

**A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACTS OF MIGRATION ON  
NIGERIA DEVELOPMENT**

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**Abstract**

*One has only to think of the bulwarks that Europe constructed at her borders to understand that the colonial image of the 'inferior' Nigeria still prevails in the third millennium. Until Nigeria grows up, becomes developed, and joins the industrialized world, the mass migration of her citizens to Asia, Europe, and America will remain. Lack of jobs, lack of social warfare security programmes for the poor, political and social instability, poor electricity, leadership failures, poor remuneration of workers, insecurity, etc. all compound the migrant challenge in Africa but especially Nigeria, the focus of this paper. While these crises constitute a poor judgment on the political dispensation in Nigeria, their economic impact is most telling. This paper employs the method of critical analysis to interrogate the impact of migration on the development of Nigeria. In Nigeria the unemployment rate is very high, and the poverty rate evident on the per capita income. It is the conclusion of this paper that if political and socio-economic issues in Nigeria do not improve, Nigerians will continue to migrate to other countries, and hence brain drain in all sectors of the economy. The government of Nigeria should urgently address the situation with migration, contribute to job creation and improve environment to stop people from migrating and encourage its skilled labor abroad to return home to help in national development.*

**Key Words:** Migration, Nigeria, Development

**Introduction**

In the last decades, movements from Africa to Europe have gained increased and extensive attention. Through popular discourse and media coverage, a certain image of African migrants has been created, based on three main assumptions: migration from the

African continent is steadily increasing, it is mainly directed towards Europe, and that its main drivers are poverty, lack of opportunities, and general violence. Images depicted in public often show only the most spectacular movements of a migrant's journey and therewith tend to reinforce the public perception of African migrants as 'desperate invaders' or 'poor victims of smuggling networks. The main problem with those depictions is that most of them are based on assumptions, selective cases or individuals' impressions instead of sound empirical evidence. A comprehensive understanding of factors shaping migrants' decisions to leave their country, and to choose a particular route and destination can help to inform the debate on regular, irregular and forced migration, and its impact on the development of Nigeria. It would enable policy makers to better target interventions that address humanitarian needs and to mitigate root causes of mobility, particularly for forced migration.

In the case of Nigeria, the main migration routes towards Europe are the Western route within Africa towards Libya and the Central Mediterranean route from Libya towards Europe. It has nevertheless persisted as the most commonly used route for migrants from the Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) region. Unlike often suggested in previous literature, migration movements, especially from parts of world like the SSA-region, are not linear, uninterrupted journeys. Particularly, for those moving by land, the journey consists of many different legs. While the first part of the journey, the West African route which mainly used by migrants from West Africa, is fragmented with many stops before reaching Europe, the second part of the journey, the Central Mediterranean route, is rather straight forward as many of those that arrive in Italy come from Libya. Nigerian migrants are exposed to risks and vulnerabilities throughout all parts of their journeys. These risks are all taken by Nigerians in their numbers in search for a greener pasture. It is this that Asiegbu considered and affirms thus:

Ever since, the African has kept memory of a colonial, imperialist and slave-driving European. Difficult times in Africa demonstrate the extent to which the European colonizer succeeded. The image, which the African cuts of himself, at such times, is one of the 'inferior,' 'barbarian' in contrasts to the 'superior' European. Following the unprecedented economic decline of most African states,

Africa-to-Europe migration has redoubled. Nothing betrays the African internalization of the Europeans' jaundiced outlook on Africans as the Europe of the migrants' dream. That such a Europe is a nightmare is a view that African migrants reject to their hurt.<sup>1</sup>

It is simply this reality of economic hardship occasioned by failure of leadership that many professionals, academics, and ordinary Nigerians troop to Europe in their numbers. In affirmation of this, Asiegbu writes:

While nothing the suffering of migrant Africans, the unjust and harsh European immigration laws, the perilous trek through the Sahara Desert and the risk of sea-fearing to the Canary Islands, the Spanish enclaves, etc.,<sup>2</sup>

This ugly social phenomenon raises daily its head, and thus poses grave danger to growth and development of virtually all sectors in Nigeria. Its negative and terrible impacts in mostly the health, science, and education sectors are better imagined than experienced. These continue without any conscious struggle or efforts from the leaders to create jobs and good atmosphere to stop her citizens from leaving for Europe and America. This rush to Europe by Africans contributes to the derogatory lens through which the continent is seen. As M. Wolf, captures Hegel in *Why Globalization works*:

May be in future there will be African history, but at the moment there is none. There is only the history of the white man in Africa. The rest is darkness, and darkness is not a subject of history.<sup>3</sup>

The most arresting impact of Africa's history is, arguably, not the pillage and its various dimensions that the African had sustained. Rather it is its influence on the African psyche, the fact that the Africans are forced to perceive herself to be inferior to others in Asia, America and Europe.

The purpose of this paper however, is to address these concerns raised above with the view to recommending the best path to tow for Nigerian development. However, so many postulations have been adduced by scholars as the causes and panacea for Nigerian underdevelopment. The real negative impact of migration to the Nigeria's development is not fully understood. However, this lacuna as to what constitute the remote and immediate causes of migration in Nigeria and its consequent effects on its growth and development forms the rationale for this paper.

### **Conceptualizing Migration**

Human migration involves the movement of people from one place to another with intentions of settling, permanently or temporarily, at a new location (geographic region). The movement often occurs over long distances and from one country to another, but internal migration (within a single country) is also possible; indeed, this is the dominant form of human migration globally. Migration is often associated with better human capital at both individual and household level, and with better access to migration networks. Persons moving from their home due to forced displacement (such as a natural

disaster or civil disturbance) may be described as displaced persons or, if remaining in the home country, internally-displaced persons. A person who seeks refuge in another country can, if the reason for leaving the home country is political, religious, or another form of persecution, makes a formal application to that country where refuge is sought and is then usually described as an asylum seeker. If this application is successful this person's legal status becomes that of a refugee.

International migration is inextricably linked with globalization. On one hand, processes of globalization drive international migration, including through disparities in development, demography and democracy; the global jobs crisis; the segmentation of global labour markets; revolutions in communications and transportation; and transnational social networks. On the other hand, international migration itself generates processes of globalization, including the global transfer of money and goods; the emergence of global cities; and growing social and cultural diversity.

Migration is a key feature of a more interconnected world. Despite significant concerns about its economic and social implications, the movement of people across the world's borders boosts global productivity. The countries that prioritize integration stand to make the most of these potentials, by improving outcomes for their own economies and societies as well as for immigrants themselves. More than 90 percent of the world's 247 million cross-border migrants moved voluntarily, usually for economic reasons. The remaining 10 percent are refugees and asylum seekers who have fled to another country to escape conflict and persecution. Roughly half of these 24 million refugees and asylum seekers are in the Middle East and North Africa, reflecting the dominant pattern of flight to a neighboring country. But the recent surge of arrivals in Europe focused the developed world's attention on this issue. Roughly half of the world's migrants have moved from developing to developed countries, where immigration is a key driver of population growth. Migrants of all skill levels make a positive economic contribution, whether through innovation, entrepreneurship, or freeing up natives for higher-value work. Employment rates are slightly lower for immigrants than for native workers in top destinations, but this varies by skill level and by region of origin. Refugees typically take longer than voluntary migrants to integrate into the destination country. Extensive academic evidence shows that immigration does not harm native employment or wages, although there can be short-term negative effects if there is a large inflow of migrants into a small region, if migrants are close substitutes for native workers, or if the destination economy is experiencing a downturn.

The economic, social, and civic dimensions of migrants' integration need to be addressed holistically. Some of their guiding principles include changing the narrative to recognize

the economic opportunity inherent in immigration; beginning integration interventions early and sustaining them over the long term; empowering local stakeholders to implement initiatives that work for their communities; making integration a two-way process between native-born and immigrant communities; and building partnerships with the private sector and NGOs. The success or failure of integration across areas such as employment, education, health, and housing can reverberate for many years, influencing whether second-generation immigrants become fully participating citizens or remain in a poverty trap. It is also pertinent to note that there are two kinds of migration; voluntary and forced migration.

Voluntary migration is based on the initiative and the free will of the person and is influenced by a combination of factors: economic, political and social: either in the migrants' country of origin (determinant factors or "push factors") or in the country of destination (attraction factors or "pull factors"). "Push-pull factors" are the reasons that push or attract people to a particular place. "Push" factors are the negative aspects of the country of origin, often decisive in people's choice to emigrate and the "pull" factors are the positive aspects of a different country that encourages people to emigrate in search of a better life. For example, the government of Armenia periodically gives incentives to people who will migrate to live in villages close to the border with Azerbaijan. This is an implementation of a push strategy, and the reason people don't want to live near the border is security concerns given tensions and hostility because of Azerbaijan.

Although the push-pull factors are apparently diametrically opposed, both are sides of the same coin, being equally important. Although specific to forced migration, any other harmful factor can be considered a "push factor" or determinant/trigger factor, such examples being: poor quality of life, lack of jobs, excessive pollution, hunger, drought or natural disasters, which are mostly seen in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Such conditions represent decisive reasons for voluntary migration, the population preferring to migrate in order to prevent financially unfavorable situations or even emotional and physical suffering.

There exist contested definitions of forced migration. However, the editors of a leading scientific journal of Migration Review offer the following definition: Forced migration refers to the "movements of refugees and internally displaced people (displaced by conflict) as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects."<sup>4</sup> These different causes of migration leave people with one choice, to move to a new environment. Immigrants leave their beloved homes to seek a life in camps, spontaneous settlement, and countries of asylum.<sup>5</sup>

## **Understanding Development**

Development has many construal. To appreciate the term properly, we have to look at it through the lens of different scholars. In the view of Agbakoba, “it is a process by which humans seek to maximize the realization of themselves.”<sup>6</sup>This view of Agbakoba is in line with Mabogunje’s conceptualization: that “Development is essentially a human issue, a concern with the capacity of individuals, to realize their inherent potentials and effectively to cope with the changing circumstances of their lives.”<sup>7</sup>

To clarify the notion of self-realization, Agbakoba delineates development as universal and particular. The universal dimensions of self-realization consist of those values, orientations, attitudes, idea, practices and objects which are necessary (either as preconditions or as enhancing conditions) for the realization of people across the globe.<sup>8</sup>He notes that the particular aspects of development are those that concern specific communities and individuals. His critical analysis brought to light that every society, based on its historical, cultural, and geographical antecedents and conditions formulates its communal values and aesthetic sense in respect of secondary needs. However, development at this level is characterized as a mere process without showcasing the movement process of development. J.C Chukwuokolo noted that in the 1905s up to 1980s, development was conceived in terms of one of the triad The level of globalization, technological prowess and Gross National Productivity. Rogers is in the same line of thought when he opines that “a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced to produce higher per capita income and levels of living, through more modern production methods and improved social organization.”<sup>10</sup>Development at this instance was conceived basically in this construal such that capitalist West was seen as a model. This view led the Global South Nations into conceiving development in terms of replication or imitation of Europe. This wrong concept of development was responsible for Africa since development was construed as a transfer of European economic and technological prowess into Africa.”<sup>11</sup>

Regrettably, the impacts of the universalistic conception of development were different in Europe as they had a nodal organizing principle of development. The consequences of this disparity, led to the lack of a universal and comprehensive underpinning of the term ‘development’ in the African continent. The need for a broader understanding of development became apt. Be that as it may, Development means improvement in country’s economic and social conditions. More specially, it refers to improvements in way of managing an area’s natural and human resources. In order to create wealth and improve people’s lives Dudley Seers while elaborating on the meaning of development suggests that while there can be value judgments on what is development and what is not,

it should be a universally acceptable aim of development to make for conditions that lead to a realization of the potentials of human personality.

Diane understands of the term emphasis the exploration of the future as a prospective in time as it relates to the challenges confronting African development. Keita captures this thus:

First Diagne critically evaluates and finds wanting the theories of time in the African sociological context as formulated by John Mbiti and French colonial theorist Levy-Bruhl. Diagne argues against Mbiti's notion that time in African context is not intrinsically future oriented with reference to the different plans and programmes for African development, such as the Lagos plan of Action and the present NEPAD, Diagne attempts to show how the idea of time as it applies to prospective and a developmental political culture could produce for the youth of Africa a vision of tomorrow with a future in Africa and not elsewhere.<sup>12</sup>

However, by the early postwar period, development thought, like conventional economic wisdom, was really neither left nor right, for the simple reason that a broad consensus had come to coalesce around certain core assumptions. Its thrust was that economies needed more state intervention than they had been given in the past (in fact, in Latin America it was right-wing authoritarian regimes that began employing statist development strategies). Meanwhile, the horrors of the Depression and postwar political developments had given Keynesian economics pride of place in both academic and policy circles in the first world. This influenced both third-world academics and foreign advisers to newly independent countries, whose confidence in the state was further reinforced by the emergence of structuralist economics. Aware of the imperfections in the market and the world economy, and confident that the state could overcome them, development theorists proposed models that assigned the state a leading role in the economy. Many third-world, some of which had just won their independence, eagerly adopted the models, for they seemed to promise a rapid journey into the industrial age.

At first, the models seemed to deliver just that. With the postwar world economy booming, demand for third-world products rose. This provided third-world governments with the capital they needed to develop their industry and infrastructure. However, as time went by, problems in these strategies came to light. It became increasingly clear that many third-world economies were growing more slowly than required to continue improving the standards of living of the world's poorest citizens. The industrial development that took place consumed more resources than it generated, a waste exacerbated by inefficient states. When the postwar boom came to an end in the 1970s, the shortcomings of state led development became plain. It was around this time that the right began to resurface.

Dissident voices belonging to an old-school, neoclassical theory had for decades been firing occasional volleys from the sidelines of development studies. They claimed that the main problem in the third world was the state itself, and that rapid development could only come about if the state was rolled back. At the same time, as earlier development models became compromised, new left-wing schools of thought in particular, dependency theory arose to claim that the market itself was the problem, and that if anything was needed, it was a greater role for the state. The development debate polarized. By the late 1970s the left had become politically weak, its theorists engaged either in internecine squabbles or in strident defenses of orthodoxy. The time was ripe for neoclassical theory to start a revolution. First-world electorates and governments, anxious for solutions to the worsening economic situation in their countries, looked to the new ideas and turned to the new right. This initiated a long attack on the state and the other institutions, such as unions, that were seen to be hindering the operation of the market. First-world donor agencies began pressuring third-world governments to make similar changes in their policies. Many third-world governments acceded reluctantly, because the debt crisis had weakened their bargaining power with their creditors. Others rolled back the state more eagerly, because local constituencies had already started pushing for reform.

Less state, more market: this was the essential thrust of the strategy known as structural adjustment, which was soon applied in much of the third world. The idea seemed sound, but as time would tell, structural adjustment contained its own problems. Its shortcomings, which grew more evident with the passage of time, shed a new and damaging light on neoclassical theory. Structural adjustment yielded some positive gains in some of the more advanced third-world countries. However, in the poorer countries, those most in need of rapid change, it was less effective, and in some places actually did more harm than good. While out of power, neoclassical writers, like any opposition, could proclaim their theory's perfect virtue and point to the imperfections of the governing party. Once in power, though, neoclassical theorists had to defend policies that were not working in quite the way the public had been led to expect. Meanwhile, the left had been liberated by its journey through the political wilderness. No longer required to defend sacred truths and orthodoxies, it was free to begin a new debate. Whereas neoclassical theory remained dominant in practice, in the academic realm the pendulum began to swing back toward the left though perhaps not as far as it went in the postwar period, and not even toward the same corner. For if the old left had died, what had arisen to take its place was a new left. From its statist, modernist, and essentially liberal beginnings, development thought had gone through an imperfect neoclassical phase. But the problems encountered by neoclassical thought did not long because the pendulum to simply swing back toward an old left of state-led development. On the



contrary, by the 1990s, a wholly new critique had emerged. Influenced by postmodern currents of thought, and finding its popular voice in the anti-globalization movement that mushroomed in the course of the decade, this type of thinking, in development studies, came to be known as post-development theory. Because of its staunchly modernist credentials, the initial reaction of development studies to the post-development critique was skepticism, even outright hostility. But as the twenty-first century drew nearer, the ideas of the post-development thinkers were gaining an ever-wider audience. Besides, some of their concerns actually dovetailed with some emergent trends in the more conventional literature.

Partly as a result, development theory is today less programmatic, and more concerned with flexibility and adaptability. Discussions of the state, particularly the large body of literature that flows from the World Bank and aid community, revolve less around the question of whether more or less state is good for development; rather, there is a widening agreement that “better,” rather than more or less, is what matters when it comes to the public sector, and the literature has turned to the more mundane but all-important matter of how to improve administrative and technical capacity in third-world public sectors. This kind of localized, particularistic, and flexible approach to development is, in the end not that far from what post-development thought has advocated. The Progress of Development 5 Equally, post-development thought has called for a return to the stress on people as both the measures and the determinants of development. In the past, the single-minded determination to rapidly develop economies and strengthen states led to abuses, at times, of individual freedom; ordinary lives could quite readily be sacrificed on the altars of national independence. But the call for people to be restored to the front and center of development thought was not peculiar to post-development thought. After all, neoclassical economics, with its call for macroeconomics to be replaced by microeconomics, always placed its faith in the operations of an economy filled with liberated individuals, even if its practices paradoxically sometimes led to the loss of liberty by those same individuals.

However, our efforts have been to bring to sharp focus that the term ‘development’ is a complex and difficult one to achieve. This is simply because any attempt to define development in a holistic sense will result in overemphasis on an aspect of development as seen in those who tried to reduce the term to mere economic growth. It is therefore, a holistic evolution of all the aspect of the society.

### **Causes of Migration in Nigeria**

Migration is a topic everyone ranging from politicians to shopkeepers has an opinion on and that is in the news almost every day. People are interested in migration because

almost everyone is affected by migration, directly or indirectly. Migration affects all areas of life, social, economic and political which makes the analysis of migration extremely relevant as well as more complicated. Due to the recent influential immigration experiences of Europe and the USA, to many people, politicians and also researchers' migration is synonymous with immigration. Migration is the temporary or permanent move of individuals or groups of people from one geographic location to another for various reasons ranging from better employment possibilities to persecution. While migration is as old as humanity itself, theories about migration are fairly new.

The causes of migration in Nigeria could be traced to a number of factors viz: life insecurity, work insecurity, food insecurity, inequality and unemployment which inevitably creates the desire and search for greener pasture. Thus, the rate of migration in Nigeria is one of the highest and most worrisome in the country and is fueled by population growth (211,400,708, a 2.55% increase from 2020), and the adverse economic and political situation in the country. Those who migrate are often the youths leading to high school drop-out, loss of labor and averagely literate groups from rural communities. This leads to increased pressure on infrastructural facilities like housing, water supply etc.; poverty and the growth of urban slums. The family structure is gradually weakening as a result of migration; young men and women are exposed to societal vagaries from which they may not be recover in adulthood; the family security which children enjoyed by virtue of the presence of both parents is being lost.

It has become a thing of pride to have at least one member of the household living outside the shores of the country in Nigeria. The picture that readily comes to mind is that of prosperity and unlimited opportunities for other members of the household or extended family to benefit from the success of the first person. This would appear logical given that the 'member abroad' would send some foreign currency home, eventually get established and be able to give information that could help others access the same opportunity. The expectation is even more logical if the individual happens to be in a developed country in Europe or in the United States of America because such countries offer a higher standard of living and a better quality of life for all cadres in the society. Such an environment and expectations of life are not readily accessed by all in Nigeria, hence the driving force to see a 'better life', spread the joy and share the goodies.

But how does it start? And from where does it start? The inequality of the society gives credence to the fact that for many, migration is the window through which they can improve their income, have educational opportunities and improve the prospects of their future generation. As such people move both within the country and across international borders with the expectation that they will have access to better opportunities in the

destination location in order to benefit themselves, their immediate families and communities. The movement from one part of a country to another for example from a hamlet to a village and later from a village to a town is the usually the start and the characteristic patten of migrating. One moves to a place considered to be better or to have more opportunities. Several push and pull factors are responsible for this but some factors could be peculiar to the individual.

The rate of migration in the country is high and it is fueled by population growth and the adverse economic and political situation in the country. Adverse economic conditions refer to a state where unemployment and under employment create despondence in the society. Typically, in most rural areas, most farm families have excess labor during the peak seasons; those areas located in semi-urban zones may have access to off farm income opportunities which are viable. Those which are not usually get involved in one form of off-farm/household activity which may not be economically viable. Implication is that families are unable to meet their basic needs for a minimum standard of living most of the time. This leads to poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition and general poor health status. In extreme cases despondence and hopelessness may arise and to prevent or forestall other dire consequences, the quest to search out a better living elsewhere is succumbed to. The poor state of the economy also limits the extent of infrastructural development in the area; these are characterized by poor roads, poor water supply, poor health facilities etc. On the other hand, most towns and cities have a better share of such facilities and better job opportunities. As such inequality in the availability of resources and infrastructures are push and pull factors for the youths. This coupled with increasing population heighten food insecurity and poverty because food supply and employment opportunities will not match the increasing demand. Population growth leads to an increased pressure on existing social infrastructures and poverty and food insecurity in the poor areas. The reflections of poverty in the rural areas include under employment of labor and over use of resources particularly land. This enforces a vicious cycle of low income-low productivity-low resources which pushes individuals or whole families to migrate. The Consequences of Rural Urban Migration Agriculture The combination of poverty, environmental degradation and unemployment has led to the desertion of agriculture leading to increased cost of production and labor scarcity. The farming population is aged and often unable to take advantage of new or improved technology or labor-saving devices.

However, the economic potentials and the relative ease of production compared with cropping are making it more attractive to the aged and women who are left behind. In rural communities, the family structure is very traditional in the area so migrants maintain

close links with their nuclear and extended families. These links are maintained through cash and kind remittances to their families, social or kinsmen associations in the cities through which political and economic development in their home communities are monitored. Also, through such association's funds are raised for development objectives in their villages. Such development objectives include building town halls, provision of water, and 'political' pressure on more successful indigenes to bring development to the villages. Another evidence of such development is the building of foreign styled houses in the villages even though the owners are not there to live in them. The presence of such houses further motivates the youths to migrate because it indirectly opens them up to economic and environmental conditions abroad. Building such structures often require deforestation which further reduces land area for food production and exposes opened up areas to erosion. On the causes of migration in Africa, M.F Asiegbu writes:

Interneccine and civil war displace quite a number of Africans. The Congo basin hostilities threw up innumerable refugees as did the interneccine Rwandan Hutu-Tutsi ethnic cleansing and genocide. Until the election of her first African Lady president, Liberia did not know any peace. Internal strife nearly consumed Sierra Leone (1991-2001) and Ivory Coast. The Sudanese religious civil war has turned Dafur into an international crisis. Of recent, the violence-prone Delta region of Nigeria leaves one with impression of a country torn between national loyalty and her multiple ethnic identities. The political standoff in Zimbabwe causes yet, another unrest and a source of concern. The pillage and extreme destruction in the wake of strife and violence, the near absence of reconstruction in the post-war years, the lack of social welfare security programmes for the poor-all compound the migrant problems in Africa. While the crises constitute a poor judgment on the political dispensation in Africa, their economic impact is most telling.<sup>12</sup>

He laments further that poverty basically contributes to the global migration of the Africans to Europe and America respectively. He submits:

Nearly, all African states are listed among the HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries), where the poverty line is staggering. If Europe characterizes some of her poor population as the fourth world, in Africa, many families earn less than a dollar per day. The grim implications of a poverty-stricken population are all too well known: high rate of child/maternal mortality, widespread of HIV/AIDS disease, limited life expectancy, and a population that grows in leaps and bound (2.83% among African nations), outpacing the growth rate of the continent's

economy. 84 million Nigerians, for instance, numbered among the 300 million HIPC's population, who thrive on less than a dollar (US\$0-165) a day.<sup>13</sup>

In spite of the forces and stringent immigration laws put in place by Europe and America, African migrants still persists, many dying in Mediterranean Sea and Sahara Desert in a bid to cross illegally in order to experience the continents living standards and also with the firm belief that the moment they get to Europe or America, they would make it very big. This ugly trend has continued unabated by either the Nigerian political leaders or the European Union themselves, such that it has gradually caused brain drain in virtually all the sectors of our economy, as these Nigerians who are experts in their areas chosen careers are leaving the country in their numbers on daily basis. It seems then too, that the EU will continue to fail in her plight to stop Africa to Europe migration, if nothing is consciously done to liberate the African continent from the socio-economic and political factors driving the Nigerian migrants. The next heading shall present in sharp focus the consequences of migration to the country's economy.

### **Impacts of Migration to Nigeria Economy**

There are different economic consequences of migration of Nigerians abroad. Remittance inflows from Nigerians abroad are a potential economic development tool. In sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria is the largest recipient of remittances, receiving nearly 65 % of officially recorded remittance flows to the region and 2 % of global inflows. In 2014–2017 net remittances transferred by Nigerian migrants to the country exceeded significantly foreign direct investment, foreign portfolio investment flows to Nigeria and accounted for 3, 68–5, and 85 % of GDP for respective years. The World Bank ranked Nigeria fifth among the highest remittance-receiving countries in the world. Yet official data on remittances do not include monetary inflows through informal and unregulated channels, especially through friends returning to Nigeria and through goods sent to Nigeria which are readily converted into cash.

Nigerians in the Diaspora are also active in transnational transactions and have promoted the flow of trade, capital and technology back to Nigeria. A large number of Nigerians trade in West African countries, such as Ghana, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, the Gambia and Cameroon. Most of them establish temporary residence in these countries from where they undertake business trips to Nigeria. Their business ventures in Nigeria make considerable contribution to the local economy by providing a wide assortment of goods and services.

Migration made an important contribution to Nigeria's recent economic growth. There are indications that overall migration has increased at a faster rate and that this increase

coincided with economic growth. While the oil sector is still the primary engine of growth and a magnet for migrant workers, the marginal economic growth of 2013–2014 has been attributed to non-oil sectors telecommunications (28 %) and wholesale and retail trade sectors (12 %). Retail trade is the main informal sector, which has traditionally been attracting low-skilled internal as well as international migrant labor. The Nigerian economy is attractive to labor migrants from the region and elsewhere. Nigeria requires highly skilled labor to sustain growth. Although evidence seems to suggest that most immigrants to Nigeria are low skilled, Nigeria's economy also needs highly skilled immigrants to fill labor shortages in the technical professions.

Migration directly reduces the available supply of labour, particularly skilled labour, but there are positive static effect such as through return migration and remittances. If you take into consideration for instance, the country's health and education sectors, you will see there are levels of brain drain especially in the health sector. It is on record that because of the government's unfriendly attitudes to the welfare of workers that many of the best brains are leaving the shores of the country in search for greener pastures in Europe and America. The health sector in the last decades has suffered greatly because there those who are professionally trained to do the job are not been paid handsomely thereby making them consider countries in Europe and America where their services are needed and paid for with handsomely and friendly packages. And it is heart breaking that there is no single sector in Nigeria presently, especially those that requires special skills that are without brain drain.

This sector is not alone as a lot of the scholars who were sent on scholarships abroad no longer feel comfortable to return home because of poor conditions of service in the Nigeria university system. It may interest the readers to note that most of the Nigerian university lecturers who are opportune to secure conference visas to Europe and America end up absconding simply because they feel that to stay in a place where one's services are not valued and well paid for are needless. There are little incentives for workers (highly professional skilled) in Nigeria and hence the lack of qualified man-power to man critical sectors that would drive the country's economy. If there is qualified and good medical service delivery in Nigeria, it could be a centre for other African countries, and therefore, attract foreigners who would fertilize the country's economy. And until there is a conscious effort on the side of the political leaders to create incentives, good conditions of service, for at least the highly skilled personnel in the critical sectors, in order to discourage migration of professionals to Europe and America, Nigeria will continue to grip around for ideal development paradigm.

Another area of concern on migration is the acknowledgement of the benefits of the many scholarships been awarded to many African states, particularly Nigerians by the European and American Universities. While we acknowledge its benefit to the growth and development of many Nigerians and Nigeria at large, but will not also forget that there are many who after their studies usually do not return back to Nigeria, thereby causing brain drain in critical areas of the Nation's economy. In other to stop situations like this, this study suggests that applicants be compelled to sign a bond with the domestic and the sponsored country's embassies on an agreement to return home at the expiration of their studies. There are even situations where those sent to Europe and America at the expense of the country's (Nigeria's) purse, end up not returning home upon graduation.

More worrisome is the renewed xenophobic attacks in South Africa on Nigerians and other Africans. It raises serious concern among experts and analysts of foreign relations. The latest scenario in Pretoria has resulted in the loss of innocent lives and valuable properties destroyed by some militant youths in South Africa. According to Nigeria's Foreign Affairs and Diaspora Advisor, Abike Dabiri-Erewa, the country has lost about 116 nationals due to the unlawful acts of some hoodlums in South Africa. This remains a significant setback to the nation's economy and which poses a threat to the external relations of Nigeria and South Africa. The ugly trend of xenophobic attack has resulted in a cold war between Nigeria and South Africa in their socio-economic and political relationships. However, the paper infers that adequate actions are required to be taken to restore and guarantee peace for the Nigerian immigrants residing in South Africa. Failure to curb the menace of xenophobic violence in South Africa might degenerate into regional conflict which invariably will affect the relationship between both nations in all ramifications.

The last but not the least is the security implication of the 2020 federal government policy of visa on arrival to the national security. National Security has been a pivotal issue upon which several fundamental individual rights have been abrogated. It is as fundamental as the existence of the State itself and it is against this background that most countries of the world often jealously guard their national security. However, it seems with the Nigeria Visa Policy (NVP), 2020, the Nigerian National Security and Safety will become porous. This is because there will more influx of foreigners, those with genuine and legitimate concerns and those with illegitimate concerns. More insurgents and terrorists can obtain Visas easily; Nigerians' Public Health may be in jeopardy, especially with the outbreak of airborne viruses which Nigeria has not really developed advanced resistance to or prevention for.

Interestingly however, there have been attempts/efforts within the framework of the NVP itself that are geared towards the protection of National Security and Safety. The authorities have efficiently put in place a technological hub, called the Migrants Information and Data Analysis (MIDAS) to ensure strict compliance with the conditions for the issuance of the visa. The MIDAS is a high-quality, affordable system that can collect, process and record information for the purpose of identification of travelers, data collection and analysis. This technology would allow the authorities to control the influx of foreigners of undesirable elements and address the security concerns of people.

In the long run, the NVP 2020 will likely lead to over-population in Nigeria because more influx of foreigners howbeit for a short period will lead to the presence of more persons in Nigeria especially as Nigeria currently ranks as the most populous country in Africa. It is expected that African Countries and others that will benefit from the Visa Exemption Programme under the NVP 2020 will utilize same. The direct consequence of the above will be more population and fewer resources, except there is development of a consequential and remedial economic policy.

### **Development implications of Migration for the Origin Countries**

Migration is a decision that impacts the welfare of the household, the home community, and in the end the whole economy in various ways. The welfare implications of migration on the origin country are most often, though not always, sizable and positive. The main channels through which migration alleviates poverty are increased incomes from remittances, ability to smooth consumption, access to finance for starting a new business, as well as tapping on to the knowledge and resources provided by the international community of the migrant Diaspora. Besides pure monetary gains, migration and remittances allow for higher investment in health care and education. Yet, not all impacts are positive: exploitation of migrants by unscrupulous recruiters or employers is reportedly widespread; separation from family can be stressful for migrants; and large-scale immigration can pose serious challenges to a nation's identity and sovereignty.

While migration has economic, social, and cultural implications for the sending and host societies, remittances the migrants send home are perhaps the most tangible and least controversial link between migration and development. According to the official estimates, migrants from developing countries sent over \$315 billion to their origin countries in 2009, three times the size of official development assistance. The true size of remittances including unrecorded flows through formal and informal channels is likely to be even higher. While remittances to developing countries declined modestly in 2009 because of the global financial crisis, these flows have remained resilient compared to private capital



flows, and have become even more important as a source of external financing in many developing countries, especially in Africa. Migration and remittances have both direct and indirect effects on the welfare of the population in the migrant sending countries. A cross-country study of 71 developing countries found that a 10 percent increase in per capita official international remittances will lead to 3.5 percent decline in the share of people living in poverty.<sup>14</sup> Evidence from Latin America, Africa, South Asia and other regions suggests that remittances reduce the depth and severity of poverty, as well as indirectly stimulate economic activity.<sup>15</sup>

Remittance-receiving households in Ethiopia used their cash reserves and thus avoided having to sell their livestock to cope with drought.<sup>17</sup> Recent evidence from Mali confirms that a substantial part of remittances is saved for unexpected events and the migrant thus serves as an insurer for the whole household. Cross-country analysis indicates that remittances are related to greater income inequality in Africa.<sup>18</sup> However, other studies suggest that migration enhances the welfare of the rural poor disproportionately. Migration may also raise inequality initially, as only the relatively well-off have the resources to send workers abroad and therefore receive remittances. Migrant remittances increase domestic savings as well as improve financial intermediation which can improve growth prospects. Evidence from Philippines, Mexico and other countries suggests that remittances increase the accumulation of assets in farm equipment, promote self-employment and increase small business investments in migrant-sending areas. Factoring the remittance inflows correctly into macroeconomic analysis is also likely to improve the credit rating and external debt-sustainability of the remittance-receiving country. Because they are a large and stable source of foreign currency, remittances are likely to curtail investor panic and prevent sudden current account reversals during a crisis.

Furthermore, future flows of remittances can be used as collateral by governments and private sector entities in developing countries to raise financing in international capital market.<sup>19</sup> These innovative financing mechanisms can be used to raise funds for development projects such as low-income housing, or water supply. The Diaspora serves as a link between the sending and receiving communities, expands the opportunities to access international financing, and facilitates networking. The Diaspora also contributes through philanthropic remittances. And the development of their former communities through hometown associations and collective financing of development projects such as schools, health facilities and community infrastructure access to information through the Diaspora and the skills learned by returning migrants can improve technology, management and institutions in the sending country, and lower the fixed cost and knowledge requirements for setting up an international business. Emigrants may also be an important supply of foreign investment, as their knowledge of their home country

institutions (and perhaps a greater ability to maneuver within the home country regulatory framework) may mean that they incur lower investment costs and/or higher returns, compared to other international investors. In the current environment of a credit crunch after the financial crisis several countries have started looking at the Diaspora abroad as potential sources of capital. In the past, Israel and India have raised over \$35 billion of development financing by issuing Diaspora bonds.<sup>20</sup> For the countries, Diaspora bonds represent a stable and cheap source of external finance, especially in times of financial stress. Diaspora bonds have several advantages, both for the issuer and for the emigrant who buys the bond: Through retailing at small denominations, issuers can tap into the wealth of relatively poor migrants, although Diaspora bonds are not necessarily limited to migrants. Migrants are expected to be more loyal than the average investors in times of distress. And they might be especially interested in financing infrastructure, housing, health and education projects.

Migration contributes to human capital formation. There is a growing body of evidence suggesting that the income from remittances is disproportionately spent on education and health rather than everyday consumption.<sup>21</sup> Once in school, the children of migrants may be more likely to finish their education, as the increased income from remittances provide additional financial resources and better prospects associated with migration influence social norms and incentives towards gaining more education. Evidence from rural Pakistan suggests that temporary migration is associated with higher school enrollment, especially for girls. Furthermore, migration has been observed to increase health knowledge in addition to the direct effect on wealth, which has led to lower rates of infant mortality and higher birth weights in Mexico.<sup>22</sup> Visiting and returning migrants may also bring back health-improving practices such as drinking safe water and better sanitation (UNDP 2009, p. 79). On the other hand, migration as such might also present a threat to migrant health as certain jobs expose migrants to occupational hazards, such as tuberculosis, pneumoconiosis and workplace injury by mine workers.

### **Impact of Migration on Nigeria Development**

Economic growth regarded as a mechanism to ensure a long-term balance through the optimal use of available resources, through the development of innovative potential, the creation and development of instruments generating economic growth and also an adequate distribution of income is influenced by many factors, including migration.

Globalization seen as the integration of countries and their populations as a result of a significant reduction in transport and communication costs and removing artificial barriers in the way of the movement of goods, services, capital, their knowledge and (to a lesser

extent) people among countries, generates a series of positive and negative effects, both macro-economically and micro-economically. In fact, one estimates that the process concentrates power and marginalizes the poor defined as countries or people, generating their desire to turn to other countries, to migrate. Political and socio-cultural intolerance, the failures of home country (source country) governments, human rights violations have spurred international migration. Migration is one of the most controversial and disputed contemporary issues and it is defined by the International Organization for Migration as the movement of one person or group of people either over an international border or within the same country, which may include any kind of movement of people, regardless of its duration, composition or causes. The term migration considers the “migration of refugees, displaced people, economic migrants and people travelling for other reasons, including for family reunification. Migration is seen as a phenomenon that involves moving people from one area to another in order to generate increased employment opportunities.”<sup>22</sup>

At present, this phenomenon is caused by social disparities in certain regions of the world and the labour market in industrialized countries. People choose to immigrate in order to protect themselves and their families, escaping from a less favourable economic situation their home country is in. Migration is perceived as a rational process by which a person seeks to maximize their usefulness or accomplish their aspirations. People who are immigrants are both a mechanism allowing for the regulation of structural imbalances in the home country labour market, and a palliative for the labour market within it, and the decision to move depends on the net utility gain for the family as a whole rather than for an individual. Home countries of migration or source countries are actually the countries where migrants originate. Countries migrants move to are called host or receiving countries as far as international migration is concerned.

Developing countries host many of international migrants in the world. Most immigrants are migrant workers and are employed either formally or more often informally in their countries of destination. Immigration thus plays a key role in the destination countries' economic development. A number of low and middle-income countries, however, lack evidence and awareness of how immigrants can contribute to different segments of the economies and very few have developed and implemented appropriate policy frameworks. A large informal economy associated with weak labour migration management capacities and a lack of active labour market policies prevent many destination countries from making the most of immigration. How well immigrants are integrated into the host country's labour market is directly linked with their economic contribution to their destination countries. Immigrants in most partner countries have higher labour force participation and employment rates than native-born workers. However, the quality of

jobs immigrants take remains a concern because they often face a lack of decent work, but insofar as they do it, and then increases the host countries GDP, through the many taxes they pay from their earnings. Laying credence to this claim, Mario Pezzini writes:

The estimated contribution of immigrants to gross domestic product (GDP) ranges from about 1% in Ghana to 19% in Côte d'Ivoire, with an average of 7%. The immigrants' contribution to value added exceeds their population share in employment in half of the partner countries. In countries where this is not the case, the differences were small. Overall, immigration is unlikely to depress GDP per capita. The analysis on how immigration affects productivity reveals less clear results. Various research methods were employed across the countries depending on data availability.<sup>23</sup>

Although these new commitments represent significant milestones towards a more coordinated international migration agenda, immigration remains a sensitive issue in most countries. Local populations often believe that immigrants take the jobs of native-born workers, contribute to lowering wages, take advantage of public services, do not pay enough taxes, and threaten social cohesion and security.

However, migrant workers occupy the lower strata of the working class, sometimes called an underclass or under table jobs. As a consequence, the factor differential incorporation of immigrants/ethnic minorities caused them to suffer from discrimination in terms of their access to housing, education, health and welfare, social mobility and consumption. Consequently, they are disadvantaged with regards to general indicators of deprivation such as infant mortality, indices of poverty.

The history of migration has also demonstrated that a good share of migrants will settle even when this was not their initial or original plan or the plan envisaged by policymakers. This has been verified in all European countries which were recipient of substantial immigrant groups after the Second World War. Family reunion has taken place and a second/third generation is growing up on European soil. Their mode of incorporation is further removed from the causes of migration. This is raising sharper issues because those persons are not immigrants and share the aspirations of their peers of autochthonous origin while they are often caught up in the same process of racialization as their parents and the discrimination concomitant with it, and thus possess another security threat to the host countries.

The question of refugees and their mode of incorporation is another angle altogether, that it is more complex but often subsumed into similar processes as those discussed above because, like labour migrants, they are in many cases incorporated into the lower rungs of society and may suffer from similar discrimination and prejudice. This is not a direct

consequence of the causes for their migration but is related to it because they have been seriously disempowered. The intricate and variegated causes of refugee migration influence the composition and nature of those populations. The parameters determining which group moves where will differ partly from those of labour migrants; their demographic profile will be different and they are less likely to be part of chain migration but will be more dispersed. The frequent urgency of the situation does not enable them to prepare themselves materially and psychologically to the move and their move is generally associated with trauma. Another consequence is that it is less probable that historical links may exist between country of origin and of reception which will entail greater discrepancies of culture, language and know-how. Given the obstacles involved in this kind of migration, a larger proportion of those reaching Europe are likely to be educated. What they take with them in the land of asylum is also closely connected to the causes of their flight and will influence their mode of interaction with the sending and reception societies. The link between asylum policies, media and commonsense construction of the image projected on refugees is even more blatant than for labour migrants and has far-reaching implications for their positioning within European countries.

## Conclusion

Underdevelopment is a symptom and a cause of migration not only in Nigeria but also in many developing countries across the globe. For Nigeria to drastically discourage her citizens from moving out of the country, it should first and foremost, solve the problems or issues that make people migrate. This could be done by proportionately translating the country's economic growth to developmental projects, such as providing infrastructural facilities, ensuring security of lives and property, providing better jobs and equal chances to the youths, and reducing high population growth rates through family planning or other birth control measures. Until these issues raised are properly attended to, Nigeria will not know peace-headway in her quest to join other stable economies around the globe.

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