



Research Paper

African to Africa Migration and Xenophobia in the 21st Century.

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ABSTRACT

The process of Africa to Africa migration is the movement of an individual, family or large groups from one geographical region to another with the intention of either settling temporary or permanently. Most people may decide to relocate from one place to another due to forced displacement as a result of natural catastrophe or personal reasons. However, there are numerous cases of xenophobia which is in form of discrimination amongst Africans. Xenophobic attacks and racism by the citizens against the foreigners as a result of hatred towards them, varies from one African country to another. Based on this assertion, this study seeks to ascertain and examine the level of Africa to Africa migrations and xenophobia in the twenty-first century. Also the socio-economic effects of xenophobic violence on black migrants in Africa Diaspora, as a result of the migrants investing their resources back in their native countries, so as to increase the Gross National Products (GNP) due to an improvement in the Net Foreign Investment which will thereby reduce the host country's Gross Domestic Products (GDP) because the foreigners are being discouraged from investing in their country. Above all, as far as people won't put a stop to migrate from a country to another, the way forward is for the citizens and foreigners to have equal rights and dignity. This must be respected irrespective of race, tribe, religion or socio-cultural differences.

KEYWORDS: Migration, African Diaspora, Discrimination, Xenophobia, Racism, Socio-Economic, Xenophillia, Sustainable Development, Migration, Twenty-First Century.

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I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Since the 21st century, the activity and process of migration is becoming rampant in the society. This is as a result of peoples movement from one geographical location to another with the intention of either settling temporarily or permanently. An individual may decide to move from one place to another as a tourist with the view to learn and understand other people's culture within a stipulated amount of time while such a person might also decide to migrate permanently to another geographical location with the intention of achieving better opportunities.

According to a research carried out by the United Nations, there has been a rise in the influx of people moving from one destination to another of about 258 million which is about 70 percent increase as compared to former years exceeding the global population growth rate. United Nations (2017).

In most cases, people migrate from the rural to urban areas but due to some personal reasons. An individual may also decide to move from urban to rural area. Some of the factors which may influence people's decision to migrate includes; environmental, economic, cultural, security, health reasons and so on.

According to IOM (2018), about 60 percent of migrants tend to migrate in search of better countries and to experience the good life easily and gain the job opportunities they desire, improve their living standards and assist their families in their respective countries.

In some cases, an exposure to violence and political unrest in one's country can contribute to the reasons why people chose to migrate to a country they deem better of than theirs.

Cross-border migration has increased in the number of foreigners moving into new geographical locations as compared to the past. It is discovered that citizens in the receiving country exaggerates the number of non-citizens in their countries because they are not willing to entertain them within their country and do view the

migrants as a delinquent rather than as an opportunity. However, this behaviour towards foreigner varies significantly from one country to another but as a result, it can be connoted that each has its own characteristics due to the attitude of citizens towards the foreigners vice-versa. Such a hatred that takes the form of discrimination from country to country is referred to as xenophobia.

The word xenophobia can be defined as an extreme fear or dislike of strangers or people from other countries. It is the behaviour of rejection which is often acted against the foreigners in a society, region or the country as a whole irrespective of their historical background, skin colour or gender. According to Shindondola (2003), xenophobia arises as a result of intense fear or loathing of foreigners that are not a citizen of the country which will later have an undesirable effect on the foreigners. Xenophobic attitudes by the citizens towards foreigners can result in violence, hostility, verbal and physical abuse, resentments, antipathy and etc.

Coenders, Lubbers and Peer (2004); Crush and Ramachandran (2009); Geschiere (2009), further opined that xenophobic acts are not restricted to a particular continent but can be found in every part of the world. According to International Law (1965), racial discrimination is a form of restriction, limitation or preference which is based on historical background, race, physical characteristics such as hair type, skin colour, facial similarities and socio-cultural origin with an effect of abolishing or prejudicing the benefits which is to be derived as a form of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, social, cultural, economic, traditional and other fields of life.

The magnitude of racial discrimination is frequent among the citizens of the country but as a result, it is being played down and denied by the governmental authorities in such countries. However, one of the regional preparatory meetings for the world conference covered that “racism is an ideological construct” that assigns a certain race or ethnic group to a position of power over others on the basis of physical and cultural attributes as well as economic wealth involving hierarchical relations where the superior race exercises domination and control over others”. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that xenophobia, racial discrimination and racism is difficult to extricate due to its behavioural effects which varies from one country to another. For examples, countries like South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana are received with open arms because they are seen as business patterns and investors.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Obviously, the core focus of every nation is to improve the living standards of its citizens and foreigners living in the country. Due to some challenges from his/her country as faced by such individual, recent research has suggested that the need for change of environment either by rural-urban migration, inter-city migration and inter countries migration. There are trepidations in the achievement of an improved standard of living in other countries due to various challenges being faced by migrants of the host countries. In the light of these, the study will examine the interplay between migrations, xenophobia, racism and will also shed more light on the causes of xenophobia towards migrants in host countries. There will also be verification on the implications for new socio-economic consciousness in diaspora as a way of proffering lasting solutions to xenophobia and other forms of racial discrimination in African countries and beyond.

Africa and in fact the globe, is experiencing unprecedented and fast-paced changes at virtually all fronts; political, ecological, and economic amongst others. The almost inseparable twin phenomena of globalization and digitalization have created what can best be described as an heraclitean global society of constant flux; and society of constant change that reminds us of the Greek logos of heraclitus. The continent Africa in particular finds itself in a constantly evolving globe where time is of essence and where no one waits for the other to catch up.

Africa in the 21st century exists within a framework of global competitiveness and knowledge economy. A world where what you bring to the global table, determines and defines your identity or place in the global village. The German question is: Is the continent African ready to take its place in the emergent globalized society of the 21st century? Put differently, is the continent Africa on the path to sustainable development? Are the dynamics playing out on the contemporary African continent supportive of the kind of roadmap capable of engendering growth and development? Against the background of the prevalent and contemporary experiences of xenophobia and xenophobic attacks in Africa, the paper attempts to interrogate the phenomenon xenophobia vis-à-vis the desideratum for sustainable development in Africa.

The paper comes in three overlapping parts. In the first part, we conceptualize the phenomenon xenophobia, with particular reference to South Africa, the second part, of the paper discusses the content and consequences of the African experience of xenophobia and xenophobic behaviours and tendencies. Against a background of the need to address the threats posed by contemporary xenophobic trends and tendencies, the paper, in the third part, develops an epistemological construct xenophilia as a veritable opposite to counter the narrative of xenophobia. The fourth and concluding part of the paper prescribes a xenophilia framework, which the paper argues provides a veritable tools for positioning Africa for development in the 21st century.

II. CONCEPTUALIZATION

THE PHENOMENON XENOPHOBIA

Etymologically, speaking of the word “xenophobia” derives its origin from two Greek words: xeno (which ordinarily refers to foreign) and phobia (which refers to fear). Thus, technically, xenophobia is used to refer to the fear of that which is foreign or alien. English Dictionaries variously define xenophobia as some kind of intense fear, hatred or strong dislike for anything foreign. (Dictionary.com.2019; Cambridge.org, 2019). Arising from the phenomenon, xenophobia (or xenophobia) is the construct xenophobe (or xenophobe), meaning one that may be said to be driven by xenophobic beliefs and practices. Xenophobia is then some kind of metaphysical construct founded on an attitude of hate or dislike for things, ideas or phenomena outside one’s immediate culture or environment (Steinbaver, 2019). Xenophobic tendencies are grounded in some kind of sense of cultural superiority. The xenophobe considers the stranger as coming from a culturally inferior background. Xenophobes are therefore individuals who with a passion are unwelcoming of strange, unknown and unfamiliar tradition, phenomenon or culture. For the xenophobic, a stranger or a foreigner is almost as good as an intruder or a trespasser or an unwanted guest who has come to have undue share of his social economic and ecological space.

Thus, when conceptually analyzed, xenophobia or xenophobia has socio-cultural, ecological, economic and political dimensions. The xenophobe sees the non-indigene or the foreigner as encroaching his or her socio-economic and ecological space. By implication, xenophobic attitudes and tendencies suggest some kind of fear in the face of limited or scarce resources. To the extent that resources everywhere are limited, the xenophobe is concerned with the issue of resource control or the question ‘who gets what?’. The stranger or alien is viewed with disdain and suspicion.

CONTENT AND CONSEQUENCES OF XENOPHOBIA: THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE AS A CLASSIC ANALOGY

In recent times South Africa has become synonymous with xenophobia. Globally, South Africa remains perhaps the easiest reference for xenophobic attacks and xenophobic tendencies in the 21st century. Hitherto popularly referred to as ‘the rainbow nation’, that is, a nation of people of different races, South Africa is today a shadow of its rainbow, a stormy and hostile environment for foreigners, and blacks in particular. The pertinent question at this juncture is how and why did South Africa get to the status of a nation that both connotes and denotes xenophobia? How did a country once ruled by the great humanist and Pan-Africanist Nelson Mandela derail into a country of predominant xenophobic thinking and culture? Answering these questions, among others, requires that we closely analyze the content of xenophobic attitudes and behaviour in South Africa.

An outline of the history of xenophobia in South Africa provides a veritable starting point for examining the content or character of xenophobia in South Africa. The xenophobic attitudes in South Africa predate 1994, as immigrants faced racist and discriminatory attacks before the advent of majority rule in 1994. Contrary to expectations that an emergent majority rule in South Africa will bring the death of xenophobic tendencies and behaviours, the intense dislike for foreigners remained unabated. (Neocosmos, 2010). As further documented by Nyamnjoh not less than 67 people died between 2000 and 2008 as a result of xenophobic attacks in South Africa (Nyamnjoh, 2014). The month of ‘May’ in the year ‘2008’ stands out as a black spot on the calendar of xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Series of unprecedented and wildfire-like xenophobic attacks across South Africa leaving 62 people dead and several injured in May 2008 (Vahed and Desai, 2013).

The year of 2015 was also characterized by unending xenophobic attacks which necessitated the repatriation of immigrants by governments in their home countries.

For example, according to Nigerian senior Special Adviser on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora, Abike Dabiri-Erewa, the country lost about 116 Nigerian nationals in the period of 2016 to 2017 due to unlawful acts of violence by the locals of the host country Salau (2017). This unlawful act of violence has remained a major setback which poses risk to the external relations of Nigeria and South Africa.

In 2019 the incidents of attacks arising from fear of foreigners reached a feverish peak as several immigrant business owners especially Nigerian and Mozambican small shops and small scale business owners became the objects of attack (Burke, 2019). Several lives were lost and several businesses and properties were destroyed in acts best describable in Hobbesian language as nasty and brutish. The trajectory of xenophobic attacks in South Africa is multi-dimensional. The widespread non-hospitality of black South Africans betrays the popular South African philosophy, ubuntuism. A humanist philosophy founded on the significance of togetherness, ubuntuism declares ‘I am because we are’. Contemporary realities in South Africa draw a trajectory that is antithetical to ubuntuism: “you must go, so we can be”.

A XENOPHILIA FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AMONGST AFRICAN NATIONS

Africa in the 21st century still harbours a large percentage of nations that have been categorized as developing nations. Characteristics of developing nations, the nations of the African continent still battle with questions of basic needs for survival. Basic human needs such as water, light, food and shelter still remain a luxury for a majority. The poverty rate in most African nations is so frightening that the question of attaining the status of developed nations in the 21st century does not even appear to be realistic. The stark realities of tribalism, racism and xenophobia within and among the nations of Africa constitute a threat to sustainable development. No people or nation survives in an atmosphere of intense hatred and hostilities. Development is engendered in an environment of mutual love, trust and understanding. Mutual feelings of love for one another is key to development. Feelings of fear, hatred and prejudices gives rise to conflictual experiences which undermine development.

Thus, for the nations of the African continent to attain sustainable development in the 21st century, they must embrace a filial framework that counters the better xenophobic experiences of the South Africa kind. As a counter-narrative to xenophobia, Africa must adopt, develop and embrace the content of the phenomenon we identify as xenophilia. Technically, we define xenophilia as intense feeling of love or likeness for foreigners. African must as a matter of urgency transcend tribalistic, xenophobic and racist mentalities. The Nigerian Yoruba must for example develop likeness for the next door neighbour of Igbo tribe and vice versa, the South Africa must develop a love and respect for the average Malawian immigrant in South Africa, and people of African extraction, in general must learn to appreciate and respect people from other continents and vice versa.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

THE DRIVERS OF MIGRATION

In conceptualizing the role of development, the idea that much African migration is essentially driven by poverty ignores evidence that demographic and economic transitions and ‘development’ in poor countries are generally associated with increasing rather than decreasing levels of mobility, migration and the relationship between development and migration is fundamentally non-linear. This argument was originally put forward by (Zelinsky, 1971), in his hypothesis of the Mobility Transition.

Zelinsky argued that, processes of modernization and economic developments have historically coincided with increasing rural to urban migration followed by a subsequent increase in emigration. When societies become wealthy emigration decreases and immigration increases, leading to a mobility or migration transition in which countries gradually transform from countries of net emigration into countries of net immigration. These ideas about a ‘migration transition theory’ have been further developed by (De Haas, 2010; Martin & Taylor, 1996; Skeldon, 1997) and empirically tested using historical (Hatton and Williamson, 1998) and contemporary (Clemens, 2014; Czaika & De Haas, 2012, De, Haas, 2010) data sources. Such insights turn the predictions of conventional “push-pull” models or neoclassical theories that predicts that, migration decreases as societies develop and income and other geographical opportunity gaps decrease upside down.

In reality, most migrants do not move from the poorest to the wealthiest countries, and the poorest countries tend to have lower levels of emigration than middle income and wealthier countries. To understand why development is generally associated to move migration, it is important to move beyond views of (Africa) migrants as objects which are passively pushed around by external ‘push’ factors such as poverty, demographic pressure, violent conflict or environmental degradation, analogous to the way physical objects are attracted or repelled by gravitational or electromagnetic forces. Such ‘push/pull/’ views however, ignore that people will only migrate if they have the ambitions and resources to make this happen. We can see migration as a function of people’s aspirations and capabilities to migrate (De Haas, 2011; 2014). This idea helps us to understand why development is often associated to increased levels of migratory as well as non-migratory mobility (such as commuting, tourism and business travel). Development processes typically expand people’s access to material resources, social networks, education, media and knowledge. At the same time, improvements in infrastructure and transportation which usually accompanies development, makes travels less costly and risky, enabling migration over-increasing distances.

In conceptualizing the role of states in Africa-Africa migration processes, common accounts of Africa migration are also characterized by either an ignorance or a weak theorization of the role of African states in migration processes, which reflects a broader ‘receiving country bias’ in migration research which observes the role of state origin (Vezzoli, Villares-varela & De Haas 2014). There is also Africa-Africa migration, together with the motivations and results of these. In Africa, also there is intra-border and extra-border migration of herders and the socio-political implications of this reality to twenty-first century African states. This theory is premised on two theories. **The Theory of Entitlement Propounded by Robert Nozick, (1974), and the Attribution Theory by Weiner Bernard (1974).** In light of **The Entitlement Theory of Justice**, Nozick criticized John Rawls’s difference principle. Rawls’s difference principle apprehends that there should be a fair distribution of the benefits and burden of social cooperation. Nozick viewed the difference principle from another perspective with the opinion that social cooperation can be achieved on three reasons.

Firstly, the idea that talents are somehow common property diminishes the “dignity and self-respect of autonomous being” because it “attributes everything noteworthy about the person to certain sorts of ‘external factor’”.

Secondly, Nozick defines the Rawlsian assumption that a person's talent are arbitrary from a moral point of view which explains that an individual may be entitled to a particular thing but it does not necessarily mean that such person deserves to own it.

Thirdly, using the better off to benefit the worst-off is to make an assertion never to use people as means but always as ends. The theory of entitlement is of the opinion that the citizens are gratified to some basic rights such as employment opportunities, housing, health insurance, social facilities, infrastructural facilities and so on which cannot be shared with the foreigners living in their country. This has given privileged to the citizens to oppress and recall the colonial indoctrination whereby black foreigners are viewed as intruders and common enemies with the support of the whites living in Africa countries. This attitude among the black people especially in countries like Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Mozambique and so on has made mockery of the independence and post-apartheid from the white colonial masters, Chengu, (2015); Fanon, (1968).

The Attribution Theory by Weiner Bernard opined that people interpret an event in relation to their thinking and behaviour. Based on some research paradigm by Weiner, he averred that ability, effort, task difficulty and luck are the most important factors affecting attributions for achievement.

According to a research carried out by the European Union in 1997, it was discovered that almost 33 percent of the people being interviewed are xenophobic due to their frustration with the life circumstances and as a result, there is low confidence having this acuity in their future expectancy and fear of unemployment and insecurity despite the establishment of the public sector companies and political institutions by the government and non-governmental organizations in the country so as to improve competition and employment opportunities in the country Shindondola (2003).

As a matter of fact, most locals have the perception that the foreigners will take their jobs because they see themselves as being superior to the foreigners and aftermath, they blame the foreigners of their misfortune eliciting public violence that assumed xenophobic characters which can be attributed to their laziness and charlatan behaviour. However, it is generally believed that most foreigners migrate from their country to seek better opportunities in other countries as a result; they are diligent, industrious and dedicated to their jobs. In an attempt to be able to contribute resources (money) and maintain their families and well wishers back home, most foreigners take extra jobs on part time basis and they indulge in different kinds of business activities so as to improve their inputs in their native country.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The socio-economic effects and implications for new consciousness in the diaspora, is to ensure sustained improvement, progressive growth, development of social policy and economic initiatives for the increase in the standard of living of individuals, families, communities and society at large. Some socio-economic effects migrants and citizens are willing to enjoy include: employment opportunity, access to social welfare, access to the health facilities in the host country, the contribution of the foreigners on the growth and development of the host country.

However, due to high rate at which people are migrating from one place to another in countries, regions and communities, these has turn out to have positive and negative effects due to high growth in population density and as a result, most nations ranging from the underdeveloped, developing and developed countries are experiencing persistent increase in unemployment, dwindling of business and low income capital.

According to Solow (1956), the high influx of foreigners will lead to an increase in labour force. This is supported by Brucker and Jan (2011) who averred that the positive and negative economic effects of migration is down to the flexibility of the labour market. In most cases, the migrants take most of the jobs that the host citizens see as dirty jobs and as a result, it is seen as an adjustment variable in the labour market. From the foregoing, Brucker (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of studies examining the effect of immigration on unemployment in the U.S and Europe and finds that a 1% increase in immigration will lead to 0.3% increase in unemployment.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper examined the effects of migration on Africa to African countries and the incidences of xenophobia as its obtainable in the 21st century.

It considered the explanations of xenophobia and its origin vis-à-vis other relationships of Africa-Africa migration, xenophobia and discrimination and racism. It shows that xenophobia is not just an anti-political social and economic agenda against migrants as a form of grievance and hostility but also its competition for scarce resources and the belief of the citizens of the host countries to see their country as superior to other

countries. An example, can be deduced from the xenophobic attacks by South African nationals on black foreigners because of their believe that they are in competition with the foreigners for socio-economic resources and due to an extreme hatred for4 them, the locals lay ambush and violent attacks which led to loss of lives and properties and insecurity and panic amongst the foreigners residing in the country.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing, whether legal or illegal, migration has been alarming as concerns rises and there is persistent increase in the migration of foreigners to host countries for better opportunities has neither curbed nor ended discrimination, xenophobia and racism towards the migrants. However, various measures by representatives, government and non-governmental organizations, international institutions, civil society and migrant groups through policy implementation and anti-immigrant reforms to help end xenophobic attacks have been futile because they see foreigners as a threat to their country. Since, the main reason why people migrate from one country to another is to seek for better life and employment opportunity to improve the individualsliving standard, here are some recommendations based on the discourse in this study, which are as follows:

1. Migrants should learn to invest their resources in their native countries, which will increase the Gross National Products (GNP) due to an improvement in the Net Foreign Investment and as a result of this action, there will be a reduction in the host country's GDP because the foreigners are being discouraged to invest in their country.
2. The 21st generational has to avoid repeating some of the mistakes of the past and as such, citizens and foreigners must have equal rights and dignity which must be respected irrespective of their race, tribe, religion or socio-cultural differences.
3. There is need for the government of native countries to create an enabling environment for its citizens to thrive to improve their living standards, enjoy the good life and attain success in their life endeavours and careers or work. There should be provisions of basic social amenities like good roads, security, power and water supply, standard hospitals, quality education and so on as most foreigners intend to migrate to countries that can offer them such pleasures.
4. The government of every country should provide measures of employment opportunities, through collaborating with multi national companies, government and non-governmental organizations private and public sectors in the provision of medium and long term loans for the empowerment of entrepreneurial skills and training, business and agricultural sector, as a way of discouraging their citizens, intending to migrate to other countries for greener pastures. These will also help the native country avoid an experience of brain drain and reduction in numerical strength.

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