Research in Business & Social Science

Migration vis-à-vis Philoxenia in South African context: implications for African continental integration

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Many scholars in the field of migration and xenophobia have consistently examined various levels and expressions of xenophobic behavior within the South African context. They have contributed significantly to conceptualizing migration as inherently conflict-prone, often citing incidents categorized as xenophobia, Afrophobia, and color-blind xenophobia in both scholarly and public discussions. While ample scholarly evidence exists regarding factors that promote social cohesion between South Africans and African immigrants, as well as their implications for African continental integration, there is a notable dearth of scholarly attention on how Philoxenia, the concept of extending friendship or hospitality to strangers, can contribute to the project of African continental integration. Utilizing qualitative research methods and document analysis as a data collection technique, this paper reveals those certain aspects of the South African migration legislative framework exhibit Philoxenic characteristics. Moreover, the paper provides evidence of multiple economic sectors and communities in the country that demonstrate Philoxenia. The paper concludes that Philoxenia can serve as a catalyst towards achieving a united state of Africa, while "xenophobia", "Afrophobia", "Threats" to social cohesion", "colour-blind xenophobia" and "sibling fights or sibling bullying" are impediments to this long-term objective of the African Union. The paper recommends that, South Africa as one of Africa's dominant African immigrants' host state must come up with legislation that criminalizes the latter actions.

Introduction

Intra-African migration is a is well established phenomenon and fact amongst African leaders, scholars, policy makers and ordinary citizens of the continent themselves. As of 2022, Africa Center for Strategic Studies recorded that intra-African migration routes stood at 53% compared to routes elsewhere in the world. In addition, the Africa Center for Strategic Studies has also documented that despite having the overall figures of migrants due to occurrences of illegal migration, there is around 21 million documented of Africans who currently residing in another African country. These statistics from the Africa Center for Strategic Studies provide us with a picture that majority of Africans have a preference of migrating internally within the continent as compared to emigrating to other parts of the world. Due to inter-African migration, most of the African countries have become culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse. As such, there are always challenges of integrating migrants in various African countries by hosts due to multiple factors such racial and tribal barriers, ethno-linguistic anxieties and the popular and scholarly discourse of Afro/Xenophobia.

While there are recorded challenges of co-existence amongst Africans who are hosts and those who are migrants residing in same countries, this has not deterred African leaders to establish declarations that speak to African continental integration, free movement of people and integration of immigrants by host states. The Accra Declaration by AU Heads of States, states that, African governments agree to accelerate the economic and political integration of the African continent, including the formation of a Union Government for Africa with the ultimate objective of creating a United States of Africa. African leaders through the various

commitments and declarations have considered the contribution that intra-African migration can make in fostering closer political, social and economic unity amongst African states and people.

This intra-African migration can also contribute to developing people centred approaches to African continental integration because such integration of national populations could be inspired by the coming together of African citizens especially at grassroots level. Hence intra-African migration and free movement of people are at the core of regional integration by all African Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

Though there has been various scholarly contributions on the subject of migration, social cohesion and African continental integration, there is a lack of scholarly attention on how Philoxenia (the concept of being a friend to a stranger or practicing hospitality) can contribute to the project of African continental integration. Hence, this paper pays attention on the intersection of migration, philoxenia, and the pursuit of African Continental Integration. This paper delves into how philoxenia in South African context can contribute towards African continental integration or citizenry based United States of Africa.

Literature Review

Theoretical and Conceptual Background

Contesting and Emerging Terminology

Since the early 2000s, there has been extensive discourse surrounding hostility and violence directed towards foreigners, particularly African immigrants living in South Africa, prevalent in both popular and academic circles. The prevailing narrative sought to label such acts as "xenophobia" (Harris, 2002; Landau, Ramjathan-Keogh & Singh, 2005; Steenkamp, 2009; Tella, 2016; Chenzi, 2021). However, alternative perspectives emerged, suggesting a reevaluation that specifically emphasized African immigrants encountering hostility and attacks from South Africans, thus advocating for understanding these incidents as "Afrophobia" (Thakur, 2011; Ochonu, 2020; Angu, 2023).

In some of my prior research, I've presented empirically-based findings that challenge the conventional discourse on the "Xeno/Afrophobia" debate. These findings revealed that (a) African immigrants and South African nationals exhibit elements of coexistence through positive interactions; (b) contact between immigrants and South African nationals does not inherently result in conflict; and (c) there is social cohesion between African immigrants and South African nationals, rooted in mutual and intricate interdependence (Maseng, 2019; 2020).

These efforts aimed to redirect scholarly narratives away from "Xeno/Afrophobia" towards considering "Threats and Enhancers" to social cohesion between African immigrants and South Africans. Nonetheless, Tewolde (2019) proposed moving beyond existing concepts towards what he termed "colour-blind xenophobia." Despite these significant contributions, there has been a noticeable absence of works addressing the potential contribution of philoxenia towards achieving a united states of Africa.

Philoxenia as a Conceptual Framework

In ancient Greece, "philoxenia" was characterized as the practice of showing friendship or hospitality towards foreigners, while "xenophobia" was described as the fear or aversion towards foreigners (Papanikos, 2020,p237). These definitions encapsulated the attitudes and behaviors towards individuals from outside one's own community or nation in that historical context. This concept emphasizes the idea that extending hospitality and warmth towards strangers creates a bond that transcends differences and cultivates a feeling of being at home, both for the host and the guest (Nicolacopoulos & Vassilacopoulos, 2004). According to Rouska (2023) philoxenia is synonymous with hospitality, it embodies a willingness and friendly disposition to warmly welcome and, above all, offer free shelter, food, and care to one or more individuals during their stay in a foreign home.

In migration context, philoxenia represents both "conditional" and "unconditional" hospitality. "Unconditional hospitality'' refers to the ethical approach of welcoming a foreigner without placing any preconditions or requirements. This concept, is articulated by Derrida and Dufourmantelle (2000) who emphasizes this as an idea of receiving strangers with openness and generosity, regardless of their background or circumstances. "Unconditional hospitality'' implies a willingness to embrace the other without judgment or reservation and also fostering an environment of genuine acceptance and inclusion. In essence, unconditional hospitality encourages individuals and communities to extend kindness and hospitality freely, without expecting anything in return, thus embodying a spirit of compassion and understanding towards others.

In contrast to the concept of unconditional hospitality, which advocates for a welcoming attitude towards strangers without any prerequisites, conditional forms of hospitality operate on the basis of certain requirements or conditions that must be met before acceptance. According to Derrida and Dufourmantelle (2000), these conditions often entail the disclosure of one's identity as a foreigner, serving as a means to assess their eligibility and suitability for entry into a state. In conditional hospitality, the host-state may expect the guest to provide information about themselves, such as their background, intentions, or affiliations, before extending hospitality. This requirement reflects a more cautious or selective approach to receiving strangers, where the host-state seeks to establish trust or ensure compatibility before granting access to their country.

While conditional hospitality may be motivated by concerns for security, cultural compatibility, or mutual benefit, it inherently introduces barriers to immediate acceptance and may perpetuate biases or prejudices against those who do not meet the specified criteria. In contrast, unconditional hospitality challenges such barriers by advocating for a more inclusive and empathetic response to the presence of strangers, emphasizing the importance of openness, generosity, and acceptance without reservation or judgment.

The author employs this philoxenia as a conceptual framework (in both its "conditional" and "unconditional" contexts) because, based on what is presented in this paper within the South African context, there are various elements in the country's legislative frameworks and plans that can be interpreted as embracing Philoxenia, rather than adhering solely to the prevailing narrative of Afro/Xenophobia, both in popular discourse and scholarly analysis. Thus, the conceptual framework of Philoxenia presented in this paper is intertwined with South Africa's legislative and policy structures, as well as its economic activities, wherein migrants are afforded opportunities for participation despite existing sentiments and incidents of anti-immigrant attitudes. Consequently, at the levels of legislation, policy, and economic engagement, this conceptual framework reinforces the paper's argument that South Africa exhibits elements of Philoxenia, which could contribute to fostering a united States of Africa, contrary to the commonly held belief that the country is antagonistic towards African immigrants.

The researcher emphasizes that the relationship between philoxenia, social cohesion, and African unity lies in their shared inclusivity, cooperation, and the recognition of common humanity by Africans. Thus Philoxenia can contribute to social cohesion by fostering positive interactions and relationships between South Africans and African immigrants reding in South Africa. In this regard, Philoxenia can thereby be a catalyst of strengthening the bonds that unite African society. Both Philoxenia and social cohesion have the ability to provide the foundation for collective action and solidarity, which are essential for realizing the vision of African unity if practiced by African peoples, civil societies and governments. The researcher believes that Philoxenia in legislation, programmes and in practice can embrace the principles of hospitality, mutual respect, and shared identity. As a result, South Africa as one of Africa's lead states can work together with other African countries and peoples towards building a more cohesive and integrated continent.

Research and Methodology

Research Design

This researcher adopted exploratory research design. Exploratory research design is a type of research methodology used to investigate a topic when little is known about it or when previous research is insufficient on the subject. As seen in the literature review; in both African and South African context specifically, much work has been carried out by scholars on xenophobia, Afrophobia, threats and enhancers to social cohesion between South Africans and African immigrants as well as colour blind xenophobia. However, little has been done by scholars to explore insights on philoxenia, xenophilia and xenolasia in South African context. Hence, this study utilizes exploratory research design due to scarcity of knowledge on the operationalization and realities of the concept philoxenia in African and South African context specifically.

The researcher utilized qualitative research methods to investigate the relationship between migration and philoxenia, and their impact on the progress of African Continental Integration. This approach involved examining scholarly viewpoints on transnational migration within Africa. Additionally, the author examined legislative, policy frameworks, and economic activities in South Africa that embody philoxenia, and assessed their implications for the goal of establishing the United States of Africa.

Data Collection Technique

The researcher employed document analysis which is a qualitative research technique focused on interpreting documents to uncover insights and perspectives demonstrating the influence of philoxenia on the pursuit of African Continental Integration. The materials referenced encompassed various sources, such as the SADC Protocol on Education and Training, the Immigration Amendment Act No. 8 of 2016, the National Plan on Higher Education (NPHE), and the National Action Plan to combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance. Through analysing these documents, the researcher highlighted certain hospitable aspects of the South African government, which contrast with the prevalent scholarly and popular narratives depicting the country's xenophobic tendencies.

Findings and Discussions

South Africa's Immigration Amendment Act No. 8 of 2016

Amongst the legislative provisions that enhance Philoxenia by South Africa towards African immigrants was the Immigration Amendment Act No. 8 of 2016. This Act enacted by Parliament, serves as the legal framework governing entry and departure from South Africa. Over time, this Act has undergone several amendments to adapt to changing circumstances and address evolving migration challenges. Within the framework of this legislation, the Act categorizes migrants into two main groups: "Legal foreigners" and "Illegal foreigners."

    i.   Legal Foreigners: These individuals are in South Africa in accordance with the provisions outlined within the Immigration Act.

    ii.   Illegal Foreigners: This category refers to individuals who are present in South Africa without the proper documentation or authorization under the Immigration Act.

The Act underscores the importance of upholding the rule of law and protecting national security while also acknowledging the rights of migrants to seek legal status and protection when warranted. Even though there have been interpretations that the act is xenophobic towards "Illegal foreigners." However, the Act emphasises Philoxenia towards legal foreigners in the country through various provisions. The Philoxenic nature of the Immigration Act is evident in its provisions that grant various rights and opportunities to migrants, emphasizing inclusivity and hospitality within South Africa's legal framework. Some of these provisions include:

    i.   Rights to Temporary Residence: The Act allows for the granting of temporary residence permits to individuals seeking to stay in South Africa for a limited duration. This provision recognizes the legitimate reasons people may have for temporary stays, such as work assignments, academic pursuits, or visiting family members.

    ii.   Visas for Specific Purposes: The Act enables individuals to apply for visas tailored to their specific purposes, such as work, study, or visiting relatives. By providing avenues for legal entry and stay based on these purposes, the Act facilitates the integration of migrants into various aspects of South African society.

    iii.   Asylum Seekers' Rights: The Act acknowledges the rights of individuals fleeing persecution or violence to seek asylum in South Africa. By allowing for the application for asylum, the Act demonstrates compassion and solidarity towards those in need of international protection.

    iv.   Access to Medical Treatment: Another manifestation of the Philoxenic nature of the Act is its recognition of the right of migrants to access medical treatment in South Africa. This provision underscores the importance of healthcare as a fundamental human right, regardless of one's immigration status.

The provisions of the Immigration Act in South Africa, emphasizes the country's commitment to upholding human dignity, promoting inclusivity, and recognizing the potential contributions of migrants to society and the economy. These rights are embedded within the Act, demonstrating South Africa's desire to create a welcoming environment for migrants while maintaining necessary immigration controls.

Despite some interpretations suggesting xenophobic undertones in the Immigration Act, Section 44 obliges state actors to report undocumented migrants while also ensuring their access to essential services. This provision acknowledges the rights and vulnerabilities of undocumented individuals, emphasizing principles of human dignity and humanitarianism alongside immigration law enforcement. By allowing both documented and undocumented migrants access to essential services like healthcare, education, and emergency assistance, South Africa not only fulfils their basic needs but also contributes to societal well-being and cohesion.

As noted by Obadire (2018), South Africa's migrant populations encompass a range of individuals, including refugees, asylum seekers, skilled workers with permits, and students. Moreover, there are migrant populations who have obtained citizenship or permanent residency status in the country. In the context of South Africa's diverse society, it's evident that the country's societal framework embraces a spirit of inclusivity and openness towards people from various backgrounds. This diverse composition reflects the rich tapestry of cultures, ethnicities, and identities within South Africa, highlighting the country's commitment to embracing diversity and fostering a sense of unity despite differences particularly between citizens and African immigrants.

By acknowledging and celebrating this diversity, South Africa was attempting to promote social cohesion and understanding among its population including African immigrants. Thus embracing philoxenia within its societal framework not only enhances the country's cultural vibrancy but also reinforces its commitment to promoting tolerance and acceptance of migrants at legislative and policy levels. It's through embracing differences and recognizing the value of every individual that South Africa can continue to build a more inclusive and harmonious society for all its inhabitants.

Asylum Seekers vs Philoxenia

The South African Act recognizes the rights of individuals escaping persecution or violence to seek asylum within its borders. The Act exhibits compassion and solidarity towards those requiring international protection. South Africa's Philoxenic attitude toward asylum seekers is evident in official statistics published in 2023 migration profile report. In 2019, the primary countries of origin for asylum seekers were Ethiopia and the DRC, comprising 30.1% and 21.2% of the total respectively (Statistics South Africa, 2024). This trend persisted in 2020, with Ethiopia (30.6%) and the DRC (22.1%) maintaining their positions as the top source countries. Even in 2021, asylum seekers from the DRC (22.4%) and Ethiopia (30.3%) remained prominent (Statistics South Africa, 2024). However, by 2022, there were some shifts in the distribution of asylum seekers, with Ethiopia still leading (29.5%), closely followed by the DRC (28.9%) (Statistics South Africa, 2024).

In South Africa, legal provisions safeguard the rights of asylum seekers and refugees in accordance with international conventions like the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol, and the African Union's OAU Refugee Convention. These laws grant asylum seekers various rights, including the right to seek asylum, protection against forced return, access to healthcare and education, and limited work rights. However, despite the legal framework, challenges persist in implementation due to issues such as xenophobia, discrimination, bureaucratic hurdles, and socioeconomic marginalization. As a result, while the principle of philoxenia, or hospitality

towards asylum seekers, is endorsed, practical obstacles often hinder its realization. Efforts to combat xenophobia, promote inclusion, and strengthen support systems are essential for upholding philoxenia in practice within South Africa's legal context.

Refugees vs Philoxenia

Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia are among the leading countries from which refugees come to South Africa. The data from the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) reveals a substantial number of refugees in 2009, amounting to 408,060, representing an increase from the previous year's figure of 377,137 in 2008 industries (Statistics South Africa, 2024). However, following this surge, there was a noticeable decline in the number of recorded refugees industries (Statistics South Africa, 2024). The lowest figures were seen in 2020 and 2021, with only 2,414 and 25 refugees recorded, respectively industries (Statistics South Africa, 2024).

South Africa's acceptance of African refugees embodies the spirit of philoxenia, showcasing hospitality toward strangers seeking refuge from conflict, persecution, and economic hardship in other African nations. This reflects the country's commitment to humanitarian principles and its leadership role in addressing displacement crises. It resonates with the ethos of ubuntu, emphasizing human interconnectedness and the importance of compassion and solidarity.

However, challenges persist. Many refugees encounter obstacles in accessing legal protection, services, and job opportunities. Anit-immigrants violence and discrimination against refugees and migrants underscore the complexities involved.

While South Africa's acceptance of African refugees demonstrates philoxenia, ongoing efforts are needed to address structural inequalities and social tensions affecting refugee communities. This entails implementation of its plans to safeguarding refugee rights, combating anti-immigrants' sentiments through education, and fostering inclusive approaches to integration and social cohesion.

Government's Philoxenic Plans

The South African Government's National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerances is a multifaceted initiative aimed at tackling pervasive social issues and fostering a more inclusive society. Inspired by the declarations of the United Nations (UN) World Conference against Racism in 2001, South Africa's NAP reflects a commitment to international standards of human rights and anti-discrimination efforts.

At its core, the NAP seeks to raise awareness and gather essential data on xenophobia and other forms of intolerance prevalent in South African society. By acknowledging and confronting these challenges head-on, the government aims to address deep-rooted prejudices and promote greater understanding and acceptance among diverse communities.

Central to the NAP's objectives is the recognition of migrants, particularly those from other African countries, as integral members of South African society. By prioritizing inclusivity and tolerance, the government strives to create an environment where all individuals, regardless of their background, can contribute positively to the nation's progress and prosperity.

The NAP underscores South Africa's commitment to upholding the principles of equality and human dignity enshrined in its constitution and international agreements. Through targeted policies and initiatives, the government seeks to dismantle systemic barriers and empower marginalized groups to fully participate in the country's social, economic, and political life.

Overall, the National Action Plan represents a proactive approach to combatting racism, xenophobia, and related forms of intolerance, signaling South Africa's resolve to build a more just and equitable society for all its citizens and immigrants.

Despite pockets of social cohesion among African migrants and South Africans in certain communities within South Africa, the full realization of the National Action Plan's objectives in combatting racism, xenophobia, and related forms of intolerance remains hindered by persistent anti-immigrant sentiments.

One of the significant challenges to the effective implementation of the NAP is the prevalence of deep-seated prejudices and stereotypes against immigrants, particularly those from other African countries. These negative perceptions are often fueled by socio-economic factors, including competition for scarce resources and opportunities, as well as historical tensions rooted in apartheid-era policies.

Additionally, the rhetoric of some political leaders and media outlets may exacerbate anti-immigrant sentiments, further perpetuating divisions within society. This hostile environment not only undermines efforts to promote inclusivity and tolerance but also poses significant barriers to the integration and well-being of migrant communities.

Moreover, the lack of comprehensive immigration policies and effective mechanisms for addressing discrimination and hate crimes exacerbates the challenges faced by migrants in South Africa. Without adequate legal protections and support structures, migrants are vulnerable to exploitation, violence, and marginalization, perpetuating cycles of exclusion and inequality.

To truly realize the goals of the NAP, concerted efforts are needed to address the root causes of xenophobia and promote a culture of respect and understanding among all members of society. This entails not only enacting and enforcing anti-discrimination laws but also investing in education, community engagement, and economic empowerment initiatives that foster cross-cultural dialogue and solidarity.

Ultimately, the journey towards building a more inclusive and tolerant society in South Africa requires a collective commitment from government, civil society, and the broader community to challenge prejudice, dismantle structural barriers, and uphold the fundamental rights and dignity of all individuals, regardless of their origin or background.

Philoxenia in South African Higher Education

South Africa has emerged as a destination for migrant students from across Africa, surpassing previous levels seen before end of apartheid (Kahn, Gamedze & Oghenetega, 2019). This rise can be attributed, in part, to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Education and Training (Kahn, 2015). This protocol aimed to eliminate barriers within the region and facilitate the free movement of researchers and higher education students (Kahn, Gamedze & Oghenetega, 2019). The protocol mandated member states to reserve up to 5% of their university spots for students from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and to apply domestic tuition fees to these students (Kahn, Gamedze & Oghenetega, 2019). South Africa's decision to sign the SADC Protocol on Education and Training, with the goal of removing barriers within the region and promoting the free movement of researchers and higher education students, was one of Pretoria's early steps toward fostering international relations rooted in philoxenia within its borders. Thus integration of African immigrants into South African institutions of higher learning should be interpreted as a move towards brining African people closer and also promoting social cohesion.

The 2001 National Plan on Higher Education (NPHE) outlined strategies to increase the access of black and disabled students, particularly in postgraduate programs. It also proposed measures to diversify staff profiles in higher education institutions to align with the growing proportion of black students. One strategy suggested was the active recruitment of academics from other African countries. This approach was seen as beneficial not only for providing diverse intellectual and research networks but also for contributing to the broader social and economic development of Africa as a whole. Consequently, recruiting students and academics from across the African continent was identified as a pivotal strategy in the transformation of higher education (Sehoole, Adeyemo, Ojo & Phatlane, 2019).

Hence, the Department of Higher Education and Training's database recorded a total of 520 sub-Saharan African doctoral graduates from the five universities in 2012 and 2013 combined (Kahn, Gamedze & Oghenetega, 2019). Furthermore, Between 2012 and 2016, South Africa produced close to 4000 foreign graduates, comprising both African and international students, out of a national total of 9000 doctoral graduates (DHET, 2018). The majority of these foreign graduates came from approximately thirty-four sub-Saharan African countries. Thus South African universities serve and still continue as a central hub for postgraduate education in the sub-Saharan African region (Kahn, Gamedze & Oghenetega, 2019).

Furthermore, it is clear that South African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have consistently enrolled students from African immigrant backgrounds. Statistics from South Africa's data between 2013 and 2021 highlight the shifting patterns in student influx from different nations seeking educational opportunities in the country. Zimbabwe contributed the highest proportion, accounting for nearly a third (30.4% or 222,162) of immigrant students during this period, followed by Namibia (9.0% or 66,186), Eswatini (5.0% or 36,505), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (4.8% or 35,137) (Statistics South Africa, 2024). Lesotho and Nigeria also sent notable numbers of students for educational pursuits. However, the numbers from these countries fluctuated over the years, with some witnessing increases while others experienced declines in student arrivals (Statistics South Africa, 2024). Additionally, Zambia, Botswana, Kenya, and Ghana were among the countries represented, each with varying degrees of involvement in South Africa's education system (Statistics South Africa, 2024). Notably, Ghana had the fewest students among the top contributors.

At practical levels of interactions, there have been studies showcasing philoxenia in higher education institutions. For instance, a study conducted by Kayitesi and Mwaba (2014) interviewed 192 female and 63 male students at a South African University, revealing that the sampled South African students generally held positive views towards African immigrants. Thus besides statistics proving that South African universities are accepting foreign students from other African countries, there is evidence of Philoxenic treatment by South African university communities.

These statistics and the study cited above underscore the dynamic nature of South Africa's immigrant student demographics and highlight the welcoming stance demonstrated by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) towards foreign students. Recruiting students and academics from across the African continent by South Africa should be seen as advantageous in fostering diverse intellectual and research networks, thereby contributing to the broader social and economic development of Africa. Furthermore, promoting such diversity in intellectual and research networks aligns with the country's commitment to philoxenia through its domestic legislative frameworks. Additionally, these domestic laws reflect a positive idealization and commitment towards the pursuit of African continental integration.

Philoxenia in South African Economic Activities and Communities

The following sub-section elucidates the Philoxenic nature in some of South Africa's economic activities.

Philoxenia in the Context of The Mining Sector

Since the era of Apartheid, the South African mining sector has consistently exhibited a hospitable attitude toward African immigrant workers. Several investigations conducted by Mabiala (2013), asy, Williams, and Peberdy (2005), Coderre-Proulx, Campbell, and Mandé (2016), and Bakewell (2009) have highlighted the significant role played by immigrants in the mining industry. Agdjan's study in 2008 uncovered that migration within the Southern African region was spurred by the expansion of the South African mining sector, which actively sought to recruit African immigrants as labourers. Crush et al. (2005) and Bakewell (2009) additionally offer insights into the emergence of mining as a favored employment option for African immigrants in South Africa during the late 1880s. These immigrants played a vital role as laborers in the gold and diamond mining sectors (Crush et al., 2005; Bakewell, 2009). Research findings from Crush et al. (2005), Bakewell (2009), and Mabiala (2013) underscored the substantial contribution of immigrants as inexpensive laborers in a burgeoning mining industry. The aforementioned studies indicate that historically, the South African mining industry has exhibited philoxenia towards African labour migrants. Although the proportion of African immigrants employed in the mining and quarrying sector notably declined from 3.47% in 2012 to 1.58% in 2022 industries (Statistics South Africa, 2024), these figures still demonstrate the presence of immigrant workers in these underscoring their continued status as Philoxenic.

Philoxenia in the Context of The Agricultural Sector

Evidence suggests that immigrants from the SADC region significantly contribute to the production of agricultural goods on various commercial farms in South Africa (Crush et al., 2005). According to Crush et al. (2005), immigrant women are particularly active in South African commercial farms compared to men. This notable involvement of immigrant women in the agricultural sector stems from clandestine border crossings, as highlighted by Jeeves and Crush (1997) and Crush et al. (2005), where these women find employment on South African farms without the need for legal documentation. The most recent report from Statistics South Africa (2024) underscores that undocumented migrants frequently play a role in bolstering the economy by stepping into labour vacancies within sectors experiencing shortages, such as agriculture. Despite fluctuations in the numbers of African immigrants employed in sectors like Agriculture, hunting, forestry, and fishing—ranging from 6.20% in 2012 to a peak of 7.50% and then a decline to 5.61% in 2022 (Statistics South Africa, 2024)—the presence of African immigrants in these industries persists. Therefore, their employment in the agricultural sector illustrates a form of philoxenia. Furthermore, the involvement of African immigrants in this sector aligns with the Department of International Relations' role and commitment to providing food assistance to certain African nations. This contributes to bolstering food security throughout the African continent.

Philoxenia in the Context of The Tourism Sector

Crush et al. (2005), Joppe (2012), Janta, Ladkin, Brown, and Lugosi (2011) and Lyon and Sulcova (2009) have shed light on the involvement of immigrants in the tourism sector. In South African context for example, Crush et al. (2005) revealed that the expansion of tourism in South Africa is correlated with a significant influx of immigrants, as not all immigrants enter the country solely for employment purposes. This also suggest that the South African tourism industry demonstrates a preference for African immigrant workforce over South Africans. The preference for an African immigrant workforce by the tourism industry paints a distinct picture of philoxenia within this sector. Therefore, research conducted by Crush et al. (2005) indirectly highlights the Philoxenic character of the South African agricultural industry through the utilization of African immigrants in employment roles.

Philoxenia in the Context of Client-Service Provider Relations

There are numerous occasions and connections among these groups that can be seen as promoters of social unity and hospitality between African immigrants and South Africans. In South Africa, instances of philoxenia are observed in various settings where African immigrants and South Africans engage in positive contact and interaction.

The South African micro-scale business sector is also one of the sectors that exemplifies philoxenia. Rogerson (1999) discovered that foreign-owned small, medium, and microeconomic enterprises played a substantial role in shaping the evolving economy and urban landscape of inner-city Johannesburg. Similarly, Charman et al. (2012) highlighted a significant increase in foreign ownership within the spaza shop (tuck-shop) sector in South Africa over the course of a decade. Notably, immigrants from various African countries, Bangladesh, and other South Asian regions were identified as owners of spaza shops across different South African communities (Charman et al., 2012). Washinyira (2015) further elaborates on the experiences of over 2000 immigrants engaged in the informal economy in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Dikgwatlhe and Mulenga (2023) also observe that African immigrants often settle in South African neighborhoods not seeking work, but instead they often end up operating spaza shops, hair salons and garment making services.

These accounts underscore how immigrants contribute significantly by catering to the needs of economically disadvantaged consumers, providing affordable goods in suitable quantities, at convenient locations and times, or meeting niche demands (Washinyira, 2015; Dikgwatlhe & Mulenga, 2023). The support extended by South African consumers towards businesses owned by African immigrants vividly illustrates the Philoxenic nature of South African society, besides the commonly held popular and scholarly discourse on South Africans having anti-immigrants attitudes and sentiments. Kalitanyi and Visser (2010) present findings indicating a constructive interaction between African immigrant entrepreneurs and South Africans. According to their research, over 80 percent of African immigrant entrepreneurs surveyed engage South Africans in their enterprises.

Despite prevalent negative sentiments towards immigrants, their study also highlights the transfer of entrepreneurial expertise from immigrant entrepreneurs to their South African counterparts (Kalitanyi and Visser, 2010). In addition, The 2018 study titled "Cross-Border Migration, Social Cohesion, and African Continental Integration: Perspectives of African Immigrants and South African Nationals in Gauteng, South Africa" discovered that the majority of small African immigrant businesses in Gauteng relied on South African customers. Conversely, this study emphasized the importance of the relationships between service providers and clients in enhancing social cohesion and also that interactions between immigrants and nationals didn't necessarily result in conflicts.

These occurrences significantly contribute to the strengthening of social cohesion between these groups (Maseng, 2020). For example, there is well-documented evidence of numerous businesses owned by African immigrants that primarily serve a South African clientele (Maseng, 2020). Additionally, many institutions within South African communities have employed African immigrants. It is within these contexts that positive and friendly relations between South Africans and African immigrants thrive, fostering greater social unity (Maseng, 2020).

The assertion that regular and positive interaction between different groups facilitates positive intergroup relations, as proposed by Allport in 1954, finds support in the existence of certain amicable relationships between South Africans and African immigrants. For example, Crush (2001) and Kirkman (2001) discovered that South Africans who have had frequent positive interactions with African immigrants tend to exhibit greater tolerance towards immigrants compared to those who have not had such opportunities for regular positive contact.

Maseng's research in 2018 and 2019 highlights numerous instances of positive and frequent interactions that not only bolstered but also fostered favorable perceptions of social cohesion between African immigrants and South Africans. Conducted in Gauteng province, the study involved interviews with thirty-five South Africans and fifty African immigrants. It revealed that the client-service provider relationship between these groups was a significant contributor to social cohesion. Particularly in Gauteng, where a substantial immigrant population resides, South Africans embraced services provided by businesses owned by African immigrants. This acceptance and support signify philoxenia, as evidenced by South Africans actively backing enterprises run by African immigrants in the study area.

The occurrence of Philoxenia in South Africa was also substantiated in a study conducted by Muchuweni-Chiumira in 2019, which focused on the experiences of African informal migrant traders operating in Pretoria central. This study revealed two key findings:

   i.   Firstly, informal traders perceived Pretoria as a safe city for both residence and business operations, indicating a sense of human security. This coexistence underscores the positive aspects of social cohesion (Muchuweni-Chiumira, 2019).

   ii. Secondly, the traders' perception of the city as a safe environment for conducting business suggests that they felt accepted rather than rejected by the South Africans they frequently interacted with (Muchuweni-Chiumira, 2019).

As such Maseng (2020) argues that this sentiment is primarily due to the cordial relationships they enjoyed with their South African clients, built on factors such as customer loyalty, appreciation, gratitude, tips, and referrals. The existence of such relationships indicates that not all South African clients harbor hostility or resentment towards African immigrants (Maseng, 2020). Indeed, in the context described above, factors like customer loyalty, appreciation, gratitude, tips, and referrals within shared spaces reflect the practice of philoxenia within South Africa. These actions demonstrate a welcoming and hospitable attitude towards African immigrants businesses by South African clients, fostering positive intergroup relations and contributing to social cohesion.

In addition to studies conducted in Gauteng that examine businesses owned by African immigrants with predominantly South African clienteles, similar research has been undertaken in various provinces across South Africa. For example, Chikwendu-Ezennia, Mutambara, and Indermun (2015) conducted a comprehensive analysis of African immigrant-owned businesses in Durban, KwaZulu Natal province. Fatoki (2014) investigated business enterprises owned by foreign nationals in Limpopo province. Hartnack and Liedeman (2017) identified immigrant-owned businesses in the Delft township of Cape Town. Muchineripi, Chinyamurindi and Chimucheka (2019) also discussed the existence of immigrant-owned businesses in the Eastern Cape Province. Across these provinces, it is evident that immigrants of African descent have established businesses that rely largely on a South African clientele. Consequently, immigrant-owned businesses in various South African communities are not only accepted but also embraced by South Africans. This acceptance fosters positive client-service provider relationships, thus enhancing social cohesion between nationals and African immigrants amidst diverse identities and cultures.

The mutually beneficial relationships between South African clients and service providers from other African countries vividly exemplify the concept of philoxenia within the context of South Africa. Thus Philoxenia is embodied in the harmonious interactions and collaborations between local residents and immigrants from various African nations. These positive client-service provider relationships not only foster economic exchange but also promote social cohesion and cultural diversity within South Africa. They signify a willingness to embrace and support individuals from diverse backgrounds, enriching the fabric of society with their unique perspectives, skills, and experiences. Moreover, these interactions serve as a testament to the interconnectedness of African communities, transcending national borders and fostering a sense of unity amidst diversity. Thus, these client-service provider relationships serve as tangible manifestations of philoxenia in action, reflecting the spirit of inclusivity and goodwill that defines the South African ethos.

Philoxenia in South African Communities and Neighborhoods

Maseng (2020) reveals Philoxenia occurs in South Africa through stating that living spaces such as communities and neighborhoods between South African nationals and immigrants doesn't automatically lead to conflict. Put differently, sharing social spaces can actually foster social cohesion between immigrants and nationals (Maseng, 2020). Furthermore, Maseng (2019) noted the presence of social cohesion between African immigrants and South Africans, attributing it to the fact that these groups reside in and share similar social spaces such as residential areas. However, McLaren (2003), Crush (2001), and Kirkman (2001) only tangentially suggest that close and regular contact can breed intolerance towards immigrants among nationals.

Maseng (2018) demonstrated that living together and sharing common social environments, where there was regular and close positive interaction, fosters social cohesion between immigrants and nationals. Furthermore, this intimate and frequent interaction resulting from cohabitation in shared social spaces offered both groups an opportunity to envision positively the idea of social cohesion between themselves and to embrace a hopeful perspective towards the potential achievement of African continental integration or a union government comprising all African states (Maseng, 2019). Therefore, the fundamental essence of maintaining friendly relations while sharing residential or neighborhood spaces should be regarded as a catalyst for enhancing social cohesion between these groups across various South African communities (Maseng, 2020). The existence of social cohesion between African immigrants and South African communities serves as a testament to the principles of philoxenia, highlighting the deeply ingrained values of hospitality, acceptance, and mutual respect within these shared spaces. Through positive interactions, collaboration, and a sense of unity, both immigrants and South African nationals contribute to building inclusive communities where everyone feels valued and supported. This spirit of philoxenia not only strengthens bonds between individuals but also fosters a sense of belonging and collective identity, ultimately promoting harmony and unity within society.

While the studies by Maseng cited supra predominantly focused in Gauteng, there are other studies conducted in other provinces such as Kwazulu-Natal and Free State which also reveal the existence of social cohesion between immigrants and South African nationals sharing similar communities and neighbourhoods. Thus these studies provide evidence of Philoxenia in various South African communities. In a study conducted by Raniga (2019) titled "Xenophobic experiences of foreign African Women in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa," the majority of respondents, who were African immigrant women, expressed that they had cultivated strong social support systems and networks across different racial groups in South Africa. When asked about whether Ubuntu, the African philosophy of interconnectedness and mutual support, was merely rhetoric or a lived reality in South Africa, these women affirmed its tangible presence in their lives. Their experiences underscored the existence of heartfelt connections and positive relationships with South African women in their communities. Additionally, they highlighted the crucial role played by community leaders in safeguarding them, which they interpreted as a manifestation of the African philosophy of Ubuntu, emphasizing the principle of collective welfare and solidarity (Raniga, 2019).

Furthermore, according to Ncube (2019), Zimbabwean immigrants in Bloemfontein, Free State province, lived "side by side" with South Africans and were regarded as integral members of the communities that welcomed them. This symbiotic relationship observed between Zimbabweans and South Africans aligns with Chipkin and Ngqulunga's (2008) conceptualization of social cohesion, which emphasizes the presence of "sentimental bonds" between both groups. The notion of living "side by side" and being "part and parcel" constitutes a fundamental component as well as a promoter of social cohesion between immigrants and nationals within South African communities.

Despite Ncube's acknowledgment of occasional xenophobic incidents in Bloemfontein, such occurrences were not frequent. Additionally, while there were instances of derogatory name-calling towards immigrants, physical attacks by locals were not prevalent (Ncube, 2019). Moreover, Ncube notes that on a day-to-day basis, there was no visible animosity between locals and migrants. Consequently, social cohesion persisted consistently, with no indications of human security being compromised through force or coercion.

Furthermore, in their study titled "Host Communities and Elderly Refugees in Post-Apartheid South Africa: A Discourse of Conflict and Peaceful Co-Existence", Yusuf and Umejesi (2023) indicated that the experiences of displaced older refugees are multifaceted. The findings demonstrated that certain members of the host community exhibit friendliness towards older refugees (Yusuf & Umejesi, 2023). Their actions are guided by principles such as 'brotherhood' or 'one family,' where they perceive older refugees as a vulnerable group deserving of assistance(Yusuf & Umejesi, 2023). Consequently, some individuals show compassion and are willing to offer them the necessary support (Yusuf & Umejesi, 2023). This highlights that not all members of host communities harbor hostility towards older refugees (Yusuf & Umejesi, 2023). In this context, it is not universal that immigrants encounter xenophobia; rather, there are instances within South African communities and neighborhoods where a spirit "philoxenia," prevails, as illustrated by the examples mentioned supra.

Challenges and Limitations to Practical Implementation of Philoxenia in South Africa

The researcher acknowledges that South Africa has instituted Philoxenic laws and strategies, such as the Immigration Amendment Act No. 8 of 2016 and the National Plan on Higher Education (NPHE), along with the National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerances. Additionally, there is evidence of Philoxenic behaviors

towards asylum seekers and refugees, as well as efforts to include and support immigrants in the country's economic activities and communities. However, there are also challenges and limitations hindering the practical realization of philoxenia in South Africa.

Challenges and limitations to practical implementation of Philoxenia are embedded in varied conceptualisations in both popular and scholarly discourse. Since the early 2000s, some scholars have indirectly conceptualized threats to philoxenia as "xenophobia" (Harris, 2002; Landau, Ramjathan-Keogh & Singh, 2005; Steenkamp, 2009; Tella, 2016; Chenzi, 2021). This concept refers to negative attitudes, hatred and attacks on foreigners. particularly African immigrants residing in South Africa, has been prevalent in both popular and scholarly circles. However, others proposed a reconceptualization to challenges and limitations to Philoxenia in South Africa as "Afrophobia" (Thakur, 2011; Ochonu, 2020; Angu, 2023). In its definition, "Afrophobia" specifically is regarded as negative attitudes, hatred and attacks towards immigrants of African immigrants. Consequently, some termed challenges to unity of Africans as "Threats" to social cohesion between African immigrants and South Africans (Maseng, 2018; 2020). Furthermore, Tewolde (2019) refers to an anti-immigrant position as "colour-blind xenophobia". Most recently, Maseng (2024) suggest that conflicts between Africans (as hosts and immigrants) must be considered as "sibling fights or sibling bullying". Thus even though, South Africa has some Philoxenic legislations, plans and practices at community level, the practice of Philoxenia faces obstacles due to different types of xenophobia and mistreatment from authorities like the South African Police Service (SAPS) and Department of Home Affairs (DHA) (Maseng, 2020). Additionally, differences in identity are viewed as potential disruptions to social unity between South Africans and immigrants (Maseng, 2020).

In this regard, the practical implementation of Philoxenia in South Africa faces numerous challenges and limitations, including xenophobia and Afrophobia, which perpetuate discrimination and hostility towards foreigners and African migrants. These attitudes pose significant threats to social cohesion between South Africans and South Africa immigrants, hindering efforts to foster inclusivity and diversity within African societies. For instance, xenophobia has at some point triggered hostile bilateral relations between South Africa and Nigeria (Oni & Okunade, 2018; Ogunnoiki & Adeyemi, 2019). This on its own had implications in as far dividing Africa and enhancing the narrative of us and them between Southern African Development Community (SADC) [were South Africa is considered a hegemon] and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) [were Nigeria is considered a hegemon].

Additionally, Philoxenia in South African context is challenged by "colour-blind xenophobia" highlights that all foreigners are attacked including non-African migrants such as Asians (Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis and Chinese) (Tewolde, 2019).

Furthermore, the prevalence of sibling fights or sibling bullying within communities adds another layer of complexity to promoting Philoxenia. These interpersonal conflicts can reflect and reinforce broader societal tensions, undermining efforts to cultivate a culture of hospitality and acceptance towards others, both within and beyond national borders. These are the embodiments of challenges and limitations to practical implementation of philoxenia in South Africa.

Implications of Philoxenia on African Continental Integration

In an article published in 2020 titled "Revealing 'threats' and 'enhancers' to social cohesion between African immigrants and South Africans," the author concluded that service provider-client and professional relations, as well as sharing community and neighborhood, serve as "enhancers" of social cohesion between South Africans and immigrants of African descent. Thus, the philoxenia between African immigrants and South African nationals was embedded in factors such as service provider-client and professional relations, as well as sharing community and neighborhood. Indeed, the aforementioned factors can serve as community-centered catalysts and enhancers of African continental integration.

At the international relations level, South Africa's welcoming and non-anti immigrants reputation is reflected in its participation as a signatory to the SADC Protocol on Education and Training. This protocol aims to remove obstacles within the region and promote the unrestricted mobility of researchers and students in higher education. Additionally, it requires member states to allocate up to 5% of their university placements for students from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and to charge them domestic tuition fees. Facilitating the free movement of researchers and students in higher education is another essential pillar for laying the foundation of a united Africa focused on the unrestricted movement of people. Furthermore, at the domestic legal level, the South African Immigration Act demonstrates a welcoming attitude by providing African immigrants with rights to temporary residence, visas tailored for specific purposes such as work, study, or visiting relatives, as well as ensuring rights for asylum seekers and access to medical treatment (*See Statistics South Africa's Migration Profile Report For South Africa of 2024 for detailed statistics*).

Existing research highlighting the significant contribution of immigrants as inexpensive laborers in South Africa's growing mining industry suggests that historically, the South African mining sector has displayed philoxenia towards African labour migrants. Consequently, the labour force has become an integral part of South African communities since the apartheid era, forging strong connections with these local communities. This implies that the mining industry in the country serves as one of the epicenters and starting points for forming a united state of Africa from a South African perspective, especially considering that the country hosts a majority of African immigrants. The multilingual and multicultural nature of the mining industry in South Africa led to the rise of Fanakalo pidgin as the chosen lingua franca within highly diverse mining environments (Mesthrie, 2019). This linguistic development offers compelling evidence of how mines can serve as foundational elements in the construction of a united states of Africa by mitigating language barriers between South Africans and African immigrants.

By establishing Fanakalo as the lingua franca (Mesthrie, 2019), the mining industry not only improved communication but also fostered a sense of unity and cohesion among workers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This shared language facilitated cooperation, teamwork, and mutual understanding, laying the groundwork for a more inclusive and harmonious work environment. Moreover, the use of Fanakalo in the mining industry demonstrates how practical solutions can be found to address linguistic diversity and promote integration within African societies. As a result, mines can be seen as important sites for promoting cultural exchange, bridging linguistic divides, and fostering a sense of common identity among workers.

The preference shown by the South African tourism industry for an African immigrant workforce over South Africans reflects a clear picture of philoxenia within this sector. The South African tourism industry's preference for an African immigrant workforce presents a unique opportunity for fostering integration and cooperation within the country and across the continent. By actively recruiting African immigrants to work in various roles within the tourism sector, South Africa not only benefits from their skills and expertise but also promotes diversity and inclusivity within the industry.

This preference for African immigrant workers can be seen as a manifestation of philoxenia, or a friendly attitude towards strangers, within the tourism sector. It reflects an openness and willingness to embrace individuals from across the continent, acknowledging their valuable contributions to the industry. Furthermore, the presence of African immigrants within the tourism workforce can enhance the overall visitor experience for tourists from other African countries. Immigrant workers may bring a deeper understanding of cultural nuances, languages, and customs, enabling them to better connect with and serve visitors from their home countries.

Additionally, the employment of African immigrants in the tourism industry can serve as a catalyst for economic empowerment and social integration. By providing job opportunities to immigrants, the industry helps to uplift marginalized communities and promote social mobility. Overall, the South African tourism industry's preference for an African immigrant workforce not only benefits the industry itself but also contributes to greater cohesion, cooperation, and unity within the country and across the continent. It represents a positive step towards building a more inclusive and integrated society in South Africa and towards realizing the vision of a united states of Africa.

Furthermore, the support shown by South Africans for the micro-scale business sector owned by African immigrants carries positive implications for how Africa can achieve continental integration through this sector. Such support fosters collaboration between South Africans and African immigrants, thereby contributing to the development of a robust micro-scale business sector that can advance the vision of a united states of Africa. Small enterprises owned by African immigrants operating in South African communities can indeed serve as a means of socio-cultural integration in the host society. These businesses often become integral parts of the local economy, providing goods and services that meet the needs of the community. Additionally, they create opportunities for interaction and exchange between immigrants and local residents, fostering understanding and mutual respect. by contributing to the social and economic fabric of the community, small enterprises owned by African immigrants can indeed play a significant role in promoting cohesion between South Africans and African immigrants. This cohesion can foster understanding, collaboration, and a sense of shared identity, which are crucial for building a united states of Africa. When individuals from diverse backgrounds come together through business interactions and shared economic goals, it can pave the way for greater unity and cooperation on a broader scale. Thus, these enterprises can serve as important building blocks towards achieving the vision of a united Africa.

Hence, a study published in 2018 titled "Cross-Border Migration, Social Cohesion, and African Continental Integration: Perspectives of African Immigrants and South African Nationals in Gauteng, South Africa" found that the majority of small African immigrant enterprises relied on a primarily South African customer base. Conversely, South African residents in the surveyed region viewed these businesses as crucial contributors to their local socio-economic landscape. Moreover, the study highlighted that the relationships between service providers and clients played a role in bolstering social cohesion in the area. The research concluded that interactions between immigrants and nationals did not inherently lead to conflicts and that social cohesion was also fostered by mutual interdependence.

Philoxenia in South Africa encounters numerous hurdles and constraints, notably xenophobia and Afrophobia, which fuel prejudice and animosity toward foreigners and African migrants. Such attitudes pose significant risks towards achieving African continental integration due to some elements of disunity between South Africans and immigrants. As such, instances of xenophobia and Afrophobia are an impediment to any government, civil society or citizens initiatives which intend to nurture inclusiveness and multiculturalism within African societies. I had already stated, that xenophobia has at times strained diplomatic relations between South Africa and Nigeria, therefore exacerbating divisions within regional blocs like the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Moreover, in the South African context, Philoxenia faces the challenge of "colour-blind xenophobia," where all foreign nationals, including non-Africans like Asians (Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis, and Chinese), are targeted. Additionally, the prevalence of interpersonal conflicts, such as sibling bullying within communities, adds another layer of complexity to promoting Philoxenia. These local disputes often mirror and reinforce broader societal tensions, undermining efforts to foster a culture of hospitality and mutual acceptance, both domestically and internationally. These represent significant obstacles to the practical implementation of Philoxenia in South Africa and most significantly are a major impediment towards achieving the African Union's long term objectives of African Continental Integration. Hence in one of my works titled "Revealing "Threats" and "Enhancers" to Social Cohesion between African

Immigrants and South Africans", I have revealed how "Threats" to Social Cohesion between African Immigrants and South Africans contribute towards African disunity.

Conclusions

The regional treaties that South Africa is a signatory to and the country's migration law and some action plans reflect a hospitable approach, evident through features of Philoxenia. For instance, the SADC Protocol on Education and Training; the 2001 National Plan on Higher Education (NPHE); the South African Immigration Act and the National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerances convey a welcoming stance toward African migrants. These frameworks offer a foundation for engagement between African immigrants and South Africans, fostering the potential for greater unity among Africans. Additionally, the paper highlights various economic sectors such as the Higher Education, micro-scale business, the tourism, the agricultural, and the mining sectors in South Africa that also exhibit Philoxenic qualities. Therefore, Philoxenia evident in legislation, policies, and certain economic endeavors in South Africa could play a role in advancing the vision of a united Africa.

The reader must note that, achieving the vision of a United States of Africa faces several formidable challenges and limitations, many of which revolve around deeply ingrained societal attitudes and behaviors. Among these obstacles are xenophobia and Afrophobia, which poison relations between different African nations and inhibit the spirit of unity necessary for the formation of a continental union. These prejudices manifest in various forms, from discrimination against migrants to distrust and hostility towards individuals from other African countries.

Moreover, these attitudes pose significant threats to social cohesion within and across African societies. They undermine efforts to build solidarity and cooperation among diverse populations, fracturing the bonds that are essential for collective progress and prosperity. The notion of "colour-blind xenophobia" further complicates matters, as it obscures the racial dimensions of discrimination, making it more difficult to address systemic biases that perpetuate division and inequality. Additionally, the prevalence of sibling fights or sibling bullying within amongst Africans reflects underlying tensions and rivalries which impede efforts towards continental Integration. These conflicts, are rooted in historical grievances or contemporary competition and also serve as microcosms of broader intra-African discord.

The researcher acknowledges that, even though this paper relied on document analysis as a data collection technique, there is a need for further research which prioritizes integrating empirical data sourced from interviews, case studies and ethnography as well as field observations. These methodological approaches may offer much more valuable insights to deepen the analysis and unveil more nuanced insights into the expression of Philoxenia in South African context. Thus through incorporating the perspectives of key stakeholders and individuals actively engaged in shaping migration-related policies and practices, further studies may enhance the scientific credibility and relevance of Philoxenia. This multi-faceted approach not only would enrich the understanding of Philoxenia but also illuminate the complexities inherent in migration dynamics within the South African context.

In order to use Philoxenia as a cornerstone for African unity there is a need to think of the following by the authorities in South Africa and elsewhere in other African countries:

i. Encourage concerted effort to dismantle prejudices, foster a sense of shared identity and purpose, and promote dialogue and understanding among all African peoples.

ii. There is a need for visionary leadership, grassroots mobilization, and concrete actions to address divisions amongst African citizens in order to promote and ultimately achieve African continental integration.

iii. South Africa as one of Africa's dominant African immigrants' host state must come up with legislation that criminalizes "xenophobia", "Afrophobia", "Threats" to social cohesion", "colour-blind xenophobia" and "sibling fights or sibling bullying". This must also applies to other African states.

iv. African governments must confront various existing barriers to unity head-on, in order for Africa to move closer to realizing the dream of a United States of Africa, where diversity is celebrated, and solidarity prevails.

Informed Consent Statement: All sources used have been dully acknowledged.

Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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