

SUE NYAMNJOH

Cultural Conduits: Music, Media, and
Migrant Identity in South Africa



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Chapter 1: Introduction

The world is shifting. Borders are becoming more porous, and people are moving across them in unprecedented numbers. The dynamics of migration are closely tied to the processes of globalization, which have accelerated and transformed global interconnectedness. Over the past several decades, globalization has reduced barriers to movement, reshaped labor markets, and fostered the rapid exchange of cultural practices and ideas. Migration is both a product and a driver of these changes, reflecting the complex interplay of economic, political, and social transformations on a global scale (Castles, de Haas, & Miller, 2020).

Advancements in technology and transportation have facilitated the movement of people across borders in search of safety, opportunity, and better livelihoods. Global economic disparities, often intensified by neoliberal globalization, have also created stark push-and-pull factors, particularly for those in the Global South migrating to wealthier nations in the Global North (Sassen, 1998). At the same time, migration within the Global South has become increasingly significant, accounting for nearly 40% of global migration flows, driven by regional economic inequalities, conflict, and environmental crises (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2020).

Cultural globalization has added another layer to the migration experience. With the rise of global media networks, diasporic communities are able to maintain transnational ties while simultaneously integrating into new

cultural settings (Appadurai, 1996). Through cultural expressions such as music, literature, and art, migrants negotiate their identities and contribute to the cultural hybridity of host societies (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004). This intersection of global cultural flows and individual migration experiences highlights how globalization shapes and is shaped by the lived realities of migrants.

Despite these opportunities for connection, globalization has also intensified challenges related to migration. Rising populist and nationalist movements in the Global North have led to restrictive immigration policies and heightened xenophobia, particularly targeting migrants from the Global South (Betts, 2013). These reactions underscore the dual nature of globalization, which fosters interconnectedness while simultaneously amplifying divisions.

The South African context reflects these broader global dynamics. As a nation deeply embedded in global migration networks, South Africa has experienced significant inward migration from the African continent, with economic opportunity, political stability, and historical ties driving much of this movement (Crush, Chikanda, & Skinner, 2015). However, South Africa's unique sociopolitical history and its position within the global economy have also produced tensions and exclusions, mirrored in media portrayals and public sentiment toward migrants.

Understanding migration within a global framework provides essential context for examining the specificities of the South African experience. By analyzing how global forces intersect with local realities in shaping migration discourses, we can better understand the complexities of migration in a world marked by both unprecedented mobility and persistent inequalities.

In an era marked by global mobility, the lived experiences of migrants themselves and how these experiences are portrayed in the media of South Africa, a nation steeped in both rich diversity and a complex history of its own migration patterns have emerged as pivotal areas of scholarly inquiry. The mediation of migrant life and identity is a complex domain, shaped by sociopolitical, economic, and cultural forces that transcend national boundaries.

This research situates itself within the subtle space where media representations and the realities of African migrants in South Africa collide. It recognizes the intricate interplay of social, political, economic, and cultural forces that transcend national boundaries, shaping both the narratives constructed by the media and the lived experiences of migrants themselves. This exploration of the dynamics of media portrayals of African migrants in South African newspapers is set against the backdrop of South Africa's rich cultural diversity and its historical and contemporary migration patterns. Drawing upon existing literature and media theories, this study seeks to unravel the layers of discourse that inform, construct, and sometimes distort the narrative surrounding African migrants in South Africa.

South Africa, with its intricate history of migration and diversity, presents a unique context for examining media representations of migrants. The country's media landscape serves not only as a mirror reflecting the multifaceted narratives of migration but also as a mould shaping public perception and policy discourse. Research has consistently highlighted the media's pivotal role in influencing societal attitudes towards migrants, framing them either as contributors to the societal fabric or as outsiders challenging the status quo (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Chavez, 2011; Bloemraad, de Graauw, & Hamlin, 2015). It is the specific contours of this influence in the South African context, especially in relation to African migrants, that this study seeks to explore.

Research Questions

Building on the robust foundation laid by critical media studies and migration research, this study embarks on a detailed exploration guided by two principal research questions that probe deeply into the portrayal of African migrants within the South African media landscape.

1. The first question, "How do South African newspapers report on African migrants?" seeks to unravel the layers of narrative, framing, and discourse employed by newspapers in South Africa, aiming to identify the

predominant themes and representations that emerge in the coverage of African migrants.

2. The second question, “How does music mediate the subject of migration in the South African context?” explores the cultural dimensions of migration narratives, exploring how music — as a potent form of cultural expression — serves as a medium for articulating, contesting, and negotiating identities and experiences related to migration. This aspect of the study recognizes music not merely as entertainment but as a critical site of social commentary and collective memory reflective of migrant communities within South Africa. By examining various song lyrics, this research aims to uncover the role of music in shaping public perceptions, fostering a sense of community, and potentially challenging prevailing narratives of exclusion and marginalization.

These research questions are deeply informed by the recognition of the media’s dual capacity to either facilitate integration and inclusivity or to perpetuate exclusion and marginalization, as highlighted by Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad (2008). This dual capacity underscores the powerful role of media and cultural expressions in shaping societal attitudes towards migrants, influencing policy debates, and impacting the lived experiences of migrant communities.

The Research Landscape

A critical examination of existing literature reveals a depth of studies exploring the intersections of migration, media, and music within various geographical and socio-cultural contexts. From the portrayal of migrants in North American media (Chavez, 2011; Bloemraad, de Graauw, & Hamlin, 2015; Ungerleider, 1991) to the exploration of music as a site of belonging and identity formation (Baily & Collier, 2006; Kiwan & Meinhoff, 2011; Sardinha & Campos, 2016), the literature review underscores the global relevance of these themes while situating the South African experience within a broader

international discourse. This comparative analysis not only highlights the commonalities and divergences in media and musical representations of migrants across different regions but also emphasizes the significance of context in shaping these narratives.

Methodological Underpinnings

This study's methodological rigor is anchored in the application of Discourse Analysis (DA) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as primary analytical tools, enabling an interrogation of media representations and narratives surrounding African migrants in South Africa. DA's strength lies in its ability to dissect the woven threads of language, power, and societal structures, revealing the subtle mechanisms through which media discourse contributes to the shaping of public perceptions and societal attitudes towards migrants (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2009). By examining the linguistic and symbolic constructs of media texts, this research aims to uncover the latent ideologies and assumptions that underpin representations of African migrants, shedding light on the processes of inclusion and exclusion enacted through media discourse.

This thesis employs a discourse analysis approach, drawing from the theoretical underpinnings provided by Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (2009), to dissect the language, symbols, and practices through which media discourse around migration is constructed and disseminated. Discourse analysis allows for an in-depth examination of the subtle ways in which power, ideology, and identity are negotiated within media texts, offering insights into the layered complexity between media representations and societal attitudes towards migrants.

Furthermore, the study explores the realm of music as a medium through which narratives of migration are articulated and contested. Employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this research examines the ideological underpinnings and power dynamics inherent in musical expressions related to migration, illuminating the role of music in shaping public perceptions

and fostering a sense of belonging or exclusion.

CDA's role in this study extends the analytical scope to the realm of music, exploring how migration-related themes are mediated through musical expressions and how these articulations reflect, contest, or negotiate societal ideologies and power dynamics. This approach recognizes music as a potent form of cultural discourse capable of influencing societal attitudes and perceptions, thereby offering a useful lens through which to examine the multifaceted narratives of migration, identity, and belonging in the South African context.

By integrating insights from both discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis, this research contributes to a more holistic understanding of the complex dynamics at play in media and musical representations of African migrants in South Africa. The findings of this study have the potential to inform media practitioners, policymakers, and cultural actors, offering evidence-based insights that can guide the development of more inclusive, accurate, and empathetic narratives about migration. Furthermore, this research hopes to enrich academic discourse on media, migration, and music, providing valuable contributions to the fields of media studies, cultural studies, and migration studies.

Analytical Framework

The discourse on media, migration, and societal attitudes has often navigated the realms of abstract theories and analyses, often removed from the tangible realities and lived experiences of migrants as depicted through various media channels and cultural expressions. This study seeks to transcend these theoretical confines by embarking on a meticulous examination of concrete media portrayals and actual musical expressions within the vibrant and complex socio-cultural landscape of South Africa. Through an in-depth exploration into the intricacies of real-world representations—ranging from the varied narratives in news media to the evocative storytelling found in music—this research uncovers the tangible mechanisms at play

in shaping public perceptions of migration. What emerges from this detailed inquiry is a layered understanding of how media portrayals and musical expressions can either reinforce entrenched prejudices or, conversely, serve as powerful conduits for cultivating empathy and understanding towards African migrants.

It is hoped that this practical knowledge, grounded in the analysis of specific case studies and examples drawn from the South African context, would serve as a beacon for media practitioners, policymakers, cultural actors, and the wider society, illuminating the profound influence they wield in shaping the narrative surrounding migration. By offering tangible examples and concrete outcomes, this research contributes modestly to equipping these stakeholders with some critical insights and tools necessary to navigate this delicate landscape more responsibly and inclusively. It prompts a re-evaluation of existing strategies and narratives, encouraging a shift towards more empathetic and multifaceted portrayals that recognize the humanity and contributions of migrants. Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of ethical journalism and culturally sensitive artistic expressions in fostering a more inclusive and understanding society. In so doing, empowering media practitioners and cultural creators with the knowledge to effect positive change in the portrayal and perception of migrants by employing an ethics of “listening” more “appropriate for a new democracy where social polarisations continue to impact media narratives and agendas, and in a society where continued economic inequalities provide certain parts of the citizenry with disproportionate power to make themselves heard in the public sphere” (Wasserman, 2013: 77).

The significance of this research transcends the specificities of the South African milieu, casting light on broader global dynamics at play in the dynamic interaction between media, music, and migration. By meticulously dissecting these relationships within a nation celebrated for its rich diversity and complex migration history, the study offers insights that resonate across geographical and cultural boundaries, enriching the international discourse on these pivotal issues. An objective of this research is to explore the ways different media outlets frame migration narratives to understanding the role

of music in shaping and reflecting collective identities, towards contributing valuable lessons applicable in diverse local and global settings. A possible outcome of the study would be to equip researchers, policymakers, advocates, and cultural practitioners worldwide with the analytical tools and perspectives necessary to critically examine and address the multifaceted challenges surrounding migration within their respective contexts.

Furthermore, by highlighting the universal themes and shared experiences that emerge from the South African case study, this research contributes to building a more interconnected and empathetic global community. It underscores the potential of media and music to bridge divides, foster mutual understanding, and celebrate the richness of cultural diversity. Ultimately, this research endeavours to cultivate a deeper, more comprehensive global understanding of the powerful roles media and music play in shaping societal attitudes towards migrants. This enhanced understanding hopes to serve as a catalyst for fostering inclusivity, diversity, and mutual respect in this increasingly interconnected world, paving the way for more harmonious coexistence and meaningful engagement with the phenomena of migration and cultural exchange.

The upcoming chapters will provide a comprehensive overview of the academic literature on how migration is mediated by the press, initially focusing on the Global North. Following this, the discussion will shift to the intersection of migration, policy, and media in Africa, with a specific emphasis on South Africa. This exploration will include an analysis of how migrant identities are constructed and disseminated through diasporic musical cultural production. Subsequently, the methodological underpinnings of this study will be examined in detail. The following chapter will analyse media narratives related to South African migration and a song that illustrates how this form of musical cultural production mediates migrant identity, potentially serving as an alternative site of inclusion. The study will conclude with a summary of findings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Historically, societies have always been in motion, moving from one place to the other. While mainly Western movements have been detailed in history books pre-16th Century, that does not tell the full story. In his chapter on Mobility, Patrick Manning tells the story of the “shifting mobility regimes” (2018: 226) that Africa and Africans have gone through, going back several centuries and detailing underlying factors for migration. Today, physical movements abound across the globe and even when viruses like COVID-19 disrupt this, people often turn to ICTs to keep them in motion. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a surge in ICT use, with people relying more on communication technologies like video calls, social media, and online services to stay connected and informed (Lee, Malcein & Kim, 2021).

This chapter seeks to explore scientific literature around the intersections of migration and the media. While this dissertation primarily concerns itself with intra-African migration to South Africa, and focuses on themes of inclusion and belonging with the aim of exploring the viability of music as one of those areas of belonging; it is important to gain an understanding of relevant literature around the globe, with the hope of both finding patterns and situating Africa and South Africa within a broader context.

In the spirit of this, this chapter will begin by looking at migration in the Northern Hemisphere, more specifically North America, drawing on academic case studies, and using various concepts to make sense of the literature. Then,

will follow a critical examination of migration on the African continent in general, and South Africa in particular, through the lens of policy and the media. The dissertation will then turn its attention to the area of music, where it shall delve into the possibilities this creative medium offers for societal inclusion and belonging.

Migrants in the media in North America

If one were to take a passing look at international media coverage on migration, it would seem as though it comprised mainly of reports of one refugee crisis or another, taking up space in the news cycle for a week or two until it too is displaced by the next story. However, it is hard to say for sure, without conducting a study underpinned by a robust methodology.

Using a content analysis methodology, Irene Bloemraad, Els de Graauw and Rebecca Hamlin sought to investigate the media coverage afforded to Vietnamese and Indian migrant communities in the USA and Canada, specifically in San Jose & Boston, and Vancouver and Toronto respectively (2015). The aim of this paper, titled “Immigrants in the Media: Civic Visibility in the USA and Canada”, was to “document and analysing immigrants’ civic visibility” (Bloemraad, de Graauw & Hamlin, 2015: 874) as a way of gaining insight into the level of incorporation local migrants gain from media coverage.

Building on Karthick Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad’s concept of ‘civic presence,’ which assesses both the socio-political visibility and weight of migrant community organizations such as non-profits, unions and religious communities (2008, 20–21), Bloemraad, de Graauw and Hamlin take on media coverage as another arena where migrant civic visibility can be measured. They evaluate this civic visibility in the media through three main areas, namely, the volume of coverage, the themes of said coverage and the tone it takes (Bloemraad, de Graauw & Hamlin, 2015). Their inclusion of media coverage as a metric for migrant visibility and incorporation can be read as an acquiescence and recognition of the agenda setting function of the media.

The agenda setting function of the media came into media research discourse with Maxwell McCombs' and Donald Shaw's study of election coverage in the United States (1972). Essentially, the researchers began comparing the issues Chapel Hill voters viewed as important in the elections to the issues which were highlighted by the local news media. Their findings showed a significant overlap between the issues deemed major by both parties, indicating a strong correlation, if not necessarily causation between the issues foregrounded by the media and those held in high regard by the public. It is their assertion that "[R]eaders learn not only about a given issue, but also about how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position" (McCombs & Shaw, 1972: 176). Based on this finding, the media's role in determining what issues live in the minds of the public consuming the content becomes apparent. One could even go as far as saying that the media does not only set the agenda, but it also to some degree influences the way people think about the topics it brings to the fore.

While this Chapel Hill study was political in nature, solely focused on political candidates and election coverage in the media, the findings can be extrapolated and applied to other areas of media research. Bloemraad, de Graauw and Hamlin acknowledge this, as in their view, the media can "increase the salience and public knowledge about public policy issues as diverse as gun control, social security and foreign policy" (2015: 874). This becomes one of the core principles behind their study.

The findings of Bloemraad, de Graauw and Hamlin's content analysis showed media coverage of the migrant communities they looked at (Indian and Vietnamese) to be quite low. Coverage of both communities averaged between 5 and 10 newspaper articles a year. This was despite a significant increase in both migrant populations, thus disproving their "demographic mirror" hypothesis whose underlying assumption was that media coverage - and as a corollary, civic visibility - for a particular migrant community would increase as that community grew. They also found no real correlation between newsroom diversity, publication ownership and the volume or tone of the coverage (Bloemraad, de Graauw & Hamlin, 2015).

While it may be argued that marginality may be advantageous to curtail the effects of negative representation often experienced by minorities, Bloemraad, de Graauw and Hamlin (2015) argue that “there could be real costs to invisibility” as it might result in the sidelining and erasure of issues related to hardships faced by immigrants as well as their successes, thus lessening the legitimacy of their status in their communities and by extension, the civic presence and visibility they could potentially enjoy (Bloemraad, de Graauw & Hamlin, 2015: 876). In so doing, they demonstrate that while visibility might come at the cost of harmful representation, invisibility comes at the much higher one of total erasure, taking away any hope for meaningful integration into society.

As the world grows evermore interconnected and mobilities show no signs of slowing down, it is important for individuals to see themselves reflected within the spaces they occupy in this world. This is because things do not happen within a vacuum. Social beliefs about race and racial hierarchies contribute to marketing thought which in turn influence decisions and practices at the institutional level in advertising organizations (Davis, 2018: 143). Though Judy F. Davis wrote this about racial portrayals in advertising, this is typically how ideology originates and remains dominant. The media has the ability to “convey[s] and reinforce[s] societal norms and values, disseminating them in conspicuous manners across cultural, psychological, political, and economic spectrums through a variety of widely accessible [media] platforms” (Davis, 2020). Oftentimes, minorities experience negative or minimal exposure across media platforms which can lead to varying levels of “damaging psychological internalizations” (Burrell, 2010: 73). This can be the case for migrants where media representation is minimal, and, when present, largely concerned with instances of precarity or rare situations of exceptional excellence.

In their paper, Bloemraad, de Graauw and Hamlin however highlighted the success – albeit minimal, of migrant political mobilization in generating additional media coverage. This shows the impact of public agency in influencing media decisions; thus, inviting one to move away from a political economy approach largely guided by structural factors such as ownership,

control, funding sources and mutual relationships (Herman & Chomsky, 2010), and rather view this through the lens of cultural studies where individual social agency is emphasized (Fenton, 2007), and people's ability to take on negotiated and contested readings of dominant messages in the media is recognized.

That being said, Bloemraad, de Graauw and Hamlin understand that there are myriad ways in which migrants can meaningfully be incorporated into society. Media coverage and representation is just one of them. They invite one to take on an "embedded context of reception approach" (Bloemraad, de Graauw & Hamlin, 2015: 896) wherein the "dynamic interplay" (ibid) of the various contributing socio-economic and political factors, such as government reception through "opportunity structures," (ibid) policy, legislation and the media is recognized as giving legitimacy and hence civic visibility to migrants.

Leo R. Chavez, on the other hand, takes a more visual approach to studying the discourse around immigration in the media. In an attempt to map the changes in American attitudes towards immigration over a period of roughly three decades, he studies US magazine covers, paying particular attention to the images and language they use to discuss migration (Chavez, 2001). He, like Bloemraad, de Graauw and Hamlin, equally saw the media as a powerful tool for shaping public opinion, and he sought to explore that influence in relation to migration.

His findings foreground two distinct points of note. Firstly, alarmist covers do not necessarily foreshadow the tone and stance of the publication (2001). This shows the media's propensity for sensationalism as well as the lengths they go to attract viewer attention – similar to the click-bait approach which dominates digital spaces. This can also be compared to the bait and switch approach countries in the global north, and even to a certain extent South Africa take on when it comes to legitimate paths to citizenship and migrant incorporation. Lured by the heavily advertised promise of a better future and resources, migrants flock to these countries, armed with lottery tickets, green cards or critical skills visas only to be met with resistance on the ground from bureaucratic processes, zealous nationals, and a hostile media; all these

factors working together to significantly impact the potential for meaningful incorporation into society.

And secondly, the timing of these alarmist covers largely coincided with important political events and policy debates surrounding migration (2001). July – which happens to be the month in which America gained its independence – is consistently the preferred month for highlighting migrant success stories and reaffirming the country’s immigrant roots. This suggests an assumedly state-sanctioned performativity of inclusion carried out by the media, inviting one once again to look critically at the political economy of the media.

As a way of making sense of Chavez’s findings, it’s worth turning to Charles S. Ungerleider’s paper titled “Media, minorities and misconceptions: The portrayal by and representation of minorities in Canadian news media.” Here, the author goes a step further in exploring the various structural and organizational “mechanisms which are used to create and sustain the images we have of minorities, explaining how and why the media represent minorities as they do” (Ungerleider, 1997: 158) in the Canadian context. Underpinning the need for this study are four main assertions; namely: the media, through their coverage has the power to influence what people think about minorities; this coverage and consequent influence affects the importance given to minority-related issues; minorities make up a small proportion of content presented by the media; and, when minorities do get media representation, they are either victimized or vilified (Ungerleider, 1997).

One of Ungerleider’s (1991) proposed explanations for this cluster of phenomena harkens back to the propaganda model discussed in Noam and Chomsky’s *Manufacturing Consent* (1988). He takes on a definition of news inspired by Trina McQueen, wherein, information is gathered with “a crew and equipment” (Ungerleider, 1991: 158). Because of the cost to media companies inherent in news making, they flock to locations at the nexus of economic and political power where they anticipate newsworthy content. And more often than not, minorities such as migrants do not feature at this nexus (1991).

The cost of this newsgathering causes an overreliance on governments as the main sources of news. They “not only [...] figure prominently in the news,

[but] are also the major manufacturers and distributors of information that gets codified as news” (Ungerleider, 1991: 158). This ties in with one of Noam and Chomsky’s filters wherein “[t]he mass media are drawn into a symbiotic relationship with powerful sources of information by economic necessity and reciprocity of interest” (1988: 18). Sigal (1986, as cited in Ungerleider, 1991) takes this slightly further, boiling it down to the authority carried by those in positions of political and economic power. This then becomes almost chicken and egg-like in nature. Cost and access cause the media to turn to seats of power for information. Their position as journalistic sources and constant featuring in the news causes the public to view them as authoritative news sources; and the cycle continues. The corollary is that less-featured individuals like migrants then fall by the wayside.

The other two reasons advanced by Ungerleider are what he calls “pack or copy-cat journalism” and the media’s penchant for a “narrative structure [in their] news content” (1991: 158). Due to factors like deadlines, cost, and competition, editors tend to monitor competing publications, with news agencies often “disseminating information gathered by other news media” (Sigal, 1986, as cited in Ungerleider, 1991: 158), resulting in sameness of content. When it comes to narrative structure, “issues are framed as conflicts between opposing forces with one of the forces often cast in the role of hero and the other of villain” (Ungerleider, 1991: 158). “A narrative structure creates unity among events separated by time and space, implies intentionality to the actions of the participants involved in the events beyond that which they may have had, and creates the impression that the separate events share a common ‘meaning’ - thus providing a single interpretation to the many events” (Manoff, 1988, as cited in Ungerleider, 1991: 158). In this structure, minorities are either portrayed as victims or villains; and, because of the unity created by this kind of reporting, there is a cementing of these stereotypical representations in the minds of readers.

Like Davis (2018), Ungerleider posits that these kinds of representations or lack thereof do not happen in a vacuum. “The ideology within which (Canadian) journalists operate exists within a broader, primarily unquestioned, ideology that is not neutral. This ideology celebrates the existing social

order and the values it places on individualism, corporate and entrepreneurial capitalism, and politics not of the people but of elites” (Ungerleider, 1991: 158). Beyond this contextual element, the media does not have much to gain by embracing and representing the diversity brought by minorities like migrants. “The principal purpose of the media is to deliver large, preferably homogeneous audiences to advertisers” (ibid). Diversity on the other hand implies heterogeneity, a society filled with different people with different needs and wants, each needing to be catered to in a specific way. Ungerleider by no means suggests there is a “conscious conspiracy to deny diversity” (ibid) on the part of the media. Rather, he highlights the role external and internal pressures such as advertisers and ownership play in the formulation of news and exclusion of minorities.

Messages from the media permeate with ease into the fabric of society. Adequate and meaningful citizenship, particularly in democratic contexts, is often equivocated with representation. When it comes to migrants and their level of societal incorporation, it is impossible to deny the correlation between civic visibility and the quantity and quality of attention they receive from the media. By looking at various content analyses in tandem with concepts like agenda setting and the political economy of the media, the literature above has shown the limited coverage and thus civic incorporation received by migrants in North America. However, these studies focused entirely on migrants in the West, specifically Canada and America. These studies also focused narrowly on a representation-based view of citizenship and societal incorporation, which contrasts with Isin’s (2012) concept of “citizenship without frontiers.” This present study aims to bridge this gap by examining the level of incorporation migrants in Africa, specifically in South Africa, receive through traditional news media. Additionally, it seeks to expand the potential areas for citizenship and incorporation by exploring music as an alternative site for inclusivity.

Migration, policy, and the media in Africa: The Nigerian and Ghanaian expulsions

When looking at attitudes towards migrants on the African continent, a more useful approach may be to look at the situation through the dual lenses of globalization – and by extension the media – and policy. Writing on intra-African movements, John K. Akokpari highlights the “curious connection” which exists between “globalization [...] and migration” (Akokpari, 2000: 72). Globalization seeks to explain the growing and deepening interconnectedness of the world. David Held and Anthony McGrew use “scope” and “intensity” (2007: 262) to understand the dimensions of this phenomenon. The scope of socio-political and economic activities in parts of the world widens to the extent that these activities “come to have immediate significance for individuals and communities in quite distant parts of the global system” (ibid). In turn follows “an intensification in the levels of interaction, interconnectedness or interdependence between the states and societies which constitute the modern world” (ibid), which were these levels evenly distributed, would produce a utopian world anchored by interdependence and conviviality wherein individuals at the frontier are encouraged to reach out, encounter and explore ways of enhancing or complementing themselves with the added possibilities of potency brought their way by the incompleteness of others (Nyamnjoh, 2017).

Held and McGrew recognize that the effects of this globalization are not felt evenly across countries and communities. It “has a differential reach and impact reflecting existing asymmetries in the geometry of global power relations” (Held & McGrew, 2007: 262). Akokpari touches on this in his paper by exploring the unique ways globalization has served as a “catalyst” (2000: 78) for African migration. Globalization comes with “the integration of financial markets across the world” as well as “high mobility of capital unencumbered by state restrictions” (Mengsteab, 1998: 2 as cited in Akokpari 2000: 74), resulting in “the rapid expansion of capital” alongside “capitalists” seeking to “[maximize] profits” (Akokpari 2000: 78). On the continent, this has allowed foreign private and state corporations to move freely into the

African nations which have historically had significantly less capital. However, despite the much-needed injection of capital these investments bring, they leave the continent vulnerable to the fluctuations of the global market, leading to job losses and migration (Akokpari, 2000) in search of greener pastures.

Looking at the case of the expulsions of Nigerians and Ghanaians from Ghana and Nigeria in 1969 and 1983 respectively, one can see some of the push and pull factors of globalization at play. By the 60s, Nigerians were a staple in Ghanaian society, “contribut[ing] immensely to the socio-economic development of Ghana before and after independence” (Aremu & Ajayi, 2014: 176). Like many West Africans at the time, Nigerians migrated to the affluent Gold Coast in search of economic opportunities. The success many of these Nigerian migrants found in the informal trading sector saw them become cemented into the fabric of Ghana’s economy (Olaniyi: 2008). They further solidified their socio-political integration via participation in various other sectors. A number of Yoruba migrants were selected as aides to Kwame Nkrumah, “presumably to secure the political support of [an] economically powerful group” (Olaniyi, 2008: 2). Intermarriages became a way of welding Nigerians to their Ghanaian counterparts. Yorubas also took on an evangelical role, with the Muslims spreading Islam, while the Christians opened Baptist churches throughout the Gold Coast (Olaniyi, 2008). Buoyed by the visible flow of capital into Ghana, Nigerians settled in Ghana in every sense of the word, creating a mini global village through their socio-political and economic integration.

However, as integrated as they were, it was not enough to escape the blame that came their way when Ghana slumped into an economic depression. Nigerians became “the first-count scapegoats for the economic misfortune of large-scale unemployment that had befallen Ghana” (Aremu & Ajayi, 2014: 176). Unable to justify the presence of Nigerians to an underemployed Ghanaian populace, Ghanaian leaders turned to policy to placate their people’s worsening attitudes towards Nigerian immigrants. They adopted a number of “intervention[ist] policies aimed essentially at controlling the number of immigrant population and restricting the exercise of certain activities by non-nationals” (ibid). Policies like the 1957 Deportation Act were passed leading

to the deportation of several prominent Nigerian figures from Ghana. But it was the Aliens Compliance Order of 1969 which led to large scale deportations (Aremu & Ajayi, 2014).

Before exploring the prelude and aftermath to this policy, it is worth taking a linguistic detour to explore the word “alien” which features in so many past and present immigration documents. In his paper, Johnson explores the social and legal construction of the term alien and the way in which it frames immigrants as “non-people” through a process of othering and diminishing of rights (1996). Though he explores this in a US-specific context, his work can still be used to make meaning of this word in other contexts. Drawing an analogy to the socially constructed nature of race, Johnson sees the term “alien” as equally socially constructed. He purports that similarly to how “the construction of race [...] legitimizes racial subordination, the construction of the alien has justified the fact that legal system[s] offer noncitizens limited rights” (Johnson, 1996: 268). The pejorative nature of this terms mystifies and others the foreign nationals it applies to, thus allowing for the creation of an us-versus-them narrative wherein “faceless ‘illegal aliens’ are invading the nation and must be stopped or [all] shall be destroyed” (Johnson, 1996: 269).

Fictional representations of alien invaders through films like *ET*, *Alien* series, *Independence Day*, *Species* and *District 9* have further cemented this us-versus-them narrative in the public psyche. These movies present viewers with an exaggerated visual depiction of otherness in the form of aliens. Embedded in this construction of an alien race is an emphasis on physical difference. “[A]liens are always depicted as corporeally homogenous. This is emphasized by their routine nakedness, which displays their ‘natural’ corporeal similarity [...]. An alien is easy to identify, and particular judgements about them are thus easily drawn from their appearance alone, so rooting their ‘racial nature’ in their biology” (Addison-Smith, 2005: 27). This physical sameness becomes the pillar on which the cultural sameness is built, [using] “techniques of de-individualization and biological reification [which] are routine in racist constructions of non-European cultures” (ibid).

Also central to these alien science fiction films is “a formulation of the

‘unity’ of the human race [...] enacted through an erasure of difference, particularly in the centralization of white male characters.” (Addison-Smith, 2005: 27). United by erasure, this homogenized human race is presented with a common enemy in the form of aliens. Similar to discourses around migrant groups, these movies also label aliens as good or bad. Good migrants work hard, enter countries through the legal channels, and live as upstanding citizens, while bad migrants are framed as violent, uneducated individuals who come in through illegal channels to deplete a nation’s resources. In cinematic representations, good aliens are ones like E.T. who long for their homelands; while bad aliens, like the ones depicted in *Independence Day*, seek to dominate the world, and wreak destruction. “A clear dichotomy emerges from these films—aliens who know their home and are spiritually attached to it are positively represented, whereas mobilized aliens, degraded by their lack of attachment to place, are negatively depicted” (Addison-Smith, 2005: 33). In *E.T.*, one sees the titular alien become progressively sicker the longer he stays on earth, and the entire plot revolves around his desire to return to his home planet. *Independence Day*, however, depicts an alien invasion, and the human race is mobilized against this foreign common enemy threat.

Though constructed, be it textually or visually, the term “alien” is much more than a word or fictional character. “Language veils the existence of systems of privilege” (Wildman, 1996), art imitates life and its tensions, and this can be seen in contexts of belonging, citizenship, and the rights that both come with. “In effect, the term alien serves to dehumanize persons. We have few, if any, legal obligations to alien outsiders to the community, though we have obligations to persons. Persons have rights while aliens do not” (Johnson, 1996: 272). Sovereign states around the world decide on who meets the varying conditions of admission and can thus gain entry. But entry does not guarantee membership. By equivocating foreign nationals to aliens wherein they constitute “a group distinct and apart from citizens, states are [...] able to ensur[e] that noncitizens are only limited, conditional, or ‘partial members’ of the community” (Johnson, 1996: 270). This belonging is further qualified by the ever-hanging threat of deportation should you not satisfy the far from stationary goalposts that are the conditions of stay.

Now, let one return to the Nigerians in Ghana faced with this 1969 Aliens Compliance Order. All aliens without a valid resident permit were ordered to leave Ghana within fourteen days. This was communicated via a Quit Order which stated:

It has come to the notice of the Government that several aliens, both Africans and non-Africans in Ghana, do not possess the requisite residence permits in conformity with the laws of Ghana. There are others, too, who are engaging in business of all kinds contrary to the term[s] of their visiting permits. The Government has accordingly directed that all aliens in the first category, that is those without residence permits, should leave Ghana within fourteen days that is not later than December 2, 1969. Those in the second category should obey strictly the term of their entry permits, and if these have expired, they should leave Ghana forthwith. The Ministry of Interior has been directed to comb the country thoroughly for defaulting aliens and aliens arrested for contravening these orders will be dealt with according to the law.

(Sudarkasa, in Shack & Skinner, 1979)

The state justification for this order was the burden placed by the high number of migrants on state finances, which was amplified by remittances they sent home. The order also aimed to stamp out the purported illegal diamond smuggling by migrants. (Aremu & Ajayi, 2014).

At first glance, it may appear as though the causes for this expulsion order were purely internal. However, upon closer inspection, it becomes evident how the economic arm of globalization led to some of the economic decline in Nigeria and then Ghana which birthed many of the home conditions that gave rise to the influx of migrants and their consequent expulsion. In a post-colonial Africa, the global economy did not favour the continent. This was seen through “an upsurge in the use of biotechnology, [a] declin[e] in the importance of Africa’s primary products and Africa’s systematic marginalization in the world’s economy” (Brown, 1995: 100-103 as cited

in Akokpari, 2000: 82). This left newly sovereign African states severely indebted, with very few resources available for growth and development. “As a rule, economic crisis exemplified in long periods of recession, unemployment and inflation, exacerbates scarcity and [...] conflict” (Akokpari, 2000: 83). This is seen through the cross-border movement it prompted between Nigeria and Ghana, along with the rise in the informal trading sector. As indicated earlier, this additional pressure on the Ghanaian economy led to public dissatisfaction, thereby prompting the mass expulsions.

Almost 15 years later, similar socio-political and economic tensions are emergent, resulting in the heightened presence of Ghanaians in Nigeria, and the consequent popularly and appropriately termed “Ghana Must Go” expulsion of foreign nationals from Nigeria (Ghanaian nationals accounted for most of the undocumented immigrants deported in the 80s). Leadership changes in Ghana were plagued by corruption and misappropriation of national resources. A coup d’état brought Lieutenant Rawlings to power in Ghana in the 70s. This change in regime also brought on executions of corrupt former officials. Nigeria responded to this power change and swift executions by cutting off credit agreements for oil supply in Ghana, thus worsening an already tenuous economic situation in Ghana. The ECOWAS free movement agreement, signed in May of 1979, became an opportunity for Ghanaians and other Africans to move through the continent in search of better opportunities (Aluko, 1985).

Nigeria had experienced economic growth throughout the 70s, making it a prime destination for these Africans in search of greener pastures. However, this boom in the economy was primarily attributed to the increases in oil prices. Nigeria relied heavily on these oil exports, and when the price of oil took a downward turn in 1982, so did the Nigerian economy. The austerity measures introduced in 1982 did little to help the situation as inflation continued to rise and unemployment reached a 20% high (Aluko, 1985: 552). This decline in the Nigerian economy led to increased public frustration which manifested itself partly through religious riots. And though “the majority of the people who participated in the Kano riots, and similar riots such as in Bulunkuntu near Maiduguri, and Kaduna in 1982, [...] were Nigerians” (Aluko, 1985: 540),

it did not stop the Nigerian government from assigning blame and “making scapegoats of the illegal aliens” (ibid). The pre-existing rivalry between Nigeria and Ghana did not ease these tensions. “Since Ghana’s independence in March 1957, the Nigerian leaders and most Nigerians have regarded Ghana as their rival in the leadership role in Africa” (Aluko, 1985: 548). The remnants of this rivalry still jokingly persist today, taking the form of “jollof wars,” with Ghanaians and Nigerians vying for the title of “best jollof rice.”¹

All of these factors eventually culminated in an expulsion order. “The decision of the Federal Government of Nigeria announced on 17th January 1983 by the then Minister of Internal Affairs, Alhaji Ali Baba giving all illegal immigrants numbering between 2 million and 3 million 14 days to leave Nigeria created the worst international crisis for Nigeria since the end of the Civil War in January 1970” (Aluko, 1985: 541). Ghanaian foreign nationals were by far the most affected by this stop order, making up about 1 million of the expelled immigrants (Aluko, 1985: 542). The international response to this order was swift and hostile, with governments and religious authorities criticizing the decision, and labelling it a human rights violation (ibid). South Africa’s Botha government went as far as comparing “Shagari with Hitler, and [likening] the quit order with the question of finding the final solution to the Jewish problem in Nazi Germany” (Aluko, 1985: 542). The western media echoed these condemnations of the quit order, with British papers like the *London Observer* and *London Times* comparing the expulsion order to apartheid in South Africa (ibid).

Viewing the “Ghana Must Go” quit order in tandem with the 1969 Aliens Compliance Order, one can begin to see patterns. African borders are notoriously porous, and intra-African migrations go back for centuries. Owen Sichone’s research on pre-colonial intr-African mobilities shows how “clan, kingdom, territorial and other borders were crossed in the past by people who embarked on one-way journeys to unknown destinations” (2020: 2) Left to their own devices, migrants are innovative and insert themselves with relative ease into their host countries – as seen in the case of Nigerians and Ghanaians who took up trades, married across cultures and became part of the religious fold. However, as outsiders, adeptly termed aliens, the sovereign states they

inhabit owe them little, if anything at all. To cite Johnson once again: “We have few, if any, legal obligations to alien outsiders to the community, though we have obligations to persons. Persons have rights while aliens do not” (1996: 272). Both expulsions show how previous political tensions, combined with downward economic trends lead governments to adopt a scapegoat mentality, and reach for the outsider as a beam on which to hang the blame for country’s plights.

It is worthwhile to note that neither the Ghanaian nor the Nigerian economy rebounded as a direct result of these expulsions. Instead, both countries felt the absence of these migrants’ economic contributions quite acutely. In Ghana, the departure of Yoruba merchants led to not only a loss of capital, but also business acumen and connections, which created a vacuum in retail trade and resulted in widespread scarcity of household goods. The cocoa trade was equally affected as agriculture in Ghana largely depended on foreign farmhands. With the loss of migrant labour, “production declined, producer prices plummeted, and farm owners ran into losses” (Aremu & Ajayi, 2014: 180). In Nigeria, small-scale industries like bakeries and poultry farms folded, while operations at construction firms and hotels slowed down considerably (Aluko, 1985: 559). This goes to show that the perception of migrants as a drain on the economy is flawed and one-dimensional. While it stands to reason that more people need more resources, it would be remiss to discount the fact that by and large, migrants are not empty vessels, waiting to receive. They can and have demonstrated social and economic value, and give just as much, if not more, than they take.

The studies cited in this section are primarily focused on globalisation and the socio-political and economic aspects of these expulsions. The media’s portrayal of the events on both a local and international level was not explored as fully as they could be, but the discussion highlights the importance of context in media representations of migrants. This dissertation, while it does not turn back to the coverage of the Ghanaian and Nigerian expulsion, does however seek to explore the relationship between policy and media representation on issues of migrants and migration in the South African context.

South African migration: policy, xenophobia, and the media

When discussing policy and events in South Africa's history, a very hard distinction is often drawn between pre- and post-1994, that year signalling the official end of the apartheid regime, the election of democratically elected leaders, and the emergence of South Africa as a racially integrated "rainbow" nation. For the purpose of this dissertation, this section will limit itself to literature around intra-African migration-related policy decisions, xenophobia, and media attitudes towards migrants in the post-1994 South African landscape.

In a brief for the Helen Suzman Foundation, Tove van Lennep (2019) offers a chronological overview of migration policies in the South African landscape. The newly minted rainbow nation inherited the apartheid-era Aliens Control Act which was only amended in 1995 to become the Aliens Control Amendment Act. Here again, one observes the term "alien" feature in migration policy documents, showing how the governments through the law participate in what Johnson terms as the "construction of nonpersons" (1996) through the linguistic creation and solidification of this other. In 1998 came the Refugees Act, modelled after the UNHCR Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. After a green paper, white paper, and draft bill, the 2002 Immigration Act was enshrined into law. This policy document was amended in 2004, and again in 2007 and 2011, with the Refugees Act getting amended a year later, in 2008, and thrice again in 2011, 2015, and 2017 (van Lennep, 2019). Through its different iterations, the Refugees Act offers various protections and rights to refugees and asylum-seekers, granting them formal recognition, the right to seek employment, a pathway to permanent residency, and freedom of movement (Refugees Act, 1998). Though this Act and the protections it offers are humanitarian in nature, it was not reflective of public sentiment at the time, with a "South African Migration Project survey in 1999, 70% of respondents felt that refugees should never have the right to freedom of speech or movement" (van Lennep, 2019).

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the new non-racial rainbow nation

inherited its immigration policy from the preceding apartheid government. Jonathan Crush and David McDonald describe this inheritance as resting on four distinct pillars: “racist policy and legislation; the exploitation of migrant labour from neighbouring countries; tough enforcement legislation; and the repudiation of international refugee conventions” (Crush & David, 2001: 2). The first and second pillars describe the “two-gate” immigration policy used by de Klerk’s government wherein the “front gate welcomed people who corresponded to the criteria of attractiveness defined by the governing minority; [and] [t]he back gate served a double function, preventing unwanted migrants from entering and allowing cheap and relatively docile labour in for temporary periods” (Segatti, 2011: 34). This allowed that government to be assured that any incoming populace would not topple the carefully arranged deck of racist policies it had stacked on over the years. It is also worth noting that the second pillar discussed by Crush and David “was underwritten by bilateral treaties which worked in favour of employers and governments and solidly against the interests of migrants and their dependents” (2001: 2). Under these conditions, workers’ rights were not assured, neither was freedom of movement or a path to permanent residency as these policies were enforced in a draconian manner with pass laws, border controls and lack of due process, establishing an “Inter-Departmental Committee on Illegal Aliens” and the infamous “Maputo Squads” (Crush & David, 2001: 3).

Given the harsh and unfair nature of this apartheid-era policy, it borders on incredulous that a new government founded on principles of non-raciality and inclusivity took so long to amend this act. The 1994 “post-apartheid Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) and the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy [failed] to address the immigration issue”, and the “1996 Presidential Commission to Investigate Labour Market Policy which made far-reaching proposals to reform the inherited immigration system was dead on arrival” (Crush & David, 2001: 4). The Aliens Control Act, though amended in 1995, essentially survived for 12 years after apartheid came to an end (Segatti, 2011: 38). In her paper, “Reforming South African Immigration in the Postapartheid Period (1990–2010)”, Aurelia Segatti credits this delay to migration in South Africa being much less about borders and

sovereignty and much more about bilateral opaque agreements with the private sector. “The complexity of the politics surrounding migration almost certainly helped keep it off the front burner and prevented it from being conceptually linked with other pressing developmental concerns” such as housing, reconciliation, and education (Segatti, 2011: 32). This was despite the public expectations from migrants and NGOs that a black government riding on a wave of righteousness and liberation would take migrant human right issues into consideration. However, this was not the case. Outcry from liberal political and media institutions ensued, with warnings of an imminent explosion of violence should this not be addressed (Segatti, 2011: 42). “Although this reluctance to envisage migration more innovatively is understandable in a country that was severed from the rest of the continent for almost half a century, such framing further delayed healthy engagement by stakeholders” (Segatti, 2011: 32).

Presently, immigration in South Africa is governed by the 2002 Immigration Act. Despite being promoted by its drafters as “a product that all of us can live with” (Scott, 2002: 2702), policy analysts like Kabwe–Segatti see the act as a continuation of previous policies, opting for incremental changes rather than deep and meaningful transformation (2006: 183), thus leaning into a protectionist approach fuelled by exceptionalism. This protectionism is visible in the “modernized two-gate policy system” (ibid) wherein the act remains relatively tolerant of skilled migration while cracking down on unskilled labour. This is despite the socio-economic consequences of this approach, and the feelings of exceptionalism it creates.

It is also important to consider the kind of language used when it comes to drafting and implementing immigration policies, as often, “immigration anxieties of the state are exemplified by changes in the way that officials imagine and describe immigrants and migrants” (Peberdy, 2001: 23). There is a failure on the part of the state to make an adequate distinction between immigrants, migrants, and refugees. These terms are usually prefaced with the word illegal, and often all lumped together as foreign nationals. This lack of distinction, despite research that states otherwise (see Rogerson, 1997; Sechaba Consultants 1997; Peberdy and Crush 1998; McDonald 2000),

assumes two things: the first that all foreign nationals are other and here illegally; and the second that “once in the country legally or illegally, they leave no stone unturned to remain here” (Peberdy, 2001: 24). Lying behind these assumptions is “another implicit construction: that most “‘illegals’ are (black) Africans [...] foreigners [who] supposedly threaten ‘the nation’ by endangering its physical and moral health, and its ability to provide services, employment, and to control crime” (ibid). There is an enormous contradiction between the state’s attitudes to migrants and the actual state of affairs in the country. Sally Peberdy captures this in her paper:

[T]he state has faced considerable social and economic problems since it came to power in 1994. It is trying to redress decades of unequal resource allocation and service delivery which have left South Africa a highly divided society. The 1996 Census recorded an unemployment rate of 33.9 percent (RSA 1998:46). About a quarter of the adult population is illiterate or semiliterate (RSA 1998:7). Millions of (mainly black) South Africans live in shacks in peri-urban and urban areas; many others live in inadequate and/or overcrowded housing or on the street (RSA 1998:64-66). In 1994 an estimated twelve million people in South Africa lacked access to clean drinking water, and twenty-one million lacked adequate sanitation (ANC 1994:28). As the state now tries to provide adequate education and health services to all of its population, instead of less than ten percent of it, state resources are stretched to the limit. Despite these inequalities and the enormous problems in delivering services to all, when it comes to immigration the state sees itself as exceptionally well endowed with infrastructure, resources, and services in comparison to other African countries. South Africa is thus represented as a “magnet” or “land of milk and honey” in Africa. (Peberdy, 2001: 25)

Because of the legacy from its colonial masters, and apartheid government, the rainbow nation, though colourful, is not perfect. There is inequality, poverty and high rates of unemployment, and subpar literacy. Representing Mzansi as an Eldorado when it comes to the migration debate does not do anyone any favours – such is the case with lies. It detracts from the real structural issues that need addressing and causes unjustified feelings of exceptionalism to rear their head in the xenophobic sentiments present in

South Africa. This, along with the media attitudes towards migrants and xenophobia will be discussed in the subsections that follow.

Xenophobia in South Africa

In a migration policy series, titled “Xenophobic violence in South Africa: Denialism, minimalism, realism,” Jonathan Crush broadens the definition of xenophobia, expanding it to mean more than the fear or dislike of foreigners. To him:

[X]enophobia consists of highly negative perceptions of non-citizen groups on the basis of their citizenship and foreign origin. Xenophobia is disseminated through public discourses that repeatedly denigrate migrants and refugees by making them easy scapegoats for various problems and challenges faced by the receiving society. Xenophobia is not simply about negative attitudes held by citizens, politicians, and state officials. Hostile and distorted perceptions of migrants and refugees usually combine with discriminatory practices and shoddy treatment of such groups by citizens and state institutions. Violence against migrants represents escalating and extreme manifestations of xenophobia. (Crush, 2014: 7)

In her book, “Citizen and Pariah: Somali Traders and the Regulation of Difference in South Africa” Vanya Gastrow takes on an etymological approach to defining xenophobia drawing on the root of the word “phobia” which means fear. To her fear is not always violent in nature and often manifests in “unease and avoidance” (Gastrow, 2022: 67). In her research, she found most violent crime affecting shopkeepers could be drawn back to “the social and political discomfort towards and evasion of foreigners” (ibid). The evasion and avoidance she speaks of are visible in the level of denialism that takes place in the political realm in South Africa. Instances of xenophobic violence in South Africa’s history have been framed by political leaders as criminal activity and crimes of opportunity, even though the targets are foreign nationals. (Gastrow, 2022: 69).

When it comes to denialism, South Africa’s history is littered with examples

of political leaders minimizing or outright denying instances of xenophobia. In the aftermath of the outbreak of xenophobic violence in 2008, Thabo Mbeki sitting president and AIDS denialist made the following statement: “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” (Danso, McDonald, 2000). Another example of this is the case of the march against immigrants led by the “Mamelodi Concerned Residents” which took place in Pretoria in February of 2017. The protesters marched against immigrants, and carried pamphlets stating that “Nigerians, Pakistanis, Zimbabweans etc. bring nothing but destruction, hijack our buildings, sell drugs, inject young South African ladies with drugs and sell them as prostitutes” (Gastrow, 2022: 69). Protesters could be heard yelling statements like: “Get out of our country.” (McKenzie & Swails, 2017). In response to these protests, the then president of the republic, Jacob Zuma, labelled the protests as being anti-crime, not anti-immigrants, and lauded South Africa’s respect of human rights exemplified by the nation’s decision to not put refugees in camps (Moatshe, 2017). It would be tempting, but wrong and dangerous to simply label these statements as “political statements by expedient leaders” (Gastrow, 2022: 70). Through this denialism, elements of how language and discourse around a particular topic is indicative of the larger social anxieties begin to poke out. As previously cited, “immigration anxieties of the state are exemplified by changes in the way that officials imagine and describe immigrants and migrants” (Peberdy, 2001: 23). By continually denying the phenomenon, and simply labelling it as “crime”, the state refuses to deal with a very real problem that will eventually come to a boiling point.

In searching for the origins of xenophobia, one can look to the back to the emergence of the post-apartheid new rainbow nation. In establishing this new multicultural democracy, the ANC saw their nation-building mandate as forming “the basis on which to ensure that our country [South Africa] takes up an effective role in the world community. Only a program that develops economic, political, and social viability can ensure our national sovereignty” (ANC 1994:6). Post-1994, “[e]conomic, political, and social viability for the ‘new’ nation is linked to the provision of services and jobs to all South African

citizens. Immigrants and migrants, legal and undocumented, are portrayed as an inherent threat to this nation-building project, and therefore a threat to the nation itself” (Peberdy, 2001: 24). In her book, Gastrow terms this *biopolitics* wherein “politics becomes engaged with delineating those whose lives are useful to a small political elite working under the guise of ‘the nation’ and those whose lives are not” (2022: 177). Like other forms of discrimination, xenophobia works by a processing of othering and exclusion. In positioning foreigners (read black African non-South Africans) as an obstacle to national prosperity and detractors to the nation-building project, the small political elite creates a fertile ground for xenophobia to thrive.

In an analysis of the 2008 xenophobic riots, Aidan Mosselson rejects the knee-jerk reaction to place the blame solely at the feet of poor socio-economic conditions in South Africa’s townships. “Whilst it cannot be denied that socio-economic conditions are significant contributing factors to the hostility, bitterness and violence that lurks within many sections of South African society, materialist explanations for the attacks remain incomplete and fail to account for many of the socio-political factors that contributed to and shaped the attacks” (Mosselson 2010: 642). Rather, he looks to contested notions of belonging and citizenship to understand the often violent xenophobic and exclusionary sentiments. Central to his argument is Giorgio Agamben’s concept of the state of exception, where sovereign powers can suspend legal norms to manage threats to social and political order. This suspension allows the state to address those outside the political community, emphasizing the exclusionary nature of defining a “community of friends” and the unity it protects (Agamben, 2008). In the post-apartheid South African society, this political community of united friends is achieved through the exclusion of foreigners through increasingly stringent migration policies as illustrated in the previous sections. Foreign nationals thus become the exception in both the eyes of the state and the public imagination.

Looking once more to language as an important indicator of the public imagination, and sentiment, it is important to explore the origins and use of the word *amakwerekwere* in South African discourse as it pertains to foreigners. The term *amakwerekwere*, a “derogatory neologism for ‘foreigners,’ [...]”

is supposedly onomatopoeic. The Greeks dubbed foreigners ‘barbarians’ because, to Greek ears, they brayed ‘bar, bar’ in unintelligible tongues; South Africans claim to hear ‘kwere, kwere’ when immigrants open their mouths. But the *amakwerekwere* are not just any foreigners: they are specifically African immigrants, and they have been singled out for ridicule and abuse by many black South Africans” (Nixon, 2001).

When it comes to the public imagination around issues of national relevance, the media plays a powerful role in bringing things into the public consciousness and shaping opinions. As such, in this discussion around xenophobia in South Africa, it would be remiss to not take a look at media attitudes towards migrants and xenophobic violence in the country. In a paper titled “Writing Xenophobia: Immigration and the Print Media in Post-apartheid South Africa”, Ransford Danso and David A. McDonald take on a quantitative analysis of print media. The genesis of the study stemmed from the discrepancy the authors found in the SAMP (South African Migration Project) survey between the number of South African people who held negative opinions about migrants, and the number of South Africans who actually had regular interactions with foreign nationals. Based on “the 1997 [SAMP] survey, 37% of South Africans felt that ‘people living in South Africa from neighbouring countries’ are a threat to jobs and the economy, 48% believed they are a criminal threat, and 29% believed they bring diseases. By contrast, only 25% of the sample said that they have ‘nothing to fear’ from foreign migrants living in South Africa” (SAMP, 1997). However, when it came to interactions with foreigners, “only 4% of the 1997 sample and 6% of the 1998 sample said that they have a ‘great deal of contact’ with people from other African countries. Almost half said they have no contact whatsoever, with an additional 17% in both years saying they have ‘hardly any contact’” (SAMP, 1997). Based on this vast difference in numbers, it would not be wrong to infer that “anti-immigrant sentiments in South Africa are not a result of personal exposure to noncitizens but rather a product of (mis)information from secondary sources such as schools, friends and the media.” (Danso & McDonald, 2001: 116).

With this inference in mind, Danso and McDonald set out to design and carry

out more robust research on print media coverage as it relates to migrants and xenophobia in South Africa. They undertook a content analysis, with their sample made up of a “a comprehensive database of all English-language South African newspaper clippings related to cross-border migration from 1994 to 1998: articles, editorials, and letters to the editor.” (Danso & McDonald, 2001: 119). They then coded and analysed the articles on three different planes. The first plane sought to determine whether the articles were pro- or anti-immigration. The second plane sought to gauge the depth of analysis employed in each article. And the third plane served as “a critique of the language and imagery used in the articles and the kinds of associations made between immigration and other social and economic developments” (Danso & McDonald, 2001: 121).

When it comes to their findings, by and large, they find the depth of analysis of the articles to be severely lacking, with 70% of the articles falling below the line of what they termed to be mediocre analysis (Danso & McDonald, 2001). Exacerbated by this is the overwhelming number of neutral articles, that is, ones that are neither pro- nor anti-immigration which Danso and McDonald view as indicative of the “tendency of journalists/editors to merely catalogue statistics on migration-related events in media reports”, showing that this “apparent neutrality does not necessarily constitute good reportage or a lack of bias” (2001: 121). Interestingly enough, once they moved their attention from the neutral articles, they found articles with a pro-immigration stance to be more analytical and robust in their reporting than articles with an anti-immigration stance. However, they maintain that the robustness and quantity of pro-immigration articles does little to bring balance to the South African media landscape as it relates to xenophobia. What happens is “more of a polarization of analysis than anything else, with little scope for debate or cross-referencing of other interpretations of migration issues. As a result, news readers in South Africa will find it very difficult to arrive at an informed position on issues of cross-border migration and the role of (im)migrants in the country” (Danso & McDonald, 2001: 123).

Danso and McDonald equally explore the use of language to perpetuate stereotypes about migrants in South Africa. In analysing the articles, they

found three stereotypes to be particularly dominant: “migrants as job-stealers, migrants as criminals and migrants as illegals” (Danso & McDonald, 2001: 123). In addition to this, they also found that “[t]he use of sensational language and headlines is common, as is the conflated use of the terms migrant, immigrant and refugee, and the questionable use of statistics on the number of undocumented migrants in the country.” These stereotypes harken previously discussed literature wherein Peberdy (2001) problematizes the contradiction between the stereotypical narratives around immigration and the reality on the ground. Danso and McDonald reiterate this, stating: “To assume that immigration leads to worsening unemployment among South African citizens is extremely problematic and ignores a growing body of research (see Rogerson 1997; Peberdy and Crush 1998) which argues that migrants create jobs as well as compete for jobs in South Africa” (Danso & McDonald, 2001: 123-125).

In their search for an explanation of this coverage, they look to issues of ownership and control within the print media, as well as an overreliance on official sources – two points which once again tie in with one of Noam and Chomsky’s filters wherein “[t]he mass media are drawn into a symbiotic relationship with powerful sources of information by economic necessity and reciprocity of interest” (1988: 18). Recognizing the difficulty in building a direct bridge between media representation and public sentiment, they stop short of establishing a causal relationship between their findings and the public opinions around migration. Despite this, they maintain the importance of print media’s role in moulding the ways in which people see the world.

A journalist’s language conveys messages through the complex associations and implications of its metaphors and unstated assumptions. If a journalist’s language violates the experiential reality of a minority or identifiable group within a society, it creates a conflict between public reality and the personal experiences of those who come to be identified as deviant (Ridington, 1986, as cited in Danso & McDonald, 2001: 131).

So, rather than trying to establish a causal relationship, Danso and McDonald take on a responsibility-based argument in their concluding remarks, advocating for more balanced, analytical reporting as a function of journalistic

duty.

Music, citizenship, belonging and inclusivity

Given the ever-decreasing, exclusionary, concentric circles of belonging that police citizens and citizenship at a state, community and individual level, how then can one envision inclusivity in a South African context? For answers, this paper turns to the work of Francis Nyamnjoh, where in his book, “#Rhodes Must Fall – Nibbling at Resilient Colonialism in South Africa”, he offers a fluid notion of belonging more suited to the nimble, sweet-footed African (Nyamnjoh, 2016). He states, rightly so, that “[c]itizens are not citizens in abstraction, but through binding relationships and social action” (Nyamnjoh, 2016: 232), rejecting the rights-based approach to citizenship, and its corollary belonging, where autonomy and individualism are valued above the communal and collective, and where one is “answerable to none other than the constitution as supreme law of the land protected by a minimalist enabler-state” (Nyamnjoh, 2016: 230). Instead, he offers up a reconceptualization of citizenship which makes space for “excluded nationals and non-nationals alike both, as individuals and collectivities” (Nyamnjoh, 2016: 232):

In this fluid and open-ended idea of citizenship, space should be created for its articulation at different levels, from the most global to the most local or autochthonous, from the ethnic to the civic, and from the individual to the collective. Just as cultural, economic, and social citizenships are as valid as juridical-political citizenship, so collective, group or community citizenship is as valid as individual citizenship, and is to be claimed at every level, from the small-scale local level to the mega-scale global level [...] The emphasis should be on the freedom of individuals and communities to negotiate inclusion, to opt out, and opt in with total flexibility and reversibility of belonging in consonance with their realities as repertoires, melting pots, mosaics or straddlers of various identity margins (Nyamnjoh, 2016: 232-233).

In taking on this more fluid and encompassing idea of *flexible citizenship*

(Ong 1999; Nyamnjoh 2007; Isin 2012; Nyamnjoh 2022), these previously restrictive and exclusive concentric levels of belonging become a springboard which launches the formulation of various levels of identity at a political, social, economic, and cultural level, each as valid as the next. In acknowledging the citizenship and belonging inherent at each and all of these levels, one begins to see how it is possible to do away with the constraints of one-dimensional belonging and citizenship, thus allowing for a more diverse and evolving community founded on the basis of mutual acknowledgement and inclusivity.

As stated in the opening of this literature review, mobilities abound, and people have been crossing borders since the dawn of time. However, it's important to note the temporal as well as the spatial dimensions of the displacement that migration, done for whatever reason, invariably engenders. This has significant impacts of migrants' ability to return. Temporal displacements means that for the migrant, "the culture with which the migrant is familiar no longer exists, even in the place they left. In their absence the home society has moved on, such that they no longer feel that they are fully a part of that society either" (Baily & Collyer, 2006: 170). This leaves migrants in a fluid state of exile wherein "no migrant can necessarily be reunited with the site of their estranged culture simply by return migration, no matter [...] the circumstances of their migration" (ibid). Faced with such an exile, migrants seek out the recreate an approximation of their cultural homes in their private lives through the "endless repetition of half-remembered practices [...] [which] continues to provide a source of comfort, a partial antidote to the hostility experienced in the new society, reinforcing and responding to feelings of nostalgia" (Baily & Collyer, 2006: 171). Through this repetition inevitably comes innovation, with migrants in various host countries standing at the forefront of cultural production. In the area of music, this is seen with the success of travelling Peruvian musicians in Europe, as well as that of Algerian rai music in the city of Paris (Baily & Collyer, 2006).

As one of the "widest spread and most easily created forms of cultural production" (Baily & Collyer, 2006: 167) music presents itself as a particularly important means of community building, identity formation, and a catalyst

for belonging. Just as there is a need to move away from the constraints of one-dimensional notions of belonging, there is a dual need to similarly look beyond “statistical or survey data” in this research’s conceptualizations of the migration experience. “[M]usic is more popular, more democratic and more far-reaching in both production and consumption” (Baily & Collyer, 2006: 168). Notions of cultures being confined to a particular territory have been dispelled (see Clifford, 1992), and as music and culture are often inextricably intertwined, it’s important to recognize the mobility inherent in music. Nowhere more so with African music, as the famous podcast, *Afropop Worldwide*, anchored by the diasporic USA-based Cameroonian, Georges Collinet (“*Afropop Worldwide*,” n.d.).

Because of its emotive and evocative nature, music can be used to assert and negotiate identity in a particularly powerful manner (Baily 1994: 48). It “give[s] the listener a feeling of security, for it symbolizes the place where he was born, his earliest childhood satisfactions, his religious experience, his pleasure in community doings, his courtship and his work – any or all of these personality shaping experiences” (Lomax 1959: 929). In so doing, a note of music from a migrant’s homeland becomes Proustian in nature, unlocking and cementing memories of a culture left behind.

As much as music, identity and culture are linked, none are static. They are fluid and fertile grounds for innovation and reinvention. Through music, identity and culture can be enriched and redefined with “the creation of new forms [of music] which are indicative or symptomatic of the issues facing the immigrant, and which help one in dealing with a new life in a place of settlement and in the articulation of new identities” (Baily & Collyer, 2006: 174). This is often the case with second- or third-generation migrants who do not have the same (or any) first-hand memories of their homeland as their older relatives. One sees the articulation of new identities through music with the reinvention of bhangra music in the UK where the “traditional Punjabi folk songs both modernised and Westernised with the addition of elements derived from Western popular music” (Baily & Collyer, 2006: 175). Neither Indian, nor entirely Western, this new era of bhangra “heralded the coming of age of the new generation and gave them a voice with which to tell their

white compatriots who they were and what they were; not the shy, insular and conservative creatures they had hitherto been stereotyped as, but ordinary fun loving young people...the new generation of British South Asians has finally found its voice; a vibrant, youthful and modern voice which acknowledges the two polarities of their cultures and reconciles them” (Banerji, 1988: 211-12). In so doing, this new generation of British South Asians demonstrate flexibility in their citizenship and construction of identity, opting in and out as they see fit. Such music can take on an outward-directed tone wherein the cultural creations are shared with the host community and perhaps even a broader world stage, and in so doing “promote mutual understanding of different cultures among different peoples” (Baily & Collyer, 2006: 176). Through this outward-directed musical creations, one begins to see inklings of the power of music as an alternative site of inclusivity wherein nativism is rejected, resulting in a “cross-fertilization of cultures and styles” (Velasquez-Manoff, 2017).

Migrants, particularly their children, inhabit a space beyond the “double consciousness” (Du Bois, 1903), one of multiple consciousnesses derived from the encounters brought about by various levels of mobility. This puts them at an advantage when it comes to the areas of creation and innovation. Straddling multiple communities, neither of which they fully belong to, becomes a fertile ground of this “cross-fertilization of cultures and styles” (Velasquez-Manoff, 2017) and adoption of flexible citizenship. In creating, they bring “different frames, tastes and repertoires from their cultures of origin” (Kasinitz & Martiniello, 2019: 859) and view their host countries “from both the insider’s and outsider’s vantage point” (ibid). Because of its relatively “low costs of entry, [and comparatively] few traditional gate keepers” (ibid), music tends to be the more accessible form of creative expression to which migrant outsiders flock. The accessibility of music expands beyond its creation, into its consumption. Sardinha and Campos acknowledge this permeability of music across various constructed borders, stating: “Migrants often know the music of the places to which they migrate before they speak the language, and members of the host society often become familiar with the newcomer’s music before they know much else about them.

Indeed, music crosses borders, even when human bodies cannot” (2016). By this assertion, music consumption thus becomes a seminal incision point into the discovery of a new culture.

However, it would be naïve to extrapolate from this that this discovery through music necessarily leads to widespread acceptance and inclusion (Kasinitz & Martiniello, 2019). “American history (to cite but one example) is full of cases of white musicians and audiences who developed a deep and sincere appreciation of (and a willingness to steal from) African American music without altering their biases against African Americans” (Kasinitz & Martiniello, 2019: 859). Various musical genres across space and time are littered with instances of musical appreciation that did not seemingly result in changes of perception with regard to the influencing culture.

That being said, changes in public perception are notoriously hard to measure and a reluctance to extrapolate inclusivity from mutual discovery through music does not dilute the cultural bridge-building and encounter-spurring nature of music. “In other words, popular music can become a means of communication and dialogue between different groups to build some form of shared local citizenship. It is an arena in which diversity is experienced in everyday life and “the other” is encountered, often in a positive context” (Kasinitz & Martiniello, 2019: 861). By shining a light on the “aesthetic agency” (Bohlman, 2011) involved in music, one begins to see it as more than just a form of entertainment, lyrics to a beat. It transforms to become an important facet of identity and cultural formation, with its mobility creating a path for its consumption far beyond the walls of its site of creation. Looking at music in this way presents interesting research focus areas for delving into the possibility it offers as an alternative site of inclusivity.

Though the literature above focuses on Asian and Latin American migrant journeys of identity formation in a foreign land through music, it offers important insights which can be transposed to different contexts. This study seeks to use this as a springboard to delve into alternative notions of flexible citizenship among migrants in South Africa expressed through musical innovation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction & Research Design

In an increasingly globalized world, the intersection of media, migration, cultural diversity, and belonging has become a topic of great importance. Understanding how the media represents and portrays different communities, particularly migrants, is crucial for promoting inclusive and accurate narratives that reflect the complex realities of the diverse societies on the globe. This research study aims to explore the media portrayals of African migrants in South African newspapers and the potential of music as an alternative space for inclusion.

South Africa, a country known for its rich cultural diversity and history of migration, provides an interesting context to examine how African migrants are portrayed in the media. This study, like others before it (see McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Chavez, 2011; Bloemraad, de Graauw & Hamlin, 2015; Ramakrishnan & Bloemraad, 2008), recognizes the power of the media in shaping public perceptions, attitudes, and policies, and acknowledges the potential impact of media representations on social integration and inclusivity.

The first research question put forward by this study is: “How do South African newspapers report on African migrants?” By analysing news articles, editorials, and opinion pieces from a diverse range of South African

newspapers, this study aims to uncover the dominant narratives, themes, and discourses surrounding African migrants. Through a discourse analysis, this dissertation will explore how issues surrounding migration and migrant identities are framed, and the nature of the language used in this portrayal.

The second research question, “How does music mediate the subject of migration in the South African context?”, looks to music as an arena where representation, meaning, and belonging can be created, negotiated and contested. It seeks to explore the processes through which media messages are produced, circulated, and interpreted within a given socio-cultural context through the medium of music. To address this question, the study employs a critical discourse analysis methodology of music lyrics and accompanying videos.

By examining the mediations of migration in the South African context, through the lens of migrant representation found in media texts and music, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding migration, media, and belonging. The findings of this research can inform media practitioners, policymakers, and cultural actors in developing more inclusive and accurate narratives that foster positive social change and promote the integration of African migrants in South Africa.

The following sections will discuss the methodology employed to address these research questions, including data collection, analysis techniques, limitations, and ethical considerations. By adopting a rigorous and comprehensive research approach, this study strives to provide valuable insights into the media’s role in shaping public perceptions of African migrants and the potential of music as a tool for fostering inclusion.

Data Collection

In this media research study, one of the central inquiries revolves around understanding how African migrants are portrayed in South African newspapers. To attain a comprehensive understanding of the dominant narratives, themes, and discourses concerning African migrants, the data collection

process involved a meticulous analysis of various news articles, editorials, and opinion pieces from a diverse selection of South African newspapers.

Sampling

Selection criteria for the newspapers were carefully devised to ensure the inclusion of publications that accurately represent South Africa's multifaceted population while considering constraints posed by time limitations and language proficiency. This dissertation's sampling strategy focused on four key factors: language, circulation, coverage, and readership. Consequently, the data collection was confined to English newspapers due to the linguistic abilities of the researcher, which may have limited the inclusion of newspapers published in other languages. Nevertheless, the chosen newspapers were thoughtfully selected to represent the broad spectrum of South Africa's populace.

The newspaper selected for this study is *The Sunday Times*. This newspaper was chosen based on its national coverage, widespread readership, use of English, and significant circulation numbers. By including newspapers with diverse readerships, this study aimed to capture various perspectives and opinions regarding African migrants from different segments of the South African society. Additionally, the selection encompassed only weekly publications due to the constrained nature of this research study, and its inability to review daily newspapers due to the sheer volume of data they would have. The following sections will discuss the selected newspaper highlighting the factors that contributed to its selection.

The Sunday Times

The *Sunday Times*, as a widely read and highly circulated weekend newspaper, is renowned for its comprehensive reporting on a wide array of topics, including social and cultural issues (Times Live, n.d.). The inclusion of *The Sunday Times* in the sample for this master's dissertation is based on its distinctive features, which collectively create an ideal platform for examining

migrant representation within the South African media context.

A closer look at The Sunday Times' readership demographics offers a compelling reason for its inclusion. The readership spans diverse categories such as race, age, and income, with a notable 60% falling within the 25-49 age group. A significant portion of readers (45%) possess a matric certificate, and 31% have some high school education. Around 51% of readers are employed, with an average personal income of around R8000 (Arena Holdings, n.d.). These demographic aspects mirror societal diversity, making The Sunday Times a suitable source for understanding migrant representation. Moreover, the established trust between the newspaper and its readers, attributed to its unwavering editorial standards (Arena Holdings, n.d.), enhances its relevance.

The reporting style and coverage of The Sunday Times also adds to its significance. Known for producing impactful and well-researched news, particularly in politics, the newspaper's investigative journalism has earned several awards, including SA Story of the Year, SA Journalist of the Year, Investigative Journalism, and News Photographs (Arena Holdings, n.d.). This reputation underscores its ability to provide insights into the socio-political landscape, making it valuable for this study.

In terms of circulation, The Sunday Times holds influence, with a circulation figure of 116,012, reflecting a 3.9% increase from the previous year (Biz Community, 2022). Its wide readership further underscores its role in disseminating information and potentially shaping public opinions, making it an essential part of this paper's sample.

The recent ownership changes in 2019, placing The Sunday Times under Arena Holdings alongside The Sowetan, adds an interesting dimension. Arena Holdings' mission to protect and enhance media assets, coupled with its adaptation to digital changes (Times Live, 2019), highlights The Sunday Times' relevance in the evolving media landscape and its potential impact on migrant representation.

In essence, The Sunday Times' diverse readership, editorial trust, impactful journalism, circulation reach, and ownership evolution collectively position it as a valuable component of this paper's sample, enriching its exploration of migrant representation within the South African media landscape.

By employing these newspapers as data sources, this research paper seeks to offer a robust and comprehensive analysis of how South African newspapers report on African migrants. The selected publications, with their diverse readerships and varied content, promise to shed light on the complexities and nuances surrounding this significant societal issue.

When it comes to the sampling methodology used in article collection from the newspaper described above, a purposeful sampling approach (Patton, 2002) was chosen. Also known as selective or judgmental sampling, this method involves deliberately selecting articles that meet certain criteria related to the research focus. Patton's (2002) view of purposeful sampling emphasizes the intentional and deliberate selection of research participants or data sources based on specific criteria that are relevant to the research objectives. Purposeful sampling involves actively seeking out cases, individuals, or data that provide rich and in-depth information related to the research questions. This approach is particularly valuable when the researcher seeks to gain a deep understanding of specific phenomena, contexts, or perspectives. Patton (2002) highlights that purposeful sampling goes beyond random selection and instead focuses on choosing cases or sources that are likely to yield valuable insights, diverse viewpoints, or unique experiences. This method allows this study to maximize the relevance of the collected data and target specific aspects of the research topic. In essence, Patton's (2002) perspective on purposeful sampling emphasizes its strategic nature, where the researcher's judgment and expertise play a critical role in selecting cases that align with the research goals. Purposeful sampling enables the exploration of complex aspects of this study, ensuring that the data collected are meaningful, contextually rich, and contribute to a deeper understanding of the research phenomenon.

Because this dissertation's research question focuses on how African migrants are covered in South African newspapers, it was important to ensure that the articles examined addressed this topic. To achieve this, articles that were published around the time of major migration-related events in South Africa were chosen. This approach is guided by Galtung and Ruge's concept of news values, which emphasizes the relevance and timeliness of events in

shaping media content (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

Galtung and Ruge's foundational work in media studies introduced the concept of "news values," which serves as a fundamental framework for understanding how news stories are chosen and presented in the media (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). This framework highlights various factors that shape editorial decisions and influence the prominence of news items, thus shaping public perception and discourse. These news values encompass aspects such as the frequency of events, their significance threshold, clarity of meaning, the presence of negativity, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, reference to prominent nations or figures, and personalization (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Each of these elements contributes to the complex ecosystem of how news is prioritized and reported.

With this in mind, data collection was organised around the following years – 2008 and 2022. Both of these years coincided with significant migration-related occurrences in South Africa. In May 2008, a series of xenophobic incidents erupted in Alexandra, Johannesburg, spreading across seven out of South Africa's nine provinces. Tragically, this wave of violence resulted in 62 fatalities, including 21 South Africans, 11 Mozambicans, five Zimbabweans, and three Somalis. Numerous individuals were also injured during these distressing events. As a consequence, approximately 40,000 foreign nationals left the country, and an additional 50,000 people were displaced within South Africa (Human Rights Watch, n.d.).

In 2022, amidst Covid-19-related economic uncertainties, a rise in xenophobic violence occurred among foreign nationals in South Africa. Vigilante groups such as "Operation Dudula" and "Put South Africa First" carried out door-to-door searches for undocumented migrants, citing concerns about crime and unemployment. Notable incidents included the April killing of a Zimbabwean national in Johannesburg, a June mob setting fire to a migrant-populated market, and the intentional burning of migrant residences in September. (Human Rights Watch, n.d.).

In summary, Patton's (2002) purposeful sampling approach has proven to be a valuable tool for gathering newspaper articles that offer insights into the depiction of African migrants in South African media. This method's

deliberate selection process ensured that the chosen articles closely aligned with the research objectives, enabling a thorough exploration of the subject matter. Incorporating Galtung and Ruge's (1965) news values framework further enhanced the precision of data collection, focusing on key migration-related events in 2008, 2015, and 2022. These years provided crucial context for understanding media representation and its impact on society. By combining purposeful sampling and news values, this study is able to delve into a comprehensive examination of how South African newspapers portray African migrants, revealing a layered picture of events, perceptions, and narratives that contribute to public discourse.

To further elaborate on the methodology related to data collection, especially concerning music lyrics, this dissertation employed a purposeful sampling approach. This methodology is integral to this research's exploration of how music mediates the complexities surrounding migration and the lives of migrants in South Africa. The essence of purposeful sampling lies in its strategic selection of data sources that are rich in information and relevant to the research questions at hand (Patton, 2002). Indeed, the intent behind this careful choice is to ensure that the music piece analyzed contributes significantly to the overarching research objectives of this dissertation.

The process involved an extensive review of a wide array of musical works to identify one that could offer profound insights into the phenomena being examined. The criteria for selecting the music piece chosen for analysis was thoughtfully developed to encompass lyrics that engage with the theme of migration, both through direct and indirect references. Direct references in the lyrics overtly address migration, the lives of migrants, or specific elements of the migrant experience, providing clear insights into the topic. These explicit mentions are invaluable as they often reflect the straightforward aspects of migration narratives, shedding light on the challenges and circumstances faced by migrants.

Indirect references, conversely, subtly suggest migration themes or the interaction between locals and migrants, offering insight into how migrants are perceived and integrated within the host society. Through metaphorical language, symbolism, and other poetic devices, these indirect lyrical cues re-

veal the complexities of migrant identity and cultural assimilation, enriching this study's understanding of the dynamics between migrants and their new environments. By capturing the subtleties and implicit messages embedded in the music, a more comprehensive picture of the migrant experience begins to take shape - one that transcends literal interpretations and enters into an examination of the emotional and psychological impact of migration.

This strategy was crucial for this investigation into how music reflects and influences perceptions of migration and the experiences of migrants in South Africa. Purposeful sampling enabled the strategic selection of a music piece that was informative, novel, and directly relevant to the research questions posed in this study. It was paramount for this research that the scope of its analysis was both rigorous and expansive, thus reflecting the multifaceted nature of migration narratives captured in the lyrical content. This approach ensured that the music lyrics analysed were deliberately chosen for their significant content related to themes of migration, the identities of migrants, and their portrayal within the South African sociocultural context. This methodological decision-making process, therefore, underpins the integrity and depth of this dissertation's research findings, allowing this study to contribute valuable perspectives to the existing body of knowledge regarding migration and music in South Africa.

This study's data collection has focused on analysing the portrayal of African migrants in South African newspapers and music, offering insights into the complex narratives and themes surrounding migration. Through careful examination of articles from newspapers like the *The Sunday Times*, this research aimed to capture a wide array of perspectives, reflecting the diversity of South African society. Simultaneously, the study explored music lyrics through purposeful sampling, selecting songs that address migration themes, both explicitly and implicitly. This inclusion of music enriched the analysis, providing a multidimensional view of how migration is represented across different cultural mediums.

The strategic approach to selecting news articles and music lyrics ensured a comprehensive understanding of the portrayal of migrants, highlighting the role of media and music in shaping societal perceptions. This dual focus

reveals the influential power of storytelling in media and music, showcasing how they contribute to the discourse on migration and identity.

In conclusion, the study's exploration of both newspapers and music underscores the importance of diverse representations in understanding the migrant experience in South Africa. The findings encourage further academic inquiry and dialogue, emphasizing the significance of media and music in reflecting societal attitudes and fostering a more inclusive narrative around migration.

Instrumentation and Materials

The methodology for collecting and analysing news articles and song lyrics employed a combination of digital tools and coding strategies to ensure a comprehensive examination of media portrayals. This section details the instruments and materials utilized in the research process, from data collection to analysis.

The primary tool for data collection of news articles was PressReader, an extensive digital platform that offers access to a wide range of newspapers and magazines globally. PressReader was selected for its comprehensive archive of digital newspaper articles, encompassing a variety of publications necessary for the research. The platform's capability to provide immediate access to numerous newspapers made it an invaluable resource for gathering relevant articles efficiently.

The interface of PressReader facilitated the organization of collected newspapers into different catalogues, enabling a segmented approach to data collection. This feature was particularly beneficial for managing a large volume of articles and sorting them according to predefined criteria, such as publication and year. The ability to create these catalogues significantly streamlined the process of identifying and selecting articles relevant to the research themes.

Upon completion of the collection phase, the articles were exported from PressReader in an editable format. This conversion was crucial for the

subsequent coding and analysis phases, as it allowed for the manipulation and annotation of the text. To systematically analyse the content, the articles were color-coded according to various themes identified in the research design. This color-coding scheme facilitated the organization of data and made the identification of thematic patterns more manageable.

The color-coded articles underwent a further process of data extraction and grouping through a custom-developed script. This script was designed to automatically categorize the articles by newspaper, publication year, title, and thematic colour code. The automation of this process significantly enhanced the efficiency of data management, enabling a more effective visualization and interpretation of the findings.

Prior to its application on the full dataset, the script was rigorously tested with a smaller subset of articles to verify its functionality and accuracy. This preliminary testing phase was critical for ensuring the robustness and reliability of the script, adjusting as necessary to optimize its performance.

The combination of PressReader's digital access capabilities and the utilization of a custom script for data organization represents a methodologically sound approach to collecting and analysing news articles. The digital tools and coding strategies employed not only facilitated an efficient data collection process but also ensured a systematic and thorough analysis of the media portrayals under investigation. This methodology underscores the importance of leveraging digital platforms and custom software solutions in contemporary media research, allowing for a more comprehensive exploration of media content.

The intricate process for selecting the song that underwent an in-depth analysis within this study was thoroughly modern, relying heavily on the use of contemporary digital platforms. Among these platforms, TikTok stood out due to its increasingly prominent role in propagating musical trends and, by extension, shaping cultural dialogues on a global scale (Radovanović, 2022). This social media giant, which has become a hive of activity and influence, acted as the foundational tool for pinpointing songs that have managed to strike a chord with modern listeners, especially concerning the theme of migration.

What sets TikTok apart is not merely its widespread popularity but its sophisticated, algorithmically curated content delivery system. This system, in harmony with its vast pool of user-generated content, offers a uniquely contemporary perspective. By analyzing what thrives on TikTok, insights can be gleaned into the prevailing sentiments and narratives surrounding migration as echoed by today's society. It's no secret that songs gaining traction on TikTok are often those that mirror or even shape the current social discourse; thereby, this platform serves as an invaluable resource for spotting musical pieces that embody, or provide commentary on, the diverse experiences of migrants in the ever-evolving global scenario.

However, while TikTok was instrumental in pinpointing the most popular song for this study, it was not used as a site of research per se. User comments and videos were not analyzed. Instead, Spotify was the primary platform where the music was obtained, and lyrics were transcribed for detailed examination.

The methodology embraced in this research project reflects the layered essence of music—how it acts as a powerful conduit for expressing, negotiating, and interpreting the varied dimensions of migration, as well as its profound effects on both the individual and collective psyche.

Pulling these strands together, the methodical approach in amassing music lyrics leaned on TikTok's innate ability to tap into the zeitgeist, catching the pulse of prevailing musical currents. This strategy paved the way for this paper to uncover specific tracks that resonate with ongoing conversations related to migration while also connecting to broader socio-historical discourses. The song selected through this process opened up avenues for a deeper exploration into the intricate dialogue between musical expression, the phenomenon of migration, and the construction of identity within the South African landscape. Additionally, examining such music offered invaluable perspectives on how the medium of sound can confront issues of migration and vividly portray the myriad experiences faced by migrants.

Coding

This study's methodology chapter outlines an in-depth analysis framework designed to examine the varied representations of migrants within news articles, utilizing a structured discourse analysis method. This method systematically organizes different facets of migrant representation into clearly defined thematic areas, each marked by a unique colour code for straightforward reference and analytical clarity. By weaving these thematic strands into a unified methodological fabric, the study adopts an elaborate coding scheme that methodically dissects news articles. This structured approach unlocks a layered examination of how migrants are portrayed in the media, with the aim of fostering a deeper conversation about migration and its ties to media narratives, societal perceptions, and policy discussions. Subsequent sections will detail each thematic area along with its designated colour code.

Merging these categories into one comprehensive methodology enables a thorough investigation into media portrayals of migrants. Employing this coding scheme across a wide array of news articles helps unravel the layers of media narratives concerning migration. Opting for a single coder methodology rather than multiple coders eliminates potential discrepancies in intercoder reliability. This research relied on a single analyse, meticulously parsing through articles to ensure a deep and broad understanding of migrant depictions.

By examining into aspects such as representation, language use, power dynamics, governmental policies, public sentiment, migrant identities, information sources, and the overarching context, this research endeavours to offer a detailed insight into the construction of media narratives about migrants. Through this detailed scrutiny of key factors, the study seeks to illuminate the consequences of migrant representation, enhancing this thesis' comprehension of this multifaceted issue. By dissecting the factors shaping migrant portrayals in news pieces, this investigation aims to contribute significantly to the discourse on migration in the media, advocating for a more informed and comprehensive public dialogue.

Portrayal of Migrants (Green)

The representation of migrants is coded under “Green,” focusing on whether migrants are depicted in a positive, neutral, or negative light. This approach facilitates a detailed examination of how migrants are depicted, whether as victims, perpetrators, or in a more neutral capacity, thus contributing significantly to the discourse on their social construction within media narratives.

The use of varying shades of green—light green for positive portrayals, dark green for negative portrayals, and a medium shade for neutral portrayals—serves as a visual and analytical tool to differentiate and categorize the tone and nature of the representation. By assessing whether migrants are positioned as victims or perpetrators, this coding scheme allows for a critical examination of the language utilized to describe them, focusing on identifying instances of dehumanizing terminology such as “illegals” or “aliens,” as well as language that perpetuates existing stereotypes.

A critical component of this analysis is the attention paid to the complexity of migrant portrayals. It aims to uncover how media narratives either contribute to or challenge the social construction of migrant identities, shedding light on the multifaceted roles migrants occupy within societal narratives. This approach is not only indicative of the media’s power in shaping perceptions but also highlights the potential for media narratives to either reinforce harmful stereotypes or offer more nuanced, empathetic portrayals of migrant experiences.

The coding scheme’s emphasis on the quality of representation aligns with broader discourses on media influence and the construction of social identities. By categorizing and analysing portrayals through this lens, this thesis can better understand the dynamics at play in the media’s contribution to the social construction of migrant identities.

Power Dynamics (Yellow)

When we look at power dynamics in media narratives about migrants, the ‘Yellow’ code comes into play. This code highlights how migrants are often portrayed in two extremes: either as powerless individuals or as threats

to the existing power structures. This analytical dimension allows this study to understand the implicit and explicit power relations that underpin media narratives, highlighting how migrants are positioned within societal, economic, and political hierarchies.

The utilization of the “Yellow” code as a metric to analyse power dynamics allows this study to explore the multifaceted ways in which power relations are constructed and manifested in media portrayals. By categorizing narratives into those that depict migrants as lacking agency or power, and those that frame them as challenges to the status quo, this coding scheme illuminates the interwoven threads of migrant identities and broader societal structures. It seeks to answer questions about the representation of migrants in the context of power imbalances, such as: Are migrants predominantly shown as victims of larger systemic issues, or are they depicted as undermining societal cohesion and security?

This aspect of the analysis serves to uncover the ways in which media narratives either reinforce or challenge existing power hierarchies. It provides insights into how media discourse contributes to the social positioning of migrants, potentially influencing public perceptions and policies related to migration. By examining the portrayal of migrants in the context of power dynamics, this study was able to gain a deeper understanding of the ideological underpinnings of media narratives and their implications for migrant communities and host societies alike.

Government Policies (Orange)

The analysis of government policies towards migrants, categorized under the “Orange” code, scrutinizes media representations of these policies to ascertain if they are portrayed as welcoming or hostile, and to what extent their effectiveness is highlighted. This examination is essential for understanding the narrative framing of governmental actions and regulations affecting migrants, offering a lens through which the media’s influence on public discourse surrounding migration policy can be observed and assessed.

By employing the “Orange” category, this study is able to evaluate how the media portrays the dynamic dance between migrants and governmental

policies. This involves a review of the tone used in media narratives—whether policies are framed in a positive light, suggesting a hospitable approach towards migrants, or in a negative light, indicating an antagonistic stance. Furthermore, this categorization probes into the portrayal of the efficacy of these policies: Are they depicted as successful in achieving their intended goals, or are they criticized for their shortcomings?

This facet of the analysis serves to examine the media’s role in either reinforcing or challenging prevailing narratives about migration and policy responses. It sheds light on how media narratives might influence public opinion and policy debates by either legitimizing or questioning the approaches taken by governments towards migration. The “Orange” code thus enables an exploration of how migration policies are communicated to the public, emphasizing the power of media narratives in shaping perceptions and attitudes towards these policies.

Public Sentiment (Red)

The exploration of public sentiment towards migrants, marked by the “Red” code in the analysis, is instrumental in determining how media narratives frame societal attitudes—whether these sentiments are depicted in a positive or negative light. This scrutiny serves as an entry point to understanding the influence of media on societal perceptions of migrants, as well as assessing the potential of these portrayals to affect social cohesion and the integration of migrants into host communities.

By categorizing the depiction of public sentiment under the “Red” code, this study is equipped to evaluate the tone of media representations regarding the public’s views on migration. This enables an examination of whether media narratives predominantly portray societal attitudes towards migrants as welcoming and sympathetic, or if they lean towards hostility and exclusion. Such an analysis is critical in identifying the narratives that prevail in public discourse and understanding how these narratives might contribute to shaping the public’s stance towards migrants.

Migrants' Identities (Burgundy)

The analysis of migrants' identities, encapsulated by the "Burgundy" code, looks at the portrayal of migrants within media narratives, investigating whether they are depicted simplistically, primarily through the lens of their ethnicity or nationality, or as complex, multifaceted individuals embodying a spectrum of backgrounds and experiences. Through this analysis, the study aims to assess the level of character depth and nuance that media narratives afford to migrants, challenging or reinforcing one-dimensional stereotypes.

By employing the "Burgundy" code, this study undertakes a critical examination of how migrants' identities are constructed in the news. This approach enables an assessment of whether media representations tend to reduce migrants to mere embodiments of their ethnic or national identities, or if they succeed in capturing the rich, varied dimensions of their lives. Such an analysis is crucial for understanding how media narratives contribute to public perceptions of migrants, potentially influencing societal attitudes and integration processes.

This facet of the study highlights the importance of nuanced character development in fostering a more comprehensive understanding of migrants. It scrutinizes media practices concerning the portrayal of migrants, questioning whether these narratives offer a stereotypical, reductionist view or a more expansive portrayal that acknowledges migrants' individuality and humanity. The "Burgundy" code analysis seeks to identify opportunities for media narratives to transcend simplistic portrayals, thereby contributing to a more empathetic and informed public discourse on migration.

Sources of Information (Blue)

The analysis of the origins of information within news articles about migrants, denoted by the "Blue" category, helps this study assess the diversity of perspectives presented in the media. This aspect of the study involves a meticulous identification of the sources from which information is derived, be it migrants themselves, local authorities, or other stakeholders. This categorization aims to illuminate the range and variety of viewpoints that inform media narratives on migration, thereby assessing the inclusivity and

comprehensiveness of the representation.

By employing the “Blue” code, this dissertation seeks to systematically examine which voices are amplified in the discourse surrounding migrants. This approach allows for an assessment of whether media narratives are predominantly shaped by authoritative sources, such as government officials and policymakers, or if they also incorporate the perspectives of migrants themselves. Additionally, it evaluates the inclusion of other stakeholders, such as NGOs, community organizations, and experts, in shaping the narrative.

This facet of the analysis is pivotal for understanding how the selection of sources influences the portrayal of migrants and migration issues in the media. It highlights whether the media narratives are predominantly one-sided, potentially reflecting the agendas and perspectives of those in positions of power, or if they strive for a balanced representation by including a multitude of voices. The “Blue” code thus serves as an indicator of the media’s commitment to diverse and equitable representation, revealing the extent to which media practices support a multifaceted exploration of migration and its impact on societies.

Moreover, analysing the sources of information under the “Blue” category sheds light on the potential biases and limitations in media coverage of migration. It underscores the importance of critical media literacy in discerning the origins of information and understanding its implications for public perception and discourse. By highlighting the diversity (or lack thereof) of perspectives in media narratives, this approach advocates for more inclusive journalistic practices that acknowledge and give voice to the complexity of migration phenomena, thereby contributing to a more informed and empathetic public dialogue on migration.

Contextual Analysis (Purple)

The utilization of the “Purple” code for conducting a contextual analysis underscores the essential role that political, social, and economic factors play in shaping news articles about migrants. This comprehensive approach is designed to equip this thesis with a critical understanding of how migrants are

represented in the media, taking into account the broader backdrop against which these narratives are constructed and disseminated.

By applying the “Purple” code, this thesis examines the intricate web of circumstances that influence media narratives on migration. This analysis recognizes that the portrayal of migrants cannot be fully understood without considering the political climate, social attitudes, and economic conditions prevailing at the time of publication. It investigates how these broader factors inform the framing of stories, the selection of sources, and the emphasis on particular aspects of migration. This approach highlights the interplay between migration narratives and the wider context, illustrating how external events and prevailing discourses can significantly impact the depiction of migrants in the media.

The contextual analysis facilitated by the “Purple” code enables a deeper exploration of the complexity of migration issues. It allows one to uncover potential biases and uncover underlying themes that might influence public perception and policy debates on migration. By situating media narratives within their broader context, this approach sheds light on the dynamics that drive the representation of migrants, offering insights into the mechanisms through which media narratives contribute to shaping societal understanding of migration.

Furthermore, the “Purple” code emphasizes the importance of a holistic view in media studies, advocating for an examination of migration narratives beyond the immediate content of news articles. It calls for an acknowledgment of the influence of external factors on journalistic practices and the construction of media narratives. Through a contextual analysis, researchers can better grasp the multifaceted nature of migration representation, contributing to a more informed and critical engagement with media narratives on migration.

Analytical Methods

Discourse analysis is a widely used methodological approach in media studies that enables the examination and interpretation of the construction, representation, and dissemination of meaning within different forms of media discourse (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2009). Its primary focus lies in how language, symbols, and discursive practices shape social reality and power relations. While other approaches may concentrate primarily on the explicit or manifest content of media texts, discourse analysis delves deeper to investigate the latent ideologies, assumptions, and social structures embedded within them (Fairclough, 1995). Through this method, one can uncover the ways in which meanings are produced, negotiated, and contested by analysing the linguistic and discursive strategies employed.

This method offers valuable insights into the intricate interplay between language, power, and ideology within media texts. It provides a framework for understanding how language not only reflects but also actively shapes sociocultural practices and structures (Fairclough, 1995). Similarly, van Dijk (2009) argues that discourse analysis is particularly useful for studying media representations and their impact on social groups and individuals, particularly those marginalized within society. This method facilitates the discovery of hidden meanings and subtexts, shedding light on how media shapes our views and goes about the creation of specific narratives.

In the context of media studies, discourse analysis proves particularly suitable for addressing research questions that involve exploring the social and cultural implications of media representations and discourses. By critically analysing the language, rhetoric, and discursive practices employed in media discourse, this study seeks to gain insights into how specific social groups or individuals are represented and how dominant or marginalized voices are portrayed. This method enables the examination of the subtle ways in which power relations, ideologies, and identities are constructed and reinforced through media texts.

Considering these factors, discourse analysis was chosen as the appropriate method to obtain answers to the research question proposed by this study.

Its implementation allows for an in-depth exploration of the underlying social, cultural, and political dimensions of media representations of African migrants in the South African media landscape. It facilitates a comprehensive analysis of the linguistic and discursive strategies employed within media texts, shedding light on power relations, ideological positions, and the production of meaning.

As a research methodology within the field of media studies, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) focuses on exploring language, communication practices, and power dynamics in media texts. It provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how discourse shapes and reflects social realities, ideologies, and power relations (Van Dijk, 1993). CDA's interdisciplinary approach combines linguistics, social theory, and political analysis to unveil the hidden meanings and implications in media messages (Van Dijk, 1993). By investigating the ways in which language is used in media representations, CDA helps researchers gain insights into how specific social issues are constructed, negotiated, or contested through communication.

In South Africa, migration is a complex and multifaceted issue that intersects with historical, social, and political factors. Music, being a significant form of cultural expression and communication, plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and attitudes towards migration. Applying CDA to this research question allows scholars to delve deeper into the underlying power dynamics, ideologies, and cultural representations embedded within music that influence audience understanding of migration issues (Fairclough, 1995). The social context of South Africa, with its historical legacy of apartheid and diverse migrant population, adds complexity to how migration is perceived and portrayed in media, including music. CDA acknowledges the influence of the social environment in shaping discourse and illuminates how power relations manifest in media texts (Van Dijk, 1993). By examining music as a discursive practice, CDA helps researchers uncover how various social actors, such as musicians, contribute to constructing meaning and representing migration.

One significant advantage of CDA in this research is its emphasis on analysing ideology in discourse. Through CDA, researchers can identify the

dominant ideologies embedded in music, which may reflect societal norms and power structures (Fairclough, 1995). Conversely, CDA also allows for the exploration of counter-narratives and oppositional readings, providing a more layered understanding of how music can challenge prevailing ideologies and add another layer of meaning and debate to the migration discourse.

As music is a multimodal form of communication, encompassing both linguistic and non-linguistic elements, CDA's multimodal analysis is particularly well-suited for examining the mediation of migration through music. In addition to the lyrics, researchers can explore the use of musical styles, rhythms, visuals, and music videos to gain a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which music shapes audience perceptions and emotions about migration in the South African context (Machin, 2013).

Considering this, CDA was selected as the most suitable methodology for investigating how music mediates the subject of migration in the South African context. By delving into the power dynamics, ideological representations, and multimodal elements present in music, CDA enables researchers to unravel the complexities of migration discourse and its influence on public attitudes and understanding. This methodological approach enhances this study's comprehension of how media, particularly music, actively participates in shaping societal perceptions of migration issues in South Africa.

Limitations

This study endeavours to provide a nuanced understanding of the portrayal of African migrants in South African media. However, it encounters several limitations that are important to acknowledge for a comprehensive appraisal.

South Africa's rich linguistic diversity, featuring 11 official languages, poses a significant challenge. Focusing predominantly on English-language sources may inadvertently narrow the spectrum of cultural and social nuances captured in the analysis. Languages such as Zulu, Xhosa, and Afrikaans, among others, carry unique narratives and perspectives that could enrich the understanding of migrant experiences. This linguistic limitation suggests

a potential gap in fully comprehending the diversity of migrant portrayals across different cultural and linguistic contexts within South Africa.

The strategic choice of purposeful sampling, while beneficial for focused analysis, introduces an element of subjectivity. The researcher's decisions on which articles and music lyrics to include are influenced by their perspectives and interpretations of relevance, which may not encompass the full range of available narratives. This approach, coupled with constraints on time and resources, limits the study's scope and its capacity to generalize findings. The selection process's inherent bias underscores the need for cautious interpretation of the results, acknowledging that the study represents a snapshot rather than a complete picture of the media landscape.

The utilization of digital platforms like TikTok for gathering music related to migration highlights the dynamic and transient nature of online content. Digital media's fast-paced evolution means that trends and discussions can rapidly change, with some potentially relevant material being missed. This challenge is compounded by the platform algorithms that curate content based on user interaction, possibly skewing the selection of songs towards those that are more popular or engaging, rather than representative of a wider range of experiences and perspectives. As seen in the literature review, social beliefs about race and racial hierarchies contribute to marketing thought which in turn influence decisions and practices at the institutional level in advertising organizations (Davis, 2018: 143). The media has the ability to "convey[s] and reinforce[s] societal norms and values, disseminating them in conspicuous manners across cultural, psychological, political, and economic spectrums through a variety of widely accessible [media] platforms" (Davis, 2020). This influence underscores the critical role media plays in shaping public perception and maintaining ideological dominance

Ethical Considerations

At the heart of this study is a commitment to ethically engage with the materials and subjects represented within them. Analysing public content such as newspaper articles and music lyrics necessitates a careful balance between scholarly inquiry and respect for the individuals and communities depicted. The study emphasizes sensitive interpretation of migrant experiences, striving to avoid reinforcing stereotypes or contributing to negative portrayals. This ethical stance involves a critical examination of how narratives are constructed and the implications they hold for the understanding of migration and migrant identities.

The ethical use of digital content, especially from online platforms, requires adherence to intellectual property laws and fair use principles. This study ensures that all analysed content is properly cited, attributing credit to the original creators, whether they are journalists, musicians, or digital content producers. By respecting the legal and moral rights of content creators, the research upholds the integrity of the academic work and the broader discourse on migration.

In navigating these limitations and ethical considerations, the study aims to contribute thoughtfully and responsibly to the discourse on the portrayal of African migrants in South African media. By recognizing and addressing these aspects, the research enhances its academic rigor and ethical integrity, offering insights into the interconnections between media, migration, and cultural representation.

4

Chapter 4: Analysis

Chapter 4.1: Analysis of the Sunday Times' 2008 Coverage of Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

Introduction

In 2008, South Africa experienced a wave of xenophobic violence that left a profound impact on the nation. Sparked by economic frustration, unemployment, and a perception that foreign nationals were taking jobs and resources, the violence led to the deaths of over 60 people and displaced thousands, predominantly African migrants. This tragic episode marked a significant moment in South African history, drawing widespread media coverage and shaping public discourse on immigration and xenophobia.

This section provides an analysis of how the Sunday Times covered the 2008 xenophobic violence, with a specific focus on the framing of these events and the representation of African migrants. The primary objective is to understand how these incidents were portrayed and to assess how this portrayal reflects broader issues related to media reporting on African migrants in South Africa. By employing a critical discourse analysis, this examination looks at the media narratives presented by the Sunday Times. It aims to reveal the underlying themes and biases that shape public perception and contribute to the cultural

context into which migrants are received in the host country.

The 2008 violence serves as a critical backdrop for understanding contemporary media coverage and public attitudes toward African migrants. The analysis will explore the language, imagery, and framing techniques used by the Sunday Times during this period. By dissecting these elements, the study seeks to uncover the ways in which media narratives can perpetuate xenophobic attitudes or promote a more inclusive perspective. This examination is crucial for identifying patterns in media reporting that may influence societal attitudes and for developing strategies to foster a more empathetic and informed public discourse.

Emotive Language and the Construction of Reality

The framing of xenophobic violence in the Sunday Times can be characterized by several recurring themes and narratives that have the potential to influence public perception. Firstly, the newspaper often adopted a sensationalist tone, emphasizing the violence and chaos associated with the xenophobic attacks. Headlines and lead paragraphs frequently highlighted the brutality and scale of the violence, contributing to a heightened sense of alarm and urgency. For example, headlines such as “Scores flee Durban after locals go on rampage,” “Terror on the home front,” and “Terror reigns as attacks spread to the Cape” (Sunday Times, 2008) were used to describe the events, with the word “terror” and its derivatives featuring several times throughout the articles. This language creates a dramatic and intense image of the situation, likely heightening public fear and concern.

Such sensationalism aligns with Stuart Hall’s (1980) theory on media representation, which posits that media constructs reality through specific codes and conventions, often reflecting broader societal power relations. By choosing sensational and emotive language, the Sunday Times not only attracts readers’ attention but also reinforces existing social anxieties and prejudices. Edward Said’s (1978) concept of Orientalism further supports this argument, as it explains how the media often constructs the ‘Other’—in

this case, African migrants—as a threat, introducing terror across a nation. This echoes Pierre Bourdieu’s (1991) theory of language and symbolic power highlighting the role of media discourse in maintaining social hierarchies. The repeated use of terms like “terror” and the focus on violence serve to marginalize and stigmatize African migrants, presenting them as a source of fear and instability.

Teun A. van Dijk’s (1991) analysis of ethnic minorities in the press underscores the ideological functions of news media, arguing that news reports often reflect and propagate dominant ideologies. In the context of xenophobic violence, the sensationalist coverage by the Sunday Times perpetuates a narrative that emphasizes the vulnerability and precariousness of migrants, reinforcing their position as subalterns and diminishing their agency. Van Dijk’s analysis reveals how the media’s focus on dramatic and violent events can serve to entrench existing power imbalances and social hierarchies, portraying migrants as passive victims rather than active agents.

The sensationalist approach of the Sunday Times aligns with these theoretical perspectives, as it constructs a reality that emphasizes fear and instability. This framing strategy not only attracts readership but also shapes public perception by reinforcing negative stereotypes and societal anxieties about migrants. The use of dramatic and emotive language amplifies the sense of crisis, influencing how the public understands and responds to xenophobic violence.

Simplified Narratives: The Problem with Binary Framing

Additionally, the framing in media often creates a clear dichotomy between victims and perpetrators, with African migrants depicted primarily as victims of irrational and violent mobs. This binary framing, while it brings attention to the suffering of migrants, significantly oversimplifies the complex socio-economic and political factors that underlie the violence. In doing so, it strips the narrative of the necessary context that would provide a deeper understanding of the root causes of such conflicts.

For instance, media coverage tends to portray violence as erupting almost spontaneously, seemingly detached from South Africa's rich and complex socio-historical context. An incident described in the media attributes the violence to the outcome of a community meeting, highlighting the sudden and chaotic nature of the event (Khupiso & Rank, 2008). Another article states, "Xenophobia-related violence exploded in an informal settlement in Milnerton on Thursday night after a community gathering, called by ANC MP Lumka Yengeni to calm tensions, ended in chaos. Residents of Du Noon embarked on a looting spree, ripping doors and windows from many of the 50 or more foreign-owned shops and leaving shelves bare" (Nombembe, Cohen, & Jurgens, 2008). This type of reporting portrays the violence as a sudden eruption and characterizes the residents as irrational and violent attackers.

This narrative strategy aligns with Entman's (1993) theory of framing, which posits that media framing involves selecting and emphasizing certain aspects of reality while omitting others, thus shaping public perception in a specific direction. By focusing predominantly on the immediate acts of violence and not addressing the deeper socio-economic issues, the media constructs a simplified hero-victim narrative. This focus on immediate violence over context results in a portrayal that lacks the depth needed to understand the true drivers of xenophobic violence.

This portrayal is also consistent with van Dijk's (1991) observations that media representations of minorities often lack appropriate contextualization, focusing instead on individual actions framed negatively. Such framing strategies obscure the complex socio-economic and historical factors contributing to xenophobic violence, including historical tensions, economic disparities, and political dynamics. Consequently, this approach perpetuates a superficial understanding of the issue, where intricate social problems are reduced to episodic events of chaos and victimhood.

Moreover, Gaye Tuchman's (1978) concept of the "strategic ritual of objectivity" elucidates how journalists, in an effort to appear neutral, often focus on specific, dramatic events while neglecting the broader context that gives these events meaning. Tuchman argues that this practice of emphasizing neutrality leads to a form of reporting that is short-sighted

and fails to provide the public with a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic and historical factors driving events like xenophobic violence. Journalists' reliance on this ritual results in a portrayal that is limited in scope and fails to capture the full complexity of the issue at hand.

Shanto Iyengar's (1991) study on media framing and public opinion supports this perspective, highlighting how the media often frames social issues through episodic rather than thematic lenses. Iyengar's research indicates that such framing emphasizes individual events and conflicts, leading to misinformed public perceptions by neglecting the broader socio-political context. This approach can heighten tensions and contribute to a superficial understanding of complex social phenomena, such as xenophobic violence. Iyengar's findings suggest that when the media focuses on isolated incidents of violence or competition, it obscures the systemic issues that underlie these events, such as historical inequalities, economic policies, and social dynamics.

By emphasizing immediate acts of violence and framing the situation in binary terms, the media simplifies a multifaceted issue, thereby failing to address the deeper causes of xenophobic violence. This reductive portrayal not only misrepresents the situation but also hinders public understanding and informed discourse on the matter. The emphasis on dramatic, isolated events over continuous socio-economic and historical contexts prevents a nuanced analysis, ultimately contributing to a distorted public perception that does not support effective solutions to the underlying issues.

The Role of Economic Anxiety in Xenophobic Framing

Several articles in the Sunday Times framed the violence in the context of economic strain, reinforcing stereotypes of migrants as competitors for scarce resources and jobs. This narrative suggested that the violence was a reaction to the perceived threat migrants posed to local livelihoods. For instance, one article stated, "But if four million undocumented foreigners continue to be barred from participating in South African society — in the absence of any public policy which explains both their plight and value — then any success

they do enjoy will inevitably be seen as an injustice by South Africans living in worse circumstances” (Philp, 2008a). Additionally, sources in other articles described migrants as “stealing their jobs and houses” (Khupiso & Rank, 2008), and noted that “foreign soccer players face the daunting prospect of being stereotyped as takers of jobs and resources” (Alfred, 2008). The use of derogatory terms like “amakwerekwere” to describe migrants further perpetuates the image of the unintelligible “other” who comes to steal and pillage (Khupiso & Rank, 2008).

This type of framing aligns with the theories of Teun A. van Dijk (2015), who argues that media discourse often reinforces societal power structures by depicting ethnic minorities as threats to the social and economic order. Van Dijk highlights how such representations contribute to the marginalization and stigmatization of minority groups, framing them as the ‘Other’ who threaten the well-being of the dominant group. This portrayal is not accidental but rather a deliberate tactic that serves to maintain existing power dynamics by preventing a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. Van Dijk’s theory underscores how the media’s depiction of migrants as economic threats is a strategic maneuver to uphold the status quo, ensuring that public discourse remains focused on the immediate impacts of migration rather than exploring underlying causes and potential solutions.

These perspectives reveal how media narratives are constructed to highlight immediate threats and dramatic incidents, which in turn bolster societal fears and entrench prejudices. By zeroing in on isolated events of violence and resource competition, the media narrative simplifies the multifaceted causes of xenophobic violence. This reductionist approach serves to preserve existing power structures and social hierarchies by diverting attention from the systemic socio-economic and historical issues that underpin these conflicts. The media’s construction of this us-versus-them opposition perpetuates a superficial narrative that fails to address the broader socio-economic and policy contexts – such as the effects of globalization highlighted by Akokpari and instantiated in the Ghana-Nigeria migration conflict (2000), thereby influencing public discourse and societal attitudes towards migration and xenophobia.

The portrayal of migrants as economic threats is further complicated by the use of sensational language and framing. For example, the Sunday Times' coverage included headlines such as "foreigners stealing jobs" and "taking their houses" which tap into pre-existing anxieties about economic insecurity among the local population (Khupiso & Rank, 2008). This narrative not only exacerbates fears but also legitimizes xenophobic attitudes by presenting migrants as scapegoats for broader socio-economic problems. This is consistent with Entman's (1993) theory of framing, which posits that media framing involves selecting and emphasizing certain aspects of reality while omitting others, thus shaping public perception in a specific direction.

Additionally, the use of derogatory terms like "amakwerekwere" to describe migrants further entrenches their dehumanization and marginalization. The term itself, laden with xenophobic connotations, strips migrants of their individuality and reduces them to a monolithic, threatening entity. Such language not only reinforces negative stereotypes but also justifies exclusionary attitudes and policies. This aligns with the findings of Hier and Greenberg (2002), who argue that media narratives frequently construct migrants as security threats, thereby legitimizing exclusionary practices and policies.

Moreover, Welch (2002) notes that the criminalization of migrants in media discourse can lead to increased public support for restrictive immigration measures and harsher law enforcement practices. This trend is evident in the Sunday Times' depiction of migrants as economic threats and criminals, which potentially influences public opinion and policy towards more punitive approaches. The persistent negative framing of migrants not only affects their immediate well-being but also has long-term consequences for their integration and acceptance in society.

The media's construction of migrants as economic competitors also has significant implications for public policy. When migrants are consistently depicted as threats to local jobs and resources, it shapes public attitudes and fosters a climate of fear and hostility. This, in turn, influences political discourse and policy-making, often resulting in restrictive immigration policies and increased support for xenophobic rhetoric. Jiwani (2006) points

out that the media's role in constructing racialized and criminalized images of migrants contributes to a societal climate that is less welcoming and more punitive towards newcomers. The emphasis on economic competition and the use of derogatory language perpetuate a narrative that justifies exclusion and marginalization, further entrenching social and economic divides.

The Sunday Times' framing of xenophobic violence through the lens of economic strain reinforces harmful stereotypes and legitimizes exclusionary attitudes and policies. By depicting migrants as economic threats and using sensational language, the media exacerbates societal fears and prejudices. This framing strategy not only diverts attention from the underlying socio-economic and historical issues but can also influence public discourse and policy in ways that disadvantage migrant communities. The persistent negative portrayal of migrants underscores the need for more balanced and contextually informed media coverage that recognizes the complexities of migration and promotes social cohesion and understanding.

Humanizing Migrants: The Limits of Sympathetic Representation

The representation of African migrants in the Sunday Times articles varied but often leaned towards portraying them in a sympathetic light while sometimes inadvertently reinforcing stereotypes. Many articles focused on the personal stories and hardships faced by African migrants, humanizing them and eliciting empathy from readers. Stories included detailed accounts of migrants' journeys, struggles, and the impacts of the violence on their lives (Sunday Times, 2008). Despite the sympathetic coverage, this manner of media representation inadvertently reinforced negative stereotypes about migrants. Descriptions of migrants often highlighted their marginalization and dependency, portraying them as passive victims rather than active agents. Phrases like "desperate refugees" and "struggling to survive" were common, perpetuating an image of helplessness. This framing can limit the perception of migrants as resilient individuals who contribute positively to society.

Media representations that focus on the vulnerability and dependency of

migrants can inadvertently contribute to a one-dimensional narrative. While such descriptions may evoke sympathy and highlight the dire circumstances faced by migrants, they can also reinforce a perception of migrants as burdens rather than as individuals with agency and potential. This type of coverage fails to capture the full spectrum of migrant experiences, including their resilience, resourcefulness, and contributions to host societies.

Chari (2010) discusses how media representations can perpetuate stereotypes and limit the perceived agency of marginalized groups, thus reinforcing societal power dynamics. When migrants are consistently depicted as victims in need of aid, it undermines their agency and reduces their identity to one of dependency. This portrayal can influence public opinion and policy, leading to measures that treat migrants as passive recipients of aid rather than as active participants in society. This view is supported by Lawlor and Tolley (2017), who found that media narratives often emphasize the challenges and vulnerabilities of migrants, overshadowing their contributions and successes.

Furthermore, Esses, Medianu, and Lawson (2013) argue that such media portrayals can lead to negative public attitudes and support for restrictive immigration policies. When the media focuses predominantly on the hardships and perceived burdens of migrants, it shapes public perception in ways that may justify exclusionary and protectionist measures. This narrow representation fails to acknowledge the complex realities of migration and the multifaceted identities of migrants.

This issue of representation is critical because media narratives play a significant role in shaping public perception and discourse. When media coverage is skewed towards portraying migrants as helpless, it can create a social and political environment that overlooks their potential contributions and capabilities. This can result in policies that focus on containment and aid rather than integration and empowerment, thus perpetuating cycles of dependency. As noted by van Dijk (2000), media discourse not only reflects but also actively constructs social realities. The manner in which migrants are depicted in the media can have profound implications for how they are treated and integrated into society.

Criminalization and Otherness in Media Narratives

The Sunday Times also framed the violence through the lens of criminality and otherness. In several reports, the xenophobia was attributed to criminal elements, a tactic that subtly shifted blame onto both the perpetrators and the victims. The article “Scores flee Durban after locals go on rampage” described the attacks as “coming from Zulus” or “the work of a criminal element,” using language like “gang” to emphasize criminality (Sunday Times, 2008a). By framing the violence in this manner, the newspaper not only criminalizes the perpetrators but also indirectly associates migrants with criminal activities, reinforcing negative stereotypes. This narrative aligns with broader media practices identified in academic literature, where portraying marginalized groups as inherently criminal serves to legitimize exclusionary attitudes and policies. Such representations perpetuate the notion that migrants are a disruptive and threatening presence within the community, thereby justifying harsh measures against them. Consequently, the depiction of migrants through a criminal lens not only dehumanizes them but also fuels societal and institutional responses that further entrench their marginalization.

Academic literature supports the notion that media often plays a crucial role in this process. Hier and Greenberg (2002) argue that media narratives frequently construct migrants as security threats, thus legitimizing exclusionary practices and policies. By portraying migrants in a negative light, media outlets like the Sunday Times contribute to a societal perception that justifies harsher treatment and greater surveillance of migrant communities. Furthermore, Welch (2002) notes that the criminalization of migrants in media discourse can lead to increased public support for restrictive immigration measures and harsher law enforcement practices. This trend is evident in how the Sunday Times’ depiction of migrants as gang members and criminals potentially influences public opinion and policy towards more punitive approaches.

Moreover, the use of derogatory terms like “amakwerekwere” to describe migrants emphasizes their status as outsiders and perpetuates their dehu-

manization. This term, laden with xenophobic connotations, strips migrants of their individuality and reduces them to a monolithic, threatening entity. The article “Recent attacks just the tip of a xenophobic iceberg” exemplifies this by citing sources that describe migrants as “criminals, smelly, and taking their jobs” (Rank, Govender, & Nombembe, 2008). This framing paints migrants as undesirable and unworthy of inclusion in South African society. The dehumanization of migrants through such language reflects broader societal prejudices and serves to justify their exclusion and mistreatment.

Bauder (2008) discusses how derogatory terms and negative stereotypes in media contribute to the marginalization of migrant communities by depicting them as fundamentally incompatible with the host society’s values and norms. This portrayal not only alienates migrants but also fosters an environment where xenophobic violence can be rationalized as a necessary response to an alleged threat. Additionally, Essed (1991) highlights how everyday racism, manifested through language and media representations, reinforces structural inequalities and social hierarchies, further entrenching the marginalization of minority groups. These insights underscore the critical role of media in perpetuating stereotypes and deepening societal divisions.

These media portrayals have significant implications for public perception and policy. When migrants are consistently depicted as criminals and threats, it shapes public attitudes and fosters a climate of fear and hostility. This, in turn, influences political discourse and policy-making, often resulting in restrictive immigration policies and increased support for xenophobic rhetoric. As Jiwani (2006) points out, the media’s role in constructing racialized and criminalized images of migrants contributes to a societal climate that is less welcoming and more punitive towards newcomers. As seen in Chiumbu and Moyo’s paper, “this persistent association of migrants with criminality and other ills helps create negative stereotypes about them, which build resentment and therefore makes them fair targets for attacks” (2018). This recurrent negative framing of migrants not only affects their immediate well-being but also has long-term consequences for their integration and acceptance in society. By perpetuating stereotypes and fostering a culture of exclusion, the media plays a pivotal role in shaping the social and political

landscape in ways that disadvantage migrant communities.

Media Framing of Political Ineptitude and Social Unrest

Ironically enough, but still in line with its “watch-dog” role, the Sunday Times also attributed the violence to political failures and a leadership vacuum. Articles such as “At the heart of our chaos lies a scary leadership vacuum” criticized the government’s inadequate response to the xenophobic violence, highlighting a disconnection between political leaders and the masses (Sunday Times, 2008b). This article noted that “these leaders have lost touch with the masses” and blamed unemployment for fueling the violence, suggesting that the socio-economic despair among South Africans was a significant underlying cause.

This framing, however, is somewhat incongruent with previous portrayals of migrants as victims without agency and as threats to state resources. The media’s defense of migrants and their place in civil society appears more pronounced when it aims to criticize the government and adopt a watchdog role. The Sunday Times’ framing of the government’s failure to address unemployment and economic disparity aligns with broader discussions on the socio-economic roots of xenophobic violence. Crush and Ramachandran (2009) highlight that economic hardship and competition for limited resources can fuel xenophobic sentiments, particularly in contexts where the state is perceived to be failing in its duty to provide for its citizens. The emphasis on unemployment as a catalyst for violence in the Sunday Times’ reporting reflects this understanding, pointing to the broader structural issues that underpin xenophobic attacks.

In an op-ed titled “We have to talk about the violent anger in our midst,” politician Bantu Holomisa is given the floor and attributes the violence to underlying anger and frustration among South Africans, pointing to broader socio-economic issues that the government failed to address (Holomisa, 2008). This perspective underscores the multifaceted relationship between economic hardship, political disillusionment, and xenophobic violence.

Holomisa's commentary is indicative of the broader academic consensus that socio-economic deprivation and political disenfranchisement are critical drivers of xenophobic violence. Neocosmos (2008) posits that xenophobia in South Africa is not merely a result of economic competition but is also deeply rooted in historical and political contexts of exclusion and marginalization. Furthermore, Misago (2016) suggests that the failure to address socio-economic inequalities and provide meaningful political inclusion for all citizens creates a fertile ground for xenophobic violence.

The Sunday Times' focus on political failures and socio-economic issues as underlying causes of the violence also resonates with the theory of relative deprivation, which posits that perceived discrepancies between expected and actual living conditions can lead to social unrest (Gurr, 1970). When people perceive that they are unfairly deprived of economic opportunities and political representation, they are more likely to express their grievances through violence. This theoretical framework helps to contextualize the Sunday Times' reporting, which highlights how unmet socio-economic expectations and disillusionment with political leaders can drive xenophobic violence.

Additionally, the critique of the leadership vacuum in the Sunday Times' articles reflects a broader discourse on the role of the state in managing diversity and social cohesion. Scholars like McDonald and Jacobs (2005) argue that the state's failure to effectively manage ethnic and racial diversity can lead to heightened tensions and conflict. The Sunday Times' reporting suggests that the South African government's inability to address the root causes of xenophobia, such as economic inequality and poor governance, has contributed to the persistence of violence against migrants.

The Sunday Times' coverage of xenophobic violence highlights significant political failures and a leadership vacuum, attributing much of the unrest to the government's inability to address unemployment and economic disparity. By framing the violence within the broader socio-economic and political contexts, the newspaper underscores the Layered complexity between economic hardship, political disillusionment, and xenophobic sentiments. This perspective is consistent with academic discussions that emphasize

the role of socio-economic deprivation and political disenfranchisement in fueling xenophobia. The emphasis on relative deprivation theory further contextualizes the media's portrayal of unmet socio-economic expectations as a catalyst for violence. Moreover, the critique of the government's failure to manage diversity and ensure social cohesion reflects a broader discourse on state responsibilities in mitigating conflict. This critique contrasts with earlier portrayals of migrants and highlights the media's complex role in framing societal issues.

Media Introspection and the Ethics of Coverage

Interestingly, the Sunday Times did not shy away from self-reflection, with some articles and letters to the editor critiquing the media's role in stoking xenophobic sentiments. An anonymous letter to the editor accused the publication of fueling xenophobia by sensationalizing issues related to migrants (Anonymous, 2008). The letter emphasized the economic value migrants bring through their skilled labor and called out the media's failure to properly contextualize the violence, urging for more responsible reporting. This criticism aligns with academic perspectives that highlight the media's significant influence on public perception. According to Entman (1993), framing in media can profoundly affect how audiences interpret events and issues, often by highlighting certain aspects while downplaying others. In the case of xenophobic violence, the media's focus on sensational and negative portrayals of migrants can exacerbate public fears and prejudices. Moreover, scholars such as Chomsky and Herman (1988) argue that media often serve the interests of dominant power structures, which can lead to biased reporting that reinforces existing societal hierarchies and injustices. The letter's call for responsible reporting underscores the necessity for media outlets to adopt a more balanced and contextually informed approach to coverage, which can help mitigate the propagation of harmful stereotypes.

Rowan Philp's op-ed "No one hates foreigners like we do: How the media stoked the fires" examines into the negative attitudes towards migrants and

critiques the media for amplifying these sentiments (Philp, 2008b). This introspection highlights the powerful role of media in shaping public opinion and the necessity for ethical journalism that promotes understanding rather than division. Philp's op-ed is a critical reflection on the media's role in both reflecting and shaping societal attitudes towards migrants. According to McCombs and Shaw (1972), the agenda-setting function of the media plays a crucial role in determining the salience of issues in the public mind. When the media consistently highlights negative aspects of migration, it sets an agenda that prioritizes fear and suspicion over empathy and inclusion. Furthermore, van Dijk (1991) emphasizes that media discourse can perpetuate racial and ethnic stereotypes, reinforcing social divides and justifying exclusionary practices. Philip's call for introspection and ethical journalism resonates with the broader academic call for media responsibility, as articulated by scholars like Silverstone (2007), who argue for a moral imperative in media practices that foster social cohesion and mutual respect.

The emphasis on self-reflection and critique within the Sunday Times is indicative of a broader recognition of the media's power and responsibility. Ethical journalism, as advocated by Philip (2008b) and echoed in the anonymous letter, is crucial in combating xenophobia and promoting a more inclusive society. This aligns with the arguments of Bailey, Cammaerts, and Carpentier (2008), who advocate for media practices that are inclusive and participatory, fostering dialogue and understanding rather than division. The recognition of the media's role in either exacerbating or alleviating social tensions is a critical step towards more responsible and ethical reporting. By acknowledging their influence and striving for more balanced coverage, media outlets can play a pivotal role in shaping a more informed and empathetic public discourse.

Summary Conclusion

The analysis of the Sunday Times' coverage of the 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa reveals the intertwined threads between media framing, public perception, and societal attitudes towards African migrants. The newspaper's approach to reporting these events highlights several recurring themes and narratives that shape the public's understanding of xenophobia and migration. By employing sensationalist language and emphasizing dramatic incidents, the Sunday Times not only attracted readership but also reinforced existing social anxieties and prejudices.

The framing of xenophobic violence as sudden and chaotic events, often detached from the broader socio-historical context of South Africa, contributes to a superficial understanding of the underlying causes. This focus on immediate acts of violence and the portrayal of migrants as economic threats or criminal elements further entrenches negative stereotypes and justifies exclusionary attitudes and policies such as the recent move to do away with the Zimbabwean Exemption Permit which was recently deemed unlawful². By presenting migrants as competitors for scarce resources and emphasizing their perceived threat to local livelihoods, the media narrative simplifies the multifaceted causes of xenophobic violence.

Moreover, the Sunday Times' critique of political failures and socio-economic issues as root causes of the violence underscores the importance of effective governance and social cohesion in mitigating xenophobic sentiments. The reporting on the leadership vacuum and economic disparities reflects a broader discourse on the state's role in managing diversity and addressing socio-economic inequalities. The emphasis on unemployment as a catalyst for violence in the Sunday Times' reporting points to the broader structural issues that underpin xenophobic attacks.

The self-reflection within the Sunday Times, with articles and letters critiquing the media's role in stoking xenophobic sentiments, highlights the powerful influence of media on public opinion. Ethical journalism that promotes understanding and inclusivity, as advocated by the op-ed pieces and letters to the editor, is crucial in combating xenophobia and fostering

a more informed and empathetic public discourse. This recognition of the media's role in either exacerbating or alleviating social tensions is a critical step towards more responsible and ethical reporting.

Overall, the Sunday Times' coverage of the 2008 xenophobic violence serves as a critical case study in understanding the role of media in shaping societal attitudes towards migrants. By recognizing the media's influence and striving for balanced, contextually informed reporting, media outlets can contribute to a more inclusive and cohesive society. The insights gained from this analysis underscore the need for continued vigilance and ethical responsibility in media practices to ensure that public discourse supports integration and empowerment rather than perpetuating cycles of fear and exclusion.

Chapter 4.2: Analysis of the Sunday Times' 2022 Coverage of Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

Introduction

The recurrence of xenophobic sentiment and violence in South Africa has been a topic of significant media attention, particularly in light of the popularity of Operation Dudula and the divisive comments made by the Limpopo MEC in 2022. Operation Dudula, a movement known for its anti-immigrant stance and actions, gained considerable traction during this period, contributing to an atmosphere of heightened tension and xenophobia. Simultaneously, remarks by the Limpopo MEC exacerbated these sentiments, leading to further polarization and conflict.

The Sunday Times, one of South Africa's leading newspapers, has played a crucial role in shaping public perception and discourse on this issue. This analysis seeks to understand how South African newspapers, particularly the Sunday Times, report on African migrants. It emphasizes the framing techniques used and the underlying narratives about African migrants, aiming to uncover the ways in which media representation can influence societal

attitudes, potentially fueling xenophobic sentiments or fostering a more inclusive narrative.

In the context of Operation Dudula, the media's role becomes even more critical. Operation Dudula's activities, often marked by violent confrontations and aggressive rhetoric, were extensively covered by the Sunday Times. This coverage not only highlighted the movement's actions but also framed the discourse around African migrants in a manner that could either mitigate or exacerbate tensions. The divisive comments made by the Limpopo MEC in 2022 further added to this complex media landscape. Such comments often served to legitimize anti-immigrant sentiments, making the media's portrayal of these events a significant factor in either perpetuating or challenging xenophobic attitudes.

This analysis delves into specific examples of how the Sunday Times reported on key incidents of xenophobic violence, focusing on the language and imagery used in their articles. It also considers the broader narratives constructed by the newspaper, examining whether these narratives framed African migrants as threats or victims. By applying discourse analysis, this study seeks to identify patterns in the media coverage's of these instances of xenophobia as a way of understanding how the media reports on African migrants in South Africa

Media Framing and Narrative Construction

Media framing refers to the way information is presented to the audience, influencing their perception and interpretation of events. This concept is crucial in understanding how media can shape public opinion and societal attitudes. By selecting certain aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient, media framing can significantly influence how issues are perceived by the public (Entman, 1993). This process involves highlighting particular elements of a story, such as specific facts, interpretations, or aspects, while omitting others, thereby constructing a specific narrative that aligns with particular ideological, political, or economic interests.

The Sunday Times' 2022 coverage of xenophobic violence in South Africa provides a compelling case study for examining media framing. By analyzing the newspaper's articles through the lenses of both positive and negative framing, one can gain insights into how media narratives are constructed and the impact they have on public discourse. Positive framing in this context refers to articles that highlight the contributions and humanity of migrants, presenting them in a sympathetic light. Conversely, negative framing involves depicting migrants as threats to social stability and economic well-being, often exacerbating xenophobic sentiments.

The analysis of the Sunday Times' 2022 coverage is divided into sections that explore these contrasting frames. Several articles emphasize the economic and social contributions of migrants, aiming to foster empathy and counteract negative stereotypes. For instance, reports highlighting the negative economic impacts of xenophobia on industries such as tourism underscore the importance of a diverse and inclusive society. These articles represent a shift from purely negative portrayals of migrants, reflecting a broader recognition of their positive roles within South African society.

However, this positive framing is juxtaposed with articles that depict migrants as burdens on public services and threats to national resources. The portrayal of the Dudula movement and statements from government officials that blame migrants for straining the healthcare system exemplify this negative framing. Such narratives reinforce stereotypes and justify exclusionary attitudes and policies, contributing to a climate of fear and hostility towards migrants.

Understanding the implications of media framing in the context of xenophobic violence is essential for several reasons. First, it reveals the media's role in shaping public perception and potentially influencing policy decisions. Second, it underscores the ethical responsibilities of journalists to provide balanced coverage. Third, it highlights the broader societal impact of media narratives, particularly in fostering or mitigating xenophobia.

The following sections, will delve deeper into these contrasting frames, examining specific articles from the Sunday Times. By dissecting the language, imagery, and underlying messages, this study will explore how

media framing constructs particular narratives about migrants. This analysis will also consider the broader implications of these narratives, questioning whether framing migrants primarily in terms of their economic utility aligns with ethical principles and promotes a truly inclusive society.

Positive Framing

Several articles in the Sunday Times highlighted the positive contributions of migrants to South African society. For instance, a report by Chris Barron (2022) emphasized the negative economic effects of xenophobia on the tourism industry, pointing out that wealthy travelers from East Africa, Nigeria, and other West African nations were reconsidering their visits to South Africa due to increasing incidents of xenophobia. Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa, CEO of the Tourism Business Council of SA, is quoted as saying, “All this does is strengthen perceptions of SA as a lawless and unstable country” (Barron, 2022). This article underscored the economic contributions of migrants and the broader negative implications of xenophobic violence for the national economy. It highlighted how xenophobia not only threatens social cohesion but also has tangible economic repercussions, such as diminished tourism revenue and damaged international reputation.

Academic literature supports the notion that xenophobia negatively impacts economic stability and growth. For example, Crush (2011) argues that xenophobic violence in South Africa has led to significant economic losses, particularly in sectors like tourism and retail. Furthermore, economic theories on migration suggest that migrants contribute positively to the economy by filling labor shortages, creating businesses, and paying taxes (Dustmann & Frattini, 2014). In the South African context, migrants often take on jobs that locals are unwilling or unable to fill, thereby complementing the local workforce rather than competing with it (Crush, 2017). This is particularly crucial in industries such as agriculture, hospitality, and construction, where labor shortages are common.

In another piece, the Sunday Times presented the voices of anti-xenophobia activists and legal experts who argued that migrants are essential to the economy, particularly in the context of business ownership and tax contributions.

For instance, Naledi Shange (2022b) highlighted the perspective of a legal expert who emphasized, “We have migrants that contribute to the economy of SA, some of them as business people. They have documents that allow them to be in the country running legal businesses and paying taxes” (Shange, 2022b). This coverage aimed to counteract the negative stereotypes and highlight the factual contributions of migrants, thereby fostering empathy and understanding among the readers.

The role of migrants in economic development is well-documented in academic literature. Migrants often bring entrepreneurial skills and innovation, which are critical for economic dynamism (Wickramasekara, 2013). Studies have shown that immigrant-owned businesses create jobs and stimulate local economies. For example, a study by Fairlie and Lofstrom (2015) found that immigrant-owned businesses in the United States generated significant employment and economic activity, a trend that is mirrored in many other countries, including South Africa. Moreover, the tax contributions of migrants are substantial, often exceeding the cost of public services they consume (OECD, 2013). This fiscal contribution is crucial for public finances, especially in developing countries with constrained budgets.

Comparatively, this approach represents a slight shift from the coverage seen during the 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa. During that period, the media, including the Sunday Times, often failed to highlight the positive contributions of migrants, instead predominantly portraying them as a homogenous group responsible for various socio-economic problems. The 2008 coverage was marked by a lack of emphasis on migrant identity and agency, which contributed to a monolithic and negative perception of migrants. Reports from 2008 typically focused on the violence and its immediate impacts without delving into the broader socio-economic contributions of migrants or their individual stories.

The 2008 xenophobic violence, which resulted in the deaths of over 60 people and displaced thousands, was largely reported in a manner that dehumanized migrants. Articles from that period often framed migrants as a threat to local jobs and resources without exploring the systemic issues underlying these tensions. This type of coverage perpetuated a narrative

that migrants were a burden, contributing to the escalation of xenophobic sentiments. According to Landau (2011), the media played a significant role in shaping public opinion by failing to provide a nuanced view of migration, thereby reinforcing negative stereotypes and justifying xenophobic behavior.

In contrast, recent articles in the *Sunday Times* have begun to present a more layered perspective by incorporating the voices of migrants and highlighting their positive contributions. This shift, although not comprehensive, suggests a growing recognition of the need for more inclusive reporting. For instance, articles now feature quotes from legal experts and activists who argue for the economic necessity of migrants, emphasizing their role in business ownership and tax contributions (Shange, 2022b). This inclusion of diverse perspectives helps to counteract negative stereotypes and fosters a more empathetic understanding of the migrant experience.

However, advocating for the acceptance of migrants primarily on the basis of their economic contributions represents a problematic departure from Kant's ethical maxim of treating individuals as ends in themselves rather than merely as means to an end. While it is important to highlight the positive economic impacts of migration, reducing individuals to their economic utility risks perpetuating a utilitarian view that overlooks their inherent human dignity and rights. Kantian ethics emphasizes the intrinsic worth of individuals, advocating for their treatment based on inherent dignity rather than instrumental value (Kant, 1785/1997).

This instrumentalization of migrants raises critical ethical questions about the direction in which society should evolve. Ending xenophobia solely for the purpose of economic prosperity might lead to a superficial resolution that fails to address the underlying prejudices and systemic inequities. Such an approach risks perpetuating a transactional view of human relations, where the worth of individuals is contingent upon their economic productivity. As Sen (1999) argues, development should be seen as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy, which includes recognizing their rights and dignity beyond mere economic contributions.

The *Sunday Times*' recent coverage of migrants represents a slight but significant shift from the predominantly negative portrayals seen during the

2008 xenophobic violence. By highlighting the economic contributions of migrants and including their voices in the narrative, these articles contribute to a more fruitful public discourse. However, advocating for the acceptance of migrants primarily on the basis of their economic utility risks dehumanizing them and undermines the ethical imperative to treat all individuals with inherent dignity. It is crucial for media and society to embrace a more holistic view that values migrants not only for their economic contributions but also for their intrinsic worth as human beings.

Negative Framing

Conversely, some articles portrayed migrants as a threat to national resources and public safety. For example, reports about the Dudula movement, a civic group advocating for the removal of undocumented foreign nationals, framed migrants as invaders who have taken over jobs and housing meant for South Africans. This framing was evident in the portrayal of the Dudula leader's rhetoric, which emphasized taking back control of resources from migrants, presenting them as the primary cause of socio-economic issues faced by the local population. In a piece by Naledi Shange (2022), the leader of the Dudula movement is quoted saying, "We are fighting for a better life for our children, the future of Alex. We are doing this because the government doesn't want to listen to us. Sometimes as a father of the house you must make difficult decisions when you have a problem. I am taking Alexandra on my shoulders to say undocumented foreign nationals must go" (Shange, 2022a). This statement encapsulates the movement's ethos, framing their actions as a necessary response to governmental neglect and positioning migrants as obstacles to local prosperity.

The depiction of migrants as economic threats is not unique to South Africa. Academic literature on migration often discusses how economic insecurity fuels xenophobic sentiments. Crush and Tawodzera (2014) argue that xenophobic violence in South Africa is often justified by economic rationalizations that depict migrants as competitors for scarce resources. This competition narrative aligns with global patterns where economic downturns amplify anti-immigrant sentiments, as seen in various countries facing

economic strain (Wimmer, 1997). Moreover, the portrayal of migrants in media often lacks a critical examination of the structural economic issues that contribute to unemployment and poverty among locals. Instead, migrants are scapegoated, diverting attention from the failures of economic policy and governance (Landau, 2011).

Furthermore, the Sunday Times published articles that supported the notion that foreign nationals overburden South Africa's healthcare system. Reports from medical staff in Limpopo indicated that the health system was collapsing due to the influx of foreign patients, framing migrants as a significant strain on public services. An article by Hendrik Hancke (2022) highlighted statements from medical professionals like Michael Ndwambi, senior clinical manager at Tshilidzini Hospital, who said, "We are overrun by foreign patients and barely have the budget needed to care for our South African ones" (Hancke, 2022). This narrative was reinforced by statements from government officials, such as the Limpopo MEC, who suggested that migrants were exploiting the healthcare system. The MEC's remarks were stark: "Zimbabwean nationals are abusing the system and collapsing medical health care in Limpopo... They go from one clinic to another collecting medication and go sell it in their country" (Amashabalala, 2022).

The framing of migrants as a burden on public services is a common trope in anti-immigrant rhetoric globally. Research by Willen (2012) discusses how health-related xenophobia can lead to the marginalization of migrant populations, exacerbating their vulnerabilities. In the context of South Africa, this narrative overlooks the systemic issues within the healthcare system itself, such as chronic underfunding, mismanagement, and the lingering effects of apartheid-era inequities (Coovadia et al., 2009). Scholars like Crush (2017) argue that the focus on migrants as the primary cause of service delivery failures distracts from these deeper, structural problems. Moreover, international human rights frameworks emphasize the right to health for all individuals, regardless of nationality (UN General Assembly, 1948), highlighting the ethical implications of denying healthcare based on immigration status.

The failure of the Sunday Times to present a balanced narrative on migration

issues is particularly concerning. By providing a platform for xenophobic rhetoric without sufficient critical analysis, the newspaper inadvertently legitimizes bigotry and reinforces harmful stereotypes. This lack of balanced reporting contravenes the principles of ethical journalism, which require the media to provide comprehensive, fair, and unbiased coverage. As observed by McCombs and Shaw (1972), the media's agenda-setting role significantly influences public opinion and discourse. When newspapers like the Sunday Times prioritize sensationalist and biased perspectives, they contribute to a polarized and misinformed public sphere.

Furthermore, the unchecked dissemination of xenophobic views can have severe societal repercussions. According to a study by Esses, Hamilton, and Gaucher (2017), media portrayals that depict immigrants negatively can lead to increased prejudice and discrimination, exacerbating social tensions and undermining social cohesion. The propagation of a singular, negative narrative about migrants not only affects public perception but also impacts policy decisions, potentially leading to more restrictive and punitive immigration policies (Bloemraad, 2012).

The Sunday Times' portrayal of migrants through the lens of the Dudula movement and the healthcare strain narrative reflects broader societal anxieties and economic insecurities. These representations not only shape public perception but also influence policy discourses that can lead to exclusionary practices. By failing to present a balanced narrative and giving free rein to bigots, the newspaper compromises its journalistic integrity and contributes to a climate of hostility and division. It is imperative for media outlets to adhere to ethical standards that promote a just and equitable understanding of migration, thereby supporting social cohesion and the rights and dignity of all individuals.

Government and Political Narratives

The role of government and political figures in shaping public discourse around xenophobia was also evident in the Sunday Times' coverage. Politicians often framed anti-immigrant sentiments as necessary for protecting national interests. For instance, Minister Aaron Motsoaledi's comments that migrants were abusing the system were highlighted, reflecting a governmental stance that often exacerbated xenophobic sentiments by portraying migrants as opportunistic and detrimental to national stability. In one article, Motsoaledi is quoted saying, "Migrants are abusing SA says Motsoaledi... They cross the border illegally. They go from one clinic to another collecting medication and go sell it in their country" (Khoza, 2022). Similarly, the Limpopo MEC, Phophi Ramathuba, made inflammatory remarks stating, "Zimbabwean nationals are abusing the system and collapsing medical health care in Limpopo... They go from one clinic to another collecting medication and go sell it in their country" (Amashabalala, 2022). This framing by government officials not only delegitimizes the presence of migrants but also amplifies fears and prejudices within the local population.

Academic literature supports the significant influence political rhetoric can have on public attitudes towards migrants. According to van Dijk (1997), political discourse often sets the tone for media coverage and public perception, as it carries authority and legitimacy. When politicians like Motsoaledi and Ramathuba make statements that frame migrants as a burden or threat, it legitimizes xenophobic attitudes and policies. This is particularly concerning in contexts where economic hardships and high unemployment rates make scapegoating a convenient political strategy (Betz, 1994). Furthermore, the political framing of migrants as exploiters of public resources can lead to public support for more stringent and exclusionary immigration policies, as seen in various global contexts (Mudde, 2007).

Additionally, articles criticized the government for failing to regulate immigration effectively, which supposedly led to increased criminal activities and resource depletion attributed to migrants. This perspective perpetuated the narrative that strict immigration control was necessary to maintain social

and economic order. For example, in one report, it was claimed that “the Limpopo health department was owed R500m by patients, most of which was a result of illegal Zimbabweans” (Amashabalala, 2022). Such statements reinforce the belief that migrants are a financial drain on state resources, necessitating tighter immigration controls to protect national interests.

This narrative aligns with broader themes in migration studies, where governments often justify restrictive immigration policies by linking migration to security concerns and resource allocation issues. Research by Huysmans (2006) highlights how migration is frequently securitized, with migrants depicted as threats to national security, social cohesion, and economic stability. This securitization of migration serves political agendas by framing immigration control as a matter of national security, thereby gaining public support for more restrictive measures. Furthermore, Wodak (2015) argues that this framing creates a climate of fear and hostility, which can have severe social and psychological impacts on migrant communities.

A critical issue in this coverage is the newspaper’s reliance on official government sources, often at the expense of migrant voices. This reliance not only skews the narrative but also represents a dereliction of journalistic duty. By prioritizing governmental perspectives, the media perpetuates existing power dynamics, where the voices of authority figures are amplified while those of marginalized communities are muted. According to Herman and Chomsky’s (1988) propaganda model, the media often serves the interests of powerful elites, shaping news in ways that maintain the status quo. This model highlights the structural biases within media organizations that lead to an over-reliance on official sources.

The prioritization of governmental sources over migrant voices in the *Sunday Times*’ coverage underscores the power imbalances in media narrative construction. Migrants are often depicted through the lens of authority figures who frame them as problems to be managed rather than individuals with their own stories and contributions. This marginalization of migrant perspectives not only dehumanizes them but also denies them agency, reinforcing societal prejudices and exclusionary attitudes.

Moreover, this approach raises significant ethical concerns about the

media's role in a democratic society. Journalism is tasked with holding power to account and providing a platform for diverse voices. When newspapers like the Sunday Times fail to include migrant perspectives, they neglect this duty, contributing to a one-sided narrative that exacerbates xenophobia. This approach contradicts the ethical standards of journalism, which call for balanced and fair reporting that includes marginalized voices (Ward, 2011).

Including divisive voices without simultaneously problematizing their content can be particularly detrimental, especially in a media environment where readers do not always engage with content critically. Hall (1980) discusses how audiences decode media messages in various ways, ranging from a dominant-hegemonic position to negotiated or oppositional readings. However, many readers may not possess the critical skills or contextual knowledge to contest problematic narratives, instead accepting them at face value. This uncritical acceptance can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and normalize exclusionary attitudes.

The portrayal of migrants as scapegoats for governmental failures in public service provision and economic management is a recurrent theme in media coverage globally. According to Alexander Betts (2013), states often use migration control as a means to distract from broader structural issues, such as economic mismanagement or corruption. By framing migrants as the source of societal problems, governments can deflect attention from their own shortcomings. This strategy not only marginalizes migrants but also deepens societal divisions and fosters an environment of intolerance and exclusion.

Moreover, the Sunday Times' coverage reflects a broader trend in which media and political discourses intersect to shape public opinion on migration. Media scholars like McCombs and Shaw (1972) have long argued that the media's agenda-setting role significantly influences what the public perceives as important issues. When political figures frame migration in negative terms, and the media amplifies these messages, it creates a feedback loop that reinforces xenophobic sentiments. This dynamic can have long-term implications for social cohesion and the integration of migrant communities.

The Sunday Times' coverage of xenophobic sentiments, influenced by

political rhetoric, underscores the ways in which media, politics, and public perception interact. Politicians' framing of migrants as threats and opportunists, coupled with media narratives criticizing government failures in immigration control, perpetuates a cycle of fear and exclusion. The newspaper's reliance on official government sources, at the expense of migrant voices, reveals a dereliction of journalistic duty and reinforces power imbalances in media narrative construction. Including divisive voices without problematizing their content can exacerbate xenophobic attitudes, particularly among uncritical readers. This highlights the need for more responsible and balanced reporting that recognizes the contributions of migrants while addressing legitimate concerns in a manner that promotes social cohesion and respects human dignity.

Public Sentiment and Civil Society

The Sunday Times also documented the responses of civil society to xenophobic violence, providing a platform for voices advocating for inclusivity and migrant rights. These articles reported on anti-xenophobia marches and the efforts of legal advocates to protect migrants' rights, presenting a counter-narrative to the dominant negative portrayals of migrants as threats to national stability and resources. For example, a piece by Naledi Shange (2022) highlighted the agency of migrants in responding to violence, noting that a lawyer representing over 68 people stated, "We went to law enforcement agencies and got no help, we went to the councillors and also got no assistance so we wanted to do as they do but without assaulting anyone. We decided that we would only defend ourselves if needs be because we were not getting help anywhere" (Shange, 2022a). This statement underscores the proactive steps taken by migrants to protect themselves and assert their rights, challenging the passive victim narrative often perpetuated in media coverage.

The Sunday Times' coverage of civil society's responses included detailed reports on anti-xenophobia marches, which aimed to draw public attention

to the plight of migrants and the injustices they face. One article described how anti-xenophobia activists marched to the Hillbrow and Johannesburg Central police stations to deliver a memorandum asking police to intervene to prevent a rising number of attacks on migrants (Khoza, 2022). Such events are crucial in raising awareness and fostering solidarity among South Africans, demonstrating a collective resistance to xenophobic sentiments and actions.

Moreover, the newspaper highlighted the efforts of legal advocates who argued for the necessity of protecting migrants' rights. These advocates emphasized the contributions migrants make to the economy and society, thereby countering negative stereotypes. For instance, an article by Prega Govender (2022) pointed out that the government's anti-immigrant policies were detrimental to the education sector, as foreign educators who had contributed significantly to students' success were being dismissed. A senior teacher lamented, "The teachers had produced very good results over the years. We are [now] forced to teach up to 66 pupils in a matric class in physical science" (Govender, 2022a). This underscores the tangible benefits that migrants bring to South African society and the negative impact of exclusionary policies.

Academic literature supports the notion that civil society plays a vital role in combating xenophobia and promoting social cohesion. According to Landau and Freemantle (2010), civil society organizations are often at the forefront of efforts to support migrants and challenge xenophobic attitudes. These organizations provide essential services, advocate for policy changes, and create spaces for dialogue and understanding between migrants and host communities. Their work is crucial in addressing the root causes of xenophobia, such as economic inequality, social fragmentation, and political opportunism (Misago, 2016).

Furthermore, the Sunday Times' documentation of civil society's responses aligns with broader theories of media responsibility and ethical journalism. Ethical journalism requires the media to not only report on events accurately but also to provide context and highlight efforts to address societal issues. This involves giving voice to marginalized groups and showcasing positive initiatives that promote social justice and cohesion (Ward, 2011). By reporting on

anti-xenophobia marches and the work of legal advocates, the Sunday Times contributes to a more balanced and layered public discourse, challenging the dominant negative narratives about migrants.

The efforts of civil society to address xenophobia also highlight the importance of addressing systemic issues such as economic inequality and political opportunism. Scholars like Crush and Tawodzera (2014) argue that xenophobic violence in South Africa is often driven by underlying economic frustrations and political manipulation. By focusing on these root causes, civil society organizations aim to create more sustainable and inclusive solutions that benefit both migrants and host communities.

The Sunday Times' coverage of civil society's responses to xenophobic violence provides a crucial counter-narrative to the dominant negative portrayals of migrants. By highlighting anti-xenophobia marches, the efforts of legal advocates, and the proactive steps taken by migrants themselves, the newspaper contributes to a more balanced and empathetic understanding of migration issues. This coverage not only challenges xenophobic attitudes but also underscores the importance of addressing the systemic root causes of xenophobia, such as economic inequality and political opportunism. Through ethical journalism that amplifies marginalized voices and promotes social justice, the media can play a pivotal role in fostering a more inclusive and cohesive society.

Summary Conclusion

The analysis of the Sunday Times' coverage of xenophobic violence in South Africa reveals the profound impact of media framing on public perception and discourse. By examining the language, imagery, and underlying messages in the newspaper's reporting, it becomes evident how media narratives can either mitigate or exacerbate xenophobic sentiments. The Sunday Times presented a complex array of perspectives, oscillating between positive framing that highlights the contributions of migrants and negative framing that portrays them as burdens on public services and threats to national

stability.

The role of government and political figures in shaping public discourse around xenophobia was also evident in the coverage. Politicians, such as Minister Aaron Motsoaledi and the Limpopo MEC, Phophi Ramathuba, made inflammatory comments that framed migrants as opportunistic and detrimental to national stability. These statements were prominently featured in the *Sunday Times*, reflecting a governmental stance that often exacerbated xenophobic sentiments. The newspaper's reliance on official government sources at the expense of migrant voices underscores the power imbalances in media narrative construction. This reliance not only skews the narrative but also represents a dereliction of journalistic duty, as it perpetuates existing power dynamics and marginalizes the perspectives of those most affected by xenophobia.

The *Sunday Times* also documented the responses of civil society to xenophobic violence, providing a platform for voices advocating for inclusivity and migrant rights. These articles reported on anti-xenophobia marches and the efforts of legal advocates to protect migrants' rights, presenting a counter-narrative to the dominant negative portrayals of migrants as threats to national stability and resources. By highlighting the proactive steps taken by migrants to protect themselves and assert their rights, the newspaper challenged the passive victim narrative often perpetuated in media coverage.

However, the inclusion of divisive voices without problematizing their content can be particularly detrimental, especially in a media environment where readers do not always engage with content critically. Many readers may not possess the critical skills or contextual knowledge to contest problematic narratives, instead accepting them at face value. This uncritical acceptance can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and normalize exclusionary attitudes. The unchecked dissemination of xenophobic views can have severe societal repercussions, increasing prejudice and discrimination, exacerbating social tensions, and undermining social cohesion.

Advocating for the acceptance of migrants primarily on the basis of their economic contributions represents a problematic departure from Kant's ethical maxim of treating individuals as ends in themselves rather than merely

as means to an end. While it is important to highlight the positive economic impacts of migration, reducing individuals to their economic utility risks perpetuating a utilitarian view that overlooks their inherent human dignity and rights. Ending xenophobia solely for the purpose of economic prosperity might lead to a superficial resolution that fails to address the underlying prejudices and systemic inequities. Such an approach risks perpetuating a transactional view of human relations where the worth of individuals is contingent upon their economic productivity.

The Sunday Times' coverage represents a slight but significant shift from the predominantly negative portrayals seen during the 2008 xenophobic violence. By incorporating the voices of migrants and highlighting their positive contributions, the newspaper contributes to a more engaging public discourse. However, the over-reliance on official government sources and the failure to problematize divisive rhetoric reveal significant ethical shortcomings. For media to truly promote social cohesion and respect for human dignity, it must embrace a more holistic view that values migrants not only for their economic contributions but also for their intrinsic worth as human beings.

This analysis underscores the importance of ethical journalism in fostering a more inclusive and cohesive society. Journalists have a responsibility to provide balanced and fair reporting that includes marginalized voices and challenges harmful stereotypes. By doing so, the media can play a pivotal role in addressing the systemic root causes of xenophobia, such as economic inequality and political opportunism, and in promoting a society that values diversity and human dignity.

Chapter 4.3: Analysis of Hirosamii's Boarder Jumpers 6

Introduction

Throughout history, music has served as a potent platform for amplifying complex social issues. From folk ballads documenting historical struggles to contemporary hip-hop critiquing social injustices, music provides a space for marginalized voices to be heard and understood. In South Africa, a nation with a rich musical heritage deeply intertwined with its history of resistance and social transformation, music takes on a particularly powerful role.

Migration is a significant social issue in South Africa, with a long history of both internal movement within the country and cross-border migration from neighboring countries. This movement of people is driven by a multitude of factors, including poverty, inequality, political instability, and a search for better opportunities. However, migrants often face a myriad of challenges, including xenophobia, exploitation, and difficulty integrating into new communities.

This analysis engages in a critical examination of the track “Boarder Jumpers 6” by South African artist Hirosamii, focusing on how the song utilizes the unique soundscape and lyrical content of trap music to articulate the experiences and challenges faced by migrants in South Africa. Trap music, a genre often associated with themes of struggle, hardship, and resilience, provides a fitting backdrop to explore the realities of migration. By examining the lyrics, musical production, and cultural context of “Boarder Jumpers 6,” we can gain valuable insights into the lived experiences of migrants in South Africa.

“Boarder [sic] Jumpers 6,” a track by the artist known as Hirosamii, provides a vivid portrayal of the challenges and narratives surrounding migration through the medium of trap music. Released on Spotify on July 11, 2023, and achieving broader recognition through a TikTok video posted on October 19, 2023, this song has become a significant piece of cultural expression, garnering over 1.2 million views on TikTok and streamed more than 217,118 times on Spotify as of early April 2024 (Blanco, 2023). The track’s popularity on digital platforms underscores its resonance with a global audience, particularly addressing themes pertinent to African migrants.

Trap music, traditionally associated with the raw expressions of urban American life (Conti, 2020), here serves as a vehicle for Hirosamii to articulate the complexities of immigrant experiences in South Africa. Unlike the genre's typical focus on American inner-city strife (Conti, 2020), Hirosamii adapts trap's elements to reflect the South African milieu — infusing the music with local South African rhythms and lyrics that speak to the challenges of integration and identity retention among migrants.

The analysis of “Boarder Jumpers 6” serves as a case study to explore a broader research question: How does music mediate the subject of migration in the South African context? By examining this musical form of cultural production that address migration, we can gain a deeper understanding of the social, political, and economic realities that shape the lives of migrants in South Africa. Furthermore, this research can contribute to a broader discussion about the power of music to raise awareness, challenge stereotypes, and promote social cohesion.

Border Crossings and Liminal Spaces

The title of Hirosamii's song, “Boarder Jumpers 6,” carries a potent and explicit reference not merely to the act of migration but to the layered and often contentious issue of irregular migration and the porosity of South Africa's borders. This title serves as a critical entry point into the broader discourse on migration, encapsulating the complexities and challenges faced by those who cross borders without official authorization. By choosing such a provocative title, Hirosamii engages directly with the stigmatized and politicized nature of migration, drawing attention to the socio-political realities that migrants encounter.

In academic discussions, the concept of irregular migration is often framed within the broader context of state sovereignty, border control, and human rights. As noted by scholars such as De Genova (2002), irregular migration challenges the conventional boundaries and norms of state governance, creating a “space of non-existence” where migrants navigate the tension

between visibility and invisibility. This theoretical perspective helps to contextualize Hirosamii's choice of title, suggesting that "Boarder Jumpers 6" is not just a reference to physical border crossings but also to the liminal spaces that migrants occupy within society. The title's implicit reference to a series that does not exist underscores the repetitive and unresolved nature of migration issues, highlighting how these socio-political dynamics are continually recurring and inadequately addressed.

The humor and irony in the "6" of the title add a layer of critique to this discussion. By suggesting a non-existent series, Hirosamii points to the ongoing, cyclical nature of migration debates and policies that fail to resolve the core issues. This aligns with Anderson and O'Connell Davidson's (2003) critique of migration management, which often cycles through the same ineffective measures without addressing the structural causes of migration. Hirosamii's ironic approach not only draws attention to these systemic failures but also invites listeners to question the efficacy and morality of current migration policies.

Moreover, the explicit reference to "Boarder Jumpers" taps into the contentious discourse surrounding undocumented migrants, often labeled as "illegal" or "unauthorized" within public and political debates. As emphasized by Khosravi (2010), the terminology used to describe migrants significantly shapes public perception and policy responses. By reclaiming the term "Boarder Jumper," Hirosamii subverts its negative connotations, using it as a badge of resilience and survival rather than criminality. This act of linguistic reclamation is a powerful tool in mediating the subject of migration, transforming a term of exclusion into one of defiance and agency.

Hirosamii's choice of title thus functions on multiple levels, engaging with both the personal and the political dimensions of migration. On a personal level, it reflects his own experiences and those of his community, who navigate the precarious realities of irregular migration. On a political level, it critiques the state's handling of migration issues, highlighting the systemic failures and recurring challenges that remain unresolved. This dual engagement underscores the role of music in mediating complex social issues, providing a platform for marginalized voices and fostering a deeper understanding of the

migrant experience.

In the South African context, the issue of irregular migration is particularly poignant given the country's history and socio-economic landscape. As Landau (2011) points out, South Africa's migration dynamics are shaped by its apartheid legacy, economic disparities, and regional geopolitical factors. The porosity of its borders is both a practical reality and a metaphor for the fluid and contested nature of identity and belonging in post-apartheid South Africa. Hirosamii's song title, therefore, resonates with these broader historical and social contexts, positioning the act of border jumping within a continuum of movement, struggle, and adaptation.

Furthermore, the title "Boarder Jumpers 6" highlights the interconnectedness of local and global migration issues. As migration scholars such as Castles (2010) argue, migration is a global phenomenon that transcends national boundaries, influenced by global economic trends, political conflicts, and environmental changes. Hirosamii's music reflects this global dimension, using the specific context of South African borders to comment on the universal challenges of migration. This global-local nexus is crucial in understanding how music mediates migration, as it captures the transnational flows and experiences that characterize contemporary migrant life.

The title of Hirosamii's song, "Boarder Jumpers 6," serves as a multifaceted commentary on the complexities of irregular migration. It engages with deep-seated socio-political issues, critiques systemic failures, and reclaims stigmatized terminology, all while situating these discussions within the broader context of South African and global migration dynamics. Through this title, Hirosamii not only sets the stage for the narrative that unfolds in his lyrics but also invites listeners to engage with the layered realities of migration, making his music a powerful medium for social and political discourse. This analysis ties directly into the research question by demonstrating how music, through its titles, lyrics, and cultural references, mediates the subject of migration in a way that is both deeply personal and broadly political.

Reclaiming Voice: The Significance of Accent in Migration Music

Hirosamii's deliberate use of a thick, exaggerated Zimbabwean accent within his lyrics plays a multifaceted role in the song. This stylistic choice not only serves to authenticate his personal and narrative voice, ensuring that his identity as a Zimbabwean migrant is unmistakable and prominent, but it also acts as a vocal symbol representing the significant Zimbabwean community, the second largest (Stats SA, 2023) in South Africa. This community, often living in a delicate balance of integration and marginalization, faces unique challenges that Hirosamii's song seeks to voice.

The use of an accent in music can be a powerful tool for cultural expression and identity politics. In Hirosamii's case, the exaggerated Zimbabwean accent functions as an audible marker of his heritage, firmly anchoring his identity within his music. This tactic aligns with the broader theoretical frameworks of linguistic anthropology, which emphasize the role of language and accent in the construction and performance of identity (Eckert, 2000; Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). By foregrounding his Zimbabwean accent, Hirosamii resists assimilation pressures and asserts a distinct cultural identity within the South African context.

Moreover, this vocal choice serves as a strategic act of solidarity and representation for the Zimbabwean migrant community in South Africa. As noted by Nyamnjoh (2006), migrant communities often use cultural productions as a means to assert their presence and address issues of marginalization. By using his music to vocalize the Zimbabwean accent, Hirosamii not only highlights the presence of his community but also draws attention to their unique socio-economic challenges, including discrimination, unemployment, and limited access to resources.

The accent also plays a crucial role in mediating the subject of migration through music. It bridges the listener's understanding of the migrant experience, making the narrative more relatable and immediate. This approach is supported by the concept of "transcultural capital" as discussed by Pennycook (2007), where elements of language and culture are strategically used in globalized contexts to create new forms of cultural capital and social

meaning. Hirosamii's use of accent, therefore, is not merely an aesthetic choice but a deliberate act of cultural mediation, transforming personal and communal experiences into a form of artistic expression that resonates across diverse audiences.

Furthermore, the accent acts as a counter-narrative to dominant media portrayals of migrants. According to McLaren and Leonard (1993), dominant media often depict migrants through homogenizing and dehumanizing lenses, stripping them of their individuality and agency. Hirosamii's pronounced accent disrupts these narratives by emphasizing the individuality and cultural specificity of Zimbabwean migrants, thus reclaiming their voice and agency within the public sphere.

The use of a thick Zimbabwean accent also engages with the broader socio-political discourse surrounding migration in South Africa. It challenges xenophobic attitudes and stereotypes, which often paint migrants as the "Other." As Bauman (2004) suggests, such cultural expressions can be seen as acts of resistance against marginalization, providing alternative narratives that highlight the contributions and resilience of migrant communities. Hirosamii's accent becomes a symbol of cultural pride and resistance, reinforcing the idea that migrants are integral to the social and cultural fabric of South Africa.

By incorporating these academic perspectives, it becomes clear how Hirosamii's deliberate use of his accent mediates the subject of migration. It authenticates his narrative, represents his community, challenges dominant media portrayals, and engages with socio-political discourses on migration. This multifaceted approach underscores the power of music as a medium for expressing complex social issues and fostering cultural understanding.

Subcultural Evolution and Migration Narratives in South African Trap Music

In his opening lines, Hirosamii not only pays homage to Yeat's influence but also positions himself within a cultural lineage of musical and subcultural evolution.

“Back in the day they called me a Luh Twizzy,
Just like Yeat, my nigga, let's get busy:”
(Hirosamii, 2023)

The reference to being a former “Luh Twizzy,” a nod to Yeat's “Luh Geeky,” signifies a shared ethos and an artistic lineage that transcends geographical boundaries, resonating deeply with the South African counterculture known as the Luh Twizzys. This group, known for their anarchic, antisocial behavior and distinctive aesthetic that combines elements of the “vamp” and “Y2K” styles (Monsoon, 2023), reflects a broader global influence of American trap culture, adapted to local conditions and frustrations.

The evolution of subcultural identities within the trap music genre illustrates a complex interplay of global influences and localized expressions. Hirosamii's invocation of Yeat's “Luh Geeky” persona in his lyrics not only highlights a connection to a broader cultural lineage but also situates him within a distinct South African counterculture. This interplay underscores the global nature of trap music and its ability to transcend geographic and cultural boundaries, while also adapting to specific local contexts.

The term “Luh Twizzy” and its cultural connotations reflect the South African adaptation of American trap culture. The Luh Twizzys, characterized by their rebellious and anti-establishment attitudes, mirror similar movements in American trap subcultures. Uliano Conti (2020) discusses the characteristics of urban subcultures, particularly noting how elements like violence, individualism, and references to drugs and urban life are central to the trap genre. These elements are not only indicative of a global subcultural trend but also resonate with the experiences and expressions of South African

youth who navigate their socio-political landscape through music.

The adoption and adaptation of American trap aesthetics and attitudes by South African artists like Hirosamii highlight a significant cultural exchange. This exchange is facilitated by the global nature of media and digital platforms, which allow for a seamless flow of cultural products and influences. As noted by Conti (2020), the trap subculture's emphasis on street codes and normative violence finds resonance in the South African context, where socio-economic challenges and a history of systemic inequality provide fertile ground for such expressions.

The influence of American trap culture on South African subcultures, as seen through Hirosamii's work, underscores the role of music in mediating migration narratives. The Luh Twizzys' anarchic behaviors and distinctive aesthetics are not just mere imitations of their American counterparts but are adapted to address local conditions. This adaptation process reflects what Conti (2020) describes as the dynamic interplay between global cultural forms and local socio-economic realities.

Moreover, the migration of cultural elements from American trap to South African contexts highlights the broader theme of cultural migration. This form of migration, unlike physical migration, involves the transfer and transformation of cultural symbols and practices across borders. In the South African context, where migration and its associated challenges are deeply embedded in the social fabric, music becomes a powerful medium for articulating these experiences.

Hirosamii's lyrical homage to Yeat and the cultural lineage of the Luh Twizzys exemplifies the transnational nature of trap music and its role in mediating complex narratives of migration and identity in South Africa. This cross-cultural exchange not only enriches the local music scene but also provides a lens through which the socio-political dynamics of migration can be understood. By embedding global influences within local contexts, South African trap artists like Hirosamii offer a unique commentary on the intersections of culture, migration, and identity.

Cultural Hybridity and Local Expressions in 'Boarder Jumpers 6

Hirosamii goes on to demonstrate his in-depth understanding of the socio-linguistic landscape of his host country, South Africa, through further lyrics in his song. In one particular verse, he skillfully incorporates local expressions to communicate a powerful message:

“I hope you remember the saying

Eh yo walala wasala

Border jumper 6

There is nothing for mahala”

(Hirosamii, 2023)

In these lines, Hirosamii references the South African phrase “walala wasala,” which roughly translates to “you snooze, you lose.” This popular isiZulu saying is not just a catchy phrase, but a stark reminder of the relentless hustle required to survive in South Africa’s competitive environment. It is a call to action, urging listeners to stay vigilant and proactive, lest they miss out on opportunities in a society where nothing comes for free, as emphasized in his line, “There is nothing for mahala” — “mahala” being the isiZulu word for “free.”

This choice of words reflects Hirosamii’s deep engagement with the multilingual context of South Africa, showcasing not only his linguistic adaptability but also his keen awareness of the local culture and economic conditions. By weaving these elements into his music, Hirosamii does more than just entertain; he resonates with the lived experiences of many South Africans who navigate these realities daily.

The incorporation of local phrases like “walala wasala” and “mahala” underscores Hirosamii’s ability to connect with his audience on a linguistic and cultural level. This approach aligns with Bakhtin’s (1981) concept of heteroglossia, which emphasizes the multiplicity of voices and languages within a single text. By embedding isiZulu phrases within his lyrics, Hirosamii enriches his music with the diverse linguistic realities of South Africa,

reflecting the country's complex social fabric. This linguistic strategy not only enhances the authenticity of his narrative but also positions him as an artist deeply rooted in the cultural milieu of his host country.

Moreover, Hirosamii's use of local expressions can be seen as a form of cultural adaptation and resistance. According to Pieterse (2001), cultural hybridity involves the blending of elements from different cultures to create new, hybrid forms of expression. Hirosamii's lyrics exemplify this process, as he merges his Zimbabwean identity with South African linguistic and cultural elements to create a unique musical expression. This hybrid approach allows him to navigate his identity as a migrant while also asserting his place within South African society.

This engagement with local language and culture also speaks to the role of music in mediating migration experiences. As noted by Stokes (1994), music is a powerful medium for expressing identity and belonging, particularly for migrant communities. By incorporating isiZulu phrases, Hirosamii not only asserts his own identity but also creates a sense of solidarity with his South African audience. This linguistic and cultural alignment helps to bridge the gap between migrant and host communities, fostering a sense of shared experience and mutual understanding.

Furthermore, the themes of hustle and resilience in Hirosamii's lyrics resonate with the broader socio-economic context of South Africa. As detailed by Seekings and Nattrass (2005), South Africa's labor market is characterized by high levels of unemployment and economic inequality. In this environment, the concept of "walala wasala" becomes particularly poignant, reflecting the daily struggles of many South Africans to secure livelihoods and improve their socio-economic status. Hirosamii's lyrics capture this reality, offering a narrative that is both relatable and reflective of the broader economic challenges faced by his audience.

By embedding these socio-linguistic elements into his music, Hirosamii enhances the narrative of "Boarder [sic] Jumpers 6," grounding it in the specific socio-economic backdrop of South Africa. This approach not only enhances the authenticity and relatability of his music but also positions Hirosamii as an artist with a profound connection to and understanding of

the community that he now calls home. This deep-rooted cultural empathy allows him to create music that serves as a mirror to society, reflecting both its challenges and the resilience of its people.

Hirosamii's deliberate use of local linguistic elements in his lyrics highlights the multifaceted relationship between language, culture, and identity in the context of migration. His music mediates the subject of migration by blending Zimbabwean and South African elements, creating a hybrid narrative that resonates deeply with his audience. Through this linguistic and cultural engagement, Hirosamii's music offers a powerful commentary on the migrant experience, fostering understanding and empathy within the broader South African society.

Civic Participation and Migrant Advocacy in Hirosamii's Lyrics

In the next verse of his song, Hirosamii takes a bold step by directly addressing the President of South Africa with the line:

“Cyril Ramaphosa please cancel the Luh Twizzys,” (Hirosamii, 2023)

This direct appeal to President Cyril Ramaphosa is a powerful moment in the song, where Hirosamii, a migrant artist, steps beyond typical artistic boundaries to engage in a public and political discourse. By calling on the president to intervene and address the issue of the Luh Twizzys, a disruptive countercultural movement, Hirosamii not only highlights a significant social issue but also positions himself as an engaged stakeholder in the societal well-being of South Africa.

This action is particularly striking because it is unusual for a migrant to directly engage with political figures in such a public manner. According to a 2002 study conducted by Leal, “non-citizens are significantly less likely to participate in political activity than those with legal citizenship status” (Leal, 2002). Leal suggests that there are many obstacles to participation facing non-citizens, including limited resources and lack of social or com-

munitarian support. Additionally, he notes that “undocumented residents may be particularly anxious to avoid contact with the government, however tangential” (Leal, 2002, p. 357). This finding is particularly important because it underscores the limitations fear can place on migrant agency.

However, Hirosamii transcends this conventional restraint, elevating his role from that of an observer to an active participant in the national conversation, and thereby staking his claim for flexible citizenship, discussed earlier under literature review. His willingness to directly address the president not only underscores the seriousness with which he views the issue but also reflects his commitment to the community he now resides in.

By doing so, Hirosamii implicitly claims a space typically reserved for citizens, asserting his right to participate in the civic dialogue about issues that affect the country he lives in. This bold move serves to bridge gaps between different societal groups, advocating for issues that affect not just migrants but all residents, and fostering a sense of shared responsibility and social cohesion within the community. In essence, Hirosamii is using his platform not just to entertain but to advocate for change and promote understanding, leveraging his unique position to influence and inform both his audience and policymakers.

This direct engagement with political discourse through music ties back to the broader research question of how music mediates the subject of migration in the South African context. Hirosamii’s plea to President Ramaphosa serves multiple functions: it draws attention to the socio-political challenges facing migrants, it empowers his community by demonstrating active participation in societal issues, and it fosters a dialogue that includes migrant voices in national conversations. This aligns with the theoretical framework of cultural citizenship, as discussed by Rosaldo (1994), which emphasizes the right of individuals and groups to participate fully in the cultural and political life of their society, regardless of their legal status. It instantiates as well, the idea of flexible citizenship.

Hirosamii’s bold move also resonates with the concept of “voice” in migration studies, which emphasizes the importance of giving migrants a platform to express their perspectives and experiences (Chimienti, 2011). By addressing

the president, Hirosamii amplifies the voices of his community, challenging the invisibility and marginalization often experienced by migrants. This act of speaking out is not just a personal statement but a collective one, representing the broader migrant community's demands for recognition and justice.

Furthermore, this act of addressing a national leader highlights the role of music as a form of political activism and social commentary. As Gilroy (1993) notes in his work on the Black Atlantic, music has historically been a powerful medium for marginalized communities to articulate their struggles and aspirations. By making use of his musical platform to engage with political issues, Hirosamii is participating in a long tradition of artists who use their craft to influence social change.

Moreover, the focus on the Luh Twizzys—a countercultural group known for its disruptive behavior—highlights the intersections of migration, youth culture, and social unrest. This ties into broader discussions about the role of youth subcultures in expressing dissent and negotiating identity in contexts of social and economic marginalization (Hebdige, 1979). Hirosamii's call to address the issues related to the Luh Twizzys underscores the need for inclusive policies that consider the diverse experiences and contributions of all societal groups, including migrants.

Hirosamii's engagement with political discourse also ties into the concept of "cultural citizenship," where marginalized groups use cultural expressions to claim their rights and assert their presence within the public sphere (Ong, 1996). His music becomes a platform for cultural and political negotiation, where the issues facing migrants are brought to the forefront of national conversations. This act of cultural citizenship not only challenges the dominant narratives that marginalize migrants but also fosters a more inclusive and participatory society.

Hirosamii's direct appeal to President Ramaphosa in "Boarder Jumpers 6" exemplifies how music can mediate the subject of migration by engaging with political discourse, advocating for social change, and amplifying marginalized voices. This bold act of political engagement not only enhances the narrative of his song but also positions Hirosamii as a key player in the ongoing conversation about migration, identity, and social justice in South Africa.

By addressing the president, Hirosamii draws upon his musical platform to influence and inform both his audience and policymakers, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and social cohesion within the community.

Building Bridges: Shared Struggles in Hirosamii's Lyrics

A few lines later in the song, Hirosamii bridges his narrative between two nations with the line:

“In Harare, we have a lot of cable stealers.” (Hirosamii, 2023)

Through this statement, he not only shares a glimpse of the challenges faced in his home country of Zimbabwe but also draws a compelling parallel to similar issues in South Africa. Both nations struggle with infrastructure vandalism, particularly cable theft, which is a significant problem that disrupts daily life and economic activities (Stoddard, 2023; Matika, 2024). By highlighting this shared problem, Hirosamii skillfully creates a connection with his South African audience, emphasizing the commonalities between Zimbabwe and South Africa.

This line serves a dual purpose: it educates the South African listeners about the circumstances in Zimbabwe while also fostering a sense of shared experience and mutual understanding. Such references are crucial in humanizing the issues that migrants bring with them, which are often similar to those already existing in the host country. By drawing attention to these similarities, Hirosamii subtly works to soften the often harsh perceptions that South Africans might hold towards Zimbabwean migrants (Muzondidya, 2010). His approach is not just about sharing his music but also about bridging cultural divides, building empathy, and fostering a more inclusive community where shared challenges can lead to shared solutions.

The strategic use of shared societal issues in his lyrics reflects the concept of “transnationalism,” as discussed by Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc (1994), which highlights how migrants create and maintain social, economic,

and political ties across national borders. By addressing a problem like cable theft, which is pertinent in both Zimbabwe and South Africa, Hirosamii exemplifies how transnational ties can be used to build solidarity and mutual understanding between migrant and host communities.

Hirosamii's reference to cable theft in Harare is particularly significant in the South African context, where the same issue poses a severe challenge to infrastructure and economic stability. According to Harris (2011), infrastructure vandalism, including cable theft, has profound socio-economic implications, affecting businesses, public services, and everyday life. By highlighting this shared problem, Hirosamii aligns the struggles of Zimbabweans with those of South Africans, fostering a sense of empathy and shared fate. This narrative strategy can help to reduce xenophobic sentiments by emphasizing common challenges rather than differences.

Moreover, this lyrical choice can be seen through the lens of Appadurai's (1996) notion of "public culture," which involves the creation of shared meanings and understandings through media and cultural practices. By integrating a cross-border relatable issue into his music, Hirosamii contributes to a public culture that transcends national boundaries, encouraging his listeners to view social problems through a more inclusive and empathetic lens.

The portrayal of shared issues also taps into the concept of "cosmopolitanism," which advocates for a global sense of belonging and mutual responsibility across national borders (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002). Hirosamii's lyrics encourage his audience to adopt a cosmopolitan outlook, recognizing that the struggles of Zimbabweans and South Africans are interconnected. This perspective can lead to greater solidarity and collective action in addressing these issues.

Additionally, Hirosamii's approach resonates with the ideas of "cultural hybridity" discussed by Bhabha (1994), which suggests that the interaction of different cultures can lead to the creation of new, hybrid cultural forms. By blending Zimbabwean and South African contexts in his lyrics, Hirosamii creates a hybrid narrative that reflects the interconnectedness of the two societies. This hybridity not only enriches his music but also promotes a deeper understanding of the migrant experience, highlighting how migration

contributes to the cultural and social fabric of the host country.

Hirosamii's reference to cable theft in Harare within his song is a strategic lyrical choice that mediates the subject of migration by highlighting shared societal issues, fostering empathy, and promoting a sense of transnational solidarity. His music becomes a powerful tool for bridging cultural divides and building a more inclusive community. By addressing common challenges, Hirosamii's lyrics not only enhance the narrative of unity and common ground but also urge his audience to see beyond national borders to the universal struggles that bind communities together.

Mediating Migration Through Pop Culture: Hirosamii's Lyricism

In the same verse, Hirosamii incorporates a set of culturally significant references that resonate deeply with the South African audience, each line peppered with local icons and moments.

"She stretching her legs just like Dr Malinga," (Hirosamii, 2023) he raps, evoking the image of the famous South African House, Afropop, Jazz, and Gospel singer known for his exuberant performances and iconic stage high kicks. This reference not only brings a visual element to the lyrics but also celebrates the vibrant energy and unique performance style that Dr. Malinga brings to the South African music scene.

"I'm using black magic like Pastor Bushiri," (Hirosamii, 2023) he continues, alluding to the controversial Malawian pastor who became a figure of intrigue in South Africa due to allegations surrounding the use of black magic or muti in his churches. This line taps into the complex and often contentious discussions around spiritual practices and their legitimacy within the community.

Switching to a more local setting, he mentions, "I was at Mall of Africa and I saw a Luh Twizzy," (Hirosamii, 2023) referring to a recent incident at one of Johannesburg's largest shopping centers, where members of the counterculture group, the Luh Twizzys, caused chaos. This not only localizes his narrative but also highlights ongoing social dynamics and tensions within modern South African society.

“My mom is having an affair with Papa Penny,” (Hirosamii, 2023) he concludes, drawing on the persona of the beloved South African musician and politician, known as the “Shangaan Disco King.” Papa Penny is not only celebrated for his musical contributions but also for his charismatic and colorful life, which includes his large family and popular reality TV show that captured the nation’s heart.

By weaving these distinct and culturally rich references into his verse, Hirosamii not only demonstrates an acute awareness of the South African pop culture landscape but also engages listeners by tapping into a shared cultural memory. Each line serves as a nod to familiar figures and events, reinforcing his connection to his audience and enhancing the song’s relevance. These references do more than entertain; they interpellate the South African audience at a profound level, using shared cultural knowledge to foster a deeper bond with listeners and affirm his place within the cultural mosaic of South Africa. This strategic inclusion of local icons and events showcases Hirosamii’s skill in creating a rich, multi-layered narrative that resonates on both personal and collective levels, further cementing his dual role as artist and cultural narrator within South Africa’s dynamic social and cultural fabric.

Hirosamii’s incorporation of culturally significant references into his music serves as a profound mediation of the migrant experience in South Africa, bridging the gap between Zimbabwean heritage and South African cultural identity. His lyricism functions as a tool for cultural negotiation and integration, highlighting how music can facilitate a deeper understanding of migration through shared cultural signifiers.

The reference to Dr. Malinga brings to the fore the performative and celebratory aspects of South African music culture. Dr. Malinga’s exuberant performances symbolize resilience and joy amidst adversity, themes that resonate with the migrant experience. According to Erlmann (1996), performance in African music often serves as a means of asserting identity and community. By invoking Dr. Malinga, Hirosamii aligns himself with these performative traditions, suggesting a shared resilience and cultural vibrancy between migrants and local South Africans.

The mention of Pastor Bushiri highlights the tension between spirituality

and skepticism within South African society. Bushiri, a figure shrouded in controversy, embodies the tension between traditional spiritual practices and modern skepticism. This reference not only reflects the diverse spiritual landscape of South Africa but also engages with themes of belief and doubt that are central to the migrant experience. As Meyer (2004) discusses, the negotiation of spiritual practices is often a crucial aspect of cultural integration for migrants, who must navigate between maintaining their traditional beliefs and adapting to the host country's spiritual milieu.

By situating a recent incident at the Mall of Africa within his lyrics, Hirosamii localizes his narrative, grounding it in the contemporary social realities of Johannesburg. The Mall of Africa, as a symbol of modern consumerism and social interaction, becomes a site where local and global, native and migrant identities intersect. This setting underscores the daily negotiations and encounters that define the migrant experience in urban South Africa. As Appadurai (1996) suggests, such sites of social interaction are critical in shaping the public culture of globalization, where diverse identities come into contact and negotiate their place within the broader society.

The playful mention of Papa Penny highlights the role of popular culture in shaping social narratives and identities. Papa Penny's larger-than-life persona and his engagement with traditional and modern elements in his music and public life reflect the hybrid nature of contemporary South African identity. By referencing Papa Penny, Hirosamii aligns himself with a figure who embodies the integration of diverse cultural elements, mirroring the migrant's journey of blending heritage and adaptation.

These references collectively create a network of shared cultural touchstones that resonate deeply with South African listeners. They function as nodes of identification and empathy, fostering a sense of shared experience and mutual understanding. This approach aligns with Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of representation, which posits that cultural narratives and symbols play a crucial role in constructing social reality. By weaving these cultural references into his music, Hirosamii not only entertains but also educates and bridges cultural divides, using his platform to mediate the complexities of migration in South Africa.

Furthermore, Hirosamii's strategic use of local cultural references can also be understood through the lens of cultural hybridity as discussed by Bhabha (1994). Hybridity in cultural expression allows for the negotiation of new identities and the creation of a shared cultural space. Hirosamii's lyrics reflect this process, blending Zimbabwean and South African cultural elements to craft a narrative that is both unique and universally relatable. This hybridity challenges the boundaries of cultural belonging and promotes a more inclusive understanding of identity in the context of migration.

Hirosamii's integration of culturally significant references into his lyrics is a powerful example of how music mediates the subject of migration in the South African context. His ability to draw on shared cultural icons and moments fosters a sense of unity and empathy, bridging the gap between migrant and host communities. Through his music, Hirosamii not only narrates his personal journey but also contributes to the broader cultural dialogue, promoting a more multidimensional and inclusive understanding of migration.

Food, Stereotypes, and Identity in Hirosamii's Lyrics

He later goes on to refer to one of South Africa's tribal groups, the Sepedi people:

“Fly on a broom
cuz you cav that I'm Pedi
In Limpopo, re ja di papa and veggies”
(Hirosamii, 2023)

In these lyrics, Hirosamii engages with the cultural and regional identity of the Sepedi people from Limpopo, South Africa. The line “Fly on a broom cuz you cav that I'm Pedi” (Hirosamii, 2023) alludes to the Sepedi people's reputation associated with witchcraft, which is a widespread belief and practice within the region (Baloyi, 2014). This portrayal by Hirosamii taps into the broader

narrative of mysticism often linked to African ethnic groups in general and the Sepedi in particular (Baloyi, 2014). By employing the imagery of flying on a broom, a common element in tales of witchcraft, Hirosamii acknowledges and plays with this stereotype, perhaps as a means of reclaiming or reshaping it within a contemporary context.

The reference to witchcraft in Hirosamii's lyrics serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it acknowledges a stereotype that is deeply ingrained in both local and international perceptions of African cultures. According to Geschiere (1997), witchcraft and its associated beliefs are not merely relics of the past but are interwoven with modern African identities and social practices. By invoking this imagery, Hirosamii situates his narrative within a complex cultural discourse, highlighting the tension and possibilities between traditional beliefs and contemporary identity.

Continuing, Hirosamii's reference to consuming "di papa and veggies" (Hirosamii, 2023) in Limpopo not only grounds the song in a specific geographical setting but also highlights a staple dish of the region, connecting the cultural and the everyday. Pap, a type of maize porridge, is a fundamental element of South African cuisine, especially in Limpopo where the Pedi community is predominantly located (Seoshone, n.d.). The mention of this dish serves as a cultural identifier, situating Hirosamii within this community and showcasing a deep understanding of its traditions and lifestyle.

Food references in music often serve as powerful symbols of cultural identity and belonging. As noted by Pilcher (2006), food can act as a "cultural shorthand" that encapsulates complex social and cultural identities. By mentioning "di papa and veggies," Hirosamii not only affirms his connection to the Sepedi people but also engages in a broader dialogue about the significance of cultural practices in shaping communal and individual identities. This lyrical choice highlights how everyday practices, such as eating traditional foods, play a crucial role in maintaining cultural continuity and fostering a sense of belonging.

This lyrical engagement with cultural stereotypes and regional identity does more than just situate Hirosamii within a specific ethnic context; it demonstrates a nuanced and deep-seated understanding of how these

elements can be interwoven to construct a multi-layered narrative. It reflects an intimate knowledge of the cultural, mythological, and culinary practices that define the Sepedi, and by extension, offers a commentary on identity that is both locally specific and broadly relatable within the South African landscape.

Hirosamii's ability to blend these cultural references into his music speaks to the broader research question of how music mediates the subject of migration in the South African context. His lyrics serve as a bridge between his Zimbabwean heritage and his adopted South African identity, illustrating the fluidity and hybridity that characterize migrant experiences, and the promise of flexible citizenship and belonging. This approach aligns with the concept of "creolization," as discussed by Hannerz (1987), which refers to the blending of different cultural elements to create new, hybrid identities. By engaging with Sepedi cultural markers, Hirosamii exemplifies how migrants navigate and integrate into new cultural landscapes, creating a hybrid narrative that resonates with diverse audiences.

Moreover, Hirosamii's strategic use of cultural references can be understood through the lens of "ethnic boundary making," a concept explored by Wimmer (2008). This theory suggests that cultural practices and symbols are used to construct and negotiate boundaries of identity and belonging. By invoking Sepedi traditions and stereotypes, Hirosamii not only asserts his place within South African society but also challenges and redefines the boundaries of what it means to be a migrant. His lyrics invite listeners to reconsider their perceptions of migrants, emphasizing shared cultural practices and common experiences.

Hirosamii's reference to the Sepedi people in Limpopo through his lyrics is a powerful example of how music can mediate the subject of migration. By weaving cultural stereotypes, regional identities, and everyday practices into his narrative, Hirosamii creates a rich, multi-layered commentary on identity, belonging, and cultural hybridity. His music not only entertains but also fosters a deeper understanding of the migrant experience, highlighting the interplay between heritage and adaptation in shaping migrant identities in South Africa.

Bare Life and Border Crossings in Hirosamii's Music

In the next verse, Hirosamii uses vivid language to illustrate the harrowing experience of irregular migration, which he directly references by saying:

“I jumped the borders without wearing a shirt”
(Hirosamii, 2023)

This line, a stark portrayal of precarity, paints a poignant picture of Hirosamii as a migrant crossing South Africa's borders bereft even of basic clothing. This imagery resonates deeply with the lived experiences of many irregular migrants who embark on journeys across borders under conditions of extreme precariousness. According to López Marín & Lenti (2019), “When irregularised, migrants in transit enter a terrain of precariousness and enhanced risk that makes them vulnerable to adversities” (p. 215). This statement underscores the severe vulnerabilities faced by migrants who, like Hirosamii in his lyric, often must abandon everything to flee worsening conditions in their homeland.

Irregular migration is characterized by the necessity for constant “improvisation of life,” a concept discussed by López Marín & Lenti (2019), where migrants are compelled to constantly adapt to new challenges while facing various forms of coercion that push them from their home countries, as well as the violence and uncertainty that makes the irregular migration journey so precarious (López Marín & Lenti, 2019). Hirosamii's reference to migrating without a shirt symbolically represents this lack of preparation and resources, highlighting the sheer desperation and spontaneous decisions that often accompany such journeys.

Moreover, Hirosamii uses his art to bring these narratives of precariousness into the South African public consciousness, challenging listeners to contemplate the profound reasons behind such perilous journeys. His lyrics not only reflect his personal or imaginative experiences but also serve to empower and affirm the agency and identity of migrants. This aspect of empowerment through artistic expression aligns with findings from other studies, such as

Cin et al. (2023), who note how art can be a powerful medium for migrants to assert their identity and agency, thus reclaiming their narratives from the margins to the center of societal attention.

By incorporating such powerful imagery into his music, Hirosamii invites the audience to pause and consider the compelling “why” behind the image of shirtless border crossers. His words challenge prevailing perceptions and urge a more empathetic understanding of the migrants’ plight, rather than a reactionary dismissal or criminalization of their actions. In doing so, Hirosamii not only elevates the discourse around migration in South Africa but also uses his platform to advocate for a deeper, more humane approach to understanding the complex dynamics of irregular migration.

Hirosamii’s stark portrayal of his own experience without a shirt during his migration journey underscores the broader issues of vulnerability and survival that define irregular migration. This imagery is not just a personal anecdote but a powerful metaphor for the systemic challenges faced by migrants. According to De Genova (2002), the concept of “deportability” shapes the lived experiences of undocumented migrants, making their existence one of constant threat and uncertainty. Hirosamii’s lyrics capture this sense of precariousness, illustrating how migrants are often left with no choice but to undertake perilous journeys under dire conditions.

Furthermore, Hirosamii’s artistic choice to highlight such vulnerability can be seen as an act of resistance against dominant narratives that dehumanize migrants. As noted by Butler (2004), the act of making oneself visible in a state of vulnerability can challenge societal norms and elicit empathy. By presenting himself as a shirtless border crosser, Hirosamii disrupts the often negative and stigmatizing portrayals of migrants, instead humanizing their experiences and highlighting their resilience.

Hirosamii’s narrative also aligns with the concept of “bare life” as discussed by Agamben (1998), where migrants are often reduced to their most basic form of existence, stripped of rights and protections. His lyrics bring attention to this reduction, urging listeners to recognize the humanity and dignity of those who endure such conditions. This approach not only fosters empathy but also calls for a reevaluation of policies and attitudes towards migrants.

Incorporating this personal and collective struggle into his music, Hirosamii mediates the subject of migration by providing a platform for marginalized voices. His lyrics serve as a bridge between his personal experiences and the broader socio-political context of migration in South Africa. By doing so, he fosters a dialogue that is crucial for understanding and addressing the complexities of migration.

Hirosamii's depiction of irregular migration through vivid and poignant lyrics serves as a powerful tool for mediating the subject of migration in South Africa. By highlighting the vulnerabilities and resilience of migrants, his music challenges dominant narratives and promotes a more empathetic and textured understanding of migration. Through his artistic expression, Hirosamii not only tells his own story but also amplifies the voices of countless others, advocating for a more humane and just approach to migration.

Public Transport as Cultural Space: Hirosamii's Depiction of Urban Life

Later in the song, Hirosamii illustrates a familiar scene for most South Africans:

“Yeah I’m posted in a taxi
and we’re listening to Maskhandi”
(Hirosamii, 2023)

Through these lines, Hirosamii projects an image of himself sitting in a taxi—a common and economical form of public transport in South Africa, known for its often cavalier approach to traffic regulations (Hansen, 2006). The minibus taxi industry, which caters to about 65% of South Africans relying on public transport, is a significant sector marked by black entrepreneurship and operates largely within the informal economy (Boudreaux, 2006; Nelson, 2023). This mode of transport is not just a practical conveyance but a cultural phenomenon, deeply embedded in the urban youth culture of South

African townships. Taxis are more than mere vehicles; they are cultural icons adorned with distinctive decorations and equipped with powerful sound systems, reflecting and influencing youth trends (Hansen, 2006). By placing himself in this context, Hirosamii aligns with the everyday South African youth, immersed in the local culture and trends. His choice of transportation becomes a statement of identity—a declaration of belonging to the vibrant and dynamic street culture.

The mention of Maskhandi music further enriches this cultural tableau. Maskhandi, a genre rooted in Zulu folk music, is known for its storytelling and reflection of social issues, making it a significant cultural expression within South African society (Dlamini, 2017). By highlighting Maskhandi, Hirosamii connects his personal narrative to a broader cultural context, showcasing a deep engagement with local music traditions. This reference serves as a cultural bridge, linking his Zimbabwean heritage with the South African environment he now inhabits, illustrating the hybrid nature of migrant identities.

Hirosamii's lyrical depiction of the minibus taxi scene serves multiple functions in the mediation of migration. Firstly, it underscores the integration of migrants into the everyday social fabric of South African life. The minibus taxi, a ubiquitous element of urban mobility, symbolizes the convergence of diverse cultural experiences and the fluid nature of social interactions in South African cities. As Samara (2010) notes, public spaces and transportation modes in cities are critical arenas for the negotiation of identity and belonging, especially for marginalized groups.

Moreover, Hirosamii's portrayal of this scene highlights the intersection of economic activity and cultural expression within the informal sector. The minibus taxi industry, often seen as a bastion of black entrepreneurship, provides not only economic opportunities but also a platform for cultural expression (Graham, 2016). The taxis themselves, with their vibrant decorations and booming sound systems, serve as mobile sites of cultural production and consumption, influencing and reflecting youth culture. By embedding himself in this milieu, Hirosamii signals his engagement with the economic and cultural lifeblood of urban South Africa.

The choice to reference Maskhandi music within this setting also speaks to the cultural hybridity that characterizes migrant experiences. According to Appadurai (1996), cultural flows in the modern world are marked by complex and overlapping influences, creating spaces where diverse cultural elements intersect. Hirosamii's engagement with Maskhandi exemplifies this dynamic, illustrating how migrants navigate and integrate into new cultural landscapes while maintaining connections to their heritage.

Furthermore, this scene can be analyzed through the lens of cultural citizenship, which Rosaldo (1994) describes as the right to be different and to belong in a democratic society. By situating himself in a minibus taxi and engaging with Maskhandi music, Hirosamii asserts his cultural citizenship, claiming a space within the South African cultural landscape. This act of cultural assertion challenges exclusionary narratives and highlights the contributions of migrants to the vibrancy of local culture.

Hirosamii's portrayal of the minibus taxi scene also aligns with Lefebvre's (1991) concept of the "production of space," which posits that social spaces are continually produced and reproduced through social interactions and practices. The minibus taxi, as a social space, becomes a site where identities are negotiated and cultural meanings are produced. By placing himself within this space, Hirosamii participates in the ongoing production of South African urban culture, weaving his migrant narrative into the broader fabric of social life.

Hirosamii's depiction of himself in a minibus taxi listening to Maskhandi music is a powerful example of how music mediates the subject of migration in the South African context. Through this imagery, he illustrates the integration of migrants into everyday social and cultural practices, highlights the intersection of economic activity and cultural expression, and asserts his cultural citizenship. This lyrical choice not only enhances the narrative of belonging and identity but also fosters a deeper understanding of the migrant experience in urban South Africa.

Intermusicality and Migration: Hirosamii's Cultural Synthesis

To conclude the song, Hirosamii engages in a musical dialogue by sampling and covering “Ngafa” by Shwi Nomtekhalala, a popular maskhandi song that itself includes elements from Marvin Gaye’s “Sexual Healing.” This layering of musical references creates a rich web of intertextuality, or more aptly, intermusicality, where the boundaries between different musical forms are blurred, enhancing the song’s cultural resonance.

Maskanda music, often described as “Zulu blues,” is a potent site for cultural negotiation and power dynamics, where what is considered “given” in the music—those elements presumed to be inherent and unalterable—is actively reinterpreted and remade by musicians. This dynamic reclamation and adaptation challenge traditional notions of authenticity and ownership in cultural expressions (Titus, 2021). Hirosamii’s act of sampling “Ngafa” situates him within a broader tradition of Maskanda musicians who manipulate primary materials—be it musical styles, lyrics, or rhythms—to craft something distinctly personal yet universally resonant.

Hirosamii’s incorporation of these musical elements into his song is a prime example of how music can mediate the subject of migration. His choice to sample and reinterpret “Ngafa” speaks to the ways in which migrants engage with and reshape their cultural environment, blending their heritage with new influences to create a hybrid identity. This process aligns with the concept of “musical transculturation,” where the interaction between different musical traditions leads to the creation of new, syncretic forms (Erlmann, 1996). By engaging in this transculturation, Hirosamii not only honors his cultural roots but also asserts his place within the South African musical landscape, reflecting the fluid and dynamic nature of migrant identities.

Furthermore, Hirosamii’s use of intermusical references serves to bridge the gap between different cultural and musical traditions, fostering a sense of continuity and dialogue between past and present, local and global. According to Lipsitz (1994), such cultural practices are essential for creating a “cultural memory” that connects individuals and communities across time and space. By embedding his music within a framework of intermusicality,

Hirosamii contributes to a shared cultural memory that transcends borders and brings together diverse influences, reflecting the interconnectedness of the globalized world.

This intermusical approach also resonates with the idea of “diasporic aesthetics,” which Gilroy (1993) describes as the artistic expressions that emerge from the experiences of displacement and migration. Diasporic aesthetics are characterized by their ability to blend different cultural elements, creating new forms that reflect the complexities of migrant identities. Hirosamii’s blending of maskanda can be seen as an example of diasporic aesthetics, where his music becomes a site of negotiation and expression for his hybrid identity.

In addition, the use of intermusicality in Hirosamii’s work can be seen through the lens of “glocalization,” a term coined by Robertson (1995) to describe the simultaneous presence of global and local elements in cultural practices. Hirosamii’s music exemplifies glocalization by incorporating global influences, such as Marvin Gaye, into a local South African context, thereby creating a unique cultural expression that resonates with both local and global audiences.

Hirosamii’s sampling and reinterpretation of “Ngafa” by Shwi Nomtekhala exemplify how music can mediate the subject of migration in the South African context. Through intermusicality, cultural hybridity, and glocalization, Hirosamii navigates and negotiates his migrant identity, creating a rich and dynamic musical expression that reflects the complexities of his experience. His work not only enriches the South African musical landscape but also fosters a deeper understanding of the migrant experience, highlighting the creative ways in which music bridges cultural divides and shapes new identities.

Summary Conclusion

The analysis of Hirosamii’s “Boarder Jumpers 6” underscores the profound role that music can play in mediating the subject of migration in the South African context. Through his lyrics and musical choices, Hirosamii bridges

cultural and national divides, creating a narrative that resonates deeply with both migrant and local communities. His deliberate use of a Zimbabwean accent, references to local cultural icons, and incorporation of South African socio-linguistic expressions serve not only to authenticate his identity but also to highlight the shared struggles and experiences of migrants and South Africans alike.

Crucially, Hirosamii's music stands out as an alternative site of inclusion for migrants, offering a platform where their voices and experiences can be amplified and understood. In a societal context where migrants often face exclusion and marginalization, music provides a powerful medium for reclaiming their narratives and asserting their identities. Hirosamii's engagement with political discourse, as seen in his direct appeal to President Cyril Ramaphosa, exemplifies how music can transcend entertainment to become a tool for social commentary and advocacy. By addressing issues such as the socio-economic challenges faced by migrants and the need for political intervention, Hirosamii positions himself as an active participant in the national conversation, advocating for a more inclusive and empathetic approach to migration.

Moreover, his references to shared societal issues like cable theft create a sense of solidarity and mutual understanding between Zimbabwean migrants and South Africans, emphasizing common challenges rather than differences. This approach not only humanizes the migrant experience but also encourages listeners to adopt a more empathetic and inclusive perspective.

The strategic use of local cultural references, such as mentions of Maskhandi music and the vibrant minibus taxi culture, further enriches Hirosamii's narrative, showcasing his deep engagement with the South African cultural landscape. These references function as cultural touchstones that foster a sense of belonging and identity, illustrating how migrants navigate and integrate into new cultural environments while maintaining connections to their heritage.

Hirosamii's music, through its intermusicality and cultural hybridity, exemplifies the dynamic interplay between global and local influences, creating a layered soundscape of cultural expression that reflects the complexities

of migrant identities. His ability to blend different cultural elements into a cohesive and resonant narrative highlights the bridging power of music and its ability to cultivate social cohesion.

In conclusion, Hirosamii's "Boarder Jumpers 6" serves as a powerful example of how music can mediate the subject of migration in the South African context. By using his platform to amplify the voices and experiences of migrants, Hirosamii not only enriches the South African musical landscape but also contributes to a broader cultural dialogue that promotes understanding, empathy, and inclusivity. His work vividly demonstrates that music can be an alternative site of inclusion for migrants, providing a space for cultural negotiation, identity formation, and social advocacy.

Chapter 4.4: The Divergent Roles of Media and Music in Mediating Migrant Identity

Both media and music serve as powerful platforms for mediating migrant identity, yet they do so in markedly different ways, influenced by distinct forces that shape their capacity to represent these narratives. While media is often constrained by political and economic forces, music offers a more democratic and accessible avenue for marginalized voices, providing them with greater agency and the ability to define their identities on their own terms.

Media and Its Constraints

Media plays a critical role in shaping public discourse around migration. However, its ability to offer inclusive and holistic representations is often compromised by various political and economic forces. The propaganda model, as outlined by Herman and Chomsky (1988), highlights how media content is influenced by ownership, advertising, sourcing, flak, and anti-communism ideologies. These factors create a symbiotic relationship between media and

powerful interests, often resulting in biased coverage that prioritizes certain narratives over others.

In the context of migration, this can lead to skewed representations that either marginalize or vilify migrant communities. Media portrayals are frequently shaped by the need to cater to political agendas and economic imperatives, which can perpetuate stereotypes and exclusionary narratives. Consequently, looking to mainstream media for fair and inclusive representation of migrants can be naive, as these platforms are not entirely free from the influence of the dominant socio-political and economic powers.

Music as a Democratic Platform

In contrast, music offers a more democratic and accessible medium for expressing migrant identities. Unlike the media, which is subject to external controls and pressures, music allows marginalized voices to articulate their experiences and narratives on their own terms. This form of cultural expression provides migrants with the agency to define themselves and share their lives and stories with the world, free from the constraints that often bind traditional media.

Hirosamii's "Boarder Jumpers 6" serves as a poignant example of how music can mediate the subject of migration by embedding personal and collective migrant experiences within a broader cultural context. By incorporating elements of Maskhandi music and referencing vibrant aspects of South African culture, Hirosamii creates a narrative that resonates deeply with local audiences, fostering a sense of belonging and inclusivity. This approach allows him to assert his cultural citizenship and bridge the gap between his Zimbabwean heritage and South African identity.

Differences in Mediation

The differences in how media and music mediate migrant identity are stark. Media representations are often influenced by the need to maintain political and economic allegiances, leading to a tendency to frame migration narratives in ways that align with the interests of those in power. This can result in a lack of depth and fairness in the portrayal of migrant experiences, reducing complex human stories to simplistic and often negative stereotypes.

Music, on the other hand, operates with a greater degree of freedom and creativity. It is not bound by the same external controls and can therefore offer a more nuanced and authentic representation of migrant lives. Through music, migrants can explore and express their identities, experiences, and aspirations without the need to conform to external narratives imposed by mainstream media. This freedom enables a more inclusive and empathetic engagement with the issues surrounding migration, as artists can highlight common challenges and shared humanity in ways that resonate with a broader audience.

The Power of Music for Social Advocacy

Music also serves as a potent tool for social advocacy. Hirosamii's direct appeal to President Ramaphosa in "Boarder Jumpers 6" underscores the role of music as a platform for political activism and social commentary. By addressing socio-political issues directly through his lyrics, Hirosamii amplifies the voices of migrants and engages in national conversations about migration, identity, and social justice. This act of cultural citizenship challenges dominant narratives and fosters a more inclusive and participatory society.

Moreover, the use of relatable societal issues in his music, such as cable theft, connects with the South African audience by emphasizing shared experiences. This narrative strategy can help reduce xenophobic sentiments by highlighting common struggles between migrants and local communities,

fostering empathy and mutual understanding.

Summary Conclusion

While both media and music play significant roles in mediating migrant identity, they do so under vastly different conditions and influences. Media is often constrained by political and economic forces, which can limit its ability to provide inclusive and holistic representations of migrant experiences. In contrast, music offers a more democratic and accessible platform, allowing marginalized voices to express themselves freely and define their identities on their own terms. This greater agency in music enables more authentic and empathetic engagement with migration narratives, promoting understanding and social cohesion.

Chapter 5: General Conclusion

This study explored the complex and often contentious terrain of media representations of African migrants in South Africa. By examining how newspapers and music mediate the subject of migration, this research has picked apart the layers of discourse that inform, construct, and sometimes distort the narrative surrounding African migrants. The dual focus on media and music provided an interesting and textured terrain for understanding how migrants are portrayed and how they articulate their experiences and identities within the South African context.

Media representations, particularly in newspapers, play a crucial role in shaping public attitudes and perceptions towards migrants. The narratives constructed by the media can perpetuate negative stereotypes and xenophobic sentiments or foster empathy and understanding. By critically analyzing the coverage of African migrants in South African newspapers, this study highlighted the predominant themes and framing techniques that seep into the public imagination. The analysis of media content revealed that the portrayal of migrants is often influenced by political and economic forces, which highlights the influence of ownership and sourcing on media content.

The persistent use of emotive language and binary framing simplifies complex migration issues into “us vs. them” scenarios, often linking migrants to job competition and social unrest. Although some articles attempted to humanize migrants, these representations were limited and overshadowed

by narratives of criminalization and othering. This framing not only shapes public perceptions but also influences policy debates, underscoring the need for more balanced and empathetic reporting.

Conversely, music, as a potent form of cultural expression, offers an important lens through which to understand the experiences and identities of migrants. Unlike traditional media, music provides a vibrant and dynamic space for migrants to express their identities and build connections with the broader society. Hirosamii's work, particularly "Boarder Jumpers 6," exemplifies how music can challenge negative stereotypes, reclaim migrant voices, and foster cultural hybridity. By blending traditional African musical elements with contemporary South African trap music, Hirosamii creates a unique sound that resonates with both migrant and local communities. This cultural synthesis not only celebrates the diversity of migrant backgrounds but also promotes a sense of shared identity and mutual respect .

The ability of music to articulate migrant experiences in a multifaceted and empathetic manner stands in stark contrast to the often one-dimensional and negative narratives prevalent in newspapers. Music's potential for social advocacy is evident as it provides a platform for political activism and social commentary, engaging national conversations about migration, identity, and social cohesion.

This exploration grounded itself in the recognition that the media's influence extends beyond mere representation; it actively shapes and is shaped by societal attitudes, policy debates, and the reality of migrant communities. The dual focus on media and music allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between these cultural forms and their impact on public perceptions of migration.

The literature review highlighted the dynamic relationship between migration, media, and music. Studies from North America demonstrated how media coverage often marginalizes migrant communities, while policy analyses from Africa illustrated the socio-political and economic dynamics influencing migration. The review emphasized the media's role in shaping public attitudes towards migrants, framing them either as threats or contributors. It also underscored the potential of music as a powerful medium for expressing

migrant identities and fostering a sense of belonging and inclusivity.

Additionally, the review provided a comparative analysis that situated the South African experience within a broader international context. By examining the intersections of migration, media, and music across different regions, the literature review illuminated common patterns and divergent themes. This analysis not only highlighted the global relevance of these issues but also emphasized the importance of context in shaping media and musical representations of migrants.

Furthermore, the literature review explored how media and music can either reinforce exclusionary narratives or serve as platforms for inclusivity. The media's agenda-setting role was particularly evident, demonstrating its capacity to influence societal attitudes and policy debates. In contrast, music was shown to have a unique ability to bridge cultural divides, offering a space for migrants to negotiate their identities and foster community connections. This dual focus on media and music provided a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted narratives surrounding migration and the potential for cultural expressions to promote inclusivity.

The research employed a Discourse Analysis (DA) and a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to dissect media representations and narratives surrounding African migrants in South Africa. DA facilitated the examination of linguistic and symbolic constructs in media texts, while CDA explored the ideological underpinnings and power dynamics inherent in these representations. This dual analytical approach allowed for a targeted interrogation of how media narratives shape public perceptions and societal attitudes towards migrants.

Additionally, the study analyzed music as a cultural discourse, investigating how migration-related themes are mediated through musical expressions. This analysis provided insights into the role of music in articulating migrant identities and experiences, highlighting its potential as a medium for challenging negative stereotypes and fostering inclusivity. By examining the lyrics and themes in migrant-related music, the research revealed how musical expressions can reflect, contest, and negotiate societal ideologies and power dynamics related to migration.

The combined use of DA and CDA, along with the cultural analysis of music,

enabled a comprehensive exploration of the complex dynamics at play in media and musical representations of African migrants. This methodological approach provided a deeper understanding of the ways in which media and music influence public perceptions and contribute to the broader discourse on migration and inclusivity.

The analysis of newspaper articles, particularly from the *Sunday Times* in 2008 and 2022, revealed persistent themes in the portrayal of migrants. Media narratives often employed emotive language and binary framing, simplifying complex migration issues into “us vs. them” scenarios. Economic anxieties were frequently highlighted, linking migrants to job competition and social unrest.

Although some articles attempted to humanize migrants, these representations were often limited and overshadowed by narratives of criminalization and othering. The predominant framing of migrants as threats has the potential to contribute to negative public perceptions, reinforcing xenophobic sentiments. Furthermore, the media’s role in framing political ineptitude and social unrest also played a significant part in shaping these negative views, as migrants were often scapegoated for broader societal issues.

Efforts to defend migration by emphasizing the economic contributions of migrants were also critiqued. While acknowledging their labor output, such defenses often reduce migrants to mere economic units, failing to recognize them as multidimensional humans with lives, hopes, and dreams. This reductionist view overlooks the rich, complex identities of migrants, thereby perpetuating a narrow and utilitarian perspective on migration.

The study highlighted the media’s influential role in constructing public discourse around migration. By consistently emphasizing economic competition and social disruption, newspapers like the *Sunday Times* contributed to a climate of fear and hostility towards migrants. This analysis underscored the need for more balanced and empathetic reporting to foster a more inclusive and accurate understanding of migrant experiences. It also called for narratives that acknowledge migrants as full human beings, deserving of dignity and respect beyond their economic contributions or lack thereof.

The analysis of Hirosamii’s *Boarder Jumpers 6* illustrated the profound

potential of music as an alternative site of inclusion for migrants. Hirosamii's lyrics vividly highlighted the struggles and resilience of migrants, effectively reclaiming their voices and challenging pervasive negative stereotypes. Through his music, Hirosamii created a powerful platform for articulating migrant experiences, fostering cultural hybridity, and advocating for migrant rights.

Hirosamii's music delved deeply into themes such as border crossings, identity, and urban life, offering a rich, empathetic portrayal of migrants. This portrayal stood in stark contrast to the often negative and simplistic narratives found in mainstream media. By addressing the complexities of migrant life, including the challenges of crossing borders, the search for identity in a new land, and the realities of urban living, Hirosamii's music provided a holistic and humanized view of migrants.

Hirosamii's music captured the tremendous nimblefootedness (à la flexible citizenship) with which migrants navigate life in their host societies. His lyrics depicted migrants weaving in and out of different cultural contexts with agility and adaptability, developing intimate cultural knowledge of the societies they inhabit while retaining elements of their migrant and foreign identities. This dynamic interplay allowed migrants to negotiate their existence in new environments, blending in when necessary and standing out when it suited their needs.

The theme of border crossings in *Boarder Jumpers 6* was particularly significant, as it not only depicted the physical act of crossing geographical boundaries but also symbolized the crossing of cultural, social, and emotional borders. This multifaceted approach highlighted the liminality experienced by migrants and underscored their resilience in navigating new and often hostile environments.

Furthermore, Hirosamii's music was instrumental in fostering cultural hybridity. By blending traditional African musical elements with contemporary South African trap music, he created a unique sound that resonated with both migrant and local communities. This cultural synthesis not only celebrated the diversity of migrant backgrounds but also promoted a sense of shared identity and mutual respect.

In essence, *Boarder Jumpers 6* showcased the unifying potential of music to bridge cultural divides and foster a more inclusive society. Hirosamii's work underscored the importance of cultural expressions in challenging dominant negative narratives and providing alternative, positive representations of migrant experiences. His music not only entertained but also educated, making it a critical medium for promoting inclusivity and understanding in a context often marred by division and xenophobia.

The findings of this study underscore the significant work that remains to be done in transforming how the media represents migrants. Newspapers, as the research revealed, often reinforce negative stereotypes and contribute to public anxieties about migration. This persistent portrayal shapes societal attitudes, fostering a climate of fear and exclusion rather than understanding and inclusion. The role of the media in this regard is profound, emphasizing the pressing need for more balanced, empathetic, and accurate representations of migrants.

Conversely, music emerges from this study as a powerful medium for fostering inclusivity and understanding. Unlike traditional media, music provides a vibrant and dynamic space for migrants to express their identities and build connections with the broader society. Hirosamii's *Boarder Jumpers 6*, for instance, highlighted how music can challenge negative stereotypes, reclaim migrant voices, and foster cultural hybridity. Music's ability to articulate migrant experiences in a multifaceted and empathetic manner stands in stark contrast to the often one-dimensional and negative narratives prevalent in newspapers.

The media's role in shaping societal attitudes towards migrants cannot be overstated. Newspapers have the power to influence public discourse and policy debates, making it imperative that they adopt more inclusive and accurate portrayals of migrants. By moving away from sensationalism and binary framing, and instead providing context and depth to migrant stories, the media can help foster a more informed and empathetic public. This shift is essential for reducing xenophobia and promoting social cohesion.

On the other hand, music offers an alternative and complementary avenue for promoting inclusivity. As a form of cultural expression, music transcends

linguistic and cultural barriers, making it an effective tool for fostering mutual understanding and respect. By highlighting the struggles, resilience, and contributions of migrants, music can humanize them and counteract the negative stereotypes perpetuated by traditional media. Through a dual focus on improved media representations and the power of music, this approach has the potential to create a more accepting and cohesive society.

This research underscores the importance of continued scholarly inquiry into the intersections of media, migration, and music. Such inquiry is crucial for developing strategies that promote inclusivity and challenge prevailing narratives of exclusion and marginalization. Academics, media practitioners, and cultural creators must work together to harness the power of both media and music to reshape public perceptions of migrants.

By advocating for more inclusive media narratives and recognizing the immense potential of music, this study contributes to a broader discourse on the role of cultural expressions in promoting social justice and equality. The findings highlight the need for a concerted effort to shift public discourse towards a more empathetic and inclusive understanding of migration. This shift is not only necessary for the well-being of migrant communities but also for the health and cohesion of society as a whole.

The study reveals that while the media often perpetuates negative stereotypes about migrants, music provides a potent counter-narrative that celebrates their identities and contributions. By harnessing the power of music and promoting more inclusive media narratives, there is a significant opportunity to create a society that values the contributions and humanity of migrants. Continued research and advocacy in this area are essential for fostering a more inclusive and understanding world.

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