

Psychological Determinants of Xenophobic Behaviours

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Abstract

Xenophobia has become increasingly worrisome since 1989 till date as the world becomes more globalized and international migration increased; with number of affected nations and casualties on the increase. This study examines the contributory roles of right-wing extremism, intolerance of ambiguity and ethnocentrism to propensity for xenophobic behaviour among South African undergraduates. Descriptive research design of survey type was adopted. Non-proportional stratified and simple random sampling techniques were utilized to select 600 undergraduates across levels/colleges and faculties in selected South Africa universities. Four standardized self-report questionnaires were used for data collection. Two hypotheses were raised and tested using multiple regression and t-test statistics. Findings revealed among others that the three predictor variables (right-wing extremism, intolerance of ambiguity and ethnocentrism) when combined, predicted the criterion variable (Xenophobia). The findings also showed that intolerance of ambiguity is the most potent predictor of xenophobic behaviour, followed by ethnocentrism, with right-wing extremism as the least predictor. Consequently, the paper recommended among others, that South Africa government should create space for cultural exchange programs in the universities to enhance mutual understanding among university community members and encourage diversity education.

Keywords: Xenophobia, Right-Wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity, Ethnocentrism.

Introduction

The world is gradually becoming a compact village; people of differing cultural background are increasingly coming into contact through travel, business, work, temporary and permanent settlement and information and communication technologies. What happens as a result of their contact can vary from mutual learning and appreciation to hostility and overt conflict arising from fear of being dominated. Xenophobia has become increasingly worrisome since 1989 as the world became more globalized and international migration (documented and irregular) increased. For example, the United States has been known throughout its history as a nation of immigrants (Smith & Edrnonston, 1997). At the same time, the United States has a long history of Xenophobia and Intolerance of immigrants (Fuchs, 1995; Takaki, 1989). This trend of hatred of strangers or foreigners was also noticed in South Africa. Before the year 1994, immigrants in different parts of the World were reported to be facing discrimination and violence including South Africa. This was attributed to an institutionalized racism as a result of apartheid in the Country during that period. With the advent of democracy since 1994, the incidence of xenophobia is yet to subside. This is evident in the various statistics available on the phenomenon from year 2000 till date. Between year 2000 and March 2008, nothing less than 67 people were killed in what were identified as xenophobic attacks, in May 2008, a series of riots broke out which claimed 62 lives, Although 21 of those killed were South African citizens, the attacks were apparently motivated by xenophobia (Igglesden, Misago, Landau, 2009; Seedat, Umesh, Kopano, 2010). In 2015, another nationwide xenophobic attacks against immigrants in general occurred which prompted some foreign governments to start repatriating their citizens (Robinson, 2015). Between 2016 and 2018, over one hundred and eighteen Nigerians were reported to have been killed in violent manners. While several businesses and properties were either burnt or looted. Furthermore, several xenophobic riots towards African immigrants have been on the increase since March 2019 with not less than 14 Nigerians had been killed. Another riots and looting targeting shops owned by foreign nationals broke out on 1 September, 2019. Not less than 50 businesses predominantly owned by Nigerians were destroyed during the said riotous act (Haffajee, 2019; The Nation, September 4, 2019).

Xenophobia, simply put, is fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers; it is embodied in discriminatory attitudes and behaviour, and often culminates in violence, abuses of all types and exhibitions of hatred (Mogekwu, 2005). Xenophobia comes from the Greek work (Xenos), meaning “stranger, foreigner” and (phobos) meaning “fear”. The term is typically used to describe a fear or dislike of foreigners or of

people significantly different from oneself, usually in the context of visibly differentiated minorities (Shinsana, 2008). It is more broadly defined in the Dictionary of Psychology (1978) as “fear of strangers”. It is a form of attitudinal, affective and behavioural prejudice toward immigrants and those perceived as foreigners. Xenophobia is a phenomenon that is evident in a large number of states around the world. In 2000, the United Nation’s Commission on Human Rights (cited in Valji, 2003) showed concern about the world-wide rise of intolerant attitudes towards outsiders. According to that report, “despite the efforts undertaken by the International community at various levels, racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, ethnic antagonism and acts of violence are showing signs of increase (p. 10)”. Therefore, xenophobia is a global phenomenon. It is not limited to South Africa. It is a reality in many other African Countries, in Europe, in America, among the Asia, in rich as well as in poor countries of the world. Xenophobia and its different manifestations (including amongst others, selective enforcement of bye-laws, harassments and arbitrary arrests, political scapegoating, denied access to services, and of course public violence) are an ongoing serious threat to lives and livelihoods of those deemed “outsiders” in many countries across the globe. While this situation has improved considerably in the United States of America (USA), Canada and parts of the European Union (EU) due to several factors which include intervention by workers’ unions, to mention but a few, the psychological fear of discrimination still persists among blacks from Africa (Campbell, 2009).

The issue of xenophobic relations in contemporary South Africa is rooted in and conditioned by the structure of its apartheid economy, racial categorization and international isolation. The apartheid economy was a totalizing one in that it mobilized all the social forces at its disposal to further the interest of the apartheid South African State. Since the primary productive force in the apartheid South African economy was gold, and the concomitant social relations of the mining process was by mostly black labour force, the industry (dominated by white South African Capitalists) attracted heavy migrant labour from Southern African regions to the fast thriving industry. According to Murphy (2001) as quoted by Mnyaka (2003), African immigrants flock to mining and fanning industries, two fields that are not popular among South African workers because of poor working conditions and low pay. The immediate result of this was that, as the foreign labour force began to gain social mobility in the gold industry and the black South Africans continually subjected to the repressive policies of apartheid, social tensions rose in the political economy of the state and has since remained a dominant part of the social relations of the post-apartheid South African State (Konanani&Odeku, 2013; Chidozie, 2014). The black South Africans have the belief that the foreigners steal their jobs (Dodson, 2010). The isolation hypothesis situates foreigners at the heart of hostility towards non-nationals. According to Harris (2002), “Isolation hypothesis suggests that suspicion and hostility towards strangers in South Africa exists due to its history of international isolation as a consequence of apartheid”. Morris (1998) points out that as “South Africans have no history of incorporating strangers and are unused to nationalities beyond Southern Africa, they may find incorporating foreigners difficult” - a problem that is fuelling anti-African Xenophobia. The isolation hypothesis is wedded to the discourse of exceptionalism as expressed by Neocosmos, which is rooted in the belief of South Africans that they are different from the rest of Africa; that they are exceptional (Steenkamp, 2009). Given South African’s successful reconciliation and democratization process, its political stability and high level of industrialization, its citizens see the country as not really belonging to Africa. Instead, Africa is seen as some kind of strange backward continent characterized by primitivism, corruption, authoritarianism, poverty and failed states (Neocosmos, 2008). They have negative and superior view over other Africans. All these negative behaviours promote xenophobic behaviour among South Africans, making the country to be hot spot among African nations in xenophobia.

Apartheid law of segregation is another contributing factor to xenophobic attitude of South Africans. South Africa is a melting pot of cultures, religions, languages and ethnic groups. This multicultural and multiracial environment has formally existed for over three hundred years. For much of the twentieth century, apartheid laws segregated people along racial lines. One of the legacies of apartheid was racially segregated universities which continue to exist under the name of Historically Disadvantaged Universities (HDUs). Going by the South African past political history, it could be inferred that some factors such as socio-economic structure, international isolation, racial categorization, political

fragmentation, prejudice, exceptionalism and discrimination, which are features in the apartheid South African state have had huge effect on the attitudes of South African citizens. These have also contributed in developing ethnocentrism, intolerance of ambiguity and right-wing extremism which are manifested in xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

Ethnocentrism refers to the way we look at the world from our perspective or from our filter of meaning (Andrew, 1986). It is a psychological construct that described the tendency of an individual to reject out-groups or tendency to view any economic, political or social event only from the point of the in-group. This has been an important factor to South African's hostile attitudes towards foreigners, that is, out-group. In fact, various scholars, such as CGRMSA (2008), Valji (2003) and Yakushko (2009), argued that frustration and anger by South Africans at the worsening economic conditions and the lack of service delivery have fuelled the rise of violence. The already existing competition amongst the less well off for scarce resources is exacerbated by the widespread assumption amongst South Africans that foreigners are stealing their jobs, houses and other services and resources of which they themselves feel entitled (Dodson, 2010, London, 2004, Valji, 2003). These perceived feelings of threat are explained by the Realistic Conflict Theory, which suggests that "competition for access to limited resources results in a conflict between groups", as the in-group views the out-group as a source of competition, causing prejudices against them (Yakushko, 2009). The attitude also includes seeing one's own standards of value as universal and it is manifested by South Africans. They believed that they are different from the rest of Africans and that they are exceptional. The behaviours associated with ethnocentrism are cooperative relations with the in-group and absence of cooperative relations with the out-group (Levine and Campbell, 1972). Membership in an ethnic group is typically evaluated in terms of one or more observable characteristics (such as language accent, physical features or religion) that are regarded as indicating common descent (Kurzban, Tooby & Ciesmides 2001) in short, ethnocentrism can be in-group favouritism or out-group hostility. Ethnocentrism is also seen as the feeling that one's group has a mode of living, values, and patterns of adaptation that are superior to those of other groups. It is coupled with a generalized contempt for members of other groups. Therefore, it could be inferred that ethnocentrism played a major role in the xenophobic attitudes towards immigrants in South Africa as they view other groups as inferior and contemptible.

Worthy of note is the study of Mekonne and Bahir (2003) that found out that students displayed their ethnocentric behaviour to foreign students by resulting to name calling and refusal to cooperate with group assignments. This corroborates the findings of Crush and Pendleton (2004) where it was discovered that foreign students were referred to as 'makwere' (a derogatory form used for a black person who cannot demonstrate mastery of local South African languages). Intolerance of other cultures leading to mistreatment, negative affective reactions to out groups, distrust, hostility, contempt and so on, resulted in xenophobic attacks. Also related to ethnocentrism is South African's intolerance of foreigners' way of life, culture, language, mode of dressing, etc. as those were considered strange and ambiguous. According to Frenkel-Brunswik (1949), Intolerance of Ambiguity is the key variable in ethnocentric personality. The end of apartheid meant the waiving of international borders and for South Africans to come into contact with people previously unknown and of different culture. According to this argument, a brutal culture of hostility towards strangers and no history of incorporating them meant that South Africans were and still are unable to tolerate difference - a characteristic of Intolerance of Ambiguity. Burdner (1962) described Intolerance of Ambiguity as the tendency to perceive ambiguous situations as, sources of threat. Individual psychological differences involve two related dimensions: personality and cognitive style. Kagan and Segal (1988) define personality as the total pattern of characteristic ways of thinking, feeling and behaving that constitute the individual's distinctive method of relating to the environment. Personality refers to the attitudes or beliefs of individuals, while cognitive style refers to the ways or methods by which an individual receives, stores, processes and transmits information (Gul, 1984).

Intolerance of ambiguity is a personality characteristic that reflects the general feelings and attitudes of an individual toward ambiguity and ambiguous situations. A situation is likely to be perceived as ambiguous when it is uncertain, changing or unstable or when it confronts the individual with new and unfamiliar problem that he or she cannot adequately structure or categorise. Hartmann (2005) and

Norton (1975) defines intolerance for ambiguity as a tendency to perceive or interpret information marked by vague, incomplete, fragmented, multiple, probable, unstructured, uncertain, inconsistent, contrary, contradictory or unclear meanings as actual or potential sources of discomfort or threat. It could be inferred that South Africans saw the presence of foreigners in their state as ambiguous situation and source of discomfort. Their complaints were “the foreigners use up our resources”, “took our jobs”, “they were criminals” and so on. This perception is an ideology of right-wing extremists. Right wing extremist thinking was defined with 10 consisting elements: extreme nationalism, ethnocentric, anticommunism, anti-parliamentarism, anti-pluralism, militarism, law and order- thinking, a demand for strong political leader and/or executive, anti-Americanism and cultural pessimism. The violent attitudes displayed by South Africans were more of right-wing characteristic. Rigid right-wing social ideology does not support diplomatic peace buildings. Inequality and propensity to violence shape their thinking. It supports an order based on origin, achievement, national, ethnic and race affiliation (based on the fundamental inequality of the individual). The main characteristics of this personality are its antidemocratic views that are combined with anti-semitism, ethnocentrism, conventionalism, authoritarianism, law and order mentality, the feeling of being threatened by something different, cynicism and exaggerated sexuality (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, Sanford, 1950).

Although xenophobia presents itself mainly in socio-economically deprived communities as explained by Economic Theory, it is found everywhere - ‘even in institutions of higher learning where one expects a higher level of broadmindedness’ (Mogekwu, 2005). Here xenophobia may not be expressed in the same manner as in poor communities where outbreaks of physical violence and attacks on businesses occur, but in ‘more subtle forms of making the non-national feel so unwelcome and despised in an environment that is psychologically hostile’ (Mogekwu, 2005). Despite the fact that South Africa is a democratic country, racial divisions amongst South African students is very visible at higher education institutions. The policies of these institutions may contain democratic principles; however, the students’ interactions with each other reflect racial divisions (Iggelsden, Monson, &Poizer, 2009). Foreign students however, perceive these divisions differently. Cross and Johnson’s (2008) study at Wits University revealed, amongst other things, that xenophobia ‘has had serious repercussions’ and that ‘xenophobia, is something that makes South Africa a very intimidating society’. Unlike the xenophobic experiences in South African communities which are more violent in nature and openly hostile, xenophobia within the higher education context manifests in more subtle ways. The effect, however, is still the same. It leads to the foreign student being made to feel unwelcome and creates a sense of ‘not belonging’. Cross and Johnson’s (2008) findings at Wits University showed that ‘in real life, group identities on campus still reflect the apartheid legacy’. Xenophobia amongst students is more subtle and can only be uncovered by establishing the individual experiences of students who are willing to share these experiences. Xenophobia as experienced by foreigners is rooted in constant fear of reprisals. However, the manifestation of xenophobia undermines social cohesion, peaceful coexistence and good governance and constitutes a violation of human rights. To allow citizens of one member state to think and act in xenophobic ways about citizens of another, is ultimately extremely destructive of regional cooperation and harmony (Crash & Pendleton 2004).

South Africa is one of Africa’s most culturally diverse nations with 11 official languages and 5 racial groups, which include black African, white, coloured, Indian and Asian. According to the last census in 2013, South Africa is also the home to nationals from 53 African countries giving the country a wider range of ethnic variety than the rest of the continent. The question that arises is what are the implications of these incidences on the economies of South Africa and the entire continent?

One which becomes clear is the effect on the economic integration of Africa. The current incidence in South Africa is an upfront to this dream of a united Africa. The xenophobic attacks also have negative economic effect on South Africa as a nation. Every investor would want to invest in a politically stable economy; one which will provide the lasting security for his /her investments. The incidence is a direct opposite of actions that attract investments into an economy.

The xenophobic mayhem has sharpened a sense of “us and them”, causing bitterness among nations that hosted thousands of South African exiles during the struggle against apartheid, leading credence to the

fact that if nothing is done urgently to address xenophobic attacks world-wide, the third world war is inevitable. However, there have been mixed reports on the influence of personality factor on the causes of xenophobic behaviour; while some reports (for example, Botsch, 2004) suggest that Right-wing extremism contributes greatly to xenophobic behaviour, some argued in favour of Ethnocentrism, yet others opined that it is intolerance of ambiguity. However, it is a truism that before a problem could be solved; the genesis must be traced as this will facilitate the approach to take in solving it. The present study therefore attempts to determine scientifically and statistically, the predictive power of the independent variables (Right-wing extremism, Intolerance of ambiguities and Ethnocentrism) in predicting the dependent (xenophobia) and particularly to determine the most potent predictor of xenophobic behaviour among the three independent variables.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are postulated for testing:

- i. There is no significant relationship among Right-wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity, and Ethnocentrism and Xenophobic behaviour among Undergraduates in selected South African Universities.
- ii. There is no significant composite influence of Right-wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity, and Ethnocentrism on Xenophobic behaviour among undergraduates in selected South African Universities.
- iii. There is no significant, relative influence of Right-wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity and Ethnocentrism on Xenophobic behaviour among undergraduates in selected South African Universities.

Methodology

Design and Participants

The descriptive design of survey type was adopted in this study because attempt was only made to gather information from respondents through the use of questionnaires without manipulating any of the variables. Participants consist of the entire undergraduate students in the Tshwane University of Technology, Guateng and Durban University of Technology, Kwazulu-Natal. The two universities have an estimated number of over 60, 000 and 26,059 undergraduates respectively. Non-proportional stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 400 undergraduate students across levels/colleges and faculties from Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria and Durban University of Technology', Kwazulu-Natal. The first stage of stratification was represented by the two universities (Tshwane University of Technology, Guateng and Durban University of Technology, Kwazulu-Natal) and this was followed by the different departments and faculties in the selected universities. The selection of respondents was made randomly and not based on the percentage of the population in each of the two selected universities. The mean age of the participants was 20 years.

Instrumentation

Four standardized instruments were adopted for data collection in the study.

The instruments are described below:

Cross-National Cumulative Measure of Xenophobia

Xenophobic behaviour was measured using 9 items scale adopted from Cross-National Cumulative Measure of Xenophobia developed by Van der veer, Ommundsen, Yakushko, Higler, Woelders, & Hagen (2011). This scale consists of statements which assess the degree to which a respondent is xenophobic. Each item was rated on a 5-point likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), The scale reliability index is 0.75 which is satisfactory; while the validity index is 0.50. The reliability index of the scale in the present study is 0.80

General Ethnocentrism Scale (GENE)

General Ethnocentrism Scale is a 21-item scale developed by Neuliep and McCroskey, (2013). It is on a 5-point scale, ranging from strongly Agree (5) to strongly disagree (1) depending on the degree to which the items on the scale apply to individuals. A series of exploratory factor analysis were conducted on GENE scale. Reliability for the scale as determined by Crombach's alpha was .92. The reliability index for the present study is 0.63.

To assess the revised GENE'S validity, participants in this study completed three scales thought to be theoretically linked to ethnocentrism, including the Adorno *et al.*, (1950). Patriotism scale, Shimp and Sharma's (1987) CETSCALE, and the interdependent, and independent Self-Construal scale. The correlations were significant and most were in the $r(88) = .191, p = .074$. to $r(88) = -.023, p = .834$ range but they were sufficiently consistent to suggest that the measure had content, concurrent and construct validity. This 22 items scale will be adopted in this study.

Budner's Ambiguity Tolerance/In tolerance Scale

Intolerance of Ambiguity was measured using 16 items scale that was developed by Budner (1962). Each item uses a 7-point frequency, based on Like-1 scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (7) Strongly agree. Although the test correlation was good (0.85 over 2 months) the internal alpha was poor (0.49). Various forms of validity were examined including concurrent and construct. Not all the correlations were significant and most were in the 0.20 to 0.40 range but they were sufficiently consistent to suggest that the measure had content, concurrent and construct validity. The reliability index for the present study is 0.79.

Rightwing Extremism Scale

Rightwing Extremism was measured using 12 items scale adopted from The Support for Diplomacy Scale (SDS) developed by Kenneth E. Vail, III and Matt Motyl (2009). Negative correlation is expected between the support for Diplomacy and Rightwing Extremism Scales because rigid rightwing social ideology does not support diplomatic peace buildings; inequality and propensity to violence shape rightwing thinking. All items were assigned a 10-point Likert-type frequency (1 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree). A large Cronbach's alpha of .94 added to the evidence for internal reliability of this scale. The reliability index of the scale in the present study is 0.72). The scale validity index is 0.50.

Procedure for Data collection

Questionnaires were administered on the respondents in each faculty/colleges of the university used as sample through the assistance of some of the academic staff in each of these universities. A total of two months, three weeks and 3 days were used for the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed and returned, out of which 599(99%) were properly filled and used for analysis. The data resulting from the scoring of the instrument was subjected to multiple regression and t-test statistical analyses.

Results

This study presents the results from data analysis. This is done in accordance with the stated hypotheses in chapter one as follows.

Hypothesis I: There is no significant relationship among Right-wing, Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity, and Ethnocentrism and Xenophobic behaviour among Undergraduates in selected South African Universities.

Table 1: Relationship among Right-wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity, and Ethnocentrism and Xenophobic behaviour among University Undergraduates in selected South African Universities

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Xenophobia	77.84	14.895	1	0.406**	0.285**	0.140**
Intolerance	65.71	10.624		1	0.033	0.335**
Ethnocentrism	64.35	9.257			1	-0.193**
Right-wing	48.88	7.796				1

* $P < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

The results in Table 1 showed the mean and standard deviation of the variables in the study. Xenophobic behaviour had a mean score of 77.84 and standard deviation of 14.895, Intolerance of ambiguity had a mean score of 65.71 and standard deviation of 10.624; Ethnocentrism had a mean score of 64.35 and a standard deviation of 9.257; whereas Right-wing extremism had a mean score of 48.88 and a standard deviation 7.796. The results also revealed that xenophobia correlated significantly with intolerance of ambiguity ($r = .406, p < .01$), Ethnocentrism ($r = .285, p < .01$), and with Right-wing

extremism ($r=.140$, $p<.01$). Furthermore, the results showed that intolerance of ambiguity did not correlate significantly with Ethnocentrism ($r=.033$, $p>.05$) but correlated significantly with Right-wing extremism ($r=.335$, $p<.01$). The results also revealed that ethnocentrism correlated with right wing extremism, but in a negative direction ($r= -.193$, $p<.01$).

Table 2: Composite influence of Right-wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity and Ethnocentrism on Xenophobic behaviour among South Africans

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square F	Sig.
Regression	40473.277	3	13491.092 63.572	.000
Residual	126480.696	596	212.216	
Total	166953.973	599		
Model Summary	R=492	R ² = .242	R ² _(adj) = .239	

Table 2 reveals that the R-value 0.492 has an adjusted R² -value 0.239 which signifies that 23.9% of the variance in Xenophobic behaviour is jointly accounted for by Right-wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity and Ethnocentrism. The F-value 63.57 is significant at 0.05, ($P<0.05$). It follows that there is a significant composite influence of Right-wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity and Ethnocentrism on Xenophobic behaviour among South African Undergraduates.

Table 3: Relative in time size of Right-wing Extremism, Intolerance of Ambiguity and Ethnocentrism on Xenophobic behaviour among South African Undergraduates

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.055	6.276		1.124	.261
INTOLERANCE	.391	.040	.373	9.792	.000
1 ETHNOCENTRISM	.589	.075	.286	7.832	.000
WRIGHT-WING	.129	.072	.070	1.804	.072

a. Dependent Variable: Xenophobic Behaviour

Table 3 shows the beta values, 0.373 for Intolerance of ambiguity, 0.286 for Ethnocentrism and 0.070 for Right-wing extremism. It follows that Intolerance of ambiguity predicts Xenophobic behaviour most, followed by Ethnocentrism and Right-wing Extremism the least predictor. The t-values and the level of significance show that while Ethnocentrism and Intolerance of Ambiguity have significant relative influence on Xenophobic behaviour, Right-wing Extremism does not.

Discussion

The main objective of this study was to investigate the joint and relative contributions of Right-wing extremism, Intolerance of ambiguity and Ethnocentrism in explaining the variance in Xenophobic behaviour of University undergraduates in two South African Universities. The fundamental interest for conducting the study was to provide an empirical data base for discussion on Xenophobia with a view to finding solution to its menace; more so that the world is gradually becoming a village and the efforts so far made to put an end to the incidence of Xenophobia related crises seems to be unavailing and causing great damage to nationals' unity and nations' bilateral relationship. The working assumption was that behind every human action, there is a propelling trait. Therefore, beyond environmental factors which many previous studies addressed (CORMSA, 2008; Dodson, 2010; Valji 2003, Yakushko, 2009) as possible ways of putting an end to the menace of Xenophobia, there may be that innate tendencies propelling the act; and if these are determined and worked on, it may lead to a lasting solution to the problem. In pursuit of the research objective, three main hypotheses were derived to investigate the joint composite and relative powers of the predictor variables, particularly to know the most potent determinant of xenophobic behaviour among Right-wing extremism, Intolerance of ambiguity and Ethnocentrism using undergraduates in two universities in South Africa as sample. Preliminary analysis

involved inters correlations of the predictor variables (right-wing extremism, intolerance of ambiguity and ethnocentrism) and the criterion measure (xenophobia).

The findings of this study established two theoretical positions. First, in consonance with previous arguments in the literature, it found that Xenophobia has significant positive relationship with all the variables investigated by the study. This finding reflects results of studies (Adorno, 1950; Alarape, 2008; Arogundade, 2008; Backes& Jesse, 1989; Bekker et al 2008; Carttacin, *et al*, 2006,) that have established the interrelatedness of the variables investigated by the study. Researchers have consistently argued that Ethnocentrism, Intolerance of ambiguity and Right-wing extremism are factors embedded in Ideology of inequality with traces of nationalist, over-estimation of one's ability, racism, eugenic division of worth and not-worth living, the thesis of natural hierarchies, stressing of the right of the stronger, unequal treatment of foreigners, among others. They argued that they are factors that are based on anti-democratic and anti-individualistic views, denying the democratic fundamental axiom of the equality of all human beings; a position that is directed against all liberal and democratic forces and an issue traceable to South African long history of apartheid economy, racial categorization and international isolation.

The results of this study demonstrate that the three independent variables are significant predictors of xenophobia in two respects. First, right-wing extremism, intolerance of ambiguity and ethnocentrism combine to influence xenophobia. The importance of the combined effects of the variables is underscored by the fact that it accounted for almost one-quarter of the variation in xenophobic behaviour of the respondents. This implies that to achieve a lasting solution to the menace of xenophobia, management intervention should necessarily incorporate the three predictor variables investigated by this study. These findings are in congruence with the outcomes of some studies (e.g. Dodson, 2010; Esses, Dovidio, Semanya& Jackson, 2005; Esses, Dovidio, Jackson & Armstrong, 2001; Mekonnen & Bahir, 2013) on the influence of right-wing extremism, intolerance of ambiguity and ethnocentrism on xenophobia. These scholars argued that ethnocentrism, nationalism, nativism, social dominance orientation and belief in a hierarchical world order are strongly associated with xenophobia. They argued that the end of apartheid meant the waiving of international borders, and for South Africans to come into contact with people previously unknown and of different culture. According to them, a brutal culture of hostility towards strangers and no history of incorporating them meant that South Africans were, and are still unable to tolerate differences - a characteristic of intolerance of ambiguity, ethnocentrism and an attitude of right-wing ideology. It could be inferred that South Africans imbibed the right-wing extremist's ideology of inequality with traces of nationalist, over estimation of one's ability, racism and unequal treatment of foreigners. They believed that they are different from the rest of Africans, and that they are exceptional (Steencamp, 2009). This thinking is rooted in the isolation hypothesis which states that suspicion and hostility towards strangers in South Africa exist due to its history of international isolation as a consequence of apartheid.

The second aspect of the finding is that right-wing extremism, intolerance of ambiguity and ethnocentrism independently influenced xenophobia. While intolerance of ambiguity made the greatest contribution to the prediction of xenophobia, and followed by ethnocentrism; right-wing extremism was the least predictor. This implies that while ethnocentrism and intolerance of ambiguity have significant relative influence on xenophobic behaviour, right-wing extremism does not. The non-significant finding for the predictive independent effect of right-wing extremism suggests that the construct may not be a crucial factor when it acts in isolation. It was expected, however, that it will independently, and significantly too predict xenophobia; but the research outcome shows that these possibilities may only arise if right-wing extremism is combined with other factors as indicated by the significant joint influence of all the predictor variables.

Conclusion

The findings of this study are useful for a better understanding of the influence of right-wing extremism, ethnocentrism and intolerance of ambiguity on xenophobia with meaningful implication for management of xenophobia, particularly, among South African undergraduates. Nevertheless, caution should be exercised in the interpretation of results because of a number of limitations. First, findings are

based on a study that involved two universities' undergraduates. This limits generalization, and creates a need for confirmatory studies. Besides, it calls for studies that compare xenophobic behaviour of other South African citizens with greater number of universities' undergraduates. Second caution is required in interpreting findings because the data obtained from participants were self-reported. A longitudinal investigation that incorporates the qualitative approach is therefore recommended for future studies. Although the predictor variables examined in this study made significant contribution to the understanding of xenophobia, they cannot be said to be exhaustive more so that right-wing extremism, ethnocentrism and intolerance of ambiguity could only predict 23% of the variance in xenophobic behaviour of the respondents leaving 77% unaccounted for. Thus, future studies should be incorporate other psychological construct that may be relevant in understanding xenophobia.

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