit any involvement, responded

that maybe the community members decided to remove foreigners themselves because they did not trust the police and did not believe the raids were actually going to be carried out. However, judging from how they greatly benefitted from the attacks and how they behaved after the violence (e.g. asking for community recompense for their help in removing foreigners), it is clear that the comrades did not want to let this opportunity to officially appropriate the community leadership pass them by. Organizing attacks that removed foreigners from the location was a comrades' strategic move to consolidate their community leadership monopoly, which could probably not have been achieved had the foreigner-related issues been handled by the usual institutions with the relevant mandate.

Like in Itereleng, attacking and removing foreigners in *Atteridgeville* was not only a source of great economic benefits for the instigators (GACA also known as Jeff's office) but also a brutal show of force demonstrating and consolidating their supreme and undisputed authority and power. GACA's actions were another clear example that leadership groups organised violence against foreign nationals for their own specific interests. Indeed, GACA orchestrated the removal of foreign nationals but later organised their return at a fee. At the time of the study field work, it was visible that some of the displaced foreign nationals had returned to the area but according to respondents, Jeff's office was charging them money for return and protection. The Atteridgeville CPF chairperson for example stated:

> The organization called GACA; they are community leaders, its Jeff Rabothlale and Themba Ncalo. After the xenophobic violence, foreigners are paying them money to reintegrate into community and are also paying protection fees. As the leaders of the community they did not show any concern and were nowhere to be found. The mayor established a task team to assist the victims; they refused to participate in meetings.

Jeff and his GACA committee members admitted that they organized their own 'reintegration' programme after they realized that the local council was not effective and was just misusing funds allocated by government in this regard. They stated:

> For instance our civic association is the only organisation, nationally, that has done things properly and the first integration programme. During the xenophobic violence the provincial government and parliament have issued two million rand for the integration process. The ANC zonal structure in Attredgeville has made their committee of only ANC members. After that many structures were side-lined and we left them because we saw that it was a political thing. And what we did launch our own integration process and at the same time we launched the other patrollers. First we must bring stability before we do integration. On our own we did that. […]On the tenth we launched our integration structure. We reintegrated many of Zimbabweans, Mozambicans and Malawians. The second integration phase focused on Somalis and Pakistanis and the second one was done on the 24th June. The second one was mostly focused on Muslim people. After these two re-integrations there was nobody else to reintegrate. Then we went back to that ANC committee and we asked them to account because we had already reintegrated everybody, then we asked them what they have done with that two million rand and that's where we clashed with them.

Orchestrating attacks on foreigners and organising their returned -and in the process thwarting state-sanctioned processes- not only earned the instigators money but also and most importantly demonstrated and consolidated their undisputed authority and community leadership supremacy. The group's actions were a clear statement to community members and other rival groups that they were in charge; that they had the power and authority to decide who lives or dies and who resides in or leaves that specific location.

4.3.4 Leadership Structures or Protection Rackets?

In light of the above, can we consider these violent groups as 'legitimate' leadership structures or are they merely mafia-style protection rackets? According to Tilly (1985:171), a racketeer is "someone who produces both the danger and, at a price, the shield against it.' By this definition, these groups are protection racket enterprises producing rumours about threats and imminent danger the presence of foreigners pose to communities (see details in the next chapter) and offering much needed protection by chasing foreigners away, only to bring them back or allow them, at a fee, to visit the families they left behind.

These groups however refer to themselves, perhaps appropriately, as 'legitimate' community leaders. In an environment where constitutionalism is relatively new and 'unrooted', this analysis speaks of multiple means of legitimization and systems of authority (see also Monson, 2011). For some analysts, legitimacy depends on "conformity to an abstract principle or on the assent of the governed or both at once" (Tilly, 1985:171) and for others, it "depends rather little on abstract principle or assent of the governed: 'The person over whom power is exercised is not usually as important as other power-holders.' Legitimacy is the probability that other authorities will act to confirm the decisions of a given authority" (Stinchcombe in Tilly 1985:171).

This perspective helps to capture the multiple levels of authority, legitimacy and power at work in the townships before, during, and after the violence. As self-appointed and violent as they are, these groups appear to enjoy considerable assent, collaboration and support not only from communities but also (and more importantly) from other local power holders including the police and service providers such as schools, hospitals, social welfare institutions, faith organisations and non-governmental organisations operating in their jurisdictions.

For instance, community members in Itireleng are required to produce a proof of residence issued by 'Comrades', a self-appointed leadership group, to get social services (the form used displays the local councillor's letterhead and stamp). The local police also encourage people to report cases to the 'comrades' first before going to the police. These groups seem to have capitalised on communities' lack of trust in official local leadership institutions caused by poor service delivery, corruption, favouritism and perceived general ineptitude. In this way, they act more like what Tilly (2003) terms 'political entrepreneurs' who

> […] wield significant influence over the presence, absence, form, loci and intensity of collective violence. When they promote violence, they do so by activating boundaries, stories and relations that have already accumulated histories of violence; […] by coordinating destructive campaigns, and by representing their constituencies through threats of violence (Ibid: 34).

The involvement of local leadership in violent exclusion is not a new phenomenon in townships. Using Alexandra as an example, Nieftagodien (2008:72) shows how in the past local leaders have always evoked the discourse of outsider (this time migrants from rural areas) exclusion and removal as "an appropriate means of effecting development." He reminds us that at the beginning of Alexandra renewal project in 2001, approximately 3 500 families were forcibly relocated to places far away from Alexandra and consequently prevented from benefiting from the development they felt they had been promised. Nieftagodien further argues that:

> When they make claims on already scarce resources, they [outsiders] are regarded as a threat to the interests of insiders. Understood in these terms, African foreigners are defined as the quintessential outsider and as an immediate threat to the insiders. Consequently, they are subject to exclusion, even violently so (Ibid).

In conclusion, this section provides evidence that, while they attracted participation of large crowds, violent attacks on foreign nationals were carefully planned and executed by known local leadership groups (formal and/or informal) for their own interests. The study identifies these groups as key players or violence entrepreneurs who used violence against foreigners as a tool to claim or consolidate community leadership positions, power and authority needed to further their political and economic interests. For these groups, attacking and chasing foreigners away was not only a direct source of great economic benefits but also a brutal show of force demonstrating and consolidating their supreme and undisputed authority and power over community residents and rival leadership groups. By helping them consolidate their community leadership monopoly, the violence was also, if indirectly, a useful tool to expand their client base and economic revenues it represents. Clearly, for these groups, violence against foreign nationals was just 'politics by other means'. The elite manipulation theory discussed earlier finds direct application in the attitudes and deeds of these local leadership groups.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides answers to the critical questions of *'where'* and *'why'* xenophobic violence occurs by examining localised socio-economic and political dynamics (of affected and non-affected areas) and their relationship with the presence or the absence of the violence. It highlights the crucial role played by local dynamics and instrumental motives of key actors in the occurrence of the xenophobic violence in South Africa. In particular, it shows that local politics and leadership provide both the opportunities and incentives for violence. Indeed, the chapter provides evidence that in all affected locations, the violence was just 'politics by other means' as it was organised and led by local leadership groups (formal and/or informal) as an

attempt to claim or consolidate the authority and power needed to further their political and economic interests.

The chapter makes a three-fold methodological and empirical contribution to the understanding of xenophobic violence in South Africa and collective violence in general. First, by arguing and proving that the xenophobic violence in South Africa is just 'politics by other means' as/and its instrumental motives are located in the local political economy and micro-political processes at play in many of the country's towns, townships and informal settlements, this chapter further reveals - and addresses the weaknesses of - the commonly used macro-economic explanations that emphasize factors such as poverty, unemployment, inequality as the necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of the collective violence.

Second, the chapter highlights the need for alternative and more appropriate methodological and analytical approaches to study xenophobic violence and collective violence in general. It argues that a thorough understanding of xenophobic/collective violence requires a qualitative comparative multi-case study methodological approach and a micro-level analysis of the drivers of the violence. Like other analysts have urged researchers and policy makers to consider micro-level agendas and dynamics in their quest to understand conflicts and/or build effective peace building processes (see for example Autesserre, 2009), there is a compelling need to pay a sustained attention to micro-politics and sub-national dynamics when analysing xenophobia and related violence in South Africa and certainly elsewhere.

Third, by adopting the 'most similar systems' approach, the study (through this chapter) is able to explain the absence of the xenophobic violence in potentially volatile locations. It proves that the absence of xenophobic violence in potentially volatile areas is explained by the nature of local authority and community leadership characterised by popular trust and

legitimacy, non-receptiveness to violence as well as genuine intent and ability to represent and look out for the interests and safety of all residents. Explaining the absence of violence is another significant methodological and empirical contribution to the understanding of xenophobic violence in South Africa and collective violence in general. Indeed, it sets this study apart from most studies in this discipline. Most studies on xenophobic/collective violence exclusively focus on areas affected by the violence and, according to many collective violence scholars, understandably produce limited or inaccurate causal explanations that cannot account for the absence of the violence in similar environments.

In summary, this chapter identifies micro-politics and localised political economy as key drivers of the violence. It shows that the local socio-economic dynamics provided the opportunity while the political economy constituted the instrumental motives for the violence. However, it does not show exactly how these certainly long-lasting conditions and motives translate into collective, xenophobic violence, and why at specific times. This is the object of the next chapter that shows that, as important and critical as they are, these drivers are by themselves not sufficient for the outbreak of collective hostility. They require another necessary and interdependent ‘trigger’ determinant embodied in mobilization.

V. MOBILIZATION AS A TRIGGER OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes the analysis of the drivers of xenophobic violence a step further to establish how local socio-economic and political dynamics as well as violence entrepreneurs' instrumental motives translate into collective violent attacks. It bears repeating that only by answering the 'why', 'how', 'where' and 'when' questions, can we truly identify all the determinants of xenophobic and collective violence or at least all the key elements of the causal chain. Following the previous chapter that answers the 'where' and 'why' questions, this chapter focuses on '*how*' violent attacks on foreigner nationals occurred and by doing so, identifies the real triggers of xenophobic violence.

The previous chapter discusses the local dynamics and instrumental motives of the violence but does not explain the modalities of the violence i.e. it does not show exactly how these certainly long-lasting conditions and motives translate into or get to be expressed in collective violent attacks. In other words, it does not identify the specific or real triggers of violence. This is the object of this chapter, which, drawing from extensive empirical data for this study and from global theoretical and empirical literature, argues and proves that the triggers of xenophobic violence in South Africa (and of collective violence in general) are located in the mobilization processes. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of how violent attacks erupted in locations where they did and, by doing do, shows that mobilization was indeed the trigger.

Mobilization here broadly refers to all activities, social interactions and processes aimed at recruiting and persuading individuals and groups to participate in a collective action or in this case xenophobic violence. It refers to a process of bringing potential participants i.e. the

members of the affected group and sympathisers into action. It focuses on instigators of the violence (or violence entrepreneurs as referred to earlier) and their ability to assemble individuals and get them to participate in a collective action for a seemingly common/collective goal even if, often times or at least in the case of xenophobic violence in South Africa, motives of instigators are not always the same as those of the followers. Mobilization refers to "the process through which violence entrepreneurs and followers seal temporary loyalties around a violent enterprise" (Guichaoua, 2013:70).

The chapter reveals that, while local or micro-level socio-economic and political circumstances or dynamics are important elements in heightening tensions and creating collective discontent, anger and resentment towards foreign nationals, it is the mobilization of this discontent and not the discontent itself that triggered the May 2008 xenophobic violence and similar attacks that preceded and followed it. I argue that mobilization is the vital *connective tissue* between discontent or grievances and collective violence. As a trigger, mobilization helps explain the pathways from collective discontent and/or instrumental motives to collective violence. By showing that the triggers of the May 2008 xenophobic violence are rather embedded in the mobilization processes, this chapter *usefully provides a corrective to my earlier analysis* (Misago, 2011) whose conclusion situated the triggers in the micro-politics at play in the country's poor informal settlements and townships.

The study reveals that the main mobilization techniques and processes that triggered the May 208 xenophobic violence include: i) mobilization by rhetorical means (e.g. haranguing and inciting crowds in mass community meetings and spreading purposely engineered rumours), ii) mobilization by setting an example or starting the violence and asking others to join; iii) door-to-door mobilization, and iv) patronage or the hiring of 'area boys' to attack the target group.

After a brief discussion on global debates and perspectives on mobilization for collective violence, the chapter looks at the mobilization processes that triggered the May 2008 xenophobic violence in areas where it occurred. The chapter then concludes by proposing a model that captures the increasing theoretical recognition -and now empirically demonstrated centrality- of mobilization as a trigger of collective violence: the mobilization of discontent model.

5.2 PERSPECTIVES ON MOBILIZATION AS A KEY DETERMINANT OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE

5.2.1 General Perspectives

The concept of mobilization as a trigger and therefore a key determinant of collective action emerged as a response to shortcomings of earlier theoretical and empirical explanations that emphasised structural underlying issues as necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of collective violence, action or behaviour. As Snyder (1978) notes, the general merits of 'mobilization-based' explanations lie in their greater attention to dynamic processes and their ability to address questions that are 'logical necessities' in explaining collective violence but are underemphasized in most other theories or explanations: 'how does collective violence occur'? Many scholars have appropriately argued that without showing exactly how prevailing structural (socio-economic and political) conditions lead to the occurrence of collective violence or action, explanations have only been able to demonstrate correlation rather than causality. For Hechter *et al* (1982) for example, these explanations have a hallowed place in the sociological literature but:

> […] what has been missing is a simple explanation of their efficacy. Too frequently analysis has halted with the demonstration of correlations between measured variables

> and the actual occurrence of events and types of collective action. By providing a theory [or an explanation] that lays bare the elementary mechanisms of collective action we can begin to move beyond simple correlation towards the harder task of understanding [or establishing] causality (Ibid: 431).

Informed mainly by the social movement literature, perspectives on the relevance of mobilization in the occurrence of collective violence are most visible in relatively recent (in the 1970s) theoretical discussions (see for example Gamson, 1975; Snyder, 1978; Aya, 1979) that emerged to oppose or complement earlier theoretical explanations. As indicated earlier (see theoretical approaches to xenophobic violence), theories (e.g. resource mobilization, rational choice, elite manipulation) embedded in what I term '*the mobilization approach'* were developed partly as a response to the growing dissatisfaction with the increasingly perceptible conceptual and empirical limitations of the then dominant '*deprivation-grievances-discontent'* theoretical approaches. In earlier discussion, I agreed with proponents of the mobilization approach who argue that it is the organization or mobilization of discontent that triggers collective violence rather than just discontent or grievances themselves.

Recognising that there is always a large enough stock of discontents in any society to warrant extensive collective violent action, many scholars (see for example Tilly, 1975; Oberschall, 1973; Snyder *et al*, 1972; McCarthy *et al*, 1977) have concluded that the mobilization of discontent is a central explanatory variable for the occurrence of collective violence, particularly insofar as it helps to account for how individuals come to participate collectively (at the same place, time, and often for the same purpose) in large-scale events (see detailed discussion in Snyder, 1978). Confirming the theoretical centrality of mobilization and making discontent or grievances an important but weaker component, some analysts (see for example

McCarthy *et al*, 1977 and Smelser, 1963) have gone even further to argue that grievances and discontent are often defined, created, and manipulated by violence entrepreneurs intent on benefiting from the collective hostility. For others, even genuine collective discontent and grievances need mobilization to trigger a collective violence incident the same way dry grass needs a spark to ignite fire (Gleason, 2011). Similarly, Bond (2007:29) argues that "having a large number of distressed [or discontented] group members is not enough to foment collective violence. A group's members must be marshalled, organized and focused to be able to carry out a targeted collective action.

In a similar vein, talking about collective behaviour in general, Smelser (1963) agrees that for behaviour to become collective, some mode of bringing people to act together is needed. He opines: "…the central defining characteristic of an episode of collective behavior is a belief envisioning the reconstitution of some component of social action. In order for behavior to become collective, of course, some mode of communicating this belief and some mode of bringing people to action must be available (Ibid: 6).

I share the opinion that a targeted collection action is not possible without mobilization. A thoughtful someone, an organiser, generally a leader with some kind of moral authority and legitimacy, makes the call that brings together individuals, members of a collectivity or just sympathisers and turns or converts them into actual participants (Wittkowski, 2008). Referring to ethnic violence, (Wolff, 2007 in Vermeersch, 2011) reminds us that, even though mass violent conflicts often look like highly unorganized and spontaneous outbursts of popular anger, in reality they always involve a certain degree of planning, organizational effort and strategic deliberation. He rightly argues that "an ethnic conflict only occurs when a critical number of people have made the calculated decision to pursue their goals with violent means" (Vermeersch, 2011:1). He notes that while this does not mean that the grievances

invoked by such collective action are not deeply felt prior to the process of mobilization, or that the population is not genuinely or spontaneously angered by 'the ethnic other', "the step from grievances to ethnic strife should never simply be regarded as an automatic linear chain from cause to consequence" (Ibid). According to Aya, 1979:49), grievances, anger, hatred or discontent require "political mobilization via association, formal or informal, to be galvanised into action."

I also agree with Smelser (1963) who similarly argues that mobilization is the final phase of the value added process which produces an episode of collective behaviour or action. He opines that once other relevant determinants (some of which may be created on the spot by the very leader or organization who mobilizes participants for action) have been established, "the only necessary condition that remains is to bring the affected group into action. This point marks the onset of panic, the outbreak of hostility, or the beginning of agitation for reform or revolution. In this process of mobilization, the behavior of leaders is extremely important" (Ibid: 10).

5.2.2 Techniques of Collective Violence Mobilization

This section is a review of the literature that summarizes global discussions on techniques and modalities of successful mobilization for collective violence. The aim is to provide a comparative basis for the mobilization processes and techniques used during the May 2008 xenophobic violence discussed later in this chapter.

While scholars identify various techniques and processes involved in mobilization for collective violence, they share the opinion that the mobilization success depends on the ability of the organizer (s), mobiliser (s) or leader (s) to "develop a set of ideas that resonates with widely held beliefs (Gamson, 1992 cited in Wittkowski, 2008:33). Organizers mobilize and

convert affected group members and sympathizers into actual participants by casting a situation as a collective problem worthy of attention and by fostering a belief that the identified collective action or solution will effectively resolve the problem and overcome the perceived injustice (Ibid). By crystalizing the belief in a collective problem and related corrective collective action, organizers are able to gain both ideological and behavioral support needed to spur crowds into action (Smelser, 1963).

It is also important to note, as Bond (2007) argues, that mobilization that facilitates collective violence targets not only potential participants but also all group and community members to seek popular support and solidarity with those who eventually perpetrate the actual violence. Popular support and approval facilitates mobilization for the identified violent collective action by rationalizing it as a loyal service to the group or community or necessary collective self-protection against malicious others intent on destroying the community and its way of life (Ibid).

Mobilizers or violence entrepreneurs use different techniques to interact and mobilize people into collective violent action. *Mobilizing through rhetorical means* (see Guichaoua, 2013), violence entrepreneurs may use individual face-to-face interactions with potential participants, dialogues with group members, mass media or public gatherings to communicate ideas, spread rumours and reinforce beliefs (see also Smelser, 1963). According to Guichaoua (2013), through these different forms of interaction, violence entrepreneurs spread rumours (see also Smelser, 1963, Das, 2007 and Horowitz, 2001), narratives or discourses that "tailor 'master cleavages', breeding readiness to violence among followers" Guichaoua (2013:73).

Such discourses and rumours foster enmity and fear; polarize identities and "make the physical elimination of the vilified, and often dehumanized, enemy a feasible option in their followers' eyes" (Ibid: 10). Guichaoua (2010) gives as a notorious example Radio 1000

Collines in pre-genocide Rwanda. The radio broadcasts were a systematic attempt by extremist Hutu leaders to exacerbate hatred against the Tutsi who were referred to as cockroaches, deserving of extermination (Ibid). The public rhetorical stance adopted by the affected group is "one fundamental element of its mobilizing strategy" (Guichaoua, 2013:73). A group's members are easily mobilized to support and participate in collective violence by these polarising discourses that become legitimation processes that deem the targeted group and its members as dangerous, immoral, or sub-human, and hence killable (Bond, 2007).

Once group members or potential participants are together, particularly in public meetings, the most popular and effective technique leaders use to spur crowds into action is '*haranguing'*. As Smelser (1963:253) notes, "haranguing a crowd is frequently an effective means of leading a hostile group to action. … In public gatherings of enraged citizens, a leader may appear and incite the group to openly hostile expression. … A leader deliberately harangues a group to action." Through haranguing, a leader is not only able to manipulate the discontent, crystalize the belief and provoke agitation, but also and perhaps most importantly is able to break potential apathy and resistance (Ibid). Allport similarly indicates that haranguing is an effective tool a leader uses to crystallize a belief and spur the crowd into action:

> The people are brought together by a common interest preparing them for a certain type of action. The harangue of the leader, or similar stimulus common to all, increases this preparation to the point of breaking forth. The command or first movement of some individual toward the act prepared affords the stimulus for release. And finally, when act and emotion are under way, the sights and sounds of others' reactions facilitate and increase further the responses of each (Allport, 1924 in Smelser, 1963:253).

Apart from haranguing, analysts have identified additional successful mobilization techniques or leadership forms. Smelser (1963) for example notes that an episode of collective violence (or collective action in general) i) may be tripped by an actor who simply *perpetrates a triggering act, who simply sets an example* and who does not intend to lead the violence further'; ii) may be initiated by *a leader who has arisen spontaneously*; iii) may be "*rigged" by a subversive organization* which has moved in to capitalize on unrest; or iv) in still other cases, *instigation may be the work of leaders behind the scenes*.

Through the analysis of activities and roles violence entrepreneurs play in the occurrence of an episode of collective violence, still other scholars have identified other successful mobilization techniques and processes. For example, using empirical evidence from Nigeria and Niger, Guichaoua (2010:10) confirms Tilly's argument that "violence entrepreneurs play critical parts in activating, connecting, coordinating, and representing participants in violent encounters." To successfully play these roles and perform these activities, violence entrepreneurs use mobilisation techniques involving more concrete initiatives other than just - or in addition to - influencing people ideas through rhetorical means.

These more concrete mobilization initiatives include: i) *social brokerage* involving connecting willing potential perpetrators of violence with each other through perpetual bargaining (resulting in horizontal and vertical alliances/coalitions) and marketing of loyalties, and ii) *parochial patronage* involving a) promises of economic or political emancipation (i.e. convincing promises of direct or long-term socio-economic or political benefits), or b) political or economic leaders simply hiring thugs or 'area boys' to carry out the defined violence act by offering them material rewards in the form of money or tacit authorisation to loot (see details in Guichaoua, 2013).

To conclude this section, the discussion above shows that violence entrepreneurs have at their disposal a variety of techniques to successfully mobilize people or crowds for collective violence. That a particular technique is preferred depends largely on the nature of potential participants, the surrounding socio-political environment and the violent act they are called for. It is however important to note that the various techniques reviewed above may not necessarily be mutually exclusive. As Smelser (1963) notes, violence entrepreneurs may, when necessary, use many different mobilization techniques either simultaneously or sequentially in the process of triggering an episode of collective violence.

5.2.3 Triggers versus Precipitants of Collective Violence

This section highlights the analytical necessity to establish a distinction between '*triggers*' (embedded in mobilization process as discussed above) and '*precipitants'* of collective violence, arguing that triggers deserve specific attention, separate from the analysis of other violence proximate antecedents (generally referred to as precipitants in the literature of collective violence).

According to Horowitz (2001:269) a precipitant of collective violence "is an act, event, or train of acts and events, antecedents but reasonably proximate in time and space to the outbreak of violence and causally related to it." He also refers to them as "flashpoints" with a triggering quality i.e. the capacity to move participants over the threshold from nonviolence to violence (Ibid). In the case of communal violence, precipitants often refer to evocative or provocative acts or events i.e. highly charged offenses committed by members of one group against the other, such as assassination of a leader, attacks on -and rapes of- women, murder, assault or a clash between two members of opposing groups, ethnic processions that insult members of the opposing group or its sacred symbols, rumours of threatened or actual

aggression by the target group and an outbreak of violence in another locality (see details in Lieberson *et al*, 1965; or Horowitz, 2001; or Smelser, 1963).

Perhaps due to their close temporal, spatial and causal proximity to the actual outbreak of an episode of collective violence, many analysts consider (incorrectly in my opinion) these precipitants or these pre-violence events as the triggers of the violence. Like Horowitz (2001), Gleason (2011) for example opines that these flashpoints are catalytic events that are thought to directly cause collective violence or riots outbreaks. "These flashpoints, or sparks, when produced under the appropriate conditions (dry grass) serve as the immediate antecedents that trigger ethnic [or collective] violence" (Ibid: 8).

While I agree with Smelser (1963) that precipitants or these pre-violence events may confirm or justify the fears or hatreds; give the generalized beliefs concrete, immediate substance and provide a concrete setting or target toward which collective action can be directed, I argue that precipitants, at least as currently defined in the literature, are not the real triggers of collective violence episodes they closely precede.

Indeed, as described above, precipitants are generally acts performed by the *target group* and therefore cannot be triggers if we accept that triggers are activities and processes that galvanise members of the *perpetrator group* and get them to start performing a collective violence act. While precipitants (real or purposefully rumoured) "call forth threatening characteristics or behaviour of the target group and support the determination that violence is required" (Horowitz, 1001:271), I maintain that acts and events by the target group do not and cannot in themselves bring members of the 'aggrieved' group together and convert them into actual participants. As discussed earlier, this is the role played by mobilizers or organisers from the group that is about to perpetrate violence against the 'group provocateur'. The

assassination of a group leader for example can be a precipitant. It however requires mobilization to lead to collective 'retaliation'.

To use what I hope are now familiar terms, it is the mobilization of discontent caused or aggravated by precipitants that triggers the episodes of collective violence. It also bears repeating that precipitants can be real events or rumours purposively manufactured and spread by violence entrepreneurs in their efforts to mobilize for violence. Violence entrepreneurs use precipitants, like - or in addition to - other sources of collective discontent, to legitimize violence and facilitate the mobilization process that in the end triggers the targeted collection violence act.

By his own admission, Horowitz (2011), talking about ethnic riots, concedes that precipitants are not always immediate triggers of riots. He notes that there is often a period or an interval ('the lull') between the precipitant and the onset of the violence during which forces are mobilised for action. According to him, "precipitants do not always evoke an immediate violent response. There is often a period, measured in several hours or a few days, during which the impact of the precipitating event is felt and forces are mobilized for the assault" (Ibid: 89). I argue that it is the 'mobilization of forces' that triggers the 'assault' rather than the precipitant that gives it meaning, direction and legitimacy in the eyes of perpetrators.

5.2.4 Triggers: an Analytical Gap in Literature of Collective Violence

The analytical understanding of mobilization and its collective violence triggering effect is not only missing in the literature on xenophobic violence in South Africa but also it is not given due consideration in the general literature and empirical research on collective violence as a key determinant.

Perhaps due to the long unquestioned reference to precipitants as triggers (see the discussion above), the real processes that trigger an episode of collective violence seem neglected in research on determinants or key elements of the collective violence causal chain. This gap in the literature can be attributed to the still widely held assumption that grievances accumulate and tensions or collective discontent boil up and automatically explode into collective violence. Much attention is always paid to underlying conditions without explaining how they translate into collection violence. This assumption unfortunately persists despite constant reminders that violence is not an automatic outgrowth of conflict (Brubaker *et al*, 1998) and that, as mentioned earlier, even 'dry grass' needs a 'spark' to ignite fire (Gleason, 2011).

Even though increasingly recognised, mobilization as trigger of collective violence remains at the level of conceptual and theoretical discussions (briefly discussed earlier) and has not really been thoroughly tested with empirical research.[32] The focus of theoretical positions emphasizing the critical role mobilization plays in the occurrence of collective violence seems to have been on debunking the merits of competing theoretical approaches rather than building solid methodological and analytical tools that can help to adequately identify and understand its (mobilization) forms, variables, processes and relevance. While these theoretical premises thus far make logical sense (in my opinion at least), they lack solid empirical backing that would consolidate their explanatory value or efficacy.

Snyder (1978), one of the proponents of the mobilization approaches to collective violence admits that processes of interaction between individuals and groups, especially the mechanisms of recruiting potential participants, converting them into actual participants and maintaining their commitment remains important research questions. By identifying

[32] Guichaoua (2013) work is an exception in this regard.

mobilization processes that triggered the May 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa (see next section), this study is hopefully another step (however modest) towards filling this gap.

5.3 MOBILIZATION TECHNIQUES AND PROCESSES FOR THE MAY 2006 XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

To trigger the May 2008 violent attacks on foreign nationals in location where they occurred, mobilization took different forms, used different techniques and involved different processes from haranguing and inciting crowds in mass community meetings; spreading purposely engineered rumours, appeals to community's sense of solidarity and right to self-defence, setting examples and asking community members to join; to hiring youth groups to carry out the attacks. The following is a review of these processes and techniques drawing from primary data for this study. The data contains extensive empirical evidence that mobilization was the trigger of xenophobic attacks in locations where they occurred.

5.3.1 Leaders' Harangue in Mass Community Meetings

The analysis of events that immediately preceded the violence in affected areas reveals that in most cases, violent attacks of foreign nationals were triggered by the harangue of community leaders during purposely called mass community meetings. Community leaders (formal or informal) called mass community meetings in which attacks were decided upon and carefully organized. In those meetings, the leaders' role in triggering the violence was twofold: i) haranguing and stirring crowds into action, and ii) leading by example by directly participating in and leading the attacks. Most meetings were purposely called to discuss the attacks on foreign nationals but in some instances ordinary community meetings were hijacked by violence entrepreneurs and became a convenient opportunity to incite people for violence. The following paragraphs discuss processes that triggered violence in mass community meeting in certain areas.

5.3.1.1 Community leaders' fury and incitement for violence in Alexandra

In ***Alexandra***, where violence started on 11 May 2008, respondents reported that organizing and mobilizing community members for the violence against foreign nationals was the work of the comrades (popularly known as Indunas) or the local leadership committee. According to the local police, a few days before the attacks, the police and CPF called a community meeting whose purpose was to discuss community concerns over the rising rates of violent crimes in the area. The police communications officer describes what happened in that meeting:

> There was a meeting here at the police station a week before the attacks on the 6th of May, 2008. Hostel dwellers complained that people including foreigners commit crime and run to the hostels and this makes hostel residents to be seen as criminals, as the ones committing crime. Our response was 'we would like you to point out those involved in crime'. We need them (hostel residents) to co-operate and assist us to identify the criminals. The reason for the police to ask the residents to assist them is because in many instances where there are murders and robberies the suspects are traced back to KZN, therefore SAPS say that foreigners cannot be blamed for such crimes but we must blame our own South Africans. The residents and hostel Indunas were very upset after the meeting because they wanted the police to say that foreigners are responsible for the crime in the area. The police felt it was going to be a serious indictment to blame the foreigners whereas in certain or most instances South Africans are responsible.

From that meeting, Indunas and other community leaders started organizing meetings in which attacks on foreign nationals were planned. The police were aware of those meetings as a senior officer confirms: "Prior to the attacks, there was a meeting on the 10th of May, 2008

and it was decided that they will attack around the hostel and the shack area. This was not the first meeting; it was a follow up meeting". Ordinary member of the public were also aware of those meetings. An editor at the local community radio for example states: "There were secret meetings at Madala Hostel. It's a dangerous place, people have guns; the police are also scared to go there. It is where attacks were planned."

After these preparatory meetings, the comrades called a mass community meeting where the decision to attack and remove foreign nationals from the area was formally endorsed and after which attacks immediately started. The meeting took place at the local police station and was called by community leaders. Asked who called the meeting and how they did it, one respondent stated: "It is the leaders of this area. There is a committee here. They went around the whole area saying everybody must attend the meeting at the police station. It was before the violence. This is where the violence started; after this meeting, when people were coming from police station." According to another respondent, the comrades also used whistles and loud speakers to call for the meeting: "I heard whistles and a car with loud speakers saying Khalangas [foreigners] must go and everybody must come to the meeting. The car that was using a loud speaker was the same car that normally calls for community meetings."

Respondents were unanimous that the decision to immediately start attacking and removing foreigners was taken -and plans about how to proceed discussed and adopted- in that meeting led by community leaders and attended by the local police representatives. One respondent summarizes the views confirmed by many:

> The decision to remove foreigners was taken at a meeting held at the police station. That is where the whole Alex was in attendance. At this meeting even police spoke, I think what lighted the spark is that police said "when we try to do investigation of people who are committing murder, we do not know these people. When we try the

> fingerprints; there are no records". When we look at what has been happening here, we realised that there are number of people who have been robbed even dying. Police then said "to you as the community, what do you say when a person has come to your area and do whatever he wants, what do you do?" There was a police who issued a statement that people must decide on how they deal with someone who has entered his kraal and taken his cattle. This statement for me started the violence.

According to another respondent, from that moment on,

> People agreed that foreigners must leave. They said 'from this very meeting, foreigners must leave the area.' Yes, they said this in front of the police. People said 'from this very moment we are going to remove foreigners. We no longer want them here.' Everybody knew this decision. People said it in front of the police. Police supported this decision. They went behind people who were singing songs and removing foreigners."

Clearly this account shows that attacks on foreign nationals in Alexandra were not a spontaneous outbreak as reported in the media but rather a result or deliberate community organising and mobilization by local leaders (see also Monson *et al*, 2011). There is no doubt about the defining role played by mobilization in triggering the attacks. Mobilization in this case involved efforts and ability of community leaders (and the police) to bring people together in a mass meeting and incite them for action by convincing them that attacking and expelling 'dangerous' foreigners was the only option available and that they had the power to do so.

The structure of the violence further demonstrates the degree to which attacks were organised and carefully planned. As Monson *et al* (2011) indicate, despite the unavoidable chaos, the

deliberate structure of the evictions did not disintegrate entirely. For example, they cite a respondent stating that the homes expropriated by attackers were in at least some cases redistributed in an organised fashion: "Only people who did not have houses were selected to occupy these houses. If you said you did not have a house, you needed someone else to back your claim that you did not have a house. This is how houses were allocated. There were people who were collected from under bridges and they were given houses" (Ibid: 34).

5.3.1.2 Violence against foreigners: a matter of survival in Diepsloot

Like in Alexandra, mobilization for violence against foreign nationals in ***Diepsloot*** took place in a community meeting organised by the local leadership committee or the 'comrades'. According to respondents, the attacks on foreign nationals in the area were triggered by a meeting the comrades organised following the outbreak of the violence in Alexandra on 11 May. Accounts vary with respondents about the initial agenda of the meeting. Some reported that the meeting aimed at preventing people displaced from Alexandra from settling in Diepsloot while others contended that meeting was specifically called to discuss the removal of foreign nationals, as one respondent stated:

> Yes, there was a meeting and some foreigners were in attendance as this was a community meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the issue that foreigners were robbing people. It was about discussing the issue of foreigners; they were saying they no longer want foreigners. The issue of removing foreigners was discussed. [...] We discussed the crime that foreigners are committing. We realized that whenever a person is caught and beaten, at least 70% were foreigners.

Whatever was the initial intention, respondents reported that a variety of anti-foreigner views were aired in that meeting. Asked who organized the meeting and what was discussed, one respondent who was in attendance for example replied:

> It was the community leadership, the councilor. So it was a meeting for the whole community. People were saying that foreigners commit crime and even rob people in their houses. They even said foreigners are selling their products at expensive prices when they know we do not have money. They go and stock their stuff and sell to us at unaffordable prices. They concluded that what they could do was to help themselves to properties belonging to foreigners.

According to another respondent, the comrades informed people that foreigners "mug people going to work in the morning, kill them and put them inside the dirty bins" and for that reason "the committee and people were saying they no longer want any foreigners and advised that any South Africans with Zimbabwean tenants should remove them", stated yet another respondent who further indicated that he, and many others in the attendance, were convinced that expelling foreigners was a matter of survival. In his own words: "Attacks that took place in Diepsloot were common when looking at other areas. But in Diepsloot it was an issue of survival, foreigners were killing us."

Respondents reported that attacks immediately followed that meeting. "They started attacking after the meeting on the same day. They started attacking at our house because it is known that Shonas stay here", said one foreign respondent, a victim of the violence. To make sure that all foreigners were reached, the comrades asked (at the meeting) all residents staying with foreigners to inform them (the comrades) as they were the ones directly leading the attacks. Asked how people knew that a person was not a South Africa citizen, one respondent stated: "The committee told the community that if you are staying with a foreigner you must tell

them so that they can deal with them." Respondents were unanimous that the comrades led the attacks. One of them for example responded when asked who the people leading the attacks were: "It was the comrades and the community joined in since it was something discussed at the meeting and led by the comrades."

In sum, the discussion above shows again that mobilization played a critical role in triggering the violence in Diepsloot. Without the comrades calling the community meeting and leading people to the conclusion that attacking and expelling foreigners was a legitimate, urgent and a 'matter-of-survival' action, attacks would have probably not taken place. It is also important to note that in addition to rhetorically inciting people into action, the comrades also mobilized participants by setting an example i.e. by directly participating in and leading the violence. This is consistent with the standard mobilization techniques reviewed earlier.

5.3.1.3 Crowds' roar of approval for the comrades' decision to expel foreigners in Itireleng

Mobilization processes that triggered violence against foreigners in ***Itireleng*** resemble the ones described in the previous two cases. Respondents reported attacks immediately followed a mass community meeting called by comrades in the night of 17 February 2008. While they reported that meeting had been preceded by a series of other meetings in which the issue of foreigners was discussed, respondents agreed it was in this meeting that the final decision to attack and drive foreigners out was taken. At the meeting, community members agreed to the chairperson's proposal to remove foreigners because of all the problems they continue to cause in the community.

Judging from how respondents described the meeting proceedings, it is clear that the comrades had already decided to expel foreigners and the meeting was called to seek

community approval and active participation. Asked how violence started, one respondent for example stated:

> One evening a loud speaker by comrades from the gate called a meeting. A regular community meeting to discuss community problems. The chairperson opened the meeting by telling the crowds that there is only one issue on the agenda, that of foreigners. The chairperson asked the meeting if it wasn't a good idea if foreigners leave the area. The entire meeting answered 'Yeeees, foreigners must leave!' The later part of the meeting was discussing complaints about foreigners. The decision for them to be removed was taken by the chairperson very early in the meeting.

At the meeting, foreigners were accused of all sorts of things from stealing jobs and women, crime, corruption, etc. as one respondent who attended the meeting explained:

> They said locals are not getting jobs because of foreigners. Crime is also an issue. Foreigners are very fast on women. We respect married women, they do not. They sleep with married women. This is unacceptable. Foreigners owned stands but no one knows how they got them because they are not supposed to own stands. No doubt there must have been corruption. When they come back, they will have to start from scratch. Foreigners are bringing many unknown diseases. Our children are dying. There were also rumors that foreigners had killed a young woman but nobody knew who it was and no [dead] body had been found.

Respondents were unanimous that, led by the comrades, attacks on foreign nationals started immediately after that meeting. "From there and there people wasted no time; they moved from the meeting straight to houses where they knew foreigners were living and took them

out. They started with spaza shops, the stock was all over, and people were looting." Another respondent confirmed that the comrades led the attacks when she stated:

> The leaders at the gate led the fighting of foreigners. They had no option, we voted them, and they must do what the community wants. … Foreigners entered the country illegally. The police are taking their time looking for documents. We do not want that, we simply say 'leave now, we don't want to even see your papers'.

Clearly, this discussion demonstrates the defining role mobilization by community leaders played in triggering - and securing mass participation in - attacks on foreign nationals in the area. Again, through rhetorical means (haranguing and spreading rumours about the imminent danger the presence of foreigners causes to the entire community), and by leading by example, the comrades incited the crowds and stirred them into action. It also important to note that, perhaps due to pervasive and strong public negative attitudes and resentment towards foreign nationals in the location, the comrades did not seem to have a difficult time mobilizing the crowds for action.

5.3.1.4 Rumours and violence as self-defense in Ramaphosa

The processes that led to the occurrence of xenophobic violence in ***Ramaphosa*** similarly confirm the mobilization's direct triggering effect. Indeed all respondents reported that attacks of foreign nationals started directly after community leaders (the local ward committee) called a public meeting and urged community members to attack and expel foreigners in the name of self-defense. Asked how violence started, on respondent who participated in the attacks for example stated: "It was a normal community meeting called by our leaders. It was said we must approach Amashangane [foreigners] because they are fighting us. We must go and fight them also. We went to them straight and war broke out. We killed some and others ran away."

Another respondent confirmed: "On Sunday the community met. The community was fighting now. The meeting said the war must be declared against foreigners."

Some respondents explained that after seeing violence elsewhere on TV, foreigners got scared and, in trying to organize and protect themselves, started beating and killing locals. "They saw this on television and because they were scared that's when they started protecting themselves", said one respondent. One ward committee member shared a similar view and confirmed that the committee called a meeting and urged for retaliation and self-defense after realizing that foreigners were killing locals. In his own words:

> On Friday, they started beating locals, they killed one person. On Saturday evening the killers who had disappeared came back to continue their job; they were beating up locals because they were beaten in Alex. On Sunday morning we tried to defend ourselves; we came together to decide to chase them away because they were killing us. […] what happened? We beat them; we were not going to talk to them nicely; we went where they were gathered; we went to their shacks and burnt them.

According to some respondents however, the story of foreigners beating and killing locals was just a rumour. The local ward councilor for instance was not aware of any killings of South Africans by foreigners. He stated when asked about it: "It is the first time we hear this. I think the self-defense story was fed to the community by the ring-leaders we are unfortunately not able to identify." Another respondent, an ordinary community member, agreed: "Amashangane [foreigners] did not start anything. It was us black people who started killing Shangaans. This is how they were removed."

In sum, we learn from this brief discussion that mass violent attacks on foreign nationals in Ramaphosa were triggered and made possible by the mobilization (by local leaders) of the

collective discontent caused by a rumoured precipitant that crystalized and confirmed the belief that the presence of foreigners represented an eminent danger to the lives and livelihoods of all local community members.

5.3.1.5 Failed community meeting and opportunistic violence entrepreneurs in DuNoon

Respondents were unanimous that violence in ***DuNoon*** was triggered by a failed night community meeting called by the local police, a Member of Parliament (MP) and the local Councilor. It was in May 2008 when attacks on foreigners were happening elsewhere. The agenda for the meeting was not properly communicated and some thought it was to discuss how to remove foreigners as it was happening in other places. A big crowd turned up and the police and the MP disappeared, leaving the councilor alone. Chaos, singing and looting started immediately. The councilor reported that he was instructed by the MP and Police (against his will) to call the meeting. He stated:

> Violence in May 2008 started when the police and a national MP, came to me as a Councillor and asked me to call South Africans and foreigners to gather at the Resource Centre. They wanted to tranquilize them [foreigners] that violence will never happen here. People turned up in a big crowd and MP and the police ran away, which put me in danger. People were calling me to address them and I could not reach everyone with a small speaker. I was trying to tell them not to attack and come back tomorrow for the meeting. It was 7pm and the attacks started, looting, destroying shops, etc.

Another respondent who attended the meeting confirmed: "the reason the meeting was called was unknown or what was going to be said in the meeting was not talked about because people turned up in numbers and those who were supposed to chair the meeting just vanished

and the Councilor was left to speak to these masses alone." The lack or properly communicated agenda led many to believe that the meeting was called to discuss the removal of foreigners from the area as it was happening elsewhere. One respondent stated when asked what the meeting was about: "I don't really know because we even said, maybe the meeting which was called was for the attacks on Somalis. The reason that made people to say that was because even in the aim of the meeting was not known by the community. So, we ended up by concluding that the meeting was for the Somalis to go from this area."

According to some respondents, during the chaos of the failed meeting, the idea of expelling foreigners was raised by local landlords and property owners who saw an opportunity to repossess houses they had rented (long-term leases paid upfront) or sold to foreigners. One respondent was adamant it was them who instigated the violence: "the removal of foreign nationals was instigated by local landlords and property owners who, after realizing that foreign nationals were being evicted in other places, saw an opportunity to repossess houses they had sold to foreigners." While one of the landlords denied it was them who instigated the violence, he agreed that they had meetings in which the issue was discussed: "As you know it [violence] started in May this year in Gauteng and then it came here in Western Cape. Then there were reports that houses bought by foreigners would be repossessed." We had meetings, us as landlords to discuss it."

Whether it was the 'landlords' or not, some respondents reported that, with no communicated agenda and the Councilor not able to address the crowds, some people started circulating the idea that "… the Councilor cannot say it openly but the meeting is about removing the foreigners …. And that's how violence started", said one respondent. Therefore, in DuNoon, unlike in previous cases, it was not the formal community leaders who mobilized the crowds

for attacks on foreign nationals but violence entrepreneurs who 'high jacked' a failed mass community meeting and became instant violence leaders.

To sum up this discussion on mass public meetings, it is clear that mobilization by leaders played a defining role in triggering the violence. In cases discussed above, mobilization involved convening mass public meetings and haranguing crowds into action by particularly feeding them purposely engineered rumours about the eminent danger the presence of foreigners represented to the community. Many scholars (see for example Smelser, 1962; Horowitz, 2001 and Das, 2007) have, in many different contexts, recognised the positive power of rumours to mobilize crowds for a collective violent action. Rumours create a sense of endangered collectivity, which becomes easily mobilizable for collective action usually in the name of self-defence (Horowitz, 2001).

5.3.2 Door-to-Door Mobilization Madelakufa II

Door-to-door mobilization was used in ***Madelakufa II*** where, as respondents reported, a group called 'Amabacha' started the violence and went around asking residents to join in. As indicated earlier, respondents reported that the attacks were organized and led by 'Amabhaca': a sub-clan of the Xhosa ethnic group, some living in the same area and others coming from a nearby township. Asked how members of the community got to participate in the violence, the local councilor stated: "They asked other community members to join and that's how it became a big group." Similarly, another respondent stated: "I think there was no organized meeting as such. This attack took place or it was organised by a small number of people then later on it influenced a large number of community members." A respondent who participated in the attacks confirmed: "It was on a Friday night, when we saw a group of residents… and they were knocking on our doors demanding us to join them as they went to

attack migrants. I had no choice but to go with them. We went and vandalized migrants' shacks and shops. Some were taking migrants belongings and stock for themselves."

While some people may have been forced to participate, most respondents believed that the majority of those who participated joined voluntarily when asked. They did not refuse to participate because they had seen these kinds of attacks in other places such as Alexandra. In fact some respondents believed that the organizers themselves were influenced by the media reports on attacks that were taking place elsewhere. One respondent stated:

> Violence was started by what people saw on TV and read in the media about attacks in other townships such as Alexandra. Criminals then organized themselves and mobilized other community members to do what was happening elsewhere. … It was just thugs from us who took advantage of what was going on in Alexandra. Alexandra gave them a reason.

Violent attacks on foreign nationals elsewhere seem to have been the precipitant violence entrepreneurs used in their doo-to-door mobilization that succeed in getting community members to participate en masse in the violence in Madelakufa II.

5.3.3 Patronage or 'Youth for hire' in Masiphumelele

As indicated earlier, respondents reported that both waves (2006 and 2008) of violent attacks on foreign nationals in ***Masiphumelele*** were perpetrated by groups of youths 'hired' by local businesses owners unhappy about the business competition brought about by the increasing number of foreign-owned businesses. On both occasions, local business owners organised internal meetings in which they decided to mobilize the local youth to attack and chase away foreign nationals particularly those operating businesses in the location. Talking about the 2006 violence for instance, one respondent stated: "What they [local business owners] did,

they spoke to these silly boys whom we refer to as thugs in the area to go and loot and vandalize Somali shops. That's how the 2006 violence started."

In 2008, local business owners similarly organized a meeting at a local community hall and after that meeting attacks began. As one respondent stated: "There was a meeting organized by business people, they used young people to attack the foreigners." A former community leader confirmed: "A meeting was called by business people; they called the community and other business people. They were not happy that foreigners' prices are cheap; they are friendly to their customers and give good service. They organized boys in the community hall to attack and loot the Somalis shops."

All respondents were well aware that business people were behind the violence even if they were not directly involved in the attacks. One respondent for example stated: "Yes, it is not business people who loot the Baraka [foreigners] shops. What they do, which is important is that they 'buy' the youth to loot the shops of Baraka and evict them. They target unemployed youth to do this on their behalf." In a similar vein, a representative of a local NGO indicated the people took advantage of the unemployed youth vulnerability to incite them for violence: "In cases of that nature, the youth is vulnerable; some adults use that opportunity to incite the youth." Asked exactly how the local business people incited the youth to start attacking foreigners, he responded: "In a series of meetings that were happening in the community hall, there were people showing their dissatisfaction and showing what they wanted to be done. Those business people did not go directly by themselves. They used the youth."

In sum, local business owners triggered violent attacks on foreigner nationals in Masiphumelele using '*parochial patronage'*, a well documented mobilization technique involving hiring thugs or 'area boys' to carry out the defined violence act by offering them

material rewards in the form of money or tacit authorisation to loot (see earlier discussion for details).

In conclusion, this discussion on mobilization for xenophobic violence in South Africa leaves no doubt that it was mobilization, and not any other factor, that triggered mass violent attacks on foreign nationals and other outsiders in May 2008. We also learn from this discussion that, community leaders and/or local violence entrepreneurs used well-known mobilization techniques and processes to stir crowds into targeted and well-organized collective violent acts. These included i) mobilization by rhetorical means (e.g. haranguing and inciting crowds in mass community meetings and spreading purposely engineered rumours), ii) mobilization by setting an example or starting the violence and asking others to join; iii) door-to-door mobilization, and iv) patronage or the hiring of 'area boys' to attack the target group.

In all these different processes, the discussion shows that mobilizing people for action or converting community members into actual participants was relatively easy. Indeed, while some members of the public may have participated in the attacks out of intimidation and fear of victimization, it appears that mobilisers did not have difficulty co-opting residents who already entertained deep-seated negative attitudes towards foreign nationals. Crowds' participation was mostly voluntary because of years of hoarded resentments and grudges towards foreigners.

The majority of those who participated did so voluntarily or did not resist when asked. Mobilizers capitalized on communities' feelings, fears, negative attitudes and resentment towards foreign nationals. These served as collective psychological raw material and a perfect fertile ground for successful mobilization. Leaders capitalized on latent and freshly rekindled (through real or rumoured precipitants) collective discontent - emanating from the presence of foreign nationals in their respective areas - to mobilize crowds for attacks. Mobilization of

collective discontent triggered the May 2008 violent attacks on foreign nationals in locations where such attacks occurred.

5.4 CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A 'MOBILIZATION OF DISCONTENT' MODEL

This chapter adds a new and critical element or determinant to the analysis and understanding of the causal factors of xenophobic violence in South Africa and of collective violence in general. It highlights the often missed or taken-for-granted defining role mobilization plays in triggering xenophobic or collective violence by proving that without mobilization, a targeted collective violent act is not possible or is at least highly unlikely.

Such an addition is theoretically important and practically useful. Theoretically, it not only provides strong empirical evidence to support still hesitant theoretical premises that it is the mobilization of discontent -and not the discontent itself- that triggers episodes of collective violence, but also it contributes to existing analytical debates by for example clarifying misunderstandings surrounding certain concepts (e.g. precipitants of collective violence) and debunking roles inappropriately attributed to certain variables (e.g. relative deprivation as a trigger of collective violence). Practically, this addition is equally useful as it is a significant step towards a clear understanding of all key determinants of xenophobic violence in South Africa. Such an understanding is required if relevant institutions would like to design appropriate measures/responses to stop on-going violence and/or prevent future recurrences.

Finally, I hope theoretical perspectives reviewed and rich empirical evidence presented in this chapter enable me to suggest a model that captures the increasingly recognised centrality of mobilization as a trigger of collective violence: the *Mobilization of Discontent Model.* It is important to note that the *Mobilization of Discontent Model* I propose here shares the same

appellation with -but differs significantly from- the one formulated by Gurr and Lichbach in 1979.

Indeed while theirs specifies a full range of the antecedent socioeconomic and political conditions of violent political conflict (e.g. patterns of motivation, belief, mobilization, and capacities for collective action) and is used for forecasting internal anti-government violent conflicts (Gurr *et al*, 1986:10), the new model specifically focuses on - and explains the - triggers or processes that intervene between the potential for collective violence and its actualization. Unlike its predecessor, this model does not intend to be all encompassing; in other words it is not an attempt to account for all determinants of collective violence. It is a model that specifically focuses on one key determinant and intends to lay bare its mechanics or modalities. Its scope is therefore intentionally limited since no one theory or model can explain every element of the collective violence causal chain.

There is a gap in the literature for such a model. While there are models and theories that (attempt to) account for other determinants such as structural conditions and the discontent they generate (e.g. relative deprivation); instrumental motives of key actors (e.g. functionalism and elite manipulation), no attempt has been made, to best on my knowledge, to design a theoretical model that specifically caters for the triggers of the collective violence. The mobilization approach I mentioned earlier is not a consolidated model or theory. It was just my attempt to group together disparate theories that at best individually explain single components of the mobilization although they unduly claim to explain the entire mobilization process.

As a first attempt to fill this gap, this model seeks to establish basic principles that underlie mobilization processes that trigger collective violence. It intends to improve our understanding of how collective violence occurs or of what triggers a collective violence act.

Drawing from existing literature and empirical data for this study, the model posits that targeted collective violence (as in the case of xenophobic attacks in South Africa) is triggered by mobilization of collective discontent invariably generated by a wide range of different factors (e.g. relative deprivation, beliefs and rumours, precipitating events, etc.). It is mobilization by 'violence entrepreneurs' that brings together members of the 'aggrieved' group and turns them into actual participants in a targeted collective violence act. Note that the main task of the model is not to explain the origins of the collective discontent but rather the *pathways* from that discontent to collective violence.

While I believe that the case of xenophobic violence in South Africa provides preliminary support for my proposition and hopefully a useful empirical entry into the workings of mobilization in triggering collective violence and the relevance of the model, further investigation or more specifically more comparative research is needed to consolidate empirical evidence necessary for building the model's methodological and analytical tools that can help to adequately identify and better understand the forms, variables and processes of a successful mobilization.

Recognising that no single theoretical model can adequately account for all determinants of collective violence, the *mobilization of discontent model* acknowledges that mobilization naturally is no 'lone ranger'. It requires interaction with other determinants to produce an episode of targeted collective violence. The name itself implies the indispensable presence of discontent! To continue with Gleason' (2011) analogy that 'dry grass needs a spark to ignite fire' (or in this case discontent needs mobilization to trigger collective violence); the inverse is equally true: 'the spark needs dry grass to ignite fire' or mobilization needs discontent to trigger collective violence.

I now wish to extend this analogy further by asking and answering the following question: are these two (dry grass and spark) the only elements the fire needs to ignite? It appears not. There is indeed a third element without which the fire does not ignite: an oxidizing agent (usually oxygen). The International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA, 2008)[33] explains what it terms the 'fire triangle' by indicating that three elements: fuel (e.g. dry grass), heat (spark) and oxidization must be present and combined in the right proportions for a fire to occur. A fire can be prevented or extinguished by removing any one of the elements in the fire triangle. For example, covering a fire with a fire blanket removes the 'oxygen' part of the triangle and can extinguish a fire (Ibid).

Similarly, discontent and mobilization require the presence of another key element to trigger an episode of collective violence. This element is a composite variable some call '*political opportunity structure*', others '*social controls'* but which I prefer to term '*governance*' as I argue that both political opportunities and social controls actually emanate from -or are embedded in - the broader governance regime of a given locality. As the next chapter demonstrates, governance is the equivalent of oxygen in the fire triangle i.e. governance is as important in the occurrence of collective violence as oxygen is in the occurrence of fire. Indeed the next chapter provides empirical evidence that without favourable governance factors, mobilization of discontent does not succeed in triggering xenophobic violence.

[33] https://www.firerecruit.com/articles/1206070-What-is-a-fire-triangle

VI. LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter takes the analysis of the determinants of xenophobic violence further by examining societal conditions the capacity for mobilization depends on i.e. the conditions under which mobilization for xenophobic violence is likely to succeed or fail. One defining condition the study identifies is local governance. Building on the increasingly recognised understanding of governance as "the hybridisation of modes of control that allow the production of fragmented and multidimensional order within the state by the state, without the state, and beyond the state" (Levi-Faur, 2012:3), I, for present purposes, use the term '*local governance'* broadly to refer to all formal and informal systems of order in a given locality or polity i.e. the integration of - or interaction between - all localised *systems of controls* (social, economic, normative, legal, and political) and *leadership, authority and power regimes.*

As briefly introduced in the last chapter, this chapter argues that local governance played a defining role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa by providing a favourable political opportunity structure and through its use of social and political controls in facilitating violence rather than constraining it. Building on Chapter IV that reveals that the nature of local authority and community leadership explains the occurrence or absence of the violence, this chapter provides additional evidence and extends the analysis to further demonstrate that *favourable* governance factors provided a favourable platform or socio-political opportunity structure for mobilization to take place and eventually succeed while violence non-receptive leadership prevented it despite mobilization attempts.

It is however important to note that 'favourable' governance factors does not necessarily mean or imply 'absence' or 'weakness' of governance and this introduces the chapter's main contribution to the literature of xenophobic and collective violence. Indeed the chapter uses empirical data to critically review and challenge widely accepted and time-honoured theoretical predictions that collective violence and other forms of contentious collective action tend to occur in societies where mechanisms of social control (particularly institutional leadership and authority) have lost their restraining power.

After this brief introduction, the chapter proceeds through three main sections. First it discusses how local governance provided a socio-political opportunity for xenophobic violence to occur in areas where it did. Second, it examines and provides critical reflections the role or the effect of social controls on xenophobic and collective violence. Lastly, the chapter concludes by summarizing its main contributions to this study, to the understanding of xenophobic violence in South Africa and to the literature of collective violence in general.

6.2 LOCAL GOVERNANCE: A POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE FOR XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

6.2.1 Introduction

In this section, I discuss how both official and informal local governance regimes provided a favourable platform, a political opportunity structure for xenophobic violence to occur in affected areas. I show that local governance provided a political opportunity structure for xenophobic violence in two ways: i) in many cases, official community leadership facilitated and used its authority and legitimacy to mobilize community members for violence, and ii) in areas where official community leadership was weak or absent, violent alternative governance by non-state actors defined new forms of social control and authority that saw violence as, not

only a tool to consolidate their power and legitimacy, but also as 'legitimate' means of protecting or restoring threatened local socio-economic and political orders. This section starts by a brief discussion of the general causal relationship between the political opportunity structure and collective violence to set the scene for the discussion of the critical role local governance played in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa.

6.2.2 On Political Opportunity Structure and Collective Violence

Used more prominently in the social movement literature (and having emerged particularly from the work of the political process theorists such as Tilly, 1978; McAdam, 1982 and Tarrow, 1983), the *political opportunity structure* concept generally refers to a complex compound of formal and informal social and political conditions that facilitate or constrain the formation and/or operations of a social movement. In other words it generally refers to the nature of resources and constraints external to the challenging group (McAdam *et al*, 1996; Tarrow, 1994, Tilly, 1978). Vermeersch (2011:9) argues that the concept (and the related theoretical model) "responds to an intuitive feeling that social movements will act in accord with the institutional opportunities and constraints with which they are confronted in a given political system." He also opines that such a concept is related to what March and Olsen (1989) termed 'the logic of appropriateness' according to which "the strategies and preferences of actors are determined and created by institutions. Institutions create or socially construct the actors' identities, belongings, definitions of reality and shared meanings" (Ibid).

With regard to contentious politics which usually involve some form of collective action, political opportunity structures refer broadly to: "Consistent but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements" (Tarrow, 1996:54). More specifically, they refer to "those aspects of the political system that affect the

possibilities that challenging groups have to mobilize effectively. In this sense, opportunities are options for collective action, with chances and risks attached to them, which depend on factors outside the mobilizing group" (Giugni, 2009:361). The political opportunity structure concept evolved out the recognition that "social movements and revolutions are shaped by the broader set of political constraints and opportunities unique to the national context in which they are embedded" (McAdam *et al*, 1996:3).

Meyer (2003) notes that, although scholars differ in their operational definitions of political opportunity structure, certain key aspects are recurrent. He states that,

> [A]cknowledging the broad variation in use, Tarrow (1998:76-80) distils political opportunity structure into five interrelated clusters of variables: the degree of openness in the polity; the stability of political alignments; the presence of allies and support groups; divisions within the relevant elite and/or its tolerance for protest; and repression or facilitation of dissent by the state (Ibid: 19).

In other words, a political opportunity structure is a balance between facilitation and repression. According to Tilly (1978:100) "repression is an action by another group which raises the contender's costs of collective action. An action which lowers the group's costs of collective action is a form of facilitation." Therefore, social movements require opportunities (or conditions that facilitate their actions) but also consider threats such as state repression and/or any other actors' efforts to suppress either contentious acts or organisations responsible for them. "Social movements must examine opportunity and threat and they must decide whether to act or not, based on that opportunity and/or threat (de Búrca, 2009:6).

Tarrow (1998:71) argues in a similar vein that social movements' "contention is more closely related to opportunities for - and limited by constraints upon - collective action than by the

persistent social and economic factors that people experience" and that " …when combined with high levels of perceived costs for inaction, opportunities produce episodes of contentious politics" (Ibid). Kitschelt (1986) for example provides empirical evidence that political opportunity structure is a more important determinant of social movement contentious political protests than prevailing socio-economic strain or deprivation. In explaining the intensity, strategies and outcomes of antinuclear political protests in France, Sweden, the United States and West Germany, he shows that 'political opportunity structures' are a more important determinant of movement mobilization, strategies and policy impacts than the levels of deprivation perceived by a constituency and the internal skills of aggrieved groups.

More specifically Kitschelt shows that political opportunity structures can further or restrain the capacity of social movements to engage in protest activity in at least three different ways: i) mobilization depends upon the coercive, normative, remunerative and informational resources that a movement can extract from its settings and can deploy in its protest; ii) the access of social movements to the public sphere and political decision-making is also governed by institutional rules, such as those reinforcing patterns of interaction between government and interest groups; and iii) social movements face opportunities to mobilize protest that change over time with the appearance and disappearance of other social movements. The mobilization of one movement may for example have a demonstrating effect on other incipient movements, encouraging them to follow suits (Ibid: 61). Similarly McAdam (1999:27) adds that "political opportunity structures can constrain or expand the field of collective action in four ways: (1) they expand the group's own opportunities; (2) they expand opportunities for others; (3) create opportunities for opponents; and (4) create opportunities for elites".

In addition to social movements' contentious politics, many scholars have also identified the political opportunity structure as a key variable or determinant of other forms of collective action particularly collective violence. Many scholars have indeed provided empirical evidence that the political opportunity structure is a key variable in the occurrence of different forms of collective violence including political violence (Tilly, 2003; de Búrca, 2009), race riots (Lieberson *et al*, 1965), religious violence (de Búrca, 2009); ethnic riots or pogroms (Bergmann, 2011) and genocide (Bond, 2007).

de Búrca (2009) for example explains that political violence by Hamas and the IRA was made possible by a favourable political structure in terms of social sanction and political support by their constituencies. He notes for example that Palestinians became increasingly supportive of extreme violence by Hamas militants. Supported and reinforced by political and religious leaders, this social sanction and normative acceptance creates opportunities for militants to carry out their acts of violence. Similarly, Bond (2007) argues that mobilization for genocide in Rwanda succeeded due to a receptive socio-political setting. The political leadership was able to galvanize the disaffected population because the political-social structure had effectively muted any contrary voices. The population was mobilized with no internal resistance. The leadership mobilization efforts for genocide were facilitated by a receptive social and institutional setting.

Bergmann (2011) further identifies the political opportunity structure as a key variable in the outbreak and escalation of ethnic riots or pogroms. In his study of anti-Jewish violence in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe, he provides evidence that pogroms "require a favorable political opportunity structure, in which the behaviour of the government, the police, public opinion, and bystanders fulfills a key function in the outbreak and escalation of the violence in intergroup conflict" (Ibid: 489). He specifically demonstrates that waves of

pogroms seem to occur more often in situations when state control is either absent or weak, which opens opportunities for assailants to act, or when state organs of control are themselves actors in the violent actions thus becoming a conflict party that, instead of providing protection to the minority, joins in the attack against it.

In sum, the brief discussion above highlights the causal relationship between the opportunity structure and collective violence. It shows that a favourable political opportunity structure is a key variable in the occurrence and escalation of many forms of collective violence including social movements' contentious collective actions, political violence, religious violence and ethnic riots. In the next section, I discuss how local governance provided a political opportunity structure for - and therefore was a key determinant of - xenophobic violence in South Africa.

6.2.3 Local Governance: A Political Opportunity Structure for Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

6.2.3.1 Micro-political opportunity structures

Analysts usually use the political opportunity structure concept in reference to national level socio-political factors or conditions that facilitate or constrain collective violence, with a particular focus on the state capacity (or lack thereof) to regulate and contain violent conflicts (see for example Meyer, 2003 and Tong, 1991). However, to understand the role of local governance in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa, I propose to extend the meaning and application of the political opportunity structure model to subnational, local, community level socio-political arenas and their governance regimes. This is in recognition that national political systems often nest subnational power and authority regimes with

significant relegated or appropriated autonomy that often translates into variations in authority patterns, institutional structures and political incentives.

As I argue elsewhere (see Misago, 2011), these variations mean that we must start thinking of the state in the 'plural' rather than the 'singular' in terms of (in the South African case for example) its role, responsibilities, capacities and incentives at national, provincial and local levels (see also Boone, 2003). I indicated earlier (see discussion on micro-politics in chapter IV) in a similar vein that the recognition of these subnational variations challenges those who continue to speak of politics as a fundamentally a set of national processes and rather confirms the adage that 'all politics is local' (O'Neil *et al*, 1994).

Building on increasing recognition that political opportunity structures vary among subnational spaces within the same national political systems (Kitschelt, 1986) and that there are often recognizable differences in the conduct of local state agencies and organs of control (Bergmann, 2011), I argue that the political opportunity structure model maintains its relevance - and its explanatory power (with regard to collective violence) prevails - even when applied to local, community level socio-political factors and systems of order (i.e. local governance regimes). Indeed, the analysis of xenophobic violence in South Africa shows that, local governance regimes presented (independently or in conjunction with the wider national level socio-political systems) opportunities for - and constraints to - xenophobic violence. It is these locally generated opportunities and constraints that I term '*micro-political opportunity structures'*. It is indeed a logical conclusion that *micro-politics* (discussed in chapter IV) inevitably produce corresponding *micro-political opportunity structures*.

As I indicated earlier, local governance provided a (micro-) political opportunity structure for xenophobic violence in two ways: i) in many cases, official local authority facilitated and was directly involved in the violence, and ii) in areas where official community leadership was

weak or absent, violent informal leadership groups were provided with an opportunity to act. In the following sections, I briefly discuss how these two processes unfolded building on the detailed discussion provided in chapter IV.

6.2.3.2 Official local authority's direct involvement, complicity and inaction: a perfect opportunity for xenophobic violence

In chapter IV, I provide detailed evidence that, in violence affected areas such as Alexandra Sector II, Diepsloot, DuNoon, Madelakufa II and Ramaphosa, the institutional local authority and official community leadership structures (e.g. local police, local CPF branches, ward and street committees) permitted or provided the means and incentives for xenophobic violence. I specifically show that, in those areas, these structures permitted the occurrence of the violence in a number of ways. They either i) directly organised the violence and/or were actively involved in the attacks, ii) were complicit with instigators/perpetrators and sanctioned their actions, iii) passively encouraged or tolerated the violence, or iv) did not make any effort to prevent the attacks despite visible warning signs.

In these cases, by commission and/or omission, the local leadership and authority provided a perfect socio-political opportunity for xenophobic violence. Indeed, using its clout, institutional authority and moral legitimacy, it easily secured social sanction and normative acceptance; legitimized the violence by framing it as a necessary act of solidarity in legitimate self-defense; had no difficulty coopting community members for participation; and lowered the violence costs while raising its (real or perceived) normative and/or material benefits. All these are acts of *facilitation* (see earlier Tilly's definition), characteristic of a favourable political opportunity structure.

Examples from elsewhere also show that official community leadership structures can indeed provide a facilitating social and political opportunity and therefore play a critical role in the occurrence of collective violence. For example, in his analysis of insurgent organizational structure and the control of collective violence, Worsnop (2013) notes that strong community leadership structures are crucial in both starting and sustaining rebellions. Such structures are able to mobilize community members for participation by employing status rewards based on solidarity, enforce social controls and norms, control the flow of information leading up and during the collective action, and ensure monitoring and concomitant sanctioning of undesired behavior (Ibid).

6.2.3.3 Absent or weak institutional authority and leadership: an equally de facto political opportunity structure for xenophobic violence

In addition to areas where the official leadership and authority was directly involved or tacitly supportive, the study finds that xenophobic violence also occurred in area where local institutional authority and community leadership was weak or absent. As shown in Chapter IV, the absence or weakness of the official community leadership was demonstrated by its inability to exercise its bestowed authority and power and subsequent inability to enforce the rule of law, lost legitimacy, and lack of public trust. In these areas, the community leadership and authority had been usurped by informal leadership groups which residents considered more legitimate, more competent and more worthy of their trust.

The absent or weak official local authority and community leadership provided a favourable opportunity for xenophobic violence in three related ways: i) its absence meant there were not effective conflict resolution mechanisms able to diffuse tensions before they escalated into violence; ii) its absence also meant impunity and lack of accountability for the perpetrators

and instigators of xenophobic violence, and iii) its absence led to the emergence of informal leadership groups that used violence to further their economic and political interests.

6.2.3.3.1 Lack of Effective Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

Many of the places where xenophobic violence occurred lacked conflict resolution mechanisms capable of channeling or solving concerns in ways that could diffuse the tensions inherent in any diverse and dynamic community. Without denying that South Africa's townships have a documented history of using violence as a means of solving problems, communities largely resort to violence, vigilantism and mob justice when relevant institutions and existing conflict resolution mechanisms have failed to adequately address issues of concern. The words of a respondent in Itireleng are telling in this regard: "If there are no other ways of resolving these problems even after several meetings, violence seems to be the only voice we have left."

Respondents across all affected areas reported that the members of the community took the law into their own hands because they did not trust the local authorities and leaders or the police and the criminal justice system. During fieldwork in Du Noon, residents showed us two tyres that they had planned to use to 'necklace' a Nigerian national a day before. He was suspected of selling drugs to the youth. He escaped after confessing and promising that he would never do so again, and has since left the area. When asked why they did not report him to the police, residents said it could have been difficult to find evidence to present to the local police, who are known to quickly reject cases without taking time to carry out any form of investigation.

With regard to xenophobic violence, the lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms was particularly evident in local authorities' failure to engage communities during the events that

preceded the attacks. In some affected areas, violence was fueled by people's frustrations over the inability or perceived unwillingness of local authorities (police, ward councils, CPF etc.) to address communities' concerns/complaints (substantiated or not) with regard to the presence of foreign nationals in their communities. As indicated earlier, numerous meetings with community leaders and the police were held in which residents voiced their concerns related to the presence of foreign nationals on their communities and asked the police and authorities to address them. There was no effective or satisfactory reaction from local authorities. Instead, these structures either ignored the complaints or quickly dismissed them as baseless accusations, without taking time to engage and reason with communities in an effort to understand the origin of such concerns and provide the kind of feedback that might have changed dangerous misperceptions.

A respondent in Alexandra for example was adamant that attacks on foreign nationals in the area were a result of the local authority's inability to effectively attend to residents' concerns. She stated when asked why community residents decided to attack foreigners instead of taking their concerns to the authorities:

> When the community complains to councillors and the police, they are asked to provide evidence to support their claims, which they would not have in most cases. Last year in October, people warned the authorities that if nothing was done in three months, they were going to kick foreigners out themselves, … that's exactly what happened. You see, it's the government that failed everybody.

Similarly, talking about the violence against foreigners in Itireleng, a respondent stated: "[…] Government is not thinking for us [i.e. on our behalf]. Government understands us only when we use violence." In some instances, complainants were told to find ways to solve the problem themselves as a respondent in Sector II, Alexandra, reported: "There was a police

who issued a statement that people must decide on how they deal with someone who has entered their kraal and took their cattle. This statement for me started the violence."

In the face of the local authority's inability or unwillingness to address communities concerns, instigators started organising mass meetings during which attacks on foreign nationals were publically planned. That the police and local authorities were aware that the attacks were being organized and did nothing to prevent them is further evidence of incompetence of local authority and lack of effective mechanisms to resolve conflicts in communities. The perceived inability or unwillingness of local authorities to address community concerns over the presence of foreigners in their communities led residents to resort to mass violence (attacks on foreigners) in the same manner they do when dealing with crime if the criminal justice system does not - or is perceived not to - take appropriate action.

By allowing the public collective discontent and resentment towards foreign nationals in affected areas to fester and mobilization for violence to take place and succeed, the lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms presented a favourable opportunity for the occurrence of xenophobic violence.

Other scholars have also identified the lack of conflict resolution mechanisms as an important element in collective violence causal chain. For example, analysing the precipitants and underlying conditions of race riots in United States, Lieberson *et al* (1965: 887) argue that "Riots seem most likely to occur in communities where institutional malfunctioning, cross-pressures, or other inadequacies are such that the city is unable to resolve racial problems." They provide evidence that supports the proposition that the functioning of local community government is important in determining whether a riot will follow a precipitating incident. Local authority structures' prompt action can prevent riots from developing; their inaction or actual encouragement can increase the chances of a race riot (Ibid).

6.2.3.3.2 Impunity as 'facilitation' for xenophobic violence

This study identified an endemic culture of impunity with regard to perpetrators and instigators of xenophobic violence. Indeed, foreign nationals have been repeatedly attacked in South Africa since 1994 (as indicated in previous chapters), but few have been charged and fewer convicted.

In research sites that experienced xenophobic violence prior to May 2008, the study found that either no arrests were made or where a few were made, suspects were released without charges and in some cases with the assistance of local and provincial authorities. In Masiphumelele, for instance, the former Provincial Premier, a Member of Executive Council (MEC) and the local SAPS Commander intervened to secure the release of businesses owners who had been arrested after xenophobic violence in 2006. A representative of the local South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) branch reported:

> The criminals were arrested but released because the Premier and MEC Ramathlakane negotiated with the police. People said they can't speak to the Premier unless the people arrested are released. The Premier met the Station Commander in Ocean View and they were released. Then the negotiations started. The South African shop owners did not want the competition with the Somalis. Somalis' prices were cheaper and the community preferred to buy from the Somalis.

As indicated earlier, the same local business owners were the instigators of the second wave of xenophobic violence in Masiphumelele in May 2008.

The case of Itireleng is another illustrative example. After violent attacks on foreign nationals February 2008, eleven suspects including women and some 'comrades' (community leaders), were arrested according to the police. They were held in custody for a week or so but on the

day of the court hearings, the community organised a protest march to the court to get them released. All the suspects were released on that day as the court ruled that 'the charges be partially withdrawn pending further investigation,' said a representative of Laudium SAPS. Respondents reported that no further investigation was taking place and some residents were visibly annoyed. "This nonsense of comrades coming back without being charged is unfair; it sends signals that it is OK to attack foreigners", lamented one of them.

While the 'comrades' denied that some of them were among the arrested, they supported the community decision to protest for the release of the suspects. One of them said: "they did not do any harm; they did not kill anybody; they were just chasing foreigners holding sticks; it was just xenophobic attacks. The warning from the magistrate was enough." While the term 'xenophobic' might have been too technical for the 'comrades', it was clear that 'comrades' believed that those who attacked and chased foreigners from the area did something good for the community and should not be prosecuted.

Like in Masiphumelele, it appears that local authorities in Itireleng also supported the protest to get suspects released, as this statement from a respondent suggests:

> Local police were useless, they did nothing. When Atteridgeville police arrested comrades, the councillor told people that if they can go to police station to demand that people be released, they will be released. So this sends signals that foreigners can be attacked and nothing will happen. The councillor advised them that they should go there and tell the police that they did this as a group not as individuals.

Similarly, during and after the May 2008 violence, some arrests were made at the different scenes of violence but most of suspects were released without charges due to the mobilization of communities and their leaders. For example, following the May 2008 violence in

Masiphumelele, former Premier Ebrahim Rasool addressed community leaders and members saying: "The leadership and people of Masiphumelele have done the unthinkable. Convincing people to return the goods which were stolen is a brave move"[34]. What is not mentioned here is that the goods were not returned out of free will. It is indeed the police and some members of the community who went house-to-house, retrieving stolen goods from suspected perpetrators. The owners of the houses from which looted property was retrieved were never arrested.

In DuNoon (that also experience xenophobic violence in 2001), the local councillor reported that the arrested individuals had been released and he was not sure aware of any on-going investigation. Similarly, during the time of research fieldwork, some of suspects arrested in Alexandra and Tembisa were out on bail and others still in custody. Across all research sites, respondents and observers did not recall any concluded xenophobia-related court cases, nor did they know what had happened to the idea of 'special' courts that the government had proposed to deal with xenophobia-related crimes.

As other authors have observed (see for example Monson *et al*, 2009), the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) seemed to share - with political leaders of different levels - the lack of interest or incentives to hold the offenders of the xenophobic violence accountable. In 2009, there was only one murder conviction despite the fact that at least 62 people were murdered during the May 2008 violence. The main reason given by NPA for case withdrawal and low conviction rates included the lack of witnesses or interpreters. Clearly, the authors note,

[34] www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/pubs/news/2008/may/170138

> […] there is an evident lack of strong determination to hold the perpetrators of the violence accountable. More worryingly, it appears that those arrested were only those caught looting or directly involved in anti-foreigner public demonstrations and not the 'true' perpetrators who are those known groups and individuals who instigated the attacks. These are still free on the streets and undoubtedly represent a serious risk for further violence. The actual and perceived impunity with which instigators and perpetrators of xenophobic violence are seen to act can only continue to encourage the ill-intentioned to attack foreigners and outsiders (Ibid: 30).

While inadequate judicial response to the May 2008 violence does not explain its appearance, this discussion illustrates the manner in which the judicial system has responded to previous incidents of xenophobic attacks over the years. The inability or unwillingness of relevant organs of control (community leadership together with other state organs of control particularly the police and the justice system) to hold perpetrators and instigators accountable perpetuated a perceived sense of impunity that in turn encouraged the continuation and the spread of the violence through May 2008 and beyond.

Studies elsewhere also confirm that impunity is common for acts of collective violence when the state organs of control and the population majority are not the primary target or when control organs and representative of the majority are to a certain degree involved (Bergmann, 2011). These crimes which are often perceived as "collective self-help' are usually treated comparatively mildly" (Black, 1983:40).

With "brutality greeted by impunity, and impunity greeted by indifference" (Monson, 2011:46) the lack of accountability in terms of prosecution and restorative justice (i.e. impunity) provided a favourable opportunity structure for violent attacks on foreign nationals.

Indeed, impunity proved to be an excellent act of facilitation (see Tilly, 1978) that lowered the hostile group's costs of xenophobic violence.

6.2.3.3.3 Violent alternative governance

In chapter IV, I discussed in detail how, in some areas, absent or weak local authority and community leadership led to the emergence of informal leadership groups that used xenophobic violence as means to consolidate their leadership legitimacy and consequently further their political and economic interests.

That the absence of local authority and community leadership provided the political opportunity structure for xenophobic violence by allowing these violent groups to emerge and use violence to articulate their interests is probably obvious. What is perhaps less obvious is that in these instances, local governance provided a *double* opportunity for the violence to occur. First, by its absence, institutional governance indirectly permitted the violence by allowing violent groups and other interested parties to organise and carry out attacks against foreign nationals.

Second and perhaps most importantly, the absence of institutional governance did not mean the absence of governance all together (see details in the sections to follow). It rather ushered an era of alternative governance by non-state actors that defined new forms of social control and authority that saw violence as, not only a tool to consolidate their power and legitimacy, but also as 'legitimate' means of protecting or restoring threatened local socio-economic and political orders. This new and violent alternative governance provided an opportunity for xenophobic violence by its direct involvement and by its mobilization of communities for participation. Therefore, the absent 'old' institutional governance and the present 'new'

alternative governance provided (indirectly and directly respectively) a double opportunity for xenophobic violence in those areas.

6.2.4 Local Governance as an Effective Constraint to Xenophobic Violence

In previous sections, I discussed how local governance provided a favourable opportunity structure for xenophobic violence in affected areas. Here I wish to reiterate the study's finding that without such an opportunity, xenophobic violence does not occur even when other determinants are present. I provide detailed evidence to this effect in chapter IV. It simply bears repeating here that local authority and community leadership was instrumental in preventing xenophobic violence in potentially volatile areas by not only discouraging potential perpetrators from within but also and most importantly by successfully mobilizing communities to stand against actions and influence from outside violent elements.

In these areas, local governance constrained rather than facilitated xenophobic violence despite the presence of all other determinants; particularly despite the mobilization efforts by violent groups from neighbouring communities. These cases present clear evidence that mobilization for xenophobic violence does not succeed without a favourable socio-political opportunity structure provided by local governance. Local governance was the most significant distinguishing factor that explained the absence of xenophobic violence in those areas. It did not provide the localised socio-political opportunity structure needed for violence to occur. As Monson (2011:189) confirms,

> […] the spread of violence appeared to depend on the strength of leadership institutions in the surrounding areas. Arguably, more strongly democratic forms of leadership created firebreaks against the conflagration, while adjacent areas of weakly institutionalised leadership or leadership autonomous from the state presented softer

boundaries, more easily penetrated both by political instigators and by the depoliticised spread of recidivism.

6.2.5 Conclusion

The discussion in this section clearly shows that local governance provided a political opportunity structure for the May 2008 xenophobic violence in two significant ways. On the one hand, official local governance provided locally based and generated socio-political opportunities (micro-political opportunity structures) for the occurrence of xenophobic violence in areas where it occurred. In many cases, official community leadership facilitated and used its authority and legitimacy to mobilize community members for violence. The active role of community leaders coupled with the inaction of other state organs of control, public support and socio-moral sanction provided a perfect social and political opportunity for the violence to erupt and escalate. In this instance, it was the presence (not the absence) of a strong and trusted community leadership that facilitated the occurrence of the violence.

On the other hand, in areas where official community leadership was weak or absent, violent alternative governance by non-state actors defined new forms of social control and authority that saw violence as, not only a tool to consolidate their power and legitimacy, but also as 'legitimate' means of protecting or restoring threatened local socio-economic and political orders. In both instances, local governance (formal or informal) deliberately provided a favourable opportunity structure for xenophobic violence.

This shows that the May 2008 xenophobic violence occurred both in areas where official local authority was present and strong and in areas where it was weak or absent and this finding is in line with research findings elsewhere. As briefly mentioned earlier, Bergmann (2011)'s study on ethnic violence in twentieth-century Europe concluded that waves of pogroms occur

more often during periods when the state authority has either suffered a loss of power, making it less effective in exerting its control or when it has become a party to the conflict.

The discussion also shows that in areas where local governance did not provide the required opportunity, xenophobic violence did not take place despite the presence of all other determinants. This is evidence that without a favourable political opportunity structure provided by local governance, other factors including mobilization will not succeed in producing violence, which makes local governance an indispensable determinant i.e. a defining element of the xenophobic violence causal chain. To continue with the fire analogy, local governance is as important as the oxygen in the fire triangle. Without it, other elements will not produce xenophobic violence the same way dry grass and spark will not ignite fire without oxygen.

6.3 ON SOCIAL CONTROLS AND COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: THE STATUS QUO QUESTIONED

6.3.1 Social Controls and their Effect on Collective Violence

The concept of 'social control' generally refers "to structures, mechanisms and strategies whose purpose is to cause society's members to adhere to its valid norms and standards" (Kirschner *et al*, 2011:13). Informed by social control theories (see for example Hirschi, 1969 and Black, 1998) developed within the sociology of deviant behaviour, the concept of social control is generally based on a human understanding and model of order in which,

> [P]eople are regarded as being fundamentally, or by nature, prone to criminal acts, while successful behaviour regulation is seen as a product of internal and external control that limits this potential. Thus losses of control or the weakening of originally

> effective control mechanisms become the central causal factor in explaining criminality and violence (Kirschner *et al*, 2011:14).

In its original and wider sense, the concept denoted a society's capacity to regulate itself; a form of control that employed mechanisms of social influence, and as such was contrasted with forms of state control that applied coercion (Ibid). Increasingly however, the concept of social control is used in a narrower sense to denote those mechanisms and structures with which a society causes its members to comply with its norms, placing a special emphasis on its formal, state control mechanisms and instruments such as the police, the justice and prison system, leadership and institutional governance (Ibid). Indeed Horwitz (1990) notes a decline in informal types of social control and an increase in the significance of formal, state-sanctioned mechanisms.

Regarding collective violence, there are widely accepted and time-honoured theoretical predictions that collective violence and other forms of contentious collective action tend to occur in societies where mechanisms of social control (particularly formal state mechanisms) have lost their restraining power. Indeed a number of prominent theorists of collective violence (see for example Useem, 1998; Smelser, 1963; Horowitz, 2001 and Tilly, 2003) have long predicted that collective violence occurs when and where social controls are weak or no longer have deterrence power.

For example, in his defence of the '*Breakdown theory'* (whose proponents include Durkheim, LeBon, and Tarde in the European tradition, and Park, Blumer, Parsons and Smelser in the American tradition), a classic sociological explanation of contentious forms of collective action such as riots, rebellion and civil violence, Useem (1998:215) opines that "these sorts of events occur when the mechanisms of social control lose their restraining power."

Similarly, Smelser (1963:261) contends that hostile collective outbursts occur when social controls are not able to act as effective deterrents that would counter, neutralise or contain the forces of positive determinants (i.e. factors that would produce the outburst in the absence of the deterrent). Noting that "social control involves the institutionalising of respect for the law and for orderly means of resolving grievance", Smelser argues that the occurrence of collective hostile outbursts signals the failure of agencies of control to prevent, interrupt, deflect, or inhibit the accumulation of the determinants that eventually produce such outbursts. He indicates that to understand the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of social controls, "we shall ask how the appropriate agencies of control - the police, the courts, the press, the religious authorities, the community leaders, etc. - behave in the face of a potential or actual outburst of collective behaviour. Do they adopt a rigid, uncompromising attitude? Do they vacillate? Do they themselves take sides in the disturbance?" (Ibid: 17).

While Charles Tilly is not a proponent of the breakdown theory, his theoretical predictions equally imply the correlation between the weakness or incapacity of state organs of control and the occurrence of collective violence. In answering the question of 'what are the conditions that make certain locations prone to collective violence?" Tilly (2003:232) predicts that collective violence is more likely to happen in '*low-capacity'* and '*undemocratic'* states: "People in low-capacity regimes suffer the most extensive losses from collective violence because their regimes allow so much room for petty tyranny (on the part of officeholders, warlords, and other predators)". He suggests that collective violence tends to happen in times of socio-economic and political uncertainty and particularly when 'social controls' or 'stabilizing parties' become absent (see also Basu, 1995).

6.3.2 Challenging the Status Quo

This study on xenophobic violence in South Africa (a form of collective violence) challenges the above-outlined predictions on two main accounts. First, it proves these predictions incorrect by demonstrating that in most cases, it was the formal community leadership and authority that used its clout, institutional authority and moral legitimacy to successfully mobilize communities for violence. Here official, institutional leadership and authority was not absent or weak but rather it was its presence and power that facilitated the occurrence of the violence. In these cases, local official or state-sanctioned social controls had clearly not lost their restraining power. Instead of attempting to 'restrain' it, official social and political controls rather sanctioned and facilitated the violence and this proves that collective violence also occurs in societies were official leadership and authority are strong and social controls are in fact a mobilizing factor.

In these cases, strong official socio-political controls were used as a facilitating rather than a constraining factor. As discussed in detail earlier, formal social controls (in the form of institutional community leadership and other state organs of control, particularly the police) provided a perfect social and political opportunity structure for xenophobic violence to occur in areas where it did.

Examples from elsewhere are plenty. Analysts (se for example Hinjens, 1999 and Mamdani, 2001) of the 1994 Rwandan genocide for example note that the genocide was not a result of the collapse of social controls or the inability of the national authority to enforce them. It is rather common knowledge that, state-sanctioned social controls (including government, the army and state-sponsored militia) during genocide in Rwanda supported and facilitated the violence rather than trying to constrain it.

Similarly, Bergmann's (2011) study of ethnic violence in Europe confirms this study's finding that collective violence indeed happens both in areas where formal social controls are present and strong and in areas where they are absent or weak. He finds that waves of pogroms occur more often during periods when the state authority has either suffered a loss of power, making it less effective in exerting its control or when it has become a party to the conflict i.e. when state organs of control are themselves actors in the violent actions thus becoming a conflict party that, instead of providing protection to the minority, joins in the attack against it.

Second and perhaps more importantly, I argue that even in communities where institutional leadership and authority is absent or weak, social controls are not necessarily absent or weak and have not necessarily lost their meaning and power. In other words, the lack of state-sanctioned social controls does not necessarily mean that the entire control system (i.e. governance regime) has collapsed. Instead, the 'unoccupied' space allows the emergence of alternative, informal governance regimes that create new forms of social controls and order that supplant the older ones. Indeed, in previous chapters, I discussed how official leadership vacuums created by absent or weak institutional governance led to the emergence of powerful informal community leadership structures that took over the authority of the state in their respective locations. These leadership groups forged their own laws and/or new law enforcement mechanisms (see Monson, 2011), i.e. new (and/or new ways of enforcing) social controls.

This study shows that where institutional leadership is not trusted, its legitimacy and related socio-legal controls are questioned, confronted and where possible replaced by newly defined modes of social order that are perceived more legitimate and more relevant. Social controls are not always in line with state authority or institutional leadership regulations. This means

that, in those locations where official leadership was absent, new forms of social control emerged (or existing ones redefined); new modes of enforcement adopted and new custodians entrusted.

As Monson (2011:172) correctly notes, before and during the May 2008 xenophobic violence, these new custodians of local governance created new social controls and new enforcement mechanisms by either "*making the law*, *breaking the law* or *taking the law into their own hands*." Demonstrating that xenophobic violence involves various levels of departure from the state-sanctioned social order, she argues that making the law, breaking the law or taking the law into own hands are three sub-national forms of sovereignty and political authority that help understand "[…] xenophobic violence as local-level appropriations of - or incursions into - one or both of the dual components of state sovereignty: legitimacy (or recognition as the 'lawful source of social predictability') and capacity to regulate (for instance, through its theoretical monopoly on mobility and coercive force)" (Ibid: 173).

6.3.3 Assumptions Informing the Relationship between Social Controls and Collective Violence

This study not only challenges the theoretical predictions outlined above but also the assumptions that inform them. Indeed, predictions that collective violence tends to occur in societies where social controls have lost their regulatory capacity seem to be informed by two main assumptions that are unfounded or equally poorly supported by empirical evidence: i) the assumption that collective violence is an aberrant behaviour that social controls are there to prevent; and ii) the assumption that legitimate governance is a state monopoly (i.e. that the state is the sole producer and arbiter of legitimate governance and authority).

6.3.3.1 Collective violence: an aberrant behaviour or a form of social control?

While increasingly rejected, the assumption that collective violence is an aberrant or anti-social behaviour which strong social controls (particularly those state-sanctioned) should be able or at least try to prevent still persists. Indeed, de la Roche (1996) notes that while the conception of collective violence as deviant behaviour rather than social control has increasingly been rejected as ideological, the assumption "still shakes the field" as many "continue to characterize collective violence of some kinds by some people not only as deviant behaviour but also as undesirable and blameworthy-irrational, pathological, or criminal" (Ibid: 98). In particular, collective violence "from the top down" by social superiors (dominant or majority groups) against social inferiors (i.e. minorities, marginals, the poor, etc.) is often portrayed as irrational, illegitimate and deserving of punishment (Ibid). As Horowitz (2001:35) similarly notes, there is an enduring "assumption that collective violence or crowds act in contradiction to values accepted in the wider society."

The discussion in this chapter adds voice to calls that reject the assumption as mostly unfounded. Indeed the discussion shows that, i) collective violence (even when dominant, majority groups target minorities) is not always anti-social but rather often enjoys social approval and is facilitated or supported by social controls (in other words, collective violence is not always a deviant behaviour that needs to be contained, it is often times sanctioned and made possible by the very same controls); and ii) when collective violence enjoys social approval, those state-sanctioned controls that would attempt to prevent it would no longer be relevant or legitimate.

As indicated earlier, for many of those who were involved in the May 2008 xenophobic violence - and for many who were not - attacking foreigners was a legitimate means of protecting South African lives, livelihoods and systems of order; a means of extending official

law by other means (Monson, 2011). Although some expressed sympathy with the victims, most respondents reported that the communities in general supported the attacks and felt satisfied that foreigners have finally been removed from their space and society. A respondent in Alexandra for example stated, "[…] others were crying with excitement; they were saying 'at last action is taken against foreigners.'" In this case (and undoubtedly in many others), collective violence was considered as a legitimate means of protecting or restoring threatened local systems of order. Here collective violence acts as a form of social control or as a collective behaviour for which social controls are the dependent variable (Black, 1990).

In line with this finding, the study lends support to the increasingly recognised but still unpopular conception of some types of collective violence as a form of social control (albeit not always in line with state authority and regulations); self-help by a group, a form of protest, a quest for justice no matter how justice is defined. For Black (1990:43) for example, "collective violence is often an extreme form of self-help, a species of social control that entails the handling of a grievance by unilateral aggression." Similarly, Gurr (1989 in de la Roche, 1996:98) argues that "collective violence is now commonly regarded as a form of protest, a quest for justice, and the purposive expression of real grievances over underlying social, economic, and political issues." Drawing from the 'functionalist' theory that explains collective violence in terms of its purpose and motives, Aya (1979) argues that, as an indicator of severe underlying social discontents and maladjustment in the community, collective violence is often a legitimate attempt to protect or restore threatened social, structural and material orders. It is motivated and triggered by the pressing need for redress of grievances.

Looking at and analysing specific types of collective violence, different analysts have reached similar conclusions. For example Bergmann (2011:488) defines pogroms in as "a one-sided

and non-governmental form of social control, as a form of self-help by a group that occurs when no remedy from the state against the threat which another ethnic group poses can be expected"; while Tilly *et al*. (1975:85), drawing upon the analysis of European crowd violence, concludes that "justice. lies at the heart of violent conflict".

In sum, collective violence is not always a deviant behaviour social controls are there to contain. Instead, certain types of collective violence are, more often than not, a form of social control at least in the eyes of those who feel their social orders are threatened and feel compelled to restore or protect them though collective action/violence. The May 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa certainly was a form of social control at least in the eyes of perpetrators, sympathisers and custodians of the local authority. It was one of those newly and locally designed forms of social control, and given the extent of mass participation, popular support and social approval it received, there is no doubt that it was considered more legitimate and more effective (than older forms of control) by the communities concerned.

6.3.3.2 On the state and monopoly of legitimate governance

The second assumption informing the predicted effect of social controls on collective violence is that legitimate governance (authority and control) is a state monopoly or that the state is the sole producer and arbiter of legitimate governance and authority (particular the legitimate use of violence as social control). This assumption flows from the Weberian understanding of the state as the only institution in the society, which has the monopoly on legitimate use of violence on society's members (Wulf, 2007). This understanding implies that state-sanctioned social controls are relevant or have currency in communities across the state territorial jurisdiction.

By demonstrating that xenophobic violence in many violence affected communities represented a local appropriation of state authority and the redefinition, reinvention and reclaiming of social controls (see also Monson, 2011), this study clearly shows that legitimate governance and use of violence are not the monopoly of the state. In those communities, governance and authority are exercised by non-state, informal actors that gain their legitimacy from the assent of both the governed and other local power holders. These alternative systems of authority are at liberty to use violence (e.g. xenophobic violence, vigilantism, etc.) whenever it is deemed to serve their interests and/or those of their constituencies. The use of violence to achieve societal goals has proven to be an effective type of service provision that confers authority and legitimacy to these non-state actors. Helping communities expel unwanted foreign nationals appears to be a highly appreciated service which the state has failed to deliver.

In many of the areas effected by xenophobic violence, the institutional authority has no normative power as a result of lack of public trust due to poor service delivery; has no coercive poor due to weak and incompetent law enforcement agencies; and has no economic power due to lack of control over material resources. In other words, in the 'Weberian' sense, the local state has no power at all. The person who - or group that - governs those spaces is one that can claim and/or dispense at least one of those forms of power. Xenophobic violence provides that power because i) it is in itself a form of coercive power in addition to other forms of vigilantism characteristic of those areas; ii) it mobilises the normative values of the communities (normative power); and iii) it distributes material resources through direct distribution of material incentives for participation in violence (e.g. housing or cash for the hired youth) or through the elimination of business competition (economic power).

Things are not necessarily different in contexts beyond South African borders. Indeed many scholars (see for example Clunan, 2010 and William, 2010) note the emergence of alternative forms of authority and governance in a context of softening state sovereignty and show that increasingly "social structures exert authority over the control of violence" (Clunan, 2010:8). Others (see for example Baylouny, 2010 and Arias, 2010) demonstrate that, state incapacity and/or the exclusion of certain communities from mainstream official economic, social and political space creates room for alternative forms of governance to emerge, particularly over the provision of goods of policing and conflict resolution. Arias (2010) for example notes that in Latin America, non-state actors wielding violence have become authoritative governors along with the police and unveils hybrid systems of urban governance' which he labels 'violent pluralism'. Similarly, Baylouny (2010) discusses how violent non-state actors in the Middle East, gained authority and legitimacy through the provision of basic services of security to residents of marginalised spaces.

In sum, the case of xenophobic violence in South Africa and examples from elsewhere clearly demonstrate that the state is not the sole producer and arbiter of governance and has no monopoly over the legitimate use of violence. I therefore agree with those who argue that instead of calling locations where the state is absent or has limited influence 'ungoverned spaces' (see the discussion in Clunan *et al.*, 2010 or Keister, 2014); we should refer to them as places governed by alternative authority and governance structures (Clunan, 2010). These places are governed by alternative governance regime led by non-state actors. In other words, the social and political order is simply wielded by actors other than the state (Keister, 2014).

These are unconventional ways of governance but governance nevertheless. As Keister (2014:2) correctly puts it, "Ungoverned spaces are actually not ungoverned, but exist under authorities other than formal states." Similarly, Landau *et al* (2010:168) note that "the

absence of state-centered, stable regulatory regimes does not reflect an *ungoverned* space, but a space that is *alternatively* governed." I therefore agree with Keister (2014:1) that the "term 'ungoverned spaces' is a misnomer - these areas are not ungoverned. They are simply ruled by subnational authorities."

Those who perceive such areas as 'ungoverned spaces' ignore the reality and still prefer the increasingly outdated state-centric model of authority and governance. Clearly, the examples above demonstrate multiple layers of authority and 'shared monopoly' of legitimate use of violence (Wulf, 2007) and render outdated "conventional accounts of the monopoly of force concept in which the nation-state is conceived as the sole appropriate agent" (Wulf, 2007:16).

6.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the role of local governance in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa and by extension to role of governance in the occurrence of collective violence generally. It argues that local governance played a defining role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa by providing a favourable political opportunity structure in two significant ways. On the one hand, official local governance provided locally based and generated socio-political opportunities (which I term *micro-political opportunity structures*) for the occurrence of xenophobic violence in areas where it occurred. On the other hand, in areas where institutional local authority was weak or absent, violent alternative governance by non-state actors defined new forms of social control and authority that saw violence as, not only a tool to consolidate their power and legitimacy, but also as a 'legitimate' means of protecting or restoring threatened local socio-economic and political orders. The chapter provided evidence that without a favourable political opportunity structure provided by local governance, other all other factors including mobilization will not

succeed in producing violence. This makes local governance an indispensable determinant i.e. a defining element of the xenophobic violence causal chain.

Further, by demonstrating that May 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa occurred both in areas where the official local authority was present and strong and in areas where it was weak or absent, and drawing from studies elsewhere, this chapter critically reviews and challenges widely accepted and time-honoured theoretical predictions that collective violence and other forms of contentious collective action tend to occur in societies where mechanisms of social control have lost their restraining power.

The study's findings in this chapter are both empirical and epistemological. Empirically, the study identifies governance as one of the critical determinants of xenophobic and collective violence (as summarised above). Epistemologically, the study lends evidence-based support to voices that are increasingly calling for a review of the foundations of the current understanding of - and approaches to - legitimate governance and its core functions of social control and political order.

The study supports voices that demand a review of the outdated state-centric approach to governance and an approach that recognizes non-state systems of governance (Landau *et al*, 2010). As Landau *et al* (2010:166) note, we need "[…] a perspective on governance that considers the interactions and outcomes of formal and informal processes. Officials are not the only wielders of authority and are not necessarily where our analyses should begin." An accurate understanding of the current realities of governance requires new approaches that recognise multiple units of analysis and "the need to see gradations and multiple modes [and nodes] of governance" (Ibid: 168).

A more accurate understanding of governance and its multiplicity of modes, nodes, levels and actors would provide a more solid foundation for a better analysis and understanding of the causal relationships between its (governance) factors and the occurrence of different types of collective violence.

VII. CONCLUSIONS: TOWARDS A GOVERNANCE MODEL OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

This study responds to inadequacies and limitations of current causal explanations for xenophobic violence, which has become a long-standing feature in post-Apartheid South Africa. I argue in Chapter One that the poverty of existing explanatory models lies in a twofold repertoire of analytical blind spots: i) many lack empirical backing; ii) others are incomplete due to their reductionist approach and all suffer from blindness to their own shortcomings. What the best of these explanations can offer is a descriptive account of the general socio-economic context in which xenophobic violence occurs, which, while valuable, is not an adequate explanation of xenophobic violence that occurs in some areas and not in others.

With this in mind the study set out to provide a comprehensive empirically-based and theoretically informed causal explanation. Indeed, using qualitative, multi-case, comparative methodological approaches and a micro- analytical framework, the study was able to identify and analyse all the key determinants (i.e. the necessary and sufficient conditions) and their interconnections leading up to the occurrence of xenophobic violence. While its primary focus is obviously to satisfy the peculiar demands of current research, the study ultimately situates its conclusions within - and speaks to - broader contemporary interdisciplinary debates in collective violence research. Its shows that, as in the case of xenophobic violence, current general empirical and theoretical explanatory models of collective violence are equally inadequate due to relatively similar reasons.

The determinants the study identifies consist of underlying causes, proximate factors and triggers. And with underlying causes (deprivation, xenophobia and collective discontent) already established, the study pays particular attention to the often missed proximate factors

and triggers (the political economy of the violence, mobilization and governance). It is through the findings on these new factors that the study introduces new empirical and theoretical insights and innovations to the study and understanding of, not only, xenophobic violence in South Africa but also collective violence generally.

This concluding chapter revisits the key findings on these factors before summarising all the determinants, their empirical explanations and theoretical backing in a multivariate model I call the *Governance Model of Xenophobic Violence.* I explain the reason behind this appellation along with the presentation of the model.

7.1 XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE AS 'POLITICS BY OTHER MEANS'

One of the key findings of this study is the identification of micro-politics and localised political economy as key drivers of the xenophobic violence in South Africa. In Chapter Four, I argue that xenophobic violence in South Africa is just 'politics by other means' as/and its instrumental motives are located in the local political economy and micro-political processes at play in many of the country's towns, townships and informal settlements. I illustrate my point by providing ample evidence that the violence was organised and led by local 'violence entrepreneurs' attempting to claim or consolidate power and authority needed to further their political and economic interests.

By showing that local politics and localised political economy provided both the opportunities and incentives for the violence, this finding challenges - and addresses the weaknesses of - the commonly used macro-economic explanations that emphasize structural factors such as poverty, unemployment, inequality as the necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of the xenophobic violence in South Africa. The finding further challenges many decontextualizing, depoliticising and agency-erasing explanations that i) obscure important

historical continuities and the political economy of the violence; and ii) portray xenophobic violence as a spontaneous, chaotic mob and collective action from which individuals or rational agendas cannot be distinguished (Monson *et al*, 2011). In the same Chapter Four, I argue in agreement with Monson *et al* (Ibid) that the reference to a 'faceless' collective perpetrator was an attempt to erase agency and responsibility of key actors behind the violence. The reference to 'faceless mobs' or 'anonymous community members' as perpetrators of the violence was often made by instigators themselves or their complicit local leaders as a strategy to shield themselves from accountability.

While the 'political economy' is not a new concept in the literature on collective violence (see for example Fortman *et al*, 1998), this finding brings to the fore the often missed centrality of micro-politics and localised political economy factors as key drivers of collective violence particularly community or group-based violent conflicts. As I argue in Chapter One, a comprehensive understanding of collective violence needs to be able to account "for the interplay between macro and micro factors, as well as the transitional processes from individual thought and feeling to collective action" (Saha, 2006 in Lau *et al*, 2010:2).

7.2 THE TRIGGER EFFECT OF MOBILIZATION

The second key finding of this study is that the triggers of xenophobic violence and of collective violence generally lie in the mobilization processes and not the in the grievances and ensuing discontent as argued by many theoretical approaches to collective violence. In Chapter V, I argue that while various forms of social, economic and/or political grievances are important elements in heightening tensions and creating collective discontent, anger and resentment towards the target group, it is the mobilization (which, for present purposes, broadly refers to all activities, social interactions and processes aimed at recruiting and persuading individuals and groups to participate in a collective action) of this discontent and

not the discontent itself that triggers collective violence. I argue that mobilization is the vital connective tissue between discontent collective violence.

This finding adds a new and critical element or determinant in the understanding of xenophobic violence in South Africa and of collective violence generally by highlighting the often missed or taken-for-granted defining role mobilization plays in triggering xenophobic or collective violence and by proving that without mobilization, a targeted collective violent act is not possible or is at least highly unlikely. In Chapter V, I make clearer the significance of this finding by highlighting the analytical and empirical distinction between *precipitants* and *triggers* arguing that '*precipitants*' are not real triggers of collective violence as often asserted by many scholars in the field (see for example Smelser, 1963; Lieberson *et al*, 1965; Horowitz, 2001; or Gleason, 2011). I argue that precipitants (i.e. real or rumoured provocative acts or highly charged offenses committed by members of the target group) are just another source of collective discontent violence entrepreneurs use to legitimize violence and facilitate the mobilization process which ultimately triggers the targeted collection violence act.

Finally, this finding helps the study to introduce the first of its theoretical contributions: an attempt at theoretical innovation. Indeed theoretical perspectives reviewed and rich empirical evidence presented in building up to this finding authorise me to suggest a new theoretical model that captures the increasingly recognised centrality of mobilization as a trigger of collective violence: the *Mobilization of Discontent Model.* This model specifically focuses on - and explains the - triggers or processes that intervene between the potential for collective violence and its actualization. Unlike other theoretical models reviewed earlier, this model does not intend to be all encompassing; in other words it is not an attempt to account for all determinants of collective violence. Rather, this model specifically focuses on one key determinant and intends to lay bare its mechanics or modalities. Its scope is therefore

intentionally limited as recognition that no one theory or model can explain every element of the collective violence causal chain.

Arguing that there is a gap in the literature for such a model, I show that, while there are models and theories that account (or at least attempt to account) for other determinants such as structural conditions and the discontent they generate (e.g. relative deprivation); instrumental motives of key actors (e.g. functionalism and/ elite manipulation), no attempt has been made, to best on my knowledge, to design a theoretical model that specifically caters for the triggers of the collective violence. As a first attempt to fill this gap, this model seeks to establish basic principles that underlie mobilization processes that trigger collective violence. It intends to improve our understanding of how collective violence occurs or of what triggers a collective violence act.

Drawing from existing literature and empirical data for this study, the model posits that targeted collective violence (as in the case of xenophobic attacks in South Africa) is triggered by mobilization of collective discontent invariably generated by a wide range of different factors (e.g. relative deprivation, beliefs and rumours, precipitating events, etc.). It is mobilization by 'violence entrepreneurs' that brings together members of the 'aggrieved' group and turns them into actual participants in a targeted collective violence act. Note that the main task of the model is not to explain the origins of the collective discontent but rather the pathways from that discontent to collective violence.

While I believe that the case of xenophobic violence in South Africa provides preliminary support for my proposition and hopefully a useful empirical entry into the workings of mobilization in triggering collective violence and the relevance of the model, further investigation or more specifically more comparative research is needed to consolidate empirical evidence necessary for building the model's methodological and analytical tools

that can help to adequately identify and better understand the forms, variables and processes of a successful mobilization.

7.3 GOVERNANCE AND COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: A MISUNDERSTOOD RELATIONSHIP

The third key finding this study makes is that governance is a key determinant of xenophobic and collective violence but not necessary in ways often assumed or prescribed by time-honoured and widely accepted theoretical predictions, particularly those contending that collective violence and other forms of contentious collective action tend to occur in societies where mechanisms of social control (particularly institutional leadership and authority) have lost their restraining power.

In Chapters Four and Six, I discuss how local governance (referring to all formal and informal systems of order, leadership and authority in a given locality or polity) constitutes a key determinant in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in locations where it occurs. In Chapter Four, I argue that local governance, in terms of local authority and community leadership is a defining factor that explains both the occurrence and absence of xenophobic violence in similar, potentially volatile locations. In Chapter Six, I specifically discuss how local governance played a defining role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa by providing a favourable political opportunity structure and through its use of social and political controls in facilitating violence rather than constraining it.

I argue that local governance played a defining role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence in South Africa by providing a favourable political opportunity structure in two significant ways. On the one hand, official local governance provided locally based and generated socio-political opportunities (which I term *micro-political opportunity structures*) for the occurrence

of xenophobic violence in areas where it occurred. On the other hand, in areas where institutional local authority was weak or absent, violent alternative governance by non-state actors defined new forms of social control and authority that saw violence as, not only a tool to consolidate their power and legitimacy, but also as a 'legitimate' means of protecting or restoring threatened local socio-economic and political orders. In both instances, local governance (formal or informal) deliberately facilitated the occurrence of xenophobic violence in areas where it occurred.

In Chapter VI, I show that this finding sits incongruently with the common and widely accepted understanding of governance and its relationship with collective violence. First, by demonstrating the role of both official and informal governance in the occurrence of violence, this finding challenges the common, if increasingly outdated, understanding of (legitimate) governance and its core function of social and political control as the monopoly of the state. It lends evidence-based support to voices that demand a review of the outdated state-centric approach to governance and an approach that recognizes non-state systems of governance; a perspective on governance that considers the interactions and relevance of both formal and informal processes. As Landau *et al* (2010:166) note: "Officials are not the only wielders of authority and are not necessarily where our analyses should begin."

Second, this finding raises questions about the equally common understating of the relationship between governance and collective violence. It shows that some aspects of this relationship are misunderstood and others are not detected at all. Indeed, the current understanding of this relationship revolves around the role social controls play in preventing collective violence. In other words, analysts often define this relationship in terms of the capacity (or the lack thereof) of the state organs of control to prevent collective violence often perceived as anti-social behaviour. As indicated in Chapter Six, theoretical predictions in this

regard indicate that collective violence and other forms of contentious collective action tend to occur in societies where mechanisms of social control (particularly institutional leadership and authority) have lost their restraining power.

Through this finding, the study challenges these predictions on two main accounts. First, it proves these predictions incorrect by demonstrating that in most cases, violence occurred in areas where local official or state-sanctioned social controls were not absent or weak and had clearly not lost their restraining power. In these cases, instead of attempting to 'restrain' it, present and strong official social and political controls rather sanctioned and facilitated the violence. Second and perhaps more importantly, the study shows that that even in areas where institutional local authority is absent or weak, social controls are not necessarily absent or weak. In other words, the lack of state-sanctioned social controls does not necessarily mean that the entire control system (i.e. governance regime) has collapsed. Instead, the 'unoccupied' space allows the emergence of alternative, informal governance regimes that create new forms of social controls and adopts new modes of enforcement. The new local custodians of social controls used their authority to mobilise communities for violence. In both instances therefore, social controls were a facilitating rather than a restraining factor in the occurrence of xenophobic violence. This finding is further evidence that collective violence is not always a deviant behaviour social controls are there to prevent or contain.

Perhaps the biggest misunderstanding of the relationship between governance and collective violence lies in interconnections yet to be detected. Indeed, in addition to the often misunderstood effect of social controls (as discussed above), the analysis of causal factors of collective violence critically fails to detect the role governance plays in the making of other determinants. I argue that the inability to detect that aspect of the relationship makes current analyses inadequate or incomplete. For example, while there is value in understanding the

effect of governance (in terms of social controls) on collective violence in terms of 'quashing the rebellion' or preventing aggrieved and discontented group members from carrying out a collective violent act, there is also need to investigate the role governance plays in the making of that rebellion or discontent and in the framing of the target group as the source of group members' frustrations in the first place.

While Smelser (1963) discusses the effects social controls could potentially have in thwarting the determinancy of some of the other elements of collective behaviour causal chain, this aspect of the relationship between governance and collective violence is rarely investigated (it has never been to the best of my knowledge) in collective violence research. In the section after next, I explore this undetected aspect of the relationship between governance and collective violence by revealing significant roles governance plays in the making of its co-determinants of xenophobic violence.

7.4 A MULTIVARIATE MODEL OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

Previous chapters provide an empirically based and theoretically informed analysis of i) the social, economic and political dynamics of affected and non-affected areas, ii) the roles and motivations of key players, iii) the trigger factors and, vi) the conditions under which triggers can indeed effectively 'trigger' xenophobic violence. This analysis allows me to suggest a relatively complete outline of the determinants of xenophobic violence i.e. the key conditions that need to be present - and processes that need to take place - for xenophobic violence to occur. While scholars and analysts are yet to reach a consensus on definite list of determinants of collective violence (Vermeersch, 2011), this comparative study suggests the following as the six key determinants of xenophobic violence in South Africa i.e. key elements that need to be present and interact to produce xenophobic violence:

1. *Deprivation* (real or perceived): a sense of socio-economic and/or political hardship (unemployment, scarce business opportunities, lack of housing; poor service delivery, etc.). Xenophobic violence in South Africa indeed violence occurs mostly (although not exclusively) in poor and economically marginal townships and informal settlements where citizens (many of whom are themselves internal migrants) and immigrants meet amidst poor living conditions and a general scarcity of public services, employment and business opportunities (Misago *et al*, 2015). The 'relative deprivation' concept is key here. Community members do not need to be objectively deprived although in some instances they may be. They just need to feel they deserve more than they have;

2. *Beliefs*: deprivation, through social and political scapegoating, engenders pervasive xenophobic sentiments and generalised beliefs that attribute deprivation to the target group (in this case foreign nationals). Residents in violence affected areas expressed their conviction that foreigners are responsible for most of socio-economic ills their communities face;

3. *Discontent*: deprivation and beliefs lead to collective discontent and strong resentment towards the target group (in this case foreign nationals). The 'framing' process (Steinberg, 1998) helps identifying the enemy or the source of the discontent and starts considering potential actions for redress;

4. *Political economy*: or instrumental motives of violence entrepreneurs: in addition to collective discontent and general group grievances, specific and direct political and economic incentives motivate violence entrepreneurs to contemplate the collective violent action against the target group as an effective means to achieve their goals.

Localised political economy acts as an intervening variable between collective discontent and group grievances and mobilization for violence;

5. *Mobilization*: violence entrepreneurs use different mobilization techniques and processes to trigger attacks on foreign nationals: they bring aggrieved community members together and stir them into a collective violent act to remove what they perceive to be the source of their discontent. It is the mobilization of discontent that triggers collective violence;

6. *Governance*: favourable (formal or informal) local governance factors provide mobilization the social and political opportunity structure it needs to take place and eventually succeed in triggering violence. Local governance explains the presence and absence of xenophobic violence in similarly volatile areas because without favourable micro-opportunity structures, xenophobic violence does not occur despite the presence of all other elements in the causal chain. Particularly, governance acts as a powerful intervening variable between mobilization and xenophobic violence as it alters the nature of their relationship depending on whether it acts as a supportive or a thwarting agent.

The value added process: Determinants interact in a value-added process (see Arthur, 2005) to lead to the occurrence of the violence. Each plays an indispensable role and adds its contribution to the contributions of others determinants. Each of these has to be present for the next to assume the status of a determinant (Smelser, 1963). An episode of xenophobic violence would normally not happen if any of these determinants were absent. Together, the determinants constitute sufficient conditions for such an outburst (Ibid). Table I below uses this study's selected research sites to

illustrate that the presence of all determinants discussed above is indispensable for the occurrence of xenophobic violence.

Table I: Determinants of Xenophobic Violence in Research Sites

Determinant / **Site**	*Deprivation*	*Beliefs*	*Discontent*	*Political Economy*	*Mobilization*	(Favourable) *Governance*	***Xenophobic Violence*** (Outcome)
Alexandra Sector II	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***
Alexandra Sector V	x	x	x	x	x		
Atteridgeville	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***
Diepsloot	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***
Du Noon	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***
Itireleng	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***
Madelakufa I	x	x	x	x	x		
Madelakufa II	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***
Masiphumelele	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***
Motherwell	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***
Ramaphosa	x	x	x	x	x	x	***x***

The table shows that two sites (Alexandra Sector 5 and Madelakufa 1) where all determinants were not present did not experience xenophobic violence illustrating the point made earlier

that for an episode of xenophobic violence to occur, all the six determinants or variables need to be present.

In Table II below, I summarise these determinants, their interconnections, empirical explanations and theoretical backing in a multivariate empirical -and integrated theoretical- explanatory model of xenophobic violence.

Table II: A Multivariate Model of Xenophobic Violence[35]

Determinants	**Deprivation**	**Beliefs**	**Discontent**	**Political economy** (intervening variable) **Mobilization**	**Governance** (intervening variable)	**Xenophobic violence**
Explanations	Real or perceived socio-economic and political deprivation	Xenophobic attitudes and beliefs attributing deprivation to foreign nationals	Beliefs lead to collective discontent and strong resentment towards foreign nationals	Instrumental motives of violence entrepreneurs i.e. instigators' political and economic incentives	Trigger: violence entrepreneurs mobilize discontented members of the community for violence	Favourable local governance factors and social controls provide micro-political opportunity structures for mobilization to succeed in triggering violence	Outbreak of violence as a result of value-added process: each determinant playing its specific and indispensable role
Associated theories	• Relative deprivation	• Scapegoating model • Real conflict theory	• Framing theory	• Elite manipulation theory • Rational choice • Functionalism	• Mobilization of discontent model	• Political opportunity structure model	• ***A multivariate model***

[35] Inspired by on Bergmann (2011) and Smelser (1963)

As a synthesis of the determinants (and their associated theoretical approaches) discussed trough different chapters, the model makes its own case (i.e. highlights the need for an integrated empirical and theoretical model of xenophobic violence) while also making even more evident the poverty or incompleteness of existing, mono-causal empirical explanations and reductionist theoretical models that can, at best, account for one factor/determinant but claim to be all encompassing (i.e. to account for all the factors and processes that combine to produce xenophobic violence).

The model clearly illustrates that a complete explanation of xenophobic violence in South Africa (and I believe elsewhere) requires an explanatory model that accounts for multiple causal factors and their interconnections, acknowledges and makes use of existing and new theoretical approaches that explain individual determinants but urges for admission of complementarity rather than isolationism and its related unfounded all-encompassing claims. I agree with Sen (2008:15) that "none of these individual influences, important as they very often are in a fuller picture, can provide an adequate understanding of the causation of widespread violence. […] The interconnections are as important as the elements that have to be connected."

7.5 FROM MULTIVARIATE TO THE GOVERNANCE MODEL OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

The multivariate model I describe above makes it clear that all determinants are important and each plays an indispensable role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence. In other words, xenophobic violence would not happen if any of the determinants were missing. That said however, I argue that governance plays a predominant role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence not only because of its critical contribution as an element in the causal chain but also, and most importantly, due to the significant roles it plays in the making of other

determinants. Indeed, a closer look at other co-determinants reveals that governance actually plays a significant role in their making or has significant effects on their effectiveness or status as determinants. I explain how in the following paragraphs.

Governance (which, as indicated earlier, refers to all formal and informal systems of control, leadership and authority) plays an important role in making ***deprivation*** a determinant of xenophobic violence. Not only governance is involved in the making of (the sense of social, economic and political) deprivation itself (due to poor service delivery, perceived leadership's inability or unwillingness to shield citizens from 'illegitimate' foreign competition for public services and other livelihood opportunities, as well as perceived social and political marginalisation) but also and perhaps most importantly it turns deprivation, a normally neutral factor, into a determinant of xenophobic violence when government officials, political leaders and social opinion makers attribute it to the presence of foreign nationals. In Chapter Three, I discuss how that government officials and political leaders at all levels have often blamed foreigners for poor service delivery citing an increasing strain foreign nationals put on public services and difficulty to adequately 'plan' for their communities due to seemingly unpredictable mass influxes.

Similarly governance plays an even more direct role in the making of xenophobic ***beliefs.*** Indeed, as I discuss in Chapter One, xenophobic in South Africa has both social and institutional roots, the former feeding on - and heavily influenced by - the latter. It is a result of past and current social and political scapegoating (Tshitereke, 1999) and "the result of political ideologies and consciousness - in brief, political subjectivities…" (Neocosmos, 2008:2). Political scapegoating and ideologies are undoubtedly governance factors or processes.

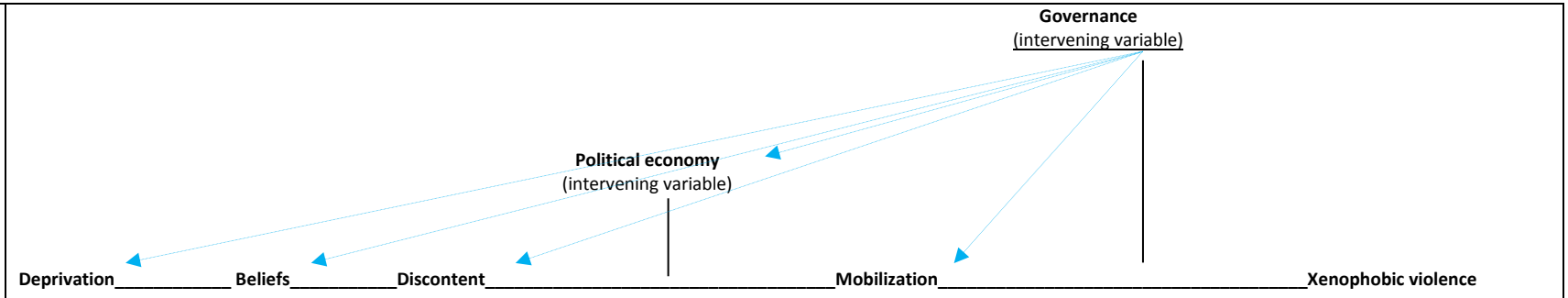
Collective ***discontent*** and strong resentment towards foreign national festered and became mobilizable in locations where local governance lacked effective conflict resolution mechanisms. Indeed in Chapter Six, I show how many of the places where xenophobic violence occurred lacked conflict resolution mechanisms capable of channelling or solving concerns in ways that could diffuse the tensions inherent in any diverse and dynamic community. Being at the origin of negative attitudes towards foreign nationals in the first place and due to its lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms, governance certainly played a significant role in the making of this determinant.

As I indicate in Chapter IV**,** the ***political economy*** of xenophobic violence played out through micro-politics and leadership struggles in affected locations. Local politics and leadership provided both the opportunities and incentives for violence which was organised and led by local leadership groups (formal and/or informal) as an attempt to claim or consolidate the authority and power needed to further their political and economic interests. In this case, governance played a role in the making of this determinant by being both a tool and an incentive or a desired outcome. In other words, violence entrepreneurs used governance (in this case leadership status) to organise violence for economic gain; but they also used xenophobic violence to claim or consolidate monopoly over the legitimacy of the local or community leadership. In this sense, governance effected the determinancy of political economy by being its dependent variable.

Mobilization is perhaps the determinant of xenophobic violence on which governance has the most obvious and direct effect. Indeed as I show in Chapter VI, mobilization does not take place and/or cannot successfully play its role of triggering xenophobic violence without favourable socio-political opportunities governance provides. In other words, governance not only plays a significant role in the making of mobilization but also effects its determinancy.

In sum, the discussion above clearly shows that governance plays a predominant role in the occurrence of xenophobic violence, not because of its role and efficacy as a determinant but particularly because of significant roles it plays in the making of its co-determinants and their interconnections. This leading role allows for a logical framing of xenophobic violence in South Africa as a '*governance issue'* and is the reason I name the multivariate model described earlier the ***Governance Model of Xenophobic Violence.*** Therefore, with added demonstration (by arrows) of the effects of governance on other determinants, the multivariate model becomes the governance model of xenophobic violence I present in Table III below.

Table III: The Governance Model of Xenophobic Violence

Determinants							
Explanations	Real or perceived socio-economic and political deprivation	Xenophobic attitudes and belief attributing deprivation to foreign nationals	Belief leads to collective discontent and strong resentment towards foreign nationals	Instrumental motives of violence entrepreneurs i.e. instigators' political and economic incentives	Trigger: violence entrepreneurs mobilize discontented members of the community for violence	Favourable governance factors and social controls provide a political opportunity structure for mobilization to succeed in triggering violence	Outbreak of violence as a result of value-added process: each determinant playing its specific and indispensable role.
Associated theories	• Relative deprivation	• Scapegoating model • Real conflict theory	• Framing theory	• Elite manipulation theory • Rational choice • Functionalism	• Mobilization of discontent model	• Political opportunity structure model	• ***Governance model of xenophobic violence***

The model lists the key determinants, considers their interdependence, unearths less obvious interconnections and illustrates the predominant role governance play in the occurrence of xenophobic violence. By giving a useful overview of the multiplicity of the empirical causal factors, their interconnections and their individual theoretical backings, the model clearly illustrates the poverty of most explanatory models not only of xenophobic violence but also of collective violence generally. I argue that this makes the model an appropriate tool for integrating empirical and theoretical knowledge from different disciplines and for identifying gaps in existing scholarship.

With regard to limitations, while evidence from this study of xenophobic violence in South Africa provides strong support for my propositions, more empirical evidence from other contexts and preferably other similar types of collective violence is needed for their consolidation. An accurate understanding of the explanatory power of this model certainly requires further investigation. Further research and particularly more comparative work may discover other factors and/or further clarify the roles of the ones the model identifies. That said however, I am convinced that the model is already fairly applicable to other types of collective violence particularly those involving antagonism between different social groups (i.e. different types of community based violence such as tribal violence, ethnic riots, racial violence, religious violence, etc.). It may however require adaptation to respond to peculiarities of each type of collective violence.

7.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

On the whole, this study makes a number of methodological, empirical and theoretical contributions to the understanding of xenophobic violence and collective violence generally. Perhaps the most important contribution is the development of an integrated empirical and theoretical explanatory model that bridges previous and newly identified strands of empirical

and theoretical knowledge in this field. Another important contribution is the suggestion of appropriate methodological and analytical approaches needed to arrive at such a comprehensive explanation.

More research is certainly needed to test the validity of these explanations and analytical approaches and their applicability to other contexts and other relatively similar types of collective violence. Despite the need for further investigations however, I am convinced that this study is a significant step towards a more complete and accurate understanding of the causal factors of xenophobic and collective violence. If nothing else, the study should serve an urgent call for a new scholarship that would revisit the methodological, empirical and theoretical foundations of our current understanding of collective violence causal mechanisms.

Finally, as I indicated in the introduction, the study presents, in addition to its scholarly contributions, potential practical relevance and implications. By clearly identifying the main and critical elements of the causal chain, the study implicitly identifies critical areas where intervention efforts could be targeted in order to stop on-going - and prevent future - xenophobic violence in South Africa. Empirical evidence suggests that responses and intervention strategies to address xenophobic violence in South Africa have largely been ineffective because they are not evidence-based (Misago *et al*, 2015). Interventions have failed to stop on-going or prevent future violence because they are not informed by a clear understanding of key causal factors or determinants. A clear understanding the elements of the violence causal chain and their modes of interaction should help relevant stakeholders in designing more effective interventions strategies. Stakeholders with different mandates and capacities could easily identify intervention areas where their effects are most needed and are likely to have an impact.

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IX. ANNEX I: BASELINE STUDY RESEARCH THEMES

A. For South African Citizens in Areas Affected by the Violence

Nature of communities

- Population composition (majority and minority groups) main language groups, religious groups, political parties, etc.
- Community organisation and leadership (existing local government and political institutions; community forums, youth organisations, etc.)
- Nature of relationship between residents and institutions (trust, legitimacy, authority, etc.)
- Main livelihood activities; current socio-economic conditions : food prices, etc.; Service delivery
- Main problems faced in the area (what people consider to be the main challenges in the area: poverty, unemployment, conflict, different tensions, crime, violence, etc.)
- General atmosphere: main issues communities are and/or are not happy about

History of violence and exclusion

- Conflict, existing tensions, crime, violence and their history (how they started and what is their current nature and intensity)
- Organised violence (taxi violence, service provision protests, etc.); How they are organised and mediated. *Hypothesis:* Violence is a community accepted way of solving problems
- Competing meanings of crime and justice. *Hypothesis:* Communities' understanding of criminality is different from the one of the state (e.g. vigilant groups assign criminality to what is not necessarily defined as such e.g. stealing jobs, women, buying or renting RDP houses, etc.)
- Non-violent exclusion (of those considered not to belong) – jobs, accommodation, opportunities. *Hypothesis:* Structural/institutional immigrant exclusion exacerbates local perceptions that immigrants do not belong and have no rights
- Existing conflict resolution mechanisms (mechanisms people use to resolve conflict in the community – how effective are they?). *Hypothesis:* People resort to violence because there are no effective conflict resolution mechanisms

Understanding of underlying causes

- General trust in institutions (elected officials, political parties & police). *Hypotheses:* i) People have no trust in local institutions (councillors, churches, courts, police, etc.)

that would normally help in conflict resolution; ii) Vigilantism is seen as a natural and legitimate form of community justice

- Political change: ANC leadership and Elections 2009. *Hypothesis*: Recent changes in country's political leadership made people doubt the legitimacy and the authority of existing institutions

- Current socioeconomic conditions: food prices, services, etc.

- Knowledge of previous other cases of anti-foreigner violence – what did you think about violence in Alex, etc. (this to establish people's attitudes towards violence and negative sentiment against foreign nationals)

Profile of non-nationals

- Numbers and demographics: which nationalities, length of time in community, etc. *Hypothesis:* Violence was caused by recent mass influx of immigrants; local communities felt overwhelmed by increasing numbers of new arrivals particularly from Zimbabwe

- Non-national livelihood activities. *Hypothesis:* Foreigners work for low wages. Foreign nationals are preferred by employers over South Africans

- Levels of success of non-national communities. *Hypothesis:* The perceived socio-economic success of foreigners (e.g. access to housing, business, etc.) is considered to have been acquired through illegal means

- Levels of pre-violence integration (use of services such as schools, health facilities, working and living together with South Africans, marriage, etc.)

- What are the perceptions about foreigners in communities? What is the source of these perceptions? *Hypothesis:* There is something criminal about living where you don't belong (being a foreigner/an outsider) stemming probably from the apartheid legacy of spatial segregation

Profile of the violence

- What exactly happened during the violence?

- Understanding of triggers for -or immediate causes- of violence

- Level of coordination and organisation of attacks (who instigated, who carried out, who collaborated; who drove the violence once triggered). *Hypothesis:* A 'third force' was behind the attacks

- Role of community leaders and local authorities. *Hypothesis:* Violence happened where local institutions are weak or considered illegitimate

- Who was targeted during the violence – foreign nationals (which nationalities, women & men) – South African nationals and why. What exactly were they accused of?

- Meanings of the attacks: what was the intention? *Hypothesis*: To send out a clear message that foreigners ('good' or 'bad') are not wanted in communities

- What happened to the victims of the attacks – where did they go – what happened to their homes & shops?

- Why in this particular area and not in others (establish any distinctive characteristics of the area, community)?

Institutional responses to violence or threats thereof

- What, if any, responses were there to threats of violence prior to actual outbreak? *Hypothesis:* Residents expressed their concerns over the presence of migrants but local authorities did not take action

- Who responded to the outbreak of violence: what events took place and by whom were they organised?

- Who were the peacemakers – what did they do; were they listened to?

Consequences of the violence and perspectives on futures interactions

- Views on social and economic impact of the xenophobic violence

- Views on future interactions with ousted immigrants (return, reintegration, etc.) and other immigrants in general

- Have you seen any effort by the government or other relevant institutions/organisations to reintegrate the displaced

B. <u>For South African Citizens in Areas Non-Affected by the Violence</u>

- Nature of community; history of violence and exclusion and profile of non-nationals living in the areas (see details in Section A above)

- Knowledge of May anti-foreigner violence

- Why it did not happen in the area and/or what did communities, leaders do to prevent it?

- How different is the area, the community from other areas that experienced violence?

- Attitudes towards the violence against foreigners (that happened in other areas)

- Attitudes towards the presence of foreigners in the community, in the country

C. *<u>For non-nationals in both Affected and Non-affected Areas</u>*

- Levels of integration prior to violence (e.g. legal status, etc.)

- History of experiences of xenophobic violence and exclusion
- Livelihood activities
- Experiences of recent violence: what happened and how affected?
- Interventions and assistance received
- Current concerns
- Opinions about causes
- Thoughts on future interactions with South Africans (reintegration), etc.
- Views on main issues raised by the residents of the places from where they were displaced