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ALIENS IN THEIR OWN LAND: SOCIAL AND SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION CRISIS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines internal migration crisis in Nigeria and the social and security implications of internal displacement of citizens. Drawing data from theoretical and empirical evidence, the authors observed the initial promises of internal migration with respect to national integration and unity; and the subsequent failure that threw up "the native-settler syndrome" whereby settlers become aliens in their own country. The consequences of these conflicts are discussed in terms of social and security problems. Given the obvious realization that internal migration is not likely to end soon, hence the crisis associated with it, the author suggested the employment of human security framework, with the incorporation of "top-down with bottom-up inputs" in order to curb internal migration crisis in the country.

KEY WORDS:

Aliens, Conflict, Human security, Internal migration, Native-settler,

Introduction

The study of migration and its implications have been accorded deserved attention in sociological, demographic and geographical literature (Fagan, 1990; Kok, 1999; Barner, 2005; King, 2012). Yet migration is a concept very hard to ignore. Apart from its long history dating back to advent of civilization, the recent re-discovery of migration-crisis nexus has re-awaken decades of accumulated empirical evidence that need realization in order to promote policy responses for solution. Sociologically speaking, people have had to move from the time of hunting and gathering culture to the discovering of agriculture and settlement. Inspite of "settlement" many "push and pull factors"continue to motivate migration. In Sub-Saharan Africa, Anthropologists have taken time to explain the Bantu migration from the interlacustrine region (in East Africa) to other parts of Africa. Reason varies; it includes the search for food, fertile land to cultivate, security, trading and or marketing, employment, favourable weather and/ or climate condition, pure expedition (the modern day tourism), etc, (Woods, 1982; Kok, 1999). These factors, and lots more, still influence migration today.

The impacts of early migration on migrants have been mix. It includes culture shock, acculturation and acculturation stress, discrimination, wars, crises, trade

expansion, and friendship, etc. In Nigeria, the European trade expedition to Africa resulted in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and the subsequent colonization that followed after the abolition of slave trade. In Europe, what started as expedition or trade voyage resulted in the discovery of the new world (America). What followed in the exploitation of the native Indians have severally been documented (Banner,2005), including theoretical expositions by Marxian scholars (Fagan, 1990; Hardy, 2009). Such historical background suggests that migration has never lacked crises, and this is conspicuously demonstrated even in contemporary time by the suffering of international migrants trying to escape unemployment, poverty, insecurity, hunger, etc, in their native countries to Europe (Ronaldo, 2013).However, what has not been clearly interrogated and has remained largely unexplored is internal migrants' crisis observed even in countries like Nigeria with an avowed vision and mission of national unity.

In Nigeria, the vision for national unity was a common chorus among the founding fathers in the early 1960s. It never lost the crescendo since then. The vision is demonstrated in the coat of Arm – unity and faith; and in the then National Anthem. The old national anthem had affirmed the vision and mission that "*though tribe and tongue may differ, in brotherhood, we stand*". The new National Anthem added more candour to the vision of the founding fathers, "…*the labour of our heroes past shall never be invain…to serve with heart and might, one nation bound in freedom, peace and unity*".This anthem is sung in all major functions where dignitaries and national leaders gather, including football events and in schools to reassure Nigerians of (the labour of our heroes past) national unity. Inspite of such devotion, the extent to which "freedom, peace and unity" have been realized in the country remains a guess work.

Migration that would have fast-tracked the realization of unity and makes the diverse tribes and tongues "a beautiful code of many colours" has become an object of fear by both migrants and the natives. While the natives exhibit fear of domination (Okoli & Uhembe, 2014)and fear of internal colonialism (Alubo, 2011), the migrants' fears range from being discriminated against, to hatred, and being denied opportunity to access resources, employment, etc(Lederach, 1997).In recent time, this fear has resulted in several crises, some with either religious and/or political colourations. The native-settler syndrome has also emerged to create identity with contentions on "who own the land", and who should have the right to farm land and/or grazing fields. These crises are in turn triggering other large waves of forced migration across the country. This is not without social and security consequences. It is not only constraining the realization of national unity, but also creating hate crime as expressed in common slangs as: *mudagarinmu* (this is our town), *awalonile* (son of the soil).Given this situation, many Nigerians have become aliens in their own land.

Amid the growing number of person affected by migration induced crises, and migration triggered by crisis, it is important to consider the social and security

implications. The emerging consequences of migrant crisis seem to bear semblance of problem faced by early migrants; at least to the extent of discrimination, displacement, and wanton destruction of lives and property (Hardy, 2009).Existingscholarly works have tended to separate the causes of migration and the effect or impact of migration from the consequences of migration (Woods, 1982; Barner, 2005). In an evaluative work provided by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society (IFRC & RCS, 2015), the impacts of migration are restricted to fund remittances and associated multiplier benefits; however, the consequences of migration as observed from migration-crisis nexus is currently becoming a problematic phenomenon. Given this observation, this paper seeks to answer two related questions: What are the social and security throw ups of internal migrant crisis in Nigeria? And how can these social and security challenges be curbed to checkmate migration crises? It is hope that answer to such questions may help to stimulate discussion on approaches to addressing the internal migrant crisis in Nigeria. It may also help in the provision of policy inputs toward addressing migrant problems and associated crises.

The paper is organized in themes. Beside this introduction, the next theme provides brief conceptual and theoretical background. This is followed by social and security challenges faced by internal migrants, and suggestions on how to curb them. Thereafter the paper provides a summary and conclusion.

Conceptual and theoretical background

Social Science has not been able to provide a single operational definition for migration because of the different contexts that migration occurs. Recent scholarly works point to migrants as people who move for different reasons across different spaces and time (Freedom & Gerald, 2010). In this context migration recognizes both spatial and duration-of-residence (time) dimensions. In Kok's (1999) analysis, migration is a process in which an individual or a group shifts their residence from one population (or place) to another. This definition incorporates only the spatial dimension, suggesting that a migrant is someone who breaks off activities and associations in one place and takes up daily lives in another place (UNDP, 1994). In contrast to this, most demographers have argued that migration must involve an essentially permanent territorial shift in residence to be distinguished from mobility (Cohen, 1996; King,2012).Such heterogeneous factors influence migration definition and make a universal definition of migration impossible.

A migrant can be a person who moves to another city or town within a nation; a refugee who crosses an international border to escape religious or political persecution; a job seeker who moves to another country for better economic opportunities; a slave who is forcibly moved; or a person displaced by war or natural disaster (Woods, 1982). In this context Kok (1999) defined migration as the crossing of a spatial boundary by one or more persons involved in a change of

residence. Migration is, therefore, "a process of moving, either across an international border, or within a country". It encompasses any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people, and economic migrants (Freedom & Gerald, 2010).

Since the concept of migration involved movement from the place of origin to the place of destination, it suggests the meeting of indigene and the migrants. The migrants take on a new status: settlers (those who arrived later), while the indigenes remain "original inhabitants". In this context, the indigenes have significant advantages over the settlers. In Nigeria, the Local Governments and the States Government determine who is an indigene. The federal government has no role. In recent time, the dichotomy between indigenes and settlers has resulted in bloody crises that claimed several lives and property. This is not without social and security consequences. No part of the country seems to be immune from this crisis. From Ife versus Modakeke in the South West, Jos mayhem in Central Nigeria to pocket of crises in Nasarawa State, Taraba State and Benue State, these crises have resulted in internal displacement of Nigerians, destruction of lives, residential buildings and farmland.

Although no accurate data exist, the contribution of internal migrants to secondary economy in the country is easily seen in the area of micro and small enterprises with high degree of informality. For instance the Igbo traders who dominate motor spare part business in Nigeria are found everywhere in the country. So are the Hausa and Fulani cattle dealers. Other migrants are either engaging in sole proprietorship or working for private employers. Over the years, the federal civil service structure has also enhanced the movement of civil servants to every part of the country, thus promoting the belief in one Nigeria. Many migrants also engage in farming, and in so doing have contributed to food security in the country. The activities of internal migrants in the informal economic sector are seen also in bars, grocery shops, restaurants, hotels, and retail trade. These activities have indeed helped to boost private sector growth in the country. The socio-economic interactions do not only promote friendship, understanding and inter-ethnic marriages but also social capital. Unfortunately these assets are the first line victims of migrant induced crises.

Empirical evidence of social and security consequences of internal migration induced crises can be drawn from Jos, the capital of Plateau State of Nigeria. Originally, Jos had existed as the capital of Benue-Plateau State, consisting Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau State. In this capacity, it existed as a melting pot for the indigenes of these States as well as migrants from within and outside the country, who were attracted to serene environment of the city for both social and economic businesses. Crisis started when the ownership of Jos became a contention between the Afizere, Anaguta, Berom, the Hausas and, to some extent, the Fulani. Since April 1994, when the crisis first took its first human toll, the city of Jos, and indeed the Plateau, has not known peace till today.

The first social consequence has been fear, followed by hatred, and discrimination. Fear is demonstrated in security consciousness. Residency in the city is polarized along religious line, and both Muslims and Christians have introduced security road block to check against suicide bombers on Fridays and Sundays respectively, during worship. The effect of the crisis on social interaction has not only destroyed social capital but also brought deep hatred among hitherto loving friends and neighbours. Inspite of military troupe deployment, state of emergency and several curfews declared in Jos town and its environ, skirmishes and killings are still being reported. The recent one occurred at Bokkos, where the Paramount Ruler of the Local Government Area was reported to have been killed (Agabus, 2016). In the past, killings in Barkin-Ladi, Riyom and Dogo Nahawa have been reported. The Dogo Nahawa killings in March, 2010 elicited international outcry; yet till today, the killers are yet to be fished out.

Elsewhere in Agatu, Benue State, crisis between settler Fulani cattle rearers and the indigenes which started in 2013 is still raising dust. In a reprisal attack in March, 2016, several villages and farm settlements were invaded by the Fulani. The attack resulted in the death of several people including the destruction of properties. According to Mayah (2016), about 300 villagers were massacred by the Fulani invaders in Aila, Okokolo, Akwu, Adagbo, Odugbehon and Odejo. The people of Agatu are now taking refuge in neighbouring Apa Local Government and in IDP camps in Makurdi. Between 2011 and 2014, suspected Fulani herdsmen had also attacked dozens of communities in four Local Government areas of Guma, Gwer-East, Buruku and Gwer-West. The consequences of these attacks on lives and property, and indeed food security, are yet to be estimated.

Theoritical Framework

Several theories of migration exist, but each tends to draw inspiration from the earlier work of Ravenstein (1885, 1889, cited in King, 2012). In his law of migration, Ravenstein had put forward seven empirical generalizations, which Samers (2010, pp. 55-56) later described as 'economically deterministic', 'methodologically individualist' and 'dreadfully antiquated'. Although opinions vary, convergence has been reached on the ground that major causes of migration are economic. Linking migration crisis to the economic can then be understood from this perspective. The struggle for economic sphere may result in several strategies to place the migrants on the status of stranger or alien. In his explanation of the theory of stranger offered by Simmel (1950), Baffoe, Cheung, Asimeng-Boahene, and Ogbuagu (2012)revealed the connection between spatial relations and the symbol.

In migration theorizing, the stranger is seen not in the sense of a “wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather as the person who comes today and stays tomorrow” (Baffoe, et al, 2012). In this context, the migrant remains a potential wanderer, who may move on someday but certainly not now, for he is yet to overcome the freedom of coming and going. He is fixed within a particular

spatial group or within a group whose boundaries are similar to spatial boundaries. But his position in this group is determined, essentially, by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning, and that he imports qualities into it, which do not and cannot stem from the group itself (Hardy, 2009).

The stranger is by nature no "owner of soil"; soil not only in the physical, but also in the figurative sense of a life-substance which is fixed, if not in a point in space, at least in an ideal point of the social environment. Although in more intimate relations, he may develop all kinds of charm and significance, as long as he is considered a stranger in the eyes of the other, he is not the "owner of soil" and cannot be counted among the *musu-gari* (those that owns the land). This is the concept of discrimination that influenced the development of native /settler crisis in Nigeria.

The social-security nexus of internal migrants' crisis

What are the throw-ups of migrant crisis in Nigeria and what implications exist for the country? Several consequences exist. Some of these implications have been pointed out in the literature review above. The rest are explained below:
Social implications: The social implication can be wide, ranging from socio-economic to political and civic responsibilities.

National Unity: In a country where the founding fathers had recognized the beauty in diversity and the need to work for the realization of national unity, internal migration crisis resulting from native/settler discrimination is an affront to national unity. It suggests our inability to co-exitpeacefullywithin the diversity.

National cohesion: Following the effect on national unity is the impact on cohesion. There is sociological evidence that migrants who faced discrimination in their community of destination felt being discriminated against in their country; and where crisis render them property-less, they often returned to their community of origin with mix-feelings about the Nigerian project (Alubo,2011). Sociological literature abounds on reprisal attacks and/or retaliations carried out by returnee migrants on people they suspect to be of similar ethnic and or religious background with those who attacked them in their community of destination.
National identity: In Nigeria, internal migration crisis may have serious impacts on national identity. This is easily observed from peoples' perceptions on the eagerness to belong. The trend over time, which has remained discernable, is the recurrence of ethnic affiliation, and existence of associations couched in ethno-cultural fixtures, even in urban cities. There is little concrete evidence to support this but public commentators have argued that groups like Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), and Movement for the Survival of Biafra (MASSOB) are results of Igbos experiences in the hand of other Nigerians outside their communities of origin (Ezekwereogu, n.d).

National integration: Since social cohesion and national identity could share similar characteristics, it can be reasonably argued that migrant crisis would exert negative impact on national integration. Where States and Local Governments decide on who becomes a native, and who is a settler, it affects employment and access to resources. In some states of the federation, those classified as settlers and or strangers are asked to pay school fees higher than their native counterparts. This is even when they have stayed for many years and have been paying taxes and rates to the government, and homage to the traditional authorities.

Internal displacement: Where internal migration is a result of reprisal attacks (like in Dogo Nahawa, and in Agatu) many homes, farmland and sources of livelihood may be destroyed. This may result in being internally displaced. The psychological impact of losing one's home and or houses can result in stress, several heath challenges, hatred, and feu. Internally displaced persons are not only without home, but are also without job. These have implications for poverty.

The future of children: There is also effect on children's education; and incase of epidemic outbreak, the health implications can be huge. But perhaps more worrisome is in a situation where the bread winner of the family is killed in the crisis. The woman remains a widow and a single parent, with the attendant cost of bringing up the children.

The security implications

The security implication of migrant crisis can be divided into two: national security and human security.

The national security dimension: Where people feel alienated, the urge to belong is easily weakened, and in such circumstance, they may constitute security problem to the country. The reprisal killings in North Central Nigeria (specifically Plateau, Benue and Taraba) are being blamed on the Fulani herdsmen who were dislodged from these communities as a result of disagreement on grazing land. They are resorting either to rustle cattle and or carry out reprisal attacks. These crises have often put members of the security community on red alert. Many more lives and property are being lost.

Besides, people who are displaced and who felt abandoned by government can be lured and indoctrinated into joining criminal gangs and or terrorist cell in the country, or even elsewhere. For instance, Onuohaand Ezirim (2010, p. 56) found poverty and joblessness as factors that provided ample pool of willing recruits for the Boko Haram terrorist group in northern Nigeria. The authors also observed that “recruitment strategy often relies on financial incentives, rather than the extremist ideology or recruit-kidnapping for which the group is better known”.Where people are made to develop weak ties with their community, the consequent psychological strain may force them into rebellion.

Another security implication has been traced to the proliferation of arms in the country. This is mostly observed where native/settler conflict exists. For instance Alubo (2011) reported about the employment of sophisticated weapons, mercenaries, motor bikes and communication gadgets employed by Fulani herdsmen in the prosecution of herder/farmer war in North Central Nigeria. In the reprisal attacks carried out at Agatu, AK 47 rifles were employed (Mayag, 2016). Both the herder and the farmer could resort to procure arms to protect themselves. This is gradually resulting in the development of violent subculture in the country. Since these arms are majorly in the hands of the youth, there is the temptation of using them to cause crisis elsewhere when the one in their community would have ended.

The human security component

The human security concept (HSC) conceptualizes security by moving away from traditional, state-centric conceptions of security that focused primarily on the safety of states from military aggression, terrorism and armed criminal. HSC concentrates on the security of the individuals, their protection and empowerment. It draws attention to a multitude of threats that cut across different aspects of human life, thus highlighting the interface between security, development and human rights; and seeks to promote a new integrated, coordinated and people-centered approach to advancing peace, security and development within and across nations (Boutros-Ghali, 1992).

Using the HSC, we can identify human insecurity breed by migrant crisis in the country. They include persistent poverty, unemployment, food insecurity and hunger, famine, deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care, ethnic, religious and other identity-based tensions. Where migrant crisis results in displacement of persons, deprivations and loss of property can result in psychological stress. Migrant crises, therefore, do not only undo years of development but can also generate conditions within which grievances can lead to growing fear and tensions. Human security is therefore driven by values relating to security, stability and sustain ability of development gains.

Curbing social and security implications of internal migrant crisis in Nigeria

Scholarly researches have shown that crisis is an inherent part of human existence and the relationships among human beings. In these contexts, migrants crises are not likely to disappear in the near future, but they can be curbed to a tolerable level. Migration is assuming new directions daily, and it is becoming a necessity in the emerging globalization. It is in this respect that we suggest a multi-sectoral solution offered by human security approach. The approach adopts a strategy which entails a broadened protection and empowerment of people. In this way emphasis is placed on the interconnectedness of both threats and responses when addressing insecurities. In this context, threats by migrant crisis are mutually reinforcing and interconnected in two ways. First, they are interlinked in a domino

effect in the sense that migrants' crisis can lead to deprivation, unemployment, outbreak of diseases and health problem, poverty, etc; and these in turn could impact negatively on national unity, cohesion, identity and national integration. The resultant consequences can be national insecurity in terms of crime of terrorism, armed proliferation, information security sabotage, and outright rebellion.

Protection are "strategies, set up by states, international agencies, NGOs and the private sector, to shield people from menaces" (CHS, 2003, p.10). It refers to the norms, processes and institutions required to protect people from critical and pervasive threats. Protection implies a "top-down" approach, suggesting the initiation of government. It recognizes that people face threats that are beyond their control. These include migration induced crises, natural disasters, and conflicts. It requires protecting people in a *systematic*, *comprehensive* and *preventative* way. The State has the primary responsibility to implement such a protective structure. However, international and regional organizations; civil society and non-governmental actors; and the private sector also play a pivotal role in shielding people from the menace of migrant crises. In Nigeria we are seeing this in the international support and regional coalition in the fight against Boko Haram in the North East Nigeria. A comprehensive response to recurring Jos crises and Agatus is still being awaited.

Empowerment is seen as strategies that enable people to develop their resilience to difficult situations (CHS, 2003, p.10). As oppose to protection, it implies a "bottom up"approach, and aims at developing the capabilities ofindividuals and communities to make informed choices and to act on their own behalf.

Empowering people would not only enable them to develop their full potential but it also allows them to find ways and to participate in solutions to ensure human security for themselves and others. In this way "human security would complements state security, strengthens human development and enhances human rights" (CHS, 2003, p. 2). Whereas state security concentrates on threats directed against the state, mainly in the form of military attacks, human security draws attention to a wide scope of threats faced by individuals and communities. It focuses on root causes of crises (insecurities) and advances people-centeredsolutions that are locally driven, comprehensive and sustainable. As such, it involves a broad errange of actors including local community leaders, youth leaders, civil society, international collaborators and or agencies.

Towards curbing migrant crisis in Nigeria

A distinctive element of human security is its focus on early prevention to minimize the impacts of insecurity, to engender long-term solutions, and to build human capacities for undertaking prevention. In this regard, human security principle entails a paradigm that:

a. Concentrates on addressing root causes of migrant crisis by identifying the risks, threats and impending consequences.

b. Identifies the concrete needs of the affected community(ies) and enables the development of more appropriate solutions that are embedded in local realities, capacities and coping mechanisms.
c. Places emphasis on early prevention of migrant crisis as opposed to current strategy of waiting for crisis to occur before the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) would respond. In other words, crisis triggers are identified early and action taken proactively to stop its occurrence.
d. Takes into account local, national, regional and global dimensions and their impact on the targeted situation.
e. Focuses on a core set of freedoms and rights under threat in a given situation
f. Encourages strategies concerned with the development of mechanisms for prevention, mitigation of harmful effects, with the aim of helping victims' tocope.
g. Recognizes the need for an early intervention which is more cost-effective.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of migration is attracting the world attention, not only because of its contribution to the dynamics of population change and economic development, but also because of increasing crisis. In recent time, migrant crises have resulted in untold hardship, loss of lives and property and massive displacements of people. This paper examined migration both from the context of "push and pull" factors in Nigeria. The diversities of Nigeria socio-economic endowment including her soil type, mineral and manpower; as well as emerging climatic condition remain "push and pull" factors for migration. The differences in soil type and climatic condition will continue to make farming and crop yield attractive; even as the green field in the Middle Belt and South-South would be attractive for cattle rearers. These diversities constitute attractive factors for migrants; encouraged by the vision and mission of national unity.

Over the years, a combination of factors ranging from discrimination between the natives and settlers, terrorism, climatic condition, and natural disaster have resulted in migration crises, thus throwing up social and security implications. In particular conflict between the natives and settlers has resulted in a new concept – aliens at home – in the sociological literature. In such circumstance, tension of opposites remains the order of the day with a culture of intolerance. It is threatening the unity of the country; and should be checked. The paper explored these tensions in terms of social and security implications and makes recommendation for the employment of human social security approaches. Since migration is a phenomenon that cannot be curbed, finding solution to the social and security consequences of migration remains a plausible option, and designing strategies that can curb violent crisis associated with migration would require both "top-down and bottom-up inputs" the mechanism of which provided for in the human social security approach.

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