



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***XENOPHOBIA AND THE FALLACY OF THE RAINBOW NATION IN
SELECTED POST- APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICAN NOVELS***

ALSHAJLAWI MUSTAFA MOHAMMED ABDULLAH

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ALSHAJLAWI MUSTAFA MOHAMMED ABDULLAH

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia in
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

July 2021

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DEDICATION

For my Family, for their love and support



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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July 2021

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Xenophobia is increasingly recognized as a serious and worldwide social phenomenon. It is considered as one of the challenging concerns that threaten the social fabric in South Africa. This study focuses on xenophobic representations which are highlighted in selected contemporary South African novels. Previous studies on xenophobia in South African fiction have focussed mostly on the economic and social factors of the phenomenon, however they neglected citizenship attitudes, postcolonial and apartheid legacies. The selected literary texts reflect xenophobia as one of the social concerns that refute the notion of Rainbow Nation that Mandela promised his people to achieve in post-apartheid South Africa. The study argues that the pervasiveness of xenophobic violence in post-apartheid is a result of citizenship attitudes, xenophobic state politics, and the incomplete decolonization from apartheid legacy. I seek to examine the xenophobic violence against black foreigners as reflected in works of fiction through the portrayals of African protagonists living in South Africa. The novels in consideration are: *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* (2001) by Phaswane Mpe, *No Time Like the Present* (2012) by Nadine Gordimer, *Zebra Crossing* (2013) by Meg Vandermerwe, and *Evening Primrose* (2017) by Kopano Matlwa. The three Postcolonial concepts of Michael Neocosmos' citizenship and Frantz Fanon's decolonization and subjectivity are applied as a conceptual framework to investigate the motives behind xenophobic violence against black foreign characters in the aforementioned texts as the selected data for this study. The study also explores how the concepts of citizenship, decolonization, and subjectivity are reflected in the novels through the black African characters' experiences in South Africa. The study is based on a textual analysis of the protagonists' experiences, behaviors, thoughts, and speeches by focusing on how African foreigners undergo oppression, racial prejudice, and xenophobic violence as reflected in the novels. The findings reveal that the appearance of xenophobia in post-apartheid is a result of state politics of citizenship and the incomplete decolonization from apartheid legacy. More significantly, the study falsifies the notion of the Rainbow Nation as the findings conclude that South African characters utilize xenophobic violence as a resistance strategy to form their identities and subjectivities.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**XENOPHOBIA AND THE FALLACY OF THE RAINBOW NATION IN
SELECTED POST- APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICAN NOVELS**

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Xenofobia merupakan fenomena sosial yang serius dan semakin dikenali di seluruh dunia. Ia dianggap sebagai salah satu masalah mencabar yang menggugat fabrik sosial di Afrika Selatan. Tesis ini menumpukan kepada representasi xenofobia yang diketengahkan di dalam novel kontemporari Afrika Selatan. Kajian lampau keatas xenofobia dalam fiksyen Afrika Selatan lebih banyak menumpukan kepada ekonomi dan faktor sosial fenomena tersebut, namun mengabaikan sikap kewarganegaraan, pascakolonial dan legasi apartheid. Teks sastera yang terpilih menggambarkan xenofobia sebagai salah satu masalah sosial yang menyangkal konsep Rainbow Nation yang dijanjikan oleh Mandela kepada rakyatnya ketika pasca apartheid di Afrika Selatan. Kajian ini mempertikaikan kekerapan keganasan xenofobia dalam pasca apartheid adalah akibat daripada sikap kewarganegaraan, tahap xenofobia politik dan penyahjajahan tak lengkap daripada legasi apartheid. Kajian ini mengkaji keganasan xenofobia terhadap orang asing kulit hitam seperti yang digambarkan dalam karya fiksyen melalui gambaran watak protagonis Afrika yang menetap di Afrika Selatan. Novel-novel yang terlibat adalah: *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* (2001) oleh Phaswane Mpe, *No Time Like the Present* (2012) oleh Nadine Gordimer, *Zebra Crossing* (2013) oleh Meg Vandermerwe dan *Evening Primrose* (2017) oleh Kopano Matlwa. Tiga konsep pascakolonial kewarganegaraan Michael Neocosmos dan penyahjajahan Frantz Fanon dan subjektiviti digunakan sebagai kerangka konsep untuk mengkaji motif disebalik keganasan xenofobia terhadap watak orang asing kulit hitam dalam teks-teks terpilih tersebut. Kajian ini mengkaji bagaimana konsep kewarganegaraan, penyahjajahan dan subjektiviti digambarkan dalam novel-novel tersebut melalui pengalaman watak orang kulit hitam Afrika di Afrika Selatan. Kajian ini berdasarkan kepada analisis teks bagi pengalaman watak protagonis, tingkah laku, pemikiran, ujaran dengan menumpukan bagaimana orang asing Afrika melalui penindasan, prejudis kaum dan keganasan xenofobia seperti yang digambarkan di dalam novel-novel tersebut. Dapatan menunjukkan kemunculan xenofobia dalam pasca apartheid adalah akibat daripada keadaan politik kewarganegaraan dan penyahjajahan tak lengkap daripada legasi apartheid. Terutamanya, kajian ini menyangkal konsep Rainbow Nation setelah dapatan menyimpulkan watak-watak Afrika Selatan menggunakan keganasan

xenofobia sebagai strategi penentangan untuk membentuk identiti mereka dan subjektiviti.



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The time for the healing of the wounds has come. The moment to bridge the chasms that divide us has come. The time to build is upon us. We have, at least, achieved our political emancipation. We pledge ourselves to liberate all our people from the continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discriminations (Qtd in Nur, 2015, p.56).

1.1 Background of the Study

Increasingly, xenophobia is recognized as a grave, international, and public phenomenon. Its foremost features contain slaughter, attacks causing serious bodily harm, robbing, theft, burning of property, dislocation, terrorization and threats, persecution, removal warnings, etc. Xenophobia originates from the Greek “terms *xénos* fear and *phóbos* stranger or guest. Interestingly, the second meaning, guest, lost its soundness, and is interpreted as fear of strange” (Bhatia 2009, p.453). M.S. Bhatia in his book *The Dictionary of Psychology and Allied Sciences* (2009) describes xenophobia as “an irrational and excessive fear of strangers or strange (foreign) cultures, which can often become converted into intense, Jingoistic patriotism and/or racial or cultural prejudice” (p.453). In the same way, David Matsumoto in his book *The Cambridge Dictionary of Psychology* (2009), affirms that xenophobia is:

An abnormal fear of strangers or people from different countries, cultures, subcultures, ethnicities, social classes, or any other identifiably different social group. In both humans and other animals, it is often associated with territoriality, and those perceived as intruders are met with hostility and sometimes physical aggression (p.584).

previous research has recognised the acceleration in public xenophobic attitudes toward ethnic factions worldwide for instance in Europe during the last decade, some of the most prominent occurrences involved burning outbreaks of houses inhabited by migrants and refugees in areas like Lubeck, Hoyerswerda, Rostock, and Molln. In fact, between 2000 and 2015, eight European Union states witnessed a rising inclination in documented bigoted and xenophobic criminalities, including Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Slovakia, Finland and the United Kingdom.

In Africa, some of the obvious expressions of xenophobia have been the menace of exclusion of strange residents, unreasonable expulsion, and on many occasions, fierce outbreaks against non-citizens have obliged many to go back to their nations (Oni and Okunade 2018). Specifically, in South Africa, the biggest and most horrific attack erupted in the Johannesburg shantytown of Alexandra in May 2008, and which rapidly escalated into a rampant nationwide bloodbath. The assailants were black South Africans who absolutely targeted African migrants (Matsinhe 2011). In 2019, uprisings and raiding targeting workshops possessed by overseas residents occurred in Jeppetown and Johannesburg. About 50 industries mainly possessed by black Africans from the rest of the continent were allegedly demolished or damaged through the occurrence. On 25 March 2019, xenophobic uprisings targeting black African migrants broke out in Sydenham, Jadhoo Place, and Overport places of Durban. About one hundred individuals attacked industries possessed by African residents, causing about 50 individuals looking for housing in a local police center and mosque. Tens and thousands of foreigners have been harassed, beaten and murdered due to the xenophobic violence in South Africa (Matsinhe 2011).

After the collapse of the apartheid in 1991, elections, enabling blacks to vote, were conducted for the first time in 1994, and Nelson Mandela was nominated as the first black South African president. Mandela launched a project of nation-building and an ideology of inclusiveness under the term *Rainbow Nation*. The economic growth, political stability, and reconciliation between the Whites and the Blacks have put South Africa on the map and made it a perfect destination for black foreigners from neighboring countries. President Mandela promised his people that the new age of democracy would change the lives of the people for the best, and South Africa would become a rainbow nation that welcomed everyone who lived on its soil. Archbishop Desmond Tutu coined the term rainbow nation during a speech in 1989 (Blaser, 2004; Ramsamy, 2007). The term was used later by Nelson Mandela in his inauguration speech, whereby he welcomed and promised everyone in South Africa of equal rights. However, South Africa saw the resurgence of xenophobia as a reaction to numerous factors such as the country's financial deterioration, the unchangeable conditions of deficiency of South Africans in the post-apartheid period, incomplete liberation, and the continuation of apartheid among other factors. The miscarriage of the state to accomplish its promises after the downfall of apartheid resulted in the riots of xenophobic violence against African refugees as they were alleged as a hazard and contestants over scarce resources. Xenophobia has been an object of research since the end of the apartheid age in South Africa.

The Mass media, reports on the United Nations, cultural studies, and human rights take xenophobic acts of violence in South Africa seriously. In 2006 and 2007, the consortium for refugees and migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) estimated that more than 100 Somalis were murdered throughout the state. Their businesses were also robbed and burnt. In one occurrence, thirteen Somali storekeepers were killed in their workshops in a town near Cape Town, but nothing had been taken from their shops (2010).

Thus, apart from social studies, xenophobia has also taken precedence in literary studies where writers and novelists have addressed issues of xenophobic violence and hostility against foreigners. Xenophobia has been the concerns of numerous studies in English literature around the world. Rajani Sudan in his book *Fair Exotics: Xenophobic Subjects in English Literature, 1720–1850* (2002), demonstrates the first use of the word xenophobia in English literature in 1909 when the writer observed and reflected on some xenophobic attitudes from English citizens towards foreign nationals sometime in the 19th century. Xenophobia was the subject of focus in *Fear, Loathing, and Victorian Xenophobia* by Tromp *et al*, who explored how xenophobia had developed and the factors that caused it to surge both as an affective and social phenomenon. Their book looked back on the Victorian era and outlined the countless strains that led to the dread and hate of the strangers, refugees, foreigners, ethnic, racial, religious and others (Tromp *et al*, 2013).

Numerous South African novels deal with the topic of xenophobia, among them, Nadine Gordimer's *The Pickup* (2001), which tackles the plight of an Egyptian refugee who was displaced and deported from South Africa to Egypt with his wife. Among other topics, the novel reflects the xenophobic attitudes of citizens toward African nationals living in the country. In the same sense, Niq Mhlongoe, another outstanding South African novelist, explores the topic of xenophobia in his novels. In 2007, Mhlongoe published his second novel, *After Tears*, which was released after the outbreak of violence in South Africa. Shortly after these attacks Niq Mhlongoe was invited to Ghana to attend the Pan-African Literary Forum luncheon, where he commented, “[n]ow after the attacks, it is very embarrassing to travel as a South African because what happened ha[s] earned us a xenophobic name tag” (Fasselt, 2014, p.15). Most of these aforementioned novels depict the lives of immigrants and refugees in Cape Town and other places in South Africa and reflect their defenceless lives in the state. *Welcome to our Hillbrow* (2001) by Phaswane Mpe is considered as one of the first novels to openly explore the topic of xenophobia. In the novel, the main character and later his beloved, both commit suicide after their forced separation because of her Nigerian origins. Xenophobia has also been depicted in, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* by K. Sello Duiker (2001). The novel reveals the hardships and the challenges experienced by African nationals in their quest to survive in South Africa. The novel explores post-apartheid themes such as xenophobia and its influence on outsiders in South Africa (Saayman, 2016).

Previous research on xenophobia in South African literature highlighted the struggle between black foreigners and South African citizens and underscored the concern of xenophobia. Previous studies focused on the competition between foreigners and citizens over scarce resources and highlighted those foreigners are flooding into the country and causing all the social ills. However, these studies missed focusing on the legacy of apartheid and the political discourse of the post-apartheid and their roles in generating and encouraging xenophobic culture. This thesis focuses on both the old oppressed and the new oppressors through the experiences of black African foreigners in South Africa and the xenophobic violence against them. To the best knowledge of the researcher these aspects have not been fully explored in modern South African fiction.

The writers in question are contemporary South Africans, who lived and witnessed apartheid and post-apartheid periods in South Africa. Thus, I examine the concerns of xenophobic violence in South Africa across a range of fiction: *Welcome to our Hillbrow* (2001) by Phaswane Mpe, *No Time Like the Present* (2012) by Nadine Gordimer, *Zebra Crossing* (2013) by Meg Vandermerwe and *Evening Primrose* (2017) by Kopano Matlwa. The texts are examined by utilising the concepts of Michael Neocosmos' *Citizenship* which claim that xenophobic violence in the state is an outcome of state policies and governmental attitude of citizenship and exclusionary attitudes. Frantz Fanon's *Decolonization* is applied as a second concept in order to conceptualize the violence between black South African colonizers and black African colonized in post-apartheid South Africa. Moreover, Fanon's *Subjectivity* is devoted as a third concept in order to trace the reasons and the motives of xenophobia in post-apartheid South Africa. Subjectivity is considered as a positive achievement and conclusion of any revolution. However, in the present study, subjectivity is achieved at the cost of oppressing and violating the brotherhood of other African states. In addition, the study attempts to question the notion of the rainbow nation due to this ongoing violence and the xenophobic attacks targeting blacks from African countries.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

A large and growing body of literature has investigated the concern of xenophobia in English literature around the world because xenophobic violence has become a worldwide, substantial phenomenon and a public concern. Observed readings of xenophobia in South Africa are wide and complete in South African fiction. For instance, John Eliastam in his study "Re-Storing xenophobia in South Africa: A post foundational, Narrative Explorations of Ubuntu in the Eastern Cape" (2015) suggests that xenophobia is a result of common notions and stereotypes about migrants who steal jobs, bring disease or break the law. Through the application of Ubuntu ideology, this study aims to reflect the challenges faced by African nationals living in the state and the motives behind such xenophobic violence. The study concluded that foreigners are a burden on the state and that they are the cause of moral corruption in South Africa. Eliastam however, fails to focus on the role of state politics and the apartheid legacies in generating and feeding xenophobic violence in South Africa. Oluwaseun Tella in her article "Understanding Xenophobia in South Africa: The Individual, the State, and the International System" reveals the hatred and xenophobic attitudes against foreigners and asserts that foreigners were consuming South African incomes at the expense of its citizens (2016). However, a major problem with this kind of research is that these studies have focused on and blamed foreigners for causing the economic decay and crisis, while they have ignored the roles of state politics and apartheid legacies in generating xenophobic violence in South Africa.

In addition to corruption, economic decay, HIV-AIDS, and other topics, enophobia has become a significant subject in the fiction of post-apartheid South Africa. Xenophobia is highlighted in Hardev Kaur's study, *Apartheid and The Reconciliation Process in Post – Apartheid Novels of South Africa* (2012). She explored *Welcome to our Hillbrow*, one of the novels examined in my study. The author emphasised that "non-South Africans were frequently used as scapegoats for all shortcomings that occurred at

the end of apartheid” (2012, p.104). The researcher adds that the violence committed against Africans is also due to their foreign accent and being seen as sources of crime and grime. As such, though the thesis discusses violence against migrants in South Africa, it fails to investigate political discourse and its role in generating xenophobia in the state. In addition, the research offers hope and concludes that a process of reconciliation is possible among black Africans and black South Africans, just as it was possible between black and white South Africans. Moreover, the study employed the negritude concept as a theoretical approach which differs from my application and conclusion.

Concerning xenophobia in South Africa, very little research has been undertaken to inspect the drives and the motives of the xenophobic violence against black foreigners living in the state. However, xenophobia comes under focus in Polona Zajec’s article “Understanding South African Xenophobia through the Prism of J.M. Coetzee’s *Summertime Scenes from a Provincial Life*” (2017). Zajec explores xenophobia in post-apartheid South Africa and suggests that xenophobia can be a serious social and economic issue which threatens the African brotherhood. However, unlike my study, these works posit that xenophobic violence in the country is a result of the pouring of foreigners into the state and that this violence is due to social and economic factors only. While these studies have immensely contributed to the body of literature, they did not shed light on the role of the country’s politics in South Africa and the shadow of apartheid that still affects and generates xenophobic violence. Furthermore, these studies also lack the theoretical framework that is utilised in the current study.

Xenophobia has historically gained the eminence of a worldwide phenomenon. It is not a one-continent concern as it has been essentially experienced in one way or another across various continents of the world. Noticeably, previous studies have focused on the economic and social motives of xenophobia, yet they neglected the hegemonic political discourse of the post-apartheid government, the historical background, legacy and implications of apartheid and their roles in maintaining xenophobia in South Africa. In addition, these studies lack the conflation of the postcolonial concepts of Michael Neocosmos and Frantz Fanon which I have employed in investigating and examining this phenomenon. There is hardly any research, so far, which examines xenophobic violence between black Africans and black South African citizens and which combines the selected concepts and novels for this research.

Neocosmos in his *Citizenship* claims that xenophobic violence in the state is an outcome of the state’s policies and governmental discourse of exclusion and citizenship attitudes. There is hardly any research so far that employs Neocosmos’ *Citizenship* in examining xenophobia in the selected texts. Moreover, *Decolonization* by Fanon is applied numerously to conceptualize the violence between white colonizers and black colonized. Yet, the current study is one of the first attempts to apply the concept of *Decolonization* in examining the xenophobic violence among black people themselves. Moreover, Subjectivity is considered as a positive achievement and conclusion of any revolution. Yet, in the present study subjectivity is achieved at the cost of oppressing and violating the brotherhood of other African states.

Moreover, the study argues that xenophobic violence is not restricted to different races and colours, but can be inflicted among societies of the same race and colour. The study claims that xenophobia in South Africa is not solely attributed to financial or communal reasons, but also to the continuum of apartheid, hegemonic governmental discourse and incomplete decolonization that encourage and maintain xenophobic violence. Likewise, I hypothesize that apartheid has not actually been dismantled or forgotten, and xenophobia is an implication and a consequence of the past history of South Africa in the selected texts.

More significantly, the study claims that South Africans employ xenophobic violence as a self-defence mechanism and a resistance strategy to actualize themselves and redefine their subjects, form their new identity and achieve subjectivity. Thus, although apartheid has been mainly dismantled by creating what is called the *Rainbow Nation*; this study aims to test the validity of this claim in the selected novels.

From all the theses and articles published in journals and other publications available on the literary works of the selected novelists, there are none that are topically related to the current study nor has anyone selected the combination of the said four novels to scrutinize xenophobia in the post-apartheid era in South Africa. Furthermore, there is no research so far, that applies the concept of *Subjectivity* on black colonizers and black colonized examining the same texts. Thus, the study claims that South Africans have become the new oppressors and the neo-black colonizers after the supposed liberation.

In addition, there are also insufficient readings of the literary texts that I have nominated for this research as far as xenophobia is concerned, which adds to the uniqueness of the study. As such, this study seeks to address these gaps by tackling the phenomenon of xenophobia in the light of Michael Neocosmos' *Citizenship* and Frantz Fanon's concepts of *Decolonization* and *Subjectivity*. In light of the above, the novels *Welcome to our Hillbrow* (2001) by Phaswane Mpe, *No Time Like the Present* (2012) by Nadine Gordimer, *Zebra Crossing* (2013) by Meg Vandermerwe and *Evening Primrose* (2017) by Kopano Matlwa will address and incorporate the following objectives.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To explore the xenophobic acts of violence in South Africa in light of Michael Neocosmos' *Citizenship* as portrayed in the selected novels.
2. To examine the motives behind the appearance of xenophobia in South Africa in light of Frantz Fanon's *Decolonization* as reflected in the selected novels.
3. To examine the role of xenophobic violence in forming the new South African subject in light of Fanon's concept of *Subjectivity* as demonstrated in the selected novels.

The first objective of the present research will explore and identify the different representations of xenophobic violence against black foreigners as reflected in the selected novels in light of Michael Neocosmos' *Citizenship*. Xenophobic violence in South Africa, as the texts suggest, is maintained and nurtured by the exclusionary state policies and the governmental rhetoric. As reflected in the texts, governmental agents in South Africa, apart from aiding and abetting, practise xenophobia as well, as will be shown in the analysis in chapter four. Thus, the concept of *Citizenship* will be applied to back up my argument and uncover the role of the governmental discourse in encouraging and nurturing xenophobia in South Africa.

The second objective will be achieved through the employment of Fanon's concept of *Decolonization* and his interpretations on xenophobic violence. By applying this concept on the selected texts, the study will offer new insights and a novel understanding of the phenomenon of xenophobia. Fanon's warnings and prophecies about the unsuccessful decolonization, incomplete liberation, and the pitfalls of the national consciousness proved to be relevant in the case of South Africa. Fanon states in *The Wretched* that incomplete liberation will lead to a state of neocolonialism and this will shatter the dream of democracy. Thus, the application of Fanon's concept will lead to the full exploration of the selected novels and will offer a new understanding of the implications of apartheid and the motives behind the pervasiveness of xenophobia in South Africa.

In the third objective I will apply Fanon's concept of *Subjectivity* on the selected texts. Black refugees in South Africa are perceived as an extension and a legacy of apartheid and colonialism. As depicted in the novels, South Africans believe that black foreigners who are pouring into their country represent a threat to their lives and livelihood. They steal their jobs and women, and hinder their prosperity. Furthermore, many South Africans believe that nothing has changed in their lives after liberation because of these foreigners. Thus, according to Fanon, they employ xenophobic violence against them as a strategic resistance and self-defence mechanism to achieve subjectivity, and as a means to regain the self-respect and self-actualization that they lost during the era of colonialism and apartheid, as will be demonstrated in the analysis. Hence, the research concludes that xenophobic violence is necessary for South Africans in order to redefine themselves towards *Subjectivity* and this will falsify the notion of the *Rainbow Nation*.

1.4 Research Questions

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How does state politics of *Citizenship* motivate and generate xenophobia against foreigners as reflected in the selected novels?
2. What role does *Decolonization* play in the prevalence of xenophobia in South Africa as portrayed in the selected novels?
3. How xenophobic violence is utilised as a resistance strategy towards identity formation and *Subjectivity* as presented in the selected novels?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Literature is replete with the perception of xenophobic violence against minorities. However, there is no satisfactory research on its dynamism, nature and different exhibitions in South Africa's contemporary fiction. It is significant to conduct a study of this nature because of the destructive consequences of a phenomenon like xenophobia. Consequently, an analytical study aimed at understanding the relationship between locals and foreigners in a post-apartheid South Africa, the underlying reasons for the antagonism between them and how South African citizens utilise xenophobic violence as a self-defence mechanism towards identity formation. Regarding xenophobia in South Africa, very little research has been undertaken to inspect what drives it to the forefront in contemporary fiction, by employing the selected concepts. The narrative mostly emphasises the prevalence of xenophobia and justifies most of the claims or insights by South Africans about African refugees. It does not, however, focus on the role of the governmental discourse, nor does it provide an in-depth analysis and/or the real reasons for this scourge of xenophobia from a postcolonial point of view.

The current study posits a great significance as it not only enriches the scholarship on xenophobia and the concepts under consideration, but it also helps to better understand how the process of oppression has changed in the post-apartheid era. The significance of this study is obvious as the resulting outcomes can be capitalized as guidelines to offer a new understanding of the real reasons for xenophobia, to change the common account that xenophobia is nothing more than a social issue, and to refute the misconception of South Africa as being the rainbow nation and dispel such a notion as a fallacy. More importantly, although previous research applied Fanon's ideologies to theorize the struggle between white colonizers and black colonized, it must be noted that the current research uses Fanon's concepts to investigate the struggle of black colonizers and black colonized in South Africa. The study will highlight the changing roles of the oppressed and the oppressors in South Africa and present at the same time, black people as being both oppressed and oppressors, colonizers and colonized, subjects and others as reflected in the texts.

The significance of this study also lies in examining novels from different timelines, different writers, white and black novelists, to inspect xenophobia from different perspectives. This underscores the real motives and reasons for xenophobia and its effect on immigrant characters and the social fabric in South Africa. In sum, this thesis aspires to support and close the gap in knowledge and study concerning xenophobia in post 1994 South Africa. The study adds to the existing discourse by offering new insight and understanding of the real reasons behind xenophobia in South Africa. It proves that xenophobia is indeed predominant and that to effectively understand this pathology, the prevalence of xenophobia at the individual, state and interstate levels requires a realistic and inclusive study.

1.6 Conceptual/ Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is comprised of Michael Neocosmos' *Citizenship* and Frantz Fanon's *Decolonization* and *Subjectivity* from the postcolonial theory. Three concepts shall be employed to investigate, examine, and analyse the xenophobic representations in the selected novels for this research in order to reveal the reasons behind such a phenomenon. Neocosmos states that "xenophobia in South Africa is a direct effect of particular kind of politics, a particular kind of state politics in fact which is associated with a specific discourse of citizenship" (2010, p.3). He asserts that xenophobia ought to be accepted as a political discourse and practice. As such, its chronicled advancement and the state of its reality must be clarified as far as the practices and remedies which structure the field of legislative issues. South Africa's history is personally associated with the way in which citizenship has been imagined and battled about for the previous fifty years at least. He claims that the precise differential management of nationals and outsiders in South Africa during this time, with some having the privilege to rights while others do not, has had similar impacts. The different political performers in this nation have enabled their political culture to give the establishment to xenophobia and inter-ethnic brutality (2010). After the supposed liberation, the government has demarcated citizenship in terms of indigeneity, so that the right of admittance to the South African employment has been progressively defined in terms of decent. Strangers then, approached to be regarded as the non-indigenous (Neocosmos, 2010).

Equally, Fanon maintains in *Black Skin White Mask* that one needs to return to the real so that he can reach the root of the problem. This turn to the real takes us to Fanon's conception of hegemony founded on wholesome dynamism. Repressed and organised by the colonial structure, the natives tolerate a living death in a state of violence. Striving for sheer existence, Fanon opined that this violent state, disadvantaged of a suitable channel against its actual cause, leads to violence turned against his own people. Apartheid is basically the reasonable end of a regulation that is intended to demonstrate to the colonized to learn to stay in their place and not move outside of the specific restrictions (Fanon, 1968).

Fanon, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, maintains that colonisation is totalitarian, with the 'native' experiencing domination internally and externally. In fact, there is no occupation of the country, he argues, without the occupation of the people and thus, there is no liberation of the country without the liberation of all the people. Colonisation is a complete experience. Constructed on spatial segregation and subjugation, the natives are controlled and repetitively prompted not to revolt. In this perspective, emancipation involves the breaking down of these inner and exterior obstructions (1968). Thus, decolonization has to be a complete and successful process.

Fanon states that the colonial system requires certain varieties of bias to validate itself in ethical expressions and so as merely to function in concrete standings. The discount of native bias to the unreasonable also forestalls any confrontation by anticipating it as sensitive. Violence is the resolution for Fanon here. "At the level of individuals", he

adds that, “Violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect” (Fanon, 1967, p.74). Fanon affirms that violence becomes an inevitability for the occupied, “their mad impulse to murder in the expression of the native's collective unconscious. If they fail to express their violence, it overwhelms them, to free themselves, they even massacre each other” (1968, p.18).

The persecuted who are brutalised by the persecutor’s violence also turn that violence against themselves when they lose the realisation and order to fight back. But they recover their identity, regain their history, reconstruct their connection, and forge their future through violence. By violence, they eliminate the principal obstruction to their civilisation and they acclimatize themselves (1968, p. 22). Thus, the study is concerned with the implications and imprints of the apartheid on the social, cultural, psychological, and political lives of the South African natives in the post-apartheid era. In addition, the research examines the changing roles of oppressors and oppressed. The effects of apartheid have placed the old oppressed as the new oppressors in post-apartheid South Africa.

Moreover, colonial power represented by apartheid in South Africa has left a negative imprint on the colonized subjects (South Africans) concerning their religious, political, socio-economic, and cultural lives. The long-time process of oppression during colonialism has turned Africans against each other in the post-apartheid era. The South Africans, after the shallow democratization and the government’s failure to deliver the promises of a better life due to a wrong state politics of citizenship have turned to oppress and humiliate the Africans from other countries. Fanon states that “The colonized man will manifest this aggressiveness which has been posited in his bones against his own people. This is the period when the niggers beat each other up” (1968, 52).

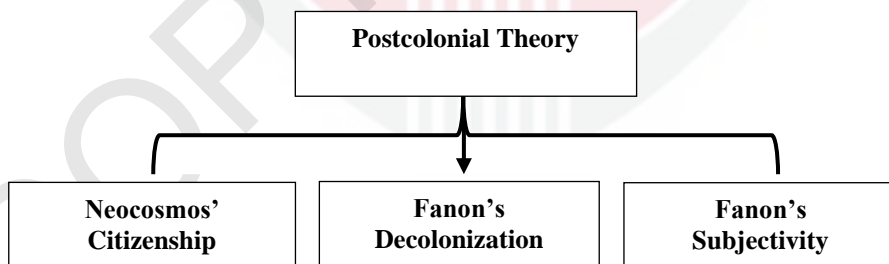


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The concern of xenophobia is traced in the context of South Africa in the post-apartheid era. The following four selected literary texts will be the subject of focus:

Welcome to our Hillbrow (2001) by Phaswane Mpe, *No Time Like the Present (2012)* by Nadine Gordimer, *Zebra Crossing (2013)* by Meg Vandermerwe, and *Evening Present (2017)* by Kopano Matlwa. The study will focus on the main characters and their experiences as migrants in the novels.

Xenophobia in the selected texts is examined through the Postcolonial theory. Michael Neocosmos' *Citizenship* and Fanon's *Decolonization and Subjectivity* will be the concepts that I aim to examine xenophobia. Applying the concepts of Neocosmos and Fanon will not only offer an in-depth understanding of the real reasons for xenophobia and its origins in South Africa, but will also throw light on its old and new notions. These readings of Fanon and Neocosmos constitute the conceptual framework of the study. Xenophobia has been studied largely from a social, political, and economic perspective, whereas my research is carried out from a postcolonial approach. The research is limited to xenophobia in the South African context in the post-apartheid era. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine xenophobia in other African states. The research is also limited to the experiences of black African foreigners in South Africa.

1.8 Justification of Text Selection

The literary texts selected for the study are diverse so that the reader can get various viewpoints about the phenomenon of xenophobia. *Welcome to our Hillbrow (2001)* is one of the first novels that openly discusses the topic of xenophobia. Phaswane Mpe is considered as one of the first novelists who explored the concerns of xenophobia in South Africa, so it is significant to analyse the novel in order to examine the first deep portrayal of the problem and its development later in South African contemporary fiction. The text received critical acclaim and is considered as having laid the foundation for other novelists to write about post-apartheid themes such as xenophobia. Nadine Gordimer is a noble prize winner and her novel will add more significance and depth to the study. Gordimer is a white South African writer who observes the communal and political realities of South Africa. Born and bred in South Africa, the apartheid and post-apartheid eras have had a crucial effect on her life and that has enabled her to capture the details and realities of South African society. *No Time Like the Present (2012)* is her last novel, thus it is imperative to analyse such a novel from a writer of such calibre, to inspect the topic of xenophobia. The novel is the most inclusive work of narrative to explore the extensiveness of concerns challenging South Africa and its people today (Will, 2013, p.170), like financial inequality, joblessness, HIV-AIDS, exploitation, criminality, migration and xenophobia.

Zebra Crossing (2013) by Meg Vandermerwe depicts the plight of a female character from Zimbabwe and her journey to South Africa. The novel is set against the backdrop of the World Cup 2010 and is narrated by a female character who offers a new and differing viewpoint concerning the xenophobic violence in South Africa. The selection of this novel lies in its representation of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, and the rumours that were rife then about foreigners being kicked out of the country after the competition ended. *Evening Primrose (2017)* by Kopano Matlwa is a very recent and significant novel. It has been published in four countries and translated into three

languages, and there has been hardly any research about it examining xenophobia using the selected concepts so far. The novel portrays the xenophobic violence against the migrants and how the main female character had to leave South Africa because of the threats and dangers to her life. These novelists have been selected because their literary texts are contemporary; they have experienced the apartheid and post-apartheid eras in South Africa and know how to portray the virulence of xenophobia. These four selected texts tackle the same theme of xenophobia; hence it is convenient to study them together.

Nonetheless, selecting the postcolonial theory for the study is definitely justified. Undeniably, South Africa specifically has experienced two types of colonialism, namely British colonisation and the apartheid colonialism in the last five decades. So, by considering apartheid as a colonial period would mean that the problems that appeared in post-apartheid South Africa, such as financial decay, migration, discrimination, and xenophobic violence, could be deliberated as postcolonial inheritances. Thus, postcolonial theory is most applicable to examining and scrutinizing the phenomenon of xenophobia since it is a postcolonial legacy. Apartheid rule has imposed the government with many societal, political, financial, and psychological developments that were raised in the postcolonial phase. Michael Neocosmos is a South African critic who theorized the appearance of xenophobia in his books and articles. Neocosmos is up-to-date thinker who lives in South Africa and one who has observed the carnages of xenophobia; hence his theories about them are far more precise and reliable. As such, I find Neocosmos' theories to be relevant and which can best support and back up my analysis. Frantz Fanon is considered as one of the foremost authorities and pioneering theorists in postcolonialism. His significant theorizations on postcolonial Africa are deemed necessary to support and back up my analysis. He is very knowledgeable about the continent, and his conceptualizations proved to be valid long after his death. Fanon's concepts of *Decolonization and Subjectivity* justify the prevalence of xenophobia in contemporary South Africa. He prophesized that any state would fail without complete decolonization. So, I believe the concepts that I chose will positively support my analysis.

1.9 Definitions of Terms

1. **Xenophobia:** is an unusual dread of outsiders or individuals from various nations, societies, subgroups, ethnicities, social classes, or some other recognisably unique social gathering. It is regularly connected with territoriality, and those apparent as strangers are met with an antagonistic vibe and some of the time physical hostility (Matsumoto, 2009).
2. **Apartheid:** actually, implies distinctiveness, and this word was coined by the Afrikaner state to direct the physical partition of the four primary races of South Africa: white, dark, hued, and Indian. (Bond, 2010).
3. **Citizenship:** is the new structure by which the state defines its citizens and resolves who has access to the rights. These rights indicate the supremacy of nationality in accepting the occurrence of xenophobia. Citizenship and xenophobia are contrived by the government, both under apartheid and post-apartheid practises of regulation (Neocosmos, 2010).

- 4- **Decolonization:** is the nationwide emancipation, national resurgence, and the reestablishment of nationhood for the people. Decolonization is basically the substituting of a certain "species" of man by another "species" of man. (Fanon, 1968).
- 5- **Neocolonialism:** The word neocolonialism commonly embodies the engagements and effects of certain legacies of structures and proxies of the colonial epoch in a particular civilization (Sartre, 1964)
- 6- **Subjectivity:** is the desire of the black subject to be free from domination. Fundamentally, that blackness must wage a tenacious fight for emancipation. This is the fundamental imperative for the black subject to move from the existential state of dehumanization to what Fanon terms as a new humanism. Therefore, those lacking subjectivity are engaged in violence in order to gain an entity (Fanon, 1968).
- 7- **The Rainbow Nation:** A term was invented by Archbishop Desmond Tutu to describe post-apartheid South Africa after the first democratic, multi-racial election of 1994. Nelson Mandela then picked up on this colourful image, when he said during his very first month in office: "Each of us is as intimately attached to the soil of this beautiful country as are the famous jacaranda trees of Pretoria and the mimosa trees of the bushveld – a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world." (Moller, 1999).

1.10 Scheme of the Thesis

The current study endeavours to analyse the phenomenon of xenophobia in the selected novels and to locate its reasons and roots in the state politics of the post-apartheid system on the one hand, and under the apartheid shadows on the other hand. The study will rely on primary sources, which are the selected texts, and on secondary sources, which include relevant textbooks, theses, publications from academic journals, and internet sources. The focus of my analysis will be on the scenes of xenophobic violence and migration which are portrayed through the main characters in the selected texts. The theoretical approach to be applied shall include the post-colonial concepts of *Citizenship* by Michael Neocosmos from his book *From Foreign Natives to Native Foreigners* 2010, in addition to *Decolonization* and *Subjectivity* by Frantz Fanon from his books *The Wretched of the Earth* 1968 and *Black Skin White Mask* 1967.

Chapter one is an introduction to the topic of the study. It offers a general background to the study, rationalises it, establishes the statement of the problem, and provides the significance, scope, and research questions, and aims, as well as the theoretical framework of the study. In the second chapter of my thesis, the study will review the existing literature on the topic of my research. The first part provides a historical background to the phenomenon of xenophobia, its definitions, roots and its representation worldwide, in African and South African literatures. Its middle section will be dedicated to reviewing the presence of xenophobic outbreaks in the African continent, and specifically in South Africa. The section depicts the extent of work already done on the selected fiction in terms of the issues of migrant crisis in South Africa which has undergone xenophobic violence, which would enable the reader to recognize the gap that my project aspires to bridge. The chapter similarly offers a

discussion of the life histories of the authors of the selected novels for this study. A significant feature of the chapter lies in its effort to deliver an examination of critical and relevant readings concerning the topic of this study. Chapter three is an explanation of the specific theoretical framework that I have adopted for my thesis. It will offer a detailed analysis of the theoretical framework and its relevance to the study.

Based on the explanation offered earlier in the scope of the study, my fourth chapter aims to apply the selected concepts for the study on the selected texts, where each concept will be applied in one chapter. Chapter four will offer an identification of the xenophobic representations portrayed by the main characters in the novels in the light of *Citizenship* to uncover the role of the country's policies of exclusion and indigeneity, and their roles in maintaining xenophobia. The focus will be on the main scenes that depict xenophobic violence in order to uncover its motives and triggers. In addition, the analysis will reflect on the characters and how their lives are threatened in South Africa due to xenophobia. The analysis will offer different representations, reasons, and catalysts for xenophobia as portrayed in the novels.

Chapter five is dedicated to the concept of *Decolonization* as it will be applied to the selected texts. I will examine the process of the unsuccessful decolonization and the state of incomplete liberation in South Africa and how the remnants of colonialism could maintain and nurture xenophobic violence as portrayed in the narratives. In the selected novels, I will trace the examples of the unsuccessful decolonization, the incomplete liberation and the state of neocolonialism in South Africa and their roles in generating violence against foreigners.

Chapter six is devoted to the concept of *Subjectivity* as reflected in the selected texts. I will examine how South African characters' employ xenophobic violence against foreigners as a self-resistance mechanism in order to redefine themselves and achieve subjectivity. In addition, the analysis will examine the credibility of the notion of the rainbow nation in South Africa. Finally, chapter seven is dedicated to the findings and contribution of my study as well as recommendations for those who are interested in promoting research in this domain.

I have drawn from a wide range of texts from different authors in order to obtain comprehensive results. I will use the library to search for interpretations and evaluations of the selected texts which comprise the primary source of the thesis. The commentary and discussion of evidence by research scholars and experts in the field are used for reliability and validity of the research. Library research is undoubtedly significant, so most of the source materials are consulted from the library to validate the work.

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- Abdullah, Mustafa Mohammed. Kaur, H., Baizura Bt Bahar, I., & Mani, M. (2020). Xenophobia and Citizenship in Meg Vandermerwe's Zebra Crossing. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 8(2), 756-764. <https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2020.8284>
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