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MIGRATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL MOBILITY IN NIGERIA: MOTIVATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

Over the years, the dynamics of migration related activities in Nigeria continues to be intensified, motivated by different conditions at the fore front of which is globalization which has presented countless opportunities to the citizens, most especially on the path of the youths by bringing to their doorstep exposure to the numerous opportunities and benefits present all over the world. This Migration reality is a phenomenon that presents positive as well as negative values as this has resulted in the emigration of human capital, especially the highly skilled youth population from Nigeria to more developed nations of the world seeking out a better standard of living, thereby leaving Nigeria in a condition of brain drain induced by the effects of this human capital mobility.

KEYWORDS: Brain drain, Highly skilled professionals, Human capital, Human capital depletion, Migration.

Introduction

The movement of people across the world has been constant throughout history, Adeola and Fayomi (2012) sum it all up as migration being an essential part of human nature. Humans have migrated for different reasons having economic, social, cultural, political, environmental, and technological and security factors to them and migration is a global culture that can occur domestically (within boarders) or internationally (across boarders). Over the years, domestic and international migration related activities globally continues to be intensified, motivated by different conditions which have acted as a "push" from country of origin and a "pull" to destination country (IOM, 2021). According to United Nations Department of Economic Affairs (UNDESA) (2021),

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the number of international migrants globally has greatly increased over the years from about 153 million people in 1990 to approximately 281 million, with the estimated number of Africans recorded (mid 2020) being 40,567,163, the West African region having a statistic of 10,558,152.

In Nigeria, the statistics of emigration has more than doubled in 30 years (1990-2020), from 446,753 to 1,670,455 (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021). The amplified trends in globalization -a process that involves the free movement of goods and ideas between and across borders and trade liberalization for greater yields- is one of the numerous factors that has influenced the practice and principles of contemporary Nigerian international migration most especially on the path of the youths by bringing to their doorstep exposure to the numerous opportunities and benefits present all over the world such as job opportunities, educational opportunities, cultural exchanges, economic benefits such as trade and production relations, as well as the realities of the increasing interdependence and interconnectedness of states over the globe. This Migration reality is a phenomenon that presents positive as well as negative values as this has resulted in the emigration of human capital, especially the highly skilled youth population from Nigeria to more developed nations of the world seeking out a better standard of living, thereby leaving Nigeria in a condition of brain drain induced by the effects of this human capital mobility as the youths seek better opportunities abroad (Kekana, 2018).

The problem here is not of individuals migrating from developing countries, but of the highly skilled professionals, artisans, talents and the youth population (human capital) who are meant to be agents of growth, developing the nation through their labour, skills and expertise are those who mostly make up the statistics of those leaving the state in droves towards the benefits and opportunities present in most countries like USA, United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, Germany to mention a few (Kekana, 2018). According to Achieng, El Fadil, & Righa (2020), this migration trend will keep being on the increase. If the rate at which human capital emigrate from Nigeria to other states is not managed, controlled, or harnessed to bring about social, economic, and cultural advantages then there are impending problems which will affect the very development of the state (Ratcliffe, 2017).

The scope of this paper is to examine how legal international migration and human capital mobility has impacted Nigeria from the period of 2015-2021. The specific focus of this paper is to review literature on the dynamics of international migration in Nigeria and human capital mobility from Nigeria to more developed

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states of the world, discussing the motivations and effects of human capital mobility in Nigeria, as well as provide recommendations towards limiting the emigration of human capital from Nigeria.

The methodology of this research was designed towards generating data to analyse migration and human capital mobility in Nigeria. The research adopted a qualitative research method, made use of accurate and detailed secondary data sources such as: books, newspapers, journal articles, periodicals, government records, survey reports and online sources, collected through tools like Internet-Enabled Devices and Library. The data gotten from research provided a foundation and formed the conclusion reached in the course of this research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research adopted two (2) theories to explain migration, human capital mobility and the continuation of migration; the push-pull theory and the social network and cumulative causation theory.

Push-Pull Theory

The push-pull theory expanded by Everett Spurgeon Lee (1966) building upon Ravenstein's research, states that the factors that prompt migration includes the attractive pull factors from the destination country and the push of dissatisfying factors from country of origin. According to him, these factors which influences migration stern from; state of origin, state of destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors.

In line with this theory some of these push factors from Nigeria includes; high unemployment rate, poor work conditions, high poverty rate, low standard of living, lack of social amenities, corruption, insecurity to mention a few. while the attractive pull factors from developed states includes better employment conditions, better wages and remunerations, relative political stability, improved technology and amenities, relative security, prestige that comes with living in an advanced society, etc. Intervening obstacles on the other hand are barriers that can hinder migration. They can be financial, technical, physical and legal (Klaus & Pachocka, 2019). While the personal factors are the factors an individual has control over unlike other factors.

Social Network and Cumulative Causation Theory

Firstly, propounded by Jacob Levy Moreno (1932), the proponents of this theory were of the opinion that the continuation of international migration relies on

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interpersonal social networks between migrants in destination states and their relatives in origin state (Taylor & Stark, 1991). Koser & Pinkerton (2004) attributed that the discuss and aspiration to migrate is built through information gotten from social networks (family, friends, community, organizations, travel agents to mention a few). Epstein & Gang (2006) also describes it as the influence of others on both the willingness of potential migrants and the location they migrate to.

In addition to the network theory, Massey et al. (1998) propounded the theory of Cumulative Causation based on the social capital theory and it is often linked with the network theory in explaining the continuation of migration. He was of the opinion that the formation of migrant networks leads to more accuracy and widespread knowledge of immigration processes, which in turn reduces the cost and mistakes of immigration and promotes future migration to a specific country or area thereby creating a community or a familiar environment in that destination country. As social networks keep influencing the decision to migrate in origin country migration processes are no longer dependent on other factors other than the social network, thus more people keep migrating and the network deepens. This network is of two types; the network connecting the origin country and destination, and the other network is the social network at the destination country. The longer an immigrant lives in the country of destination, the better and more accurate the information and resources is to potential and new migrants.

Migration aspirations are affected by culture, education, personal nature, documentation, information and the images to which people are exposed, therefore, with wider processes of social transformation, the deeper the aspirations to migrate (De Haas, Fransen, Natter, Schewel, & Vezzoli, 2020b). As individual capabilities are on the increase daily due to exposure to different factors such as social media, advance education, interaction with foreign materials and return and visiting migrants so does migration aspirations increase. In Nigeria, International migration had become synonymous with wealth and success and most youth desperate for this have become fixated on migrating. Also, increased media exposure, thirst for knowledge, curiosity and return migrants have all contributed to rapidly changing social aspirations of people living in developing countries**.** Migration discourses are widely advertised and broadcasted all over the media, it is not unusual to see fliers of travel agencies looking to help with relocation and study visas to countries such as USA, UK, Canada, China, Germany, Ireland to mention a few. Migration is presented as the "in thing" an opportunity

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which every young person (even old) must seize, an opportunity for a better way of life as well as fairer standard of living.

HUMAN CAPITAL MOBILITY IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

Nigeria is a multi-cultural, racial and ethnic state that has the presence of over 250 ethnic groups and more than 500 different languages. Gaining the title of giant of Africa based on land mass, population and the size of its economy, Nigeria is the most populous state in Africa with a population of approximately 215 million in 2022 (Countrymeters, 2022b), a large increase from 186 million as at 2016 and this figure is estimated to grow to 392 million in 2050, which will make Nigeria the fourth most populous country in the world (CIA, 2017). Nigeria has a predominance of her youth's population and her population will continue to be on the increase if measures are not taken to prevent population explosion (Indexmundi, 2021).

Prior independence, most Nigerian immigrants travelled majorly to Europe for educational reasons, but the economic and political crisis of the 80's and 90's forced Nigeria to witness a reverse migration by way of transforming into a state that had a higher emigration rate than immigration (Black, Savina, & Shannon, 2004). During that period, it was common for Nigerian academics to emigrate out of Nigeria in search of educational opportunities most of whom would not return to Nigeria due to the deteriorating standards of education, the repercussions of the structural adjustment project and political instability. According to Racheal Reynolds (2002), there were more Nigerian academics in the United States at that time, than in Nigeria, with many being underemployed as factory workers, taxi drivers or in other low-skilled positions. This situation was also encouraged by the affordable rate of air tickets and the offer of legal entry into a country (most particularly Europe) without visa.

The number of Nigerian (legal) emigrants globally has skyrocketed from 465,932 in 2019 to 1,438,331 (UNDESA, 2019). This increase in emigration rate is related to several factors which will be discussed in this research work. A poll conducted by Afrobarometer (2018), discovered that one in every three Nigerian wants to move outside the country, especially the educated youth population. Most Nigerians who migrate do it to escape the harsh realities of life in Nigeria which includes and is not limited to unemployment and underemployment, low standard of living, insecurity, poor healthcare and educational standards to mention a few.

In 2013, approximately 36% of Nigerian emigrants lived within the African continent (46% in West Africa and 42% in middle Africa), 34% in Europe, and 26% in

North America; the remaining 4% lived in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania (IOM, 2016). The ECOWAS protocol has made migration between the West African region easy for Nationals of the region, Nigerian emigrants within Africa travel to states like Ghana, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin and Togo, while those outside the African continent, favour states like the United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, Germany, Dubai, Ireland, China to mention a few. Some Nigerians have also been found to make the dangerous journey through the Mediterranean Sea or the desert in order to emigrate illegally into states like Europe and United States. Despite the high risk and number of deaths, the figure for nationals who make this journey keeps increasing.

Most people who emigrate out of Nigeria are the youth population because they are more mobile, they have lesser commitments and they have the energy to withstand the severities of travel (Ikuteyijo, 2012). According to a survey conducted in a 2018 by Pews research, 45% of Nigerian adults plan to move to another country between 2018-2023 (Gramlich, 2020). Nigerians in the Western part of the world tend to be more than Nigerians who migrate to the Southern and Asian parts of the world, this has been attributed to relative better living and earning realities which are present in the Western regions. A large percentage of Nigerian emigration to the West is made up of highly educated, skilled and talented professionals who are attracted by the various opportunities these developed nations presents while most of the migrants in the south are usually made up of people into business, trading and construction (short term), although this statistic has greatly improved especially in migration to states like China, Turkey, India and some other Asian states, the percentage of Nigerians in these places are still low when being compared to the influx in the West.

MOTIVATIONS FOR MIGRATION

Overpopulation

Generally, increase in population growth that exceeds the capacity of an environment leads to overpopulation. Overpopulation can cause bring about problems such as poverty, pollution and resource scarcity. Nigeria currently has a population of over 215 million people, a majority of whom are dependents. According to Popogbe and Adeosun (2020), approximately 2.5% of skilled Nigerians have emigrated due to rapid population growth, this level of population has led to increased competition for jobs, economic and social resources as well as increase in social vices (Admin, 2019). In order to escape these problems

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associated with overpopulation these skilled Nigerians chose to migrate to countries with better opportunities and this in turn increases the level of brain drain. According to Virginia Abernethy, migration reduces overpopulation, but the negative effect is it stops an origin state from addressing the consequences of its overpopulation while transferring this overpopulation to other countries.

Inadequate Economic Conditions

According to Ojewale and Isbell (2018), Nigerian migrants tend to migrate to other regions due to economic reasons, the greater reason being the need to escape poverty (30%) or for better business opportunities (10%). Nigeria is currently ranked as the 25th major economy of the world, the world's 129th richest country having abundance of diverse resources, minerals, oils, gases, human resources, a large economy and holds the position of the 6th largest petroleum producer in the world, despite this, over 48% of Nigerians live in abject poverty (Onyeiwu, 2021). Nigeria has been tagged the poverty capital of the world as she suffers from dependency on one or few primary export commodities, has presence of large informal sectors, increase in the cost of borrowing and decrease in FDI, lack of long-term planning to aid sustainable development, corruption, opaqueness in the utilization of resources, mismanagement of public goods, low per capita income, high rate of unemployment and underemployment, as well as high poverty rate (Onyeiwu, 2021). Nigeria's economy went into recession in 2020 following the activities of the global pandemic coronavirus (Oyekanmi, 2022), the US Dollar-to-Naira exchange rate (black market) as at January 19th 2022 now stands at NGN610 to $1 (Evenokio, 2022), while the official bank rate stands at $414 to N1 (Udo, 2022). The Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS) also shows that the average Nigerian household lives on less than $2 a day, in compares with the poverty income threshold of $3.20 per day of other oil producing states Nigeria's poverty rate stands at 71% (Onyeiwu, 2021).

In Nigeria roughly 24% of individuals belong to the middle class and less than 28% make up the elite class (Persianas, 2021). In the last few years, Nigeria has witnessed an emigration surge of its relative middle class population to different states like U.S, U.K, Canada, Australia, Germany and even states like Turkey, China, Japan etc. among them are youths who are *"tech savvy"*, doctors, inventors, engineers, professors etc who have the skills needed in high demand in their destination country (Campbell, 2019). They view these countries as a better destination to earn a higher standard of living worthy of their skill and an advance

society to bring up their children and a large percentage of them do not return back to Nigeria. Nigeria's Corruption Perceptions Index also stands at 25 of 100 a very poor result when being compared to other countries (Akinkuotu, 2021b).
It is also important to note that, although poverty is often quoted as a cause of emigration in West Africa (Anarfi & Kwankye, 2005), it is not always the poorest of citizens who migrate, the poor are often unable to afford the cost of migration. Wealth and income difference between home and destination countries might seem like an attraction or reason for emigration but most legal immigrants are not always penniless by standards of the home country. The lower classes of people in a developing country usually lack the resources or the connections to migrate legally, most of them can only hope. Of a truth, the lower-class members of the Nigerian society most often than not cannot afford to emigrate, in a state that has majority of its citizenry living on less than a two dollar per day these individuals lack the resources and connections needed to emigrate, they can only dream about *"japing"*. Most cannot even meet up the resources needed to emigrate illegally as well. Although if they want to migrate, they can do so within the corridors of Africa.

Lack of Social Infrastructure and Services.

Most professionals migrate from developing countries as a result of the lack of basic social amenities and public service in their societies. Years of poor governance, high corruption rate, lack of management skills on the part of citizens and government, and political instability have resulted in the deterioration of the country's infrastructure and basic services. Funds allocated for public goods and the development of the country have been mismanaged by political officials (Awojobi, 2014). The poor health care, educational service, high unemployment level, crumbling infrastructures, dilapidated roads, poor energy supply and insecurity are all evidence of this mismanagement (Oxfam, 2017). According to Betts (2013), the emigration environment of Nigeria to a large extent is not about people *"fleeing state persecution, rather many are fleeing state incompetence".*
As the number of tertiary institutions in Nigeria increases, so does the number of Nigerian nationals studying abroad tends to be on the increase, as most people now see the student visa route to be their get out of Nigeria free card. According to Aondofa (2021), as of September 2021, there are 202 NUC approved universities in Nigeria (99 private, 49 federal, 54 state), 152 polytechnics (37 federal, 51 state and 64 private) and 205 colleges of education (Fapohunda, 2022). Although these

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statistics of tertiary institution may seem bogus it is still not sufficient to accommodate Nigeria's growing population of approximately 215 million, where about 56% of the population are between 15-64 years of age (Countrymeters, 2022b). Kazeem (2017) reported that approximately one in every four students applying to Nigerian university will be denied admission because there is no room for them, and the conditions are still the same till date (Kabir, 2021). The educational system is plagued with inadequate curriculums, crumbling infrastructure, strikes and negligent authorities. In a bid to avoid training up their offspring in such conditions, most Nigerians have begun sending their wards abroad to countries like U.S, U.K, Canada, Turkey, China etc. in order to give them a head start. According to Ani (2021), there were at least approximately 100,000 Nigerian students currently studying in colleges and universities around the world and the figure continues to increase. In the 2021 budget, N771.5 billion was allocated for education, this represents just 5.6% of the total national budget, and is lower than the UNESCO recommended 15-20% (Suleiman & Ileyemi, 2022).

The living conditions in Nigeria are inadequate, especially for women and children. The health care service is also nothing to write home about, with the presence of underpaid and overworked healthcare officers, archaic equipment's which is still not enough to service the growing population, it is not uncommon to find patients not being attended to as a result of *"no beds", "no space" or "house doctors not being available".* Most of the leaders and politicians in Nigeria, (even the president Mohammed Buhari) are in the habit of jetting out to other countries whenever they have a health challenge, if even they don't have faith in the Nigerian medical sector what then becomes of the common man? The health care sector in Nigeria is allocated about 4.2% of the national budget, this allocation is insufficient to run the large population of people Nigeria has, the health care sector is underdeveloped and under equipped and that has led to skilled medical personnel's migrating to other parts of the world in search of better working environments (Mauanya, 2020).

Nigerian skilled workers -doctors, nurses, engineers, technicians, professors, teachers- seem to be the highest group of migrants emigrating the country, those with a tertiary education make up approximately 50% of the migrant population (IOM, 2014). In the statistics of Nigerian emigrants abroad in countries like the United States and United Kingdom, professionally skilled Nigerians make up a larger percentage of the total Nigerian migrant population having tertiary education and skill, most especially in the medical sector. According to Owoseye

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(2018), 8 out of 10 doctors seek opportunities abroad in states such as United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Australia. Despite the fact that countries like the United Kingdom have a specified quota policy for Nigerian physicians working in the country at a given time, and the United States enforces re-trainings of these medical personals before they can practice, this hasn't stopped or reduced the influx of Nigerian trained medical personnel to these destinations. This emigration will continue to be on the increase due to reasons such as poor remunerations, poor working conditions, low opportunities for career advancement and research, lack of properly equipped facilities, political instability, increase in poverty to mention a few that are synonymous with developing countries (Andrew & Baomin, 2015).

The electricity tariff, gas and petrochemical rates in Nigeria is also very high and it keeps climbing. As at November 2021, there was a proposed 54% increase in electricity meter prices by Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) (Akinrefon, 2021), also gas now sells for N750-800 per kilogram, the popular 12.5kg size now sells for, sells at N8,500-10,000, depending on the station you buy from, in compares with the former price of N4,500 (Ayeyemi, 2021). All these increase and yet the means of earning isn't increasing. According to Varrella (2020), the minimum wage for workers in Nigeria currently stands at N30,000, but averagely, the monthly cost of living for an individual in Nigeria is approximately N43,000. This goes to show that the minimum wage in Nigeria is not sufficient to cater for the need of one individual talk less of a family of four.

Most Major roads are also known to be death traps as road traffic accidents tend to be on the increase in Nigeria. Land transportation accounts for over 80% of Nigerian transportation. The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) have recorded not less than 5,320 road traffic crashes and 2,471 deaths in the first half of 2021, roughly 15 people die daily in road accidents, an average of 33.7 per 100,000 people (Madobi, 2021), this makes Nigeria one of the countries with the highest number of mortalities in Africa. Most of the highways in Nigeria are not motorable, they are filled with potholes, also drivers are negligent, a good number of them are reckless, speed excessively, drive under the influence of alcohol, drive against traffic, and some of the vehicles on the road are due for changes and the road officials are usually shorthanded, under paid and under equipped and ineffective, they are more concerned about getting bribes from motorists.

Underemployment and Unemployment

Nigeria produces large numbers of graduates yearly from the various tertiary institutions in the country, however, the labour market is unable to absorb this

surplus labour force and this contributes to a high rate of unemployment in the country. Between 2014 and 2020, Nigeria's working age population grew from 102 million to 122 million (Oyekanmi, 2020). According to Olurounbi (2021), the youth population makes up over 60% of Nigeria's working-age population, the unemployment rate in Nigeria stands at 33.3%, with youth unemployment at approximately 53.4% (15 to 24) and 37.2% (25 to 34), currently in Nigeria approximately 30.6 million people are employed and 15.9 million people are underemployed.

There is a high rate of Self-employment in Nigeria especially in the Small Market Enterprise (SME), most Nigerians engage in one economic activity to generate income, according to Monye & Abang (2020), these enterprises generate about 59 million jobs. Most graduates in Nigeria have turned entrepreneurs, marketing and selling products that have no connection with the courses or academic fields they carved out while in school. It is not uncommon to see a microbiologist selling Weaves and hair products, a certified doctor driving a taxi hailing cab, a political scientist selling clothes and bags. When there is eventually employment the wage for skilled professionals is very low in compares with the wages they could be making in developed countries. Upon the realization of this they decide to make the decision to leave seeing the financial commitments of migration as an investment into a better future. Although, at first, they may not get the job of their dreams but at least the opportunities are better than the situation back home.

Also, the harsh condition under which intellectuals and professionals work in Nigeria is a major cause of migration of human assets from the country. Some academics, technicians and doctors, do not have access to relevant literature, grants and equipment to perform their jobs adequately, this is usually followed by the desire to work in countries that can pay for and utilize their skills (Adebayo, 2010). A survey conducted by NOIPolls & Nigerian Health Watch (2018), the United Kingdom and the United States are the top two destinations Nigerian medical doctors seek opportunities in, having 93% and 86% respectively. They are also represented in countries like Canada, Saudi Arabia and Australia. The reasons for selecting these locations include: the facilities and work environment, higher benefits, and career advancement.

Insecurity

Emigration from Nigeria is also motivated by the rising level of insecurity. The activities and presence of groups such as Boko Haram terrorist group, Fulani heard men, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) supporters, Niger Delta freedom fighters,

unknown gun men, Shiite sect groups, as well as the oppression of citizens by Rogue Armed Forces in Nigeria have created panic, chaos, fear and uncertainty in many parts of Nigeria. These alone acts as a motivation for manpower assets to flee Nigeria for countries where they feel safe and protected. Although, some studies have noted that insecurity in Nigeria to a large extent is not a major driver in the desire to migrate because international migration activities in the North Eastern part of the country that have been the most affected by these insecurities (especially Boko Haram related activities) seems to be on the low when been compared with other parts of the country (Joshua & Makama, 2017). Also, another angle that can explain this is that the individuals living in this part of the country do not have the resources necessary to migrate anywhere else than within Nigeria.

Social Media and Personal Willingness to Emigrate.

Majority of Nigerians who migrate tend to be in cities like Lagos, Abuja, Port-Harcourt, Enugu, Edo etc. it has been well established in this research study that those who migrate legally are people who have the resources to migrate and most often than not they are found in those cities mentioned above, the urban areas of Nigeria. These cities have a large social network span and information on how to "*japa*" through different means is readily available if you know the right set of individuals to network with (Joshua & Makama, 2017). They are not strangers to rural- urban migration, then international migration isn't too hard for them in compares with those in the rural areas of Nigeria. This level of exposure can also be linked with the educated, skilled youths who are found in these urban cities whose motivation to migrate is also being influenced by the internet. They are usually frequent internet users who view the positive pictures being portrayed by the media and have their minds made up on making the trip abroad and never returning back to Nigeria. They see the pictures, videos put up by Nigerian immigrants who also want others back home to believe that "*the abroad is a bed of roses*" devoid of the daily Nigerian struggles with light, water and good roads and this desire to migrate deepens (The Guardian, 2016), to them the good life exists outside Nigeria and therefore migration from Nigeria has become a trending culture (Liu, Deng, & Song, 2018). Also, the combined influence of family members, ethnic groups, affects an individual's choice to either emigrate or stay in Nigeria.

EFFECT OF EMIGRATION OF HUMAN CAPITAL ON NIGERIA

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF HUMAN CAPITAL MOBILITY ON NIGERIA

The leading negative effect of the emigration of human capital from Nigeria is Human Capital Depletion or Brain Drain. This results into several problems such as shortage of manpower resources, under development, high dependency rate

since the able hands that were meant to build a state are absent leaving the aged behind to mention a few. It leads to fewer persons generating taxable income, unsatisfied, unfulfilled doctors attending to patients, fewer engineers constructing roads and other infrastructures, fewer drained teachers to educate the future generation which in turn grow to serve in various capacities in government making half-baked, half informed policy's which in turn affects the entire populace.

Human Capital Depletion or Brain Drain in Nigeria

Brain drain is the migration of "human capital" by way of highly skilled professionals or artisans across international borders usually from developing countries to developed ones (Docquier, 2014). According to (Dr. Iravani, 2011), brain drain or human capital depletion is the mass emigration of individuals with technical skills or knowledge (human capital), due to lack of opportunities, health risks, insecurity, access to technology and good working conditions which is detrimental to the economy because most emigrants usually take with them the value of their training which is usually supposed to go back into their societies. Skilled workers are individuals with university degrees or equal experience in a given field, some examples include engineers, doctors, lawyers and accountants (Iredale, 2001). They are highly skilled and trained in a field with varying levels of education, they can be professionals, workers, artisans or talents either blue-collar or white-collar workers that reside within a state (Hayes, 2021). The migration of such individuals has become increasingly rapid over the years due to various reasons which acts as "pull and push factors" (Lowell & Findlay, 2002).

Brain drain is a massive problem because it induces a loss and leaves the country of origin impoverished, these nations (usually developing countries) are denied the services and expertise these skilled individuals would have provided to aid their development and ensure the continuation of the state (Adelugba, 2018). In compares, the migration of professionals to developed countries is being described as a form of brain exchange (Findlay, 1993). Skilled people, who migrate, sometimes do so to acquire new skills and knowledge that will be beneficial once they return to their home country, but unfortunately, most often than not, they don't return owing to one reason or another which is usually relating to availability of opportunities, career advancement, better standards of living, higher economic power and security. These developed countries have benefitted from the brain drain of developing counties creating a system of brain gain in different sectors of

their economy such as technology, healthcare, infrastructure, military, finance to mention a few. Their human resources of these developed states have departed their countries for other nations as well, but the condition is not as dire as that of the developing countries (Kosoff, 2017).

Nigeria is losing a great deal of skilled professionals such as doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, entrepreneurs, scientists etc. to brain drain, in a country that has a lower ratio of formal education receivers this tend to be a great problem as the well-educated ones are leaving the continent in droves taking their skills along with them. This has translated to the under functioning/performance of the health, education, production, security and political environment. It is no uncommon to find hospitals, healthcare centres and schools short-staffed or the staffs who are left behind overworked and under qualified, or the critical decision-making forums of the country devoid of skilled individuals seasoned in policy and decision-making processes.

According to the IOM (2020), Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya are the highest countries affected with brain drain in Sub-Saharan Africa. Over the last thirty years (1991-2021), Nigeria has not had positive net migration that have surpassed emigration and this situation is the same across most West African countries (UNDESA, 2019), if this trend continues more human capital will be lost to more developed countries of the world. In 2017, it was discovered that 6 out of 10 Nigerian immigrants (25 and above) in the U.S. (61%) had a bachelor's degree or higher education, this statistic is double of the figure of the overall American population with a bachelors or higher degree. The U. S accommodated approximately 13,762 Nigerian students in 2020 and Nigeria has been recorded as the 11th state with the highest number of international students in the US, contributing about $514 Million to the U. S economy (Onyesi, 2021). This cements the fact that developed countries harness the human capital from developing countries which should contribute to the growth of their home.

There are currently over two million Nigerians residing in the US, approximately 20,000 of whom are doctors and way over 10,000 of whom are academics (Ogbu, 2019). According to Muanya & Onyedika-Ugoeze (2020), the drive among professionals, to look for work outside the country seems to be worse in the medical sector, where of over 72,000 doctors registered with the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN), more than half of them practice outside Nigeria. Nigeria has the third highest number of foreign doctors working in the UK after

India and Pakistan, as at mid-year 2021 the number of Nigerian trained doctors practicing in the UK stood at 8,384 (Akinkuotu, 2021).

Despite this high statistic of Nigeria doctors abroad, Nigeria herself suffers a shortage of doctors. There are approximately 74,543 registered doctors in Nigeria to tend to a population of over 200 million people, putting at most one doctor treating over 2,684 people as opposed to WHO's standard of one doctor per 600 people (Akinkuotu, 2021), meanwhile in the U.S, we have 1 doctor to approximately 384 people and in the UK, 1 doctor to approximately 357 people (Sahara Reporters, 2020). This emigration will continue to be on the increase due to reasons such as poor remunerations, poor working conditions, low opportunities for career advancement and research, lack of properly equipped facilities, political instability, increase in poverty to mention a few that are synonymous with developing countries (Andrew & Baomin, 2015). despite this statistics, the Minister of Labour and Employment, Dr. Chris Ngige, in the quarterly meeting of the Nigeria health commissioners expounded that Nigeria has an excess of doctors thereby necessitating their migration, he stated that *"we have more than enough, quote me"* (Atoyebi, 2019).

In the Nigeria professional emigration nexus, not only medical skilled workers are emigrating, Anetoh and Onwudinjo (2020) also supported this fact by explaining that the migration of these highly skilled workers has created gaps not only in the healthcare industry but other sectors of the economy as well. According to Molly Fosco (2018), 45% of Nigerian professionals work in education services and many are professors at top universities in the U.S, a large percentage are also found in the technology space as well as entrepreneurship, sports, entertainments and culinary arts. Nigerian lecturers are emigrating to other countries in search for better opportunities and this has a massive negative crippling effect on the educational sector of both states. According to Omonijo et al (2011), brain drain has led to reduced teacher per student ratio, increased illiteracy level and reduced human capital. There are about 100,000 academic staff members attending to 2.1 million students in Nigerian universities and the teacher to student ration is at a minimum of 21:1, in reality, the lecturer to student ratio is wider (Punch, 2022), this leads to intellectual hemorrhage, puts stress on the lecturer as his/her attention is being divided and he/she may not put out the best to these students. The outflow of highly skilled academicians affects the quality of education gotten in institutions as well as the quality of graduates who are being put out into the labour market, also the professors left behind are being overworked and may not give their best

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(Emeghara, 2013). If the skilled academician continues to leave, there will be a huge gap in literacy level and this will affect the development of the states.

Also, a large number of ICT and computer software engineers have migrated to other states in search of better opportunities, skill improvement and growth prospects, without these engineers, there is a gap in the level of technological advancement and growth, and this will in turn affected the level of development of a state. In Nigeria "tech bros" as they are usually called are being harassed for carrying a computer, in the eyes of law enforcement agencies, everyone that carry a computer is a "yahoo boy", meanwhile the wealth of technology is not being harnessed in Nigeria.

We have exemplary Nigerians such as Dr. Bennet Omalu (forensic pathologist), ImeIme A. Umana (president of the Harvard Law Review 2017), Pearlena Igbokwe (president of Universal Television 2016), Dr. Phillip Emeagwali (usually referred to as the *"godfather"* of the internet), Tunde Wey (Chef), Yvonne Orji (actress), John Boyega (Actor), Wale (Musician), Anthony Joshua (boxer) and so many more excelling in different fields in America. Although, we cannot assert that these individuals excelling in the diaspora and many more would have excelled had they remained in Nigeria, but their numerous accomplishments give light to the talents that have departing the country, abilities and skills that would have impacted and played significant roles in Nigeria and by extension Africa. The Nigerian government recognizes that there is an impending problem that will result from the emigration of human capital from Nigeria but it's not being treated as a priority especially in the health and educational sectors whereby after several strike actions, protests and sits outs still not enough money is being allocated to these sectors in Nigeria. As at 2019, only a measly 3.6% (N8.8trillion) of the national budget was allocated to healthcare in Nigeria (Abang, 2019).

The emigration of human capital has to a large extent deprived Nigeria of the population that shapes the development of any nation- the youth population-. It physically removes the potential contributors to the growth. What Nigeria loses is the destination countries gain by way of available cheap labour (Reynieri, 2001). Human capital depletion has also led to the flight of potential innovations from developing and undeveloped states and that has further limited the growth and development of these states. The migration of skilled workers like engineers, inventors, academicians and policy makers from Nigeria has reduced the level of innovation and productivity in the country, without these skilled workers, the country cannot produce, invent and make adequate plans for what it needs, to a

large extent this has also resulted in the country having a higher importation rate than export and this lowers the economic growth of the country as well as the GDP. Also, high-skilled emigrants do not pay taxes in their home country once they leave, so there is a gap in the economy because what is meant to be their tax is now being received in destination country. In cases where public education is partially subsidized by the government (most especially for medical courses), emigrants leave before they can repay their debt to society.

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF HUMAN CAPITAL MOBILITY ON NIGERIA

The migration of high-skilled migrant from Nigeria does not always have to be negative, there are some positive benefits for growth and development which presents itself as reverse structure of the labour force, diaspora socio-cultural networks, transfer of technology, circular migration, economic development, and the formation of business networks.

Reverse Structure of the Labour Force

The emigration of skilled workers creates jobs, wages and benefits for the other skilled citizens left behind in origin country. It has been argued that the prospect for migration may lead to development, the emigration of highly skilled youths may act as a motivation to others in the origin country to acquire more skill and education thereby increasing the human capital capacity of the origin country which translated to growth (Zimmermann, 2017). For example, when education is being seen as a necessity for migration there will be a drive among youths of developing countries to further their education. But if the individual is uncertain and decides to stay in home country this becomes a gain (Mountford, 1997).

Diaspora Socio-Cultural Networks

A major impact of emigration is the development of migrant communities or Diasporas in the destination countries. Migrant networks consist of the relationship between migrants, and non-emigrants across origin and destination areas. This relationship increases the possibility of international movement because they provide safe landing in form of reduced costs and risks of movement, access to foreign employment and increase in profitability of migration. This system works because of the immigration policies of some developed countries like USA, UK, Canada, Turkiye to mention a few. By

promoting the union of immigrants and their families abroad by way of special privileges of entry.

These Diasporas are usually formed where large numbers of a country's emigrant population take up residence in another country (Patterson, 2009). Nigerian migrants usually move to countries of destination which they have some information about. This migration pattern has led to the development of transnational migrant communities. In line with the social capital theory, migrants and returnees make for excellent links for maintaining transnational migrant relations and migration flows between origin and destination countries, including Diasporas. These networks are important in terms of information sharing, technology transfer, access to international markets, trades and investments (Dumont & Spielvogel, 2008) and it has been made more efficient through the various communication tools globalization has provided. These networks have helped in the stimulation of exportation and marketing of items from Nigeria to their destinations abroad, they are a natural consumer of African goods, foodstuffs, clothing etc (Campbell, 2018).

The Nigerian Diaspora have high skills, business and financial resources all of which are greatly needed in Nigeria. Through their networks new political ideas, business ideas, knowledge and technology is being transferred back to Nigeria. Politically, the Nigerian Diasporas have been involved in influencing political process and policy wherever they are. This is known as a form of social remittance and it brings about improved governance, basic human rights, democracy, rule of law, etc. Nigerian Diaspora in enforcing their civic responsibility demands accountable, transparent, democratic and functioning public institutions that respect the freedom of expression and protest (Nweke & Nyewusira, 2014). This brings about improved socio-economic development, policy reforms, technological skill, innovation, transnational network, knowledge and skill, work ethic, the reduction of oppression, poverty, economic imbalance and boost development strategies. They do these through membership of several groups, programs, policies and advocacy. However, in most state, the implementation of social remittance is constrained by poor governance, corrupt practices, infringement of human rights, weakened democracy, volatile political environment and unwillingness of government to collaborate with highly skilled Diasporas in order to implement these policies that will bring about quality change (Nweke & Nyewusira, 2014).

Few highly skilled Nigerian Diasporas have keyed into academic linkages; Nigerian universities connect with their alumni's abroad in order to facilitate academic

exchanges, training and information resource development. They also receive books and cash donations from alumni members present in the different states abroad, these links have also enabled younger academics to travel abroad for trainings and further education, some of these young academicians have returned to their various departments with fresh insights and experience. There also exist different partnership agreement between some Nigeria and other countries and programs in terms of education like; the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program, Fulbright Junior Scholars Development, Teaching Excellence Achievement Program, Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Programs, Young African Leaders Initiative, to mention a few. And also, staff exchanges like the Kennesaw State University and University of Ibadan (KSU-UI) staff exchange programme.

Economic development

Financially, The Nigerian Diasporas have always concerned themselves with the development of Nigeria. They send back a substantial percentage of remittances and investments towards community development (Asquith & Opoku-Owusu, 2020). According to Gnimassoun & Anyanwu (2019), migrants maintain social, political and economic links with their origin countries. Migrants have an attachment to their country of origin and they often visit, on such return visits they give room for a substantial increase in the use of local products and services e.g food, drink, transportation and this generates direct revenue for the country's economy.

Remittances -funds that migrants working abroad send back to their home countries as a means of support- acts as one of the benefits of emigration to sending/origin countries. Despite the downsides of the emigration of these skilled worker's remittance sent back by these workers is one of the positive factors of their migration, some literatures have also alluded these remittances to be a soothing balm to compensate for the absence of these skilled professionals. Remittances help in building national income by providing an increase in savings, investment and foreign exchange in order to limit any balance of payments deficit (Addison, 2005). The recipients of remittances are often low-income families whose offspring left the country to work abroad so migration serves as a means of alleviating poverty and income distribution for the migrant's family through transfers used for education, hospital bills and support of small-scale business. These remittances have been used to sustain daily household needs, further

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educations, build businesses, provide employment directly and indirectly and has also by extension improved an aspect of the economies of these two countries.
According to Dridi, Gursoy, Perez-Saiz, & Bari (2019), remittance contributes greatly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of migrant sending countries. In Nigeria, diaspora remittances in 2017 stood at $22 billion, exceeding the year's earnings from oil, this figure was the highest in sub-Saharan Africa followed by Senegal and Ghana with $2.2 billion each (World Bank, 2018). Nigeria is currently in the top five nations in global remittances and accounts for over one third of sub-Saharan remittance, between 2010-2019, remittance to Nigeria has growth from $19,740 to $23,810 billion (Jaiyeola, Adenubi, & Orjiude, 2021). Despite this growth, the Nigerian government has been unable to properly harness this to their advantage in order to translate to development, majorly because a larger percentage of this remittances go to household consumption (70%) while only 30% goes into investments (Vanguard, 2021).
According to Akindolie (2017), remittance is a key driver of the economy of most developing countries. While these remittances are an important source of income for these states, this research is of the opinion that they do not make up for the lack and shortage of skills and experience that is slowly eating at Africa's development. Akabzaa, Asiedu, Budu, Quartey, &Akouni (2010) supported this statement by explaining that remittances are important to the economy, but does not settle the disparity of labour shortages, lack of skills, productivity and innovation. This shortage is felt in almost every sector of the continents economy both public and private. There is also always an inclination for the recipients of these remittances to become dependent on these remittances. This can ruin the idea of poverty alleviation if not carefully utilized. According to Black et.al (2004), the remittance culture can lead to dependency on the part of those who depend on remittances rather than finding a means of survival for themselves.
Besides, some skilled workers are not easily replaceable. Take for example, you cannot replace a medical doctor with years of experience with a fresh medical graduate in the eventuality that the medical doctor emigrates. Furthermore, in finding out if an emigrant's educational level is a determinant of remittance, Yoko and Maurice (Yoko & Maurice, 2008) have explained that the higher a migrant's education the lower his/her remittances, so we really can't hold on to the claim that remittance is a succour in exchange for the massive emigration of highly skilled professional from these developing states. Kwarteng (2013) was also of the opinion that the benefits that come with the migration of high skilled migrants

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(remittance) is likely to be sustained by just the first generation of these highly skilled migrants.

Asides remittances, the Nigerian diaspora has contributed economically in developmental schemes. The Diaspora-targeted Eurobond that raised $300 million in 2017 budget was an innovation set up by the government to bring increased participation of Diasporas in the economic activities of Nigeria (Kazeem, 2017). This bond went over the 100% target and subscription stood at 130%. This shows that the Nigerian diaspora community are interested in investing in Nigeria. Although, it has been criticised to be opaque and the subscription process not entirely comprising of only Nigerians in the Diaspora and it was processed through private banks. Also, some individuals have pointed out this venture to be a means for the government to prop up the inflated economy thereby defeating the purpose for which these bonds were created, which was for the purpose of capital projects. If these bonds are put to good use and results are seen, this could lead to a more blossoming relationship between the Nigerian government and the diaspora purse.

A large percentage of Nigerian Diasporas (especially southerners) invest in the real estate and housing development sector, either building houses for rentage, lease or personal houses for when they return back to Nigeria (Ladipo, 2022). They usually rely on trusted members of their family to help them management the project to completion. This system is totally based on trust and integrity between the migrant and the person entrusted with only visual updates on construction progress. Sometimes this doesn't work out as we see instances of abroad returnees being scammed of their hard-earned funds which they have sent throughout the years for one investment purpose or another. According to Hernandez-Coss and Bun (2007), Benin City in Nigeria has the largest property development through remittance percentage in Nigeria (approximately 20%) with most of the migrants from that part of Nigeria residing in Italy.

According to World Bank (2021), there was a 28% reduction in remittance flows to Nigeria which stood at $42 billion. This reduction is majorly attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic which affected the jobs and wages of individuals both in origin and destination states, as well as different sectors of the economy that are largely migrant dependent-aviation, banking, investment-, the movement restrictions also prevent people from frequenting third party money transfer service providers and banks in order to cash in or send out remittance (Clemens, 2020). Although, the effects of the Covid-19 virus were not all bad, due to the limited capacity to

send and receive remittances physically many individuals adopted the use of digital transfers (Afford, 2020).

CONCLUSION

It is undeniably evident that for growth and development to occur a state has to be very well invested in its human capital. According to Saif (2018) the economic growth of a state is dependent on its population and human capital is a critical source of wealth and economic growth since it results in increased productivity and advancement. Nickolas (2021) agreed with this line of thought by establishing that human capital affects the economic growth and development of a state since a skilled labour force results to increase productivity which can help boost the economy of a state.

Human capital mobility is necessary for the interdependence of state as well as societal and individual progression, however it is a situation that presents both positive and negative impacts on the migration parties. In Nigeria, the statistics of emigration has more than doubled in 30 years (1990-2020), from 446,753 to 1,670,455 (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021). The problem here is not of individuals migrating from developing countries, but of the highly skilled professionals, artisans, talents and the youth population (human capital) who are meant to be agents of growth, developing the nation through their labour, skills and expertise are those who mostly make up the statistics of those leaving Nigeria in droves towards the benefits and opportunities present in most countries like USA, United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, Germany to mention a few (Kekana, 2018). This has brought about the depletion of professional human capital, created a brain drain effect and impacted several sectors such as health, education, politics and development in the country.

The motivations and effect of the emigration of human capital in Nigeria are multi-dimensional but the leading effect is brain drain. There is a need to lessen the effects of human capital depletion on the economic and social development of countries, in order to optimize "brain gain". Suggested recommendations to the problem of brain drain are provided below.

Recommendation

Based on the above conclusion the following recommendations are being suggested by this paper:

1. Majority of the motivations behind the emigration of highly skilled professionals from Nigeria comes from factors like unemployment and

underemployment, lack of social infrastructure and public services, poverty and economic imbalance, insecurity and so on. If the Nigerian government wants the emigration of their human capital to not result in a brain drain situation they have to work on delimiting these motivations by creating employment, better social infrastructure and public service, increasing security and reducing poverty. This also doesn't only relate to emigration, the return migration of the highly skilled diaspora also depends on it.

2. Remunerations and incentives for workers should be in place so as to serve as a form of motivation to reduce emigration and boost productivity. Higher wages should be given based on qualifications and productivity level. Also, the establishment of research institutes and the provision of grants for professionals will act as a motivation for professionals to stay in home country. Various benefits should be put in place as well to encourage professionals to return to home country after the completion of their education abroad.
3. Remittance inflows from Nigerians abroad are a potential economic development tool. Unfortunately, a large percentage of these remittance goes to household and informal channels, the government has not been able to effectively capture Diaspora remittance for large national projects or investment purposes. There is a need to integrate the Diasporas into the Nigerian economy as development partners so as to allow for growth and development. The Nigerian government should concentrate on creating initiatives that will motivate the diaspora to invest in the country, there should be the creation of more short term youth exchange programs diaspora engagement through tourism, cultural events, language classes, conferences, network events with attractive incentives to facilitate the flow of Diasporas from destination to origin states in order for them to share their skill, knowledge, network and capital.
4. Bilateral and multilateral agreements concerning migration should be signed between Nigeria and major destination states like U.S, U.K, Canada, Germany, U.A.E etc. this will ensure that there is a relative balance in getting the benefits of migration as well as facilitate the smooth transition of highly skilled return Diasporas. Also, developed countries have a responsibility to ensure the orderly reintegration of migrants to their countries of origin, especially highly-skilled professionals whose expertise

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should be utilised in these rich countries. Compensation for the human capital depletion can be making policies that prompt professionals going back to their countries of origin to work in special programmes.

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