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**Xenophobia and Social Exclusion: Experiences of Female Rwandan
Refugees in South Africa**

Paula Barnabé

Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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in
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1. Introduction

This research project will serve to highlight the daily encounters of xenophobia and social exclusion of six female Rwandan refugees residing in Durban, South Africa in 2002. Focus will rest upon the respondent's upheaval from their country of origin (Rwanda) and their subsequent settlement in South Africa. A comprehensive literature review will focus on South Africa's past and current international and African legislation, policies and conventions pertaining to refugee and immigration issues all by emphasizing a gender-based perspective. More specifically, a pre and post apartheid assessment will be sought in the attempts to comprehend an era of segregation, racism and sexism. The methodological section will illuminate the process utilized to put forth this research project. In other words, an examination and subsequent justification of the empirical framework and research techniques will be presented. Finally, the analysis will touch upon women's unique experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion within South African society. A feminist dialogue will serve to portray the private and public dichotomies, which in turn, influence each respondent's experiences within their country of asylum. As such, the topics of women, citizenship and exclusion will be touched upon as well as those of the public official, public and private spaces and places, public and private violence, and harassment as a means of comprehending the impact of one's gender as an influential determinant to the degree of xenophobia and social exclusion experienced within one's daily life. Due to the focus of this research, the plight of female Rwandan refugees who fled their country of origin as a result of the 1994 genocide will be touched upon. Their experiences in countries of asylum will be addressed through a gender-based analysis of social exclusion and the varying psychosocial challenges that directly impact one's social integration.

In conclusion, the two main topics – xenophobia and social exclusion – will be linked and explained within a South African context.

2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will begin by providing an overview of past and current international and African legislation, policies and conventions pertaining to refugees generally and women particularly in order to comprehend the extent to which the existing refugee crisis has become a global phenomenon. Throughout this analysis, focus will rest on South Africa's stance on refugee issues as it initially appeared in the 1991 Aliens Control Act and later in the 1998 Refugees Act. Though progressive in nature, the latter Act has been accused of holding remnants of South Africa's former era of segregation and racism. Under this guise, issues of xenophobia and the subsequent social exclusion of refugees will be addressed. In the first instance, general public perceptions as well as the legal/political and media discourses of the South African "foreigner" will be contextualized. Three hypotheses, as indicated by Harris 2002, namely, the scapegoating hypothesis, the isolation hypothesis as well as the bio-cultural hypothesis will be provided as a means of ascertaining the presence of xenophobia within a South African context. Moreover, a historical discussion of identity politics and citizenship will serve to explain the framework in which xenophobia prevailed.

2.2 International Response to the Refugee Crisis

As late as the 20th century, universal standards for the protection of refugees remained non-existent (UNHCR, 1995: 44). Following the First World War, refugee protection became the responsibility of the international community of states, as opposed to individual organizations or private charitable organizations, as displayed by the 1947 replacement of the League of Nations

by the United Nation's International Refugee Organization (IRO). This international body dealt with all aspects of refugee matters including repatriation, identification and resettlement (Gordenker, 1987: 16). In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was created, greatly impacting future international and national instruments in establishing the foundation for global human rights and freedoms. Articles 13 (1) and 14 (1) respectively, addressed the issue of displacement by stipulating that "everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state" and that "everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution (UDHR, 1948)¹. Under the auspices of this declaration, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and its Protocols were formulated and became a significant basis for international humanitarian law. In 1950, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) was adopted by a General Assembly resolution and was specifically entrusted with two main functions – that of "providing international protection [...] and [...] seeking permanent solutions to the problems of refugees" (p. 253). The core of the UNHCR's mandate, as outlined in the Statute, indicated that it may capably aid any person who:

Owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to return to it. (General Assembly resolution, 1950 (V): 9)

Over the past decades, additional aspects have been integrated within this mandate in order to adapt to the ever-evolving nature of refugee displacement. Later on, the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention and its subsequent 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees were formulated, in conjunction with the UNHCR, and stipulated not only the obligations and rights of refugees and the obligations of States towards them but also international standards towards the

¹ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948 – <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

treatment of refugees and different principles in promoting and protecting their rights. During the 1960's the refugee crisis spread from Europe to Africa as most of the continent struggled to gain independence from European colonial rule (UNHCR, 2000:37). The Algerian war of independence (1954-1962) marked the beginning of the UNHCR's increased involvement in Africa. Later conflicts, including one in the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa in the early 1960's, transformed the organization's overall perception of the refugee crisis (p. 38). Different challenges and dangers emerged, from those found in Europe, when countries of asylum were discovered as being politically unstable and highly volatile in nature. These factors triggered the awareness that instances of forced migration could not be dealt with in a homogenous manner. In response to such events, varying charters, treaties and conventions emerged in order to specifically address the uniqueness of African refugee crises.

2.3 Africa's Response to Refugee Crises

In 1965, there were approximately 850,000 refugees in Africa and by the end of the decade this number increased to four million (Giles, Moussa & Van Esterik, 1996: 44). By the mid 1960's the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention did not apply to the majority of refugees in Africa since its framework of international legal protection remained confined to assisting those who had become refugees before January 1, 1951. Moreover, before the implementation of the 1967 Protocol, signatory States were permitted to limit their geographical options to Europe (UNHCR, 2000: 49; Rystad, 1990: 121). Once implemented, the 1967 Protocol received overwhelming acceptance in Africa. However, the Organization of the African Unity (OAU) believed in the necessity of adopting a regional convention, addressing the specific needs of African refugees. By 1969, the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa was adopted and served to broaden certain provisions not found within the

UN Convention. It also restated the United Nation's 1951 Convention of Human Rights definition of a refugee by including that the term should also apply to:

[...] Every person who, owing external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality. (OAU, 1969: Article 1)

The OAU Refugee Convention came into effect in 1974 and has since provided an important legal framework, along with the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, for many African activities (Nobel, 1987: 15). In 1981, with the adoption by the OAU of the African Charter of Human and People's Rights, individual and collective human rights as well as the right to international and national peace and security were addressed and granted to a wide category of beneficiaries.

Over the past decades, other international instruments relating to the protection of human rights of refugees in general, and women in particular, have been put forth. Two stellar examples include the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination, which came into force in 1969 as well as the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), also recognized as a bill of rights for women, adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly (Nobel, 1987 and Melander & Nobel, 1978: 98).

2.4 Addressing Refugee Women

The conventions and treaties outlined above are but a few examples of instruments serving to protect the rights of refugees. However, specifically addressing women's rights has just until recently been given special attention within the international community (Forbes-Martin, 2004: 1). The importance of this remains significant, considering that approximately

80% of refugees consist of women and children and that some of the worst movements in refugee history occurred throughout the 1990's in Bosnia, Rwanda, Afghanistan and in the Sudan (pp. 1-2). In the 1980's the UNHCR Executive Committee adopted four general conclusions relating specifically to refugee women. Under these auspices the 1990 Policy on Refugee Women was formulated into a policy framework aiming to protect refugee women and was eventually adopted by the Executive Committee as well as applicable United Nations resolutions. Keeping in line with the Policy on Refugee Women, Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women were introduced in 1991 – implicitly indicating the need for asylum procedures to take into consideration the unique difficulties encountered by refugee women while applying for asylum (Amnesty International, 1997). Other international instruments also worthy of mention in serving to protect women's rights consist of, among others: the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children and the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflicts (p. 41).

South Africa's stance in adopting international treaties and conventions for protecting the rights of refugees has been quite progressive considering its past of international isolation; however, certain aspects of national legislation pertaining to refugees and immigration has been subjected to great criticism and debate since the early 1990's.

2.5 South Africa's International Stance on Refugee Issues

Between 1993-1994 South Africa's international isolation came to an end. During this period, the South African government signed an agreement with the UNHCR agreeing to the establishment of an "Office of the High Commissioner and granting some privileges to that

office” (Amnesty International, 1997: 126). It was also agreed that procedures would begin for determining refugee status and to grant asylum to certain refugees. As a result, numerous conventions and treaties were signed and adopted within the next three years including the 1995 signing of the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Protection in Africa, as well as the 1996 signing of the 1951 United Nations Convention for Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. These instruments served to underpin the current definition of refugee in the 1998 South African Refugees Act – an act developed from recommendations in the 1997 Green Paper on International Migration dealing specifically with refugees in South Africa (Human Rights Watch, 1998). Thus, within the 1998 Refugee White Paper, a refugee is defined under the 1950 UNHCR definition as a “person fleeing from individual persecution, generalized human rights violations or armed conflict in their country of origin (UNHCR, 1998: 2).

The following section will discuss past and current immigration and refugee legislation in South Africa and will contextualize the degree to which the signing and adoption of the aforementioned conventions has influenced, or not, their formulation.

2.6 South African Refugee Policy

Following the end of apartheid, the newly elected government attempted to put an end to all forms of discrimination by legislating racial inclusiveness and equality for all citizens (Harris, 2001). Despite these efforts, origins of refugee policy in South Africa stemmed from the country’s much criticized Aliens Control Act (No. 96 of 1991), which in numerous ways has failed to provide adequate guarantees to applicants (Human Rights Watch, 1998: 170; Handmaker, 2001: 92). This Act served as a basis for the formulation of three legislative instruments namely, the Green Paper on International Migration (1997), the White Paper on Refugees (1998) (enacted in 2000) and the White Paper on International Migration (1999) - as a

means to “redressing immigration in contemporary South Africa” (Harris, 2001; Crush & McDonald, 2001). In terms of refugee policy, the 1997 Green Paper on International Migration recommended that independent treatment within the realms of policy and law be granted to refugees (Harris, 2001). In other words, the Green Paper on International Migration argued that refugee protection consisted of a human rights issue (as opposed to a migrant issue) and as such, proposed four guiding principles that should be taken into account within refugee policy and legislation (Williams, 2000²). First, policy and legislation must be temporary in that refugees should be protected for as long as they remain at risk and until they can return home safely. Second, it should meet the international standards established for human rights including: the right to *non-refoulement*, security rights, basic dignity rights and self-sufficiency rights. Third, it should be solution oriented in that refugees should be able to: develop skills that would help them during their stay in South Africa and be able to maintain contact between refugee communities and their counterparts from their countries of origin, and intactness of social structures of refugee communities. Finally, policy and legislation should allow for collective protection in the South African Development Community (SADC)³. These recommendations set the groundwork for two subsequent White Papers relating to refugees and international migration.

Prior to the inception of the Refugees Act in April 2000, refugee status in South Africa was granted in accordance to a Section 28 permit of the Aliens Control Act which allocated certain legal rights only to those deemed as “recognized refugees” (Harris, 2001: 15). These rights included, among others, the rights to freedom and security, human dignity as well as

² http://www.ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/9_3/p9_need_protection.html

³ Ibid.

freedom from arrest and arbitrary detention⁴ (UNHCR, 1998). Under the Aliens Control Act, asylum seekers waiting for refugee status were granted these same basic rights as well as additional rights, which fell under Section 41 permit of the Aliens Control Amendment Act of 1995. In general, they consisted of the right to have asylum applications processed in a fair procedure and the right to *non-refoulement* while waiting for asylum applications to be decided upon (UNHCR, 1998).

Policy reform leading up to the 1998 Refugees Act began in 1996 with two Draft Refugee Bills. The Refugees Act was passed by the South African legislature in 1998 and took effect in 2000. Generally, the new law promised to shorten the adjudicating asylum applications and provided identity cards to asylum seekers who were granted official refugee status⁵. The law also placed restrictions on asylum seekers by prohibiting them from employment and schooling while their cases were waiting to be heard. Moreover, all refugees were required to have their permits renewed on a regular basis (every three months) (Williams, 2001). The Refugees Act also set out the structures and mechanisms to govern status determination procedures. These included, among others, the establishment of Refugee Reception offices; the appointment of staff within the Department of Home Affairs to specifically attend to applications for asylum; and the creation of a Standing Committee and an Appeal Board to review decisions⁶.

Those granted refugee status in South Africa possessed the rights to healthcare, education and employment. However, those rights according to De La Hunt (1998) “[were] by no means secured” (p. 138). The following section will focus on the extent to which, within legal realms, a

⁴ Additional rights included the right to: *non-refoulement*; associate in non-political and non-profit making associations and trade unions; acquire property, leases and other contracts; engage in wage-earning employment, self-employment and liberal profession; access primary, secondary and tertiary education; access to primary and emergency health care, and referral for further medical treatment; have an identity card and travel document and; pursue the unity of the family (UNHCR, 1998).

⁵ http://www.refugees.org/world/countryrpt/africa/south_africa.html

⁶ http://www.ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/9_3/p9_need_protection.html

clear divide exists between refugees, immigrants and economic migrants. As such, we will reveal the degree to which distinguishing and determining criteria between the three categories remains “tenuous and arbitrary in practice” (Harris, 2001:16) and in turn, portrays the “foreigner” as a homogeneous entity.

2.7 Homogeneity of Foreigners

Political and media discourse, in contemporary South Africa, often portrays foreigners as a homogeneous, coherent and uniform group. This tendency not only leads to a disregard for individual complexity and diversity, but it also fuels negative perceptions of all foreigners – whether they are categorized as refugees, economic migrants or immigrants. Since the definition of refugee has been elaborated above, the topic of economic migrant will first be addressed. Within the 1999 White Paper, economic migrants – or “those who travel across borders for an express economic purpose” (p. 53) – were subjected to numerous legal restrictions, which served to monitor and control. Legally, refugees and economic migrants are differentiated in that the latter must offer “desirable skills” in order to enter the country – creating “implications for who is legitimately entitled to stay in the country” (Harris, 2001:21).

A sub-category of migrant consists of the “illegal migrant” or someone who is employed or searches for employment within the country without possessing the legal right to do so. This type of migrant usually engages in temporary work and is deemed as increasingly attractive to potential employers since “their unprotected status makes them more exploitable”. (Reitzes & Simpkins, 1998: 22 as qtd. in Harris, 2001: 20)

The final category consists of “immigrants” or “those who enter another country in order to make one’s permanent life and home there” (White Paper on International Migration, 1999:52). Although this term is somewhat less ambiguous than the latter two, it does however, overlap to a certain extent. For example, migrants or refugees may also be granted permanent residence (after

five years of temporary legal employment and five years after asylum is granted) (White Paper on International Migration, 1999: 33; Draft Refugee White Paper, 1998: 16).

Outlining these legal definitions and their apparent ambiguities serves to comprehend the “popular understandings of foreigners” (Harris, 2001: 21). The following section will provide examples of xenophobic tendencies expressed towards “foreigners” in South Africa. Moreover, theories of identity and citizenship will be utilized as a means of comprehending possible originating factors behind such manifestations and perceptions.

2.8 Sources of Xenophobia – Legal/Political and Media Discourses

Within South African legislation, the terms “illegal alien” and “illegal migrant” continue to be utilized to describe foreigners who have entered the country unlawfully – including immigrants and asylum seekers not withholding proper documentation. More specifically, the 1999 White Paper represented “illegal aliens” as those who:

- Compete for scarce resources with millions of South African living in poverty and below the bread line;
- Compete for scarce public services, such as schools and medical care, infrastructures and land, housing and informal trading opportunities;
- Compete with residents and citizens for our insufficient job opportunities, and offer their labour at conditions below those prescribed by law or the applicable bargaining agreements;
- A considerable percentage have been involved in criminal activities, and;
- Weaken the State and its institutions by corrupting officials, fraudulently acquiring documents and undeserved rights and tarnishing our image locally and abroad (p. 16 as qtd. in Harris, 2001: 20).

Such perceptions of foreigners as “regularly connected with crime, poverty, unemployment and large social costs (Harris, 2001:11)” are expressed through political dialogue, which is then transmitted through the media (especially the print media) (Harris, 2001; Human Rights Watch, 1998; SAMP, 2001). The media, according to Morris (1998), impacts public perceptions and attitudes towards foreigners. In other words, negative and stereotypical reporting of particularly

African foreigners, as expressed primarily by political xenophobic statements, encourages contemporary public perceptions about non-nationals. In order to assess the extent to which such perceptions prevail, the South African Migration Project (SAMP) conducted a 1997 survey of citizen and non-citizen public attitudes towards immigration and immigrants⁷. Results revealed that South Africans, in general, hold very negative attitudes and are greatly intolerant of foreigners residing in the country. Morris (1998) indicated that the media impacts public opinions and attitudes towards foreigners and that “the attitude of the media and the authorities shape such opinions and that progressive legislation and positive reporting can alter perceptions over time” (p. 1126). Similarly, SAMP (1997) stresses the importance of government and other agencies in convincing South Africans of “the value of a more open and inclusive immigration policy [...]. Attitudes are currently very negative and political leadership and public education need to confront this reality at the outset” (Ibid).

Explaining why xenophobia prevails in South Africa, or in any other country for that matter, remains a difficult task. One manner in accomplishing this, however, is to take into account past social, political and economic aspects, for example, and to formulate hypotheses of its existence in contemporary society. Within the following section, the term xenophobia will be contextualized within a South African framework and three hypotheses will serve to explain its societal prevalence.

2.9 Xenophobia in Contemporary South Africa

According to Human Rights Watch (1998), xenophobia has been increasing in South Africa since the 1994 elections. The definition of xenophobia as a profound “dislike of foreigners, characterized by a negative attitude towards [them], a dislike, a fear or a hatred”

⁷ <http://www.samp.queensu.ca>

(Harris, 2002: 171) is, according to Tshitereke (1999), non-encompassing and misleading – especially in a South African context. The author explains that xenophobia should not be merely restricted to a fear or dislike of foreigners or perceived as an attitude but instead as a mind-set or activity, which holds serious consequences or effects (Harris, 2002: 170). According to Kollapan (1999), this phenomenon cannot be separated from violence and physical abuse and as such, the definition, as stipulated in the dictionary, should be altered to incorporate practice. In other words,

[...] it is a violent practice that results in bodily harm and damage. [...] the violent practice that comprises xenophobia [...] should be refined to include its specific target, because in South Africa, black foreigners, particularly those from Africa, comprise the majority of victims (Harris, 2002: 170).

In South Africa, as in many other countries around the globe, immigrants and “foreigners” in general, have been blamed for varying social ills including rises in violent crime, drug abuse and dealing as well as high levels of unemployment (Human Rights Watch, 1998). As indicated above, African foreigners residing in the Republic are most likely to become random targets of violence and robbery, as they are perceived as “being in direct competition with South Africans for jobs or services” (p. 123). They are also likely to be targeted because they are unlikely to report any incident of crime or violence to the police (p. 123). Police and Home Affairs officials sharing negative public attitudes towards foreigners can help to explain this phenomenon. As a result, “abuse against foreigners, who are suspected of being undocumented migrants as well as those who are lawfully in the country, encourages and condones abuses by police, army and Home Affairs officials” (p. 123). In order to explain the manifestations of xenophobia in contemporary South Africa, Harris has formulated three hypotheses, namely, the *scapegoating hypothesis*, the *isolation hypothesis*, and the *biocultural hypothesis* (p. 171). First, the *scapegoating hypothesis* situates xenophobia within “the context

of social transition and change” (p. 171). In other words, hostility towards non-citizens arises in accordance to a lack of resources such as “housing, education, health care and employment, coupled with high expectations during transition” (Harris, 2002: 171). According to Tshitereke (1999), the post apartheid era heightened people’s expectations for positive change. The eventual realization that such change was not immediate led to public discontent and indignation – bringing about an increased awareness on individual deprivation. Furthermore, this blatant exposure to the “unequal distribution of resources and wealth in the country” (p. 4), allowed the phenomenon of xenophobia to emerge. When resources are scarce (i.e. jobs and housing) foreigners become “frustration-scapegoats” or targets for others to blame for persistent poverty and deprivation. Tshitereke (1999) takes this *scapegoating* theory beyond its characteristic economic and social factors and introduces a psychological aspect for explaining xenophobia. More specifically, he utilizes the “theory of relative deprivation as a means of conceptualizing xenophobia in terms of frustration and aggression” (p. 4). According to De la Rey (1991), this theory suggests:

[that] a key psychological factor in generating social unrest is a sense of relative deprivation. This arises from a subjective feeling of discontent based on the belief that one is getting less than one feels entitled to. When there is a gap between aspirations and reality, social discontent is likely to result (p. 41 as qtd. in Harris, 2002: 172).

Thus, it is assumed that when frustration increases, anger emerges and is released towards non-nationals.

Second, the *isolation hypothesis* of xenophobia “situates foreignness at the heart of hostility towards foreigners” (p. 172). This theory is based on South Africa’s historical past of national and international exclusion and isolation. Hostility towards foreigners is believed to result as a consequence of apartheid and as such, citizens are unable to accommodate and tolerate

difference (p. 173). Morris (1998) indicates that “when a group has no history of incorporating strangers it may find it difficult to be welcoming” (p. 1125). Xenophobia may therefore emerge as a reaction against the anxiety of the unknown and is understood as the product of social transition (Harris, 2002: 174). Finally, the *bio-cultural hypothesis* of xenophobia focuses on explaining the disproportional targeting of African foreigners by South Africans. Unlike the latter two categories, which treat foreigners as a homogeneous group, the bio-cultural theory “locates xenophobia at the level of visible differences or “otherness” [...] exhibited by African foreigners in the country” (p. 175). For example, Africans from different countries are easily identifiable as the “Other” through different physical features, forms of dress or their inability to speak one of the indigenous languages. Morris (1998) indicates how “[foreigners] are in general clearly distinct and local residents are easily able to pick them out and “scapegoat” them” (p. 1125 as qtd. in Harris, 2002: 176). Thus, bio-cultural features are utilized as “indexical” marks or “signifiers” (i.e. visible features), which often prompts xenophobic actions.

The three hypotheses discussed above offer important insights into xenophobia. However, Harris (2002) indicated that despite this, “they do not properly explain why the (Black) foreigner evokes violence and aggression in South Africa” (p. 175). Furthermore, such explanations risk presenting xenophobia in a monolithic manner, when in reality it is usually black foreigners who are affected to a greater degree by this phenomenon. Thus, Harris (2002) has postulated a new hypothesis, which situates xenophobia “within South African’s transition from a past of racism to a future of nationalism” and thereby focuses on the role of broad social institutions, such as the media, as generators of “specific images of African foreigners in the country” (p. 176). In other words, it is essential to actually interrogate the term itself and to take into account the varying social relations and identities that emerge from this phenomenon. Harris

concludes that xenophobia is portrayed as pathological or abnormal – something that is separate from the “normal” South African nation. In this light, xenophobia is perceived as a negative consequence of nation building as opposed to being an intrinsic part of the “New South Africa” discourse “that privileges concepts of tolerance, harmony and diversity (p. 180). In response to this, Harris (2002) argues that xenophobia is in fact an intrinsic part of the “New South Africa” and is not a negative or abnormal consequence of nationalism. Instead, it is believed that xenophobia functions within South Africa’s culture of violence “to give definition to the “New South Africa” and the forms of identity that accompany this discourse. [...] Xenophobia can thus be understood as a central feature of nationalism” (p. 182).

Within the following section, the topic of identity politics will be elaborated in order to comprehend the extent to which the social exclusion of the “other”, in South Africa, has persisted over time. Such a theoretical perspective aids in comprehending certain xenophobic attitudes held primarily by black South Africans whose identities have been blurred through a history of marginalization and oppression by a powerful minority.

2.10 Identity Politics and Citizenship

Identity politics within a Marxist perspective consists of a political terrain where varying social groups “engage in a “struggle for recognition” [...], each seeking recognition for the special interests of a specific group identity”⁸. This demand for recognition is not based on achieving inclusion from all humankind but rather is a demand for oneself as different (Kruks, 2000: 85). The phrase signifies a wide spectrum of political activity and theorizing, originating in the shared experiences of injustice, succumbed to by members of certain social groups. These

⁸ <http://www.marxists.org/glossary/terms/i/d/.htm>

individuals or groups aim to become liberated from their persistent marginalization and in turn, salvage or assert manners of comprehending their “distinctiveness that challenge dominant oppressive characterizations, with the goal of greater self-determination” (Heyes, 2002). In South Africa, apartheid was based on the promulgation of racial segregation – the insurance of white racial dominance. As such, justification for one’s social exclusion was based on the historical nature of “race” as a category of identity (Omi and Winant, 1994). Grouping individuals into “races” emphasized the social meanings of belonging to a specific category. Those categorized into groups labeled as inferior, struggled to become re-classified as members of a more privileged group and would in turn “[...] invoke to highlight the contingency of race” (Ignatiev, 1995 as qtd. in Heyes, 2002: 7). Black South African’s struggled for social equality, integration and recognition in order to become not only treated as citizens but as human beings. As such, [...] “self-identity and recognition are relevant to citizenship because of their implications for the capacity to act as citizens” (Kabeer, 2002: 31). According to Lister (1997), “to act as a citizen requires: first a sense of agency, the belief that one can act; acting as a citizen, especially collectively in turn fosters that sense of agency” (Kabeer, 2002: 31-32). How people define themselves and how they are defined greatly impacts their self-identity and their ability to act as agents (p. 32). Following apartheid, Black South Africans won the long struggle towards recognition and were in turn, granted citizenship rights. The creation of a democratic South African Constitution envisioned the inclusiveness of both citizens and non-citizens. Taking into account the country’s past of exclusionary politics imposed on its citizens; immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers alike were not openly welcomed by the population or the State. The newly achieved recognition gained by South African citizens was perceived as being threatened by those seeking access to already scarce resources.

Similarly to that experienced by the Black South African, the “other” – commonly referring to the “non-citizen” - suddenly encompassed the refugee, the asylum seekers or what the State referred to as the “illegal alien”. According to Yuval-Davis & Werbner (1999), in “migrant-receiving states, migrants or racialized/ethnic minorities become targets [...] as competition or threat. Besieged majority members mobilize against “outsiders” and claim the state as theirs only (Pettman, 1999: 214). In South Africa, as in many other countries, a “sovereignty story is built upon the nation-state, presuming a coincidence of people, territory, authority and identity that migration disrupts” (Pettman, 1999: 215). According to Pettman (1999) increased anti-immigrant sentiments and elevating levels of racism and xenophobia, have led to “citizen-based claims which do not attend to the many people in the state who are not citizens easily become complicit with exclusivist or racist politics (p. 215). With millions of people residing in countries where they have no citizenship or work rights and insecure or no residence, it is justifiable to indicate that citizenship remains a territory based identity (p. 215). Such “identity politics” holds significant consequences for migrants and especially women as they are increasingly vulnerable to boundary policing by both “in group and other men – and women” due to their role as “markers of community boundaries, signifiers of cultural difference and as physical and cultural reproducers” (Pettman, 1999: 215). In other words, gendered identity politics are not only transnational but hybrid and mobile. Bloul (1993) indicates that women often become “territory” within such deterritorialized identity politics (Pettman 1999: 215). A national project of boundary maintenance is sought out by the policing of women’s bodies, relations and mobility where “culture, identity, difference and community are mobilized” (p. 215).

One may indicate that refugees and asylum seekers due to their unique life experiences are affected to different degrees as they bring with them varying belief systems, cultures and ways of life. Wahlbeck (1996), in her study on Kurdish refugees in Finland, utilizes the concept of diasporas in order to comprehend the social reality in which refugees live. Though meanings of this concept have evolved over time, today it is increasingly utilized to represent any migratory community and is deemed useful in describing “geographical displacement and / or deterritorialization of identities, cultures and social relations in the contemporary world” (Gilroy, 1991; Hall, 1993 as qtd. in Wahlbeck, 1996: 2)⁹. This concept may thus describe the varying processes of transnationalism and salience apparent within varying communities, which experience feelings of displacement (Wahlbeck, 1996: 2). Within the following section, special emphasis will be placed upon the resulting factors leading up to such feelings of displacement. Prevalence of social exclusion as well as xenophobia, within an African context, will be addressed in order to contextualize the latter discussion of identity and recognition in one’s new country of resettlement.

2.11 Defining Social Exclusion within an African context

The term social exclusion is quite broad and has commonly been utilized in discussions of poverty, inequality and justice (Gore, 1994)¹⁰. Gore (1994) indicates that such features of social exclusion are not necessarily applicable to African states for three main reasons namely because, “poverty is a mass phenomenon in Africa, African states do not conform to the rational-legal ideal type which (supposedly) has universalistic standards of provision for national citizens and finally, dominant analytical concepts which have been used to understand what is happening

⁹ Article published in *Siirtolaisuus-Migration*, April, 1996 and obtained at: www.utu.fi/erill/instmigr/art/whalbeck.htm

¹⁰ *Social Exclusion and Africa South of the Sahara: A Review of the Literature* – www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inst/papers/1994/dp62/index.htm.

in Africa have been diametrically opposed to any notion of exclusion” (p. 2). As such, the author indicates that the structure of exclusion in Africa should be characterized by varying “sites of inclusion/exclusion [...] based on membership of different shifting groups, categories and networks” (p. 4). The main institutions, which define the rules of inclusionary and exclusionary practices, consist of the household, the local state, the national state and different international regimes (p. 4). The literature on social exclusion, though scattered, emphasizes the relationship between social identity and entitlements to resources and other social goods (p.5). Focus also rests on the link between poverty and social identity while assessing access to, and exclusion from, resources, activities and goods and services (p. 5). Within studies pertaining to refugees and international migrant workers, one of the identities affecting entitlements consists of national citizenship. In terms of the processes of exclusion, Gore (1994) indicates that much of the literature focuses on Weber’s notion of “social closure” which is defined as “the process by which social collectivities seek to maximize rewards by restricting access to a limited circle of eligibles” (Gore, 1994: 8.). Though this concept emphasizes the monopolization of primarily economic opportunities, it also entails the “singling out of certain social or physical attributes [e.g. race, language, social origin, religion] as the justificatory basis of exclusion” (Gore, 1996: 44). Relevant to the South African context and the systematic exclusion of the “other”, Parker (1979) indicates that within such a notion “lies a form of collective social action which, intentional or otherwise, gives rise to a social category of “ineligibles” or “outsiders”” (Gore, 1996: 44). Bayart (1993) refers to the modes of government in Africa as a means of evaluating the process of social exclusion. As a powerful entity, the government may willingly and knowingly utilize exclusion as a practice for structuring a possible field of action of the less powerful.

In terms of access to employment and social identity women particularly and migrant workers, asylum seekers and refugees generally are excluded to different extents than citizens. Cohen (1987, 1991) outlines three subgroups of workers when analyzing forms of stratification linked with international migration patterns. They consist of;

“citizen” (nationals, established immigrants and convention refugees), “denizens” (privileged aliens with one or more citizenship, are recognized asylum seekers, special categories of entrants or expatriates); and “helots” (illegal entrants, undocumented workers, asylum seekers, overstayers and project-tied embedded workers). (Gore, 1994: 3).

Each group holds varying degrees of access to levels of protection “afforded by agencies of law and order, also to the social wage which is conferred on citizens – unemployment benefits, social security, housing allowance, tax credits, pensions and subsidized health care” (Gore, 1994:11). The disadvantaged groups in Africa differ from those in North America or Western Europe in that they are deprived within three main areas. First, “legal restrictions on access to particular types of jobs” are common and often result in refugees and asylum seekers seeking employment in the informal sector – thereby becoming subjected to low wages and exploitative conditions. Second, “discrimination is apparent in many instances and intensified through lack of documentation”. Finally, these segments of the population remain “vulnerable to changes in immigration policy, which are most vividly expressed in the sudden expulsion of aliens”. (Gore, 1994: 11).

Gore (1994), based on the literature, suggests that Africa is currently at a “turning point” in terms of patterns and processes of exclusion and in turn, provides essential elements of this turning point. As such, he believes that the African continent is undergoing:

increased scarcity of resources and goods which remain the basis of the population’s livelihoods; increased interrelationships between dimensions of exclusion from livelihood; a changing pattern of dominance of social goods; unstable struggles to establish a monopoly over state power, the dominant social

good, control of which facilitates the means of livelihood; changes in the way that social identities restrict and facilitate access to resources and other social goods; changes in the interrelationship between poverty and social identity in the process of exclusion; and changes in the relative importance of institutions regulating patterns of inclusion and exclusion (Gore, 1994: 1-3)

The following section will take into account the latter discussion and put into context women's experiences of social exclusion during exile and in their new countries of settlement. Thus, three main issues will be addressed, namely, experiences of exile; differences between men and women; and, women's multifaceted roles as mothers and maintainers of home life and culture. However, due to the nature of this study, as focusing on female Rwandan refugees in South Africa, a brief country profile on Rwanda will first be provided as a means of comprehending the conditions in which millions of people fled during the mid nineteen nineties.

2.12 Experiences of Exile: Focus on Rwanda

The 1994 the Rwandan genocide killed an estimated one million people over a three month period (Women's World, 1999: 8) and resulted in the fleeing of approximately 2,257,000 people to neighbouring countries (UNHCR, 2000: 315). For the latter population, seeking refuge in other countries¹¹ was paramount in escaping mass murders and rapes as well as forced sexual slavery, which affected over 250,000 women (Goodwin, 1997: 26). During the genocide, the population mainly fled to three camps outside the country, which were essentially occupied by military forces and characterized, by corruption and violence. According to WIN News (1998) refugees, as a group, are perhaps the most "endangered people anywhere in the world, with women and children remaining increasingly vulnerable and considered as "easy victims"" (p. 13). For example, the presence of high numbers of refugees in Tanzania posed numerous problems such as rapes and attacks on refugee women by "bandits, security forces and other

¹¹ 1,2 million in Zaire, 580,000 in the Republic of Tanzania, 270,000 in Burundi and 10,000 in Uganda

refugees” (Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme, 1993: 15). In 1996, Tanzania pushed for the repatriation of almost half a million Rwandans after the situation in that country had somewhat stabilized. As of October 2002 approximately 22,000 Rwandan refugees still remained in Tanzania. Many of the current refugees also left Rwanda around 2001¹² as a reaction to increased political repression in the capital of Kigali (Media Institute of Southern Africa, February 14, 2003). Thus, many Rwandan refugees remain in Tanzania (despite efforts by the government for repatriation) and many others have fled to different African countries, including Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Kenya and South Africa.

According to Eastmond (1993), “refugee situations, their causes and consequences, are complex and varied” (p. 35). This especially rings true when assessing gender differences in migratory processes (Espin, 1999:20). The following section serves to not only assess such differences but to explain the psychological impact of migration on the lives of refugees generally and women particularly. In other words the “context of exit” and “the context of reception”, as indicated by Espin (1999), are crucial determinants in assessing one’s successful adaptation into a new life (p. 16) and future inclusion into mainstream society.

2.13 Different Experiences of Men and Women Migrants: Factors Leading to Social Exclusion

According to Espin (1999), gender is central to the lived experiences of migration (p. 20). In other words, the author indicates that men and women experience the process differently, and supports this by outlining three psychological stages of the migratory process namely, the “initial decision concerning relocation; the geographical move into another country; and, the adaptation to a new society and way of life” (p. 20). Within the decision-making stage, women are often not

¹² About 11,000 Rwandans fled to Tanzania during 2000-2001.

consulted or part of the decision making process to leave their country. Instead, most men participate in this decision or make the decision independently (p.20). Forbes Martin (1997) indicated that, “husbands often abruptly decide and warn [women] about their departure” (p. 16). Second, during the relocation process, especially if escaping as a direct result of dangerous political conditions, “women’s physical endurance may be questioned or their vulnerability may be exploited” (Espin, 1999: 20). As such, women’s chances, in comparison to men, of escaping volatile situations may be impaired and could lead to the increased possibility of trauma as experienced through rape or abuse (p. 20). Finally, within the adaptation stage, adaptation and acculturation occurs in the new society where women experience a heightened modification of gender roles in comparison to their male counterparts. Their efforts “to adapt to the new environment may be further complicated by gender-based cultural prescriptions” (p. 20).

According to Espin (1999) psychological changes are a natural part of the migrating process and continue to evolve throughout the individual’s life. One example of such change includes the development of a new identity (p. 21). The transition experienced often results in a sensation of discontinuity of identity due to the fact that the “psychosocial context in which the individual’s sense of identity was originally formed has been left behind (p. 28). The impact of exile, on each population, depends greatly on a multitude of historical, political and socio-cultural background factors and settlement contexts (Eastmond, 1993: 35). Such factors are also influential in the individual’s sense of self and process of adaptation and social inclusion. This especially holds true for female refugees fleeing from political persecution and/or have experienced varying forms of gender based violence. Post-traumatic stress reactions often appear and are manifested through various channels including nightmares, numbing of feelings, sadness and depression (Espin, 1999: 28). More general consequences of transition include loneliness,

strain and fatigue resulting from adapting and coping, feelings of rejection from the new society which may directly impact one's self esteem and lead to alienation, confusion in gender role expectations, values and identities, shock deriving from cultural differences, sense of uprootedness, and impotence caused from the inability to competently function within mainstream society (Espin, 1999:19). Nevertheless, the commonality of the refugee experience may be seen to "lie in the forced uprooting from familiar patterns of everyday life, involving multiple losses and a struggle to recover continuity and control" (Eastmond, 1993: 36). Though men and women both are required to reconstruct their lives and identities, women often wish to retain, in their place of refuge, the basic familiarity of their abandoned culture and lifestyles and commonly anticipate their future return to their home countries (Buijs, 1993). Such a "reconstruction of the familiar" consists of a common psychological coping mechanism utilized by refugees for dealing with forced separation and loss (Buijs, 1993).

The following section will focus on the psychosocial challenges encountered by refugees while residing in their countries of asylum. As such, family life and employment, language, culture, prejudice and racism will be assessed as some contributing factors to the social exclusion of refugees and existing mental peril.

2.14 Psychosocial Challenges and Social Exclusion

Family support systems consist of a major determinant in adjusting to a new environment. Within this context, traditional roles, relationships and lifestyles are often altered and in turn, may have a destabilizing effect on family structures (Ekblad et al., 1998: 279). For women, the adoption of new social and economic roles bears varying consequences to family life. In many instances, the wife may be the sole provider for the family simply because she is willing to accept lower status, service industry employment (p. 279). Traditional roles and family

hierarchies may be questioned in such instances and may result in family conflicts and marital problems. Both women and men in refugee situations are faced with increased burdens in meeting the needs of their families – this bearing more strongly on women (Bushra & Lopez, 1993: 32). As such, women must also encounter the “demands of taking care of their families and define their relationships as mother and wife” (p.4). In situations where “traditional support systems have been broken down and [where she] finds herself solely responsible for the welfare of the family” (p. 4), women must play the dual role of household manager and primary caregiver (Forbes Martin, 1992). Within the public sphere, women are faced with overtly gender oppressive structures and actions (Bushra & Lopez, 1993). They are perceived as passive, vulnerable, and in need of male protection (Ibid.). One of the major concerns of refugee women, according to Forbes Martin (1992) consists of their own physical protection and that of their family (xi-x). In other words, once they have left their country of origin they can “no longer benefit from the legal systems intended to protect them” (p. x). Moreover, when community organizations and social structures for refugees are in place, they often do not address the needs of women particularly. As a result, female voices and needs fail to be expressed and therefore taken into account. As such, cultural norms dictate that women must play a submissive role and men dominate the decision making process (Kalyango, 2002).

Increased vulnerability and hence the social exclusion of female refugees is perpetuated by factors such as “unequal access to and control over resources, low participation in decision-making processes and lack of employable skills” (Kalyango, 2002: 4). In many instances formal qualifications (education and work experience) are often considered invalid in countries of asylum. This creates increased marginalization and leaves open the potentiality for exploitation of the “other”. Language problems - also recognized as one of the most important aspects of

culture - remains yet another obstacle for refugees within both work and social domains (Ekblad, 1998). Language acquisition is directly correlated with employment acquisition and hence, one's social integration. According to Ekblad (1998) "A lot of misunderstandings occur when refugees continue to follow their own cultural pattern of communication and interaction" (p. 283). A significant cultural barrier leading to the social exclusion of refugees is found within the negative effects of prejudice and racism towards refugees by the government, the public and through the mass media (p. 284).

2.15 Conclusion

As displayed throughout this review of the literature, social exclusion and xenophobia are inherently linked and apparent within South African society. Women in particular remain socially excluded within refugee situations, within legislation and policies (i.e. not granting them access to services and rights) as well as within general South African society (through overt racism and xenophobia). The creation of the new South African Constitution envisioned the inclusiveness of both citizens and non-citizens. However, according to Peberdy (1998), this has yet to be displayed in a country that is "characterized by powerful xenophobic and exclusionary discourses centered on migration from the rest of Africa" (p. 16). Moreover, she further indicates that this "language of exclusion" is married with controlling and discouraging immigration legislation and policies as well as with a "draconian approach to border and heartland policing" which has been displayed as resulting in the abuse of the rights of non-nationals (p. 16).

The integration of refugees is problematic and somewhat difficult to achieve due to varying reasons. According to Geddo (2001), these include "lack of jobs, education, shelter and health care, areas of socio-economic provision that are in short supply for the majority of citizens in all countries throughout the [SADC] region" (Chapter 2, N.P.). A second reason, according to

Geddo, which serves to prohibit the local integration of refugees, consists of the persistent xenophobic tendencies manifested through intolerance and hostility by the media and general public – mainly resulting “out of scarcity of basic services” (N.P.). Finally, he indicates that restrictive government policies fuelled by the above factors limit the possibility for integration. These include “special restrictions on access to permanent residence and citizenship as well as limits on freedom of movement and settlement, the ability of refugees to work, attend schools and universities, have access to identity and travel documents etc.” (N.P.).

Briefly, Harris (2002) indicates that, “exclusion, alienation and hostility operate in a complex, ongoing spiral across the line of nationality, i.e. between South Africans and foreigners, particularly African foreigners” (p. 15). Moreover, he refers to the works of Morris (1998) in order to explain the extent to which xenophobia directly impacts one’s foreign identity – or in other words, this phenomenon makes “foreigners feel foreign”(p. 15). As a result, foreigners in general and women specifically have become the new “Other” class within South Africa and in turn, have become systematically excluded and alienated from mainstream society.

In order to provide some insight into the lived realities of female refugees in South Africa, the following research project will focus on a sample of 6 female Rwandan refugees currently residing in Durban, South Africa. A description of the methodological process will be put forth and will be later utilized as a framework for exploring their experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion within this given context. As such, the next chapter will address the following aspects namely, the empirical framework and research techniques adopted for this research, a description of the sample population, an in depth description of the interview process and finally, the methodological limitations of this study.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Objective

The objective of this second chapter is to describe the methodological process utilized to put forth this research project. This chapter begins by examining and justifying this study's empirical framework and research techniques. This will be followed by a description of the population sample and an in-depth analysis of the interview process. The concluding section will outline the varying methodological limitations which may have arose in the attempts to comprehend the experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion amongst female Rwandan refugees residing in South Africa. The main objective of this research project is to utilize the data obtained in order to contribute both knowledge and to the welfare of women (Reinharz, 1992).

Before commencing, it is important to indicate that I have utilized the term "comprehend", in conjunction with major elements of feminist research, as;

[...] making the invisible visible, bringing the margin to the center, rendering the trivial important, putting the spotlight on women as competent actors and comprehending women as subjects in their own right rather than objects for men. (Reinharz, 1992: 248)

In order to do this, the researcher must comprehend the social actor as part of a "second degree construction" where one's social reality is subjected to common sense constructions or in other words, a "pre-comprehension, a pre-interpretation as well as a pre-selection of the world by the composition of social actors" (Schutz, 1987: 78). As such, the feminist researcher "is an active presence, an agent in research, and she constructs what is actually a viewpoint, a point of view that is both a construction or version and is consequently and necessarily partial in its understandings" (p. 76). Hence, only the actor may subjectively provide a justification for a given action since she remains the only one who truly knows why, where and how such an action has occurred. It remains of prime importance that research and theory situate social actors within

their everyday worlds. Unless research begins within the ordinary facts of lives, then the knowledge constructed will be "both alienating and apart from the actual experiences of human actors" (Andersen, 1994: 372). The objective here is to establish the relationship between social structure and everyday life. This relationship is especially important in comprehending women's experiences, due to the fact that the affairs of everyday life are the specific area of women's expertise. "Given the gender division of labor, women are charged with maintaining everyday life. To "overlook that fact or to treat it as insignificant is to deny women's reality" (Andersen, 1994: 373).

3.2 Chosen Methodologies

Taking into account the object of this analysis, the chosen methodological techniques in the production of research material were sought out by utilizing a multiple method technique known as "triangulation". Rossman and Wilson (1994) state that triangulation can be used to "substantiate, corroborate, and illuminate" the research being done. Emphasis is directed towards filtering meaning from a variety of data collection methods. According to Reinharz (1992), there are many instances where feminist research is triangulated due primarily to the special relation this method has with feminist concerns. As such, by combining methods, "feminist researchers are particularly able to illuminate previously unexamined or misunderstood experiences [...] such methods increase the likelihood of obtaining scientific credibility and research utility" (p. 197). Thus, triangulation is a key methodological technique employed in this research project. Data were gathered through interviews, relevant documentation as well as personal observations and/or experiences while I resided in Durban, South Africa from January to December 2002. Hence, the research methodology utilized, consisted of a qualitative analysis of documents, semi-structured interviews and participatory observations.

3.3 Empirical Framework

Considering that the main research technique consists of a qualitative content analysis,

or:

[...] une technique indirecte d'investigation scientifique utilisée sur des productions écrites, sonores ou audiovisuelles, provenant d'individus ou de groupes, dont le contenu ne se présente pas sous forme chiffrée, qui permet de faire un prélèvement soit quantitatif, soit qualitatif en vue d'expliquer, de comprendre et de comparer. (Angers, 1996 : 362 as qtd. in Tremblay & Ollivier, 2000 : 138)

The materials produced during the course of this study are “words, sentences, objects, ideas etc.” (p. 138). The empirical foundation of this study is divided into two parts namely, a principal framework and a secondary framework. The former responds directly to the object of the research and as such, constitutes the information obtained during the semi - structured interviews and participant observations. The participants for the semi-structured interviews were recruited by utilizing the snow balling technique. This technique is a form of convenience sampling and is described as “an approach where the researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contacts with others” (Bryman, 2001: 98). Especially important in this research, was the initial contact and acquaintance with a Rwandan refugee woman while shopping in an inner city market located in Durban. This woman in turn, introduced me to other women and so on. The sample ended up encompassing refugee women originating uniquely from Rwanda. Given the scope of the paper and difficulties in access (described below) I was limited to six interviews. As for information obtained from participant observations/experiences, I frequented the aforementioned market area, located in the city center of Durban, on a regular basis for over an 8 to 9 month period in 2002. There, many refugee women possess informal businesses (i.e. fruit and vegetable kiosks, haircutting services) and in turn, must interact with the public. I would systematically observe

interactions between the entrepreneurs and the local population and I would in turn, witness on different occasion's forms of abuse (mostly verbal) directed towards these women. Due to time constraints, ethnographic recordings of observations were not taken on a regular basis. However, I managed to maintain a personal diary and would occasionally jot down pertinent events that occurred.

The secondary empirical framework essentially consists of conceptualizing the context of xenophobia and social exclusion in South Africa. This entails finding pertinent words, sentences and ideas within the literature and amongst Internet sites. Many government and legislative documents are located within the web sites of the United Nations, the South African Department of Home Affairs and the South African Federal Government. Internet sites were also utilized to retrieve information relating to xenophobia – especially within newspaper articles pertaining to police abuses and ongoing public perceptions / debates about refugees. Given the public nature of these sources access to the documents was permitted.

3.4 Ethical Concerns

Originally, the interviews obtained were conducted for the partial fulfillment of a Poverty and Policy course that I followed, in the winter semester of 2002, while pursuing a graduate degree in Development Studies at the University of Natal in Durban, South Africa. During that time, I had considered the possibility of also utilizing this data for a future research project on xenophobia and social exclusion. As such, this section will focus on the ethical aspects that were considered before and after the interviews were conducted.

It is important to take into account that ethic boards and committees remain non-existent at the University of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa. This having been said, every possible effort was made to consider the numerous ethical aspects of conducting research with human subjects.

For the aforementioned reason, I was not required to obtain a formal consent form from the participants, nor was I required to have my questionnaire reviewed by an ethics board. However, prior to each interview, I described the nature and object of my research project – to comprehend the lived realities of social exclusion and xenophobia amongst female refugees in South Africa - and I in turn, obtained verbal consent from all participants to utilize any information obtained for these purposes. Before proceeding with the actual interviews, clarification and explanations of the research themes as well as interview objectives were put forth. As such, in order to establish a sense of confidence and comfort with the respondent, I would introduce myself (i.e. who I am, my status). In terms of anonymity and confidentiality each participant was informed, before the interview, that they were not obligated to provide their first or last names nor would this study use any information, which could divulge their true identities. They were also advised that, if they expressed any discomfort during the interview, I would gladly turn off the tape recorder and end the interview. After completing each interview, the main elements were reiterated in order to allow the respondents to add any additional comments. The participants were then thanked for their time and confidence.

Following my return to my studies at the University of Ottawa in January 2003, I was advised to complete a Secondary Data application form, which I later submitted to the Ethics Committee, describing the context within which the data was gathered in South Africa. In September 2003, permission was granted, by the committee, to utilize all data obtained for the purposes of this research project.

In terms of ethical concerns that may have arose during the participatory observations - many feminist researchers have written about the ethical and epistemological importance of integrating their selves into their work, and of eliminating the distinction between the subject and

the object (Kirsh, 1999). Within this research project, I chose not to completely immerse myself into any given environment. In other words, I did not become “totally immersed in the given context in such a way as to play an active role in the community or given setting” (Reinharz, 1992: 69). Given South Africa’s history of apartheid and class hierarchy, and due to the fact that I may be considered as a “privileged white outsider”, I did not believe that I could have immersed myself nor depicted the lived realities of South Africa’s female refugee population. This assumption follows along the lines of what Smith (1999) refers to as “Othering” the “Third World” woman within research. More precisely, Smith suggests that research itself represents a significant site for struggle between “the interests and ways of knowing of the West and the interests and ways of resisting of the “Other” (p.2)”. Smith further argues that discussing research methodology and indigenous people in the same breath remains difficult without analyzing imperialism or comprehending the manners to which knowledge is embedded within the different layers of colonial and imperial practices (p. 2). The work of Western feminists has been criticized for labeling certain groups of women. These “Othered” women argue that oppression itself is not a homogeneous entity but instead, takes on many forms and that interconnected relationships exist between, race, gender and class which “makes oppression a complex sociological and psychological condition” (p. 167). Many of these “women with labels” have argued that this condition “cannot be understood or analyzed by outsiders or people who have not experienced, and who have not been born into, this way of life” (p. 167).

3.5 Sample Population

Within this section, a brief profile of the sample population namely, Josephine, Sibongile, Velopi, Chigozie, Lilianne and Thandie (all pseudonyms) will be provided. As such, an overview of their age, place of birth, marital status, number of children, educational background,

professional background (in Rwanda and in South Africa), their salaries as well as their living arrangements/accommodation.

Josephine

Josephine is aged 26 years and was born in Butare, Rwanda. She has a common law partner with whom she has been with for 6 years and has one daughter who remained in Rwanda, with her aunt, due to the apparent dangers of displacement. She fled Rwanda with her common law partner in 2000 and traversed through Tanzania and Mozambique before entering South Africa. South Africa was never their intended destination however; while in Tanzania, they were forced to flee due to violence and threats from fellow Rwandans. From there, they fled to Mozambique where they encountered various forms of xenophobia in the townships. Instances of violence included; having boiling water poured over her legs, being put in jail by the authorities and being robbed by the police. In terms of employment background, Josephine was a pharmacist's assistant in Rwanda and is a professional nurse by trade. In South Africa, she sought employment as a vegetable vendor in a market with a remuneration of 300 to 400 Rands per month. She resides with her common law partner in a flat with 5 others – the rental cost is 1000 Rands a month with her contribution consisting of 200 Rands a month

Sibongile

Sibongile is aged 27 years and was born in Kigali, Rwanda. Sibongile is married and has four children – three of whom were born in South Africa. She fled Rwanda in March 1996 with her husband and her first-born child who, at the time, was an infant. Their first destination consisted of a Tanzanian refugee camp within which they remained for less than a month due to high crime rates and an insufficient food supply. After this time, they fled to Mozambique where they remained for another two months and departed mainly due in part to language barriers and

police corruption, which included bribery and theft of personal identification documents. Their next destination was South Africa. In order to travel from one country to the next, they would either walk or hitchhike due to low financial means. In terms of employment, Sibongile was a stay at home mother taking care of her children on a full time basis. Her husband worked as a car guard making a salary of 600 Rands a month. Sibongile did not finish high school as a result of political instability in Rwanda although she expressed the desire to graduate at a later time in her life. She resided in a two bedroom flat, which cost 1000 Rands a month, with her husband, four children and another couple. Their total familial contribution for rent was 400 Rands a month.

Velopi

Velopi is aged 31 years and was born in Kigali, Rwanda. Velopi is married with two children aged six and four years. She fled Rwanda in 1996, with her husband, and headed to Tanzanian refugee camps. High levels of crime, overcrowding and high rape rates were Velopi's main reasons for leaving the camp and heading to Malawi. While in Malawi, they encountered similar levels of crime as a result of xenophobia. Walking and hitchhiking were their principle modes of transportation. She arrived, with her husband, in South Africa, within a three-month timeframe. Instances, of abuse and violence throughout their journey to and within South Africa consisted of robbery, racially fuelled verbal abuse and being stabbed in the arm by another woman. In terms of her educational background and employment, Velopi did not finish high school however she was employed as a midwife in Rwanda. In South Africa, she is a full time domestic worker and makes approximately 450 Rands a month while her husband is employed as a car guard making approximately 500 Rands a month. She resides with six people including her husband, two children and two other adult males in a one bedroom flat worth 1000 Rands per month in which her familial contribution is 500 Rands.

Chigozie

Chigozie is aged 26 years and was born in Gikongoro, Rwanda. Chigozie is married and has one five-year-old daughter. She fled Rwanda in 2001, with her young child and husband, and headed to a Tanzanian refugee camp. They were required to leave the camp as a result of high levels of crime and political tension within. They travelled mainly by foot to Mozambique where they encountered corrupt border guards who threatened to imprison them if they did not succumb to their bribery. While residing in a Mozambican township, Chigozie was subjected to violence and verbal abuse as a result of xenophobia. In one instance, two men entered their shelter, tied up her husband and attempted to sexually assault her while her baby cried beside her. Another male came to their rescue by hitting the assailant over the head with a blunt object. While in South Africa, she witnessed her friend being shot, police officials subjecting her husband to threats and bribery as well as watching him being beaten by South African nationals, an accident that left him in hospital for two months. In Rwanda, Chigozie was a full time homemaker and her husband was employed in a local shop. In South Africa, her husband did not hold a remunerated position while she was employed as a car guard for 600 Rands a month. A total of eight people resided in a flat where she paid 500 Rands a month on a 1300 Rands a month lease.

Lilianne

Lilianne is aged 31 years and was born in Kigali, Rwanda. As a single woman, she fled Rwanda in 2001 with one female and one male friend. They travelled in kombis (privately run taxis) throughout their journey. Their initial destination was a Tanzanian refugee camp however; they were required to leave after two weeks due to tribal violence. Following this, they fled to Mozambique where they remained for a mere two weeks due to persistent verbal abuse. In terms

of employment and educational background, Lilianne holds a high school diploma with a specialization in accounting and business. When she arrived in South Africa she sought employment in a shop where she was hired to maintain bookkeeping duties. She abandoned her position due to low wages and employer labour exploitation and sought out alternate employment as a domestic worker earning 400 Rands a month. Lilianne resides with her two friends in one bedroom flat that costs 900 Rands a month with her being required to pay 350 Rands a month.

Thandie

Thandie is aged 29 years and was born in Gikongoro, Rwanda. Thandie is married with three children. She fled Rwanda in 2001 with her husband and two children. The family fled to a Tanzanian refugee camp and remained there for one week before they were forced out as a result of ongoing political rivalry with her husband, which resulted in him succumbing to an attempted kidnapping and murder. After this time, they fled to Malawi where they remained for another week and then travelled directly to South Africa. In terms of employment and education, Thandie completed a nursing degree in Rwanda and in Durban, was undergoing training to become a hair stylist. Her husband remained unemployed and she remained the sole provider and caregiver for the family earning, on average, 450 Rands a month. They resided with three other adults and paid 220 Rands a month in rent with the total lease being 800 Rands a month.

3.6 Interview considerations

The following section focuses on the varying relational and material considerations that were taken into account before and while interviewing the chosen sample population. This is followed by a discussion of the utilized interview style and its pertinence to this study. In terms of conceptual considerations, Savoie-Zacj (1992) mentions the choice of respondents. As

indicated above, the snowball technique was utilized and led to a sample of six female Rwandan refugees. In parallel to this, the preparation of an interview requires relational considerations. Savoie-Zajc (1992) indicates the importance of preliminary contact with respondents in order to present the research and its goals (p. 275). Concomitantly, Bryman (2001) indicates the necessity of achieving rapport with the respondent in order to encourage the individual to participate. Due to the difficulty in establishing contact with the women before the interviews (interviewees did not have telephones, mailing addresses, and were not all employed in the market, or at all) so as to set a meeting time and date, after each interview I would buy a phone card for the interviewee to give to the next participant. Upon telephone contact, I would explain the goal of my research and ask if they would voluntarily participate. Besides establishing a time and date, transportation issues would also need to be dealt with. Interview times were established according to the formal and informal bus systems (which end approximately after 8 p.m.). In cases where the women utilized bus services to my residence (where all interviews took place) I would reimburse the cost. In other instances where bus services were not available (evenings and Sundays) I would utilize my personal vehicle to pick them up. Again, this was also difficult in that I could not drive my vehicle into some townships – due to security reasons or due to a lack of accessible roads. As such, I was often required to meet “by the second big tree” or “by the cut sugar cane field”. In one case where the interview lasted into the evening, the interviewee would not allow me to take her home for fear that the vehicle would be “carjacked”. As a result, I arranged for her to sleep at my house and I ensured that she was delivered to her place of employment the following morning.

Material considerations must also be taken into account while preparing for an interview. Technical materials including a tape recorder and blank cassettes were utilized for recording the

data obtained. Heritage (1984) indicates that qualitative interviews are usually tape recorded because researchers are “frequently interested not just in what people say but also the way they say it” (p. 238). Moreover, a trial recording was held in order to become more familiarized with the tape recorder. While choosing a meeting place for the interviews, different environmental aspects were taken into account. A comfortable and quiet environment was decided upon, where interruptions would be minimal. The respondents were given the opportunity to choose whether the interview would be held indoors or outdoors at my place of residence. As such, the sensitive and personal nature of the interview questions required utmost confidentiality. The first woman interviewed, expressed her discomfort of having South African women (two maids) and a man (a security guard/gardener) on the premises – since most nationals were hostile towards her, she was scared of what could happen if they overheard their country being criticized. This was a factor that I did not initially consider. As a result, for that interview and the five subsequent ones, the employees were given the day off. The final material consideration consisted of the temporal aspects of the interviews including a) the duration of the interview (expected to last 1-½ hours), and b) the meeting time (established via telephone in conjunction to the availability of the respondent).

The next section will describe the specific type of interviews utilized to gather information from the chosen sample population. This will be followed by a brief description of the semi-structured interview process and its contextual relevance.

3.7 Interview Style

According to l’Ecuyer (1987) interviews consist of a directive scientific investigative technique administered to individuals and, in some instances, groups of individuals permitting for a semi-directive interrogation to occur which in turn, allows for the possibility of

qualitatively analyzing the obtained information so as to gain an in depth knowledge of the respondent (p. 364)

For the purposes of this research, this “directive technique” was utilized and encompassed a situation where it was essential to come into contact with the research participants in order to administer questions on an individual or collective basis (Tremblay & Ollivier, 2000: 128). It was initially intended to utilize a structured interview format, which is also referred to as a standardized interview. This style encompasses:

[...] the administration of an interview schedule by an interviewer. The goal of this style of interviewing is to ensure that interviewee replies can be aggregated and this can be achieved reliably only if those replies are in response to identical cues. (Bryman, 2001: 107)

Preparing for a structured interview requires the above mentioned conceptual, relational and material considerations. Moreover, it is essential to establish central themes and sub themes relating to the object of study. It is from the identification of these themes that it will be possible to formulate interview questions that will allow the researcher to gather pertinent information. Comprehending women’s experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion consisted of the central elements to be examined. More precisely, in order to situate the information, it was necessary to identify the context in which these phenomena occurred. For example, legislation and laws relating to refugees and women have just until recently emerged in this newly democratic state where transition has been hypothesized as negatively affecting the population. Once this was achieved, questions were then formulated in accordance to topics relating to social support systems, employment, fear of crime, and the like. Gathering this data could serve to later contribute to social change through consciousness-raising or policy recommendations and in turn play an important role in expanding knowledge and enhancing the welfare of female refugees currently residing in South Africa (Reinharz, 1992: 251).

In relation to my interviewing process, I ended up not asking the pre-formulated questions in a systematic manner nor did the respondents receive exactly the same interview stimulus as recommended by Reinharz (p. 107). I realized that given the sensitive nature and object of my study – as comprehending the experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion amongst female Rwandan refugees - a structured interview would not allow the respondents to freely express themselves and instead impeded thought processes. In other words, structured interviews evolved into semi-structured interviews. This type of interview is described as:

[...] a context in which the interviewer has a series of questions that are in the general form of an interview schedule but is able to vary the sequence of questions. During these types of interviews, questions are generally broader in their frame of reference from that typically found in a structured interview (Bryman, 2001: 110).

3.8 Empirical Analysis

The empirical materials for this research study were analyzed according to a qualitative content analysis method. More precisely;

[...] a content analysis consists of a method aiming to discover the significance of the message studied. [...] It is a method of classification or codification within diverse categories of elements of analyzed documents done in order to withdraw different characteristics as a means of understanding specific meanings. (l'Ecuyer, 1987: 50)

In terms of analyzing relevant documentation, I utilized documents available to the public (i.e. via the World Wide Web) including, in particular, web sites belonging to the Human Rights Watch, Lawyers for Human Rights, the South African Migration Project as well as the Centre for Violence and Reconciliation. An analysis of research and discussion papers as well as newspaper and journal articles pertaining to issues surrounding the topics of xenophobia, social exclusion, refugees, women and political/media trends in South Africa were deemed pertinent in acquiring a basic understanding and further contextualization of South African society. In terms of

answering our main question – that of understanding the experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion amongst refugee women – a qualitative analysis of interviews with female refugees residing in South Africa was conducted. It was intended that the information stemming from these interviews would offer a better understanding of women’s “social realities”. In order to achieve this goal, the data obtained from the interviews were transcribed verbatim (word for word) and a qualitative analysis was done. Heritage (1984) mentions the advantages of transcribing interviews, as a means to properly undergoing a discourse analysis, in that:

- It helps to correct the natural limitations of our memories and of the intuitive glosses that we might place on what people say in interview;
- It allows more thorough examination of what people say;
- It permits repeated examinations of the interviewee’s answers;
- It opens up the data to public scrutiny by other researchers
- It helps to counter accusations that an analysis might have been influenced by a researcher’s values or biases and;
- It allows the data to be reused in other ways from those intended by the original researcher (pp. 238-239).

Upon transcription of the interviews I performed a horizontal and vertical reading of the transcripts in order to determine recurring themes and ideas. Since the initial goal of this research was to develop an analysis grid, a content analysis was essential in constructing categories relating to the object of study. Consequently, the categorization process utilized “allowed for categories to emerge out of data and on recognizing the significance for understanding meaning in the context in which an item being analyzed (and the categories derived from it) appeared” (Bryman, 2001: 180). In total, an ensemble of five categories was established during the preliminary phase. More precisely, the categories were created in relation to the different aspects brought forth by the respondents which essentially included the following broad elements a) victimization (physical and sexual violence and verbal abuse), b) fear, c) corruption (DHA, police), d) isolation/social exclusion, e) class/racial hierarchy. This list of categories was then

narrowed into different sub categories namely, a) roles of women as mother's and wives, b) psychosocial effects of resettlement, c) relationships with others, d) the functioning self, e) identity politics and citizenship.

Though the main goal of this analysis was to obtain a general perspective of the experiences of female refugees residing in South Africa, it is of prime importance to take into account additional limitations that may arise. Thus, the following section will serve to outline those encountered while conducting this research.

3.9 Limitations

The limitations of this research project will be addressed by two main themes namely, the constraints of conducting structured interviews in general, and with women in particular, and the varying methodological and ethical concerns that arise when Western perceptions of the world construct "Third World" women's social realities. Along these lines, Mohanty (2003) discusses how Western feminist writings often categorize Third World women as a homogeneous and oppressed group. She further indicates that a "power-knowledge nexus of feminist cross-cultural scholarship expressed through Eurocentric, falsely universalizing methodologies serve the narrow self-interest of Western feminism" (p.222). Limitations stemming from such premises will be discussed throughout this section.

Initially, I believed that pre-formulated questions would ease codification and may provide me with an objective overview of women's lived experiences. During the first interview, it soon became apparent that such a method would not be suitable for obtaining feminist research material. As such, I altered some aspects pertaining to questionnaire formulation and administration accordingly. For example, I did not systematically ask all pre-formulated questions in order to gather a more relevant repertoire of information. However, certain

questions were asked in the “pre-formulated format” and upon reflection, I realized the degree to which such data could impede discussion as well as representations of the respondent’s true experiences as refugees and especially as women. According to Oakley (2000) utilizing “objective” or quantitative methods of research often serve to “rigidly control” or “manipulate” research subjects and “[...] do not take into account the subjectivity of experiences” (p. 28). Perhaps a more appropriate method, for this research study would have consisted of formulating two or three questions (in addition to probes) in order to permit the sample population to express themselves in a “free flowing” manner.

Another limitation rests within what Kirsch (1999) refers to as the “politics of interpretation and representation” (p.47). The author indicates the extent to which these factors are troublesome for feminist researchers who aim to empower the people they study and to improve the conditions of their lives. Inevitably however, researchers often get caught up in the process of speaking for others, and in the end, potentially silencing them (p. 47). As a result of this silencing, “representation can become misrepresentation, the reinforcement of unjust power structures and institutional hierarchies” (p. 47). Imposing our personal desires, our goals and our perceptions of the world upon those we study always remains a possibility despite our best intentions (p. 46). Empowering others can serve to reinforce the imposition of our values on others and to the unrelenting control of our manners of thinking, writing, reading and perceiving the world. As such, “it is not always possible or even desirable to “improve” the lives of others” (p.47).

While researchers interpret participants stories they do so in the context of their own work by filtering comments through their theoretical framework, and analyzing obtained narratives based on their personal knowledge, training and lived experiences (p. 48). This

interpretive conflict, according to some researchers (Kirsch 1999, Ede and Lundsford 1990), is characteristic of qualitative research since it remains impossible to ever be able to enter another's consciousness or to see reality through other's eyes (Kirsch, 1999:48). In the case of this study, interviews were transcribed and the information obtained was inputted into constructed analytical grids. Though every attempt was made to ensure that women's lived experiences were not overlooked or dismissed, an inevitable construction of another's social reality of the world occurred. Mohanty (1997) addresses this issue by indicating how a "Third World woman" is often produced, within feminist texts, and analyzed as a "singular, monolithic subject" where "[...] a certain mode of appropriation and codification of scholarship and knowledge about women in the Third World [is focused upon] through the use of particular analytic categories employed in specific writings on the subject [...]" (p. 255). Furthermore, Kirsch (1999) argues that this politics of interpretation and the power dynamics that arise remain major concerns for feminists especially in the context of Third World research where the potential for misrepresentation and misappropriation becomes heightened. In other words misrepresentation and misappropriation "[...] become more serious when vast differences (in terms of class, education, gender, race, and resources) exist between researchers and participants, as happens when, say, white western middle-class women study poor working-class women of the Third World" (p.50). In such cases, groups possessing minimal social, economic and political power become increasingly vulnerable to misrepresentation and exploitation. This lack of power leaves them with practically no options in preventing misrepresentation and may have to suffer its effects, including discrimination and prejudice within public realms. Alcoff (1991-1992) indicates that "despite efforts to bring the voices of others into research reports, researchers remain implicated in speaking for and about them [...] it is naïve to think it could be otherwise".

She further indicates that [...] “speaking for others always entails speaking about others and about one-self because the boundaries between self and other blur easily” (pp. 5-8).

The next limitation relates back to the issue of interview validity and the extent to which responses were tailored to a Western background. This concern arises out of the fact that all interviews were conducted at my place of residence, that I am a citizen of one of the wealthiest countries in the world and that I was studying at a “foreign” University. Moreover, South Africa’s history of apartheid and class hierarchy meant that Black and White people were not perceived as equal citizens. According to Reinharz (1992), all interviewees worry about the extent to which the individual says what the interviewer wants to hear. This issue can be especially problematic when the person being interviewed is not sure whom the interviewer is and may think that this is someone who holds some kind of control over his or her services and supports. In these situations, people may not accurately express their experiences. This having been said, I cannot be sure that respondents answered my questions accurately; I am aware that such a factor remains an example of this study’s methodological limitations.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to provide a description of this study’s methodology utilized to explore the experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion amongst female Rwandan refugees residing in South Africa. Under this guise, an empirical framework was put forth in order to identify the data and locations and conditions of access to sources. Moreover, I addressed ethical concerns that may have arisen as well as the different techniques utilized for gathering data. This section was followed by an empirical analysis characterized by a description of the interview process and data analysis. Varying limitations were also put forth in the final section. Within this context, I will turn to an analysis of the data gathered and attempt to

provide the reader with a general knowledge base of the lived experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion of female Rwandan refugees in South Africa. Such a portrayal follows my goals of increasing awareness on this topic, which could perhaps, in the future, contribute, to social change.

4. Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The empirical material collected will be examined within this analysis. It will be demonstrated, as described within the theoretical chapter, the extent to which refugees in general and women in particular are affected in varying ways by their forced displacement into countries of asylum. Interviews conducted with six female Rwandan refugees residing in Durban, South Africa, in 2002, revealed an abundance of reflections pertaining to the prevalence and subsequent effects of xenophobia and social exclusion within their daily lives. Concomitantly, the women encountered, touched upon an array of topics, which according to them, greatly impacted their inclusion (or exclusion) within South African society. The object of this analysis is to explore the varying challenges that directly impact the social integration of six female refugees into South African society. A detailed perspective of their experiences will be achieved by examining the latter topics within a gender-based perspective. It should be noted that due to its proposed sample size, the details put forth will be exploratory and generalizations will not be made.

4.2 Gender Factors in Migration: Domestic Control of Women

According to Boyd and Grieco (2003) gender “relations, roles, and hierarchies influence the migration process and produce differential outcomes for women during: the pre-migration stage, the transition across state boundaries, and the experiences of migrants in the receiving country”¹³. Within the pre-migration stage, the authors indicate that macro and micro factors are relevant in explaining women’s decision to, or the possibility of migrating. Within macro realms, women are faced with the realities of the state. More precisely, approximately 70% of the refugee population whose demographic profile is known to the UNHCR is comprised of women

and dependent children (Martin-Forbes, 2004:7). As refugees they were “pushed out” of their country – as opposed to being “pulled in” like immigrants – as a result of national political conditions thereby creating a fear of persecution and danger (Goodwin, 1997: 26).

Within micro realms, Boyd and Grieco (2003) divide the pre-migration process between: “gender relations and hierarchies as well as status and roles”. Within these contexts, men often possess domestic control over women, which in turn contributes to female subordination and allows males to exercise authority over the family. Such dynamics plays a significant impact on the migration of women. Women’s roles and identities are commonly situated within a familial context and as a result, impact their decision to migrate. According to Salgado de Snyder (1986) and Salgado de Snyder et al. (1990), women experience migration differently than men and display higher stress levels as a result of varying factors; the main one being the lack of participation in the decision making process to migrate (Espin, 1999: 18). As demonstrated by the respondents, a lack of domestic control over and the circumstances within which they fled remained apparent:

[...] The military accused people of many things like being spies for the government. My husband was accused of such a thing so we had to leave... like many other people. (Sibongile)

After the genocide stopped, people would remember murder, graves everything; even false beliefs about my family especially my husband and how he was with the government. But when everyone kills your family and friends and everything it is difficult to just say I forgive you. Everyone wants revenge... (Velopi)

I left because of personal insecurity. I left because my husband and me were being experienced by socio political problems. There is another war going on... the one after the genocide. Now there are politics... it’s very dangerous. There are lots of problems. (Chigozie)

Our neighbours came into our house and destroyed everything – it was very bad. We had nothing left. They burnt everything. I needed to go as far as we could. My

¹³ <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=106>

husband was very scared because he was from a political party but did not take part in politics. We needed to leave fast. (Thandie)

Sibongile, Velopi, Thandie and Chigozie's status and familial roles as wives and mothers (read: reproducers) left them muted in the decision making process and as a result, they did not question their husbands' abrupt decisions and / or socio-political circumstances to leave.

This trend remained apparent throughout their transition across state boundaries and their experiences in receiving countries. In other words, a male influence was also apparent during the migration process while temporarily residing within refugee camps. Initially, all six respondents fled to neighbouring Tanzania to seek refuge with the intention of remaining there until Rwanda politically stabilized. Josephine, Sibongile and Thandie recalled encountering instances of violence in the Tanzanian camps as a direct result of their husband's state of affairs in Rwanda:

I stopped in Tanzania, because of the refugees who fled to that country in 1994... because there are refugee camps in Tanzania, so I couldn't become a refugee there because they (military) would come and take me and find me and [...] especially my husband and take him (Josephine).

[...] the camps they are just as dangerous because all the people living there are from your country [...]. People wanted to kill us and would threaten us because of my husband's past... [...] so he decided to leave...(Sibongile)

We went to Tanzania...refugees are not allowed to stay outside the refugee camps. I went to the camps...we stayed there. Unfortunately, my husband knew some people who were in Rwanda... who were enemies. So those people when they found him there with his family, they tried to get revenge. They said that my husband was responsible for them losing everything. They said that because of him and the NGO that he supported they lost everything. So in many occasions there were attempts to kidnap him and to kill him. Then we needed to go as far as we could it wasn't safe. We went to Malawi. (Thandie)

Women also experience the migration process differently than men primarily due to their sexuality and its potential exploitation by men (Espin, 1999:18). According to WIN News (1998), refugee women and children are considered vulnerable and "easy victims" for those

wishing to exploit them (p. 13). Furthermore, Espin (1999) states that women's physical endurance and/or vulnerability are often exploited during the relocation process especially if they are fleeing as a direct consequence of dangerous political conditions (p. 20). In comparison to men, women are increasingly susceptible to traumatic experiences such as rape or abuse (p. 20). Amongst the women interviewed, refugee camps and townships were specifically labeled as hazardous zones where sexual and physical violence against women prevailed. Velopi described the atmosphere of insecurity and overcrowding within the camps while emphasizing women's increased susceptibility to danger:

We got there and it was very dangerous. We were living in a little shelter with many others. People would steal anything from you especially when you were sleeping. Women would get raped when getting wood and making fires. It was not safe. (Velopi)

Sibongile expressed the prevalence of female victimization:

In the camps, there is a lot of crime, rape and it's not safe. I had my daughter with me and I was scared for her too. I told my husband that we will die if we stay. (Sibongile)

Chigozie reflected on an instance where an attempted assault was directly linked to her non-status and xenophobic sentiments:

One night, someone came into our shelter and wanted to rape me. My baby was beside me and was crying. My husband was tied by another man. I was screaming and someone came to help and hit the man over the head. That is why I left. (Chigozie)

According to Pittaway and Bartolomei (2001), women are common targets of "ethically motivated and gender specific forms of violence" (p. 23). Often, aggressive acts are fueled by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance (p. 23). As displayed within the above excerpts the "intersection" of gender discrimination with other forms of discrimination (i.e. race and class) as described by Pittaway and Bartolomei (2001) remains a

double burden on women and serves to differentiate their experiences of migration from that of their male counterparts.

Schick et al. (2004) explain acts of violence against marginalized groups as stemming from fundamentalisms that “result from the ongoing revolution in social relations” - especially those between men and women (p.11). In other words, “fundamentalist patriarchy reassures insecure men of their right to dominate women” (p. 11). The authors further indicate that the “Other” is always essential in creating a fundamentalist patriarchal dogma in which those “disaffected people find a common cause in the rhetoric of xenophobia and the certainty of simplistic answers” (p. 12). Fundamentalism in and of itself is a strategy to secure or stabilize, in this case, patriarchal power when it appears to be threatened (Jaffe 2004: 106-107). A major component of fundamentalism consists of increasing control over women (p.107). This form of patriarchy occurs due to the fact that it is “intimately tied to the control and domination that men exert over each other in hierarchical societies” (p. 107). In relation to this, Josephine indicated how her apparent presence created a sense of threat amongst the township inhabitants and subsequently resulted in an act of violence fueled by xenophobia:

They think there are too many strangers. That we come here to take their jobs and their men from other women. I was only hurt once bad. They poured boiling water on my leg... see (shows burns) and said that if I want to take their job and use their place I had to pay. (Josephine)

Women, on the other hand, who partake in fundamentalist discourse, do so in the attempts of preserving their current situation in fear of losing so much in the event of destabilization (Jaffe, 2004: 107). Velopi indicated how another woman as a result of such circumstances victimized her:

[...] One day I was stabbed in the arm. A woman thought I had her husband and she became very mad. She tried to kill me and I moved away and the knife went

into my arm. She said that foreigners gave her husband AIDS. The next day we went to Durban. (Velopi)

According to Croucher (2004) the concept of gender bears similarities to ethnicity and nationhood as they all represent a social and political construct (p. 179). More precisely, gender is a category of assignment and control; a source and site of belonging; and a form of identity (p. 179). Expressions of xenophobia and the legitimating of intolerance, as demonstrated above, exclude non-citizens in the attempts of preserving nationhood and identity.

4.3 Women, Citizenship and Exclusion

Citizenship as a concept is expressed through “spaces and places” (Lister, 2004:3). The struggles that arise as a result of citizenship are directly influenced by cultural, political and historical contexts (p. 3). The identity that is formulated throughout entails notions of membership, community and relationships on the one hand and nationalism, “second class” and non-citizen on the other (p. 3). A sovereign state is maintained through immigration policies, which ensure the reproduction of boundaries whether they are spatial, social, cultural, economic or political (Croucher, 2004:67). In South Africa, as in many other countries, a “sovereignty story is built upon the nation-state, presuming a coincidence of people, territory, authority and identity that migration disrupts” (Pettman, 1999:215). The concept of citizenship creates exclusionary tensions, which operate to create non-or partial citizens and has been described as a “conspiracy against outsiders” (Lister, 2004: 43). As such, it remains a “territory based identity” in that those who do not possess this status are excluded from mainstream society (p. 215). “Identity politics” therefore, bears significant consequences to migrants and especially women in that they often become “territory” within deterritorialized identity politics (p. 215). As such, a direct link exists between identity politics, social exclusion and citizenship as a universal discourse (Alund, 1999: 147). According to Pateman (1988) many feminists have argued the

gendered nature of citizenship and its subsequent construction in terms of the “Rights of Man” (Croucher, 2004:180). Under this guise, the exclusion of women is not accidental and is instead a part of “the construction of entitlements of men” (p. 180). Respondents Velopi, Chigozie, Lilianne and Thandie mentioned the extent to which they were continuously denied and hence, excluded from the potentiality of becoming South African citizens despite the state’s recognition of their refugee status. In other words, the respondents were granted temporary a refugee status which required continuous renewal:

We have refugee status but it expires in 2002, this year – December. After that I have to go to the DHA every month to renew it. (Velopi)

Once you get your status you have to go on a waiting list to get another status. After 2 years you ask for another status. They might say they can give you status. My refugee status expires in 2003. Then I have to get another status. (Chigozie)

I have refugee status. I will have to get it renewed every month and wait in line. Then if they decide one day that they don’t want to renew then they won’t and I will have to go back to Rwanda. (Lilianne)

Every month I have to extend my visa including what of my children. I can renew it for everyone. (Thandie)

The perpetual denial of social citizenship rights allows for gross inequalities to emerge which in turn, serves to undermine the “equality of civil and political status inherent in the idea of citizenship” (p. 17). Feminist perceptions on the role of rights differ. The liberal feminist stance stipulates that in order to fight gender inequalities and to achieve full citizenship status a stronger international discourse on international rights is required whereas radical feminists argue that rights are merely an expression of male values and powers (p. 18). Furthermore, contemporary feminists indicate the danger in rejecting rights due to the law’s forcefulness as an agent of liberation and oppression (p. 18). Despite these diverging views, feminist doubt over citizenship rights overlap with those of the radical left who have accentuated “the failure of

citizenship rights vested in liberal democratic institutions to meet the needs of women and racialised groups and the socially and economically marginalised” (Lister, 2004: 18). The failure to access basic entitlements inherently impacted the respondents. Josephine explained that despite having been granted the legal right to attend school and seek employment stipulations within these rights kept her within the margins of society:

I have refugee status now so you are entitled to some rights like South African citizens. But the problem is that it is not like that because for example, when you have a refugee status you cannot apply for financial aid. So even if you are allowed to go to school, we cannot because we don't have the means. (Josephine)

Lilianne indicated that prior to having been granted refugee status, rights to education and employment were not granted. Total inaccessibility to basic rights increased the gap between the marginalized and the citizen. Lilianne and Chigozie commented on racialized immigration policies, which served to exclude those who are waiting to obtain refugee status:

All I know is that we don't have the same rights as any one else. We can't work or study what do they expect us to do here? They give you the papers later it can take 6 months to get a stat.[status]. How are we supposed to survive here we are not allowed to do anything here? (Lilianne)

I think there are no human rights for refugees. I don't think we have any rights here. We want to work... they say we can't. My husband wants to study... they say there is no financial assistance for us. If we could study or work we would have something to do. They don't want to help us in general. There are some laws but they don't apply them to us. The problem is that they don't apply them. (Chigozie)

The exclusion of women within nation-states has been a core component of the theoretical and political construction of citizenship (Lister, 2004: 196). According to Croucher (2004), “the justification and perpetuation of gendered citizenship practices is rooted in the distinction between the public and private realms” (p. 180). Within this dichotomy, the public sphere has represented universalism, politics and independence whereas the private refers to the realm of the household, care and dependence (Croucher, 2004; Lister, 2004). At the material level, power

dominance of nation-states and of dominant groups within, tends to exclude both “outsider” and “insider” groups from full citizenship (Lister, 2004:202). Prevailing power has been exercised within and across the public-private divide through the control over access to the range of citizenship rights (p. 202). Discursively, it has been exercised through the engendering of the public and private spheres “which has underwritten the masculine bias at the heart of citizenship as traditionally conceived” (p. 202). According to Lister (2004) feminist citizenship praxis should be committed to global citizenship, which ensues greater economic order and increasingly inclusionary and non-discriminatory policies towards “outsiders” and those within the nation-state (p. 201). More precisely women’s claims for citizenship should accentuate diversity at both the national and international levels (p. 202).

4.4 Experiences of Xenophobia and Social Exclusion within Public/Private Spaces

Eisenstein (1996) states that the epistemological and political construction of feminism begins from:

[The] self and moves outwards; that it is personal as well as political; that it is at one and the same time individualist and collectivist; that it requires an understanding of women as part of a larger complex community which is permeated by differences of color, ethnicity, economic class, colonialism and nationhood – it stands counter to the masculinist nationalist constructions of separatism and false universalisms (p. 169).

In relation to this, public/private dichotomies are intertwined and to a certain degree represents Eisenstein’s “we” of feminism insofar as it represents an array of selves that “share female bodily borders” (p. 169).

4.4.1 The Public Body

According to Eisenstein (1996) fear emerges as a result of the unknown and is utilized as a means of quashing and annihilating difference (p. 27). The author indicates that fear creates new and ambivalent borders which label and distinguish the inside from the outside (p. 29).

Within public spaces, nations serve to provide an identity beyond the self where a sense of belongingness and connectedness prevails (p. 46). Xenophobia, hatred and racism emerge when this sense of self becomes exclusionary of other identities. Soros (1993) indicates that ethnic states remain intolerant of diverging ethnic identities whereby exclusivity is apparent amongst racialized and sexualized lines (Eisenstein, 1996: 50). According to Lister (2004) women who are oppressed within public realms as a result of “race” or “ethnicity” are “particularly vulnerable to objectification and vilification, in some cases as sexualized, in others as de-sexed bodies, with echoes of earlier bodily prejudices” (p. 74). The nation depicts women as reproducers and mothers as well as maintainers of blood and racial lines. Masculinist nationalism utilizes such bloodlines while women’s bodies are perceived as territory to conquer (p. 31). Since women symbolize the nation, rape, as displayed by the respondents within the townships (refer to section 1.1), displays a love-hate dichotomy where women are idolized on the one hand and brutalized on the other (p. 58). As such, the body remains a site of persistent struggle where “the female body operates as a spectacle; its physicality is given meaning by marking its difference(s) (p. 31). Moreover, “the physicality of the body becomes a horribly powerful resource for those who wish to conquer, violate, humiliate and shame (p. 33).

The respondents reflected upon instances, in South Africa, where “insider” groups utilized their bodies and/or displayed physical characteristics as a means of reinforcing their subordinate status in society. Sibongile, Velopi and Lilianne indicated:

Sometimes I don’t even say anything and people still say things to me. I have darker skin and people see that... even if I could speak perfect English I would still be hated because I am not the right color. (Sibongile)

People see that my skin is dark...it is a lot darker. Sometimes they say that I should go home that there are enough problems here without foreigners. (Velopi)

Here everyone hates me no matter where I go because of my skin. Here you can die anywhere any time. (Lilianne)

Another example of this phenomenon, as put forth by the respondents, was the utilization of the derogatory term “megureguere” (read: foreigner) as a verbal xenophobic manifestation, which was directed towards them as a result of their distinguishable physical dispositions:

[...] They say “go back home megureguere”. [This] is said all the time very bad things that I don’t want to say. (Sibongile)

Everyday especially when I am working. They say you “megureguere” [foreigner] must go back to your country. He won’t approach you or hurt you or anything but they will very much verbally abuse you. (Josephine)

People would not answer when I talked to them or would say things that were bad like “megureguere [foreigner] go home”. (Velopi)

Thus, Eisenstein (1996) indicates, “[...] we live in our bodies as they represent the fears of difference and strangeness. Color, vaginas, noses mark us as others” (p. 35).

4.4.2 The Public Official

The 1999 White Paper perceives that foreigners weaken the State and its institutions by corrupting officials, fraudulently acquiring documents and undeserved rights. Under this guise, Officials at the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) dictate who may enter and exit or who may be included and excluded. Within immigration policies and laws, the family is defined in a narrow heterosexist manner (Eisenstein, 1996: 97). According to Eisenstein (1996), the concept *hetero* entails sameness and naturalness, which is “naturalized by genitalia” (p. 30). Despite this, femaleness is represented as the “other” and is considered as strangeness “as it is positioned against the phallus” (p. 30). Though it is well documented that refugees of both genders may encounter varying forms of difficulties in obtaining documentation or registration while at the Department of Home Affairs, refugee women are faced with additional constraints – especially female heads of households (Forbes-Martin, 2004: 44). In other words, female heads of

households are perceived not only as the “Other” but also as violators of the male/public interpretation of the family. As such, constraints encountered encompass an array of physical and logistical difficulties including the inability to speak with officials responsible for registration – especially in cultures where women are not permitted to interact with strangers (read: males) (p. 44). According to Sibongile, Lilianne and Thandie, perceived sexist attitudes and beliefs put women at an even greater disadvantage and consisted of yet another obstacle to which they were required to succumb to. While attempting to renew a permit on her own, without her husband, Sibongile was refused an interview with an official. Upon returning with her husband, they were bribed:

[...] I didn't know how to speak English very good. They made me wait in queue for a long time. When I got to talk to someone for an interview they asked me where my husband was and if he knew I was there. I said yes but he couldn't come and they said that they could not help me if I didn't bring him. So I waited for nothing for five hours in the queue. (Sibongile)

Lilianne and Thandie mentioned the prevalence of sexism:

[...] I was alone, no husband. Sometimes this can be a problem. They say where is you husband? Does he know you're here? (Lilianne)

I renewed my whole family's visas. Usually women have problems; because of God I am not doing very bad at the DHA. (Thandie)

In support of this, a 1999 Human Rights Watch South African report, indicated that all refugees interviewed reported that they were asked for bribes or a “fee” while approaching DHA officials for document processing and to secure their status (p. 111). Thandie and Josephine recalled their experiences with corruption:

You can go there and sometimes no one will help you. They are always cross. Sometimes they ask you for money just to extend you visa for that month. They don't understand that I can't buy a piece of bread for my children. How can I afford a paper for 200 Rand! For me it is very corrupt. If you don't pay they will give you the paper but they say “you must suffer”. So the next time they will make

you wait all day in line and close the queue when it is your turn and say the office is closed for the day after I have waited for 4 hours with 3 children. They recognize you because you are there every month. (Thandie)

Most of the persons at Home Affairs are so corrupt. The length of time it takes to get status depends on how you manage yourself. [...] so the way it is that come today and if you have money to corrupt them you can get your status today. So it ends up that there is someone who has been waiting for two years and still does not have a status because he doesn't have any money to pay them. If you don't have money like me then you can go and stay there the whole day waiting for extension of your permit. They don't extend it or they can make you wait there the whole afternoon or give you a temporary permit which is written no job and can't study and have it one year, two years. (Josephine)

The respondents further stated how such an exercise of power created a sense of fear for their future.

I don't know what will happen to us if they won't renew it. It makes me lost sleep. (Velopi)

They can reject me if they want, I don't know what will happen to us. I just have to wait and see and be scared until I know. (Chigozie)

I am scared because they can say "I don't want you here anymore". I am always scared that maybe I'll have to go back and I will just be put in a truck and taken away. (Lilianne)

It is bad because one day they can decide to send us back. It is very difficult. (Thandie)

Such a display of power and hierarchical inequality, and the subsequent effects it creates, is consistent with the fundamentalist principle of "radical patriarchy" (Riesebrodt, 1990) which rationalizes masculine public authority as a naturally occurring process rather than one which "operat[es] through a system of unequal access to social and political power" (Schick, Jaffe, Watkinson, 2004: 13).

4.4.3 Public Spaces and Places

According to Mohanty et al (1991) "women" are commonly categorized as "powerless" whereby they are placed within familial or workplace contexts "[...] almost as if these systems

existed outside the relations of women with other women, and women with men” (p. 59). The authors outline the problems with this analysis insofar as it is based on the assumption that men and women consist of “sexual-political subjects prior to their entry into the social arena”(p. 89). Followers of this assumption may in turn focus on the effects of colonialism or labor structures, for instance, on women, who are predetermined as a group (p. 89). The main point, according to the authors consists of the fact that “women are produced through these very relations as well as being implicated in forming these relations” (p. 89). Rosaldo (1980) further indicates that “woman’s place in human social life is not in any direct sense a product of the things she does [...] but the meaning her activities acquire through concrete social interactions (p. 400 as qtd in Mohanty et al.: 1991).

For the respondents, the meaning of their roles/responsibilities conducted within the family and within the workplace did indeed influence their place in human social life. All played varying roles within society and for some, altered sex-roles allowed for them the possibility of creating a new way of life. Espin (1999) indicated that for those women, “all are confronted with the alternative meanings of womanhood” (p. 4). For the respondents, the meaning of their activities (employment/child rearing) remained somewhat ambiguous in terms of defining a place within society – considering that the social interactions within each context remained rife with xenophobia and discrimination. Chigozie, Josephine, Liliane and Velopi indicated:

There is no relationship [with my employer]. Usually they treat me like they want. Like I’m not a human being. They know we don’t have a choice to do this job so we take a lot from the employers. If we don’t act like an angel they will hunt us down. I am mistreated. We can’t react because she can fire me. (Chigozie)

I worked for an Indian who owned a shop. I was supposed to do his bookkeeping because I studied that in high school. But he didn’t hardly pay me anything and he

would make me work long hours and do stupid jobs like cleaning his car. He was very mean. (Liliane)

I work as a vegetable vendor in the market. Our main employer treats us all so bad. I even remember her saying that she could collaborate with the DHA to deport us if we did anything she didn't like. She has never done that but she usually just threatens to call the DHA. (Velopi)

According to Anthias and Yuval-Davis (2002) the intersection between racial and ethnic exclusion and sexism is apparent within the realms of ethnic employment and family labour (p. 121). The authors, in their discourse of comprehending gendered ethnicities and the racialization of gender, outlined different factors that are linked to the “disadvantages and exclusions that racialized, migrant and ethnic minority women face” (p. 124). They indicated that women’s position in immigration and nationality law serves to explain their “position as migrants, through the legal political and economic position of migrants but overlaid through the way in which men and women are treated differently” (p. 124). In relation to this, Lister (2003) indicates that despite the fact that women comprise of over half of the refugee and international migrant populations, policies, immigration and nationality laws ignore women’s societal roles and in turn, casts them as dependents of males (p. 45). This perception of women as dependent on men, serves to inform immigration and nationality laws and their surrounding discourses (p. 45). The author further indicates that even certain reputedly gender-neutral immigration laws may be indirectly discriminatory and that women, due to their economically disadvantaged position within society, are particularly harshly affected by the application of such racialized laws (p. 45).

Contrary to immigration and nationality law perceptions, the respondents displayed almost complete economic independence from their male counterparts. In fact, Chigozie was employed as a car guard, Josephine as a street produce vendor and Velopi and Liliane as

domestic workers. Thandie earned a salary as a hair-cutting student and Sibongile was a stay-at-home mother taking full responsibility towards the education of her children. However, Pittaway and Bartolomei (2001) indicate that refugee women are commonly treated as second-class citizens, increasingly so in comparison to men, within their countries of asylum and are discriminated upon in terms of low wages for example, as a result of racist state policies (p. 27). Nevertheless, the neglect of immigration and national laws in recognizing the respondent's societal roles as "heads of household" bared significant impacts on their potentiality for inclusion. Considering that the 1999 White Paper legislation described "illegal aliens" as those who "[...] compete with citizens and residents for scarce resources, public services and insufficient job opportunities which are provided below the labour conditions prescribed by law (Harris, 2001:20)" – it is not surprising that the respondents addressed the impeding effects of the lack of laws in accessing formal employment, the subsequent exploitation from employers as well as the lack of acknowledgment of educational qualifications. In terms of employment and working conditions, the respondents explained how foreigners and especially women consist of an exploitative, highly sought after, human resource characterized by low wages and arduous working hours. They indicated that the lack of immigration and national laws served to undermine their participation within society and in turn, encouraged racist discourse. Lilianne (a domestic worker) and Chigozie (a car guard) recognized this by stating:

No one has to help you [find a job] because they take advantage of you. They don't have to look either. They always know that there are foreigners willing to work for 20 Rands a day. They only hire foreigners because it is cheap. (Lilianne)

It didn't take long for me to find a job. It is not difficult to find because they don't pay you. [...]. It is the government's fault. They don't protect us they exploit us. We only get tips, and I have to pay 7 Rands a day to work on that street. They give us a jacket only after we pay every morning. If you can't pay you don't work. It took me one week to find a job. (Chigozie)

While employed, they were subjected to the consequences of a lack of access to labor laws, unions and equal treatment. Though employment opportunities are scarce for both men and women, women are often limited to “domestic work or the sex industry, where their right to work, freedom of movement, reproductive rights, right to acquire, change or retain their nationality, right to health and other basic human rights are violated (p. 27). Racist immigration/national laws, while searching for employment consisted of another obstacle mentioned by the respondents. For example, employers would request South African identification booklets as a condition of employment. Sibongile explains:

The government says we can work. But what really happens is that if you go get a job the people will ask you for ID if you show a refugee ID they will say no we don't want you. They think we are taking their jobs. There should be a law against employers refusing qualified refugees from working. (Sibongile)

Josephine explained how despite having obtained proper legal documentation for employment, a guarantee of entitlement was not present:

After two interviews (with the DHA) you can get status. They give you a temporary permit which is written no job and can't study and have it one year...two years. We ask ourselves these people who issue this, they think we are living how? If you think about your life ... how are you suppose to work but you are going to work. If you show them the permit after two years they will still say no you are not allowed to work. How are we supposed to live? (Josephine)

A second example consisted of the respondents stating how they were not permitted to open a savings account at a banking institution since they were not South African citizens. This in itself was mentioned as another major obstacle since they were not able to securely save their wages. Banking institutions blatantly indicated on postings outside the building that one must possess a green South African identification booklet in order to benefit from the services offered.

Josephine and Velopi explained:

No matter where you are they always ask for ID...ID they always ask for the green id. When you give them the refugee status they say no you must show the ID.

Because refugees ask many times at the bank to open an account there is now a sign at the banks that you must show green ID. They even say that color of the ID...they want... Green! Not the yellow or the red but the green ID! If you can have a bit of money to save you can't it will stay in your house and it will get stolen anyways... we can never be able to get ahead. (Josephine)

Say for example I have extra money and want to open a bank account I can't because they say that you must have ID (South African). If you can have a bit of money to save you can't it will stay in your house and it will get stolen anyways, we can never be able to get ahead. (Velopi)

The lack of acknowledgment of educational qualifications was yet another display of racist state policies. In other words, the respondents expressed their frustration over the issue of their professional qualifications, attained in their countries of citizenship, as being disregarded in South Africa. Amongst the six respondents, two were professional nurses, one a midwife and another had bookkeeping qualifications, yet none were working in their fields of expertise. Instead, they remained under-employed working for daily salaries ranging from 10 to 25 Rands.

The problem here is that because refugees don't have passports [South African] or the proper papers they are undermined totally. Someone's qualifications here mean nothing (Josephine).

According to Espin (1999), "gender becomes the site to claim the power denied to immigrants by racism" (p. 7). Lister (2003) indicates that migrant women's autonomy remains particularly vulnerable between the public and private divide despite the fact that for many, it may open increased personal and economic independence (p. 129). The author further states racist and sexist immigration laws have a tendency of portraying them as legal and economic dependents of men "without separate public status, with implications for their rights of entry and subsequent social, legal and economic rights" (p. 129). The resulting factors remain that of economic vulnerability and sexual exploitation, for example, which could potentially lead to marital tension where their right to stay in a country derives them from their relationship to their husband (p. 129).

4.4.4 Private Spaces and Places

Lister (2003), in her analysis of citizenship, states that men and women both experience different relationships as well as different ease of passage within the public and private spheres (p. 125). The key to women's integration/citizenship lies within the realms of the interpenetration of the public and private (p. 125). Anthias and Yuval-Davis (2002) indicate that women's positions combined with societal sexism are superimposed by "internal sexist relations of the different cultural practices of the groups" (p. 124). For respondents Velopi and Chigozie, sexist relations within private realms directly affected their freedom to act in the public sphere. Velopi indicated how her new role as primary breadwinner created tension within her marriage. In addition to this, she took full responsibility for her children's education.

My husband would prefer if I didn't work. He says that I should stay home and be able to live a normal life like other women. I make about the same amount of Rands as he does – he thinks it is embarrassing that he works for the same money. I also have to teach my children myself after working all day. Sometimes I use books from another girl on my street who is also a refugee. She lets us read them. I am not good in English so I am learning too. I want my children to be educated...but I can't afford it. (Velopi)

Similarly, Chigozie explains how her husband's sense of failure and pride led to the abandonment of his job despite the financial necessity of him maintaining his position. As a result, Chigozie was required to work full time as a car guard and take care of her child's education.

My husband is educated and will not accept such low jobs it is very devaluing. He has worked in them and decided that he cannot do it anymore. This makes a lot of problems at home I need him to work but he doesn't. We cannot afford anything and we must live with many people. I come home and must take care of my child and help with home school because we can't afford to send her to school. (Chigozie)

For Sibongile who works as a full time care giver for her 4 children also takes on full responsibility for their education.

Yes, I would like to work but right now my children must be taken care of. I can't afford to send them to the crèche. So I must stay here. My oldest should be in school but I don't have money to pay the school fees. So I try to teach her things by myself. I don't have books or anything so I teach things I know. (Sibongile)

Thandie expressed how her husband wanted her to work and to take full responsibility of the children.

My husband says that I should work more and make more money. I find it difficult because he does not take care of the children and he does not work. I do everything and I'm trying to learn how to cut hair. I don't make good wages and he gets mad. My children have to learn about school so I teach them, when they get sick I help them and I have to do everything in the house like cooking, cleaning [and go to the] market to get food. (Thandie)

Lister (2003) emphasizes how women's formal equality within public realms is jeopardized in its economic, social and political manifestations and is destabilized by their burden of responsibilities in the private (p. 133). Their disjointed lives or more precisely, their private roles do not coincide with the demands of public citizenship. In other words, the potentiality of expanding their personal development is obstructed by the time spent within domestic realms. In contrast, men hold a privileged stance from this perspective insofar as they hold an advantage over women in the public sphere thereby permitting them to maintain power over women inside and outside the home (p. 133).

4.5 Public/Private Violence and Harassment

As the public and private divides collide, women's citizenship is greatly impacted by male violence and harassment. Women who encounter violence in their lives are likely to do so within the private as well as in the public spheres. No matter where it is met, male violence induces fear, imposes constraints and undermines women's position as citizens (Lister, 2003: 113-127). As discussed above, rape and violence encountered while fleeing persecution directly violated women's rights to bodily integrity. Radical feminism asserts that violence and

harassment is one of sexualized racism that impacts women's autonomy (p. 113). This argument is such that women who are not able to move or act freely within society or who are intimidated within the home, find that their ability to act as citizens is curtailed (p. 113). Within public spaces, respondents Velopi, Liliane and Josephine indicated how they were victims or witnesses of male violence and how such acts held characteristically sexualized xenophobic natures thereby inducing fear.

I was walking on the street once with another man from Rwanda he was my friend. These young boys came up to us and told me to take my clothes off and that they wanted to rape me. My friend said for me to run. So I run away... there was no one to help me. They beat my friend and stabbed him until he died. [...]I saw a woman and asked if she could help me... she was scared of me and didn't help.. I was crazy... crying and everything. (Velopi)

They [police] beat you. Someone shot one of my friends once when I was there they started to beat [kick] me because I was a foreigner. (Liliane)

All the time [I'm a victim of crime]. After one month we put our clothes out to dry everything was stolen. And another time someone stole my bracelet, I got beat up once by the police only and my friend was shot that's all and another one was stabbed by those boys. (Josephine)

I know of one woman who was raped on my street. She did not call the police because she was afraid of the men... they knew her and she was scared that they would kill her if they were arrested. She was from Congo they said that she should have sex with a real man. (Sibongile)

Such acts of violence and intimidation did in fact impede their freedom of actions and movement.

I don't go out much. I am scared to leave because I don't know how I am going to be treated. It is very dangerous out there (Sibongile)

I don't feel safe [...]I am zero safe!", "When I go out whatever I hear, I feel unsafe. When we go to markets or anywhere, anything can happen. I feel unsafe everywhere especially because I am a foreigner. It is dangerous here [South Africa] in general. It is dangerous in the area I live. Well no one goes there not even at night.... If you walk on the street you get raped or mugged. It's like that. You would have to be stupid to go outside. (Liliane)

It is very dangerous; they will mug you or even kill you for stupid things or for no reason. We must stay inside at night and even in the evening when the sun is about to go down. (Chigozie)

In more general terms, such harassment in the public domain by South African nationals of both genders also prevailed. Mohanty (1991) indicates that the “structural domination and the presence of suppression – often violent – emphasizes the heterogeneity of the subject(s) in question” (p 52). Here, Chigozie and Sibongile displayed how their “Blackness” and their lack of the native language led to racism.

Someone said to me “how can you call yourself a Black woman if you don’t speak Zulu”? I never heard Zulu before. They think we don’t want to learn but they don’t realize that I have never heard it and I have just moved to this country. They were very rude and some become aggressive. (Sibongile)

They don’t understand how a black person cannot speak Zulu. It is just ignorance because Black South Africans think that Zulu is an international language and a lot of them don’t realize that. Here particularly in KZN (Kwa-Zulu Natal province) when you don’t speak Zulu they say you are a foreigner and you don’t want to learn their language so they treat you bad. (Chigozie)

Eisenstein (1996) acknowledges how feminism theorizes that the presence of a victim is indicative of a struggle for power and as a result the potential for resistance always prevails (p. 127). Naomi Wolf’s perspective of feminism focuses on “power feminism” as opposed to “victim feminism” (p. 127). She states that women’s identity should not be formulated from their powerlessness as “women are fed up with reminders of their own oppression” (p. 126). The respondents demonstrated such resistance, as overt acts of xenophobia were squashed through their timely mastering of their third language – English.

I just learnt it [English] from going into markets. If you don’t speak no one will help you. I had no choice. I had to learn fast because I was not getting treated good or helped in the market. So I had to learn or I couldn’t ask someone for what kind of food to buy or anything. (Velopi)

It took me two months to learn it [English] when I came here. I didn’t have a choice because I had to survive. (Chigozie)

I didn't know English before coming here but I had to learn to survive. In the beginning it was very hard. They treat me bad firstly because I am a refugee and because I don't speak English. I learned especially in the markets and shops. I just had to or be treated very bad. (Thandie)

It took me maybe seven months before I could talk and understand [English]. I learned in the markets and shops in town... it was very difficult because people would think I was stupid. I had no choice to learn to talk because it could get very dangerous in situations. (Sibongile)

Maitse (2000) states that acts of violence and aggression against women remains and extension of the state apparatus since, during apartheid, all people in public were oppressed and the men were "legally empowered to oppress and exploit women in private for their own and the state's maintenance of hierarchical and oppressive patriarchal structures" (p. 201). Nationalism permitted men to retain their imaginary and real status, which they had prior to apartheid, which dictated that they owned land and women. Nationalism also allows men to act aggressively and direct their aggression toward the "Other" who is deemed inferior (p.203). More precisely, violence that occurs in countries where there was a struggle for national liberation is often correlated with nationalism and masculinities primarily due to the perception that "nationalism promotes and validates masculinities in its popular images of nationalist struggles which are predominantly male" (Maitse 2000: 211).

Within familial realms or more precisely, the household, Josephine and Chigozie mentioned how their husbands sometimes reacted in aggressive and intimidating manners within their homes. The respondents indicated that the lack of resettlement policies, protecting refugees, resulted in varying difficulties in accessing adequate accommodation and in turn, impacted their families. Again, the intersection of the public and private divides dictates one's personal and public inclusion within society. Anthias and Yuval-Davis (2002) indicate that disadvantages and exclusions are linked to "patriarchal relations and the different forms they

take [as well as to] sexist social policy” (p. 124). As such, the respondents were required to reside in over priced quarters that did not grant them any form of privacy thereby resulting in the exertion of control by their husbands. Josephine and Chigozie mentioned the effects this had on their marital relationships:

I live like that because I can't afford to live on my own. It's just too much. My husband gets very tired of everyone there sometimes he gets mad. It is like we never can be alone especially with 5 people in a one-bedroom place. Sometimes he throws things at the walls or at me you don't know where it's going to be. (Josephine)

I can't even be alone when I want to. It is very difficult you can't just leave the house to get away from everyone inside because it is too dangerous outside. Where are we supposed to go? I can't live like a family. I have to live with three strangers in a one bedroom flat. My husband gets very upset and hits everyone and just leaves most of the time. Then I have to be alone with these other people who I don't know and I sometimes get scared. (Chigozie)

As demonstrated by Chigozie and Josephine above, their husbands resorted to outward reactions towards their wives and as a result of their lack of control over racist state policies. According to Espin (1999), controlling one's private world is easier to maintain than one's public lives (i.e. types of employment, schooling, housing etc.) (7-8). As such, maintaining a sense of domestic control may be deemed necessary for men who feel they have lost their sense of importance and authority as a result of migration (p. 8).

5. Conclusion

Throughout this analysis, the experiences of six female Rwandan refugees currently residing in Durban, South Africa were utilized to explore the prevalence and subsequent effects of xenophobia and social exclusion within their daily lives. Current South African legislation and policy pertaining to the refugee crisis in general and women in particular, set the framework for an increasingly comprehensive analysis where pre and post apartheid eras influenced

experienced segregation, racism and sexism. Within this context the analysis touched upon women's unique experiences of xenophobia and social exclusion within South African society.

As such, the analysis began by focusing on gender factors pertaining to migration and its subsequent potentiality for domestic control over women. Focusing on the different gender based factors, which occur during the migration process, the respondent's journeys from Rwanda were assessed. It was determined that women experience the migration process differently than men primarily due to patriarchal expressions of gender and nationhood. Emphasis in the second section rested on notions of *Women, Citizenship and Exclusion* whereby the nation formulated a territorial based identity which excluded migrants and especially women from attaining the privileges of citizenship (read: inclusion). In other words, a lack of access to basic entitlements/rights such as employment and education were denied to refugees thereby increasing social inequalities. Gendered citizenship practices, it was determined, revolved around notions of racism and the public and private divides. Within the section entitled *The Public Body*, exclusion and xenophobia were portrayed through masculinist nationalism whereby women's bodies remained symbolic of territory to be conquered. The respondent's bodies and/or physical traits consisted of a superficial representation for those wishing to categorize as "other". *The Public Official*, and the patriarchal power which this male persona/institution encompasses, remained a major site for male/heterosexual dominance to prevail. The section entitled *Public Spaces and Places*, primarily focused on the gendered ethnicities as well as the racialization of gender in terms of employment and family labour. Immigration and nationality laws, it was discussed, ignored women's important societal roles and in turn, cast them as dependents of males. As a result, refugee women were subjected to exploitative conditions of employment despite their true independent stance from their male counterparts. The section on *Private Spaces*

and Place displayed the interconnectedness of both the public and private divides inasmuch as one influences the other and in turn, impacts the demands of citizenship. Finally, *Public/Private Violence and Harassment* encompassed the concepts of sexualized racism, masculinization and patriarchy and focused on how violence and harassment remained an extension of the state thereby negatively impacting women on both public and private dimensions.

All in all, the interviews and reflections, which prevailed, served to explain how the effects of social exclusion and xenophobia are unique to each gender. Levels of resistance, on behalf of the respondents, towards negative social realities remained apparent. It was displayed how refugees in general are excluded from society within the Republic of South Africa and how their sexuality serves as a double burden in adapting to a new society and hence formulating a territorialized identity. The respondents, in their differing yet similar experiences, were continuously required to not only respond to change but also to become agents of change and sources of tradition and continuity. Through the understanding and translation of lived experiences, women may assert the power they possess to affect their own destinies.

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