

'JAPA' SYNDROME AND NIGERIANS RESPECTIVE WITHIN XENOPHOBIA SPACE

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ABSTRACT

Migration is part of human experiences and there are varied factors that compel migration globally. These factors necessitated the relocation of some migrants to South Africa and other parts of the world. But recently, foreigners were attacked in South Africa. The quantum destruction of lives and the properties of the migrants concerned require international intervention with a view to maintaining peace and security among comity of nations. The violent acts perpetrated by the South Africans became a hard nut to crack in diplomatic relations among African countries. In view of this, the study seeks to access and analysis the effects of xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals, particularly, Nigerian and how it affects the decision of Nigerian youth in the 'Japa syndrome'. Also, identify other determinants of the mass exodus of Nigerian youth from the shore of Nigeria. They study adopted ex-post facto research design that seeks to establish cause-affect relationships. The population of the study is the youth in the tertiary Institutions in Ondo State, Nigeria. Two institutions each were selected from the three Senatorial district of Ondo State totaling six Institutions for the study (both private and public) through purposeful random sampling. A total of three hundred (300) copies of questionnaires were distributed to the Institution in fifty copies per institutions through random sampling technique and interview was conducted for some respondents.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Migration is part of human experience worldwide. There had been records of human migration in some countries of the world. For example, the Chinese's experiences in the 1980s and Nigerian's in the 1970s and 80s cannot be forgotten quickly. In the recent time, the rate out which Nigerians are leaving the shore of Nigeria is overwhelming, charming and worrisome. This is without exemption of class, age and status leaving the country in droves. A recent survey shows that seven (7) out of ten (10) Nigerian are ready to relocate to other countries (NSCS). This mass exodus of Nigeria had been tagged as 'Japa' Syndrome; The number of migrant from Nigeria in 2020 was about 1.7 Millions (United Nation Department of Economic and social Affairs). The reason adduced for this movement may not be unconnected with insecurity, harsh economic, bad education, political, and business policies of Nigeria government. Therefore, Japa syndrome is a product of great attempts by Nigerians to seek greener pastures in other countries around the world. Fidelis David (2022) opines that there has been increases in the migration of youth to convenience countries geometrically and that this action happen because of poor working and unfriendly economic realities in Nigeria. Also, it is dishearten that those on the 'Japa Train' are mostly high skill individuals across different sector of the national economy (Ogungbade).

The idea of Japa is not new in our human history. Immigration has been one powerful vehicle in how diverse our world has become. It is true that there is a spike in the number of young people eager to leave the country due to the general sense that the country is not working for them economically. Ogunmola (2022) and Apata (2022).

The record shows that seven out of ten migrant from Nigeria are youth, meaning that, youth form a larger part of the 'Japa' syndrome (preumtimegig.com) Also , British statistic shows that about 14,000 visas (study and work) were issued to Nigerian nationals in 2019 and that by 2021 number has increased about 56000. *Six decade of independent, Nigerians are not celebrating the freedom from the grip of colonialism. Rather, they are celebrating the mountain of challenges before them which include mass exodus of Nigerians to the UK, US, Canada and other European countries.*

Nigerians are relocating to get a better life where they believe almost everything work as it should. (Okuta 2022).

Xenophobia is an issue that pervades migrant discussion in the recent time. Cinimi and Balgobind (2019) conceptualizes it as sentiment of hatred and negative attitude towards foreign nationals but was violent in nature leading to physical beating, killing and looting of goods as well as destroying of property owned by foreigners who should have unhindered access to the socio-economic and cultural facilities available in the communities.

It cut across the continents of the world, including Africa. There had been record of xenophobic attacks on other migrants in South Africa particularly in May, 2008 and March, 2015. South Africa became attractive to other nationals in African continent in 1994 after the apartheid. Ayatunde (2018) in his assessment of the experiences of Nigeria migrants in South Africa opined that, migration is always propelled by political, economical and environmental challenges and the collapse in infrastructures. Also, that immigrant prefers South Africa because of low cost of migration, less difficulty in securing residence permit compared with western world. Although, the exodus of migrants was not limited to Africans but record shows that black foreigners in South Africa were most affected by these attacks. Some of the victims of the attacks were Ethiopians, Zimbabweans, Nigerians, Angolans, among others. Also the attack was gender indiscriminate because both male and female migrants and refugees were involved. These acts of brutality were unprecedented height of discrimination and intolerance to migrants from African countries which led to destruction of life and properties. This paper therefore, accesses and analysis the Nigerian youth perspective on xenophobic attack and its effects on the 'Japa' syndrome among Nigerian youth.

Purpose/Objective of the Study

The youth in Nigeria are majorly involved in the 'Japa Syndrome' reasons been that they wish to utilize better educational, economic, medical, environmental opportunities available in more secured and developed countries around the world, South Africa inclusive. There had been records of hostility, attacks and destruction of life and property against some Africans in South Africa. Some Nigerians were victims of the attack while larger percentage read or heard about the attacks which were widely published in the mass media. Asakitikpa and Gadzukwa (2015) alluded to this in Their paper which considered South Africa xenophobic attacks from the narrative of online newspapers reportage through content analysis. The findings suggest that mass media help to understanding their roles in reporting the action and reaction.

In view of this, the study seeks to access and analysis the effects of xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals, particularly, Nigerian and how it affects the decision of Nigerian youth in the 'Japa syndrome'. Also, identify other determinants of the mass exodus of Nigerian youth from the shore of Nigeria.

Design: They study adopted ex-post facto research design. It is a type of design that seeks to establish cause-affect relationships, but the researcher usually has no control over the variables of interest and therefore cannot manipulate them.

Population/and Sample

The population of the study is the youth in the tertiary Institutions in Ondo State, Nigeria. There are eleven tertiary institutions in Ondo State. However, two institutions each were selected from the three Senatorial district of Ondo State totaling six Institutions for the study (both private and public) through purposeful random sampling.

A total of three hundred (300) copies of questionnaires were distributed to the Institution in fifty copies per institutions. These copies were administered to the students of the Institutions through random sampling.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Respondent by Sex

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Male	157	54.9%
Female	129	45.1%
Total	286	

Table 1 shows that 157 (54.9%) of the respondents were male while 129 (45.1%) were female. The indication from this table is that the paper is gender sensitive and that both male and female Nigerian youth are involved in the syndrome.

Table II Age Description

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
16-20	70	24%
21-25	140	49%
26-30	60	21%
30-above	16	6%
Total	286	

The age description of the respondents as indicated in table 2 above shows that those between 16-20 years range constituted 24% of the respondents. 21-25 years range was 49% where in is the majority of the respondents while 26-30 years range was 21% and 30 years above was 6%.

Table III Institutions of Respondents

Table shows that 16.8% respondents were from Adekunle Ajasin \university, Akungba Akoko, 16% of the respondents from Achievers University, Owo, 16.470 respondents from Adeyemi College of Education Ondo, 117.5% feom School of Nursing, Akure, OSUTECH had 16.1% respondents while Federal Polytechnic, Ile Oluji had 17.3% respondents.

Item no 3 shows the Institution selected for the study and their response to the questionnaire

Table 4: Are you ready to leave Nigeria for another country.

S/N	STATEMENTS	RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
4	Are you ready to leave Nigeria for another country	Yes	257	89.9%
		No	29	10.1%
		Total	286	

Table IV shows that 257 (89.9%) respondents are ready and prepare to leave Nigeria shore to another country in the world, while 29 (10.1%) are not ready to leave Nigeria.

Table 5: For what purpose?

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Education	157	54.9
Vacation/Visit	14	4.9
Tourism	29	10.1
Residence	86	30.1
Others	-	
Total	286	

Table V shows that 157 (54.9%) of the respondents indicated that they which to study abroad. 14 (4.9%) respondents indicated that they go on vacation, while 29 (10.1%) on tourism and 86 (30.1%) to reside there.

Table VI : Did you support Nigeria youth leaving the Country?

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Yes	272	95% 95.1
No	14	5% 4.9
Total	286	

Table vi shows that 272 (95.1%) indicated their support for Nigeria youth who are leaving the country in drose, while 14 (4.9%) indicated that they did not support the movement.

Table VII : If your answer is yes to question (vi) why?

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Economic challenges	28	9.8%
Insecurity	28	9.8%
Unemployment	230	80.4%
Others		
Total	286	

Table vii shows that 230 (80.4%) respondents indicated that unemployment is the reason for their leaving Nigeria, 28 (9.8%) indicated that it is economic challenges.

Table 8 :

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Africa	29	10.1%
Asia	--	
Europe	43	15.0%
America	215	75%
Australia	--	
Total	286	

Table 3 captures the expectation of the respondents. About 89.9% is determined to leave Nigeria for greener rolltive while 10.5% is of the opinion that to study in Nigeria is preferred

Table 4 shows the reasons, Nigeria youth which to leave the country at opportunity that is available. Education is 54.9% of the reasons by the respondents. Those interviewed, said it is not because the quality of education politics and insecurity in Nigeria among others. This is followed by 30.7% of respondents who are ready to reside in choice of country.

This category of respondent equally allained themselves with the challenges mentioned above.

Table IX : There is sponsorship to the following countries, which of the Countries youth will prefer to go?

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Canada	272	95.1%
Turkey	---	
South Africa	14	4.9%
Ghana	---	
Total	286	

Table ix shows that 272 (95.1%) of the respondents prefer to go to Canada. This is followed by South Africa with 14 (4.9%) respondent preferred Turkey and Ghana

Table X: Are you aware of attacks on Nigerians in some Countries

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Yes	272	95.1%
No	14	4.9%
Total	286	

Table x shows that 272 (95.1%) of the respondents indicated that they were aware while 14 (4.9%) that they were aware, while 14 (4.9%) respondents are not aware of attacks on Nigerian abroad.

Table XI : Will these attacks affect your decision on Country to travel to in the World?

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
No	200	70% 69.9
Yes	86	30% 30.1
Total	286	

Table xi shows that 200 (69.9%) respondents indicated that, attacks will not affect their decision to go to any Country, while 86 (30.1%) respondents indicated attacks will affect their decision on where to travel to in the world.

Theoretical Framework

In the study, insight is drawn from two theories: Global justice theory Alix Dietzel (2018) and collective violence theory mattaini and Strickland, 2002. These 2 theories contributing to creating the theoretical framework that guided the analysis evident in this study and they are expounded below;

1. The Collective Violence Theory

The collective violence stems from mattaini and Strickland (2002). Is conceptualized defined as “the instrumental use of violence by people who identify themselves as members of a group either with transiting or permanent identity o again political, economic or social objectives krug el al (2002)

Also, that the theory stems from the notion of collective trauma. At the core of the conceptualization of collective trauma and collective violence a notions that a society has a mid of its own sometimes referred to as “group mind”. Mogapi (2011). The scholar further avers that collective trauma therefore, refers to a state similar to a group mind where the collective is traumatized as an entity, independent from the sum of the traumatized individuals within the group. “The above argument holds that South Africa due to her apartheid past is yet to reliever from collective trauma. Additionally, the unabated outbreak of violence in South Africa are viewed as emanating from the long term effects of collective trauma that manifests as collective violence.

Mogapi (2011 p, 125) asserts “ mathnini’s model of collective violence priories a useful frame work for highlighting the role of collective trauma in collective violence .in this paper, collective violence thing in utilized to unpack the causes of attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa.

2. The Global Justice Theory

Global Justice Theory exists within the boarder school of cosmopolitan which focuses on the importance of individuals rather than the state, community or culture. They believe that all human beings have equal moral worth hence have the right to equal moral consideration. Although, cosmopolitan thoughts are traditionally confined to the state and contained in the realm within the realm of political (not international) theory, its endeavor led to the theory

of global justice, which seek to investigate the question of how best to secure a just life for all individuals on the planet Earth, regardless of their nationality or status.

It concerns itself with the moral worth of the individual regardless of place of birth and focus on problems of global cohabitation in which individual are not yet treated as morally equal or where the moral focus has traditionally been on state. The scholars focus on what individuals across the world deserve and how distribution of these entitlements can be achieved. Although, Rawl (1971) opined that the structure of distributive justice could only exist within a democratic society or a specific type of state. But Beitz (1975) said his idea of limiting justice to national level in the modern global era is morally inappropriate.

Pogge(1989) corroborated the idea of Beitz thus; the global inequality between individuals call for a global approach to justice that can effectively respond to these inequalities. There are different ways to this concept but they advocate for a widening of the scope of justice to the global level. Therefore, the contemporary global justice scholars focus on problems like gender inequality, immigration and refugees, welfare and climate change. Although, there could be criticism, but it is clear that global justice is based on the importance of the individuals, make appeal to human rights and other liberal norms.

This theory is relevant because Xenophobia is undoubtedly a global problem that concerns migrant, refugees, welfare of individuals and human rights of the people concerned.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study examined the effect of xenophobic attacks on the "Japa syndrome" among Nigerian youth. Table I of this analysis shows that 54.9% of the respondents is male while female is 45.1%. This shows gender sensitivity in the respondents that captured the opinion of Nigerian youth. Also, the sample indicated that they are literates and well informed respondents that know their civil rights, responsibilities and duties to their nation. The findings of the field work on the effects of xenophobia attacks on the "Japa syndrome" among Nigeria youth. Findings revealed that both male and female Nigerian youth are involved in the "Japa syndrome". Also, that many youths are nursing the ambition to travel out of Nigeria without recourse to gender. This ambition cut across the professions that are available in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions. The representation in the study involved all the courses of study in an average tertiary institutions in Nigeria decisive. This is a pointer that, if steps are not taken by the authorities concerned, Nigeria may be in dire need of human capital in the future. On whether the youth are ready to leave the shore of Nigeria maturely of the respondents and those interviewed agreed that they are prepared at any available opportunity to leave the Country, without completing their present course of studies in Nigeria. The remaining 10.1% which the interview conducted are reserved about what the future hold for such plan but not to be desperately done. Concerning their reasons for leaving the Country. Majority of the respondents and the interviewed hinged it on education challenges; like unsteady academic calendar, the rigorous exercises among others. While some of them which relocate in other so stay for a better living standard and security of life. The respondents also indicated that they support and encourage other Nigeria youths to leave because their future is blank therefore, the movement has become driven and equally contagious in principles and actions among the youth. It has started eroding the loyalty and patriotism to the Country among Nigerian youth.

Summary Of Findings Nigerian youth are desperate about relocating to develop Countries of the world for greener pasture and to escape the insecurity in Nigeria. About 95% of Nigerian Youth desire to study outside Nigeria due to unstable academic calendar and the insensitivity of our education administrators to the plight of the sector. The idea of Japa syndrome is not gender sensitive because it involves both male and female youth. Xenophobia has no effect on the choice of Nigerian youth, they not choosing South Africa is not because of the attacks on Nigerians in the Country. Nigerian youth are more desperate to go to American countries than any country in the

world. Few of them are really to do anything valuable to them to leave the Country either legal or illegal means.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

The Federal Government of Nigeria warned Nigerian youth against illegal migration. This is because there is grievous bad consequence. Majority of the youth defile the warning because of the warning because of the harsh economic, education, political policies and insecurity in the Nation. Without mincing word, foreigner experienced discrimination, exclusion and violence in some major communities in South Africa. This action instill fear of being victimized at any given time and place. The study shows that more than 89.87 percent of the respondents prefer to study abroad to Nigeria.

- It has not be clearly reported that the South African Government to serious action to address the loss of life and property. Also, it has virtually impossible for Nigeria government to influence South African Government when the foundation upon to do that is faulty. Therefore, Nigerian Youth do not renege in seek for greener pasture outside the shore Nigeria without minding the consequence.
- 1) Therefore, the recommendations among others include Nigerian government should ensure that educational policy meet up with the international standard. This will allow for stable and standard academic calendar, which in effect will discourage the syndrome.
- 2) Security issues should be prioritized but not politicized. Also, the government must take step to synagesis with other Countries with a view to stem the tide of the occurrence.
- 3) South African government should ensure justice is done in regard to these attacks in other to redeem its image in the Committee of Nations.
- 4) South African government should enhance how their policies will affect the life of their citizens and the foreigners. Also, that, the locals may not have misconstrue and transfer aggression to the non- South Africans.

The necessary infrastructure must be put in place to enhance the living standard of the citizens

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