Xenophobic Prejudice in Africa: Cultural Diplomacy as a Panacea to the Deteriorating Inter-African Relations

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Abstract

Xenophobic prejudice is a generic challenge that is not new in Africa. It started during the colonial times and became more evident in the last decade of colonialism in the continent with the 1954 and 1958 deportations of African migrants from Ghana and Côte D'Ivoire respectively. The post-independence xenophobic prejudice in Africa started specifically with the 1964 expulsion in Cote D'Ivoire and continues to spread increasingly like wildfire across the continent, and today it has taken a more violent dimension, particularly in South Africa. With the growing trend of the xenophobic violence, the united African rhetoric is beginning to take a shift as most African nations are becoming intolerant of fellow African migrants for acclaimed socio-economic reasons. By implication, the African continent has become an object of ridicule in the international community as inter-African relations are now labeled with diverse kind of diplomatic spats. Hence, this paper seeks to research into the root cause(s) of this menace beyond the acclaimed socio-economic reasons and as well proffer cultural diplomacy initiatives (which allows people-to-people interaction) as a soft power instrument of African states foreign policy to plaster the cracked walls of inter-African states relations for continental peace.

Key Words**: Xenophobia; Inter-African Relations; Soft Power; Cultural Diplomacy; Colonialism.**

1. INTRODUCTION

The partitioning and arbitrary demarcation of African societies among European powers in the late 19th century which set the pace for the colonial expedition in Africa have left the contemporary Africa with haunting legacies breeding diverse forms of political instability, insurgency, terrorism and civil unrest in many African countries. Recently, the xenophobic violence has become part of the African ugly story. Although this is not a new phenomenon, its destructive nature, increasing tempo and reoccurrence is a cause for serious concerns among stakeholders in African peace, security and development. Today, the xenophobic prejudice is gravely impacting on the ideals of African Renaissance thereby making the African continent an object of ridicule in the international community.(Ramola, 2015 ; Adeoye, 2017; Adewale,

2017)

Xenophobia is derived from the Greek words "xenos" -meaning Foreign or strange and "phobos"-meaning fear or phobia. (Crush & Ramachandran, 2009; Fatoki, 2014). Xenophobia is the perceived fear, hatred or dislike of a non-native or foreigner in a particular country (Human Rights Watch, 2009). Xenophobia can be viewed as attitudes, prejudices, and behaviors that reject, exclude and often malign persons based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity. According to Akindès (2004), xenophobia is simply the fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers; it is embodied in discriminatory attitudes and behavior, and often culminates in violence, abuses of all types, and exhibitions of hatred. Bruce and Newham (2000) asserted that no statistics are available to quantify the problem; studies suggest that xenophobia takes different forms and that the problem is not limited merely to attitudes, but often involves violence, abuse, and ill-treatment of foreigners. These definitions have attempted to put the concept of xenophobia in perspective as one that involves both violent and non-violent dimensions.

The history of xenophobic attacks predates the 21st century African society. Since the early years of independence in Africa, there have been some undocumented elements of xenophobic sentiment and agitations in different countries. The documentation of these acts specifically started with the 1964 expulsion of foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire; followed by Ghana in 1969 when the country issued Aliens Compliance Order of 1969; and then the 'Ghana-Must-Go' saga in Nigeria- anti-immigration acts of Nigerian governments in the 1980s and early 1990s. In contemporary times, South Africa has come to be described as a xenophobic nation and often referred to as the hub of xenophobic prejudices in Africa where fellow African migrants live in fear and insecurity.

Several factors have been attributed to the rising level of intolerance across Africa. The two most common are perceptions that immigrants limit the economic prospects of host countries and as well responsible for the rising social ills in recipient societies. Such allegations cannot justify the bloody and merciless attacks on foreigners and destruction of their properties, especially in South African major cities since 2008.

As elucidated above, however, xenophobia is a continental phenomenon in Africa. It's not solely a South African issue; it only took a more violent dimension in South Africa for reasons that are not unconnected with the prolonged apartheid experience in South Africa. Broadly, past experiences of xenophobia in the case of Ghana, Nigeria, Chad, Libya and South Africa were spurred by political reasons, economic considerations and the rhetoric that foreigners were committing crimes, but the root of it all is inherent in the previous colonial experiences in the continent. In the 21st century, xenophobia is gravely impacting the contemporary inter-African relations either bilaterally, as in the case of, Nigeria-Ghana relations, Zambia-South Africa

relations, Nigeria-South Africa relations and multilaterally under the umbrella of regional and sub-regional organizations. For instance, following the September, 2019 xenophobic attacks in South Africa, diplomatic row ensued between the two nations. The Nigerian government immediately cancelled its participation at the African Economic Summit scheduled to be held in Cape Town in retaliation to the attack on its citizens and as well closed her embassy in South Africa in the face of the increasing xenophobic violence. Public opinion was also provoked in Nigeria calling on the Nigerian government to nationalize South Africa businesses in retaliation to the attacks on its citizens (Nwanze, 2019).

The inter-African relations are now labeled with diverse kind of diplomatic rows which continue to impair the project of African peace and unity. Although African states, sub-regional and regional organizations like the Economic community of West African States (ECOWAS), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU) on the continent invest meaningfully in inter-African relations as a condition for continental peace and security. Most post-colonial African states are still searching for sustainable peace several decades after independence. Thus, the continent continues to struggle to achieve integrated development.

Xenophobia is becoming a major impediment to contemporary Inter-African relations and by extension, continental peace, security and development. Most of the efforts geared to prevent these attacks have been centering on calls for respect and protection of human rights within the territory of individual states, arrest and prosecution of syndicates in some cases, evacuation of citizens from xenophobic states by their respective government and recently, Early Warning Mechanism (EWM) has been proposed as another preventive measure. These efforts are welcoming, but they are mere 'surface-dressing' approaches which have not targeted the root cause of the menace, as embedded in the aged long mutual-hatred sowed among the African peoples by European powers. No wonder its frequent reoccurrence across Africa. It is against this backdrop that this paper tends to proffer a continental solution that embraces shared cultural beliefs, language, values, identity, behavioral norms, etc. to heal the 'colonial wounds' and rejuvenate the deteriorating relations between and amongst African nations. It advocates cultural diplomacy, a soft power tool which centers on the exchange of ideas, information, values, art, language, customs, traditions and other elements of culture capable of fostering love, unity and mutual relations between and among African nations.

2. THERORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Soft power is a popular theory in the post-cold war politics, though developed during the cold war era. Joseph Nye is an advocate of the soft power model of explanation of international politics. Soft power is defined as the capacity to obtain a benefit without the use of 'Carrot or Stick' (economic or military means), but by generating a positive attraction that facilitates the accumulation of other forms of power (Nye 2004: 5). Because soft power is based on intangible resources and relies mainly on persuasion,

it cannot resort to restrictive mechanisms. While hard power is easy to identify and deploy, Nye emphasizes that in today's multipolar world, with an interconnected economy and an increasing power of international financial system, it is important to "affect the behavior of others" (Nye 2004: 2). Thus, the power of an actor adopting changeable forms based on the relational context where it is exercised will be determined for the most part by the knowledge of other agents' preferences (Nye 2004: 2). The effectiveness of soft power is premised on the following factors: the aspects of culture that are attractive for the interlocutor; the national politics when it is seen as legitimate from abroad; and the political values when it is recognized as positive by others (Nye 2008: 97)

Given the focus of this work on cultural diplomacy, we have adopted the soft power theory as a model of explanation and understanding the potential relevance of cultural tools to foster inter-African relations in the contemporary time. Regardless of any acclaimed reasons, power remains the means and the end of interactions between and amongst states in the international system either regionally or globally. power is the 'currency' of international relations (Awosusi and Muhammed, 2019).

However, cultural diplomacy is a potent tool of soft power which is aimed at affecting other people or the world audiences. The idea of cultural diplomacy is for the people of foreign nation to develop an understanding of the nation's ideals and institutions in an effort to build broad support for economic and political goals. It is a people-to-people (P2P) diplomacy whereby individuals from different nations are given open platform to interact in different fields so as to build mutual understanding and tolerance. Therefore, the increasing xenophobic prejudice and attacks in Africa informed by mutual-hatred and sentiments among African peoples can be addressed through cultural diplomacy which involves changing the perception of Africans towards fellow Africans.

3. INTER-AFRICAN RELATIONS: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Inter-African relations predate the coming of Europeans into Africa and thus negate the Eurocentric view of pre-colonial African society as one with neither history nor ingenuity-defined structure prior to the coming of Europeans into the continent. Before colonial incursion into the coast of African states, there were established contacts between and among pre-colonial African states and sovereign authorities as well as peoples. These interactions covered virtually all aspects of life; political, social, economic and trade, cultural, religious, education among others. Trade, diplomacy and even treaties were used as mechanisms to impose, reinforce and strengthen friendliness to sustain peace and security as well as opened contact (Miapkum, 2015).

Fage (1996) averred that, before colonialism, heterogeneous Africa was organized into states, nations, each state has its set rules, leadership procedures and culture. Due to its large region and population, there is a struggle, for control of power, resources, and land. These natural struggles for nature therefore led to means of inter states

relationships. Most of the relations either took the form of alliance, subservient or truce; for economic benefit, political alliance or protection. Trade and governmental relations between the states were also evident. Similarly, Mohammed (2015) noted that Africa was no stranger to the art of diplomacy as many diplomats in order to secure their interests, maintained their close relations through peaceful negotiation of treaties and settlement of disputes according to the customary laws and indigenous institutions of Africa. Although, the pre-colonial inter-Africa diplomatic relations were in most cases bilateral in nature and diplomatic, representations were ad hoc, yet there was much commitments and sincerity and it was in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance (Miapkum, 2015).

The driven mechanism of inter-African relations was a desire for peace and security, power, recognition, economic viability among others. A typical instance of the pre-colonial inter-African relations was the political union of Kanem and Bornu Empires into the confederate state of Kanem-Borno Empire under the leadership of Mai Idris Aloma. Also, states like Asante in old Ghana evolved from merging together of separate Akan communities and states into a single confederate political unit (Ajayi,1976: 78). The dealings between the Benin Kingdom and its eastern neighbors, with the Igala, Nupe and Yoruba, or the relations between the Oyo Empire and Dahomey; or of Dahomey with Asante, are identifiable instances of pre-colonial diplomatic relations between and among Africans states. Also, in the wake of the trans-Saharan trade in gold, salt and other commodities, the empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai maintained relations with North Africa, while Bornu and the Hausa states similarly made contact with the Maghreb (Adegbulu, 2011).

The pre-colonial relations between and among African states were organized and operationally civilized. It was based on mutual understanding and tolerance. occasioning conflicts were diplomatically handled and settled with utmost tolerance and understanding. According to Adegbulu (2011: 181), "perhaps, an important virtue which pre-colonial West Africans exhibited in their external relations, with their neighbors was what Mazrui calls 'Africa's short memory of hate'. States that had differences, according to Mazrui, did not allow them to become interminable. Once the causes of crisis were out of the way, good relations emerged and developed once again. Time and time again, pre-colonial West Africans displayed a remarkable capacity to 'Let by gones be by gones'. This reflected in Oyo alliance with Borgu, its rival, to fight their common enemy – the Jihadists." He went further to note that in spite of the havoc Nupe purportedly wrecked on Oyo during the sack of the later by the former, this did not lead to a perpetual severance of diplomatic relations between them.

The inter-African relations was limited during the colonial era as European powers became the actors in African International system replacing the aged long built inter-African relations with Afro-European relations. Instead of promoting mutual understanding between and amongst the colonial states, the Europeans were busy

sowing discord among the African societies for perceived political and economic reasons.

However, the history of contemporary inter-African relations goes back to the early nineteenth century Pan-African Movements. It was the foundation of the growth and development of modern inter-African relations. The Movement was pioneered by the Blacks of the New World who saw the unfortunate situation of the Africa continent under colonial rules. Later, European-educated young African intellectuals, including Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Sekou Toure, Leopold S. Senghor and many others, initiated the idea of self-determination and self-administration of Africa by the Africans themselves. This younger generation, by refuting the domination and exploitation of Africa by the European colonial system as well as the racial segregation of South Africa, worked hand-in-hand for the Liberation of Africa, as well for the pursuit of freedom, equality, justice and human dignity for the entire African population. Immediately after independence, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana organized the first All African people's Conference in Accra in 1958 during which he proposed the 'African Common Government'. In this historic meeting, many African nationalists met for the first time on the African soil, to express African solidarity and unity in the struggle against colonialism. Many African nationalists, who later became leader of their respective country like Nnamidi Azikiwe of Nigeria, Ahmadu SekouToure of Guinea, Mabido Keita of Mali, Julius Neyrere of Tanganika, Tom Mboya and Jommo Kenyatta of Kenya, and many others were active participants of the Accra Conference (Muhammed, 2015).

In the Accra Conference, Nkrumah and his progressive multilateral ideology of African common government-United Africa (Nkrumah, 1963) laid the corner stone for the need of inter-African relations and unity in order to solve African predicaments. According to him, "no single part of Africa can be safe, or free to develop fully and independently, while any part remains un-liberated, or while Africa's vast economic resources continue to be exploited by imperialist and neo-colonialist interests. Unless Africa is politically united under an All-Africa Union Government, there can be no solution to our political and economic problems" (Nkrumah, 1963).

In 1959, Nkrumah made practical attempt to bring his dream of united Africa into limelight by experimenting with the Ghana-Guinea Union. Consequently, Nkrumah proposed the formation of an ideal 'United States of Africa'. In the declaration of the Ghana-Guinea Union, their leaders said that it was the nucleus of the dreamed 'Union of Independent African States' and other countries were openly urged to join this union. Following this, Mali joined the Union in December 1960, and later it became the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union. Shortly after this union, many continent-wide African unionist movements emerged and proposed their own idea and mechanism for the unification of Africa. The movements include the Casablanca Group, the Monrovia and the Brazzaville Groups, who proposed very divergent approaches for the unity of Africa. In spite of their divergent approaches, the Pan-African movement across

Africa shared common goal of uniting Africa (Mohammed, 2015; Norman, 1964).

On 25 May, 1963 in Addis Ababa the organization of African Unity (OAU) was birthed particularly to unite Africa in the spirit of reconciliation as well as a vision of hope for securing peace, prosperity and development for the peoples of Africa (Akindele, 1988; Murrays, 2004). The formation of OAU created diplomatic atmosphere for multilateralism among African states not only to fight colonialism across Africa and apartheid in South Africa, but also to champion the course of African states in the international community.

In a bid to build sustainable inter-African relations and tackle diverse contemporary issues and challenges confronting the continent, African leaders decided to revise the OAU Charter and for the establishment of a more powerful regional organization committed to addressing contemporary issues in Africa. After a series of attempts, in the 35th OAU Conference of the African Head of States and Governments on 9 September, 1999 at Sirte, Libya, African leaders adopted the Sirte Declaration which eventually led to its transformation to the African Union (AU) on 9 July, 2002 in Durban South Africa with redefined objectives to promote contemporary inter-African relations and integration for continental development.(Aremu, 2007).

4. XENOPHOBIC PREJUDICE AND INTER-AFRICAN RELATIONS
The age-long pan-Africanist ideals and pursuit of African solidarity and unity (for smooth inter-African Relations) which led to the establishment of Organization of African Unity (now the African Union) are now suffering from mutual-hatred, suspicion, discrimination and the worst, Xenophobic attacks. An omen which started 'ordinarily' in form of suspicion of fellow Africans, has today taken a violent dimension- Nationals of an African nation killing and destroying the properties of fellow African migrants for perceived socio-economic reasons. By implication, the once robust inter-African relations is today marred. The contemporary inter-African relations have been marked by a steady undercurrent of xenophobia, both attitudinal and behavioral. The xenophobic altercations in the relations of African countries, such as those between Ghana and Nigeria, Zambia and South Africa as well as between Nigeria and South Africa, among others are reflections of the challenges bedeviling inter-African relations, and the quest for continental peace and development.

Xenophobia as earlier noted is a form of discrimination against those considered to be 'strangers' and non–nationals. Some manifestations of xenophobia include prejudices, negative attitudinal orientations or behaviors against a foreigner (International Labor Organization 2001: 2). Such prejudices, negative attitudinal orientations or behaviors can be triggered by political incitements, hate, declining economic conditions or concerns relating to national security, particularly in the current era of terror attacks. While foreigners are generally affected, refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants are often the central targets in xenophobic situations. This is however not a

new phenomenon in the continent, but its recent destructive nature and negative impacts on inter-African Relations has become a cause of concern for scholars and African peace architects. In most Africa nations, Zambia to South Africa, Nigeria to Ghana, Libya to Kenya, both attitudinal and behavioral xenophobic attacks have been directed against 'strangers' and non-national of fellow African descent.

The notion of xenophobia bears close links to concepts like racism and ethnic intolerance, its semantic distinctiveness lies in the fact that it is rooted in national identity, citizenship and a rejection of foreigners belonging to other borders, states or nations. Some of the evident manifestations of xenophobia have been the expulsion of foreign nationals, threats of expulsion and, in other instances, violent attacks. The root cause of this growing phenomenon has been attributed by some scholars to the colonial activities in the continent and in particular, apartheid in South Africa where it's taking a more violent dimension. Some have attributed this to the resultant effect of globalization's ideal of free trade and global human rights commitments (Njamnjoh 2006: 1). However, in Africa, xenophobic manifestations date as far back as the last decades of colonialism. It started specifically when Ghana deported some Nigerians in 1954 followed by the 1958 expulsion of African migrants in Cote D'Ivoire. The attainment of independence opened door for the long awaited opportunities for several African countries to get rid of 'strangers' in their respective states. The first noticeable post-independence xenophobic prejudice was the mass expulsion of African migrants from Cote D'Ivoire in 1964 (Peil, 1971), and since then, xenophobic tendencies have been taking attitudinal dimension until recently in South Africa where it began to take a violent dimension.

In November 18 1969, Ghana's Prime Minister, Kofi Busia introduced the Aliens Compliance Order (the Aliens Order) which sought to expel undocumented aliens. Meanwhile, prior to this time, there was a general perception of foreigners as the cause of the gross unemployment that had befallen Ghana and anti-alien sentiments had begun to emerge in the country (Aremu and Ajayi 2014: 176). 'The Aliens Order required aliens who lacked work permit [to] get them within a period of two weeks or leave the country' (Gocking 2005: 156). And most of the foreign populations were from the neighboring West African countries such as Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire. By the time the Gold Coast (Ghana) attained independence, the alien community had become an important, if not indispensable factor in the process of economic development of Ghana. Kwameh Nkrumah in the furtherance of his policy of African brotherhood, encouraged the migration of other Africans into Ghana to participate in the accelerated pace of economic growth of the new country. By 1960, Alien presence in the new Ghana was rather substantial. Out of an estimated total population of 6, 727, 000 during the year, some 12.3 percent were reported to be foreigners of which 98 percent were Africans coming from the neighboring states of West Africa. Consequently, Tensions began to rise in Ghana with the increasing entry of foreigners and the dire socio-economic conditions of Ghanaians. However, the ensued deteriorating economic condition of late 1960s among other factors, led to the

issuance of the Alien Compliance Order by the Kofi Busia administration (Aremu&Ajayi, 2014).

The Aliens Order led to the mass exodus of over a million individuals from Ghana. The aliens were accused of posing threat to the economic survival of the country. The expulsion created scenes of panic and fear among foreigners in the country and it didn't go down well with other nations, especially Nigeria whose citizens were thrown into such frustration. The expulsion resulted in a diplomatic row between Ghana and Nigeria who protested the manner of the expulsion.(Aremu and Ajayi, 2014; Asamoah, 2014,)

Similarly, xenophobic attitude surfaced and soured the Gabon-Benin Relations in 1978 due to Gabon's decision to expel all Beninese from the country in 1978). According to Gray (1998), the decision was premised on an alleged aspersion on President Bongo and the people of Gabon by President Kérékou of Benin in July 1978. Fifteen months before this time, in May 1977, Kérékou had accused officials of Gabon of a foiled mercenary coup that sought to oust him from power and told African leaders that he would consider anyone who attended the regional summit in Libreville a traitor (Ibid: 396). In reaction, Gabon banned Beninese from coming into the country. In July 1978, when President Kérékou restated his accusation before Bongo at the Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Sudan, President Bongo became infuriated. In communication with the Chairman of the OAU, President Bongo stated that 'the anger of an entire people, which has been controlled for a whole year, literally exploded after the verbal vulgarities and insanities uttered at the OAU' (Gray 1998: 396). Subsequently, about 9,000 Beninese were expelled from the country (Henckaerts 1995: 16).

Also, Nigeria whose citizens are the most victims of xenophobia in Africa is not freed in any way from xenophobic attitudes and policies in terms of anti-alien sentiment and consequent expulsion of aliens. Nigeria had embarked on massive expulsion of fellow Africans both in 1983 and 1985 (Peil, 1971). The 1970s oil boom in Nigeria combined with the establishment of ECOWAS in 1975 and the coming into force of the "Protocol for Free Movement" in 1980 led to the influx of migrant workers into Nigeria. Consequently, the oil revenue declined leading to economic recession and attendant unemployment in the country

The Nigerian Government under Alhaji Shehu Shagari was forced to impose a hiring stop and private employers were forced to retrench their workers massively. Thus, anti-alien sentiments arose on January 17, 1983, the then Nigerian Minister of Internal Affairs, Alhaji Ali Baba announced that all aliens who are illegally living and working in Nigeria would be required to leave the country in the next two weeks (later extended to four weeks). Estimates about the number of about 1.5 millions of different nationalities were affected by the expulsion. This expulsion order was what led to the popular 'GHANA MUST GO' saga in Nigeria which implies aliens

(Ghanaians in particular) must evacuate the country because Ghanaians were estimated 700, 000 (almost half of the aliens) to be expelled at that period. The year 1985 equally saw a similar trend of expulsion of aliens from the country. Since the 1960s expulsion in Ghana, and the reprisal expulsion aliens (mostly Ghanaians) The Ghano-Nigeria relations has been characterized with mutual suspicion, and all kinds of diplomatic rows (Peil, 1971; Otoghile and Obakhedo 2011: 139; Aremu 2013: 340)

The altercations between the Ivorians and Burkinabes in the 1990s were premised on the idea of '*ivorite*'-an idea propagated by former President Bédié which aimed at lacing Ivorian identity into political and economy opportunity in Cote d'Ivoire as a way of salvaging the declining economy of the country. The institutionalization of Ivoirian identity aggravated resentments against foreigners and divided the Ivorian society. Like other Africa nations, In 1999, between 8,000 and 12,000 nationals of Burkina Faso were expelled leading to tensions between Ivoirians and Burkinabe farmers (Human Rights Watch 2001: 4, Kimou 2013: 18-19; Wiafe-Amoako 2015: 82-83).

In 2004, an attempted coup against the President of Equatorial Guinea, allegedly led by a mercenary, spurred a clamp-down on foreigners in the country. Foreigners from several African countries were detained, intimidated and some were expelled. Government officials raised suspicions against foreigners and Equatorial Guineans were called upon to be vigilant with foreigners, regardless of color, because their target was the wealth of Equatorial Guinea, the oil (Roberts 2009: 192-193). Estimates of about 1,000 foreigners from other African countries, mostly from Cameroon, were expelled from the country (Human Rights Watch 2009: 81). More so, Equatorial Guineans who did not belong to the law enforcement agency of the state were permitted to arbitrarily arrest those suspected to be illegal foreigners (Ibid.) The manner at which Cameroonians were treated in Malabo resulted in diplomatic spats between the two countries in different instances. Also, the relations between Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea have always been labeled with diplomatic rows resulting from the alleged maltreatment of Nigerian laborers, a sizeable workforce in Malabo. As such the relations between the two countries continue to fluctuate between measured friendship and outright animosity (Obadare, 2001: 80). The most serious of this diplomatic spats occurred in January 1976 when soldiers of the National Guard attacked some Nigerian laborers who had taken refuge in the Nigerian embassy in Malabo, the attack resulted in eleven deaths (Human Rights Watch 2009). This incident increased the diplomatic temperature of Nigeria-Equatorial Guinea relations.

The recent diplomatic fracas between Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola over reprisal expulsions of their respective citizens equally reflects extent to which xenophobia has eaten deep in the fabric of inter-Africa relations. In 2004, the Angolan government expelled an estimated 100,000 Congolese from Angola over the allegation that citizens of the Democratic Republic of Congo (Congo Kinshasa) were stealing natural resources that belonged to Angola. Over 160,000 Congolese were

expelled between December 2008 and December 2009. In 2009, the government of Congo Kinshasa expelled 50,000 Angolans in retaliate response to the mass expulsion of Congolese from Angola. This was done amid a rising wave of popular anger over the humiliating treatment of those initially expelled by the Angola government (Siegel 2009: 23; Adebajo 2011: 91; Human Rights Watch 2012: 11).

In the same manner, in 2013, the government of Tanzania gave a two-week ultimatum to undocumented foreigners to leave the country. Prior to the expulsion, the decision was informed on two grounds. Firstly, on the complaint 'from villagers over acts of armed robbery, bus attacks and kidnaps attributed to illegal immigrants in some areas in the country. Secondly, on the ground those undocumented foreigners overstretched government's ability to offer services to its people. Tanzania expelled close to 11,000 undocumented foreigners (mostly Africans) in an effort to rid the country of criminal elements. Those expelled were from Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda (Naluyaga, 2013).

More so, in Kenya's attempts to address the threat of violent extremism, the Somali Kenyan community is often stigmatized and faced with negative reactions and sentiment due to the Somali al-Shabaab terrorist group responsible for the diverse insurgences in Kenya. Following the 2013 Westgate attacks, Kenyan government authorities threatened to close down the Dadaab camp which housed about half a million Somali refugees. In 2014, approximately 4,000 Somalis were arrested in Operation Usalama Watch initiated by the government with the view to counter terrorism and address security concerns in the state.

Considering the socio-cultural affinity in terms of language and shared ethnic values between The Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville) and Democratic Republic of Congo (Congo Kinshasa) one would least expect Xenophobic attitudes-'foreign-fears', but the opposite was the case due to the arbitrary boundaries between them. In 2014, Congo Brazzaville initiated an operation dubbed Operation 'Mbala ya bakolo'-meaning 'slap of the elders'. The essence of this operation was to rid the country of criminal elements, but turned out to be a 'general operation' during which over 50,000 citizens of the Democratic of Republic of Congo were expelled (Amnesty International, 2015.).

Also, the case of immigrant in Libya, which led to the outbreak of violence was described as a reaction by Libyan youths to the surge of more than a million legal and illegal immigrants from Nigeria, Sudan, Ghana, Chad, Niger, Guinea, and Cameroon who have been drawn to oil-rich Libya for work. Disturbing accounts by returnees of gross discrimination, beatings, arson, robbery, and looting of their homes generated widespread public anger, particularly in Nigeria, where anti-Libyan street demonstrations was staged in Lagos leaving one person dead and several brutally injured (Margaret, 2010).

The brotherly and cordial relationship between South Africa and other African nations

especially in the post-apartheid era was put to test in the wake of xenophobic attacks against other African citizens by South Africans. South Africa is today described as the hub xenophobic attacks in Africa. The new wave of xenophobic attacks in post-apartheid South Africa started in 1998 and was purely directed towards the citizens of other African countries residing and doing business in South Africa. According to Landau (2011), xenophobic attacks in South Africa started in May 2008, and since the 2008 attacks, there had continued to be an incessant xenophobic attack in South Africa. Between 20008 through 2019, hardly did any year go by without an incidence of attacks on fellow blacks from other African countries by the blacks of South Africa, the destruction in human and material resources can hardly be quantified.

These ugly developments have pitched South Africa against other African countries, especially Nigeria. The September 2019, xenophobic attacks in South Africa both regional and international condemnation and responses. In response to the attack, all stores and service centers operated by South African Telecommunications company, MTN Nigeria were temporarily shut down due to reprisal attacks on the company for the attacks in South Africa. Other South African companies in Nigeria such as Shoprite and MultiChoice also temporarily stopped operations. South African diplomatic missions in Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria were closed due to threats of reprisal attacks. The Nigerian government also cancelled its participation at the African Economic Summit scheduled to be held in Cape Town in reaction to the attack on its citizens and as well closed her embassy in South Africa in the face of the increasing xenophobic violence. In like manner, the Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) cancelled an international soccer match against South Africa scheduled to take place in Zambia to the violence against fellow Africans (Zambia inclusive). As if that was not enough, the angry Zambians stormed a Zambian based South African supermarket in retaliation for attacks on Zambian nationals in the wake of the attacks on foreigners, other African nations like Botswana issued travel advisory and warning to their nationals. (Gallen, 2019; Nwanze, 2019; Human Right Watch News, 2019; fin24 news, 2019; Eye Witness News, 2019)

From the above analysis, it is obvious that the ties between and amongst African countries are being impaired by Xenophobic prejudice. In fact, the two leading continental powers (Nigeria and South Africa) are being caught in the web of this xenophobic violence and engulfed in diplomatic spats as other African nations. By implication, however, the spirit of African brotherhood is being dampened. the message of Africa solidarity is being ridiculed. From the forgoing, xenophobic prejudice has been found to be triggered by different factors such as economic insecurity, as seen in the cases of Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa and Angola. Secondly, Socio-political factors - the claim that non-nationals are involved in and abetting crimes and terrorism in their host countries as in the cases of Ghana, Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Angola, Uganda, etc. The irony of the entire "fear of foreigners", either in South Africa or elsewhere in Africa is that it has no racial coloration because "white" people are not viewed as foreigners in the context of

xenophobic violence and they are not usually attacked as it is the case of fellow Africans.

However, beyond any acclaimed reason(s) for xenophobic prejudice in Africa, the deduced common factors responsible for this act are suspicious; manifest hatred and fear of socio-economic domination by non-nationals. These factors are unarguably manifestations of the colonial seeds of discord sowed in the continent through direct and indirect rule and in some cases, the apartheid system across Africa. For perceived political and economic reasons, the European powers created arbitrary boundaries among African nations, of which to maintain such boundaries have consciously portrayed African nations as being different or strangers to one another. This same reason accounts for the interstate conflicts in the African continent presently, as the seeds of discord sowed is fruiting xenophobic prejudices which is today tearing African nations apart. This is why the target is against fellow Africans and not white migrants irrespective of their post-colonial economic adventures in most African states. The violent nature of the xenophobic phenomenon is a direct effect of the prolonged stay of colonial powers in the country under the apartheid regime. They had enough time to water the seed of mistrust, hatred and discord among the South African people.

It is not surprising that even the South African people do not see themselves as one. When the xenophobic violence in South Africa occurred, the victims were not only foreigners in the sense of belonging to a different nationality, rather, people not belonging to the dominant ethnic groups in the main cities of Zulu or Xhosa were not spared from the attacks. Members of smaller ethnic groups in South Africa are also viewed as foreigners by fellow South Africans (Gumede, 2015). According to Mogekwu (2015), the attacks are sometimes not limited to migrants. Fellow South Africans who 'looked foreign' are also attacked because they were 'too dark' to be South African. Also, South African xenophobia prejudice is also extended to marriage between South African ladies and foreign national. Foreigners are usually referred to as "makwerekwere"-a derogatory term used to describe foreigners. Thus, it is usually a terrible experience for young ladies who decide to get married to foreign nationals. Their parents would neither consent the union nor allow the marriage to see limelight due their stereotyped notions of foreign nationals (Malesela, 2017).

5. CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN INTER-AFRICAN RELATIONS AS A PANACEA TO THE INCREASING XENOPHOBIC PREJUDICE

Africa's colonial legacies which bred all kinds of conflict in Africa and the inhuman apartheid regime in South Africa did enough damage to the psyche of Africans. Having suffered these ordeals from the Europeans, most Africans believed that after the granting of independence and the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa, they are brothers with common history and descent and to that extent would respect the dignity of one other. But little did they know that the colonial legacies are with them

and that it would haunt their future relations and efforts to build a united Africa of their dream.

Africans' psyche has been largely influence against fellow Africans and it is today, manifesting into xenophobic prejudices across the continent. The objectives or goals of African integration being pursued by the African Union (AU) are being impaired. Part of the goals of the AU are: promotion of sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies; promotion of cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples and coordination; and harmonization of policies between existing and future Regional Economic Community for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the union (Aremu, 2007).

Article two Section II of the African Union(AU) constitution states that in order to achieve the above aims, the organization shall harmonize their general policies in the following fields; Political and diplomatic cooperation; Economic cooperation including transport and communication; Educational and cultural cooperation; Scientific and technical cooperation; Cooperation for defense and security (Ibid; Adebisi 2007:83). Apparently, the atmosphere of insecurity through xenophobic attacks cannot help in promoting these lofty integration goals. The incessant violent xenophobic attacks in South Africa and xenophobic prejudices in other African states indeed has far reaching implications on the socio-economic development and inter-African relations, which calls for the immediate and collective efforts by African nations to put it to check. The impact of this on the political, socio-cultural and economic spheres within Africa has contributed significantly to massive underdevelopment of the African continent.

It is notable that the first target of the colonial masters on their emergence on the African continent was African culture and its element which is one of the sources of African bond and unity. The Europeans infiltrated the African cultural beliefs, cultural heritage and African norms to their advantages. This explains why they were quick to introduce their languages as the lingua franca which most Africans prefer over their local languages today. They created arbitrary boundaries, separated peoples that were willing to stay together and brought together peoples that were unwilling to stay together. To get it right and mitigate the effects of such colonial damages which is already manifesting in form of xenophobic prejudices in the continent, there is a prime need to adopt and deploy the tool of cultural diplomacy across the continent to rejuvenate the deteriorating inter African relations.

In today's turbulent political Africa, diplomatic means play a crucial role in a country's efforts to achieve political goals and to promote its image in the international arena. No stable democratic country relies solely on military and economic means (hard power) in its interactions with other countries. Rather, other diplomatic approaches like public diplomacy. Public diplomacy is an international

actor's attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public (Cull, 2007). Public is an old practice since the Roman Empire and its significance can be seen even through World Wars, turning wars and conflicts into peace and stability. The War times also made the world learn about the propaganda instrument of diplomacy. During the Cold war, the significance of public diplomacy was evident more in the budgetary priority in order to win the hearts and mind of the people by the United States. However, the soft power strategy has been observed as a critical strategy for cultural diplomacy after 9/11, as the war on terror started by the Bush's Administration has generated a lot of sentiments and to counter these sentiments, the United States employed different strategies to put anti-Americanism to check (Noor& Zahid, 2018). However, considering the contemporary global issues hinged on globalization, a new form of public diplomacy is evolving and cultural diplomacy holds an important and central aspect of the new approach.

Cultural diplomacy is a type of public diplomacy and soft power tool that includes the exchange of ideas, information, art, language and component of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding (Michael, 2009, Milton, 2003). It implies the use of a country's culture to reach out to foreign audiences and to project a positive image in the international arena. Cultural diplomacy includes exchanges between people in different countries, through which individuals are able to visit foreign countries and learn about the culture and society of the foreign country. It includes the study of another country's language, traditions, and lifestyle. Culture is an exceedingly broad term, thus contributing to the vast range of areas that fall under the definition of cultural diplomacy. For instance, culture includes literature, the arts in general, customs, habits and traditions, humans' behavior, history, music, folklore, gestures, and social relationships (Sztefka, 2008). Thus, any interaction or exchange between the people of two countries in any of these areas is referred to as cultural diplomacy.

Cultural diplomacy is in essence the adoption and deployment of what Joseph Nye referred to as "soft power". According to Nye, soft power "rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others". Nye stipulates that "the soft power of a country rests primarily on three sources: its culture…, its political values…and its foreign policies…" (Nye, 2004:5). By enabling a country to expose people of other nationalities to its culture, society and people, and by increasing personal connections between people of different countries, cultural diplomacy enables a country to make its political ideals and policies more attractive in the eyes of foreign audiences. When a country's culture includes universal values and interests other shares, it increases the probability of obtaining its desired outcomes because of the relationship of attraction and duty that it creates (Ibid.). Cultural diplomacy is a means through which governments can increase respect and understanding of themselves amongst other countries in the region and the world at large.

While emphasizing the indispensable role of cultural diplomacy in building mutual

understanding between and among states, Gifford Malone, a renowned author in US Diplomacy once averred that "If we strive to be successful in our efforts to create understanding for our society and for our policies, we must first understand the motives, culture, history, and psychology of the people with whom we wish to communicate and certainly their language" (Wyszomirski, 2003). As the world hegemon in the current unipolar structure of international system, United States has been relying on cultural diplomacy as a soft power tool to penetrate the minds and hearts of world audiences. Today, the dominant instrument of the United States foreign policy is cultural diplomacy as a soft power tool. Similarly, Europe and the nation Israel have been embarking on cultural diplomacy program not just to create a condition of peace in their territories, but also as means to win the heart of other nations.

The contemporary inter-African relations which are characterized with mutual hatred, suspicion and xenophobic attacks can be addressed through cultural diplomacy programs. Cultural diplomacy programs create forums for interaction between people of different countries, thus laying the groundwork for the forging of friendships and strong connections between people of different nationalities. Cultural diplomacy helps create a "foundation of trust" with other peoples. Policy makers can build on this trust to create political, economic, and military ties between and among nations. Given the African colonial history and legacies, attempts to create political friendly diplomatic relations between and among African states, lay foundation of trust and understanding amongst the mass public in these countries can help bolster public opinion in favor of any diplomatic engagement. The means to the heart of any nation is through the mass public.

According to the United States Department of States Committee Report (2005), cultural diplomacy can succeed in reaching influential members of foreign societies who cannot be reached through traditional embassy functions. Cultural diplomacy programs are often targeted at the young mass public. Increased cultural interactions with youths in foreign countries allow a country to have positive impacts on individuals who may one day become highly influential leaders in their respective countries. Friendships forged with counterparts in another country and fond memories of visits to a foreign country will not likely be forgotten when a leader is in a position of power and would make important decisions and policies that may impact the country he visited years earlier. Cultural diplomacy programs are able to counter misunderstandings, ignorance, and baseless hatred that people in other countries may bear toward a certain country. This is central to building a new Africa of mutual love and trust. As an inherited legacy, most African states hold to negative impression, hatred and sentiment towards fellow African states.

Cultural diplomacy programs which expose people to respective societies, peoples, and traditions can succeed in portraying individual African states in a different, more positive light to audiences around Africa. In the case of South Africa, people in other

African countries will finally understand that there is much more to the country other than xenophobia. South Africa is one of the most developed societies in Africa, in the field of business and culture. The same can be said of Ghana (second leading xenophobic nation in Africa). Also, the obnoxious notions of some fellow Africans that all Nigerians are criminals are far from the truth. Most Nigerians are humane, law-abiding, hospitable and friendly except for few unscrupulous elements among them. All these aspects are lost in the media portrayal of the labeled xenophobic nations of Africa, but can be exposed and portrayed through cultural diplomacy initiatives across the continent

Another area in which cultural diplomacy can be used to build mutual tolerance and in turn mend the broken fences of relations between and amongst Africans states is the field of education. Education and academic institutions are integral to cultural exchange (Thayer, 1959). In developed world, cultural diplomacy has achieved much success in the field of education in the past and continues to do so today. Textbooks from basic schools to universities are often inundated with information about the cultures of different countries, history, religions, and ethnic groups. Such efforts are often designed to educate children to understand and respect the traditions and lifestyles of people of other nationalities.

While analyzing the causes of Xenophobia in South Africa, Adewale (2017:17-18) opined that one of the major causes of Xenophobic attacks in South Africa is the poor knowledge of history by the aggressive youths. According to him, It is not a funny thing when younger generations have no or very poor knowledge of the past. They seem not to appreciate the significant role played by Nigeria and other African countries in the struggle for the liberation of many Southern African countries from the shackles of apartheid. No doubt, the xenophobic prejudice that heralds the continent is not unconnected with the poor knowledge of African History- Pre-colonial, Colonial and Post-colonial African societies. Today, most African youths have very poor knowledge of African history as most African nations have played down the role of history in the society. History as a subject taught in most secondary schools, is now seen to be irrelevant and archaic. In fact countries like Nigeria have removed History from the Secondary Schools curricula until the recent past and just few higher institutions of learning offer History as a distinct course. What a misplaced priority! Most African youths and leaders have little or no knowledge of the damage caused colonialism to African society which partly accounts for the continual sentiments, hatred and xenophobic agitations across Africa.

Many universities around the world offer students the opportunity to spend a semester abroad, immersing themselves in the culture of a foreign country. (Roni, Assaf, Steven & Ayela, 2008). All these efforts succeed in exposing youth to their counterparts in foreign countries and help build a platform of tolerance and understanding amongst nations in the world. Similar cultural diplomacy initiative can be deployed in Africa. Student exchange programs which bring students from one African state to another

would increase the diversity on campus and contributes to a more positive learning environment. By sending students abroad, universities help prepare their students for their future careers by exposing them to other cultures and to the indigenous language(s) of the host country which would in turn build trust and mutual tolerance among the citizens of exchange programs. For instance, Gambia nationals whose relatives are on exchange programs in Uganda would think twice before maltreating or attacking Ugandans in their country for fear of reprisal attacks on their relatives studying in Uganda. In that sense, mutual tolerance would be built across the continent. Similarly, a student who participated in an exchange program becomes a political leader in his or her home country would automatically bear an affinity toward the country he or she visited.

Similarly, language influences the human behavior because it is central to most of the social psychology phenomena such as attitude change, social perception, personal identity, social interaction, intergroup bias and stereotyping, attribution, and so on. Also, language is central and influences all that we do as individuals – our thought process, culture, choices, orientations, reactions to issues and so on. It is capable of curbing conflicts and restoring peace in conflict prone areas. (Olagbaju & Awosusi, 2019). Thus, placing an emphasis on teaching a country's students languages other than the country's home language is another form of cultural diplomacy. Students who familiarize themselves with the languages of other countries will be better able to communicate with and understand people living in other countries. It is noteworthy that many countries around the world mandate the study of a foreign language in secondary schools.

The Post-Biafra war reconstruction effort in Nigeria is a good example of this aspect of cultural diplomacy initiative. The country established a National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in 1973, after the Biafra war. Youths of a particular ethnic group are posted to other area comprising of other ethnic groups for a compulsory one year national service purposely to learn the culture, language and customs of other ethnic groups as a way of allaying the colonial inherited ethnic sentiment, hatred and suspicion between and among the three major ethnic groups-Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba that made up the nation. It has been a successful initiative so far as it has been one of the strong factors holding the country together till today. Regional wise, the Nigeria Technical Aid Corps (TAC) as part of its Afrocentric diplomatic initiatives in Africa is also a good cultural diplomacy initiative. Nigerian volunteers whose services are needed in other states are annually deployed to other states to fill manpower gaps in such states. In fact, this gesture is today not limited to Africa, but has been extended to the Caribbean states. Through this, most African and the Caribbean states are now convinced of the human and intellectual capabilities of the nation Nigeria. It has been effectively functioning as soft spot of Nigeria diplomacy abroad. The Technical Aid Program can be collectively adopted by other African states in form of manpower exchange across the continent with a redefined goal of cultural exchange. It should not be a one way traffic program. As Nigeria is sending out TAC volunteers, other

states should equally send volunteers to Nigeria depending on their economic strength. In fact, considering its financial burden on poor African states, it can become an African Union (AU) project, and its continental impact would convince the United Nation (UN) and other Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) to invest and support the project in the long run.

According to the former American Secretary of State Colin Powell, to address most of challenges facing most countries today from wiping out terrorism to minimizing global environmental problems to eliminating the scourge of AIDS will require every young person to learn more about other regions, cultures, and languages (Roni et al, 2008). Cultural diplomacy programs which serve to increase the people-to-people interaction between people of all different fields of occupation can help increase international, bilateral and multilateral cooperation. For instance, joint cooperation between leaders in different African countries in fields such as Agriculture, Law, Medicine, science etc. can serve this purpose effectively.

The fact that the targeted audiences of cultural diplomacy programs are ordinary citizens and not government representatives can be beneficial in a country's efforts to penetrate the minds and hearts of world audiences. This is because when a group of Legal or Medical personnel from South Africa, for example, travel to Nigeria, their views and opinions are their own. They act not as representatives of the South African government, but as representatives of South African society at large, and thus Nigerian audiences who probably disagree with the policies of the Government of South Africa are more likely to accept these Legal or Medical Personnel as people, and unconsciously form new opinions of South Africa as a nation through their interaction with these individuals. By the virtues of such newly formed public opinions, the broken fences (if any) between the two countries can be mended because public opinion holds a central place in the formulation of country's foreign policy. Thus, people-to-people interactions between and among African peoples would create an atmosphere of mutual confidence and trust as against the inherited mutual hatred and sentiments which bred xenophobic prejudices in the continent.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the aforementioned, the following recommendations are being made:
- ➢ The African Union (AU) should awake to the reality of the haunting colonial legacies manifesting like wildfire in the continent. The regional organization and other sub-regional organizations such as ECOWAS should be alive to their full responsibility to develop and deploy strategic preventive mechanism that is hinged on cultural diplomacy initiatives, devoid of sentiment and bias to put an end to the increasing xenophobic menace in Africa.

- ➢ African states should embrace the paradigm shift in international relations from the use of hard power to soft power as an instrument of foreign policy, and thus tilt their foreign policy towards soft power which embraces cultural

diplomacy as an instrument of bilateralism and multilateralism in the continent.

> The respective African states Government should rethink the value of diplomatic efforts, and in particular, cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy programs should be initiated across board. The budget for cultural diplomacy should be significantly increased to satisfy the growing need for the employment of cultural diplomacy as a means to promote a more positive public image of their states and build smooth relations with other African states.

> As enunciated above, all African states should immediately initiate students' exchange programs and the funding should be mutual to avoid overburden on either of the states which may lead to a rethink and backing off the program later. The students on exchange program should be mandated to learn the local languages of their host country.

> All African states should give priority to the study of History and African Studies in their respective institutions of learning starting from basic education to the University level. History and African studies which embrace the study of African history, culture, language and other aspects of African lives should be incorporated into the curricular of all schools and it should be made compulsory subject taught in all schools across African states.

> Media platforms across Africa, from Broadcasts to Prints should initiate and keep propagating media messages and contents that promote African culture across board. This should feature the portrayal of the good sides of various African states and their cultures, with the aim of enhancing love and mutual relations between and among African states.

7. CONCLUSION

Xenophobia prejudice is an African generic challenge with overall implications on human rights, governance, development and democracy in Africa. As it is not specific to one African state, therefore, it requires collective efforts to address. The xenophobic altercations in the relations of African countries, such as those between Ghana and Nigeria, Zambia and South Africa, as well as between Nigeria and South Africa, among others are reflections of the challenges bedeviling inter-African relations, and the quest for continental peace and development.

According to Iyorwuese (2011), Cultural diplomacy is a soft spot of diplomacy which undoubtedly has more influence than the formal diplomacy in the contemporary international relations. In this sense, this paper elaborates on the role of cultural diplomacy as a soft power tool in addressing the root causes of xenophobia in Africa. The idea of cultural diplomacy is for the people of foreign nations to develop an

understanding of the nation's ideals and institutions in an effort to build a broad support for economic and political goals. It is a people-to-people (P2P) diplomacy whereby individuals from different nations are given open platforms to interact in different fields so as to build mutual understanding and tolerance. Cultural diplomacy 'reveals the soul of a nation' which in turn creates internal and external influences. (Mary, 2001:59). Worth citing here, however, is the case of Gambia-Senegal relations. The two sister nations realized their colonial disadvantages, consciously leveraged on their socio-cultural affinity and explored them through fence-mending diplomacy, to advance their respective national interests in mutual atmospheres (Awosusi &Muhammed, 2019). Similarly, all African nations should make deliberate attempts to collectively resolve their common challenges rooted in colonial legacies, through effective cultural diplomacy initiatives as a way of plastering the cracked walls in inter-African relations and as well promoting continental security.

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