

## Migration and National Development: A Comparative Analysis of the Attitude of the First Generation South-East Nigeria Migrants and the New Generation

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### Abstract

This study focused on the underdevelopment of the South East Nigeria occasioned by migration. It also brought to for the issue of brain drain which has taken many resourceful brains outside the shores of Nigeria. It explores the migration syndrome in juxtaposition with the surrounding material conditions as the study revealed.

The authors gathered data from the five states of South East Nigeria through the homogenous purposive sampling technique using the Taro Yamane formula; the researchers arrived at the appropriate sample size for the population. The sample size of 400 respondents, eighty from each State was used to qualitatively arrive at the conclusions. The centre-periphery theory was used as the framework to guide the work. The recommendations are based on the findings and the need to regulate movement of professionals, workforce from the ages of 15-50 years. This calls for the encouragement of scholarly research and attendant public policies.

**Keywords:** Migration; Brain drain; Diapora; Capacity building; Synergy

### Introduction

*Every generation out of relative obscurity, discovers its mission, or betrays it. - Frantz Fanon (The Wretched of the Earth)*

*Attitudes are more important than Facts. - (Anon - the Optimist)*

We begin thus, there may be several economic angles to it, however, everything else considered, to reside abroad in pursuit of livelihood (work/abode) is to be a migrant. Now, world history is replete with scenes of human migration [1]. Be that as it may, in 2002, the International Migration Programme of the *International Labour Office* [2] under the United Kingdom Government (DFID) sponsored a project titled "Skilled Labour Migration (the "brain drain") from Developing Countries: Analysis of Impact and Policy Issues": A bibliocritical and thematic compendium on skilled migration, impact and policy issues from an impressive spectrum of sources in both developed and developing countries prepared by Lowell and Lindsay [2]. The criss-cross of perspectives concerning international migration over eight scores of international works need not detain us here. What is however critical is in the title of the project as sponsored by the DFID-"Skilled Labour Migration (the brain drain)" from developing countries: Analysis of Impact and Policy Issues". Apparently paying deaf ear to these warning signals, the rather disturbing dynamic of migration has continued. In this connection, according to Okodua Henry [3]: The migration of vital human resources is rather very alarming given that the United Nations predicts that the net number of migrants from developing to developed countries will increase by 2.2 million annually, from 191 million or 3-percent of the world population in 2005.

Of course, several reasons have been advanced as the incentives in regard to this ALARMING rate of migration. According to Okodua (Ibid) [3]: In traditional viewpoint, people migrate when they are both pushed by lack of opportunities at home and pulled by the hope of economic gains elsewhere. Thus, the hope that migration will help

associate migrants more closely with available economic opportunities elsewhere is a major incentive for migration. Arguably, migration is necessarily a part of a family strategy to raise income, obtain new funds for investment, and insure against risks. It is not surprising therefore that thousands of African workers with relevant skills endowments leave their home country yearly to pursue better economic prospects within or outside Africa.

There is another angle as regards the motivation for migration contained in many of the International Migration Programme papers and to the effect that the migration of skilled professionals is voluntary and good for the sending countries in terms of brain gain, brain circulation and remittances. More on that are the study unfolds. Yet, it is interesting to note at this juncture that for Moses and Lenés [4], through an applied equilibrium model, migration would lead to an efficiency gain of US\$ 774 billion for the sending countries over a specified period.

Now, there is a common saying in Africa: That for every four Africans you see, one is a Nigerian. This also applies to migration. And as every Nigerian knows, for every four Nigerian migrants you see, one (if not more) is from the South East Nigeria.

Concerning the rate of emigration from Nigeria, and the factors

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responsible, Gopalkrishna and Oloruntoba [5] state inter alia: The postcolonial experience of Nigeria has been marked by missed opportunities, truncated development and frustrated hope. The failure of governance manifests in poor socio-economic performance causing suffering and unfulfilled expectations as well as facilitated insurgency, conflicts and political instability. The involvement of multilateral development agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank in the management of the nation's economy further aggravated the development challenges. These conditions have led to massive migration of trained professionals like doctors, nurses, engineers and academics to developed countries in Europe and North America and increasingly to emerging countries in Asia and Latin-America, a situation conceptualized in this paper as forced economic migration. Although the concept of forced migration is predominantly used to describe the movement of refugees, asylees and internally-displaced persons [6], this paper conceives the diasporization of Nigerians due to economic constraints as an instance of forced migration.

We hasten to note at this juncture, that the lengthy quotation of Gopalkrishna and Oloruntoba [5] is in respect of their clear and acceptable capture of the factors responsible for the exponential migration rate. In this connection, Obom-Egbule [7] notes that there are more than five thousand (5000) Nigerian Medical Doctors practicing in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. While in Nigeria with a population estimate of over one hundred and sixty million people; we have thirty nine thousand, two hundred and ten (39,210) medical doctors. And we continue to recite the cant phrase – Health is Wealth! According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Africa has continued to lose its skilled professionals. In this connection, the IOM statistics provide that since 1990, an estimated population of 20,000 (twenty thousand) professionals (medical doctors, university lecturers, engineers, and others) leave the shores of the continent annually so that as at 2007 there were over 300,000 highly qualified Africans in the diaspora. The Nigeria content in this aggregate is decipherable from the remittances in this connection, the World Bank notes that Nigeria tops the chart in Africa (World Bank 2012) [8].

Now, whether the focus is on international migrant remittances or *migradollars* or *brain drain*, *brain gain* or *brain circulation*, the ultimate factor is, how do these boosts or detract from economic growth and development – in the short, medium and long-runs? How has migration aided organic solidarity in the society (social development) and, how has it aided political system capacity in terms of processing and effective delivery as regards the demands upon the political system or has it made matters worse? All these notwithstanding, we are yet to come across analysis either focusing on migrant remittances and the development of South East Nigeria or on the inter-generational attitudinal disposition of the migrants and the impact/implications for development. We keep these thoughts in mind as the philosophical foundations unfold.

These thoughts on development are to provide us with helpful mental regulation as we now turn to the objectives of this study:

- a. To identify the perceived gains face-to-face with the perceived costs of migration to the region of South East Nigeria in the path of development.
- b. To identify the major developmental drive or perception differences between the first generation South Eastern Nigeria migrants and the new generation.

- c. To compare the circumstances and contributions of the different generations of migrants in regard to socio-economic and political development.

- d. To proffer suggestions as regards lessons, rooms for improvement and the way forward.

As a corollary to the foregoing, we have the following questions to guide the study:

- a. Does current migration dynamic in South East Nigeria help or hinder progress?
- b. How far or how much does migration really helps us focus on our lives, hopes and aspirations as a people?
- c. How many and in which ways does migration promote the unity, and prosperity of the people of the region?
- d. What are the policy platforms to aid improvement or transformation?

We now turn to our other perceptual aid – the theoretical framework. Here, we adopt structural-functionalism and attendant values and nuances.

To begin with, technically-speaking, no matter what may be said about a system or systems, structure is everything. Hence, the extents and limits of the system stem from the structure. Accordingly, structural-functionalism is a genre of the systems perspective. According to Varma [9]:

The structural-functional analysis revolves around certain concepts – more important of them being the concepts of functions and structures. These basic questions are involved:

- (a) What basic functions are fulfilled in any given system
- (b) By what structures and
- (c) Under what conditions?

There may be manifest and latent functions. The manifest functions deal with patterns of action whose consequences are both intended and recognize. A latent function deals with patterns of action whose consequences are unintended and unrecognized by the participants.

While functions deal with the consequences involving objectives as well as processes of patterns of actions. Structures refer to those arrangements within the system which perform the functions.

Now, concerning our subject matter, how does this fit as an analytical 'tool'. To begin with, according to Gopalkrishna and Oloruntoba [5], scholars have attempted to explain the root causes of migration depending on points of view. In regard to our perspective, some see forced migration as a result of the pre-capitalist formations response to the penetration of European merchant capital. In this connection relying on Ake [10] and Zegeye and Ishemo [11], they posit that the colonial administration in most African countries introduced taxation which made it imperative for able-bodied men to migrate to the cities to work in order to earn money to pay taxes. This pattern of migration caused major disruption in the indigenous production process because able-bodied men left the rural areas for the cities.

The point here is that this pattern has been somewhat replicated in the post-colonial arrangement through an economic structure marked by disarticulation and other attendant structures and outcome – particularly their orientation towards the metropole (core).

In the words of Gopalkrishna and Oloruntoba (Ibid) [5]: World systems theory leads us to believe that the socio-economic characteristics at the periphery are not conducive to the economic capacity and optimal productivity of many professionals like doctors, nurses, engineers, academics, sportsmen and women, artists among others, who are mostly under-employed and under-appreciated. The loss of policy autonomy by the states at the periphery has also created a situation in which the opinions of many of the professionals are neither sought nor appreciated by policy makers of the Trans nationalist, capitalist state. In contrast to countries at the core of global capitalism that have well-developed political institutions, countries in the periphery operate a kind of democracy that promotes primitive accumulation by the ruling elites but disempowerment for the people [12]. The resultant socio-economic conditions in the periphery and the better opportunities that are available for skilled professionals at the core of global capitalism ...have created conditions that accentuate migration flows from the periphery to the core.

The above points have equally been underscored by Ake [12]. The relevance of structural-functionalism in this endeavor also revolves around its consideration of “patterns of actions whose consequences are unintended, and unrecognized by the participants”. In this connection, we have disarticulation and other unintended consequences. With disarticulation there are several other unintended and unrecognized consequences. Such as underdevelopment of the human material resource endowments, poor socioeconomic performance, missed opportunities, truncated development and frustrated hope and the attendant socioeconomic and political insecurity/instability. There is massive dislocation, disconnection, alienation and the denial/asphyxiation of the incentive for creativity and the attendant unemployment, crime etc. The people of the formations involved remain underachievers as long as the dynamic subsists. This reminds us of the words of Wolf-gang Goethe:

I have always felt a bitter sorrow at the thought of the German people, which is so inestimable in the individual, yet so wretched in the generality.

### The Participants

Nigeria is a colonial heritage: A product of the European quest for trade, conquest and progress. Amalgamated into one political entity on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1914 from the Northern and Southern British Protectorates of the River Niger Delta areas, she has witnessed interesting political evolution. Today, Nigeria is the most populous country in the continent, Africa. She is at present constituted of 774 (seven hundred and seventy four) Local Government Areas (LGA), 36 (thirty six) States and a Federal Capital at Abuja. Lagos is the economic hub.

The participants are drawn from the 5 (five) states of South Eastern Nigeria. These are Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States.

Table 1 below presents a synoptic view of the population of the states as well as the size, distance from Abuja and Lagos.

States	Population	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Distance of capital from Abuja	Distance of capital from Lagos
Abia	28,33,999	6320 km <sup>2</sup>	733 km	608 km
Anambra	40,55,048	4844 km <sup>2</sup>	440 km	494 km
Ebonyi	17,39,136	5533 km <sup>2</sup>	595 km	526 km
Enugu	32,67,837	7161 km <sup>2</sup>	595 km	595 km
Imo	39,34,899	5530 km <sup>2</sup>	733 km	604 km
Total	1,58,30,919	29388 km <sup>2</sup>		

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

**Table 1:** A Synoptic view of the population and size of the state's distance from Abuja and Lagos.

We hasten to add at this juncture that notwithstanding the questionable integrity of the 2006 population census figures in Nigeria, it provides us with the working population figure as regards the participants. On the other hand, the landmass or area is not in doubt. Be that as it may, the five states above provide the heartland of the Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria. It is noteworthy here that there are Igbos in the South South region of Nigeria – particularly in the Rivers and Delta states as well as in parts of the Middle Belt. The South East Region of Nigeria is the land of the great Zik of Africa -Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Nigeria's first indigenous Governor General, first President, first President of Senate. The land of the great Chinua Achebe [13], the land of Ogbunigwe, the land of Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara, Mbadiwe, Odumegwu Chukwuemeka Ojukwu, Dr. Okechukwu Ikejiani, Dr. Akanu Ibiam, Christopher Okigbo, the Aba Women of the 1929 Riot and many more.

The Igbos of Nigeria are well-known for their diligence. In the 1960s, David McClelland had to appreciate their performance as regards achievement. They were doing so well that they deserved critical scholarly consideration. Now, the Nigeria crisis and civil war and allied matters created material conditions that got Igbo children sent as Refugees to Gabon, Ivory Coast and other countries of Africa and beyond, in order to have at least, some survivors of the Genocide and the Civil War in Nigeria. The aftermath of the war (Abandoned Property Policy, the ceiling of £20 for the Igbo person – no matter the value of his savings in the banks in Nigeria, the indigenization policy and so forth) further created a psyche of rejection and created conditions for further Igbo migration abroad. But the crux of the matter is, what is the dividend, what is the attitude?

In the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and other returnees employed the knowledge/skill/acumen acquired overseas in addressing the challenges of the times. For commercial interests, they set up the Regional Bank, the African Continental Bank, (ACB); for the educational interest and the acquisition of managerial acumen, they established the University of Nigeria, Nsukka; for political coordination, they set up the National Convention for Nigeria and the Cameroons and later on, the National Council for Nigeria Citizens, NCNC and so forth. What do we have from our returnees today in order to address current challenges and issues?

From another angle, the South East Nigeria is by the standards of Nigeria, educationally-advantaged. She has among the highest number of professionals in almost every field of human endeavor- if not all. She produced the first indigenous Vice Chancellors of the University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria Nsukka and University of Lagos. The situation was the same with the Armed Forces and the Federal Public Service, where her sons held sway before the Civil War. In view of the Civil War (1967-1970) and the aftermath, the people are marginalized in the scheme of things, and, are therefore, forced to emigrate. To that extent, it is logical to expect that as with the first Generation Migrants/Returnees, the current generation would form the bulwark for regional

development. What actually is happening? What do we have now? A different orientation? This takes us to the method of our investigation.

### Method

This is all about the method of data garnering. Already, from, the existing literature, we have a lot as secondary data. However, in regard to the observed questions and issues in respect of the South East Nigeria, there is need to go for primary data. The sense is to the end that the ways and means of eliciting responses or opinion from the participants remain such that what is gathered not only be reliable; but provide the basis for valid analysis, conclusions as well as recommendations. In this regard, we had to go for a sample.

### Sample size determination

In view of the population size, we had to adopt a formula for the determination of a sample size for such a population. Here we employed the Taro Yamani formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n = Appropriate sample size

N = Actual Population

l = Constant

e = Error Margin=0.05%

$$n = \frac{15,830,919}{1 + 15830919 \times 0.05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{15,830,919}{1 + 15830919 \times 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{15,830,919}{1 + 39,577.30}$$

$$= \frac{15,830,919}{39578.30}$$

$$= 399.98=400 \text{ (approximately)}$$

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in data gathering in this study is a questionnaire (Appendix). The questionnaire items arose from the sub-questions/matters/issues arising from the research questions and allied considerations.

### Sampling techniques

On the basis of the equality of states, notwithstanding the demographic differences and peculiarities, we adopted the method of dividing the 400 respondents by the five (5) states. This gave us 80 respondents to represent each state. In pursuit of reliable opinion, we adopted the purposive sampling technique. In this regard, we went to four prominent schools in each state and discussed with the senior

prefects and elicited their response to the questionnaire – in this we were gender sensitive. On the basis of gender equality, we purposely made sure that each researcher got only 200 copies of the instrument for only one gender. The view of the women count much here not only because they are the mothers and sisters of the emigrants but also because they form the large part of those whose husbands/spouses or suitors or those of their relations are abroad. All these were taken as pilot study and whose outcomes formed the basis of focus group discussions at newspapers/magazines squares, Christian church parishes and town hall meetings. Thus, the work took about 8 weeks from late November 2013 to the middle of January 2014. Table 2 below depicts the questionnaire distribution.

It is noteworthy that in view of the interest generated around the subject matter, the purposive sampling promoted healthy rivalry among the respondents selected. The focus group content, though modified to suit our purposes also acted as a control measure. Hence, only 14 questionnaires were not returned. That is 96.5% return rate (386). These 386 were all in working order.

### Data Analysis

In this connection we approach the research questions. In this respect, the core matter being the contributions of the different generations of migrants in regard to progress vis-a-vis considerations regarding attitude. In order to refresh our minds in this connection, let us present again the research question for our purpose here:

- Does current migration dynamic in the South East Nigeria help or hinder development?
- How far or how much does migration really help us focus on our lives, hopes and aspirations as a people?
- How much and in which ways does migration promote the unity and prosperity of the people of the region?
- What policy platforms to aid improvement or transformation?

Now, the first three are of immediate importance in this section – come to think of it, each of the three is simply observing the same matter from another point of view. However, together, they provide one with a so-to-say, three dimensional view of the matter. It is therefore, in that regard that we shall treat the responses to the questionnaire with one mega-table (Table 3).

The critical question is what actually is the role of migration in development? In this regard, in the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, migration of Nigerians, nay Africans, to the United States of America and Europe produced nationalist struggles and eventual political independence in the 1960s going forward. From Nnamdi Azikiwe to Awolowo, Kwame Nkrumah and a host of others, it was a story of endeavour and advance. They had to swim against the perilous tide of the colonial powers and their local collaborators. The dividends of their labour (apart from political independence), remain in every sector of the economy. Just name it as covered by the questionnaire items and

<b>Sex</b>	M	F					400
	200	200					
<b>Age</b>	15-20	21-25	26-35	35-45	46-60	60and above	400
	40	90	60	60	100	50	
<b>Social Status</b>	School prefects	Students union leaders	Labour union leaders	CBOs NGOs	Returnees migrants	Returnees migrant relations	400
	20	80	108	72	40	80	

Table 2: Questionnaire Distribution Frequency.

Questionnaire item	SA	A	SD	D	U	I	Total
4	8	2	248	120	11	8	386
5	34	36	120	178	8	8	386
6	2	8	248	120	11	8	386
7	5	5	250	11	4	4	386
8	36	34	108	190	10	8	386
9	5	5	250	118	2	6	386
10	5	5	250	118	2	6	386
11	8	2	248	120	8	11	386
12	5	5	250	118	2	6	386
13	34	30	124	182	8	8	386
14	120	109	48	20	80	9	386
15	248	120	8	11	2	8	386
16	60	69	58	79	60	60	386
17	0	5	250	118	2	6	386
18	4	4	250	120	2	6	386
19	248	120	8	11	2	8	386
20	60	69	58	79	60	60	386
21	79	58	60	69	70	50	386
22	79	58	60	50	80	59	386

Key: Appendix

Table 3: Responses to Questionnaire.

one would see the impact of the First Generation Migrants.

But how much advancement is attributable to the current wave of migration of South East Nigerians in REAL terms? In which sectors? What are the factors responsible for the failure of these migrations to provide the critical push for the development of South East Nigeria?

To begin with, the orientation to survive at all costs is destroying the organic solidarity among the people and the classic *Nwa Obodo* or *Nwa Ora* mindset and allied values and attendant attitudinal dispositions. This destruction is worse still in the face of the inability of the state to carry out this function as is the case in the West. This is double jeopardy. This is responsible for the burgeoning of disruptive tendencies bordering on Anarchism/Nihilism. There can be no end to the social impacts of disconnection, alienation and the attendant disorientation. Yes, there may be small family gains here and there, but these do not in real terms counterbalance the general loss to the community.

Nearly 50 years ago, the South East was able to hold her ground without much, if any external connections. In this connection: During his last war time speech Biafran Head of State Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu summarized many of the technological feats of the Biafran state: In three years of war, necessity gave birth to invention. During those three years. We built bombs, rockets, and we designed and built our own refinery and our own delivery systems and guided them far. For three years, blockaded without hope of import, we maintained all our vehicles. The state extracted and refined petrol, individuals refined petrol in their back gardens. We built and maintained our airports, maintained them under heavy bombardment... we spoke to the world through a telecommunications system engineered by local ingenuity.

Fifty years later, not only have we grown more and more technologically dependent – we appear to be losing it all. Today, with some of the Returnees, we have the *Kriss-Kross* culture of *Twists: Ass-level* and other American Correction Home or Purgatorium culture sold to the hapless people back home as sophisticated. The Pull to be like others, apart from the disabling/frustrating environment only

leads to more migration: Potentials are hence lost to other lands.

It has to be underscored that migration has a lot to do with national development. However, this has to be under appropriate/ proper management – involving coordination and synergy. And that is where we are having critical challenges in the South East Nigeria, as we need a critical reorientation. According to Stan Chu Ilo [14]: The ordinary African does think that it is better to be a slave in the West than a king in Africa. Changing this orientation is a very important challenge, especially given the flamboyant lifestyle of Africans who live abroad when they return home for Christmas and other community celebrations. Here again we are dealing with the effects of poverty. People who have nothing will easily be intimidated by those who flaunt their wealth like many foreign-based Africans do in their local villages. Africans must take time to think how this kind of living would advance the cause of their continent. Africans need to develop a think-home philosophy and a sense of responsibility and contentment. The African problem is not one that will be solved through “flight from” Africa but rather through “engagement in and with” Africa [14].

## Conclusion

There is much in this basket but many things are not unlimited. Suffice it to have it here, that for several cultural connections, the South East Nigeria is in mutually-rewarding relationship with the State of Israel (as with many other states such as the United States of America USA). Suffice it to note here that much of the strength of Israel revolves around the coordination of the migrants and the homeland people. Similar coordination is crucial for other nationalities and the South East is no exception. Many have keyed in on such arrangements.

It is noteworthy in this regard that apart from the investments of Prof. Batholomew Nnaji in the Power Sector, there is no other noteworthy investment in any other sector of the economy by any migrant/returnee/diaspora South Easterner. As we think upon this, let us ask ourselves what drives Prof. Bartholomew Nnaji for him to bring world class power infrastructure into the South East Nigeria? It is passion for the land that is his fathers’ and mothers’. The Homeland passion!

The question then goes – how do we inculcate this passion in others? Through constant orientation/reminders, through the compassion of the West and the rest of humanity who watch us ache painfully before their very eyes. We need each other and we need help and our being here is to plead that you get our brothers and sisters to think home and make our place worth really visiting. Remember we have come a long way, teaching the ancient Greeks. We need to wake up and be counted. Globalism is to be greatly enhanced by globalization. Let the embassies and allied contrivances get down to work. Where there is will, there is way. A problem identified is one half-solved. Accordingly, through the Literature Review and Theoretical Framework, we identified the economic structure as responsible for the factors and magnitude of emigration from the South Eastern Region of Nigeria. Whatever may be said about human will and orientation, which is a fundamental difference between the first generation migrants and the current generation, it is important that something critical, if not surgical, be done about a political economy that sustains a dysfunctional structure. Suffice it note that these structures are man-made and not divine.

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