Tensions in The Rainbow Nation

A study of attitudes towards African immigrants in post-apartheid South Africa

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Abstract

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Migration is a global occurrence and new diverse nations have both positive and negative effects on its citizens. The historical, political and socioeconomic context of South Africa makes the country particularly interesting to investigate. Due to this, a qualitative study with semi-structured interviews has been conducted in two communities with different socioeconomic status to investigate attitudes towards African immigrants. One community is overcrowded and has a high unemployment rate. The other community is a middle class suburb with low competition for resources. The results have been compared to previous research to identify similarities and differences in the reasons for attitudes towards African immigrants. Previous research states factors within the institutional and political structure, economic competition and the discourse in media to be the main reasons for negative attitudes and xenophobia. The result of this study suggests that these factors, in fact, have meaning for how one views and expresses feelings about African immigrants, but that socioeconomic status affects the attitudes. In areas with high competition for resources the attitudes towards immigrants tend to be more negative in contrast to a middle class community where the respondents see African immigrants as being part of a mismanaged structure and society.

Keywords: South Africa, Segregation, Attitudes, African immigrants, Xenophobia
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1 Introduction

Today we are a nation at peace with itself, united in our diversity, not only proclaiming but living out the contention that South Africa belongs to all who live in it. We take our place among the nations of the world, confident and proud in being an African country. (N. Mandela, South Africa’s National Liberation Movement, 2004)

We are a Rainbow Nation but we don’t know how to do it. What is a rainbow? [...] we are angry. Immigrants must know that we are in a bad situation and we are not happy at all, we are angry. (Respondent F, personal communication, April 18th, 2016)

In our contemporary world, movement of people between countries are increasing, diverse societies are shaped and people of different nationalities and cultures are now living side by side. This is having both positive and negative effects on people and societies. Multicultural societies enable people to cohesively exchange ideas, knowledge and experiences. In some cases however, the mixture of people of different nationalities and cultures results in tensions and conflict instead of social cohesion. Migration is a global occurrence and the issue of tensions between immigrants and native citizens is something that can be found anywhere in the world. Even though this is a globally spread phenomena, the issue of negative attitudes towards immigrants in South Africa is very specific due to the country’s socioeconomic, political and historical context. This, along with current events of violent actions where African immigrants are targeted makes South Africa very interesting when investigating attitudes toward immigrants. Furthermore, the new knowledge attained from this research can teach us something valuable that could be applied not only in the local areas and in the nation investigated, but also in the rest of the world where this issue exists.

South Africa has a long history of structural racial discrimination and exclusion in form of the apartheid system where whites and non-whites were segregated and whites were more privileged and had better opportunities while non-whites belonged to the underclass. (Muula, 2005: 709) In 1994, the apartheid laws were abolished and The Rainbow Nation also known as “New South Africa” emerged. The new policy for building the nation was a programme led by the people where South Africa belonged to all who lived in it, united in their diversity. Even though the people of the country have fought for equal rights regardless of race, contemporary South Africa struggles with xenophobic attitudes and violence towards African immigrants. (Hayem, 2013: 82) The issue of xenophobia in South Africa has been explained as a new form of racism performed and executed towards immigrants from other African countries regardless their demographic, racial or socioeconomic background. (Crush & Tawodzera, 2013: 678) Xenophobia is explained in two different ways in previous research and theoretical perspectives. One perspective suggests the fact of someone being a foreigner to be the main reason for someone’s hostility and xenophobic attitude against another. This is explained as a result from apartheid and isolation in South Africa. The other perspective explains xenophobia as a result of frustration and deprivation, having its roots in socioeconomic inequalities in South Africa. (Adjai & Lazardis, 2013: 250)

In previous research within the field of xenophobic attitudes and violence in South Africa, there is a pattern of different groups of people that are identified as important and key-characters in relation to this issue. Poor black South Africans are according to previous research the ones struggling and experiencing economic competition because of the migration flow into the country. Therefore, the level of frustration towards immigrants appears to be higher among poor black South Africans but also existing among wealthier citizens. (Dodson, 2010: 5) The target group of xenophobia, both in terms of attitudes and violence, is immigrants from other African countries. (Thompson, 2016: 120) Previous research also shows that competition in the job-
market, the government’s failure to address poverty among black South Africans, stereotypes about African immigrants as being criminal and causing high unemployment are some of the most central causes behind xenophobia in South Africa. (Steenkamp, 2009: 443)

Investigating two completely different areas in the country illustrates a wide range of ideas and attitudes. The reason and the importance of this division of areas for this study are their many similarities and differences, which are investigated as contextual factors for attitudes and thoughts. One community being nationally diverse, overcrowded with a high unemployment rate and a low level of education, and historically assigned to black Africans during the apartheid era. (Merridy, 2005: 11) The other area flourishing with a wide ethnic diversity, attracting many tourists and accommodates a lot of university students and affluent citizens. (South African Tourism, 2016) Additionally, this community was a white area during the apartheid era. (Harris, personal communication, May 30th, 2016) Regardless these differences, they are all people sharing a unique history of segregation and living in the same nation, but are part of different socioeconomic groups, which according to previous research are important factors to consider. The context in this study is a result of a particular history. Since it has its roots in colonialism and migrations patterns where mostly white Europeans immigrated to the country it is most relevant to investigate within the field of global studies. (Department of Welfare, 1998: 32)

The results of this study exemplify attitudes towards African immigrants in relation to socioeconomic status. From this, conclusions can be drawn about how this affects and sometimes creates tension between people of different nationalities in South Africa. Investigating why some people have these attitudes to a greater extent than others, can teach us something valuable that can be used to prevent issues such as xenophobic attacks that now are frequently repeated in certain communities in South Africa.

1.1 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to investigate what attitudes native South African citizens, living in areas with different socioeconomic status express about African immigrants. The aim is additionally to identify explanations for these in relation to previous research and particular contexts of two communities.

1.2 Research questions

- What are the attitudes towards African immigrants among native South Africans in communities with different socioeconomic conditions?
- What explanations can be identified for these attitudes?

1.3 Limitations
This research is limited to investigate attitudes towards immigrants in two different areas in the Gauteng province, South Africa. The study has been done in the two areas, Alexandra and Melville. The authors have been focusing on communities in South Africa that are significantly different in socioeconomic status. Alexandra is a township located in central Johannesburg. The township is home to a population consisting of mainly black Africans. The employment rate is low and the competition for income generating opportunities and resources high, which has resulted in tension and xenophobic violence in the area. (Merridy, 2005: 9) Due to violent happenings between native South Africans and African immigrants in the township it is a suitable area for this study and for investigating attitudes towards immigrants. To be able to investigate any differences and patterns in attitudes in relation to socioeconomic status the other half of the material was conducted in a middle class suburb, also located in central Johannesburg. This area has a rich ethnic diversity but has during the violent xenophobic attacks in the country managed to remain a calm and safe community regardless the mix of people. There is a smaller population living in the area and less competition for resources than in the contrasting area of this study.
The fact that the xenophobic violence never erupted in Melville even though it is home to people with different national background makes it a fitting area for this study. Investigating these two areas has made it possible to present differences in attitudes in relation to socioeconomic context. The research is also limited to these two communities due to feasibility within the timeframe to collect data and due to their geographical location. The common geographical location provides areas with a similar social context but has big differences in socioeconomic context making it possible to investigate patterns and differences in attitudes. Furthermore, when referring to attitudes, the authors of this study are referring to the way a person views and expresses certain feelings about something or someone.

1.4 Outline
Chapter 2 presents background information. The chapter deals with South Africa’s history of racial segregation, immigration and xenophobic attacks that have taken place. Additionally it presents the communities investigated in this study and information about the Nelson Mandela Foundation. Chapter 3 presents theoretical framework and previous research on xenophobia and identified explanation for attitudes towards African immigrants. In this section theories on the violence against African immigrants is offered and the explanations for the attitudes have been divided into specific categories; institutional and political structure, socioeconomic competitions and the media discourse. Chapter 4 introduces the methodology and the chosen source material. The structure of the interviews, the process of sampling and the expert informants at the Foundation are offered. The thematic analysis that has been applied to the study is also presented. The role and influence by the researchers has also been stated in this section. Chapter 5 is a presentation of the results of this study. The results are presented according the research questions, beginning with attitudes in each community and then identified explanations for these attitudes. The results are discussed in chapter 6. This section presents an analysis of the events labelled as xenophobic in relation to theories on the matter. Attitudes and identified explanations between the respondents and their communities are also discussed both on their own and in relation to previous research. The authors have furthermore discussed what new knowledge the study has contributed with. Finally, chapter 7 contains concluding remarks. This section also states what could be interesting and useful for further research on the subject.
2 Background

This chapter presents South Africa’s history of racial segregation and the political fight for equality, the history of immigration patterns to South Africa and the xenophobic attacks of 2008, 2011 and 2015. It also presents action taken to prevent and condemn these xenophobic attacks and information about the two communities investigated in this study. To fully comprehend why this issue is important and problematic it is vital to understand the unique history and context in South Africa. Knowledge of the xenophobic attacks and what stand the government has taken in relation to these is also significant for understanding analyses of attitudes found in this society. Furthermore, background information about the communities help to understand the context in which this research is taking place.

2.1 Racial segregation and the political fight for equality

South Africa is a multicultural nation that takes pride in its diversity but has a history of colonial and apartheid eras. After the Second World War an authority with a goal of maintaining and intensifying white domination came into power in South Africa. This authority created a racially segregated nation where the interests of white Afrikaaner were prioritized over other racial groups, hence an unjust and unequal civil society. (Tibane, 2015) Racist legislations ensured that land use in cities was divided between different races, segregating them from each other, under the Group Areas Act. All South Africans were classified into four different categories of races: African, Asian, coloured and white. The citizens were then allowed to reside in areas designated for the race they belonged to according to the state. Thousands of non-white families were forcibly moved by the state because they lived in or too close to areas designated for white citizens. (Morris, 1998: 760) People labelled as African suffered most from this system. These people were subject of the pass laws, which controlled their freedom of movement. Africans were told in which community or township they had to reside. To move from there to another without getting permission was a criminal offence. The pass laws did not only decide in which area Africans were allowed to stay, but also if they were allowed to stay in a city, town or outside of these in rural areas. Africans were only designated to city areas or town areas if they had been born there. The towns had marginal infrastructure and rural areas were severely depleted and exhausted, while the city areas and especially white areas had much better living standards. (Morris, 1998: 761) Additionally, interracial relationships became prohibited and non-whites and women were not allowed to vote. The nation was described as multicultural but people belonged to certain areas based on their race. (Morris, 1998: 763)

During the time when the apartheid government came into power the African National Congress led by Nelson Mandela first presented its program with a focus of rejecting white domination and for increased rights for the black population through protests demonstrations and strikes. The party was also part of a small anti-racial congress but the success of breaking through the apartheid system was going to be long. During the years of the apartheid government, black demonstrators who opposed the government were killed, white anti-racism politicians accused of treason and black political leaders banned or arrested. During the years of the apartheid system the demonstration and the arrests got a lot of attention from the outside world leading to the opening of Parliament in 1989, meaning possibilities for liberations movements to participate. With this came also the release of political prisoners, one being Nelson Mandela who in 1994 would get chosen president in what was South Africa’s first democratic election. (Tibane, 2015) The pass laws were abolished in 1986, as was the Group Areas Act in 1991. Non-whites were now allowed to move into cities and neighbourhoods previously assigned to whites only. Even so, not many Africans could move into areas or suburbs that were historically white mainly due to lack of affordability and because many black families felt uncomfortable living as black minorities in white areas. (Morris, 1998: 763)
Even after the apartheid laws had been abolished, racial inequalities in South Africa continued. Even though everyone has the same legal rights there are significant divisions in incomes between different ethnic groups in the South African society. People who have historically belonged to the white privileged upper class have due to their higher household income better opportunities for education and income generating work while people whose earlier generations have been disadvantaged during the apartheid era are struggling more to make a decent living. (Morris, 1998: 767) Thus, the history of racial segregation in South Africa is highly relevant for this study focusing on areas with contrasting socioeconomic backgrounds where one area is a historically white suburb and the other historically was an African township designated to black South Africans.

2.2 Immigration to South Africa

During the colonial and apartheid eras, European and white immigrants in general were favoured in South Africa under the white settlement program and the immigration from Europe, North America, and Australia was large (Department of Welfare, 1998: 32). Immigrants from other African countries have later on come to migrate into post-apartheid South Africa in hope of better socioeconomic opportunities. A more stable government and an economic growth unlike any other African country have made the nation attractive for African migrants. (Adjai, Lazaridis, 2013: 237) A new diverse Rainbow Nation emerged but underneath the surface xenophobic attitudes started to grow in the 1990s as a result of an uneven distribution of social and economic means. (Everatt, 2012: 6)

Between the years of 1985 and 2000, the average number of black Africans immigrating into the country was stated to be 828,750. Between the year of 2000 and 2010 the number decreased, and after 2010 it has continuously increased again. According to Statistics South Africa the population of South Africa has been estimated to almost 55 million people in 2016. The same report stated the legal migration flow of African people into the country to be 779,593. (Statistics South Africa, 2016: 4) The figure for illegal immigrants is unknown but highly inflated numbers by the government are circulating in media. The blown up figure, which has been withdrawn by the government, said between 4,000,000 and 8,000,000 illegal immigrants were residing in the country. The actual number is unknown but has by Statistics South Africa been expected to be somewhere between 500,000 to 1,000,000 illegal immigrants. (Crush, 2008) It has been argued that the history of apartheid and its institutionalised violence has left marks in the national psyche and is a result influencing and shaping xenophobia within the nation. Within this discussion are also the arguments that no justice or compensation for what was taken from the black South African population during the 1900’s was ever restored and would also be a root cause. Also the extensive exclusion the country experienced during this time has been debated as reason for why the population today is having issues living side by side with African immigrants who they feel are outcompeting them and receiving support that should instead be given to poor South Africans. (Everatt, 2012: 3)

2.3 The xenophobic attacks and the government’s actions

In 2008 one of the first violent attacks towards African immigrants by lower class South Africans took place in the country. It erupted in the township Alexandra and spread through the nation but seemed to be calming down just as fast as it had broken out in the first place. Previous research argues that this event was xenophobic and that there are different reasons behind the violence, like socioeconomic inequality, housing related issues and a reliance on cheap labour. (Everatt, 2012: 1) The South African government has received a lot of criticism for their lack of action and the reluctance to condemn the xenophobic attacks that have taken place in post-apartheid South Africa. After the attacks 2008 the contemporary president, Thabo Mbeki, initially did not comment on the attacks, as if nothing had happened. It took two weeks before the
government denounced the violence that had taken place. (Steenkamp, 2009: 440) Later on, when acknowledging the attacks the president stated:

> These masses are neither antipathetic towards, nor do they hate foreigners. And this I must also say - none in our society has any right to encourage or incite xenophobia by trying to explain naked criminal activity by cloaking it in the garb of xenophobia. (Mbeki, T., The Presidency, 2008)

In 2011, there were new xenophobic attacks in townships all over the country. The victims were African immigrants living in South Africa, both documented and undocumented. Some native South African people were attacked as well, mistaken for foreigners or for protecting friends or spouses from other African countries. (Hayem, 2013: 80) When the attacks were repeated in 2011, the government under the rule of president Jacob Zuma did not comment on the violence initially, as in 2008. (Hayem, 2013: 78) The policy of silence has been interpreted as an unspoken consent to chase out African immigrants. The lack of political attention to the violence and lack of action to prevent it accelerated the remigration of thousands of immigrants in South Africa. (Hayem, 2013: 87) Most of the actions to prevent xenophobia and support people who have suffered from the attacks have been taken by NGOs and Community Based Organizations. (Hayem, 2013: 78) Even though NGOs have worked to prevent new attacks from happening they were repeated in the spring of 2015, and African immigrants were targeted again. Among other things these people were shot or shot at and their shops were burned. (Thompson, 2016: 128)

2.4 Communities investigated
This study is focused on two very different communities in the Gauteng province. These two areas have significantly different histories, socioeconomic backgrounds and population.

2.4.1 Alexandra
The township and area named Alexandra did during the 1900’s provide a rare opportunity for black people to live within a city. As more people started to migrate into the city of Johannesburg so did more people move into Alexandra. Since the area was considered a black area the Johannesburg City Council did not want to invest in the township and areas for whites were prioritized instead. As a result, infrastructure and facilities such as electricity and sewage systems were not installed in Alexandra making the living conditions marginal. Between 1958 and 1973 people were also moved by force out of the area because of urban planning efforts. Even so, the overcrowding of the township continued as people moved to the area from more rural areas both legally and illegally seeking employment opportunities. This flow came to be extra high after the year of 1986 when the legislation controlling black people from entering townships was abolished. During the years of the apartheid system the community was often the site for youth and anti-apartheid movements and in relation to this an area with both peaceful and non-peaceful protests. (Merridy, 2005: 9) The area has a population calculated to between 350,000 to 500,000 people and 70 percent are under the age of 35. The township covers 7.6 km² and is a diverse area with people from different nations cultures and backgrounds. (UNESCO, 2005) 99 percent of the population are black Africans, 0.4 percent Coloured, 0.1 percent Asian, 0.1 percent White and 0.4 percent have other backgrounds. The most common languages are IsZulu and Sepedi but 13 different languages can be found in the area. (Statistics South Africa, 2011) Alexandra is an area known for a history of violence, overcrowding, poverty and deprived living conditions. The level of educations is considered to be low since many people lack a diploma and few people have studied past secondary school. Today the unemployment rate, regarding people who still search for income generating employment, is 32 percent and when including people who are unemployed and no longer looking for jobs or have turned to an informal sector the number is over 60 percent. Crime is part of many people’s everyday life and the most common criminal activities are car hi-jacking and rape. Because of issues like overcrowding the living conditions get worse and sewage issues and dangerous electric cables are found in the area. (Merridy, 2005: 11)
2.4.2 Melville
Melville is known as one of Johannesburg’s most popular nightlife hotspots. However, Melville is different from other hotspot areas and distinguished as Johannesburg’s centre for bohemian life, famous for its trendy restaurants and bars. It is a lively suburb with a busy population of youth and students. Other than a hip nightlife Melville is also known for being the home of Melville Koppies Nature Reserve. Even though Melville is most famous for its bohemian life and its nature reserve it is mainly a residential area. It is located close to downtown Johannesburg and two big universities. Melville also attracts a lot of tourists and many residents in Melville run guesthouses. Even though it is a suburb with a lot of liveliness it has had an economic downturn over the past few years. (South African Tourism, 2016) Melville is a rather small suburb of 1.72 km², with a total population of 3355 residents and 1608 households. The population consists of 55.62 percent white, 33.38 percent black African, 5.16 percent Asian, 3.19 percent Coloured and 2.68 percent other citizens. The main languages are English 50.45 %, Afrikaans 22.74 % and isiZulu 6.45 percent. (Frith, 2011) During the apartheid era, Melville was a community created for white working class, under the Group Areas Act. Therefore it is a community historically resided by privileged South Africans. Today it is a middleclass suburb with little competition for resources. The community was not affected during the xenophobic attacks regardless the mixed population. (Harris, personal communication, May 30th, 2016)

2.5 Nelson Mandela Foundation
The data conducted through semi-structured interviews and literature studies has been complemented with expert informants at the Nelson Mandela Foundation in Johannesburg, South Africa. Nelson Mandela founded the Foundation in 1999, the same year he stepped down as President of South Africa. The Foundation became the base for Mandela's post-presidential charitable work. The work covered a wide variety of activity from peace and reconciliation interventions, HIV/AIDS work to research in relation to education. After five years the Foundation became The Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory and an organisation concentrated on legacy-work, memory and dialogue. By promoting the legacy of Nelson Mandela the organisation works towards its vision for South Africa: A society that remembers its past, listens to all its voices, and pursues social justice. (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2016)

Since Melville has not had xenophobic attacks or other major issues with xenophobia, Nelson Mandela Foundation has not done any preventive work there. In Alexandra however, the organisation has conducted preventive work against xenophobia. After the xenophobic attack in 2008, the organisation began to facilitate community dialogues in areas most affected by this issue, Alexandra being one of them. The purpose of these dialogues was to create understanding between native South Africans and foreign nationals for each other’s perspectives. This was a two year long project and was meant to help members of the communities find their own solutions to the issues and prevent new attacks from happening. (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2010: 2) The overall purpose of this project was to find underlying causes of anger leading up to the attack and to build cohesion between native South Africans and foreign nationals. The causes for the attacks was not fully understood but were believed to lie within social and economic inequalities. (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2009: 5) What they found out during these dialogues is that foreign nationals felt marginalised and excluded in their local communities and that native South Africans felt that foreign shopkeepers traded in an unfair way. Through these dialogues, the foreign shopkeepers got the opportunity to engage in the local community and this helped build better relationships between people. (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2010: 23) In their work preventing xenophobia, the organization emphasizes the importance of remembering South Africa’s history of oppression. Due to the negative perceptions of the judicial system in South Africa, people rely on memory to determine the truth about South Africa’s history. (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2010: 33) According to Verne Harris, Director: Archive and Dialogue at the organization, the outbreak of xenophobic attacks is a huge failure of South African memory. He
means that it is a failure to let the past negatively affect South Africans today. (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2010: 34)
3 Previous research and theoretical perspectives

This section presents previous research on xenophobia in South Africa. The previous research has been inductively categorised into three explanations for xenophobia by the authors: institutional and political structure, socioeconomic competition and media discourse. This section ends with presenting two theoretical perspectives on xenophobia in South Africa; the isolation hypothesis on xenophobia and xenophobia as a result of frustration and deprivation. These theories are then applied in the analysis of the results of the study.

3.1 Institutional and political structure

The institutional and political structure in South Africa has according to previous researchers had an impact on the attitudes towards African immigrants. One theory brought up by previous researchers is that the immigration policies in South Africa are race based, strict and therefore contribute to xenophobic attitudes among native citizens. Gordon, Trimikliniotis and Zondo are discussing how the xenophobia is due to migration policies and how it is a result of apartheid and old racist ideas. (Gordon, Trimikliniotis & Zondo, 2008: 1331) Adjai and Lazaridis also suggest how the immigration policies are what set the tone for how immigrants will be viewed and treated. (Adjai & Lazaridis, 2013: 242) Another explanation that is also identified is the lack of action by the government when violent xenophobic attacks have occurred can be interpreted as an encouragement to the violence and proves that preventing xenophobia is not a high priority among the ruling politicians. Hayem writes that after the attacks 2008 and 2011 the government’s quietness softened the impression of the brutal attacks even though it had never been clearer legally in South Africa that such events should be condemned. (Hayem, 2013: 78) Dodson also identifies the lack of action from the government when xenophobic violent attacks have occurred as one way that the political framework have contributed to xenophobia in the country in her article. A government that did not respond harsh enough to the event led to reproduction of xenophobia. Dodson also brings up the political discourse as a contributing factor to creating stereotypical prejudices about African immigrants. (Dodson, 2010: 7)

3.2 Socioeconomic competition

A common conclusion in previous research is that socioeconomic competition is a triggering factor to xenophobia in South Africa. For example, Steenkamp concludes that African immigrants are used as scapegoats that outcompete South Africans on the job market by accepting lower wages. (Steenkamp, 2009: 443) Dodson also has an explanation behind this issue in her research. Poor South Africans see African immigrants as competition in the job market but also as competing with them for housing and other resources, which they feel that they themselves should be entitled and prioritized for. This article also brings up how wealthier citizens feel that they are paying taxes for shelter and services to people who are fleeing to South Africa due to their own countries’ political and economic incompetence. (Dodson, 2010: 5) There is a frustration among people of the South African lower class that their conditions have not been improved after 1994 even though the apartheid laws where abolished and when immigrants from other countries are competing with them; these immigrants are being blamed for their situation. Especially Somalis have experienced violence and xenophobia because their shops and businesses have been successful and outcompeted South Africans shops. Thompson demonstrates how Somali immigrants whose work has been economically successful have experienced violent exclusion. (Thompson, 2016: 120) In relation to political aspects it is brought up in previous research that the government has failed to address poverty among black South Africans in post-apartheid South Africa, which has resulted in a frustration among them and is one of the reasons behind the xenophobic attacks. As the socioeconomic resources in South Africa are already low, many South Africans feel that instead of giving them to immigrants they as South African citizens should be prioritized for these resources. Oyedemi, who found that in post-apartheid South Africa
the government has been unsuccessful to find a long-term solution to the economic inequality that black South Africans experience, demonstrates this. (Oyedemi, 2015: 62)

3.3 Media discourse
African immigrants are wrongfully portrayed as criminals in media, which confirms people’s prejudiced ideas about them and contributes to xenophobic attitudes and actions towards immigrants of an African origin. Adjai and Lazaradis suggest that the way media has presented information about immigrants is a cause for the situation today and especially by inflating the numbers of people entering South Africa. Most of these people are also portrayed as illegal immigrants, which have made the attitudes towards them more hostile. (Adjai & Lazaradis, 2013: 239) Also Steenkamp presents media as a factor creating a certain attitude by presenting material that will contribute and strengthen prejudiced ideas about foreigners. (Steenkamp, 2009: 443) Gordon, Trimikliniotis and Zondo also state in their article that media often targets African immigrants as criminals in their news. News like these fuel xenophobic attitudes and reproduce prejudiced ideas about African immigrants. (Gordon, Trimikliniotis & Zondo, 2008: 1331)

3.4 Isolation hypothesis of xenophobia
The isolation hypothesis of xenophobia suggests the fact of someone being a foreigner to be the main reason for someone’s hostility against another. It reads xenophobia to be the result of the apartheid system and the way South Africa was excluded from interacting on an international level. It is considered a new racism and is based on nationality and ethnicity rather than on race. The racism builds on the idea of difference and the exclusion of what is different. (Adjai & Lazaradis, 2013: 250)

3.5 Frustration and deprivation
Dr. Clarence Tshitereke does unlike the isolation hypothesis of xenophobia explain the violent attacks against African immigrants as frustration and deprivation among South Africans based on the idea that one is getting less than one is entitled to. He explains South Africa as a having a gap between aspiration and reality, which has resulted in personal frustration and social ills where immigrants are used as scapegoats. (Adjai & Lazaradis, 2013: 250)
4 Methods and source material

The following chapter presents the arguments and use of a qualitative method, the process of sampling and selection of communities and respondents as source material. This section also has a presentation of the thematic analysis that has been used throughout the process of analysing the collected data.

4.1 The interviews

To investigate the attitudes of native South Africans towards African immigrants a qualitative study with interviews is a convenient method to use. Interviewing is a good method for investigating complex and controversial phenomena. It is also suitable to use this kind of method when conducting material and researching people's experiences, opinions and feelings. Since the research questions of this study deals with subjects that are personal and sensitive, interviews were the best research method in the sense that it provides an opportunity for the respondents to explain complex issues. (Denscombe, 2009: 232) The interviews have all been semi-structured with the purpose of bringing up certain issues the authors had in mind beforehand but also to provide the respondents with an opportunity to raise and clarify on issues he or she finds important and vital within this subject. This has allowed the authors to have a certain amount of structure during the interviews, which has made the data easier to compare and analyse later on in the research process. (Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014: 150) Using key concepts identified in previous research as having an impact on xenophobic attitudes, the authors created questions that have been asked during the interviews. By studying previous research methods and the way these researchers have asked their questions the authors have been able to create and ask questions that will provide us with as much information as possible during our interviews. But also allow the respondents to add other factors and exemplify attitudes and explanations. Short answer questions based on foregoing studies in the field were also used to strengthen the collected material. Each interview has been between 35 to 45 minutes long. During the interview one of the authors had a leading role and was asking the questions. The other author was taking notes but always had the opportunity to add additional questions when it felt needed. A recording device was also used with the consent of the respondents during the interviews for further and deeper analysis of the collected data. The interviews conducted in Alexandra required a translator. Using an interpreter may have modified the data in the sense of personal views and opinions by the one translating and the authors have been aware of this when analysing the data.

In previous research that has been conducted within the same field, qualitative studies have been the most common methodology. Furthermore, interviews are the most common and a successful method among previous researchers when investigating personal experiences and attitudes. Previous researchers argue that this methodology is suitable for an investigation regarding issues like attitudes. This argument was considered when choosing a qualitative method and semi-structured interviews. (Charman & Piper, 2012: 87) The methods used in this study are inductive and deductive. The authors have inductively identified three categories in previous research: institutional and political structure, socioeconomic competition and media discourse. These categories have then been deductively used to form an interview guide and analyse explanations for xenophobia in the results from this study. (Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014: 25) Additionally, a literature study of previous research has been made to present theories on the matter and used secondary data for the background chapter to put this issue in its context.

4.2 The communities

The process of choosing areas to conduct interviews in was based on a few criteria distinguished by previous research as having a certain influence on xenophobic attitudes. Communities with
economic deprivation, township retail competition, housing shortages, a history of violence and 
racism has been identified as factors leading to a higher risk of an outbursts of xenophobic 
attitudes or violence. (Everatt, 2012: 1) In the process of selecting an area to conduct data for this 
study the authors chose a township, which had these factors to be able to investigate what 
influence they have on attitudes. The township and the residents of Alexandra were also chosen 
since previous research has concluded the area to be a hub for xenophobic attacks and host a lot 
of tension between native South Africans and African immigrants in the past. (Adjai & Lazaradis, 
2013: 250) Poverty and unemployment is common and the education level is considered to be 
low. The township is described as an overcrowded community, with a national diversity but 
consists almost only of black Africans. (Merridy, 2005: 11) There are as mentioned earlier specific 
actors that has been vital in the process of choosing areas and are to be considered placing this 
township in a certain socioeconomic state which is important and part of the research questions 
in this study. The community called Melville on the other hand is described as a middle class area 
where xenophobic violence has not been an issue but still has a broad ethnic diversity. (Harris, 
personal communication, May 30th, 2016) The lack of factors identified by previous researchers 
as vital regarding the outburst of xenophobia is not found here. Melville, which has a different 
socioeconomic status than Alexandra, was chosen just because of its lack of xenophobic history 
with the purpose of investigating if this has in fact created other attitudes among its residents. 
These differences make a comparison in attitudes both feasible and interesting.

4.3 The respondents

Five interviews have been conducted in each area. The interviews have been done with members 
of two groups of native South Africans distinguished in previous research as belonging to 
different socioeconomic backgrounds and statuses. The reason and the importance of this is to 
include what previous researchers have highlighted as key-characters or important groups of 
people within this field. Since previous research explains several factors behind xenophobic 
attitudes and violence it is relevant for this study to interview native South Africans who either 
live or work in a community experiencing these factors, or in what can be considered the opposite 
to one of these communities for the possibility of a comparing analysis. Sampling based on 
convenience in each community has been the process of finding suitable candidates to interview. 
The selection was based on a few criteria, which the authors had to make sure the participants 
could confirm before doing the interview and this was done by approaching people in the streets 
in both communities. All participants had to be over the age of 18 for ethical reasons. Except for 
this age limit the authors wanted to have a wide range of age among the interviewees to be able to 
get a wider understanding of the attitudes. Gender has also been taken into consideration in the 
process of selecting candidates. The authors wanted to have an equal amount of women and men 
as respondents for this study, which therefore at some level determined whom the authors 
approached in the process of sampling. The last criterion that was implemented was the fact the 
respondents had to be residents or work in their specific community. These conditions were 
applied on the sampling because the authors wanted respondents who knew the area well and the 
atmosphere in it, also to be able to give an idea of the most common attitudes and ideas of their 
particular community regarding African immigrants. The authors of this study wanted to conduct 
at least 5 interviews in each area and during the process of interviewing patterns of attitudes 
could be identified early in the process confirming the amount of respondents as appropriate. 
Interviews with these members have provided insight in the groups ways of thinking, experiences 
and opinions. The interviews have also given opportunity to find deep understanding and 
answers to the research questions of this study and have made it easier for the authors to see 
things from a participant’s perspective.

Respondent A - Alexandra, woman, 38 years old, unemployed 
Respondent B - Alexandra, man, 22 years old, student 
Respondent C - Alexandra, man, 27 years old, driver 
Respondent D - Alexandra, woman, 32 years old, administrator
Respondent E - Alexandra, woman, 27 years old, unemployed

Respondent F - Melville, man, 36 years old, owner of store
Respondent G - Melville, woman, 30 years old, university lecturer
Respondent H - Melville, man 34 years old, shop assistant
Respondent I - Melville, man 73 years old, retiree
Respondent J - Melville, woman, 70 years old, retiree

4.4 Ethics
Ethical aspects have also been considered throughout the research process and also in the way the data has been presented. All participants have given consent to their participation in this study. The interests of all participants have also been considered carefully by the authors not to affect the respondents negatively. In relation to this all respondents are anonymous in this study and was informed about this before the interviews were done. The purposes of this study, the role of the researchers and the role of the interviewees have been presented clearly to keep an open and honest presentation of the study. Even so, the specific research questions of this study have not been presented to the interviewees to make sure the informants have not felt compelled to answer in a certain way to fit the purpose of the study. The participants also got informed about their possibility to discontinue with the interviews at any time.

4.5 Reliability
The source material has been limited to interviews with five people in each area that are exemplifying attitudes found in these communities. The process of finding suitable candidates to interview has been done by visiting the two contrasting areas and meeting people living or working in Alexandra and Melville. The majority of the respondents in Alexandra are under the age of 30 and this has an explanation in a particular distribution of age in the township. This has been taken into consideration when analysing the material. Additionally, awareness of the fact that some of the respondents in Melville have more experience of the former political system, which is part of what makes South Africa especially interesting for this study, has also been taken into consideration. Due to this, people have different experiences and views, which has been taken into thought when analysing the data. The interviewees are either living or working in the chosen areas and therefore have the knowledge about the most common opinions and standpoints in the community. Nevertheless, doing the interviews with five people is to be acknowledged as a weakness because their attitudes and opinions might not be a truthful and are only examples of attitudes and opinions found in these communities. Thus, the purpose of this study is not to generalise attitudes and opinions, but to exemplify them.

4.6 Expert informants
The authors of this study have been working with some of the staff at the Nelson Mandela Foundation, whom have been providing information regarding the two different communities in this study but also on what kind of work the organization have been carrying out in relation to xenophobia. Verne Harris, Director: Archive and Dialogue, has been the main contact and expert informant at the organization. Harris was part of the process of identifying communities for this study and could confirm on their contrasting socioeconomic status. As mentioned earlier, Nelson Mandela Foundation has done preventive work against xenophobia in areas most affected by the xenophobic attacks. This organisation has experience of grass root projects and with finding underlying causes to tensions between native South Africa and immigrants.

4.7 Thematic analysis
To be able to clarify and analyse data collected during the interviews a matrix have been created and applied in the thematic analysis of this study. The matrix is consisting of two themes; attitudes and identified explanations for attitudes. This division was made to clarify the presentation of the results and are therefore in direct connection to the research question of this
study. Whatever information can be interpreted from the first section of the matrix are therefore all related to attitudes whilst the information discovered in the second section is regarding the reasons for these.

The first half of the matrix consists of different codes, which are representing certain attitudes. When analysing the material from one interview, identified attitudes have been placed into these different codes. Since these codes already consist of specific attitudes it could all be presented clearly in the study. Some of these codes have for example been “African immigrants are people in need” or “All African immigrants are in South Africa illegally”. Whenever someone would express one of these attitudes it could be marked in the matrix, then analysed and presented in the text of this study. The authors created the codes in this part of the matrix after the interviews had been conducted and data had been analysed in a first step. Even so, certain key-words and concepts that are identified as vital in foregoing research have been used as much as possible since they are coherent with the results conducted in this study as well. Whatever information this codes could provide the authors with; it was presented as what attitudes were found in Alexandra and Melville in the Result-section of this study.

In the other half of the matrix the main structure was based on three categories created from reasons for xenophobic attitudes identified in previous research. Unlike in the first section of the matrix these categories are created completely from a theoretical framework. These three categories are institutional and political structure, socioeconomic competition and media discourse. The reason for using these was mainly to be able to structure the collected data to be able to identify the reasons for people’s attitudes towards African immigrants. When the authors analysed the data from one interview and the respondent expressed reasons for why he or she had a certain attitude towards African immigrants, the authors could place this in the matrix and a specific category. If this argument for example fell under the category of socioeconomic competition it is presented in the second part of the Result-section. Further explanation of what kind of socioeconomic competition the respondents have expressed has also been further analysed and presented in this section. Using a thematic tool like this helps to structure results and reduces the complexity of analysing material conducted in a qualitative study. It clarifies what the results are actually saying either by confirming one preconception or by expounding new patterns. ([Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014: 45]

4.8 The role of the researchers

The authors of this study are aware of their own influence both when conducting, analysing and presenting the results. The researchers role as white foreigners has been considered and the authors are aware that this may have affected the results and the respondents when conducting the interviews. By keeping an open mind and not applying any prejudice or preconception into the research the authors have been preventing the study from being influenced by their role as researchers. Ethical principles have been applied to present truthful results, as have any limitation been taken into consideration when analysing the material.
5 Results

In this chapter the results of this qualitative study are presented. The collected information is presented one community at a time and according to the research questions of this study. The chapter begins with attitudes in each community and later it also presents explanations for these attitudes.

5.1 Attitudes towards African immigrants

This section presents the identified attitudes towards African immigrants found in the two communities researched: Alexandra and Melville.

5.1.1 Alexandra

The general attitude towards immigrants as individuals is open and accommodating in Alexandra. Depending on the respondent, things like interaction with foreigners and feelings about immigration issues vary, but the overall attitude is accepting. Even so, there are certain ways native South Africans in the township Alexandra perceive African immigrants, which is creating a gap between the groups of people. When speaking of African immigrants the general idea is that all immigrants are in Alexandra and South Africa as illegal, undocumented immigrants. This certain group of illegal immigrants is the one that is being brought up by the interviewees and the one that is explained in any kind of negative sense. Regardless what the subject might be when discussing immigration all respondents refer to immigrants in this way.

The majority of the interviewees recognize African immigrants as people in need; who are leaving their home countries to get not just a better life and earn more money, but also for survival and to live a safer life in South Africa. Respondents B, D and E expressed how they believe the immigrants have come to South Africa looking for employment to be able to create a better life for themselves and their families. Respondent B also expressed an understanding and an open-minded attitude towards people coming to South Africa in relation to crises that have happened within the country that has led South Africans to immigrate to other African countries in the past. He was referring to the oppression during the apartheid system and how African countries opened their borders for South Africans in need.

They helped us when we needed it, now we need to let them come here. (Respondent B, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

Respondent A was the only participant who described the migration flow of African people into South Africa as an opportunity where the foreigners might bring work openings for the rest of the population. In relation to this argument the attitudes towards immigrants were positive. All the respondents interviewed in Alexandra recognized immigrants as being very persistent and therefore successful in the work field in South Africa. The immigrants are described as being more determined to get employment than native South Africans. More than once the interviewees themselves even recognized South Africans as lazy, which is explained by the residents of Alexandra as a well-known stereotype for native South Africans among African immigrants. The respondents expressed how they believe immigrants are more eager to work since they often send money back to their home countries, have a higher education or are just more efficient. Even though there is this insight about them being efficient, this efficiency found in immigrants has created a certain frustration among the population in Alexandra. The respondents explain the way the immigrants are being successful in the work field as something that divides natives and foreigners. Regardless this knowledge of their success respondent A explained how they are perceived as coming to South Africa with the purpose of stealing jobs from native citizens. The respondents are said not to have problems with the people themselves, rather having negative attitudes and issues because they feel that African immigrants out compete native South Africans.
Some South Africans don’t like foreigners, they think they just take our jobs, but South Africans are too lazy to look for jobs. The foreigners know how to get these jobs and South Africans don’t do it right. (Respondent E, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

In relation to this issue of unemployment among the citizens of Alexandra, immigrants are being perceived as taking opportunities from native South Africans. In addition to this, foreigners are being described as more persistent and it is also expressed that they take jobs native South Africans would not seek themselves to begin with. Respondent C explained some of these jobs as being beneath South Africans and they would never pursue this kind of employment to begin with. This hunger for employment is the most common idea of African immigrants spoken among the interviewees in Alexandra. During the interviews in Alexandra envy of the success among immigrants and a strong sense of nationalism also came up. Even though immigrants are seen as taking jobs South Africans say they do not want themselves, they are still blaming immigrants for their own lack of employment.

South Africans should be prioritized, because this is our country. (Respondent A, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

The quote explains attitudes towards immigrants in relation to their success in the work field. A sense of how immigrants are being viewed as outsiders when a strong “we”, as in native South Africans, are being seen as a group that should be prioritized regardless the reason for unemployment among natives. Another common attitude is that immigrants are the ones committing most of the crime in South Africa. All of the respondents in Alexandra mentioned this at least once. Respondent B describes that many foreigners are doing as they please and are not getting arrested. He believes they are leaving their documentation in their home country deliberately and therefore cannot be arrested. He explains how they are not just using criminal activity as a necessary mean for the moment but as the main reason for coming to South Africa.

The lack of documentation among immigrants has created an attitude among South Africans where they view immigrants as possible perpetrators of criminal activity. At the same time there is an idea that South African police are treating immigrants worse because of this. Their lack of paper is seen to be what makes it more common for immigrants to become criminals, but respondent E explains why this is also how South Africans have more power over foreigners and once again is a lot of the immigrants perceived as to be illegally in the country. The interviewee explain the lack of paper and ID documentation as being something preventing immigrants from being able to report crimes committed against them leaving them in a more vulnerable position than native South Africans.

South Africans have more power. Since a lot of immigrants do not have any papers they can’t report crimes committed against them. (Respondent E, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

Described above are the attitudes about immigrants and the most common ways they are being perceived by natives in Alexandra. They are seen as illegal immigrants who are taking income-generating opportunities from other citizens. There is also this general attitude and perception of immigrants as hardworking and persistent, but also as possible perpetrators of criminal activity. Even so, there was an understanding among the citizens in Alexandra why immigrants act the way they do and it was frequently mentioned by the respondents that they did not dislike them as individuals.
5.1.2 Melville
The attitudes towards immigrants in Melville are positive. There is a common idea of the area as an area with mixed people and no widespread negative attitudes creating tension. Most interviewees in Melville do not think differently of African immigrants or immigrants from the rest of the world. The respondents expressed an idea about the difference of arriving in Melville depending what background they had. Respondent G expressed that it is easier for someone from Europe to migrate to South Africa since this person has in most of the time already a job opportunity waiting, whilst African immigrants do not. However, they acknowledged that attitudes in general in South Africa towards African immigrants are negative and that there is tension between native South Africans and African immigrants. When interviewing Melville residents about African immigrants respondents G, H and J referred to other South Africans, especially people in townships, and their issues with immigrants.

I don’t think Melville would be a hub of Xenophobia. In my experience there is a lot of immigrants in Melville and there is a lot of acceptance, people get along very well with each other. It is a middle class suburb so there is less competition for resources as it is in let’s say an informal settlement, where you are competing with your neighbour and which has a lot of people and less resources. I don’t think the tension is really in suburbia but rather in the townships. (Respondent G, personal communication, May 5th, 2016)

This quote explains very well the general view about immigration issues in South Africa among the interviewees in Melville. Other interviewees such as respondent H expressed a similar view and said that in Melville there is not the same division between different nationalities as in other poorer areas. The respondent compared Melville as an area with a high level of education among its citizens, regardless background, to other areas and believed Melville to be more civilized because of this. He explained that this was the reason for why Melville has not had experiences like xenophobic violence. He explained that other poorer areas have clear division between people and that there is a big difference in how people treat each other.

Respondent F was the only one of the interviewees who said that there is a division based on tension between South Africans and immigrants in Melville. The same respondent explained these tensions with the fact that he and the people he interacts with perceive that immigrants are using South Africans; that immigrants only want to become friends with South Africans to benefit from it somehow. Respondent H also explained that immigrants want to use native South Africans for their own benefit. This respondent explained how immigrants have no interest of integrating or interacting with native South Africans after they have gotten whatever it is they want from a friendship. Regardless this, respondent H also said that he does not have anything against immigrants personally and does not think that tension between groups of people with different nationality is an issue in Melville.

If they say they like us they are lying, I know. They don’t like us. I’ve been friends with the other ones for a couple of months and then we fight because I hear the things they say about us. So that tension between local South Africans and the immigrants, it is because of that. The immigrants they believe the South Africans are lazy. But they don’t understand the way we grew up because if you can see a country and its own history, where we come from, if you can understand where we come from then it can be easy for you to understand why we are the way we are now. They don’t see things the way we do. (Respondent H, personal communication, May 5th, 2016)

Even so, immigrants were generally explained as clever, ambitious people who work hard by all the interviewees in Melville. Especially Somalis, Nigerians and Zimbabweans are mentioned as very successful. Respondent J talked about how she believes they are not just very streetwise people but that the schooling in Nigeria is what makes them very bright in the work field. She
expressed she believes they get a particular knowledge about planning which makes them so successful. When asked how the distribution of people in the work field looks like respondent F clearly expressed that locals get outcompeted by the immigrants. He believed this to be happening in all of South Africa and that the immigrants come with education and skills the locals are lacking. Considering Melville specifically, respondent G thought that the people who immigrate are in most of the cases academics and therefore competing for jobs on the same level as locals in the area.

In two of the interviews respondent F and H portrayed immigrants as criminals or as staying in South Africa illegally. They expressed prejudice thoughts even though they earlier in the interviews said they had nothing against immigrants or sees them any different from locals.

Because you know the other thing, these people, they don’t have a permission to come here to this country. When you commit crime, they get away easy. I’ve seen that they can do whatever and they are very hard to catch. If they would keep coming here it would mess up the place. But this doesn’t apply to the legal ones. (Respondent H, personal communication, May 5th, 2016)

Another attitude communicated by the respondents was that immigrants more often than locals take part in corruption. Respondent H and J stated that immigrants tend to bribe police officers to get whatever they need or want. Whenever an immigrant would be caught doing something the way out of this would be bribery. Even though this is something occurring among locals as well, respondent H explained how this is so well known among the police force and the immigrants that corrupted officers now deliberately approaches immigrants. This is especially effective for the officers if the immigrant in questions is in South Africa illegally. Respondent J also stated how the corruption is a way for immigrant to make their way into South Africa. She explained how the immigration system is part of a moneymaking business and that illegal immigrants tend to get to resources like houses intended for the locals through bribery. Regardless of this all of the interviewees had a good understanding to why these immigrants are coming to South Africa and saw them as people in need.

5.2 Identified explanations
Following are the explanations for attitudes, both positive and negative, towards African immigrants in Alexandra and Melville thematically analysed according to the main explanations found in previous research: institutional and political structure, socioeconomic competition and media discourse.

5.2.1 Alexandra
Many different explanations for negative attitudes and for violence towards African immigrants were brought up while interviewing people living in Alexandra. Generally, the explanations they highlighted were economic, political and institutional reasons however none of the respondents brought up media as having an impact on this issue.

Institutional and political structure
The political and institutional structure in South Africa was stated by all respondents in Alexandra as an important factor contributing to attitudes and sometimes even violence towards African immigrants. When talking about political and institutional structure all respondents mentioned the registration and documentation of immigrants as important. For example, respondent D expressed that immigration to South Africa should be managed better to ensure that immigrants are entering the country legally.

Immigration policies need to be more strict. If you want to come you should have papers. (Respondent D, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)
They all expressed that too many immigrants from African countries are in South Africa illegally and that this is a problem and causes frustration among native South Africans. The interviewees did not only mention how this is causing frustration among other native South Africans but expressed that they themselves felt that this is an issue, especially because without being there legally with documentation immigrants do not have to pay tax and when committing crimes it is harder for the police to arrest them. Respondents A, B and C all expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that illegal immigrants do not pay taxes. Respondent A felt that it is unfair that native South Africans who already have so little pay tax, while immigrants who come there illegally do not have to pay. Respondent C was also frustrated by this but said that the government should make sure that immigrants have documentation and pay tax. Respondent C’s frustration in this issue was directed more towards the government than towards immigrants since he felt it was the government’s responsibility to manage immigration and make sure everyone pays tax. Respondent B said that only native South Africans pay tax but everyone, regardless if they are contributing or not, get the benefits from.

Respondent B also expressed that immigrants can commit crimes without getting caught more easily if they are there illegally. His statement also shows his perceptiveness of immigrants coming illegally without documentation with the intention of committing crimes.

[...] the foreigners don’t get arrested and they do as they please. They are not from here and leave all their documentation back in their country so they can do as they please.

(Respondent B, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

Respondents C, D and E however acknowledged that it is harder for immigrants who are in South Africa illegally because if something happens to them they cannot go to the police because they are there illegally. Respondent D said that when foreigners in South Africa get caught doing illegal activities, the police can beat them up and bribe them for money and since they are already there illegally they cannot do anything about it. The same reason is what is stopping undocumented immigrants from reporting crimes committed against them.

Everyone interviewed in Alexandra also expressed dissatisfaction with the current government and how the government work to manage immigration and prevent xenophobic attacks from happening. They all felt that it is important that the government does something about the high unemployment rates and poverty among native South Africans before they can help people from other counties. When asked what should be done to prevent more attacks from happening respondents D and E both expressed that it is unfair that immigrants are helped while native South Africans needs are not satisfied by the government. There was no knowledge among the respondents what or if something had been done after the attacks that had already happened. According to respondent D the government needs to see the needs of native South Africans as well, not just the immigrants. Respondent E expressed a similar explanation and said that the government should listen more to native South Africans to understand their needs.

Respondents B, C and D all stated directly or indirectly that the government or institutions are corrupted. For example, respondent B said that the police are sometimes corrupt and the way they treat people causes conflict, indicating that corruption is a contributing factor to tensions between people of different nationalities.

[...] the police confiscated property that was stolen during the attacks and they never gave it back to the people it was stolen from, they kept it themselves. It is still a conflict between people because of this. Because the people who lost their things did not get them back and blame those who stole it and those who stole it say they gave it back to the police.

(Respondent B, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)
**Socioeconomic competition**

The most common explanation for attitudes towards African immigrants among the respondents in Alexandra was economic. They were all very quick to mention township retail competition when talking about immigrants and the xenophobic attacks that has happened in Alexandra. Everyone interviewed in this community brought up the fact that immigrants work for a lower salary and therefore outcompete native South Africans in the labour market. It was also mentioned that immigrants from African countries, especially Ethiopians, Zimbabweans and Somalis, are very successful with their retail shops and that immigrants tend to stick together and help other immigrants from the same country in the labour market. Respondent A said that she does not have anything against them personally but that the problem is that they outcompete native citizens for jobs.

No I don’t have a problem with them but they outcompete jobs [...] They are cheaper to employ and therefore get the jobs. (Respondent A, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

When asked about the xenophobic attacks in Alexandra 2008, 2011 and 2015 everyone answered in different ways that the job situation is the cause and that too many native South Africans are unemployed while immigrants are making a better living for themselves. According to respondent D South Africans already have so little, which makes it unfair when immigrants have it easier to find jobs. She said for example that when you go to a restaurant anywhere in South Africa you only see Zimbabweans working there which is not fair. Respondent A expressed that she felt this was unfair in the following quote.

Job employment is the main cause. Why should they be better of than us? [...] South Africans should be prioritized in the job market because this is our country. (Respondent A, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

It was also expressed by respondent D and E that people in general in Alexandra feel outcompeted by immigrants, that not only they themselves experienced this. Respondent D said that people in Alexandra have issues with foreigners because they think that they only came to take their jobs. Respondent E also mentioned that the general belief in Alexandra is that immigrants came to take South Africans jobs and houses.

**Media discourse**

None of the respondents in Alexandra mentioned medias influence on the perception of African immigrants without being asked by the researchers about this factor. Additionally, when asked what they thought about medias way of portraying African immigrants no one trusted what is said in the media. Following are two examples of how they felt about the media.

From my own experience, the way they are portrayed is not consistent with reality. Immigrants have never done anything bad to me. (Respondent A, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

They are just selling stories, they are not telling the truth. (Respondent B, personal communication, April 20th, 2016)

**5.2.2 Melville**

The attitudes were generally more positive in Melville than in Alexandra. The reasons behind accepting attitudes in Melville were explained by the interviewees as a result of less competition of resources than among people in for example townships like Alexandra. Being a middle class
area with a flourishing social and economic life a majority of the respondents agreed people were all mixed and integrated.

**Institutional and political structure**

Regardless the overall positive approach to immigration there are what to be considered negative attitudes as well. Respondents F, G, I and J all expressed that the tensions that could occur among people with different national background as well as the understanding among people in Melville to be an effect of the institutional and political structure. They mentioned the lack of action by the government to work with issues such as poverty as a factor to why the tension might be created among foreigners and native citizens regardless area in the country. As in Alexandra, none of the respondent did know what or if the government has in fact done something concrete after the xenophobic attacks.

Respondent G expressed that the government needs to deal with the issue of poverty in the country before handling any other issues related to immigration. The respondent gave the explanation that the tension found anywhere in the country is a result of a wider issue. She meant that the lack of resources and the competitions among the great amount of people in the country is too much and what is creating any negative attitudes. Since African immigrants are being successful by taking less salary than native citizens they become a minority controlling the resources, which she believed to be an obvious reason for further tension. The respondent meant the issues around poverty need to be dealt with and that this would decrease any negative or xenophobic attitudes towards Africans immigrants. Respondent F also expressed that the government has to work with issues among native South Africans to avoid these tensions between people.

The government need to listen to their citizens, they just make decisions by themselves.

[...] The attacks are because of the anger with the problems we have in South Africa.

(Respondent F, personal communication, April 18th, 2016)

The issues between foreigners and native South Africans was also explained by the people in Melville to have its roots in the country’s unique, racist and very recent history. When asked about the rare but occasional tension among people in Melville the respondents connected this to what previous research has defined as policies based on old and racist ideas and one of the respondents believed there was a clear correlation.

I think South Africa has its history and it would be naive not to think this affects South Africa today. Obviously the history is a racist one and it comes from apartheid, so yes it sounds very possible. (Respondent G, personal communication, May 5th, 2016)

The interviewees all agreed on the fact that the control of people getting in and out of the country was very limited. Part of the problem is corruption within the governmental sphere and among different governmental institutions like the South African police force, which is mentioned by all but one interviewee. When being asked about the immigration policies and the effect of this respondent J gave the following response:

I think they are pretty strict but they are not managed. They can’t manage them, how do we stop people from coming in? People can just walk in. It is pretty difficult to maintain and people bribe their way in. They have to renew their passports. It is a moneymaking business. (Respondent J, personal communication, May 4th, 2016)

Respondent H explained and drew parallels to how politically active South Africans had fled into other African countries during the apartheid system. Mentioned was also how these countries had opened their borders during this period which now was a reason for why African immigrants should be able to come to South Africa and in this case Melville if they need and want to.
Even though the current issues of tension and violence against immigrants in South Africa were explained by the interviewees as having its roots in lack of actions and poorly managed policies by the government there was also this understanding that this is affecting everyone making it more than the government’s problem.

I think it is a little bit of everyone’s responsibility to prevent these events from happening. Part of it is the government, part of it is NGOs, part of it is just general society. It is me paying my cleaner a decent wage. I think it is everyone and a countrywide thing. (Respondent G, personal communication, May 5th, 2016)

According to respondent F, the responsibility was not only with the leaders and the government but also with leaders from outside of South Africa. He suggested that the UN should be more involved because the leaders in South Africa are corrupt and will not do anything to prevent tensions or violence between different national groups.

**Socioeconomic competition**

Socioeconomic competition was brought up by all the interviewees in Melville as an explanation for some tensions between different nationalities in Melville and as an explanation for bigger issues with tensions in the country. A common idea among the interviewees in Melville is that labour among illegal immigrants in many cases outcompete native South Africans on the labour market in Melville.

However, the attitudes in Melville were significantly more accepting and the explanation for this was according to the respondents also socioeconomic. Being an area with a lot of students was said to provide a lot more of the same opportunities for the population regardless their background and as long as they were all academics. In comparison to this an area attracting a lot more labourers would rather have more competition and therefore more tension and negative attitudes. As mentioned earlier in the study of attitudes in Melville this area is a suburb with less competition for resources making the interaction between people less agitated.

People here aren’t as much divided, not as in other places. People here are civilized we understand those things. Here in Melville we are not divided. […] Here in Melville there is no violence between these groups. It can be just a verbal thing with arguments but not a serious thing. (Respondent H, personal communication, May 5th, 2016)

This quote from respondent H explains that because people are more educated and civilized in Melville compared to township areas, they do not have the same issues there. The type of work that can be found in an area like Melville was also mentioned as an explanation for why people did not experience any tension according to respondent G. Even though some attitudes regarding certain issues in the South African society occurred in Melville the respondents had positive attitudes towards immigrants and the main reason for the understanding and acceptance was the belief that these foreigners are people in need.

They place is full of African immigrants, Angolans, Mozambicans. They fit in here very well and they earn more than they would at home. (Respondent I, personal communication, May 4th, 2016)

Respondent I also thought that regardless if the African immigrant managed to get an income-generating opportunity in South Africa, they were still better of coming to South Africa even if it meant begging for food and money to survive rather than dying back in their home countries. The interviewees also saw immigration by other Africans as beneficial for Melville as a society especially if there is enough income-generating opportunities available in the area. Some of the
interviewees also connected this to the fact that the world today is a global world where diversity is beneficial and is to be seen as a contribution to societies. All of the respondents were in relation to this happy to pay tax if it meant it would benefit the society and the living conditions for immigrants.

*Media discourse*

Most of the respondents in Melville did not perceive the media as portraying African immigrants in a certain way, or at all. However, it was acknowledge by respondent I that black immigrants are portrayed as thieves, rapists and murderers. He did not believe that this was consistent with reality and said that the risk of being the victim of crime carried out by a black person is more likely than a white person and has its obvious explanation in the fact that most of the population in South Africa is in fact black, not that this had anything to do with one's background.
6 Discussion

This chapter presents an analysis of the results attained in this study. It is discussing events labelled as xenophobic. Attitudes and identified explanations between the respondents and their communities are also discussed both on their own and in relation to previous research. This section also highlights what new perspective this study has in relation to previous research.

6.1 Xenophobic violence or frustration and deprivation

If we were to believe the isolation hypothesis of xenophobia where the issue would be the fact that South Africans do not like differences in people, all of the explanations and the results of this study would have nothing to do with the reasons for violence and negative attitudes towards immigrants. It means that regardless if all of the political and economical issues brought up by the respondents would be solved, there would still be tension and xenophobia in the country. Previous research has referred to the violence against immigrants as xenophobic attacks and this would mean that the issue is between the people, the differences they experience in each other and a dislike regarding this. The authors of this study, like Dr. Tshitereke, believe it is possible to question if the violence against African immigrants has in fact been xenophobic due to differences. The isolation hypothesis is built on the idea that South Africa has not yet managed to overcome the problems created during the apartheid system, which the authors believe to be very likely and what made this study interesting to conduct to begin with. Even so, the respondents express no personal issues, no differences, hate or fear of the immigrants because they are foreigners or have a different background. The reason for the negative attitudes seems to have their explanations in other occurrences. The institutional and political structure and socioeconomic competition are as mentioned by the respondents the main issues and the immigrants seem to be part of a big dysfunctional wheel which puts them in position as scapegoats. Firstly, the African immigrants are being part of the corruption; as long as there is someone, in this case a governmental institution, making money on illegal immigration it is highly unlikely this will be prioritized and fixed anytime soon. As long as there is a social ill and both political and economic structure creates the possibilities for a certain group to outcompete another as great as described by the respondents, the African immigrants are at risk of being blamed for the inequalities. Secondly, if native South African would have their needs fulfilled, if they would be able to reduce inequality and poverty, the results of this study suggest the violence against African immigrants would reduce as well. When speaking about unemployment and the fact that African immigrants would outcompete native South Africans and there are respondents expressing there are jobs native citizens believe are “beneath them”, one can wonder if the issue is really about competition or a cultural difference in work ethic, which is benefiting one more than the other and is perhaps to be seen as a learning opportunity.

6.2 Attitudes

This section deals with and discusses the attitudes found in both Alexandra and Melville.

6.2.1 Efficiency and competition

The general attitude towards African immigrants as a group of people was open and accommodating in both communities in this study. None of the respondents expressed any degrading opinions or attitudes towards immigrants in relation to their background as foreigners. In Alexandra, an overcrowded area with massive competition for resources, the attitudes towards immigrants as individuals were kind and understanding. As in Melville, none of the respondents had any personal issues with the immigrants due to their national background. This was not very surprising considering that South Africa is multicultural and diverse country with a long history of immigration. Even so, one of the respondents felt that immigrants only would interact with him to be able to get something out of it. He felt there was no genuine or honest reason for
immigrants to integrate with the locals, but rather as a mean to acquire something. Regardless of the community, there was a common attitude about immigrants as being very successful in the work field. The respondents in Melville expressed to a much higher extent that they thought immigrants were hardworking, educated people and this was the reason for their success. Part of this could be explained by the lower competition for resources in the area, more people are considered academics and therefore have the same chance of achieving goals regardless of national origin. In Alexandra on the other hand, the African immigrants were considered successful because they accept lower salaries than locals. It was also expressed by one of the respondents that the immigrants take jobs locals would not pursue to begin with. Even so, the general attitude in Alexandra was that the immigrants take jobs or opportunities from locals and as a result of this the locals should be prioritized when hiring people into businesses. The explanation for this could derive from the difference between immigrants who live in Alexandra and Melville. As previously mentioned, Melville is a middle class area with a lot of students. It can be concluded that immigrants who can afford to live there have a private financial situation more solid than immigrants living in Alexandra. Furthermore, it can be concluded that immigrants living in Alexandra are more anxious and desperate to find an income and therefore accept very low salaries and working conditions.

6.2.2 Illegal immigrants

All of the respondents in Alexandra recognized African immigrants as being illegal immigrants. When asked about African immigrants, they immediately started talking about illegal immigrants. They referred to all immigrants as lacking documentation and identification. Very rarely did any of the respondents correct themselves or add the fact that not all immigrants in South Africa are illegal immigrants. In relation to these issues all of the respondents brought up the fact that these immigrants do not pay tax like legal citizens have to do. The reason for referring to immigrants in this way could be a result of more immigrants staying illegally in Alexandra than in suburbs like Melville. Even though the respondents themselves never explicitly expressed this, a conclusion can be made that more illegal immigrants are staying in Alexandra rather than in Melville. Partly because of how the residents tend to refer to immigrants as illegal or not, when referring to all immigrants as illegal it is likely to believe this person lives around a lot of illegal immigrants. Also because of the fact that a middle class suburb like Melville attracts residents with a middle class income, which it is possible to assume many of the African immigrants, do not have when being in South Africa illegally. Also in Melville there were respondents who referred to immigrants as all being in South Africa illegally. This was done when speaking of criminality. The respondent expressed an attitude where he believed immigrants to be committing crimes at a higher rate than locals because of the lack of documentation. Even though respondent H said that they can do whatever they want without being caught he further referred to some African immigrants as actual documented citizens. Referring to all immigrants as being undocumented, living and working in South Africa illegally, means that whatever issues are related are at risk of being transferred over to all African immigrants. This careless use of the term will whenever social problems, as criminality or tax money-issues are seen as a result of illegal immigration make all African immigrants be at risk of being blamed. Since this is also found in Melville, but not to the same extent, it could mean that residents of Melville also judge immigrants in relation to the fact that there are illegal immigrants in the country.

6.2.3 Criminality

A common attitude among the respondents of Alexandra was that African immigrants are the ones committing most of the crimes in South Africa. The fact that all of the respondents brought this to attention at least once shows a common attitude about the group of immigrants. The given explanation to this was that immigrants would be aware of the difficulties of arresting someone who is lacking documentation and citizenship and therefore deliberately commit crimes in the country. Once again it becomes an issue if all immigrants are perceived as illegal. If all immigrants are perceived as illegal, the general attitude about them is that all of them are at a higher risk of committing crimes. This creates an unjust prejudiced idea about an entire group of
people in society and could for some people motivate them to perpetrate discrimination against them. In Melville the issue of criminality was brought up in a different sense, two of the respondents expressed the fact that the lack of documentation would make it easier to get away with crimes, but in this community the respondents stated more than once that illegal immigrants are being part of corruption instead of being the ones carrying out crimes on their own. According to the respondents, African immigrants, especially illegal immigrants, has become part of a moneymaking business in South Africa. Bribery is mentioned more than once and respondent J also explains this as a way into the country. The respondent also made a point of what creates such frustration among citizens in South Africa. Through these bribes, illegal immigrants are able to get certain resources that as she describes are not intended for them to begin with. Since there is already a problem with overcrowding in townships like Alexandra, one could understand why bribery in order to get to houses and other resources might lead to frustration. Once again the respondents in Melville speak of an issue related to immigration as part of a problem that does not concern their community directly, whilst the people of Alexandra seem to have more knowledge of the crimes themselves. Even though the lack of documentation was stated as being something immigrants takes advantage of for criminal activities, this is also expressed as something that puts immigrants in a vulnerable position. Respondent E stated that since a lot of immigrants do not have any papers they cannot report crimes committed against them. This puts immigrants in a position where they are at risk of being the victims of crime without having the possibility to do anything about it. This can be connected to what previous research has referred to as xenophobic violence. The widespread xenophobic violence that has happened in South Africa during the big attack is difficult not only because of the fact that there is a certain group being targeted, but also because this group can not always report whatever has been done towards them, since doing so would mean they are at risk of being deported.

6.2.4 People in need
In both communities the respondents recognized immigrants as people in need. In Alexandra the respondents acknowledged the immigrants as being in need of income-generating opportunities and therefore coming to South Africa. They believed that the reason for coming to South Africa was for the cause of leaving something worse behind. In Alexandra only one respondent ever brought up the specific history of South Africa and the flow of people into other African countries during the apartheid era. The respondent justified the fact that African immigrants should be able to come to South Africa today, because when South Africans needed help these countries had opened their borders. Even though the attitudes were more critical on the phenomena of immigration in Alexandra, this respondent was the only one who discussed this fact in this community. Likewise in Melville, only one of the respondents brought up the fact that South Africans fled to neighbouring countries when South Africa was under the apartheid system. He argued that this is a reason why people in South Africa should accept immigrants and especially refugees today. The fact that only one person brought this up in Alexandra can be explained by the young age among people in Alexandra. Since the majority of the population in Alexandra is very young they do not have as much personal experience or memory from the apartheid system as people in other areas where the older generations are still alive. By this theory, more people than just one in Melville should have mentioned this as an important aspect. However, Melville is a middle class area, historically residing white citizens, where people were not underprivileged during the apartheid era and did not experience the need to flee to another country. This could explain why only one person in Melville emphasized this historical aspect.

6.3 Identified explanations
The result of this study brought up many different explanations for both positive and negative attitudes towards African immigrants in the South African society. The division between native South Africans and African immigrants in South Africa is a complex issue and it is clear that it cannot be explained with only one cause resulting in a divided society. All respondents in both
Alexandra and Melville talked about many different factors contributing to the way African immigrants are portrayed and how native South Africans feel about them living in South Africa.

Most of the causes were within the field of socioeconomic competition and the political and institutional structure. When talking about the socioeconomic competition as a cause for negative attitudes it was brought up by all respondents in both communities that African immigrants are cheaper to employ and accept lower salaries than South Africans born in South Africa. Further they explained that this results in negative feelings and attitudes towards these immigrants among citizens who feel outcompeted by them. In Alexandra it was clear that the respondents experienced the competition for resources with immigrants while in Melville this was something that they had observed being an issue in other communities. It was also frequently mentioned that African immigrants have very successful businesses, most commonly retail shops. This is another way in which native citizens feel outcompeted by immigrants economically. By some of the respondents in Alexandra it was also expressed that African immigrants outcompete locals when it comes to housing as well and not only in the job market. In Melville, where attitudes were more accommodating of immigrants from African countries, these positive attitudes were explained by the fact that in Melville people are not outcompeted to the same extent as in other areas that the respondents explained as poorer communities. Another explanation for the attitudes among the respondents that was expressed by everyone interviewed in Alexandra and that can be categorised as both economic and political was that they thought it was unfair that illegal immigrants do not pay tax. All interviewees in Alexandra mentioned this as an issue.

One political aspect that respondents of both communities expressed as an explanation for their attitudes is that the government has failed to, or not tried to do anything about the inequalities and poverty that is already existing in South Africa. The fact that there are already so many people suffering from poverty and unemployment was said to cause frustration and anger when immigrants outcompete locals in the work field. All respondents in Alexandra and some of the respondents in Melville said that the government should manage immigration better concerning registration and documentation. The issues that were brought up about immigration were often a consequence of immigrants being in South Africa illegally. Since everyone had an issue with immigrants not paying tax in Alexandra, this explains why they felt it is important that immigrants enter South Africa legally with documentation. It was only mentioned in Melville that the current situation could partly be a result of the nation’s history of racist politics and that there was a correlation between these and the tensions in society today. Many respondents in both Alexandra and Melville said that corruption was contributing as well and that corruption in the government was a reason why the state does not do enough about inequalities in South Africa. Institutional corruption was also mentioned, mainly within the police force. According to interviewees in Alexandra and Melville both, the police treat people differently when they notice that they are immigrants, especially illegal immigrants. Some mentioned that immigrants are treated more harshly and sometimes beaten up while others said that immigrants have a habit of bribing their way forward in society and that they also do this to the police. It was also mentioned by one of the interviewees that immigrants bribe their way into the country and that there is a moneymaking business behind this at the South African border. Only one of the interviewees in Melville expressed any knowledge of the history of the country and knew that many South Africans had fled to neighbouring countries during the apartheid era. The way respondent H saw it, neighbouring countries have previously helped South Africans when they were in need and now when they are in need, South Africa should return the favour. Being an area with a high level of education, it can be found surprising that only one of the respondents expressed this as an explanation for the open-minded attitude about immigration. Even though the level of education is said to be much lower in Alexandra, the youngest respondent expressed the same explanation. The reason for this could be the fact that Melville historically been a white community and therefore not experienced oppression during the apartheid system in the same way as the people in Alexandra did. Since organisations working against xenophobia express the importance of
remembering the particular history of South Africa it is something that can be expected to appear more often in well-educated areas. Melville being an area with highly educated people was explained as a reason why attitudes are more accepting in that area.

The respondents did not stress the influence of media on prejudiced attitudes about African immigrants through their discourse and ways of portraying immigrants. In Alexandra, no one mentioned the media before being asked about it and when asked they said that the media cannot be trusted and what is said there about immigrants is not consistent with reality. The fact that they thought immigrants were portrayed in a dishonest way could mean that this affect people to have prejudiced ideas about them that are not true. However, they did not think that the media could be trusted which could also mean that the media does not have a great influence on people in Alexandra due to their distrust for the media. In Melville four of the interviewees did not think that the media portrays immigrants in a certain way but one of them said that immigrants are portrayed as criminals, which might affect people's attitudes towards them.

6.4 In relation to previous research

Previous researchers, such as Dodson and Steenkamp, emphasized the institutional and political structure, socioeconomic competition and the discourse in media as the most significant factors leading to xenophobic attitudes and feelings towards African immigrants by native South Africans. As mentioned earlier, the respondents have not confirmed the role of media as an influence on xenophobia. Two respondents in Alexandra and one of the interviewees in Melville mentioned that African immigrants are portrayed unfairly but the general trust in media seem to be very low, which could lead to the conclusion that this is not coherent with previous research. One way in which the institutional and political structure was said to be contributing was that the immigration policies were strict and race based. All but one of the respondents said the immigration policies should be stricter and never mentioned the fact that they might be based on old and racist ideas. Respondent G in Melville suggested that since the country has a racist history that comes from the apartheid system it would be naive to think this does not affect the policies regulating migration today. Except for these ideas from respondent G the majority of the interviewees expressed a wish to make to the policies stricter.

Since corruption can be understood as national problem in South Africa as the respondents have expressed it, one can wonder if the problem is the policies themselves or the way they are being managed. If the policies that are supposed to regulate the flow of people into the country would be managed properly, instead of being part of a corrupt moneymaking business, they would not have to be made stricter. If the policies were handled properly, more immigrants would be able to live and work in South Africa legally, which suggest the reasons for negative attitudes towards immigrants and even xenophobic violence to go down.

Hayem and Dodson are some of the previous researchers highlighting the government’s lack of action and recognition of the violence after the xenophobic attacks as a contributing factor for the repetition of xenophobic violence or negative attitudes towards African immigrants. This was not expressed by any of the respondents, however it was mentioned by many that the government should listen to the South African citizens and their needs and do something about inequalities in South Africa. It was recognized by the majority of the respondents that the government needs to take care of the population before being able to integrate more people. As one of the respondents in Melville suggested, the issue of poverty needs to be dealt with to make sure this frustration regarding the competition can drop. The lack of knowledge about what, or if something in fact had been done by the government as an intervention or as prevention suggests that people has not gotten any information from the government that might work in favour of settling the situation. By not stating clearly and condemn the happenings might in fact, as previous research suggest, lead to further violence.
Additionally, in the political field, Dodson criticised the discourse among politicians as contributing to creating stereotypical prejudices about Africa immigrants, which was not mentioned by any of the respondents. Even so, institutional and political structure was one of the main explanations for negative attitudes towards African immigrants both in previous research and among the people interviewed in Alexandra and Melville. However, the exact explanations within this field were not the same in previous research as among the respondents. The respondents highlighted other factors in the institutional and political structure, which they felt were the most important explanations. These were focused more on problem with corruption and what this leads to, like a high amount of undocumented immigrants and unequal payment of tax. One of the respondents even stated the government to be so corrupt and therefore incompetent to handle the crisis in the country. He suggested that South Africa is in need of international support like interventions by the UN. The fact that the government is not dealing with existing issues like inequality and unemployment was also one of the main focal points within the institutional and political structure.

Socioeconomic competition was also one of the main contributors to unaccepting attitudes towards African immigrants. Previous researchers, such as Steenkamp, stressed the fact that African immigrants are blamed for the high unemployment rates among South Africans because they accept lower wages and therefore are more desirable to hire. This explanation is something that was brought up many times by all respondents and is therefore consistent with previous research. One can understand the difficulties in this phenomenon. To be able to lift the South African people out of poverty, the salaries cannot continue in a downward spiral, which they will do if there is competition for work and a certain group is willing to accept less money. This can be seen as contributing to the great inequalities found in the country already. At the same time, it is understandable that employees want to pay as little as possible to the employed to make as much profit as possible. It is possible to argue what the result will be in terms of quality in services, but since there still is competition among the unemployed one still have to perform even if accepting a lower salary. It is possible to argue that this is where the government needs to intervene and regulate the way one can and cannot employ, which seem to be lacking according to the explanations expressed by the respondents.

Dodson is the only previous researcher bringing up that the competition for housing and other resources are part of what creates negative attitudes and are things that South Africans feel that they should be prioritised for. This is an explanation found in Alexandra but not in Melville. It was expressed by some of the respondents in Alexandra that they do not think that immigrants should come to their community because of lack of housing. Additionally, it was also expressed by one of the respondents in Alexandra that native South Africans should be prioritized over immigrants. This is most likely the result of competition among the residents in Alexandra, but not in Melville. It is possible to assume that if the government would deal with the issues of bribery and the way of getting resources by being part of bribery, these attitudes could possibly drop due to an equal chance of maintaining the resources. Since the respondents did not have any issues with the immigrants on a personal level, it seems one should deal with the issues on a structural level and that this in fact would have an effect on attitudes as well. Furthermore, according to Dodson, wealthier citizens in the country feel they are paying tax for other countries incompetence since immigrants are leaving in a big number to come to South Africa. Theoretically this suggests that this investigation would find those attitudes among respondents in Melville, which is a middle class suburb in Johannesburg. Conversely, all respondents felt good about paying tax that is used to help integrate immigrants and thought that tax is a good thing. This is not coherent with previous research and suggests that there is an understanding regarding the need for Africans to leave their home countries. It is also possible that this is part of the deeper understanding that immigration might benefit South Africa as a country. Respondent G in Melville brought this up; she believed diversity to be good for Melville as a community and had no issues paying for integration of immigrants, as did none of the respondent in Melville.
6.5 New perspective

The previous research that this study is based on has mainly focused on immigrant’s experiences. The perspectives of immigrants and their understandings are very important aspects to take into consideration to fully understand this issue. Nevertheless, to find the underlying causes to why African immigrants are targeted this study is asking native South Africans what they think is the reason. This does not mean that the respondents are perpetrators of violence or even have negative attitudes towards African immigrants. Though, these people live in South African societies and to different extents witness actions and perceptions of African immigrants. Native South Africans might have other insights that could contribute with new information valuable to find a solution to the issue. Therefore this study is designed to investigate this issue from the perspective of native South African citizens.
7 Conclusion

The main conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that overall attitudes towards African immigrants as individuals are positive. Even so, socioeconomic background and status affects how one views and expresses certain feelings about African immigrants. In Alexandra, the feelings expressed about African immigrants were that they felt outcompeted by them and the general view was that immigrants are part of and benefiting from South Africa’s corrupt and mismanaged system. In Melville, the general expression of feelings towards African immigrants was that they are a part of a societal issue that is not their problem since they are not affected by it. They viewed African immigrants as very successful and hardworking people. The explanations found were also affected by the socioeconomic background and status. The main explanation in Alexandra was that all issues with immigrants were connected to them being in South Africa illegally while the main explanation in Melville was that the issues with negative attitudes towards African immigrants is a result of a broken political system. In Alexandra, people are directly affected by immigration and therefore these people seek direct and short-term solutions to their problem such as deporting illegal immigrants and make sure that all immigrants are legal. In Melville on the other hand, people are not affected directly but rather observing the issue and therefore seek wider, long-term political solutions, such as managing inequalities in the South African society.

Similar to previous research, the institutional and political structures as well as socioeconomic competition were highlighted as underlying causes to tensions between native South Africans and foreign nationals in The Rainbow Nation among all respondents. If we are to believe the isolation hypothesis of xenophobia where xenophobia is a result of perceived differences between groups of people, the attitudes found in this study are not xenophobic. The attitudes are rather in line with Dr. Tshitereke’s theory on frustration and deprivation, where xenophobic attitudes are a result of inequalities and social ills.

For future studies, one might consider doing a larger investigation of attitudes. This study is a random sample that exemplifies attitudes and explanations for attitudes towards African immigrants from two communities in South Africa. To reach a deeper understanding of what the objectives are to discriminate or perpetrate violence towards immigrants from other African countries it would be interesting to do the same investigation but interview more people and include more communities. To be able to generalise the results, it would be interesting to conduct a large amount of questionnaires, including more people’s opinions and attitudes in more communities. This would give a more saturated result. Furthermore, it would interesting to investigate the perspective of perpetrators to fully understand what motivates them and so forth contribute to finding a solution and a way out of it.
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9 References


10 Appendix – Interview guide

What are the attitudes towards African immigrants among native South African citizens with different socioeconomic backgrounds?

- Do you perceive this area as an area with a lot of immigrants, native South Africans or mixed?
- Do you perceive this area as divided by nationality?
  - Why do you think it is like that here?
  - Is there a tension between these groups?
  - Do you think that people of these groups have the same opportunities? (income-generating work, education etc)
- How do you feel about immigrants from African countries compared to immigrants from other parts of the world?
- Do you think that immigration is good for your community?
  - Why is it good/bad?
- Does it make any difference where in the world the immigrants come from?
- Do you think more African migrants should immigrate to your community?
  - Why is that?
- How do you think native South Africans and immigrants perceive each other?
- Is there violence between different groups?
  - Is any group significantly targeted?
  - Why is that?

How can these attitudes be explained in relation to previous research and theories?

- How do you feel about paying taxes that are used to help integrate immigrants?
- Do you think African immigrants out compete you and other native South Africans in your community in the workplace?
  - Should native South Africans be prioritised in the work field?
- Do you think native South Africans and African immigrants are treated equally legally?
  - Should the immigration policies be more strict in any way?
- Previous research about immigration in South Africa has found the immigrations policies to be built on old and sometime racist values, what do you think about that?
- How do think African immigrants are being portrayed in media?
  - Do you think this is consistent with reality?
  - Is it right to portray African immigrants in this way?
  - How do you think media should portray African immigrants?
- What do you know of the xenophobic attacks in 2008, 2011 and 2015?
  - What do you think caused these attacks?
  - Did these attacks come as a surprise for your community?
  - Do you think that this will happen again?
    - Why/why not?
  - What do you think should be done to prevent this?
  - Whose responsibility should it be to prevent this from happening?
  - How do you think the South African government handled the attacks?
- What do you think of the ANC party?
  - Why is that?

Statements - True or False

- African immigrants take jobs from South African.
- African immigrants commit most of the crime in the country.
- All African immigrants should be deported even if they are here legally.
- African immigrants take opportunities from South Africans.
- African immigrants bring diseases to South Africa?