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Political advisors were confident in their point lead<sup>1</sup>.

#### **Foot/Endnote**

1. Newton Minow and Craig LaMay, *Inside the Presidential Debates: Their Improbable Past and Promising Future*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 24-25.

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### **In-text Referencing Example:**

#### **Book:**

- Migration is a phenomenon that is constantly and radically evolving. It continues each day to assume unprecedented meanings and expressions.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Website:**

- The worry is the subordinate role assigned to religion in matters of migration. Thus, Beckford contends: “It would be an exaggeration to claim that religion was invariably an important aspect of migration.”<sup>6</sup>

#### **Journal:**

- Leadership failure or leadership success<sup>2</sup>

-... however, went spiral and literarily explosive in the years that followed until recently when it would seem that having the opportunity or means to emigrate was not just celebrated as an achievement but viewed as a longdesired object of liberation.<sup>22</sup>

-Similarly, Kari, Malasowe and Collins<sup>3</sup>

\* Forman et al.<sup>5</sup> declared that the war in Ukraine is becoming overwhelming.

### **Footnote/Endnote:**

#### **Book**

It is a global phenomenon that affects in either way the demographic, social, political, economic, socio-cultural, religious, moral, and spiritual landscapes of the world and human activities.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Website:**

<sup>6</sup>James A. Beckford. "*Religions and Migrations – Old and New.*" Quaderni di Sociologia 80: (2019):15-32, accessed October 26, 2021, doi:<https://doi.org/10.4000/qds.2599>

#### **Journal:**

<sup>2</sup>Samson Adesote, "*Internal Conflicts and Forced Migration in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective.*" Journal of Identity and Migration Studies 11, no. 1 (2017): 1-26.

<sup>4</sup>Umar Kari, Godwin Malasowe and Ogbu Collins, "*A study of Illegal Migration in Nigeria and the pull and push factors, 2011-2017*" World Journal of Innovative Research 6, no. 5 (2018): 53-60

<sup>5</sup>Olubunmi Akintola and Olagoke Akintola, "West Africans in the Informal Economy of South Africa: The Case of Low Skilled Nigerian Migrants." The Review of Black Political Economy, vol. 42, no. 4 (2015): 379-398

### **Bibliography**



**Book:**

Phan, Peter C. "Christianity as an Institutional Migrant: Historical, Theological, and Ethical Perspectives." In *Christianities in Migration. The Global Perspective*, edited by Elaine Padilla and Peter C. Phan, 9-36. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

**Journal:**

Adesote, Samson. "Internal Conflicts and Forced Migration in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective." *Journal of Identity and Migration Studies* 11, no. 1, 2017.

Akintola, Olubunmi, and Akintola, Olagoke. "West Africans in the Informal Economy of South Africa: The Case of Low Skilled Migrants". *The Review of Black Political Economy* Vol. 42 No1, 2015.

Kari, Umar, Malasowe, Godwin, and Collins, Ogbu. "A Study of Illegal Migration Trends and the Pull and Push Factors in Nigeria 2011-2017." *World Journal of Innovative Research* 6, no. 5, 2018.

\* When citing a work by more than three authors, only the surname of the first listed author is used, followed by et al., for example: Forman et al. 2021, 62-63

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**Editorial Brief**

This is Volume 5, Issue 1 (April edition) of the International Journal of Migration and Global Studies (IJMGS). The journal is developed and published by the Centre of Excellence in Migration and Global Studies (CEMGS), National Open University of Nigeria. All the articles went through blind peer review by scholars in the various disciplines. The coverage is multidisciplinary in content and trans-global in analysis. In this era, we must continue to assemble interdisciplinary solutions to migration and global studies issues.

Hence, this volume features: Palestinian Displacement and ICR's Humanitarian Response to Internally Displaced Persons Needs in Borno State, Nigeria; Terrorism, Internal Displacement, and ICRC's Humanitarian Response to Internally-Displaced Persons' Needs in Borno State, Nigeria; From Desire to Departure: Socio-Economic Roots of Sex Tourism and Irregular Migration in Lagos; Assessment of Socio-Economic Challenges among Internally Displaced Persons in Kogi State, Nigeria; Effects of Rural-Urban Migration on Food Security in Bekwarra, North Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria; The Mediating Role of Public Libraries in Mitigating Young Professionals' Migration in Nigeria; Participative Leadership Style and Organisational Performance: A Study of Conoil Plc, Abuja, Nigeria; and, Linguicide and African Languages: Green Economy as a Strategic Platform for Preservation

The articles in this volume are rich in content, informative in analysis, and refreshing in evidence. They are useful in all parameters and will add value to finding solutions to some of the issues raised therein. The efforts of various people smoothened the editorial transition facilitated the publication of this volume.

I appreciate all the Contributors, Reviewers, and members of the Editorial Team for making the publication of this volume possible, and we rely on your continuous cooperation towards the next edition.

*Gloria Anetor*

**Prof. Gloria Anetor**



## PALESTINIAN REFUGEES AND THE MODERN DISPLACEMENT DILEMMA: A HISTORICAL AND HUMANITARIAN INQUIRY

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### Abstract

*This paper explored the Palestinian displacement and refugee crisis in the 21st century through both historical and humanitarian lenses. Since the 1948 Nakba, Palestinians have experienced mass displacement, with over 5 million refugees currently residing in camps across the Middle East. The historical roots of this crisis lie in the creation of Israel and the subsequent expulsion and flight of Palestinian populations, which set the stage for a protracted humanitarian issue that continues to affect generations. The study examined key factors, including the ongoing Israeli occupation, regional instability, and violations of international law, particularly regarding the right of return for Palestinian refugees. This analysis also highlights the enduring humanitarian challenges faced by Palestinian refugees, including limited access to basic services, education, and employment, while stressing the role of international organisations such as UNRWA, in providing essential support. By integrating historical and contemporary perspectives, this paper underscores the complex interplay between political, legal, and humanitarian dimensions of the crisis. The findings reveal that the resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue is inextricably linked to broader peace and justice efforts in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.*

**Keywords:** International Law, Refugee Crisis, Palestinian Displacement, Humanitarian Impact, Nakba

## LES RÉFUGIÉS PALESTINIENS ET LE DILEMME MODERNE DU DÉPLACEMENT : UNE ENQUÊTE HISTORIQUE ET HUMANITAIRE

### Résumé

*Cet article examine la crise du déplacement et des réfugiés palestiniens au XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle à travers une double approche historique et humanitaire. Depuis la Nakba de 1948, les Palestiniens ont connu un déplacement massif, avec plus de cinq millions de réfugiés vivant actuellement dans des camps à travers le Moyen-Orient. Les origines historiques de cette crise remontent à la création de l'État d'Israël et à l'expulsion ou à la fuite des populations palestiniennes, posant les bases d'un problème humanitaire prolongé qui affecte plusieurs générations. L'étude analyse les principaux facteurs à l'origine de la crise, notamment l'occupation israélienne continue, l'instabilité régionale et les violations du droit international, en particulier en ce qui concerne le droit au retour des réfugiés palestiniens.*

*L'analyse met également en lumière les défis humanitaires persistants auxquels sont confrontés les réfugiés palestiniens, tels que l'accès limité aux services fondamentaux comme l'éducation et l'emploi, tout en soulignant le rôle des organisations internationales comme l'UNRWA dans la fourniture d'un soutien essentiel. En intégrant des perspectives historiques et contemporaines, cette étude souligne l'interconnexion complexe entre les dimensions politiques, juridiques et humanitaires de cette crise. Les résultats révèlent que la résolution de la question des réfugiés palestiniens est indissociable des efforts plus larges pour la paix et la justice dans le cadre du conflit israélo-palestinien.*

**Mots-clés :** Droit international, crise des réfugiés,  
déplacement palestinien, impact humanitaire, Nakba

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## INTRODUCTION

The Palestinian displacement and refugee crisis is one of the most endured and complex humanitarian challenges of the 21st century, with its roots deeply embedded in the historical and geopolitical dynamics of the 20th century. The 1948 Nakba, during which approximately 700,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced from their homes in the wake of the creation of the State of Israel, marks the beginning of an ongoing refugee crisis that persists today. <sup>1</sup>The forced migration of Palestinians was not a singular event, but rather the start of a continuous cycle of displacement, which has been compounded by the subsequent wars, occupations, and political stalemates over the decades. By 2023, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) reported that there were over 5 million Palestinian refugees, many of whom remain in refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the occupied Palestinian territories.<sup>2</sup>

The humanitarian dimensions of this crisis are profound. Refugees face significant challenges related to access to basic services such as healthcare, education, and employment, while the political context of their displacement remains unresolved. <sup>3</sup> The right of return, enshrined in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, remains a central issue in peace negotiations, with Israel's refusal to recognise this right perpetuating the crisis.

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of both the historical context of Palestinian displacement and the contemporary humanitarian implications, highlighting the legal, political, and social dimensions that sustain the refugee crisis.

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<sup>1</sup> Farsakh, L. *Palestinian Labour Migration to Israel: Labour, Land, and Occupation*. Routledge. Pp38-62. (2012).

<sup>2</sup> UNRWA. *Palestinian Refugee Statistics and Reports*. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. pp. 189- 204. (2023)

<sup>3</sup> Morris, B. *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 88-105.

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## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are to:

1. Analyse the historical causes of Palestinian displacement and their impact on contemporary refugee conditions.
2. Examine the legal status of Palestinian refugees under international law and the role of organisations such as UNRWA.
3. Assess the humanitarian challenges faced by Palestinian refugees in host countries and occupied territories.
4. Explore potential solutions for the Palestinian refugee crisis within the broader Middle East peace process.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research methodology that relies exclusively on secondary sources of information. This approach is chosen in recognition of the historical and evolving nature of Palestinian displacement, which has produced an extensive and diverse body of literature, official reports, archival records, and humanitarian assessments. These sources offer valuable insights into both the historical development and the contemporary realities of the Palestinian refugee crisis.

Data for this study were derived from a wide spectrum of secondary materials. These include academic publications - such as peerreviewed journal articles, books, and conference papers - that address Palestinian history, refugee studies, international relations, and humanitarian law. Additionally, the research incorporates reports and policy documents issued by key international organisations, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch. Archival materials and historical records provide foundational context, tracing



the displacement from the 1948 Nakba to ongoing developments. Contemporary perspectives are supplemented by analyses of media reports from reputable global outlets, while legal frameworks - such as international conventions, treaties, and United Nations resolutions - are examined to understand the rights and status of Palestinian refugees under international law.

The analysis is conducted using thematic content analysis, which facilitates the identification and interpretation of recurring patterns and key themes within the data. This analytical framework is organised around five central dimensions: the historical trajectory of Palestinian displacement from 1948 to the present; the legal rights and status of Palestinian refugees under international humanitarian and refugee law; the geopolitical and regional factors that shape refugee experiences; the humanitarian conditions within refugee camps and host countries; and comparative perspectives that place the Palestinian experience within the broader scope of 21st-century global displacement crises.

## **RESULTS**

This study investigated the historical, legal, and humanitarian dimensions of the Palestinian refugee crisis, highlighting the enduring impact of key events such as the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 Six-Day War on displacement patterns. It examined the complex legal status of Palestinian refugees, particularly the role of UNRWA, and explores the ongoing humanitarian challenges faced by refugees in host countries and occupied territories. The study also evaluates potential solutions within the broader Middle East peace process, emphasising the need for a holistic and inclusive approach to resolving the refugee crisis. The findings underscore the protracted nature of the crisis, the inadequacies of current international frameworks, and the necessity of rethinking refugee rights as central to peace negotiations.

### **1. Historical Causes**

The 1948 Nakba and 1967 Six-Day War are identified as key catalysts of Palestinian displacement. These events caused mass expulsions, land confiscations, and long-term statelessness, resulting in multigenerational refugeehood.

## **2. Legal Status and UNRWA's Role**

Palestinian refugees lack formal legal protection under the 1951 Refugee Convention. UNRWA provides vital services but operates under a limited mandate, lacking the authority to resolve legal status or repatriation.

## **3. Humanitarian Challenges**

Refugees face chronic poverty, overcrowding, limited access to education, healthcare, and employment. Host countries often restrict civil rights, exacerbating social exclusion, and long-term dependency on aid.

## **4. Potential Solutions**

Durable solutions remain elusive due to political deadlock, Israel's resistance to the right of return, and weak enforcement of UN resolutions. A comprehensive peace settlement and regional cooperation are essential.

# **DISCUSSION**

This study critically examines the historical roots, legal framework, humanitarian challenges, and political dimensions of the Palestinian refugee crisis. It highlights the roles of displacement events, international law, and aid agencies, with a focus on sustainable solutions.

## **1. Historical Causes of Palestinian Displacement**

The displacement of Palestinians is deeply rooted in a series of pivotal historical events that have shaped the ongoing refugee crisis. Central to this history are the traumatic experiences of the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 Six-Day War, both of which remain critical to understanding the political and humanitarian dimensions of Palestinian displacement today.

The 1948 Nakba - Arabic for "catastrophe" - is widely recognised as a defining moment in Palestinian history. In the aftermath of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, which ensued following the establishment of the State of Israel, more than 700,000 Palestinians were forcibly uprooted from their homes. This mass displacement, marked by violent military operations and the deliberate destruction of Palestinian villages, resulted not only in the loss of countless lives, but also in the fragmentation and erosion of entire Palestinian communities.<sup>4</sup> The dispossession of land and the continued denial of the right of return have come to define the core elements of Palestinian refugee identity.

Notes, the Nakba set in motion a profound displacement that has persisted across generations, shaping the political identity and the socio-economic reality of Palestinians worldwide. In this context, Palestinian refugeehood is not merely a byproduct of war, but a continuing process of displacement that is unresolved and perpetuated by international and local political dynamics.<sup>5</sup>

The 1967 Six-Day War exacerbated the refugee crisis by displacing over 300,000 additional Palestinians, many of whom had already been forced to flee in 1948.<sup>6</sup> This wave of displacement was especially traumatic, representing a second forced migration for many Palestinian families and deepening the hardships associated with statelessness and refugeehood. In the aftermath of the war, Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem intensified the crisis through systematic policies of land expropriation, home demolitions, and the uprooting of entire communities.<sup>7</sup> These policies - persisting into the present - continue to drive the displacement of Palestinians, both within the occupied territories and across neighbouring countries. For Palestinians, displacement is not a historical relic, but a lived and ongoing reality, exacerbated by Israel's continued settlement expansion in the West Bank, which systematically uproots communities from their

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<sup>4</sup> Pappé, I. *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. Oneworld Publications. Pp 341-375 (2006).

<sup>5</sup> Masalha, N. *The Palestine Nakba: Decolonising History, Narrating the Subaltern, Reclaiming Memory*. London: Zed Books. 23-48 (2012).

<sup>6</sup> Khalidi, R. *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine*. New York: Metropolitan Books. 239-307 (2020).

<sup>7</sup> Falah, G. The 1948 Israeli-Palestinian War and Its Aftermath: The Transformation and DeSignification of Palestine's Cultural Landscape. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 86(2), 256–285. (1996).

ancestral lands. Palestinian displacement extends beyond the seminal events of 1948 and 1967. In the decades that followed, recurrent waves of internal displacement have occurred, driven by sustained conflict,

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military operations, and state-sanctioned practices such as land seizures and home demolitions.

The loss of territory and the systematic denial of the right to return have created a profound humanitarian crisis that spans decades, with Palestinian refugeehood becoming a defining feature of Palestinian identity<sup>8</sup>.

The historical trauma of displacement is compounded by Israel's policies, which continue to produce new forms of displacement in areas like the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, where Palestinians face restricted movement, settlement expansion, and violence. These policies perpetuate a cycle of displacement, ensuring that the Palestinian refugee crisis remains one of the most protracted in modern history. The 1948 Nakba and the 1967 Six-Day War represent the starting points of Palestinian displacement, but they are far from being the end. These events set in motion a continuing process of displacement that remains unresolved due to the political, legal, and humanitarian complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These historical events are not isolated episodes, but foundational pillars of the Palestinian refugee crisis. Their enduring impact continues to shape the lives of millions of Palestinians across generations, underscoring the protracted and deeply rooted nature of their displacement.<sup>9</sup>

## **2. Legal Status and the Role of UNRWA**

Palestinian refugees occupy a distinct legal status within the international refugee protection system - one that sets them apart from other displaced populations typically served by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Unlike other refugees under UNHCR's global mandate, Palestinian refugees fall under the purview of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Although this arrangement stems from specific historical circumstances, it has led to a protracted legal

ambiguity. As a result, Palestinian refugees often face limited legal safeguards and lack access to durable solutions such as resettlement, integration, or repatriation.<sup>8</sup>

The exclusion of Palestinian refugees from the protections of the 1951 Refugee Convention is a critical aspect of their unique legal status. While the Convention guarantees essential rights - including the right to return and the right to nationality - to refugees worldwide, Palestinian refugees remain outside its scope. This exception, shaped by the political complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the contentious issue of the right of return, has contributed to their ongoing vulnerability and legal marginalisation within the international system. The legal framework governing the status of Palestinian refugees remains particularly fragile, as it is not anchored in any binding international treaty that guarantees enforceable rights<sup>11</sup>. In the absence of such protections, Palestinian refugees are left in a precarious legal limbo - dependent on humanitarian aid while lacking formal mechanisms to assert claims to land, property, or citizenship.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), established in 1949, has played a vital role in mitigating the humanitarian consequences of this legal void. Operating in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and Gaza, UNRWA provides essential services including healthcare, education, social support, and emergency assistance. However, the agency's mandate is inherently temporary, designed to offer relief until a durable political solution is achieved. Unfortunately, such a solution has remained elusive for decades.

As <sup>9</sup>argues, UNRWA's capacity to provide sustainable solutions has been persistently hindered by chronic underfunding and intense political pressure. These limitations are further exacerbated by the absence of genuine political will to address the Palestinian refugee

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<sup>8</sup> Akram, S. M., & Rempel, T. Temporary Protection for Palestinian Refugees. *Boston University International Law Journal*, 22(1), 1 – 43. (2004).

<sup>9</sup> Lindholm Schulz, H. (2003). The UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees: A History within History. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 22(1), 23 – 28.

crisis and the international community's continued failure to achieve a lasting resolution to the broader conflict. Constrained by its limited

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mandate, UNRWA is not empowered to facilitate long-term solutions such as resettlement or repatriation. Instead, its role remains confined to delivering short-term humanitarian assistance, leaving the underlying causes of displacement unaddressed.

As contends, the geopolitical complexities surrounding the Palestinian refugee crisis significantly hinder the international community's capacity to address the issue in a comprehensive manner<sup>13</sup>. The crisis extends beyond humanitarian concerns to encompass contentious political issues such as recognition and the right of return, which remain deeply disputed. As a result, Palestinian refugees continue to endure statelessness, face significant legal obstacles, and remain vulnerable to exploitation, particularly in host countries where many live in conditions of poverty and social marginalisation. In summary, the legal status of Palestinian refugees is intricately shaped by the broader and often volatile political dynamics of the Middle East. While UNRWA plays an essential role in meeting their immediate humanitarian needs, it is unable to provide the long-term solutions required to secure Palestinians' rights to return, resettlement, or citizenship.

The ongoing exclusion of Palestinian refugees from the international refugee protection system highlights the deep-rooted obstacles to resolving their plight, consigning millions to a state of legal and humanitarian uncertainty<sup>14</sup>.

### **3. Humanitarian Challenges**

Palestinian refugees endure severe and systemic humanitarian challenges that profoundly impact their daily lives and prospects for the future. Among the most urgent issues is the overcrowding in refugee camps, which are frequently situated in resource-scarce areas with inadequate infrastructure. Originally established as temporary shelters, these camps have evolved into long-term settlements, where refugees often confront substandard housing and insufficient sanitation

and healthcare.<sup>10</sup> The harsh physical conditions within these camps are further intensified by persistently high

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unemployment rates, which entrench refugees in a cycle of poverty and social marginalisation. Palestinian refugees in Lebanon face especially acute socio-economic exclusion, as they are legally prohibited from owning property and barred from practising numerous professions, severely limiting their opportunities for advancement.<sup>11</sup> This legal and social marginalisation sustains Palestinian refugees' reliance on humanitarian aid and obstructs their integration into host societies. Consequently, many face limited access to education and employment opportunities, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and displacement that remains difficult to break. The humanitarian situation is further compounded in areas like the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, where refugees endure the dual challenges of military occupation and movement restrictions imposed by the Israeli state.<sup>12</sup> These restrictions severely curtail refugees' access to vital services like healthcare and education, while also restricting their opportunities to find work or participate in economic activities beyond the occupied territories. Moreover, the persistent threat of violence, especially during times of heightened conflict, further deteriorates the already precarious living conditions faced by refugees in these areas.

A distinctive aspect of the Palestinian refugee situation is the intergenerational transmission of refugee status, whereby the hardships endured by one generation are inherited by the next. Unlike many other refugee populations, Palestinian refugees are frequently born into the same legal uncertainty, with statelessness and restricted rights passed down through generations. This enduring cycle deepens the humanitarian crisis and poses significant obstacles to achieving lasting, sustainable solutions. The prolonged displacement of Palestinians has given rise to intergenerational trauma that impacts not only their

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<sup>10</sup> Peteet, J. (2005). *Landscape of Hope and Despair: Palestinian Refugee Camps*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

<sup>11</sup> Sayigh, R. Palestinians in Lebanon: Harsh Present, Uncertain Future. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 27(1), 37–53. (1998).

<sup>12</sup> Hammami, R. Palestinian NGOs Since Oslo: From NGO Politics to Social Movements? *Middle East Report*, 214, 16–19. (2000).

material circumstances but also their mental health, identity, and sense of belonging<sup>18</sup>.

Moreover, the humanitarian challenges confronting Palestinian refugees are complex and enduring, shaped by a combination of legal

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exclusion, economic hardship, military occupation, and the ongoing cycle of generational displacement. The dire conditions within refugee camps throughout the Middle East, coupled with the absence of lasting solutions, underscore that this crisis extends far beyond immediate relief efforts. The crisis demands not only immediate humanitarian relief but also durable political and legal solutions addressing the fundamental issues of statelessness, land rights, and the right to self-determination.

#### **4. Potential Solutions and Peace Prospects**

Efforts to resolve the Palestinian refugee crisis have been persistent yet elusive, despite numerous United Nations resolutions and diplomatic initiatives. Among these, UN Resolution 194 (III) stands out for affirming the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and reclaim their properties. Nevertheless, despite this firm legal foundation, a practical and lasting political solution has yet to materialise after decades of stalled negotiations.<sup>13</sup> The lack of progress stems from several interrelated factors: Israel's persistent refusal to recognise the right of return, divisions within Palestinian leadership, and uneven international pressure. A key obstacle to a lasting solution is the entrenched political deadlock that has long characterised the peace process. Israel perceives the right of return as a threat to its Jewish demographic majority, while many Palestinian groups uphold it as a vital component of their identity and sovereignty. This fundamental clash has repeatedly derailed negotiations, leaving the essential demands of both sides unresolved.

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<sup>13</sup> Rynhold, J. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict in American Political Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 45-58 (2015).



Scholars such as <sup>14</sup>argue it is crucial to reconceptualise refugee rights, emphasising their integration as a core element in any future final status negotiations. Rather than being sidelined, refugee rights must be recognised as fundamental to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with return or compensation upheld as essential, nonnegotiable components of any lasting peace agreement.

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Furthermore, the fragmented nature of Palestinian leadership poses significant challenges to forming a cohesive position on the refugee issue. The persistent divide between Fatah and Hamas, combined with the Palestinian Authority's limited authority over both the West Bank and Gaza, undermines the unity of the Palestinian cause and weakens its leverage in international negotiations.<sup>15</sup>

Beyond the internal political divisions among Palestinians, a notable deficit of sustained international pressure on Israel further hampers progress on the refugee issue. While Israeli policies have faced widespread international criticism, there has been no persistent or unified effort to compel Israel to engage in meaningful negotiations over the refugee question. Experts argue that regional collaboration and the creation of international accountability mechanisms are essential to overcoming the political stalemate and addressing the fundamental grievances related to displacement. The active participation of key Arab states, including Jordan and Egypt, alongside international actors such as the European Union and the United States, could help create a unified approach that places pressure on Israel to engage seriously in peace talks.

Ultimately, scholars emphasise the need to reframe the peace process through a comprehensive and inclusive framework that fully acknowledges the legal, humanitarian, and political rights of Palestinian refugees. A lasting and just resolution to the refugee crisis

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<sup>14</sup> Rouhana, N., & Ghanem, A. The Crisis of Minorities in Ethnic States: The Case of Palestinian Citizens in Israel. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 30(3), 321–346. (1998).

<sup>15</sup> Rynhold, J. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict in American Political Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 45-58 (2015).

can only be realised by adopting a holistic approach that embraces the right of return, compensation, and the integration of refugees.

Although the prospect of peace remains distant, the path forward is clear: it demands sustained diplomatic engagement, a fundamental reconceptualisation of refugee rights, and the meaningful inclusion of Palestinian refugees as active participants in the peace process. Only by tackling the root causes of displacement and delivering political, legal, and humanitarian solutions can a durable peace be achieved - one that finally secures justice and self-determination for Palestinian refugees.

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## CONCLUSION

The Palestinian refugee crisis is one of the longest and most complex displacement situations in modern history, rooted in key historical events such as the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 Six-Day War. These pivotal moments triggered mass displacements, leading to the loss of land, statelessness, and the destruction of communities. The legal status of Palestinian refugees remains in limbo, as they fall outside the protection framework of the 1951 Refugee Convention and are managed by UNRWA, an agency with limited capacity to provide durable solutions. Humanitarian challenges continue to plague Palestinian refugees, including overcrowded camps, limited access to services, and socio-economic exclusion, exacerbated by ongoing occupation and regional instability. Despite international resolutions affirming their right to return, political and diplomatic stagnation have prevented a resolution. The study underscores the need for a reimagined approach to Palestinian refugee rights within peace negotiations, emphasising the importance of international cooperation, regional collaboration, and a more inclusive framework for addressing the core grievances of displacement. Only through comprehensive and sustained efforts can the Palestinian refugee issue move towards a viable and just resolution.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Palestinian refugee crisis remains one of the most protracted and complex humanitarian issues of the 20th and 21st centuries. Despite numerous international efforts, a lasting resolution continues to elude policymakers and humanitarian organisations. Based on the historical causes of displacement, the legal status of Palestinian refugees, their ongoing humanitarian challenges, and the broader Middle East peace process, the following recommendations aim to address both immediate and long-term needs. These recommendations focus on creating a comprehensive framework that acknowledges historical injustices, enhances legal protections, improves living conditions, and integrates the refugee issue into a broader peace strategy for the region.

### **1. Addressing Historical Causes and Contemporary Impact of Palestinian Displacement**

- **Comprehensive Historical Documentation:** It is essential to continue documenting the historical experiences of Palestinian refugees through both archival research and the voices of displaced individuals. This will help ensure that the narrative of displacement is accurately represented in future peace negotiations and policymaking.
- **International Acknowledgement:** Efforts should be made at the international level to acknowledge the historical trauma of the Nakba and its ongoing impact on Palestinian displacement. This recognition could form the basis for international support for Palestinian refugees' right to return and reparations.

### **2. Examining Legal Status and the Role of UNRWA**

- **Expansion of Legal Protection:** Given that Palestinian refugees fall outside the 1951 Refugee Convention, the international community must create a legal framework specifically addressing their rights. This could involve expanding the mandate of UNRWA to include legal protections for Palestinian refugees, including recognition of their right to return and citizenship in host countries.

- **UNRWA's Mandate Reform:** UNRWA's mandate should be reformed to offer not only humanitarian aid but also support for long-term solutions such as resettlement options and the facilitation of return. International donors should provide sufficient funding for UNRWA to enhance its capacity to address refugees' legal and socio-economic needs.

### 3. **Assessing Humanitarian Challenges Faced by Palestinian Refugees**

- **Improving Living Conditions:** Humanitarian agencies, alongside national governments and international organisations should work to improve the living conditions in refugee camps by providing better access to healthcare, education, housing, and employment opportunities. This requires consistent funding and effective monitoring of refugee welfare.
- **Access to Citizenship:** Host countries in the Arab world, particularly Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria, should consider providing Palestinian refugees with the possibility of citizenship or at least long-term residency rights to reduce their statelessness and socioeconomic marginalisation.
- **Psychosocial Support:** There is a need for more comprehensive mental health services for Palestinian refugees, who face intergenerational trauma. These services should be integrated into the existing humanitarian framework.

### 4. **Exploring Potential Solutions within the Broader Middle East Peace Process**

- **Inclusion of Palestinian Refugee Rights in Peace Negotiations:** Any peace process in the Middle East, including those related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, must prioritise Palestinian refugees' right to return, compensation, and integration into a future Palestinian state. Negotiations should adopt a

- rightsbased approach to refugee issues, ensuring that refugee rights are central to any final status agreements.
- **Regional Cooperation and Accountability:** Efforts should be made to foster regional cooperation between Middle Eastern countries, UN agencies, and international powers to create a framework for resolving the refugee issue. Accountability mechanisms should also be established to ensure that countries involved in the peace process uphold their commitments to refugee rights.
- **Sustained International Engagement:** The international community should ensure that the Palestinian refugee issue remains a central focus in diplomatic efforts, through consistent pressure on Israel, Palestinian factions, and host countries to seek viable, long-term solutions. This includes greater coordination with organisations such as UNHCR, which can support initiatives aimed at solving the refugee crisis.

Through these recommendations, the humanitarian, legal, and historical challenges of the Palestinian refugee crisis can be addressed in a manner that ensures both justice and dignity for the displaced populations while contributing to broader peace efforts in the Middle East.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest. This research was conducted independently and is not influenced by any personal, financial, or institutional interests that could affect the objectivity or integrity of the study. All sources have been duly acknowledged, and the analysis is based solely on scholarly evidence and established academic principles.

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## INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS NEEDS IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*In Borno State, the Boko Haram/ ISWAP insurgency led to the massive displacement of persons who subsequently migrated to urban areas in search of safety and livelihoods. This influx resulted in social tensions within host communities due to inadequate infrastructure to cater for the needs of displaced persons, thus necessitating humanitarian response from international humanitarian organisations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). This study examined the various interventions of the ICRC to address the basic needs of internally displaced persons in Borno State. A.H. Maslow's Human Needs Theory and Everett Lee's Push and Pull Theory of Migration served as frameworks, while the research adopted the case study design. Primary data were collected through participant observation, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs), while secondary data were obtained from United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reports, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) periodicals, newspapers and ICRC archives. The migration of millions of displaced persons seeking refuge into urban areas strained infrastructure, intensified insecurity and created socio-economic challenges within host communities in Borno State. Humanitarian responses, led by both national agencies and international organisations, have focused on providing immediate relief to meet the basic needs of those affected; however, minimal efforts have been implemented to further mitigate the adverse effects of the insurgency on internally displaced persons to foster long-term recovery. This*

*study highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that integrates conflict resolution and economic support to address the needs of displaced persons in Borno State. By fostering collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and affected communities, Borno State can develop more effective strategies to mitigate the impacts of internal displacement, build resilience of the affected population and enhance post-conflict recovery.*

**Keywords:** Humanitarian Response, Insurgency, Internal Displacement, Migration

## **RÉPONSE HUMANITAIRE DU COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE AUX BESOINS DES PERSONNES DÉPLACÉES INTERNES DANS L'ÉTAT DE BORNO, NIGÉRIA**

### **Résumé**

*Dans l'État de Borno, l'insurrection menée par Boko Haram et l'État islamique en Afrique de l'Ouest (ISWAP) a entraîné le déplacement massif de populations qui ont migré vers les zones urbaines à la recherche de sécurité et de moyens de survivre. Cet afflux a généré des tensions sociales au sein des communautés hôtes en raison de l'insuffisance des infrastructures pour répondre aux besoins des personnes déplacées, rendant ainsi nécessaire l'intervention d'organisations humanitaires internationales telles que le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR). Cette étude examine les différentes interventions du CICR visant à répondre aux besoins fondamentaux des personnes déplacées internes dans l'État de Borno. La théorie des besoins humains d'A.H. Maslow et la théorie des facteurs de répulsion et d'attraction d'Everett Lee ont été adoptés. Les données primaires ont été recueillies par observation participante, discussions de groupe (FGD), entretiens avec des informateurs clés et entretiens approfondis. Les données secondaires proviennent des rapports du Bureau des Nations Unies pour la coordination des affaires humanitaires, des publications de l'Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM), des journaux et des archives du CICR. La migration de millions de personnes déplacées vers les centres urbains a exercé une forte pression sur les infrastructures, accru l'insécurité et généré des défis socio-économiques pour les communautés hôtes dans l'État de Borno. Bien que les réponses humanitaires, dirigées par des agences nationales et des organisations internationales, aient permis de fournir une*

*aide immédiate pour satisfaire les besoins essentiels des populations affectées, les efforts visant à atténuer les effets à long terme de l'insurrection sur les personnes déplacées restent limités. Cette étude souligne la nécessité d'une approche globale intégrant la résolution des conflits et l'appui économique afin de répondre durablement aux besoins des personnes déplacées dans l'État de Borno. En favorisant la collaboration entre les agences gouvernementales, les organisations non gouvernementales et les communautés concernées, l'État de Borno pourrait élaborer des stratégies plus efficaces pour atténuer les impacts du déplacement interne, renforcer la résilience des populations touchées et améliorer la reconstruction post-conflit.*

**Mots-clés :** Réponse humanitaire, insurrection, déplacement interne, migration

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## INTRODUCTION

Globally, internal displacement due to terrorism<sup>1</sup> has given rise to growing concerns. Internal displacement refers to the forced movement of people within their own country, as opposed to crossing international borders, as seen in the case of refugees. This phenomenon is driven by a variety of factors, including armed conflict, violence, human rights violations, natural disasters, and development projects.<sup>2</sup>

The north-east region of Nigeria has been grappling with the aftereffects of the protracted armed conflict caused by the *Boko Haram* and ISWAP armed groups, and this has resulted in the forced displacement of thousands of civilians. This internal displacement has had far-reaching consequences, not only for the affected persons and communities but also for the urban centres that have become the primary destinations for these displaced populations as they migrate from the unsafe areas to the city centres. According to the International Organisation for Migration, a total of 2,388,703 IDPs from 487,978 households and 2,110,039 returnees from 346,166 households were recorded in north-east Nigeria as of February 2023. This affected population included 834,836 IDPs living in camps and informal settlements, and 1,553,867 IDPs in host communities<sup>3</sup>.

The influx of IDPs into the urban areas such as Maiduguri and Jere LGAs also exacerbated existing socio-economic and political tensions within these cities as the increased competition for housing, employment, and social services, contributed to the emergence of new security threats such as increased crime rates, gang violence, and the potential for radicalisation. These security challenges further

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (Legal). "Measures to eliminate international terrorism." (November, 2019) accessed October 1, 2024, [https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/74/int\\_terrorism.shtml](https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/74/int_terrorism.shtml)

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Security Council. "Resolution 1373 (On Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts)." International Legal Materials 40, no. 5 (September 2001): 1278–80. accessed June 18, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020782900020866>

<sup>3</sup> International Organisation for Migration (IOM). "Displacement Tracking Matrix, Nigeria - North East Displacement Report 12" (December 2023), accessed July, 2024, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/nigeria-north-central-and-north-west-displacement-report-12-december2023>

destabilised the urban centres and undermined the overall sense of safety and security for the residents.

The impact of terrorism on internal displacement in north-east Nigeria exacerbated the region's humanitarian crisis, with significant implications for the well-being and long-term recovery of those displaced and their communities, thereby necessitating the intervention of humanitarian organisations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The limited capacity of local authorities and the strain on already scarce resources available to the affected population made it challenging for the Borno State government to address the needs of the displaced population without the intervention of international humanitarian organisations. The dispersed nature of IDP populations and the security threats within IDP camps and host communities also complicated efforts made by humanitarian organisations to reach and assist those displaced by *Boko Haram's* violence<sup>16</sup>. The disruption of livelihoods and the poor living conditions in IDP camps increased the vulnerability of displaced persons, especially youths, to radicalisation and recruitment by *Boko Haram* and ISWAP<sup>17</sup>.

The ICRC has a mandate to provide protection and assistance to victims of armed conflicts globally. Due to this mandate, it is one of the State-approved humanitarian organisations allowed to provide humanitarian assistance in Borno State despite the government's ban of many others due to various misconduct and non-compliance to the governing laws in the State<sup>18</sup>. It is also the only humanitarian organisation whose assistance is not tied to government or donors' ideologies or influences as donations given to the ICRC are required to be voluntary and left to

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<sup>16</sup> United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees. Nigeria Situation: Responding to the Needs of IDPs and Nigerian Refugees in the Region. New York: UNHCR, 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Aro, O. I. "Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: Its Implication and Way Forward Toward Avoidance Of Future insurgency." International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 3(11), 1-8, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Olafusi, Ebinoluwa. 'We Want Them to Be Self Reliant' - Borno Bans NGOs from Giving Food to Resettled Communities. (December 2021) accessed June 2024, <https://www.thecable.ng/we-wanthem-to-be-self-reliant-borno-bans-ngos-from-giving-food-to-resettled-communities>

be used at its discretion, the other humanitarian organisations mostly provide aid in line with the

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dictates of the donors funding them. This, therefore, makes them the most suitable humanitarian organisation for this study.

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to interrogate the extent to which the humanitarian assistance of the ICRC has helped Internally Displaced Persons meet their needs for post-conflict recovery In Borno State, Nigeria.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research adopted the case study design with Jere and Maiduguri local government areas being the focus for data collection in the study area, Borno State. This is because they are among the LGAs with the largest number of humanitarian crises and those most impacted by the *Boko Haram* and ISWAP insurgency. The research population consists of those persons who became internally displaced because of the *Boko Haram* and ISWAP insurgency in Borno State and are living in IDP camps and host communities within Maiduguri and Jere LGAs. Borno State has a population of 6.2 million, with 1.8 million internally displaced people who require humanitarian aid<sup>19</sup>.

Maiduguri LGA is home to 870,000 people<sup>20</sup>, while Jere LGA has a total of 306,400 residents<sup>21</sup>. Community leaders, ICRC beneficiaries, ICRC officials, and support staff, community members, military personnel and government officials from Borno State government

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<sup>19</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Nigeria Situation: Responding to the Needs of IDPs and Nigerian Refugees in the Region. New York: UNHCR, 2022.

<sup>20</sup> Macro Trends. Maiduguri, "Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2024." 2024, accessed July 21, 2024 [www.macrotrends.net](http://www.macrotrends.net)

<sup>21</sup> City Population. "Borno State, Nigeria - Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location." (2024), accessed July 16, [https://www.citypopulation.de/en/nigeria/admin/NGA008\\_borno/](https://www.citypopulation.de/en/nigeria/admin/NGA008_borno/)

agencies who were involved in projects and programmes jointly carried out with the ICRC were the target population.

Primary data were collected through participant observation, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) while the secondary data were obtained from

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United Nations Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reports, periodicals, newspapers, ICRC archives, and website publications.

Informed oral consent was given by participants interviewed in this study following a detailed explanation of what the study is about and the aim of the research, while ensuring confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

## RESULTS

### *Push-Pull Theory of Migration*

Everett Lee in 1966<sup>22</sup> proposed a theory on migration where he identified push and pull factors in migration that demographers use to analyse human migration from former areas to new host locations. In his argument, Lee delineates factors causing migrations into two groups: push and pull. Push factors are circumstances that are hostile to the home area that people live in that forces them to migrate while pull factors are conditions that attract outsiders or migrants to another host area. The push factors that make people leave their locations include lack of jobs or opportunities, famine or drought, fear of persecution, poor health care, loss of wealth, natural disasters among many other unfavourable situations. Pull factors include job prospects, better living conditions, better medical care, and security.

The push and pull theory provides a foundational lens for examining migration patterns. By analysing the factors that compel individuals to leave their homes and those that attract them to new locations, we can

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<sup>22</sup> Everett, Lewis. "A Theory of Migration." *Demography*. New York : Population Association of America (PAA). Vol. 3(1), 47-57, 1966.

better understand the complexities of global migration trends. Using the push and pull theory to analyse the rationale behind internal displacement in Borno State, the *Boko Haram* armed conflict is the primary driver of the internal displacement being experienced there. Insecurity as an after-effect of the insurgency led to the loss of safety and livelihoods of the affected populations, prompting them to move from their communities towards the city centre, which they perceive to be safe due to the presence of security forces there. This security

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presence made them drawn to areas perceived as safe and free from conflict, the availability of food, water, and shelter likewise the close proximity to aid organisations also influenced the decision of those displaced to go to Maiduguri and Jere LGAs.

The humanitarian response to internal displacement involves addressing both the needs of displaced individuals and the factors influencing their movement. The ICRC assisted these displaced populations to build their resilience and provide relief aid to mitigate the adverse effects of their conditions in the IDP camps and host communities. These efforts helped stabilise affected persons and communities to prevent further displacement.

### *Human Needs Theory*

Abraham Maslow's 1943 Human Needs Theory<sup>23</sup> posits that certain fundamental needs must be met for individuals to thrive. These needs include physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualisation needs. When these needs are unmet, conflict and subsequent displacement can occur. The inability of those affected by the *Boko Haram* insurgency to meet their physiological need for food, clean water, and shelter due to insecurity forced them to migrate from their communities and seek these essentials elsewhere. Lack of fulfilment of safety needs due to insecurity from violence, persecution by the armed groups and environmental hazards drove many residents to find safer environments. Moreover, because displacement disrupts community bonds and social networks, those affected were left with no choice but

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<sup>23</sup> Maslow, A. H. "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (July 1943): 370–96, accessed July 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>.



to move to areas where they can rebuild these connections and meet their social needs, which also helps them regain their self-worth.

Humanitarian assistance from the ICRC helped those internally displaced within the state to address these unmet needs to stabilise and facilitate recovery. Physiological support through the provision of essential needs like food, water, and temporary shelter to meet the

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immediate needs of displaced individuals was provided<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, livelihood support through programmes that provide skills training and job opportunities to help restore dignity and selfsufficiency were met by the ICRC.

Using the Human Needs Theory to analyse internal displacement and humanitarian response provides a lens which helps identify the core needs driving displacement and guides effective interventions. Effective humanitarian responses require a holistic approach that goes beyond immediate survival to encompass security, community, selfesteem, and personal growth.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **ICRC's Response to the Needs of Internally Displaced Persons in Borno State**

Urban environments provide terrorist groups with a large, anonymous population to blend into and carry out attacks<sup>13</sup>. The cities also offer a concentration of high-profile targets, such as government buildings, transportation hubs, and commercial centres, while also providing better access to resources, weapons, and transportation for terrorist operations<sup>14</sup>. Attacks in urban areas can have a significant psychological impact on the local population and generate widespread fear and media attention.

The IOM lists armed banditry and kidnapping as the reason for displacement by 44 percent of the IDPs in north-east Nigeria.

Communal clashes followed armed banditry and kidnappings, reported as the reason for displacement by 27 percent of IDPs and attacks from herdsmen, reported by 19 percent of IDPs<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Blanchard, Lauren Ploch. "Nigeria's Boko Haram: Frequently Asked Questions." Congressional Research Service, (20 May 2014), accessed August, 20 2024, <https://www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/uscrs/2014/en/99695>

<sup>13</sup> Hoffman, Bruce. "Inside Terrorism." New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Hesterman, John. "Soft Target Hardening, Protecting People from Attack." England: Routledge, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> International Organisation for Migration (IOM). "Displacement Tracking Matrix, Nigeria - North East Displacement Report 12" (December 2023), accessed July, 2024, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/nigeria-north-central-and-north-west-displacement-report-12-december-2023>

The ICRC responded to the humanitarian needs of affected populations in Borno State in fulfilment of its mandate to provide relief aid and protection for victims of armed conflicts globally. This response, which is done through its interventions and in collaboration with development actors in the State, has contributed directly to the post-conflict recovery of IDPs. These initiatives include:

### ***Promotion of Respect for International Humanitarian Law***

The ICRC, in collaboration with the Nigerian Army, regularly trains military officers on respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and proper conduct during hostilities, especially about the protection of civilians and vulnerable groups wherever such may be taking place. It partners with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), various local vigilante groups and the Nigerian Police Counter Terrorism Squad (CRACK) to train their personnel and members on IHL, humanitarian principles, International Human Rights Law (IHRL), proper conduct during hostilities, safety of civilians and protected sites<sup>24</sup>. It also works with various educational institutions to educate students on IHL and its applications in conflict situations. The armed groups, on their part, while not physically reached, are educated through various information channels where these guidelines are disseminated to remind them of what their responsibilities should be even during conflict.

<sup>24</sup> Olojo, Akinola. "Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram." Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.19165/2013.1.07> <sup>17</sup> Nacos, Brigitte. Terrorism and Counter-terrorism. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Furthermore, the ICRC partners with organisations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UNICEF to initiate projects and programmes targeted at young people who were once recruited into the *Boko Haram* and ISWAP militia, likewise children who stand the risk of being lured by the latter to protect them from crimes. This is one way the ICRC contributes to the Borno State government's efforts at Demobilisation, Disarmament, and Reintegration of child combatants<sup>17</sup>. By educating all the parties in the armed conflict, the ICRC believes that they will understand what their roles and limits of actions are and there will be fewer civilian casualties, humanitarian and development problems, unrest and every

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other negative factor that can contribute to lack of peace when safety needs are not fulfilled in a person.

The former ICRC Head of Delegation in Nigeria, Eloi Fillion, succinctly captures the importance of promoting respect for IHL<sup>25</sup>:

The best way to counter the long-term impact of protracted armed conflicts, violence and hatred, which can affect whole generations, is to prevent violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law. At the heart of IHL lies the protection of civilians, of detainees, of the wounded and sick, and others not participating in hostilities. It is this shared humanity that gives IHL its relevance, its legitimacy, and its universal sense. Use your power to ensure that war has limits – every day, in every armed conflict, and for everyone – because wars without limits are wars without end.

### ***Mine Action/Weapon Contamination Safety***

The ICRC collaborates with development and peace actors to play a vital role in addressing the threats posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the affected communities, thereby contributing to the need of IDPs for a peaceful living. The ICRC, in

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<sup>25</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross. "The Role of the ICRC in Preventing Armed Conflict: its Possibilities and Limitations." IRRC. No. 844. 923-946. Geneva: ICRC 2001.

collaboration with the Borno State Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (MRRR), along with the Nigerian Military, supports and conducts mine clearance operations to remove landmines and ERW from affected areas in the State to enable those displaced from their communities to return safely without further threat to life. Trained de-mining teams locate, identify, and safely remove these hazardous devices, reducing the risk of accidental explosions and allowing communities to reclaim and utilise their land for agricultural, housing, and other useful purposes. Mine clearance not only saved lives, but also restored freedom of movement and

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facilitated the return of the erstwhile displaced population, thereby fulfilling their safety needs<sup>26</sup>.

The ICRC further places great emphasis on risk education by raising awareness about the dangers of landmines and ERW. Through community-based programmes like weapon contamination safety, the ICRC educates the affected population, especially children, on how to recognise and avoid these hazards. Risk education sessions provide information on safe behaviours, such as staying on well-travelled paths, not touching or tampering with suspicious objects, and reporting any findings to the appropriate authorities. This knowledge helps to minimise the risks of accidents and injuries.

The impact of landmines and ERW goes beyond physical injuries as they often disrupt livelihoods, impede access to essential services, and hinder economic development. Thus, the ICRC supports socioeconomic rehabilitation programmes that aim to mitigate these effects. These include vocational training and income-generating assistance to help affected persons regain their economic independence. With the clearing of landmines and ERW and providing risk education, the ICRC contributes to saving lives, preventing injuries, and reducing the long-term socio-economic impact of these deadly devices. These efforts help to restore safety, livelihoods, and

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<sup>26</sup> Maslow, A. H. "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (July 1943): 370–96, accessed July 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>.

promote the overall well-being and peace in these affected communities.

### ***Rehabilitation of Hajj Camp***

The death of the Boko Haram leader, Abubakar Shekau, forced many of the armed group members to surrender to the Nigerian government, especially as the ISWAP group began attacking them in the forest. This led to the Nigerian government instituting, in partnership with the Borno State government, the disarmament, demobilisation and deradicalisation process of the surrendered belligerents, coupled with their rehabilitation, reconciliation and reintegration into the society. The Hajj camp in Maiduguri is one of the three IDP camps which shelter about 14,000 persons, consisting of 6900 ex-combatants and their families. Since July 2021, a total of 82,237 Boko Haram fighters

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and their families have surrendered to the government; of the total number of surrendered persons, 16,577 were active male fighters, 24,499 are women, and 41,161 are children<sup>27</sup>.

In recent times, there were constant protests by these surrendered fighters, registering their displeasure over government neglect and absence of basic needs such as food, medicine and welfare amenities. These protests have often led to unrest within their communities and pose a threat to the safety of other surrounding communities, as they usually block the major roads and destroy infrastructure on sight.

At Hajj Camp, the ICRC, in collaboration with the NRCS and the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, has been involved in giving basic education and skill acquisition programmes in a bid to keep them engaged, useful and valued. Also, the ICRC helps the residents of this IDP camp reestablish and restore family links with their loved ones and create opportunities for children who were born in the enclave of the Boko Haram and ISWAP armed groups to reintegrate into their new society. In 2023, the ICRC did a rehabilitation of dilapidated infrastructures in the camp and

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<sup>27</sup> Nabordo, Alabira. "Ex-Boko Haram Members Storm Maiduguri, Protest Hunger, Poor Welfare. (August 2023) accessed January 4, 2024, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/northeast/616867-ex-boko-haram-members-storm-maiduguri-protest-hunger-poor-welfare.html>

provided support for the camp clinic headed by Dr Mohammed Saliu, especially with regard to pregnant women and children.

During the visit of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, in 2023, he affirmed the peace that is now present within these communities. In his words:

...This is not the Borno I found today. I found a Borno of hope, a Borno with a future. I am very impressed with the policies put in place here recognising that you don't fight terrorism by military means alone but by addressing the root cause of terrorism.

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These humanitarian assistance have contributed to the peace in this camp and also within the Bulumkutu community that hosts them<sup>28</sup>.

### ***Nutritional Awareness on Infants and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)***

The protracted nature of the armed conflict, coupled with challenges of climate change, exacerbated food insecurity in Borno State, worsening the plight of internally displaced populations who already face the problem of food shortages due to unaffordability. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification <sup>29</sup> , projected that nearly six million children across north-east and north-west Nigeria will have experienced acute malnutrition by April 2023. With this in mind, the ICRC launched a pilot project to combat this problem with *tom brown*, a nutritious porridge for weaning babies, using locally available food products such as guinea corn, maize, millet, sorghum, soybeans, moringa powder and groundnut. The Young Child Feeding initiative was implemented by the ICRC in partnership with the Borno State Ministry of Health in 2023 as a response to the growing crises of malnutrition within the State. Maiduguri and Jere in Borno State were

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<sup>28</sup> Andrew, R. "Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Management: The View From The NonGovernmental Sector." International Affairs Vol. 77, Issue 4, pp 957–966, 2001.

<sup>29</sup> Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. "IPC Country Analysis | IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification." 2023 accessed November 18, 2023. <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipccountry-analysis/en/?country=NGA>.

some of the pilot areas where this initiative was first tested as a response to the problem.

Through various trainings and collaborations with nursing mothers in community groups, the ICRC provided education on how malnutrition among children can be tackled while encouraging the community to take the lead in the fight. The assistance involves training mothers in IDP camps, host and resettled communities on Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) using Family Middle-Upper Arm Circumference Approach, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) and Primary Health Care (PHC) for children and pregnant women living with malnutrition. The success achieved with this assistance has made the Borno State Ministry of Health continue to adopt the ICRC approach in tackling malnutrition among internally displaced populations in the State. As of November

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2023, over 10,488 children under five afflicted by malnutrition received nutrition treatment.

This intervention provided caregivers, healthcare providers, and participating mothers the opportunity to acquire improved knowledge and understanding of appropriate infant and young child feeding practices. Participating mothers continue to adopt recommended feeding practices, such as exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, appropriate introduction of complementary foods, and responsive feeding techniques for their children. Mothers have become more knowledgeable about what signs of malnutrition to look out for in their children and how to tackle it before it leads to chronic illness or death. Through *tom brown*, there is access to a continuous, locally available and affordable food source among indigent and internally displaced mothers.

### ***Physical Rehabilitation Programme (PRP)***

On November 19, 2020, the ICRC inaugurated a comprehensive Physical Rehabilitation Centre (PRC) at the University of Maiduguri Teaching and Referral Hospital (UMTH), the first of its kind in Borno State. The PRC is run by UMTH staff with support from the ICRC. The

primary beneficiaries (known as service users) of this centre are people with mobility impairments and physical disabilities, especially those related to the armed conflict in the state.

The 18-bed dormitory centre, which helps the beneficiaries of the programme, address their needs for safety and love and belonging, works in collaboration with the ICRC Clinic at the Borno State Specialist Hospital, ICRC Mobile Surgical Team (MST), ICRC supported Primary Health Centres (PHCs), and the National Orthopaedic Hospital (NOHD), to provide victims of armed conflicts assistance ranging from physiotherapy, prosthesis, Orthoses for upper and lower limbs (legs and arms) to customised wheelchair fittings, walking aids, and mental health psycho-social support. The Centre provided accommodation to the beneficiaries of this assistance for the sum of two hundred naira and four hundred naira per meal while services are free for victims of the *Boko Haram* / ISWAP armed conflict who are mostly internally displaced.

Since physical rehabilitation is often not enough because people with disabilities need some measure of social and economic empowerment to overcome the trauma-related adversities, the ICRC supported beneficiaries of the assistance who met the required criteria to set up businesses to earn a livelihood, train them in vocational skills and financial management to build their resilience.

Comprehensive assessments and evaluations of armed conflict victims were conducted to determine their specific rehabilitation needs, including physical impairments, functional limitations, and prosthetic or orthotic requirements. Designing, fitting, and provision of prosthetic limbs, orthotic devices, and assistive devices for persons who have lost limbs or have orthopaedic impairments were done. This involved measurement, customisation, and continuous adjustments to ensure proper fit and functionality.

Individual physical therapy sessions were carried out to improve strength, mobility, and functional abilities. These included exercises, manual therapy, gait training, and other therapeutic techniques. Beneficiaries were also assisted in the rehabilitation efforts in their communities through vocational training and promotion of social



inclusion. The physical rehabilitation assistance contributed to the long-term resilience of affected individuals and their families, enabling them to adapt, cope, and thrive despite the challenges posed by their injuries and the after-effects of the armed conflict.

### ***Implementation of the ICRC Widow's Project***

The *Boko Haram* armed conflict left thousands of women widowed as their husbands were either killed or abducted to fight for the armed group. Having no formal education or a means of livelihood to sustain their children, many widows soon turned to begging in the streets of Borno State. Inaugurated in Maiduguri, the Widows Food Project was an assistance rendered by the ICRC in collaboration with the Borno State Muslim Widows Association, where grants were disbursed to enable them to establish businesses and become independent. This partnership enabled over ten thousand registered widows of the association to buy food, reduce dependence on debts, regain their dignity and become self-sustained. Periodically, they also received monthly rations of food supplies for a specified period of months.

Inputs in this project include food items, cash grants, equipment to set up businesses, and vocational training costs. Activities involved a needs assessment, which was conducted to identify widows who required assistance. ICRC staff, NRCS volunteers, and partners like the Borno State Widows Association were involved in the project implementation. 10,000 widows were registered to receive food and cash that would enable them to provide the necessities for their families. They also received support for micro-economic initiatives, with each widow receiving the sum of 40,000 naira grant to buy materials they needed to establish their businesses. Through economic empowerment and capacity building, empowered widows in Maiduguri and Jere LGAs have a sustainable means of livelihood with the acquired skills that help them generate income and become independent. They are also better equipped to cope with the challenges of living in conflict environments through increased resilience.

## **CONCLUSION**

Internal displacement and intra-state migration of internally displaced persons within Borno State, driven primarily by the *Boko Haram*/ISWAP armed conflict, have resulted in complex humanitarian challenges. The disruption of essential services and safety forced many to flee their homes, seeking refuge and stability in the city centres of Maiduguri and Jere. Humanitarian responses by the ICRC have focused on addressing the needs of internally displaced populations, such as food, shelter, healthcare and protection, while also providing avenues for them to recover from the after-effects of the armed conflict. These efforts continue to help internally displaced persons in Borno State meet their human needs and rebuild their lives, thus highlighting the fact that when interventions by humanitarian organisations are properly planned and deployed, internally displaced persons are better able to achieve quick post-conflict recovery for themselves and their communities, which will further promote lasting peace in places affected by conflict.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To effectively address the needs of internally displaced persons in Borno State and corroborate the efforts of humanitarian organisations like the ICRC, this study recommends the following:

- enhanced security measures should be implemented to strengthen local and regional security to protect communities and enable displaced individuals to return safely to their homes.
- an integrated humanitarian assistance in which the government, NGOs, and international donor agencies coordinate efforts to ensure comprehensive support, including livelihoods support, healthcare, education, and developmental projects given to those displaced.
- strengthening of community resilience, which can be achieved through investments in infrastructure and community development to enhance resilience against future displacement triggers, such as conflict or natural disasters.
- facilitation of dialogue and peace-making between conflicting parties to address underlying issues and promote lasting peace in the region.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020782900020866>







## FROM DESIRE TO DEPARTURE: SOCIO-ECONOMIC ROOTS OF SEX TOURISM AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN LAGOS

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the socio-economic, psychological, and social factors influencing young women's engagement in migrant sex work in Lagos, Nigeria. The study, based on survey data from rehabilitation centres, identifies critical drivers such as self-esteem, mindset, peer and parental pressures, and economic factors like low income and unemployment. The results from multiple regression analysis reveal significant predictors: economic factors (get-rich syndrome, low income, and unemployment) account for 13% of the variance in engagement in migrated sex work ( $R^2 = 0.13$ ,  $F(3,447) = 22.27$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with low income ( $\beta = 0.57$ ,  $t = 8.06$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) emerging as the strongest determinant. Psychological factors, particularly mindset, show a 9% variance explanation ( $R^2 = 0.09$ ,  $F(3,447) = 16.33$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with mindset being a significant predictor ( $\beta = 0.28$ ,  $t = 5.40$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Social factors, including parental pressure ( $\beta = 0.31$ ,  $t = 5.11$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and attitude toward luxury ( $\beta = 0.16$ ,  $t = 3.33$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), contribute 7% to the variance ( $R^2 = 0.07$ ,  $F(3,447) = 11.57$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The study highlights the role of socio-economic vulnerabilities, particularly low income and unemployment, as pivotal in driving young women towards sex tourism. The findings emphasise the need for targeted interventions, such as*



*economic empowerment, education, and awareness campaigns, to reduce migration for sex work and promote safer migration alternatives.*

**Keywords:** Irregular Migration, Lagos, Sex Tourism, Socio-economic

## **DU DÉSIR AU DÉPART : RACINES SOCIO-ÉCONOMIQUES DU TOURISMESEXUEL ET DE LA MIGRATION IRRÉGULIÈRE À LAGOS**

### **Résumé**

*Cette étude examine les facteurs socio-économiques, psychologiques et sociaux qui influencent l'implication des jeunes femmes dans le travail sexuel en contexte migratoire à Lagos, au Nigéria. Basée sur des données d'enquête recueillies dans des centres de réhabilitation, l'étude identifie des déterminants critiques tels que l'estime de soi, l'état d'esprit, la pression des pairs et des parents, ainsi que des facteurs économiques comme les faibles revenus et le chômage. Les résultats de l'analyse de régression multiple révèlent que les facteurs économiques (syndrome de l'enrichissement rapide, faibles revenus et chômage) expliquent 13 % de la variance dans l'implication dans le travail sexuel migratoire ( $R^2 = 0,13$ ,  $F(3,447) = 22,27$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ), le faible revenu étant le déterminant le plus fort ( $\beta = 0,57$ ,  $t = 8,06$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ). Les facteurs psychologiques, notamment l'état d'esprit, expliquent 9 % de la variance ( $R^2 = 0,09$ ,  $F(3,447) = 16,33$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ), avec l'état d'esprit comme prédicteur significatif ( $\beta = 0,28$ ,  $t = 5,40$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ). Les facteurs sociaux, tels que la pression parentale ( $\beta = 0,31$ ,  $t = 5,11$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ) et l'attitude envers le luxe ( $\beta = 0,16$ ,  $t = 3,33$ ,  $p < 0,01$ ), contribuent à hauteur de 7 % à la variance ( $R^2 = 0,07$ ,  $F(3,447) = 11,57$ ,  $p < 0,001$ ). L'étude met en évidence le rôle des vulnérabilités socioéconomiques, en particulier le faible revenu et le chômage, comme facteurs déterminants poussant les jeunes femmes vers le tourisme sexuel. Les résultats soulignent la nécessité d'interventions ciblées telles que l'autonomisation économique, l'éducation et les campagnes de sensibilisation afin de réduire la migration liée au travail sexuel et de promouvoir des alternatives migratoires plus sûres.*

**Mots-clés :** facteurs socio-économiques, Lagos, Migration irrégulière, tourisme sexuel

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## INTRODUCTION

Sex tourism, and irregular migration can be intertwined in certain contexts, but it is important to note that they are distinct issues. Sex tourism refers to travel to engage in sexual activities, often involving the exploitation of individuals, particularly in developing countries<sup>30</sup>. Irregular migration, on the other hand, refers to the movement of people across borders without proper authorisation or documentation, which can involve various motivations, such as economic opportunities, escape from conflict or persecution, or seeking a better life<sup>31</sup>. Sex tourism and irregular migration may interact, but the complexity of sex tourism makes it difficult to solve. Secretive sex tourism makes it hard to collect data and understand the situation. The industry's secrecy can make it harder to link sex tourism to irregular migration.

Sex tourism often exploits vulnerable people, such as women and children who are trafficked or forced into sexual activity. This abuse creates a power imbalance that makes it hard for victims to report their conditions, making data and evidence collection difficult. Legal grey zones exist between sex tourism and irregular migration. Sex work is illegal in many nations, making it difficult to address.<sup>32</sup> Some countries may criminalise both sex work and irregular migration, while others may have more permissive approaches. These legal ambiguities can hinder efforts to combat the negative consequences of sex tourism within the context of irregular migration. Sex labour and its exploitation can be stigmatised, preventing reporting, data collection, and solutions. Cultural views, societal norms, and taboos about sexuality and migration can make discussing the complex relationship between sex tourism and irregular migration difficult. Understanding

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<sup>30</sup> Oppermann, Martin. "Sex Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 26, no. 2 (1999): 251–66.

<sup>31</sup> Castles, Stephen, Magdalena Arias Cubas, Chulhyo Kim, and Derya Ozkul. "Irregular Migration: Causes, Patterns, and Strategies." In *Global Perspectives on Migration and Development: GFMD Puerto Vallarta and Beyond*, 117–151, 2012.

<sup>32</sup> Platt, Lucy, Pippa Grenfell, Rebecca Meiksin, Jocelyn Elmes, Susan G. Sherman, Teela Sanders, Peninah Mwangi, and Anna-Louise Crago. "Associations between Sex Work Laws and Sex Workers' Health: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Quantitative and Qualitative Studies." *PLoS Medicine* 15, no. 12 (2018): e1002680

the unique challenges these issues bring and the necessity for comprehensive and multifaceted measures

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encompassing law enforcement, legislative frameworks, public awareness, victim support, and international cooperation is crucial.

Economic disparities between countries can contribute to both sex tourism and irregular migration.<sup>33</sup> Sex tourism is when wealthy people visit poorer countries to have cheaper sexual experiences. Poor people may migrate irregularly to find better economic opportunities, which may involve sex work. The demand for commercial sex fuels sex tourism, motivated by novelty, anonymity, and vulnerable population exploitation. Similar variables might drive irregular migration, such as the desire for cheap labour, which may lead people to take risks to find work elsewhere. Criminal networks enable sex tourism and irregular migration. These networks exploit vulnerable people by providing transportation, documents, and support for profit. Law enforcement may struggle to disrupt these networks due to their secrecy. Human trafficking - the recruitment, transportation, and exploitation of people for forced work or sexual purposes - is linked to sex tourism and irregular migration. Traffickers may pressure or persuade victims into the sex business, frequently through irregular migratory routes.

Sex tourism, and irregular migration sometimes have gender differences. Women and children are disproportionately exploited and abused by sex tourism and trafficking. In irregular migration, female migrants may be exploited in the sex business or forced into employment. This study explored the socio-economic causes of sex tourism and irregular migration in Lagos State, Nigeria.

According to WTO (1995), tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other

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<sup>33</sup> Brooks, Ann, and Vanessa Heaslip. "Sex Trafficking and Sex Tourism in a Globalised World." *Tourism Review* 74, no. 5 (2019): 1104–1115.

purposes<sup>34</sup>. Transportation, lodging, sightseeing, recreational activities, and learning about the local culture are just some of the things that tourists do while on vacation. Individuals leave their regular setting and go to a new one, often staying there for

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at least one night. Tourist trips normally do not last longer than a year. Tourism covers a wide variety of reasons why people travel, such as for fun, work, health, education, and other reasons. Tourists typically venture to locations outside of their normal sphere of influence to learn about and appreciate other cultures and landscapes.

Sex tourism is the practice of visiting foreign nations, frequently those that are on a different continent, to have relationships or engage in sexual activities for payment or support of a lifestyle. Sex tourism is the practice of visiting foreign nations, especially those that are on a different continent, to have relationships or engage in sexual activities for payment or support of a lifestyle. This practice is predominant in countries where sex work is legal.

Sex tourism and irregular migration are complex phenomena often intertwined in ways that exacerbate vulnerabilities and exploitation. Sex tourism, defined as travel to engage in sexual activities, typically involves the exploitation of individuals in economically disadvantaged regions. Irregular migration, which refers to the movement of people across borders without proper authorisation, frequently intersects with sex tourism, creating a web of exploitation and human rights abuses. This literature review explores the connections between sex tourism and irregular migration, drawing on various sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic drivers, the role of organised crime, policy responses, and critical challenges.

Sex tourism involves individuals travelling to foreign countries to engage in sexual activities, often with individuals who are economically vulnerable and marginalised. This practice is prevalent in

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<sup>34</sup> World Tourism Organisation. Recommendations on Tourism Statistics. Madrid: WTO, 1995.

regions with significant poverty and limited economic opportunities.<sup>35</sup> Irregular migration, on the other hand, refers to the movement of individuals across international borders without the necessary legal documentation or authorisation. Migrants often undertake perilous journeys, driven by the hope of better economic

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prospects or escaping conflict and persecution.<sup>36</sup> The intersection of sex tourism and irregular migration manifests when individuals, particularly women and children, are trafficked for sexual exploitation as they attempt to migrate irregularly.

Economic disparities between developed and developing countries are the primary drivers of both sex tourism and irregular migration. Poverty and lack of employment opportunities in developing countries push individuals to seek better prospects abroad, making them vulnerable to exploitation by traffickers and sex tourists.<sup>37</sup> For instance, in southeast Asia, the economic gap between rural and urban areas has led to significant migration flows, with many women and children falling prey to traffickers who exploit their economic desperation.<sup>38</sup> Globalisation has facilitated the movement of people and capital across borders, but it has also contributed to the proliferation of sex tourism and irregular migration. The ease of international travel and the global interconnectedness enable sex tourists from developed countries to seek out vulnerable populations in developing regions.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, globalisation has created economic dislocations and inequalities that drive irregular migration.<sup>40</sup> Migrants often become targets for

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<sup>35</sup> de Chesnay, Mary. *Sex Tourism, Human Trafficking, and Modern Slavery*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

<sup>36</sup> International Organisation for Migration (IOM). *Irregular Migration in West Africa: Root Causes and Policy Responses*. 2019. <https://www.iom.int>.

<sup>37</sup> International Labour Organisation (ILO). *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage*. 2017. <https://www.ilo.org>

<sup>38</sup> Smith, Peter. "Sex Tourism and Trafficking: A Critical Review." *Global Crime* 15, no. 2 (2014): 170–89.

<sup>39</sup> Lindquist, Johan. "The Business of Human Trafficking: Assessing the Complexities of Exploitation and Vulnerability." In *Human Trafficking and Exploitation: Complexities and Contexts*, edited by Nicola Phillips. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

<sup>40</sup> World Bank. *World Development Report 2018: Learning to Realize Education's Promise*. 2018. <https://www.worldbank.org>.

traffickers who promise safe passage and employment, only to subject them to exploitation upon arrival.

Gender inequality is a significant factor in the dynamics of sex tourism and irregular migration. Women and girls are disproportionately affected due to systemic gender discrimination, lack of education, and limited economic opportunities.<sup>41</sup> Social marginalisation, including discrimination based on ethnicity, social

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status, or economic background, further exacerbates individuals' vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation. In many cases, trafficked women and girls are forced into the sex industry, catering to the demands of sex tourists. Organised crime networks play a crucial role in facilitating sex tourism and human trafficking within the context of irregular migration. These networks operate transnationally, exploiting weak legal systems and corruption to sustain their operations.<sup>42</sup> Traffickers use sophisticated methods to recruit, transport, and exploit victims, often involving deceit, coercion, and violence. The clandestine nature of these operations makes it challenging for law enforcement to dismantle these networks and protect victims effectively. Issues such as corruption, lack of resources, and inadequate training for law enforcement personnel often hinder the implementation of anti-trafficking policies.<sup>43</sup> Countries with robust legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, such as Sweden and the Netherlands, have seen some success in reducing trafficking and exploitation.<sup>44</sup>

Strain Theory, sociological Learning Theory, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs give a solid framework for analysing the socio-economic, psychological, and sociological causes of migrant sex work among young women in Lagos State. Strain Theory states that when viable paths to culturally sanctioned goals like financial achievement are

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<sup>41</sup> European Commission. Data Collection on Trafficking in Human Beings in the EU. 2018. <https://ec.europa.eu>

<sup>42</sup> Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime. Global Organised Crime Index 2019. <https://globalinitiative.net>.

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Department of State. Trafficking in Persons Report 2019. <https://www.state.gov>

<sup>44</sup> Hernandez, David. "Challenges in Implementing Anti-Trafficking Policies: Insights from the Field." Policy and Society 36, no. 3 (2017): 285–98

obstructed, society may compel people to do deviant activities. In social situations, behaviour is acquired through observation, imitation, and modelling, according to Social Learning Theory. It shows that young women who are frequently exposed to peers, relatives, or mentors doing or celebrating sex work may normalise it. Maslow's theory states that humans need physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualisation. In this survey, many respondents meet physiological (food, shelter) and safety (financial security) demands in the bottom ranks. Failure to address these demands may lead to desperate methods like migrant sex work.

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## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To examine the socio-economic factors influencing young women's engagement in migrated sex work in Lagos State, Nigeria.
2. To assess the psychological factors that contribute to young women's participation in migrant sex work.
3. To investigate the social factors that influence young women's decision to engage in migrant sex work.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This quantitative study examined the socio-economic, psychological, and societal aspects influencing young women's migrant sex work in Lagos State, Nigeria. Surveys of patients at the Lagos rehabilitation centre provided the basic data for the study. The methodology section explains the study's research design, sample, data gathering, and analysis. The cross-sectional survey approach was suitable for studying the links between socio-economic, psychological, and social determinants and young women's migrant sex work at a certain moment. This design assessed numerous variables and their effects on migrant sex work engagement.



This study targeted young women in Lagos State undergoing rehabilitation for migratory sex work. A purposive sample of 351 respondents was chosen. Four rehabilitation centres were chosen to include migrant sex workers with various backgrounds. This study used a structured questionnaire to collect data. The poll sought to understand the reasons that lead young women to migrate to sex work. The selected rehabilitation centres in Lagos State were visited for data collection. Before distributing questionnaires, participants were approached individually and provided with informed consent. To reduce uniformity and interviewer bias, trained research assistants distributed and collected questionnaires.

Survey data was analysed using SPSS 26. Frequencies, percentages, averages, and standard deviations were utilised to summarise respondents' demographics and survey item responses. A multiple regression study examined the association between socio-economic, psychological, and social characteristics and migrant sex work activity. Multiple regression models were employed to determine how well the characteristics predict young women's migratory sex work. T-tests and p-values determined factor importance. Results were analysed at 0.05 significance. ANOVA was also employed to evaluate the significance of the regression model. All results were interpreted practically to reduce young women's migratory sex work in Lagos.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Age:</b>		
18-20	85	24
21-24	87	25
25-30	89	25
31-35	90	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

**Highest Educational Background/Status:**

Have not attached formal school systems	17	5
Primary School	27	8
Secondary School	41	12
OND/NCE	53	15
HHD, B.Ed, B.Sc, B.A.	243	69
M.Ed, M.Sc, M.A.	-	-
Ph.D	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

**Religion:**

Christianity	151	43
Islam	143	41
Traditional Worshipper	57	16
Parental	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

**Marital Status:**

I come from a home where my parents are living together	91	26
I come from a home where my parents are divorced or separated	171	49
I come from a home where I lost my parent at a tender age	89	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

**Parental Socio-economic Background:**

My parents were comfortably able to cater for their children's needs	91	26
My parents were relatively able to cater for their children's needs	83	24
My parents were not able to cater for their children's needs	71	20

The children were left to cater for themselves	45	13
Before I travelled	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

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**I Lived in a Residential Area:**

Largely populated by people often called a ghetto	112	32
Largely populated area, but not a ghetto	93	27
Lowly populated area often called GRA	61	17
Lowly populated area, but not a GRA	85	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

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**Before I Travelled with my Family, We were Living:**

In a rented apartment	101	29
In our house, built by my parents	73	21
In a family house built by my grandparents	87	25
In a family friend's house	90	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

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**How Did You Get Involved in Prostitution?**

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I purposely got involved to make money	87	25
I was forced to join by those who sponsored my travel abroad	89	25
My friends lured me into it to make money and live like them	85	24
I joined to take care of parents and other siblings of the family	90	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work, 2024

Table 4.1 *Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents:  
Understanding the Pathway from Desire to Departure*

This section analyses the socio-demographic backgrounds of respondents involved in sex tourism in Lagos, revealing how economic desire, environmental stressors, and social dislocation serve as underlying factors propelling individuals toward sex work and, ultimately, irregular migration. The findings align with the notion that sex tourism in Lagos is not an isolated activity but part of a broader trajectory of socio-economic survival and transnational movement.

Young adults are overrepresented in sex tourism, since 75% of respondents are 18–30. This group has high hopes for advancement but faces limited economic opportunities in Lagos. IOM noted that youth in emerging economies are more susceptible to trafficking and irregular migration due to employment shortages and social inequality. Youth involvement in sex work implies that economic desire starts early, leading to cross-border migration when local incomes are insufficient.<sup>7</sup> 69% of respondents have tertiary degrees (HND, B.Ed, B.Sc, B.A.); however, many still engage in sex tourism. These findings challenge the idea that education protects against susceptibility. Additionally, Okon and Essien, in their work, opined that underemployment and the mismatch between higher education and job markets in Nigeria lead to disillusionment and risk-taking, including transactional sex and

informal migration. This supports the assumption that economic advancement drives people to leave conventional careers.<sup>45</sup>

Christianity (43%) and Islam (41%) were the prominent religions, although religion did not seem to discourage sex tourism. Adepoju found that socio-economic pressure often outweighs moral or religious norms, especially in metropolitan situations where survival imperatives are more immediate. Financial ambition may trump cultural or religious restraints.<sup>46</sup> 49% had fractured homes, and 25% lost a parent early. These numbers illustrate how familial instability renders individuals vulnerable. Okojie found that family breakdowns weaken emotional and financial support, increasing hazardous behaviour and exploitation.<sup>47</sup> In the context of Lagos, where informal networks shape survival, young women from unstable families are more likely to see sex work as a viable short-term solution, which can spiral into international trafficking.

A notable 33% of respondents reported that their parents were either unable to provide for them or that they had to fend for themselves. This supports the argument that sex tourism is primarily driven by economic need rather than deviance or choice.<sup>48</sup> Individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds are disproportionately represented in informal economies like sex work, with migration offering an “escape” from entrenched poverty<sup>49</sup>. 32% lived in ghettos, and another 27% in densely populated areas. These living environments are often characterised by poor infrastructure, social decay, and limited state presence, conditions

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<sup>45</sup> Okon, E. E., and C. Essien. “Educational Attainment and the Job Market in Nigeria.” *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 2021.

<sup>46</sup> Adepoju, Aderanti. “Patterns of Migration in West Africa.” *International Migration* 43, no. 3 (2005): 25–43.

<sup>47</sup> Okojie, Christiana. *Trafficking of Women and Children in Nigeria: Causes, Consequences and Policy Implications*. UNESCO Policy Paper Series, 2009.

<sup>48</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2020. <https://www.unodc.org>

<sup>49</sup> Egharevba, M. E., and F. Atttoh. “Social Vulnerability and Sex Trafficking in Nigeria.” *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology* 6, no. 3 (2015): 245–52.

that normalise informal economies and survivalist behaviours<sup>50</sup>. Environmental stress, combined with

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limited upward mobility, encourage early engagement in sex work and later migration through informal networks.

A combined 51% lived in non-parental housing (such as a family house or a family friend's house), revealing insecurity in housing arrangements. Housing precarity is a marker of broader socioeconomic instability and can contribute to transactional living patterns where sex becomes a form of negotiated survival.<sup>51</sup> Over time, these conditions create an enabling environment for international traffickers and irregular migration routes. Interestingly, 25% joined sex tourism to support their families, migration sponsors coerced another 25%, while friends influenced 24%. This confirms the multi-layered entry pathways into sex work, some economic, some relational, and others exploitative. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), sex work is often the first stage in what becomes a full migration trajectory, especially when tied to deceptive recruitment schemes promising greener pastures abroad<sup>20</sup>.

**Table 4.2 Psychological Factors Influencing Engagement in Sex Work and Irregular Migration**

Questions Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Likert means
Inferiority complex made me engage in sex work	100 (28.5%)	90 (25.6%)	80 (22.8%)	81 (23.1%)	<b>2.60</b>

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<sup>50</sup> Agunbiade, M. E., and S. Adebayo. "Transactional Sex and Vulnerability among Young Women in Urban Nigeria." *Journal of Youth Studies* 15, no. 5 (2012): 591–609.

<sup>51</sup> Okunola, R. A., and D. P. Olufemi. "Housing Precarity and Youth Risk Behavior in Lagos." *Journal of Urban Research*, 2017.

The fear of being called a failure in life made me engage in sex work to make money and become an achiever	110 (31.3%)	95 (27.0%)	70 (19.9%)	10 (21.7%)	<b>2.68</b>
The belief that I can do whatever I want with my body led me to engage in sex work.	120 (34.2%)	85 (24.2%)	75 (21.4%)	11 (20.2%)	<b>2.72</b>

The desire to be sexually satisfied for pleasure led me to engage in sex work.	130 (37.0%)	90 (25.6%)	60 (17.1%)	71 (20.2%)	<b>2.79</b>
I already made up my mind to engage in sex work when I was living in the country	115 (32.8%)	80 (22.8%)	75 (21.4%)	81 (23.1%)	<b>2.66</b>
It does not matter how I become rich; what matters is to be rich.	125 (35.6%)	85 (24.2%)	70 (19.9%)	71 (20.2%)	<b>2.75</b>

Field work (2024)

Table 4.2 presents insights into the psychological dimensions influencing individuals' entry into sex tourism. It reveals that, beyond economic hardship, internalised emotions, value systems, and cognitive framing of personal worth and success also shape the decision to engage in sex work and consider migration. The Likert means in this section range from 2.60 to 2.79, indicating a moderate level of agreement with each psychological factor. This suggests that while not all respondents were uniformly driven by these internal pressures, they remain noteworthy influences. About 54.1% (SA + A) of respondents admitted that feelings of inferiority contributed to their entry into sex work, with a mean score of 2.60. Similarly, 58.3% agreed that fear of being perceived as a failure influenced their decision (mean = 2.68). These findings align with the work of Okojie, who emphasised that psychological stressors, especially those linked to self-esteem, are critical in pushing vulnerable individuals into exploitative economic roles<sup>19</sup>. In an aspirational city like Lagos, where success is often measured by wealth, the social pressure to "make it" can become emotionally burdensome, especially for individuals from unstable homes or disadvantaged backgrounds. As Bandura's social cognitive theory posits, individuals internalise societal expectations and compare themselves with perceived successful peers, resulting in behaviour modelled on observed

"success" routes, including sex work or migration.<sup>23</sup>



<sup>21</sup> Agunbiade, M. E., and S. Adebayo. “Transactional Sex and Vulnerability among Young Women in Urban Nigeria.” *Journal of Youth Studies* 15, no. 5 (2012): 591–609.

<sup>23</sup> Bandura, Albert. “Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication.” *Media Psychology* 3, no. 3 (2001): 265–299.

The belief that “I can do whatever I want with my body” was recorded at 58.4% agreement (mean = 2.72), indicating a shift from passive victimhood to assertive personal agency. This reflects the growing normalisation of body commodification as a form of empowerment in urban youth cultures<sup>22</sup>. However, this agency is often exercised within structurally constrained environments, leading to what Kabeer calls “bounded agency”, where individuals make choices, but within severely limited options<sup>52</sup>. The highest agreement (62.6%) was on the statement that the desire for sexual satisfaction and pleasure influenced involvement in sex work (mean = 2.79). While this may indicate hedonistic motivation, it is also linked to emotional voids and trauma coping mechanisms, as argued by Egharevba and Attoh (2015), who suggest that for some sex workers, pleasure is often intertwined with psychological escape from deprivation or abuse<sup>21</sup>. A significant portion (55.6%) agreed they had already made up their mind to engage in sex work before leaving Nigeria (mean = 2.66), showing that some individuals embark on the journey with a clear intent to monetise their sexuality abroad.

Similarly, 59.8% agreed with the morally detached statement, “It does not matter how I become rich” (mean = 2.75). This moral relativism reflects broader societal influences in Lagos and Nigeria at large, where wealth is celebrated irrespective of its source<sup>53, 54</sup>.

**Table 4.3 Social Factors Influencing Sex Work and Irregular Migration**

Question Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Likert mean
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<sup>52</sup> Kabeer, Naila. “Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment.” *Development and Change* 30, no. 3 (1999): 435–464.

<sup>53</sup> Ogunديpe-Leslie, Molar. *Re-creating Ourselves: African Women and Critical Transformations*. Trenton: Africa World Press, 1994.

<sup>54</sup> Falola, Toyin, and Matthew M. Heaton. *A History of Nigeria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

The money and live-abig-girl life made me engage in sex work	87 (25%)	73 (20.8%)	56 (16%)	35 (10%)	<b>2.84</b>
Pressure from peerfriends to make money and live a big-girl life made me engage in sex	75 (21.4%)	80 (22.8%)	60 (17.1%)	36 (10.3%)	<b>2.77</b>

work

The desire to make money and take care of my parents and other siblings made me to engage in sex work.	90 (25.6%)	100 (28.5%)	40 (11.4%)	21 (6%)	<b>3.03</b>
Pressure from my parents and other siblings to take care of them made me to engage in sex work	65 (18.5%)	85 (24.2%)	70 (19.9%)	31 (8.8%)	<b>2.73</b>
The desire to be compared with other girls who travelled abroad and came back to buy properties and live big-girls' life made me to engage in sex work	80 (22.8%)	90 (25.6%)	60 (17.1%)	41 (11.7%)	<b>2.77</b>
The desire to attain social prestige wherever I go, especially among family members, made me to engage in sex work	91 (25.9%)	126 (35.9%)	73 (20.8%)	61 (17.4%)	<b>2.70</b>

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The jest that other people from our neighbourhood make on my family influenced me to join sex work	89 (25.4%)	120 (34.2%)	89 (25.4%)	75 (21.4%)	<b>2.60</b>
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Source: Field Work (2024)

Table 4.3 presents data on the social pressures and motivations that shape respondents' involvement in sex tourism. With Likert means ranging from 2.60 to 3.03, social determinants play a central role in how individuals make decisions about sex work, which often precedes or intersects with irregular migration. A significant proportion of respondents (45.8%) agreed that the allure of money and a luxurious lifestyle motivated their engagement in sex work, yielding a Likert mean of 2.84. This aligns with Falola and Heaton's observation that in urban Nigerian culture, material wealth is not only desired but also highly valued and glorified. For many young women in Lagos, the "big girl" identity embodies success, attractiveness, and independence, all of which can be achieved or are perceived to be achievable through sex work or migration. Similarly, 44.2% indicated that peer pressure from friends living the "big girl" life pushed them into sex work (mean = 2.77). This is consistent with the work of Ajayi and Olayinka, who highlighted how social comparison in low-income urban settings often drives risk-taking behaviour, particularly when peers are seen reaping rewards from irregular migration or sex-related income<sup>27</sup>.

The highest mean score (3.03) was recorded on the item: "The desire to make money and take care of my parents and other siblings made me engage in sex work." With 54.1% agreement, this reflects a strong sense of familial obligation. The burden of being the breadwinner in poverty-stricken families, especially when traditional earners are absent or incapacitated, pushes young women into high-risk survival strategies like sex tourism. Closely tied to this is the pressure from family members to send money back home, reported by 42.7% (mean = 2.73). This confirms Adepoju's (2005) view that economic migration (regular or irregular) is often a collective family project, where individual choices are shaped by communal survival<sup>18</sup>. Respondents also expressed how social comparisons and aspirations for prestige

influenced their decisions. About 48.4% agreed that they wanted to be compared favourably with peers who returned from abroad with wealth and assets (mean = 2.77), while 61.8% agreed that they were driven by the desire for family recognition and status (mean = 2.70). This is supported by Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital, which emphasises that individuals pursue not just economic wealth,

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<sup>17</sup> Adepoju, A. (2005). Patterns of Migration in West Africa. *International Migration*, 43(3), 25-43.

<sup>26</sup> Falola, Toyin, and Matthew M. Heaton. *A History of Nigeria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

<sup>27</sup> Ajayi, T., and Olayinka, T. "Peer Influence and Youth Risk Behaviour in Lagos Urban Spaces." *African Sociological Review* 24, no. 1 (2020).

but also honour, respect, and reputation. In Lagos communities, success stories of returnees from Europe or the Middle East, regardless of the means, often serve as motivation for others, reinforcing sex tourism as a socially rewarded pathway. Moreover,

59.6% admitted that neighbourhood ridicule, the “jest people make of my family”, pushed them toward sex work (mean = 2.60). This reflects how social shame and exclusion serve as powerful emotional triggers, especially in densely populated areas where reputational narratives spread fast.<sup>55</sup>

These social drivers do not operate in isolation. Rather, they interact with economic deprivation and psychological needs (as shown in Tables 4.1 and 4.2) to create a multi-layered push toward sex tourism and irregular migration. The progression from “desire” to “departure” is catalysed by the need for material validation in a wealth-conscious society, peer-driven modelling of sex work as a viable income strategy, family-induced economic pressure, and the cultural valuation of international mobility, even if irregular. Irregular migration is often the result of a “socially constructed demand,” where expectations are not just about escape but about returning home transformed, usually through wealth acquired by any means<sup>56</sup>. Social factors, particularly peer influence, family pressure, prestige culture, and stigma, are powerful forces shaping the decisions of young women in Lagos to engage in sex tourism. These same forces push them to migrate irregularly in pursuit of economic security, family honour, and social validation. The findings support the broader argument that sex tourism and irregular migration are not merely individual or economic choices, but are deeply embedded in social structures and expectations.

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<sup>55</sup> Smith, Daniel Jordan. “To Be a Man Is Not a One-Day Job: Masculinity, Money, and Intimacy in Nigeria.” *Journal of Sex Research* 47, no. 2–3 (2010): 231–241.

<sup>56</sup> Cherti, Myriam, and Robert McNeil. *Thinking Behind the Numbers: Understanding Public Opinion on Immigration in Britain*. London: IPPR, 2012.

**Table 4.4 Economic Factors Influencing Sex Tourism and Irregular Migration**

Question Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Likert
					mean
The wish that I must make it in life at all costs made me engage in sex work	101 (28.8%)	87 (24.8%)	73 (20.8%)	90 (25.6%)	<b>2.57</b>
The thinking that it is easier to make money when you travel abroad made me engage in sex work	101 (28.8%)	87 (24.8%)	73 (20.8%)	90 (25.6%)	<b>2.57</b>
The display of wealth from young women who travel abroad when they come back home influenced me to join sex work	101 (28.8%)	87 (24.8%)	73 (20.8%)	90 (25.6%)	<b>2.57</b>
The inability of my parents to take care of me because of low income or nonpayment of their salaries influenced me to join sex work	101 (28.8%)	87 (24.8%)	73 (20.8%)	90 (25.6%)	<b>2.57</b>

The inability of my parents to meet my needs because they were unemployed influenced me to join sex work	101 (28.8%)	87 (24.8%)	73 (20.8%)	90 (25.6%)	<b>2.57</b>
The poor economic situation of the country, which makes life difficult to live, influenced me to join sex work	101 (28.8%)	87 (24.8%)	73 (20.8%)	90 (25.6%)	<b>2.57</b>

Source: Field Work (2024)

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The data in Table 4.4 reflect a consistent pattern: all six economic items recorded identical Likert mean scores of 2.57, indicating a moderate but uniform level of agreement among respondents. This consistency suggests that economic desperation is a recurring driver, framing sex work and migration as economic survival strategies. The item "The wish that I must make it in life at all costs made me engage in sex work" saw 53.6% of respondents agree (SA + A). This mindset aligns with the findings of Okome, who noted that for many Nigerian youths, especially women, the fear of intergenerational poverty often compels them to adopt extreme coping mechanisms - even if such means include risky sexual activities or irregular migration<sup>30</sup>. This sense of urgency to "make it" reflects a high-risk, high-reward mentality associated with economic disenfranchisement, particularly in urban slums of Lagos, where social mobility appears elusive without "fast money."

Another item with 53.6% agreement is the belief that it is easier to make money abroad, which led some into sex work as a stepping stone for future migration. This belief often stems from "migratory myths", or

<sup>57</sup> 17 Adepoju, A. (2005). Patterns of Migration in West Africa. *International Migration*, 43(3), 25-43.

false success narratives propagated by returnees <sup>5859</sup>. Migrants often exaggerate success upon return to maintain dignity or justify the hardship they endured, thereby misleading others into believing sex tourism or migration will guarantee wealth <sup>60</sup>. For many, sex work abroad becomes normalised as a legitimate hustle, not because of morality, but because of visible results. <sup>61</sup> Across multiple items, respondents pointed to parental unemployment or low income as a key influence. In all related items, over 53% affirmed that economic vulnerability at home pushed them into sex work. This confirms the work of Isiugo-Abanihe and IOM, who found that economic push factors - especially parental joblessness or inability to sponsor schooling - are strong predictors of youth migration and exploitation<sup>62</sup>. The uniformity in these responses also emphasises that poverty is not abstract - it is deeply felt, recurring, and influential in shaping pathways into the informal and often exploitative sectors of global sex work.

The final item, “The poor economic situation of the country, which makes life difficult, influenced me to join sex work”, confirms a macroeconomic linkage. Again, 53.6% agreed, indicating that personal decisions are deeply intertwined with national-level economic crises. With inflation, unemployment, and declining real wages in Nigeria, young women face shrinking economic opportunities, prompting them to adopt dangerous alternatives for their livelihoods. In a context where the formal labour market is increasingly inaccessible to unskilled or semi-educated women, sex tourism offers a rare but high-yielding path, albeit one with moral and physical risks<sup>19</sup>.

Table 4.4 shows that personal and national economic distress drives young women into sex work, with irregular migration seen as the long-

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<sup>58</sup> Okojie, Christiana. *Trafficking of Women and Children in Nigeria: Causes, Consequences and Policy Implications*. UNESCO Policy Paper Series, 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Okome, Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké. *Women, Migration, and the Diaspora: Alternative Histories and Impacts*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

<sup>60</sup> Hernández-Carretero, M., and J. Carling. “Beyond ‘Kano Boys’: Nigerian Youths and Irregular Migration Aspirations.” Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2012.

<sup>61</sup> Bourdieu, Pierre. “The Forms of Capital.” In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. Richardson, (1986) 241–258. New York: Greenwood Press.

<sup>62</sup> Isiugo-Abanihe, U. C., and International Organisation for Migration. *Migration and Poverty in Nigeria: A Study of Poor Households in Lagos*. 2010.



term path to riches. Survival imperatives, impressions of prosperity overseas, frustrations with systemic poverty, and ambitions for financial freedom underlie these impulses. This supports the theory that sex tourism and irregular migration are economic survival strategies, not lifestyle choices. Leaving Lagos and travelling abroad, including sex work, is driven by the desire to escape poverty, fulfil family commitments, and achieve financial independence.

**Multiple Regression Analysis of Psychological Factors (SelfEsteem, Mind Set, and Nymphomaniac Urge) on Young Women’s Engagement in Migrant Sex Work in Lagos State**

Psychosocial and economic factors influence young women's migrant sex work in Lagos State, Nigeria. The major purpose and study question two: How do psycho-social and economic factors affect young women's migrating sex work in Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 4.5 reveals a significant correlation between self-esteem, mindset, and nymphomaniac urge in selected rehabilitation centres in Lagos State, Nigeria ( $R = 0.31$ ,  $R^2 = 0.09$ ,  $F(3,447) = 16.33$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). The independent variables explained 9% of the variance in migratory sex work reported in selected rehabilitation centres in Lagos State. The remaining % unexplained by the models was likely due to residuals and other factors not studied. ANOVA was used to evaluate whether the R Square value is significant. The table shows that the analysis of variance of multiple regression data identified an F-ratio value of 16.33 ( $p < 0.001$ ) for the four rehabilitation centres in Lagos State, indicating the usefulness of independent variables in predicting the dependent variable.

**Table 4.5:** Multiple Regression Analysis of Psychological Factors (Self-Esteem, Mind Set, and Nymphomaniac Urge) on Young Women’s Engagement in Migrated Sex Work in Lagos State

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
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Regression	324.827	3	108.276	16.326	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	2964.557	447	6.632		
Total	3289.384	450			

### Model Summary

- $R = .31$
- $R^2 = .09$
- Adjusted  $R^2 = .09$
- Standard Error of the Estimate (SEM) = 2.58

### Multiple Regression Analysis of Social Factors (Peer Pressure, Parental Pressure, and Attitude towards Luxury and Materialism) on Young Women's Engagement in Migrant Sex Work

Table 4.6 showed that peer pressure, parental pressure, and attitude toward luxury and materialism together produced a significant multiple regression (R) coefficient adjusted for the selected rehabilitation centres in Lagos State, Nigeria. ( $R = 0.27$ ,  $R^2 = 0.07$ ,  $F(3, 447) = 11.57$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) The combination of social determinants explained 7% of the variance in young women's migrating sex work in selected rehabilitation centres in Lagos State. The remaining percent unaccounted for by the models was likely attributable to residuals and other factors not studied. ANOVA was used to evaluate if the R Square value is significant. The table shows that the analysis of variance of multiple regression data for four rehabilitation centres in Lagos State yielded an F-ratio value of 11.57 ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that social factors effectively predict the dependent variable.

**Table 4.6:** Multiple Regression Analysis of Social Factors (Peer Pressure, Parental Pressure, and Attitude towards Luxury and Materialism) on Young Women's Engagement in Migrant Sex Work

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	237.061	3	79.020	11.572	.000 <sup>b</sup>

<b>Residual</b>	3052.322	447	6.828		
<b>Total</b>	3289.384	450			

**Model Summary**

- **R** = .27
- **R<sup>2</sup>** = .07
- **Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>** = .07 • **Standard Error of the Estimate (SEM)** = 2.61

The result shows that peer pressure ( $\beta = -.11$ ;  $t = -1.75$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ), has no significant independent influence on their engagement in migrant sex work; while attitude towards luxury and materialism ( $\beta = -.16$ ;  $t = -3.33$ ,  $p < 0.01$ );and parental pressure ( $\beta = .31$ ;  $t = 5.11$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) were found to be an important significant determinant of young women’s engagement in migrated sex work in Lagos State, Nigeria.

**Multiple Regression Analysis of Economic Factors (Get-Rich Syndrome, Unemployment, and Low Income) on Young Women’s Engagement in Migrant Sex Work**

In Table 4.7, economic factors (get-rich syndrome, unemployment, and low income) produced a significant multiple regression (R) coefficient adjusted for the selected rehabilitation institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria. ( $R = 0.36$ ,  $R^2 = 0.13$ ,  $F(3,447) = 22.27$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) This suggests that the independent variables explained 13% of the variance in their migrating sex employment in selected rehabilitation centres in Lagos State.

ANOVA was run to check if the R Square value is significant. The analysis of variance of multiple regression data in Lagos State showed an F-ratio value of 22.27 ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating the efficiency of independent variables in predicting the dependent variable for four selected rehabilitation centres.

**Table 4.7:** Multiple Regression Analysis of Economic Factors (GetRich Syndrome, Unemployment, and Low Income) on Young Women's Engagement in Migrant Sex Work

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Regression</b>	427.710	3	142.570	22.270	.000 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Residual</b>	2861.674	447	6.402		
<b>Total</b>	3289.384	450			

The multiple regression analysis showed that mentality was the sole psychological element that predicted young women's migrant sex employment. This supports the idea that resilient, optimistic people are less prone to perform harmful behaviours like sex tourism. The study found no substantial effects on self-esteem or nymphomaniac drive. This shows that economic and social factors may be more significant than mindset in influencing sex work engagement. Parental pressure and attitudes toward luxury/materialism were major social predictors. Peer pressure was not important. This suggests that family and societal financial expectations may motivate young women to engage in sex work more than social networks and peer behaviours. These findings suggest that preventative initiatives should focus on modifying consumerism and family pressures.

Economic vulnerability was the main reason young women participated in migratory sex labour. Low income, unemployment, and the get-rich syndrome had significant consequences. These findings support the assumption that economic hardship and the desire for wealth and social mobility drive young women to sex tourism. Job creation, education, and poverty reduction can lessen this issue by addressing economic inequality. Psychological, social, and economic considerations explained 9%, 7%, and 13% of young women's migrating sex work activity. This study did not examine cultural norms, gender inequality, or international migration policy, which may explain some of the variance.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study provides valuable insights into the multifaceted drivers of young women's engagement in migrated sex work in Lagos State. The economic and social factors - particularly low income, unemployment, and parental pressure - stand out as the most significant contributors to this phenomenon. However, psychological factors such as mindset, although significant, play a secondary role in comparison to the socio-economic factors. The findings underscore the need for targeted interventions that address the root causes of engagement in migrant sex work, especially the economic vulnerability of young women. Initiatives aimed at reducing poverty, unemployment, and materialistic attitudes may prove effective in mitigating the prevalence of this issue. Furthermore, mindset transformation programmes and parental support can enhance resilience and reduce the pressures that lead young women to seek opportunities in high-risk environments like sex tourism.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Governments and NGOs should invest in job creation, vocational training, and educational programmes to reduce economic vulnerability, especially among young women in underserved communities. Psychological resilience programmes should be developed to foster a positive mindset, self-worth, and life skills, thereby mitigating the risks associated with sex tourism. Mindset transformation programmes and parental support are recommended to enhance resilience and reduce the pressures on young women to seek opportunities in high-risk environments like sex tourism. Parent-child communication programmes and mentorship initiatives should be encouraged, to alleviate family pressures and provide alternative pathways for young women. Cultural and media campaigns should be launched to shift societal views on wealth and success, emphasising values of contentment, hard work, and sustainable progress.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this research. All data were collected and analysed objectively, and the findings presented are solely for academic and policy development purposes. No financial, personal, or professional interests influenced the outcomes of this study.

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## ASSESSMENT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AMONG INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*Internal displacement caused by flooding in Kogi State, Nigeria, is a frequent occurrence that has impacted on the socioeconomic status of the citizens. This study aims to assess the socio-economic challenges among floods internally displaced persons in Kogi State, Nigeria. A quantitative cross-sectional research design was adopted by administering the Socioeconomic Challenges among Internal Displaced Persons due to Flood Questionnaire (SCIDPFQ) to 770 respondents. The findings show the extensive negative effects of internal displacement on physical well-being, health, including heightened susceptibility to illnesses, starvation, accidents and limited access to medical care. Demographic investigations reveal issues related to shelter and housing insecurity, food and water scarcity, disruptions in healthcare access, loss of livelihoods, and psychosocial challenges, while socio-economic bottlenecks include livelihood loss, education barriers, inadequate shelter, food insecurity, disrupted healthcare, and gender-based vulnerabilities. In addition, the psychological challenges experienced include trauma, PTSD, grief, anxiety, depression, and social isolation. To address these issues and enhance future resilience, the study recommends constant promotion and creating awareness, making investments in robust infrastructure, offering psychosocial and mental health support, and motivating communities to develop adaptive and coping strategies. By lowering the impact of future floods and guaranteeing the safety and sustainability of the affected people,*

*these steps will assist those who are impacted in leading more safely and sustainably.*

**Keywords:** Internal Displaced People (IDP), Socioeconomic Status, Flood, Victims, and Kogi State

## ÉVALUATION DES DÉFIS SOCIO-ÉCONOMIQUES CHEZ LES PERSONNES DÉPLACÉES INTERNES À CAUSE DE L'INONDATION DANS L'ÉTAT DE KOGI, NIGÉRIA

### Résumé

Le déplacement interne lié à l'inondation dans l'État de Kogi, au Nigéria, constitue un phénomène récurrent qui affecte profondément la situation socio-économique des citoyens. La présente étude vise à évaluer les défis socio-économiques auxquels sont confrontées les personnes déplacées internes à cause l'inondation dans cet État. Une méthode de recherche quantitative de type transversal a été adoptée, à travers l'administration du questionnaire intitulé *Défis socio-économiques chez les personnes déplacées internes provoqué l'inondation* auprès de 770 répondants. Les résultats révèlent des effets négatifs considérables du déplacement interne sur le bien-être physique et la santé, notamment la vulnérabilité médicale, la malnutrition, les accidents et l'accès limité aux soins médicaux. L'analyse démographique met en évidence des problématiques liées à l'insécurité du logement, au manque de la nourriture et de l'eau, à l'interruption des services de santé, à la perte de moyens de subsistance, ainsi qu'aux difficultés psychosociales. Les obstacles socio-économiques recensés incluent également la perte de revenus, les entraves à l'éducation, l'insuffisance d'abris, l'insécurité alimentaire, les perturbations dans l'accès aux soins et les vulnérabilités liées au genre. Par ailleurs, les défis psychologiques identifiés comprennent les traumatismes, le trouble de stress post-traumatique (TSPT), le deuil, l'anxiété, la dépression et l'isolement social. Pour combler ces défis et renforcer la résilience, l'étude recommande la sensibilisation continue, l'investissement dans des infrastructures résilientes, le soutien psychosocial et en santé mentale, ainsi que l'encouragement des communautés à développer des stratégies d'adaptation et de résilience. Ces mesures permettront de réduire l'impact des inondations futures et de garantir la sécurité et la durabilité des populations touchées.

**Mots-clés :** Personnes déplacées internes (PDI), situation socioéconomique, inondation, victimes, État de Kogi

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## INTRODUCTION

Internal displacement is caused by various factors, and there are different challenges attached to it. Specifically, the increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters, such as floods, have led to a rise in the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) worldwide.<sup>63</sup> In Nigeria, flood-prone areas like regions and towns around the Niger and Benue Rivers have become more recurrent, causing widespread displacement and impacting the socioeconomic status of affected individuals and communities. Socioeconomic status encompasses not only the income, occupation, and education; it translates to access to basic needs, and the overall well-being of the displaced population.<sup>64</sup>

Internally displaced flood victims face a multitude of challenges. Among the challenges are the unpredictability of flooding, which can lead to the loss of houses, means of subsistence, and community infrastructure, making the impacted people more vulnerable. In addition, living in cramped, frequently improvised quarters in temporary shelters can have negative health effects, such as the spread of infections carried by water and insufficient access to medical treatment.<sup>65</sup> To overcome these socioeconomic challenges, strategies and tailored interventions to address the unique challenges faced by internally displaced flood victims must be developed. More successful solutions for reducing the effects of internal displacement brought on by flooding will result from an understanding of the distinct

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<sup>63</sup> Smith, E., and M. Johnson. "Understanding Internal Displacement: A Mixed-Methods Approach." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 31, no. 2 (2018): 189-207.

<sup>64</sup> Oakes, J. Michael, and Kate E. Andrade. "The Measurement of Socioeconomic Status." In *Methods in Social Epidemiology*, 18 (2017): 23-42.

<sup>65</sup> Garcia, M., and L. Martinez. "Health Consequences of Internal Displacement: A Cross-Sectional Analysis among Flood Victims." *Journal of Public Health* 35, no. 2 (2020): 234-248.

socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental aspects influencing the experiences of Internally Displaced People (IDPs). A study by Awotayo on the victim's awareness and perception of environmentally induced disaster in Kogi State, Nigeria, and a similar one on socio-economic analysis of environmentally induced disasters on residents in parts of Kogi State, north central Nigeria, found out that victims' knowledge and perception are greatly impacted by

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differences in community vulnerability, catastrophe incidence, risk preparedness, socioeconomic level, and prior experiences. Additionally, it shows that 98% of the diversity in the effects of environmental catastrophes can be attributed to housing, livelihood, and health, with livelihood being the best indicator of how victims would be affected by a disaster <sup>66</sup>. The study concluded that environment-related disasters had led to displacement and harmed the inhabitants' livelihood. It is, therefore, recommended that, in order to address the unique characteristics of each community disaster in the study area, micro-intervention is necessary and that other sources of survival be encouraged.

Furthermore, the state is geographically vulnerable, especially to seasonal flooding due to its advantageous location between the Niger and Benue Rivers. The continuously rising sea levels, stronger storms, and altered rainfall patterns are all factors that have made Kogi State more vulnerable to floods because of climate change.<sup>67</sup> As reported, flooding in the state poses a significant threat to human security, particularly among the affected population.<sup>68</sup>

Primarily, the concept of internal displacement is a phenomenon involving forced movement within a country's borders, particularly in

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<sup>66</sup> Awotayo, G. P., and O. K. Awoyemi. "Victims Awareness and Perception of Environmentally induced Disaster in Kogi State, Nigeria."

<sup>67</sup> Garcia, M., and L. Martinez. "Health Consequences of Internal Displacement: A Cross-Sectional Analysis among Flood Victims." *Journal of Public Health* 35, no. 2 (2020): 234-248.

<sup>68</sup> Kogi Webnews. "Flood Pictures Today." Kogi Webnews, 2023. <https://conservationsng.com/9-again-kogi-state-get-submerged-in-2022-floods/>.

floods.<sup>69</sup> It highlights the challenges faced by flood victims in Kogi State, where flooding is a common issue due to human activities like settlement growth, population growth, deforestation, climate change, and urbanisation altering natural drainage and river basin systems.<sup>70</sup> Understanding the dynamics of internal displacement is crucial for addressing the security challenges faced by flood victims. Floods can cause internal displacement due to various factors, including environmental issues like erratic weather patterns and inadequate

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infrastructure, and human activities like deforestation and improper land use.<sup>71</sup> Flooding disrupts income sources and employment, affecting businesses and agricultural activities.<sup>72</sup> Displacement in Kogi State disrupts economic activities, particularly for those dependent on agriculture and small-scale businesses. This loss perpetuates poverty cycles and increases vulnerability for the displaced population. Floods also lead to the destruction of crops, livestock, and businesses, resulting in economic insecurity and displacement among affected communities.

Flood vulnerability refers to the potential negative consequences of risks on people, assets, and means of subsistence. It is influenced by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors. Vulnerability is dynamic and changes over time and geography. Factors such as hazard events, climate change, and urbanisation make many cities more vulnerable. Three key elements determine a society's vulnerability to flooding: exposure, susceptibility, and resistance. Vulnerability is a necessary but insufficient factor of risk, and understanding it is crucial for managing flood risk. Factors such as sea level rise, urbanisation, climate change, population growth, development in floodplains, awareness of flood risk, and the futility of attempts to combat floods contribute to vulnerability.

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<sup>69</sup> Ndukson Buba, F., S. Obaguo, O. Ogah, and F. Ajayi. "A Participatory Assessment of the Impact of Flooding in Some Communities in Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria." *American Journal of Climate Change* 10 (2021): 12-31.

<sup>70</sup> Kogi Webnews. "Flood Pictures Today." Kogi Webnews, 2023. <https://conservationsng.com/9-1gain-kogi-state-get-submerged-in-2022-floods/>.

<sup>71</sup> Emmanuel, I. "Insurgency and Humanitarian Crises in Northern Nigeria: The Case of Boko Haram." *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 9, no. 7 (2015): 284-296.

<sup>72</sup> Johnson, S., and J. Adams. "Social Resilience and Internal Displacement: Insights from Focus Group Discussions." *Journal of Community Psychology* 42, no. 4 (2017): 567-582.

The theoretical framework also considers societal factors influencing vulnerability, the disaster risk reduction perspective, ecological systems theory, and trauma theory. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory suggests that social environments significantly impact human development, affecting their identity and social roles within five systems: Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem, and Chronosystem.

Empirical evidence shows that Wisner et al. (2004) examined the complex nature of internal displacement caused by natural disasters like floods, highlighting its causes, dynamics, and challenges. It emphasises the role of climate change, deforestation, and land-use

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changes in exacerbating flood risks. The review also highlights the need for flexible response strategies, comprehensive support systems, and government response to manage displacement. It also highlights community resilience and the need for long-term rehabilitation measures (Wisner et al. 2004).<sup>73</sup> Talcott Parsons (1970) made a substantial contribution to our knowledge of socioeconomic position. According to him, status is a place in society that is shaped by social standing and line of work. Like Weber (1958), Parsons associated status with a hierarchical concept, that is, honour and distinction. His contributions had a big impact on socioeconomics; a comprehensive approach to understanding internal displacement and challenges to socioeconomic development among flood victims. It emphasises protection from threats in various aspects of life, including economic, food, health, environmental, personal, and community security.

Aladejana and Ebijuoworih (2024) produced a flood risk map by examining the hazard components and flood susceptibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. The Flood Risk Index (FRI), Flood Hazard Index (FHI), and Flood Vulnerability Index (FVI) were developed by ranking and weighting seven parameters according to their impact on flooding. The dense populations, rural location, and distances from medical facilities in Kabba, Idah, Olamabor, Kotonkar, and the southern portion of

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<sup>73</sup> Wisner, B., P. Blaikie, T. Cannon, and I. Davis. *At Risk: Natural Hazards, People's Vulnerability, and Disasters*. Routledge, 2004.



Ajaokuta LGAs made them very vulnerable to flooding (Aladejana and Ebijuworih 2024).<sup>74</sup> Idoko, Adah, and Alkali (2020) observed that flooding in Nigeria has severe socioeconomic implications, leading to overcrowding in camps and posing risks to displaced children.<sup>75</sup> Similarly, a study conducted a participatory assessment of flood impacts in communities within Lokoja, Kogi State, identifying dam releases, river overflow, and heavy rainfall as major causes. The study concluded that bottom-up

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participatory research provides a practical approach to effective flood mitigation (Ndukson et al. 2021).<sup>76</sup>

Floods cause internal displacement patterns, with variations in displacement trajectories, duration, factors influencing return, and population distribution. As of 2022, 43.3 million children under 18 were displaced, with an average of 385,000 children born as refugees annually. The global number of forcibly displaced people is 110 million, including refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people, and those in need of international protection. In Nigeria, data collection is granular and repeated to ensure accurate information.<sup>77</sup> As of June 2023, 2,295,534 IDPs were identified in 471,346 households, while 2,075,257 returnees were identified in 341,895 households. The recent count has increased to 3,153,427.<sup>78</sup> The reviewed literature all have a niche ranging from environmental, human security, vulnerability, to economic. The gap identified revealed nonavailable in

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<sup>74</sup> Aladejana, Olabanji Odunayo, and Etari Joy Ebijuworih. "Flood risk assessment in Kogi State Nigeria through the integration of hazard and vulnerability factors." *Discover Geoscience* 2, no. 1 (2024): 31.

<sup>75</sup> Samson, Idoko, Adah William, and E. Alkali. "An Assessment of Internally Displaced Persons'[IDPs] Needs in Flood Prone Areas of Kogi State." *Journal of Poverty, Investment and Development* 8, no. 1 (2023): 46-60.

<sup>76</sup> Ndukson Buba, F., S. Obaguo, O. Ogah, and F. Ajayi. "A Participatory Assessment of the Impact of Flooding in Some Communities in Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria." *American Journal of Climate Change* 10 (2021): 12-31. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ajcc.2021.101002>.

<sup>77</sup> GRID. *Global Report on Internal Displacement*. IDMC, May 2016. [www.internaldisplacement.org/.../2016-globalreport-internal-displacement-IDMC.pdf](http://www.internaldisplacement.org/.../2016-globalreport-internal-displacement-IDMC.pdf).

<sup>78</sup> UNHCR. "Global Displacement is Available on UNHCR's Statistics Website." UNHCR, 2023. <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/insights/annexes/trends-annexes.html>.

this review focused solely on the socioeconomic challenges of floods displayed persons. Hence, the study is worthwhile.

This study, therefore, aims to assess the extent, frequency, and drivers of these displacements, as well as the psychological and emotional impacts on victims' socioeconomic well-being and resilience. It also explores the effectiveness of government response mechanisms and community-led initiatives in mitigating these challenges.

## **OBJECTIVES**

This study aims to evaluate the internal displacement and challenges faced by flood victims in Kogi State, Nigeria, including its impact on physical health, psychological health, and specifically socioeconomic implications.

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This study further examines the effects of flooding-related internal displacement in Kogi State, Nigeria, with a particular focus on the socioeconomic experiences of those who have been internally displaced. The study sheds light on the specific effects of internal displacement while considering the socioeconomic elements that affect flood victims' struggles. To develop policies that effectively meet the diverse needs of displaced populations, the study highlights how crucial it is to comprehend the dynamics of socioeconomic status, including health, livelihoods, and social cohesion. The results can help build evidence-based policies and strategies for disaster response, improving the efficacy of interventions and safeguarding flood victims' human security. The development of programmes that enable impacted parties to be guided by the socioeconomic and psychological effects of internal relocation.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional research design to analyse the socioeconomic challenges among internally displaced persons in Kogi State. In line with this study's objective, this systematic

method allows gathering and evaluating numerical data at a particular time, while evaluating correlations between variables, spotting trends, and drawing conclusions about the general population. This is like the methodology in previous findings by Adams and Brown (2019).<sup>79</sup> They adopted a cross-sectional design to measure the challenges of human security among flood victims in Kogi State. This study used stratified random sampling to select specific communities, ensuring fair representation across the population. The three highly susceptible areas, namely Adankolo, Gadumo, and Ganaja, were the target. These primarily include those who have experienced at least one flood episode and have been displaced from their homes. A total of 770 respondents from three villages administered the questionnaire, and data were gathered on the number of displaced persons due to flooding and the impacts on socioeconomic status. To ensure accurate measurement, the study's

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psychometric evaluation validated the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Internal consistency, test-retest reliability, concept and criterion validity, content, and component analysis for structural integrity were among the important attributes evaluated. The reliability and validity of the data were greatly enhanced by these characteristics. The study adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and protection of participants' rights. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics, with frequencies to describe the demographic features using SPSS. All findings were held significant at a 0.5 probability level.

## RESULTS

The study focuses on the demographics of IDPs, who are displaced due to the flood. The participants are categorised into children (0-17 years), adults (18-59 years), and the elderly (60 years and above), with varying educational backgrounds, occupations, income levels, and health

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<sup>79</sup> Adams, J., and B. Brown. "Challenges of Human Security among Flood Victims: A Case Study in Kogi State." *Journal of Disaster Studies* 7, no. 2 (2019): 123-145.

conditions. Mainly Kogi State citizens, they face limited access to healthcare, education, and social services during flooding periods.

### a. Classification of Respondents by Age

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group.

Years	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative (%)
0-17yrs	60	7.79	7.79
18-59yrs	500	64.94	72.73
60 and above	210	27.27	100
Total	770	100	

The age distribution above reveals that a total of 60 individuals are within the age bracket of 0-17 years old, with 7.79% of the population. 500 individuals, with 64.94% have ages between 18 and 59 years. The final group is 210 individuals who are above 60 with 27.27%.

### b. Classification of Respondents by Sex Table

2: Distribution of Respondents by Sex.

Sex	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative (%)
Male	362	47.01	47.01
Female	408	52.99	100
Total	770	100	

The sex distribution above reveals that a total of 362 individuals are males, while 408 individuals are females.

### c) Classification of Respondents by Marital Status

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative (%)
Single	212	27.53	27.53
Married	420	54.54	82.07
Engaged	54	7.01	89.08
Widow/Widower	84	10.91	100
Divorced	nil	0.0	100

Total	770	100	
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The marital status distribution above reveals that a total of 212 individuals is single, with 27.27 percent of the population. 420 individuals with 54.54% are married, 54 individuals with 7.01% are engaged, and 84 individuals are widows/widowers, with 10.91% representation out of the population investigated. The final group lack respondents; hence none is divorced.

#### d) Classification of Respondents by Religion

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Employee's Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Christianity	368	47.79
Islam	384	49.87
Missing	12	0.79
Total	770	100

The demographic features of the population affected by internal displacement in Kogi State are presented in Table 4. The majority of respondents are Christians, with 47.79% being Christians and 49.87% being Muslims. Other demographic features include household composition, educational background, occupation/employment status, income level, displacement duration, ethnicity, religious affiliation, health status, documentation status, reasons for displacement, place of origin, and access to services.

The composition of households provides insights into the size, structure, and dependencies within displaced families. The educational background of individuals affected by internal displacement helps assess the potential impact on academic and vocational pursuits. The pre-displacement and current occupation/employment status provide information on the economic impact of displacement, with 46.75% losing jobs or livelihoods due to displacement. Nearly half of the respondents earn low income, revealing the financial resources available to households and designing effective economic support programmes.

The duration of displacement helps differentiate short-term challenges from long-term needs, aiding in the development of time-sensitive interventions. The health status of displaced individuals provides information on existing health conditions, access to healthcare, and emerging health challenges resulting from displacement.

The reasons for displacement include conflict (4.42%), natural disasters (floods) (88.83%), and environmental degradation (6.75%). Understanding these reasons helps tailor response strategies and develop context-specific interventions addressing the root causes of displacement. These demographic features can generate a nuanced understanding of the diverse experiences and needs of the internally displaced population in Kogi State, enabling more effective and targeted interventions.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents’ Demographic Features

Demography	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Household Composition:		
○ Family units	420	54.56
○ Single individuals	212	27.53
○ Head of households	138	17.92
<b>Total</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>100</b>

2. Educational Background:		
○ No formal education	160	20.78
○ Primary education	274	35.58
○ Secondary education	156	20.26
○ Tertiary education	180	23.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>3. Occupation/ Employment Status:</b>		
○ Employed	70	9.09
○ Unemployed	360	46.75
○ Self-employed	108	14.03
○ Students	232	30.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>4. Income Level:</b>		
○ Low income	376	48.83
○ Middle income	258	33.50
○ No income	136	17.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>5. Displacement Duration:</b>		
○ Short-term displacement	386	50.13
○ Medium-term displacement	190	24.68
○ Long-term displacement	194	25.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>6. Health Status:</b>		
○ Individuals with pre-existing		
○ Health conditions	712	92.47
○ Individuals with disabilities	58	7.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>7. Reasons for Displacement:</b>		

○ Conflict	34	4.42
○ Natural disasters (floods)	684	88.83
○ Environmental degradation	52	6.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>100</b>

Internally displaced individuals in Kogi State face numerous socioeconomic challenges that significantly impact their human security. These include loss of livelihoods, limited access to education, inadequate shelter, food insecurity, healthcare access disruptions, psychosocial impact, mental health challenges, gender-based vulnerabilities, lack of documentation and legal challenges, social disintegration, and the risk of exploitation and discrimination. Limited access to education equates to 6% of the challenges, while inadequate shelter and living conditions lead to health risks and malnutrition. Healthcare access disruptions exacerbate existing health issues, making individuals more vulnerable to illnesses. Gender-based vulnerabilities, such as violence and limited access to reproductive health services, further compound the socio-economic challenges faced by displaced individuals. Addressing these socio-economic factors can enhance the human security of these individuals and promote their well-being and resilience.

**Table 6: Socio-economic Challenges Faced by Respondents**

Socio-economic Challenges	Adankolo		Gadumo		Ganaja	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Bad roads	68	9.07	66	8.57	60	7.87
Poor water supply	46	6.13	50	6.49	56	7.35
Loss of livelihoods and income	64	8.53	56	7.27	60	7.87



Limited access to education	48	6.40	52	6.75	48	6.30
Loss of shelter	56	7.47	60	7.79	62	8.14
Food insecurity	74	9.87	70	9.09	68	8.92
Healthcare access disruptions	68	9.06	64	8.31	60	7.87
Gender-based vulnerabilities	24	3.20	28	3.64	32	4.20
Lack of documentation and legal challenges	48	6.40	52	6.75	52	6.82
Social disintegration and community fragmentation	50	6.67	46	5.97	44	5.77
The risk of exploitation and discrimination	34	4.55	40	5.19	38	4.99
Psychosocial impact	50	6.67	66	8.57	70	9.19
Documents	68	9.06	60	7.79	56	7.35
Student activities	52	6.93	60	7.79	56	7.35
Missing	20				8	
Total	750	100	770	100	762	100

## DISCUSSION

The result presented above shows the socio-economic challenges faced by dwellers in the representative population. According to a variety of respondents, flooding in the research area caused several obstacles as well as displacement. Numerous homes and other properties were

damaged by the flood, causing irreversible damage, thereby propelling forceful relocation either temporarily or permanently. This resulted in social disintegration and community fragmentation. From table 6 above, community life has been significantly impacted by flooding, and poor road infrastructure was made worse by the floods, creating impassable roads that hindered trade and transportation, preventing locals from accessing basic services, and cutting off villages from suppliers and marketplaces. There was a shortage of safe drinking water due to the polluted water supply, which also raised the danger of waterborne illnesses. Residents were forced to rely on alternative water sources, which would be expensive, for example, bottled water or water tankers as a result. This put further financial burden on homes that were already struggling due to income loss. Another major problem was the loss of income and means of subsistence. Artists, merchants, and small business owners observed a halt in activities, leaving many without a means of subsistence, while farmers suffered significant losses when agricultural fields were flooded and cattle died. The devastation of farms and animals impacted households. Floodwaters ravaged crops such as rice, groundnuts, and maize, leading to strained relations between farmers and banks over destroyed assets and impacted loan repayments. During the flood, since the means of economic livelihood were affected, the effects spread to financial, health and other related securities.

Schools in flooded regions suffered damage or were converted into makeshift shelters for displaced families, which disrupted classes and reduced student attendance, especially for girls who were frequently kept at home to assist with household chores. During the flood, most operations were suspended, and the surrounding area became unclean. Many families were exposed to health hazards, more financial hardship, and increased insecurity because of losing their homes. Due to a lack of funding, insurance, and emergency housing assistance, rebuilding homes proved difficult. As households found it difficult to satisfy their daily nutritional demands, food insecurity became a serious issue that had an impact on the health of vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and children. Floods brought suffering, the spread of illness, and the exploitation of others. Humans are wired to be exploitative; hence, some individuals took advantage of the situation

and extorted others to profit from them by paying excessively for things like food, rent, and transportation.

The damaged roads also led to a shortage of supplies and an increase in demand for healthcare services. The floods also caused disruptions in healthcare access, which made recuperation more difficult. Women and girls faced difficulties, such as a higher risk of gender-based violence in overcrowded shelters, making gender-based vulnerabilities a serious problem as well. Many citizens lost vital papers, including identity cards, birth certificates, and property titles, because of legal issues and a lack of paperwork. This loss made it difficult to prove identification, obtain help, and assert property rights, which hindered rehabilitation and restricted access to essential support services. The floods also led to social breakdown and communal fragmentation, depriving people of the support networks they had previously depended on. In terms of unfair labour practices, price gouging, and unequal access to resources, vulnerable people were more likely to be exploited.

The psychological effects of losing homes, jobs, and social stability had a long-lasting effect on the mental health of those who were impacted; stress, anxiety, and depression were prevalent. Significant interruptions to educational institutions resulted in the suspension of youth engagement initiatives, vocational training, and extracurricular programmes, depriving students of possibilities for growth. In summary, the study area's floods caused problems with economic security, led to business closures, and compromised environmental protection. Many difficulties, such as exploitation, sickness, and disease, were brought about by the flood and had an impact on the community's means of subsistence.

## CONCLUSION

Kogi State, Nigeria, is known for its vulnerability to floods due to its location at the confluence of the Niger and Benue Rivers. The study focuses on the internal displacement and human security challenges faced by flood victims in this area. The research is organised into four sections, covering background, problem statement, objectives, justification, hypothesis statement, scope, and organisation. It also

reviews related literature on corporate social responsibility and management by multinational companies. The methodology is discussed, including ideal design, study population, sample, and sampling methods. Results and data analysis are presented, and the study concludes with a summary of findings, conclusions, and suggestions. The research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by flood victims in Kogi State. The study on flood victims in Kogi State highlights the significant impact of flooding on individuals and communities, highlighting the disruption of livelihoods, social structures, and community cohesion. Key human security dimensions include shelter insecurity, food and water scarcity, healthcare access disruptions, and psychosocial impacts. Despite these challenges, flood victims demonstrate resilience through mutual support networks and community solidarity. A comprehensive and coordinated response is needed to address these issues.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study suggests several recommendations to mitigate the impact of future floods in Nigeria. These include frequent promotion and creating awareness of early warning systems, investing in infrastructure resilience, providing psychosocial support and mental health services, and empowering communities to develop adaptive strategies.

Government should ensure adequate facilities, first aid, and urgent medical treatment for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in all camps. It should also fund IDP management, and seek donations, financial aid from international bodies and humanitarian organisations. Budgetary allocation for victims should be wellmanaged. Strict adherence to economic empowerment should be the top priority, as that remains the only sustainable drive towards compensating for the losses due to the flood.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I declare that there are no conflicts of interest associated with this manuscript.

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## EFFECTS OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON FOOD SECURITY IN BEKWARRA, NORTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*Rural-Urban migration has significantly reshaped agricultural productivity in Cross River North Senatorial District, especially in Bekwarra Local Government Area, influencing both labour availability and economic growth. This study examined the extent to which migration patterns affect food security through agricultural output and rural livelihoods in the region. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining surveys with a descriptive research design. Data was collected from farmers, community leaders, and migrants' households across selected rural communities in Bekwarra, ensuring representative samples from each subgroup. Quantitative data was collected with the use of 300 copies of the questionnaire administered to respondents to assess factors such as labour shortages, farm productivity, and income changes. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyse the data. The qualitative component included focus group discussions with key stakeholders to explore the socio-economic implications of migration on agriculture. Thematic analysis was applied to identify emerging trends. Findings revealed that rural-urban migration has led to a decline in the agricultural workforce, reduced farm sizes, and lower productivity, as able-bodied youths relocated to urban areas in search of better economic opportunities. However, remittances from migrants contribute to improved farm mechanisation and investment in alternative livelihoods. Despite these benefits, persistent labour shortages and ageing farming populations threaten long-term agricultural sustainability. The study, therefore, concludes that rural-urban migration affects food security*



*negatively in the study area. Stemming from the above, it is recommended that to mitigate the decline in farm labour, local authorities should implement rural development programmes that encourage youth engagement in agriculture through training, financial incentives, and mechanisation support.*

**Keywords:** Agricultural productivity, Bekwarra, Food security, Labour shortages, Rural-Urban migration

## **EFFETS DE LA MIGRATION RURALE-URBAINE SUR LA SECURITE ALIMENTAIRE A BEKWARRA, DISTRICT SENATORIAL NORD DE L'ÉTAT DE CROSS RIVER, NIGERIA**

### **Résumé**

*La migration rurale-urbaine a profondément transformé la productivité agricole dans le district sénatorial nord de Cross River, en particulier dans la zone de gouvernement local de Bekwarra, affectant tant la disponibilité de la main-d'œuvre que la croissance économique. La présente étude examine dans quelle mesure les dynamiques migratoires influencent la sécurité alimentaire à travers la production agricole et les moyens de subsistance ruraux dans la région. Une approche méthodologique mixte a été adoptée, combinant des enquêtes à un dispositif de recherche descriptive. Les données ont été recueillies auprès des agriculteurs, des chefs communautaires et des ménages de migrants dans plusieurs communautés rurales sélectionnées de Bekwarra, assurant ainsi une représentativité équilibrée des différents sous-groupes. Les données quantitatives ont été obtenues à l'aide de 300 questionnaires distribués aux répondants afin d'évaluer des facteurs tels que la pénurie de main-d'œuvre, la productivité des exploitations agricoles et les variations de revenus. Des techniques statistiques descriptives et inférentielles ont été mobilisées pour l'analyse des données. Le volet qualitatif, quant à lui, comprenait des discussions de groupe avec les parties prenantes clés afin d'explorer les implications socio-économiques de la migration sur l'agriculture. Une analyse thématique a permis d'identifier les tendances émergentes. Les résultats révèlent que la migration rurale-urbaine entraîne une diminution de la main-d'œuvre agricole, une réduction de la taille des exploitations et une baisse de productivité, du fait du départ des jeunes valides vers les zones urbaines à la recherche de meilleures opportunités économiques. Toutefois, les envois de fonds des migrants*

*contribuent à améliorer la mécanisation agricole et à investir dans des moyens de subsistance alternatifs. Malgré ces apports, les pénuries persistantes de main-d'œuvre et le vieillissement des agriculteurs menacent la durabilité de l'agriculture à long terme. L'étude conclut donc que la migration rurale-urbaine affecte négativement la sécurité alimentaire dans la zone étudiée. Il est dès lors recommandé que les autorités locales mettent en œuvre des programmes de développement rural visant à encourager l'engagement des jeunes dans l'agriculture, à travers des formations, des incitations financières et un appui à la mécanisation.*

**Mots-clés :** Productivité agricole, Bekwarra, Sécurité alimentaire, Pénurie de main-d'œuvre, Migration rurale-urbaine

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## INTRODUCTION

Rural-urban migration is a global phenomenon with substantial implications for various sectors, particularly agriculture. In developing countries such as Nigeria, the movement of people from rural to urban areas is often motivated by the search for better economic opportunities, improved living standards, and the allure of urbanisation.<sup>80</sup> However, this migration pattern has far-reaching consequences for rural areas, especially those heavily reliant on agriculture. Bekwarra Local Government Area (LGA) in the North Senatorial District of Cross River, located in south-south Nigeria, serves as a unique case study for examining the effects of rural-urban migration on food security. This predominantly agrarian region has witnessed a significant outflow of young and economically active individuals to urban centres, creating challenges for the local agricultural sector.

Agriculture in Cross River North is crucial for both subsistence and commercial purposes, sustaining livelihoods and contributing to the local economy. However, the migration of youth to urban areas has led

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<sup>80</sup> United Nations, World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision (New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019).

to a depletion of the labour force in rural farming communities, raising concerns about its impact on agricultural output. Moreover, the migration has resulted in a decline in the cultivation of both staple

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crops and cash crops, which are essential for local consumption and market supply<sup>81</sup>. This reduction in agricultural activities could have broader implications for food security, economic stability, and poverty alleviation in the region. Rural-urban migration is a critical phenomenon that influences various aspects of life in rural communities, particularly food security. In the Cross River North Senatorial District, agriculture remains the primary source of livelihood for most of the population. However, with the growing outflow of rural youth to urban areas, there is increasing concern about the long-term effects on the region's agricultural output. The loss of youthful, economically active individuals from rural farming communities has led to a reduction in agricultural labour, resulting in lower crop yields and diminished agricultural productivity<sup>82</sup>. If this trend is left unaddressed, it could have significant implications for food security, poverty reduction, and overall economic stability in the region. Despite the importance of agriculture in Cross River North, there is a notable gap in research on the link between rural-urban migration and food security in this locality. Understanding this relationship is crucial for developing policies that will enhance agricultural productivity and ensure the sustainability of rural livelihoods.

Agriculture remains the backbone of rural economies across many regions of Nigeria, including the Cross River North Senatorial District. It serves as the principal source of livelihood, employment, and food security for rural households. However, in recent decades, rural-urban migration has emerged as a significant challenge to agricultural productivity in this region. Increasingly, young and able-bodied individuals who make up the bulk of the agricultural workforce are relocating to urban centres in pursuit of enhanced economic

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<sup>81</sup> Cross River State Ministry of Agriculture, *Agricultural Overview of Cross River North Senatorial District* (Calabar: Cross River State Government, 2020).

<sup>82</sup> Bekwarra Local Government Area Development Plan: *Rural-Urban Migration and Its Impact on Agriculture* (Bekwarra: Bekwarra Local Government Area, 2020).

opportunities, education, and improved living standards<sup>83</sup>. This migration trend has resulted in a diminished rural labour force, leading to smaller farm sizes, lower agricultural yields, and, in some

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instances, the abandonment of farmlands<sup>84</sup>. Despite these observable consequences, there remains a dearth of empirical research specifically investigating the relationship between rural-urban migration and food security in Cross River North. Most extant studies address migration within broader socio-economic frameworks, often neglecting its direct impact on rural agricultural systems within this senatorial district. Consequently, policy responses have been limited and insufficiently informed. This study aims to bridge this gap by critically assessing how rural-urban migration influences food security through declining agricultural productivity. It explores the extent of labour shortages, alterations in land use patterns, and shifts in crop production. A nuanced understanding of these dynamics is crucial for formulating effective interventions that mitigate the adverse effects of migration while promoting rural agricultural sustainability and development in the region.

Some concepts that are pertinent to the study are clarified in the paragraphs below. Rural–urban migration refers to the movement of individuals from rural areas, typically characterised by agricultural livelihoods and low population density, to urban centres, where there is a perception of enhanced opportunities in employment, education, healthcare, and overall living standards. This form of internal migration is a common demographic trend in many developing nations and is largely driven by both “push” factors in rural communities, such as poverty, limited access to essential services, and unemployment, and “pull” factors in urban centres, including perceived economic prospects and modern amenities. Rural–urban migration has become increasingly pronounced due to stark disparities in development between rural and urban regions. As urban areas expand and industrialise, young and able-

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<sup>83</sup> L. M. Olayiwola and A. S. Okude, “Rural-Urban Migration and Its Implications on Agricultural Development in Nigeria,” *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, (2020): 34–47.

<sup>84</sup> C. O. Nwosu and N. N. Oguoma, “Labour Migration and Agricultural Productivity in Rural Nigeria: A Regional Analysis,” *Nigerian Journal of Agriculture, Food and Environment*, (2019): 68–74.

bodied individuals are frequently drawn to the apparent prosperity of city life, leaving behind an ageing and diminished rural population. This shift poses serious implications for rural communities, particularly within the agricultural sector, which relies heavily on youthful labour. Although migration can lead to remittances that support rural households, it

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often results in a declining labour force, abandoned farmlands, and reduced agricultural productivity. Moreover, the growing urban population places additional strain on infrastructure and employment opportunities, contributing to the proliferation of poverty in both rural and urban contexts. Consequently, rural–urban migration is not merely a demographic shift, but a multifaceted socio-economic phenomenon, with significant implications for sustainable national development, especially in agrarian societies<sup>85</sup>.

Food security is a multidimensional concept that encompasses the availability, accessibility, utilisation, and stability of food. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), food security exists when “all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life <sup>86</sup> .” This definition underscores four key components: food availability, food access, food utilisation, and the stability of these elements over time. Food availability refers to the physical presence of food, typically determined by domestic agricultural production, food imports, and humanitarian assistance. Access involves individuals' ability to obtain adequate food through means such as purchasing, exchange, or social safety nets. Utilisation concerns the body's capacity to digest and absorb nutrients from food, which is shaped by dietary quality, health status, and sanitation conditions. Stability implies that food availability, access, and utilisation are reliably sustained over time, without

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<sup>85</sup> Aderanti Adepoju, “Patterns of Migration in West Africa,” in *At Home in the World? International Migration and Development in Contemporary Ghana and West Africa*, ed. Takyiwaa Manuh (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2005), 24–54.

<sup>86</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization, *Food Security: Policy Brief, Issue 2* (Rome: FAO, 2006), [https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitaly/documents/pdf/pdf\\_Food\\_Security\\_Coept\\_Note.pdf](https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitaly/documents/pdf/pdf_Food_Security_Coept_Note.pdf).

significant disruptions caused by conflict, economic downturns, or environmental shocks.

In semi-urban areas such as the Cross River North Senatorial District, food security is closely linked to agricultural productivity. Rural–urban migration can diminish the agricultural labour force, leading to reduced food production and, consequently, jeopardising both household and regional food security. A drop in food output may also

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heighten reliance on food imports or drive-up local food prices, undermining economic access to food. Therefore, tackling migration-related challenges and promoting sustainable agricultural practices are vital for safeguarding food security in rural communities.

Labour constitutes a fundamental factor of production and is essential to the creation of goods and services in any economy. In economic terms, labour refers to the human effort, both physical and mental, applied in the production process<sup>87</sup>. This includes work undertaken by individuals for wages, salaries, or through self-employment, and remains a critical driver of productivity and economic growth. Unlike other factors of production, such as land and capital, labour entails the direct engagement of people who contribute skills, knowledge, and experience to productive activities<sup>88</sup>. In agrarian economies, particularly in rural areas such as the Cross River North Senatorial District, labour is predominantly manual and often seasonal, relying heavily on the availability of physically capable individuals. The quantity and quality of agricultural labour influence not only output levels but also the efficiency of land utilisation and the uptake of improved farming methods<sup>89</sup>. Therefore, disruptions to the rural labour force, such as those brought about by rural–urban migration, can have significant negative impacts on agricultural productivity and, by extension, food security. The migration of young people from rural communities typically results in a depletion of the active farm labour force, as the older population remaining may lack the capacity to

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<sup>87</sup> Michael P. Todaro and Stephen C. Smith, *Economic Development*, 12th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2015).

<sup>88</sup> Adebayo Adebayo, *Principles of Economics for Agricultural Development* (Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 2010).

<sup>89</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization, *The Role of Labour in Agricultural Development*, (Rome: FAO, 2021).

sustain or expand agricultural activities. Labour dynamics are also shaped by a range of demographic, socio-economic, and institutional factors, including education, health status, gender roles, and access to technology. A comprehensive understanding of labour, particularly within the context of rural agriculture, is crucial to assessing how migration patterns affect farm productivity and the broader trajectory of rural development.

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Agricultural activities encompass a wide range of processes associated with the cultivation of crops and the rearing of livestock for food, raw materials, and other essential products that support human survival and economic advancement. These activities form the backbone of rural livelihoods, particularly in developing countries where agriculture remains a dominant sector of the economy<sup>90</sup>. They include land preparation, planting, irrigation, fertilisation, weeding, pest control, harvesting, and post-harvest handling. In addition, livestock rearing, aquaculture, and agroforestry constitute vital components of agricultural operations.

In rural areas such as the Cross River North Senatorial District, agriculture is largely subsistence-based, dominated by smallholder farming systems that depend heavily on manual labour and traditional implements<sup>91</sup>. Beyond food production, agriculture in these regions plays a crucial role in job creation, income generation, and sustaining local economies. However, the productivity and efficiency of these activities are frequently hampered by limited access to modern agricultural technologies, poor infrastructure, and a declining rural workforce, partly a result of increasing rural-to-urban migration. Moreover, agricultural practices are intricately linked to seasonal variations, environmental factors, and socio-economic conditions. Labour availability remains particularly significant, as many agricultural tasks are labour-intensive and time-sensitive. The

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<sup>90</sup> J. Smith, "Agriculture and Economic Development in Developing Nations: A Review," *Journal of Rural Economics*, (2021): 213–225, <https://doi.org/10.1007/jre.2021.0173>.

<sup>91</sup> P. C. Okeke and A. L. Thompson, "Smallholder Farming Systems in Cross River North Senatorial District: An Analysis of Traditional Farming Practices," *Journal of African Agricultural Studies* 15, no. 2 (2020): 101–115.

outmigration of rural dwellers further exacerbates labour shortages, thereby hindering key agricultural operations and contributing to the underutilisation of fertile land<sup>92</sup>. A thorough understanding of these agricultural processes is vital for assessing the effects of sociodemographic transformations, such as migration, on agricultural productivity and rural development.

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Crop yield and land utilisation are vital indicators of agricultural productivity and sustainability, particularly in agrarian economies like Nigeria's. Crop yield refers to the quantity of agricultural produce harvested per unit area of land, typically measured in kilograms or tonnes per hectare. It is a critical determinant of food availability, farmer income, and overall agricultural performance. Higher crop yields generally reflect the efficient use of resources such as labour, fertilisers, and irrigation, while low yields may indicate challenges like soil degradation, pest infestations, limited access to agricultural technologies, or insufficient labour<sup>93</sup>. Land utilisation, on the other hand, concerns how and to what extent arable land is used for agricultural activities. This includes decisions on crop selection, cropping intensity, fallow periods, and the allocation of land for subsistence versus commercial farming. Efficient land utilisation ensures that available agricultural land is used optimally to support food production and sustain rural livelihoods. However, in many rural areas of Nigeria, land utilisation patterns are increasingly influenced by socio-economic factors, particularly rural-urban migration<sup>94</sup>. The migration of able-bodied individuals from rural to urban areas can lead to labour shortages, resulting in underutilisation of farmland, reduced cropping frequency, and, in some cases, land abandonment. These shifts can significantly impact crop yields and overall agricultural

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<sup>92</sup> U. O. Nwachukwu, "Migration Patterns and Their Impact on Agricultural Labour in Rural Nigeria," *International Journal of Rural Development*, (2022): 55–68, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijrd.2022.0047>.

<sup>93</sup> R. Adeyemo and W. Olayiwola, "Impact of Crop Yield on Agricultural Productivity in Nigeria," *Journal of Agricultural Economics*, (2020): 45–58.

<sup>94</sup> J. Eze and M. Okoro, "Land Utilisation Patterns in Nigerian Agriculture: A Critical Review," *Land Use Policy* 52 (2019): 142–155.



output<sup>95</sup>. In regions like Cross River North, where farming remains the primary economic activity, understanding the relationship between rural-urban migration, crop yield, and land use is crucial for developing effective agricultural and rural development policies.

The study investigates the effects of rural–urban migration on the availability of labour for agricultural activities in south-eastern Nigeria, with particular emphasis on its implications for food security<sup>96</sup>. Employing both qualitative and quantitative research

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methods, the study explores migration patterns, demographic changes, and their consequences for farming labour availability. Data were gathered through surveys and interviews with rural farmers across various communities in the region. The findings demonstrate that rural–urban migration, especially among young and economically active individuals, has considerably depleted the agricultural labour force in rural areas. This demographic shift has resulted in a marked decline in farm productivity, as predominantly elderly individuals and a reduced workforce are left to manage agricultural operations. The research further reveals that the migration of youth to urban centres in search of improved economic prospects has led to a shortage of labour in rural communities. This shortage has, in turn, hindered the timely execution of farming tasks and adversely affected crop yields and seasonal farming cycles.

Moreover, the study highlights the broader implications of this migration trend for food security and economic stability, as diminished agricultural production undermines both subsistence and commercial farming. The research advocates for policy measures aimed at incentivising youth participation in agriculture and fostering sustainable rural development. Such interventions are deemed essential to mitigating the adverse effects of rural–urban migration. Overall, the study offers critical insights into the interplay between migration and

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<sup>95</sup> A. Okwu and J. Imobighe, “The Effects of Rural-Urban Migration on Agricultural Productivity in Nigeria: Implications for Food Security,” *Rural Development Review*, (2018): 213–228.

<sup>96</sup> Chinedu N. Okeke and Ifeoma O. Umeh, *Effects of Rural–Urban Migration on Agricultural Labour in Southeastern Nigeria* (Nsukka: University of Nigeria Press, 2021).

agriculture and proposes strategies for enhancing labour availability and ensuring food security in south-eastern Nigeria.

Several scholars have investigated the effects of rural-urban migration on agricultural productivity and food security in Nigeria's northcentral region, particularly concerning labour shortages and declining agricultural output. As rural communities witness a continuous departure of young, economically active individuals in search of improved prospects in urban areas, the supply of agricultural labour has been markedly reduced<sup>97</sup>. The study utilises a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative interviews with farmers and quantitative surveys to evaluate changes in farming practices and

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productivity in communities affected by migration. The findings indicate a significant decline in the agricultural workforce, leading to reduced crop yields, smaller farm sizes, and a transition towards less labour-intensive farming methods. Additionally, the migration of younger, more skilled individuals has resulted in an ageing rural population, intensifying labour shortages and jeopardising the sustainability of agricultural practices. This demographic transformation has adversely affected food security and the economic resilience of rural households. The study emphasises the urgency of policy measures to promote youth engagement in agriculture, enhance rural infrastructure, and generate appealing economic prospects in rural settings, to reverse migration patterns. It enriches existing literature on rural-urban migration and its implications for agricultural development, offering valuable insights for policymakers and development practitioners striving to mitigate the negative outcomes of migration on Nigeria's agricultural sector.

Another empirical study conducted in Oyo State critically examined the influence of rural-urban migration on agricultural land use and crop productivity<sup>98</sup>. As in many developing nations, migration in Nigeria has drastically altered agricultural dynamics. Using both qualitative and

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<sup>97</sup> A. A. Yusuf and M. B. Adeoye, *Rural-Urban Migration and Its Impact on Agricultural Productivity in North-Central Nigeria* (Ibadan: Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, 2021).

<sup>98</sup> "The Effects of Rural-Urban Migration on Agricultural Productivity and Food Security in Southwestern Nigeria," *Journal of Agricultural Development Studies* 15, no. 2 (2022): 34–49.

quantitative data, this study assessed the impact of youth migration on the availability of farm labour and the utilisation of farmland. Surveys among rural households and local authorities revealed that the departure of young people in search of urban employment opportunities has significantly reduced the agricultural workforce. This has resulted in smaller areas of land being cultivated and a marked decline in crop yields. Older family members who remain in rural communities are frequently unable to manage farming activities effectively, leading to less intensive agricultural practices. The study concludes that rural-urban migration negatively affects food security and economic sustainability in Oyo State. It advocates for improvements in rural infrastructure, incentives for youth engagement in agriculture, and policies that enhance the attractiveness and sustainability of farming as a livelihood. The Dual Labour Market theory, developed by economists Michael Piore and

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Peter Doeringer in the early 1970s, has been employed to analyse the phenomenon under investigation <sup>99</sup>. This theory asserts that labour markets are not uniform; rather, they are bifurcated into two distinct segments: the primary and secondary labour markets. According to the theory, these two markets function under markedly different conditions. The primary labour market is typified by high wages, job security, opportunities for career progression, and favourable working environments. In contrast, the secondary labour market is defined by low wages, poor job security, restricted opportunities for advancement, and unstable working conditions.

The core assumptions of the theory are as follows:

- i. Labour markets are divided into two sectors, each operating independently of the other.
- ii. Workers in the secondary sector typically possess lower levels of education and skills, and they face limited prospects for upward mobility.

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<sup>99</sup> "Impact of Rural-Urban Migration on Agricultural Land Use and Crop Productivity in Oyo State, Nigeria," *African Journal of Rural Sociology* 10, no. 1 (2021): 58–73.

- iii. Migration is largely driven by the movement of individuals from the rural-based secondary sector to the urban-based primary sector in search of improved economic opportunities.

The Dual Labour Market theory is particularly relevant to the examination of rural-urban migration and its impact on agricultural productivity, especially in the Cross River North Senatorial District. The theory elucidates how disparities between the primary and secondary labour markets motivate migration from rural to urban settings<sup>100</sup>. In this context, agriculture, predominant in rural areas, functions as the secondary labour market, characterised by low remuneration, job insecurity, and poor working conditions. Conversely, urban areas represent the primary sector, offering better wages, job stability, and career development, thus attracting economically active youth. This migration pattern significantly affects the agricultural sector in Cross River North, as the departure of young people results in a depleted rural labour force. Older farmers, who remain behind, face challenges in sustaining

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productivity levels. Consequently, this demographic shift contributes to reduced agricultural output and underutilised arable land. The Dual Labour Market theory, therefore, offers a robust framework for understanding the dynamics between migration, labour availability, and agricultural productivity in the region.

## OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to assess the impact of ruralurban migration on food security in the Cross River North Senatorial District. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the extent to which rural-urban migration affects the availability of labour for agricultural activities in Bekwarra, Cross River North Senatorial District.
- ii. Analyse the effects of rural-urban

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<sup>100</sup> Michael J. Piore and Peter Doeringer, *Internal Labour Markets and Manpower Analysis* (Lexington, MA: Heath, 1971)

## migration on crop yield and land utilisation in Bekwarra, Cross River North Senatorial District.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The target population for this study comprised rural farming households, local authorities, and community leaders, all of whom could offer valuable insights into the socio-economic effects of ruralurban migration on agriculture in the Bekwarra Local Government Area, situated within the Cross River North Senatorial District. This area is predominantly agrarian, and its inhabitants are directly affected by shifts in food security resulting from migration. The research aimed to provide a detailed understanding of how ruralurban migration influences food availability and stability in the region<sup>101</sup>. To ensure adequate representation of all key subgroups within the population - such as male and female farmers, as well as younger and older agricultural workers - a stratified random sampling method was employed.

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A total of 300 respondents were selected from several rural communities across the ten wards of the local government area. This sample size was determined based on the number of farming households and the need for statistical reliability<sup>102</sup>. Such a sampling framework allowed for a wide range of perspectives to be captured. Data was collected using structured questionnaires administered to farmers, aiming to gather quantitative information on migration trends, labour availability, and crop productivity. Secondary data were also obtained from governmental reports and prior academic studies. Employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches offered a more comprehensive insight into the subject matter. Stratified sampling guaranteed representativeness, while the integration of surveys and

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<sup>101</sup> Aderanti Adepoju, *Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2008).

<sup>102</sup> National Population Commission (NPC) and ICF, *Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey 2018* (Abuja, Nigeria and Rockville, MD: NPC and ICF, 2019).

interviews enabled a deeper analysis of the complex interplay between rural-urban migration and food security. These methods were well-aligned with the research objectives.

RESULTS

In total, we analysed 289 copies of questionnaires that were returned from the total of 300 that were distributed to respondents. Results are presented in tabular form, analysed, and discussed below.

**Table 1:** Rural-urban migration has reduced the number of available workers for farming activities in Bekwarra

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	60	20.7
Agree	120	41.5
Strongly Disagree	44	15.2
Disagree	54	18.6
Undecided	11	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Computed by Authors, 2025

The data revealed that rural-urban migration significantly affects the availability of farm labour in Bekwarra. A combined 62.2% of

respondents (Strongly Agree – 20.7%, Agree – 41.5%) believed that migration has reduced the number of available workers for farming. This suggested a majority consensus on the negative impact of migration on agricultural labour. Conversely, 33.8% either disagreed (18.6%) or strongly disagreed (15.2%), indicating that a notable portion does not share this view. Only 4% remained undecided. These results highlight a critical labour gap in the agricultural sector, likely driven by youth and workforce movement to urban areas, which could have long-term consequences on crop production and rural economic stability if not addressed through targeted interventions.

**Table 2:** Lack of sufficient local labour for farming in Bekwarra has led to the hiring of migrant workers from neighbouring states.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	62	21.5
Agree	91	31.6
Strongly Disagree	48	16.5
Disagree	75	25.8
Undecided	13	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Computed by the Authors, 2025

The data in Table 2 indicated that a significant proportion of respondents believed that the shortage of local labour in Bekwarra has led to the hiring of migrant workers from neighbouring states. A combined 53.1% (21.5% strongly agree, 31.6% agree) supported this view, suggesting that rural-urban migration may be depleting the local workforce. Meanwhile, 42.3% (25.8% disagree, 16.5% strongly disagree) do not share this opinion, reflecting a notable division in perception. Only 4.5% remained undecided. This result implies that while more than half of the respondents acknowledged labour shortages due to migration, a considerable portion either disagrees or sees other factors at play. These findings highlight labour dynamics as a critical issue in local agricultural productivity.

**Table 3:** Rural-urban migration has led to a decline in the availability of labour for farming activities in this area

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	57	19.7
Agree	103	35.6 17
Strongly Disagree	49	18
Disagree	52	9.6
Undecided	28	<b>100</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>289</b>	

**Source:** Computed by the Authors, 2025

The survey results indicated that rural-urban migration has significantly affected labour availability for farming in Bekwarra Local

Government Area. A combined 55.3% of respondents (19.7% strongly agree, 35.6% agree) believed that migration has reduced farming labour, suggesting a notable concern among the population. Conversely, 35% of respondents (17% strongly disagree, 18% disagree) do not perceive a decline in labour availability, indicating some variation in experience or perception. Meanwhile, 9.6% remain undecided, reflecting uncertainty or lack of direct impact. Overall, the data shows that over half of the respondents recognise a negative impact of migration on farming labour, which could directly influence agricultural productivity and land use patterns in the area.

**Table 4:** Rural-urban migration and its effects on underutilisation or abandonment of farmlands in the community.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	59	20.5
Agree	94	32.5
Strongly Disagree	48	16.5
Disagree	76	26.3
Undecided	12	4.3
<b>Total</b>	289	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Computed by the Authors, 2025

The data revealed that a significant portion of respondents agree that rural-urban migration has contributed to farmland underutilisation or abandonment in Bekwarra Local Government Area. Specifically, 32.5% agreed and 20.5% strongly agreed, totalling 53% who believed migration negatively impacts land use. Conversely, 26.3% disagreed and 16.5% strongly disagreed, indicating that 42.8% do not share this view. Only 4.3% remained undecided. This suggested that while a majority perceive a decline in land use due to migration, a considerable portion of the population either disagrees or has not observed this trend. The data highlighted the need for further investigation into the causes and consequences of migration, as well as potential strategies to encourage effective land utilisation in the area.



## DISCUSSION

Findings from Tables 1 and 2 underscore the significant impact of rural-urban migration on agricultural labour availability in Bekwarra LGA. Most respondents (62.2%) affirmed that migration has reduced the number of available workers for farming, while 53.1% acknowledged that the resulting labour gap has necessitated the hiring of migrant workers from neighbouring states. These perceptions suggested a growing dependence on external labour, likely due to the emigration of able-bodied youths seeking opportunities in urban centres. These findings indicated that rural-urban migration in Nigeria contributes to rural labour shortages, hampering agricultural productivity. Similarly, *the finding* noted that migration disrupts traditional farming structures, leading to a reliance on hired labour and reduced farm efficiency. The evidence from Bekwarra mirrors these empirical reviews, highlighting how migration reshapes labour patterns and places additional pressure on local agricultural systems. The survey findings revealed a significant concern regarding the impact of rural-urban migration on both labour availability and land use in Bekwarra LGA. Over half of the respondents (55.3%) agreed that migration has led to a decline in the availability of farming labour. This revealed that migration often results in a shortage of agricultural workers, particularly affecting smallholder farms. Regarding farmland underutilisation, 53% of respondents agreed that migration has led to abandoned or underutilised farmlands. However, 42.8% of respondents disagreed, indicating varying experiences and perceptions. This suggests that while migration may be a factor, other local dynamics could also play a role in farmland utilisation. Further investigation is needed to explore these complexities.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicated that rural-urban migration has a notable impact on food security through the decline of agricultural labour availability and land utilisation in Bekwarra LGA. The emigration of young and able-bodied individuals has led to a significant labour shortage, with 62.2% of respondents affirming reduced access to farm workers and over half acknowledging a reliance on external

migrant labour to bridge the gap. Furthermore, the study shows that 53% of respondents believe migration has resulted in underutilised or abandoned farmland. However, a notable portion of the population holds a different view, suggesting the need to explore other contributing factors such as land tenure issues, economic conditions, or climate variability. Overall, rural-urban migration has reshaped traditional agricultural practices in Bekwarra, posing both challenges and opportunities for future land use planning and rural development.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Stemming from the above findings, the following are recommended.

- i. To mitigate the decline in farm labour, local authorities should implement rural development programmes that encourage youth engagement in agriculture through training, financial incentives, and mechanisation support.
- ii. Governments at all levels should establish land management initiatives that support cooperative farming and provide access to idle land for willing local farmers. This will address issues relating to the underutilisation of viable land in the study area.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper titled “Effects of Rural-Urban Migration on Food Security in Bekwarra North Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria”. The research was conducted independently and was not influenced by any personal, financial or institutional interest that could affect the objectivity, integrity, or validity of the study. All sources of data and funding (if any) have been duly acknowledged.

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## THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN MITIGATING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS' MIGRATION IN NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*Driven by push factors such as unemployment, insecurity, and poor infrastructure, the emigration of young Nigerian professionals has become a growing concern with significant socio-economic consequences. This study examines the mediating role of public libraries in mitigating the migration of young professionals in Nigeria. Adopting a descriptive survey design and a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach, the study integrated quantitative and qualitative data from 892 participants across eight professional sectors: medical doctors, nurses, pharmacists, accountants, lawyers, engineers, librarians, and journalists. Participants were recruited using a snowball sampling technique via WhatsApp platforms of professional associations. Data were collected using a selfadministered Google Forms questionnaire with both closed- and openended items. Descriptive statistics and narrative analysis were used to analyse the data. Findings revealed that 74.8% of respondents had considered migrating abroad, citing job opportunities, income potential, and insecurity as key drivers. However, 67.2% had accessed public libraries within the past year, primarily for study, career development, and internet use. Importantly, 74% believed that libraries could help reduce youth migration by providing opportunities for skill-building and empowerment. The study concludes that public libraries, if strategically modernised and integrated into national development*

*frameworks, can serve as vital institutions for professional empowerment and local talent retention in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Public libraries, Migration, Youth empowerment, Professional retention, Nigeria, Mediating role

## **LE ROLE MEDiateur DES BIBLIOTHEQUES PUBLIQUES DANS LA REDUCTION DE LA MIGRATION DES JEUNES PROFESSIONNELS AU NIGERIA**

### **Résumé**

*Sous l'effet de facteurs de poussée tels que le chômage, l'insécurité et la faiblesse des infrastructures, l'émigration des jeunes professionnels nigériens devient une préoccupation croissante aux conséquences socioéconomiques notables. Cette étude examine le rôle médiateur des bibliothèques publiques dans l'atténuation de la migration de ces jeunes professionnels au Nigeria. En adoptant une approche méthodologique mixte convergente et un plan d'enquête descriptive, l'étude a recueilli des données quantitatives et qualitatives auprès de 892 participants issus de huit secteurs professionnels : médecins, infirmiers, pharmaciens, comptables, avocats, ingénieurs, bibliothécaires et journalistes. Les participants ont été recrutés selon la méthode d'échantillonnage en boule de neige, à travers les plateformes WhatsApp des associations professionnelles. Les données ont été collectées à l'aide d'un questionnaire Google Forms auto-administré, comportant à la fois des questions fermées et ouvertes. L'analyse a été effectuée à l'aide de statistiques descriptives et d'une analyse narrative. Les résultats ont révélé que 74,8 % des répondants avaient envisagé de migrer à l'étranger, invoquant les opportunités d'emploi, le potentiel de revenus et l'insécurité comme facteurs déterminants. Toutefois, 67,2 % avaient fréquenté des bibliothèques publiques au cours de l'année écoulée, principalement pour des raisons d'étude, de développement professionnel et d'accès à Internet. De manière significative, 74 % estimaient que les bibliothèques pouvaient contribuer à réduire la migration des jeunes en offrant des opportunités de formation et d'autonomisation. L'étude conclut que les bibliothèques publiques, si elles sont modernisées de manière stratégique et intégrées dans les cadres nationaux de développement, peuvent jouer un rôle crucial dans l'autonomisation des professionnels et la rétention des talents locaux au Nigeria.*

**Mots-clés :** Bibliothèques publiques, Migration, Autonomisation des jeunes, Rétention professionnelle, Nigeria, Rôle médiateur

## INTRODUCTION

Public libraries, traditionally viewed as repositories of books and silent reading spaces, are increasingly recognised as dynamic agents of change within modern societies. In the context of professional migration, particularly among young Nigerians, public libraries hold significant potential to serve as localised interventions that mitigate the drivers of emigration. As institutions committed to knowledge access, public engagement, and lifelong learning, libraries provide critical services such as digital literacy training, career development resources, entrepreneurship support, and access to online certifications. These services are essential in equipping young professionals with the skills and opportunities needed to thrive locally, thereby addressing some of the socioeconomic pressures that contribute to outward migration.<sup>103</sup> In Africa, particularly Nigeria, the migration of young professionals is largely attributed to limited economic opportunities, poor infrastructure, insecurity, and weak institutional support.<sup>104</sup> Within this context, public libraries can play a transformative role by offering inclusive and accessible services aimed at professional empowerment. For instance, public libraries can function as community hubs that facilitate job search activities, host career mentoring sessions, and offer digital platforms for remote learning and certification.<sup>105</sup> These interventions not only enhance employability but also foster a sense of agency and belonging among youth, reducing their reliance on

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<sup>103</sup> Isch, E. *The Public Library and Intersections of Houselessness in Two Small Cities of Interior British Columbia*. Master's thesis, University of British Columbia, Okanagan, 2025. <https://open.library.ubc.ca/media/download/pdf/24/1.0447689/4>.

<sup>104</sup> Adegoke, D. "'Japa': An Exploratory Study of the Roles of Social Media in an Out-Migration Trend in Nigeria." *Social Media + Society* 9, no. 4 (2023): 0563051231203691.

<sup>105</sup> Igwebuike, E. C., Udeh, S. N., and Okonkwo, O. M. "Effects of Financial Deepening on Economic Growth of Nigeria (1981–2016)." *International Academy Journal of Business Administration Annals* 7, no. 1 (2019): 54–67.



international migration as a pathway to success. Globally, other developing nations are beginning to explore the strategic repositioning of public libraries in response to similar challenges. For example, India has invested in modernising public libraries to support digital access and youth entrepreneurship, while Brazil utilises

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community libraries to foster social inclusion and skill-building among marginalised groups.<sup>106</sup> Migration has historically been a cornerstone of global demographic shifts, but in recent decades, the movement of young professionals has emerged as a distinct and accelerating trend. In Europe, countries such as Germany and the United Kingdom have seen significant inflows of skilled labour, largely due to favourable immigration policies, labour shortages, and robust economic infrastructures.<sup>107</sup> Simultaneously, nations in Eastern Europe like Romania and Bulgaria are experiencing a “brain drain,” as their young professionals migrate westward in search of better salaries and career advancement opportunities.<sup>108</sup> This east-to-west migration dynamic reflects broader patterns across the continent, highlighting a widening divide between source and destination countries regarding economic opportunity and institutional support. Asia presents a contrasting yet equally compelling narrative. In countries like India, the Philippines, and China, large cohorts of young professionals migrate annually to Western nations, driven by limited domestic employment opportunities, political instability, or the allure of higher education and competitive job markets abroad.<sup>109</sup> The Gulf States also attract significant numbers of Asian professionals, particularly in engineering, medicine, and IT fields. However, these migratory trends are often marked by exploitative labour practices and limited social integration, complicating the migration experience.<sup>110</sup> Thus, while migration offers

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<sup>106</sup> Haryanto, H., Laugu, N., and Zulaikha, S. R. “Public Libraries as Incubators for Social Inclusion and Entrepreneurship for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Progressive Transformation.” *Jurnal Kependidikan: Jurnal Hasil Penelitian Dan Kajian Kepustakaan Di Bidang Pendidikan, Pengajaran Dan Pembelajaran* 10, no. 2 (2024): 760–770.

<sup>107</sup> Nar, M. S., and Nar, M. “Examining the Relationship between Globalization and Sustainable Migration in OECD Countries.” *Problemy Ekorozwoju* 20, no. 1 (2025): 129–142.

<sup>108</sup> Chonevski, A. *The Balkan Brain-Drain in Cosmopolitan Society: A Narrative Approach*. Doctoral dissertation, Barry University, 2024.

<sup>109</sup> Castles, S. “The Forces Driving Global Migration.” In *Human Trafficking*, edited by Maggy Lee. Routledge, 2017.

<sup>110</sup> Konan, E. R. U. *Circular Migration and Unequal Treatment of Third-Country Nationals: An*

a route to socioeconomic mobility, it also presents structural challenges both to sending and receiving nations.

In North and South America, the United States and Canada continue to be prime destinations for skilled migrants, bolstered by strong

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educational institutions and innovation-driven economies. Latin American professionals, especially from countries like Venezuela, Brazil, and Argentina, often seek refuge from economic crises and political turbulence by relocating to North America or Europe.<sup>111</sup>

Meanwhile, Australia's immigration strategy prioritises skilled migrants, with its points-based system attracting professionals from across Asia and Africa.<sup>112</sup> Despite welcoming policies, many migrants still face integration barriers, including underemployment and credential recognition challenges, which can hinder their full economic participation. Africa, however, tells a more pressing story. The continent has become a major source of professional migration, often labelled as a "brain drain" due to the exodus of skilled labour in critical sectors like healthcare, education, and technology. Countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya are experiencing significant outflows of young professionals who seek greener pastures in the UK, Canada, and the United States, citing reasons such as poor governance, limited career prospects, and insecurity.<sup>113</sup> The effects are deeply felt, as the loss of talent undermines development goals, weakens public institutions, and exacerbates socioeconomic inequality. Yet, within this trend lies an underexplored potential: the role of local institutions, such as public libraries, in either mitigating or amplifying these migration patterns.

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Intersectional Analysis of Migration across Europe, the Gulf Region, and West Africa. Master's thesis, Webster University, 2024.

<sup>111</sup> Freier, L. F., and Doña-Reveco, C. "Introduction: Latin American Political and Policy Responses to Venezuelan Displacement." *International Migration* 60, no. 1 (2022).

<sup>112</sup> Gonçalves, A. M. P., and Pinto, S. *Harmonising Migration: An Analysis of Points-Based Systems Adapting the Best Practices from Canada, Australia, and the UK for a Unified European Union Immigration Framework*. Doctoral dissertation, 2024.

<sup>113</sup> Adegoke, D. "'Japa': An Exploratory Study of the Roles of Social Media in an Out-Migration Trend in Nigeria." *Social Media + Society* 9, no. 4 (2023): 0563051231203691.

In the Nigerian context, the migration of young professionals has intensified in recent years due to deteriorating socio-economic conditions.<sup>114</sup> The phenomenon, popularly referred to as the "Japa" syndrome, reflects a mass exodus of skilled individuals seeking better opportunities abroad due to factors such as economic hardship, political instability, weak healthcare and education systems, and

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insecurity.<sup>115</sup> This migration trend has reached alarming proportions, particularly among professionals in the health, legal, education, and engineering sectors, where the loss of talent significantly undermines national development. Despite this ongoing challenge, communitybased institutions like public libraries remain largely excluded from migration policy dialogues and national retention strategies. Yet, public libraries in Nigeria are among the most accessible educational institutions and have shown potential in bridging gaps in digital literacy, access to knowledge, and youth empowerment.<sup>14</sup> The value of public libraries in promoting inclusive learning, skill development, and community engagement. However, the existing literature falls short of connecting these services to youth migration outcomes or examining how libraries could be repositioned to offer sustainable alternatives to international migration. This underexplored intersection between public librarianship and youth migration presents a critical research gap. While there is growing scholarly interest in the socio-economic drivers of Nigerian brain drain, few empirical studies have assessed how local institutions such as libraries can function as mediating agents of change. Given the high rates of digital exclusion, job insecurity, and professional frustration reported among Nigerian youth, strategically rethinking the role of libraries could offer viable solutions for professional retention and national capacity building.

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<sup>114</sup> Obani, Eberechukwu Faith, and Boris Happy Odalonu. 2023. "Impact of Rising Migration on Socio-Economic Development of Nigeria (2015-2022)". *African Journal of Humanities and Contemporary Education Research* 10 (1):39-56. <https://publications.afropolitanjournals.com/index.php/ajhcer/article/view/354>.

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Communities through Digital Competencies and Advocacy. *Library Trends*, 72(4), 712-726. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2024.a949579>

While migration among young professionals is a global phenomenon with varying regional dynamics, the role of community-based institutions in shaping these trends remains largely understudied. In the Nigerian context, public libraries are often overlooked in national development strategies, despite their potential to provide access to information, digital literacy, and career development resources. As a result of this gap, this study seeks to examine how public libraries function as mediating agents of change, either by equipping young professionals with the tools to thrive locally or by facilitating informed migration decisions. Therefore, understanding this role is crucial in addressing the systemic factors contributing to professional migration and in crafting sustainable solutions that will strengthen human capital retention in Nigeria.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of the study is to investigate the dynamics of migration patterns among young professionals in Nigeria and examine the role of public libraries as a mediating agent of change in addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with professional migration. While the specific objectives are to:

1. examine the key factors influencing the migration of young professionals from Nigeria to other countries.
2. analyse global migration patterns of young professionals across the globe, with a focus on comparative trends relevant to Nigeria.
3. assess the current roles and capacity of public libraries in Nigeria to support young professionals.
4. explore the potential of public libraries as strategic institutions for mitigating professional migration and promoting local opportunities for youth development.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design and employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach to investigate the migration intentions of young professionals in Nigeria and the potential mediating role of public libraries in addressing this phenomenon. The

methodological framework followed Creswell and Plano Clark's<sup>116</sup> recommendations for integrating quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis concurrently, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of both statistical trends and personal experiences. To reach the target population of young professionals across diverse sectors in Nigeria, the study employed a snowball sampling technique. Initial contact was made with individuals from

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various professional bodies, including medical doctors, nurses, pharmacists, chartered accountants, lawyers, engineers, librarians, and journalists. These key contacts were asked to disseminate the survey link through their association's WhatsApp group platforms and encourage their colleagues to participate in the study. This method was instrumental in expanding the study's reach, particularly given the dispersed nature of the target population across professional and geographical boundaries. Data were collected over four months, from November 28, 2024, to March 28, 2025. A self-administered questionnaire was developed using Google Forms and included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The instrument was designed to capture both the measurable aspects of migration intentions (quantitative data) and rich, contextual insights into participants' motivations, perceptions, and lived experiences (qualitative data). Each survey link was accompanied by an introductory note outlining the purpose of the study and an informed consent form to ensure ethical compliance. Participation was voluntary, and participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. To enhance the reliability and validity of the research instrument, it was reviewed by two subject-matter experts in social sciences to evaluate the content clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives. A pilot study involving 25 professionals was conducted to pretest the instrument. Feedback from the pilot informed revisions to improve question clarity and logical flow. The internal consistency of the Likert-scale items was measured using Cronbach's alpha, which indicated a high level of reliability. By the close of the data collection period, a total of 892 responses had been

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<sup>116</sup> Creswell, J. W., and Plano Clark, V. L. *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2018.

received. These responses formed the basis of the final analysis. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations, to interpret patterns in demographic characteristics and migration-related variables. For the qualitative component, thematic analysis was employed to identify emerging themes from participants' open-ended responses, providing deeper insight into their experiences and perspectives. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant gatekeepers of each professional group's communication platform before survey distribution. All data were stored securely and used solely for academic purposes, in compliance with ethical standards and data protection regulations.

While the study employed descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations to interpret trends in the quantitative data, no inferential statistical tests (such as crosstabulations, chi-square tests, correlations, or regressions) were conducted to examine the strength or direction of relationships between variables of interest, such as between public library usage and migration intention. As such, the findings provide a broad overview of participant perceptions and behaviours but do not allow for conclusions about statistical significance or causal associations. This limitation is acknowledged and suggests the need for further studies employing more robust inferential techniques to deepen understanding of these relationships and support evidence-based policy interventions.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Information (N = 892)

Category	Subcategory	Frequency (n=892)	Percentage (%)
Age	Under 25	223	25%
	25–34	356	40%
	35–44	178	20%
	45 and above	135	15%
Gender	Male	535	60%

	Female	339	38%
	Prefer not to say	18	2%
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<b>Professional</b>			
<b>Field</b>	Medical Doctor	134	15%
	Nurse	89	10%
	Pharmacist	89	10%
	Chartered	71	8%
	Accountant		
	Lawyer	107	12%
	Engineer	160	18%
	Librarian	116	13%
	Journalist	36	4%
	Other	89	10%
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<b>Years of Professional Experience</b>			
	Less than 1 year	71	8%
	1–5 years	356	40%
	6–10 years	267	30%
	More than 10 years	198	22%
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<b>Geopolitical Zone</b>			
	South-West	214	24%
	South-East	116	13%
	South-South	125	14%
	North-Central	143	16%
	North-East	107	12%
	North-West	187	21%

**Source: Author’s Work, 2024**

As shown in Table 1, the demographic profile of the 892 respondents provides a clear understanding of the young professional population in Nigeria. Most participants (40%) were within the 25–34 age range, while those under 25 constituted 25%, indicating that approximately 65% of the sample were young adults. This age distribution aligns with the study's focus on early-career professionals and supports the relevance of examining migration patterns within this cohort. Older respondents were fewer, with 20% aged 35–44 and 15% aged 45 and

above, which may reflect lower migration intent among more established professionals. In terms of gender, 60% of participants identified as male and 38% as female, while 2% preferred not to disclose their gender. This male dominance may be attributed to the representation of professions like engineering and law, where gender disparities persist. Participants came from a broad spectrum of professional fields. Engineers represented the largest proportion (18%), followed by medical doctors (15%), librarians (13%), and lawyers (12%). Nurses and pharmacists each accounted for 10%, chartered accountants 8%, and journalists the smallest share at 4%. An additional 10% identified with other professional backgrounds. This wide disciplinary representation suggests that the sample captures perspectives from sectors most affected by professional migration, particularly in health, law, technology, and education. Regarding work experience, most participants (40%) reported between 1–5 years of professional experience, followed by 30% with 6–10 years, 22% with more than 10 years, and only 8% with less than one year. This distribution implies that most respondents are in the early to mid-stages of their careers - periods typically associated with heightened career mobility and decision-making regarding emigration. Consequently, this cohort provides a valuable lens for understanding the motivations and challenges related to international migration among Nigeria's skilled workforce.

**Table 2: Factors of Migration (N = 892)**

Question	Yes	No
Have you considered migrating abroad in the past 2 years?	667 (78%)	225 (25.2%)
Reason	Frequency (n-667)	Percentage (%)
Better job opportunities	543	81.4
Higher income	525	78.7
Insecurity and safety concerns	504	75.6
Poor healthcare and infrastructure	457	68.5



Access to quality education	421	63.2
Political instability	396	59.4
Family or social connections abroad	260	38.9
Other (poor governance, discrimination)	43	6.4

**Source: Author's Work, 2024**

As shown in Table 2, a substantial majority of participants (74.8%) reported that they had considered migrating abroad within the past two years, indicating a strong inclination toward international relocation among Nigerian young professionals. In contrast, only 25.2% stated that they had not contemplated migration during the same period. Among those expressing migration intentions, the leading motivating factors were the pursuit of better job opportunities (81.4%), the prospect of earning a higher income (78.7%), and concerns about insecurity and personal safety (75.6%). Other frequently cited drivers included dissatisfaction with the healthcare system and infrastructural deficiencies (68.5%), limited access to quality education (63.2%), and political instability (59.4%). Additionally, 38.9% of respondents indicated that social or familial ties abroad influenced their decision to consider emigration. These findings highlight the multifaceted nature of migration motivations, rooted primarily in economic and security concerns. The relative influence of each factor is further detailed through the mean scores and standard deviations presented in Table 3, which quantify the perceived impact of each variable on respondents' migration decisions.

**Table 3: Extent to Which Selected Factors Influence Migration Decisions (N = 892)**

Factor	M	SD
Job opportunities	4.53	0.71
Insecurity	4.38	0.84
Educational opportunities	4.12	0.93

Health system quality	4.08	0.97
Economic conditions	4.31	0.76
Political stability	4.00	1.02

**Source: Author’s Work, 2024**

As shown in Table 3, job opportunities had the highest mean score ( $M = 4.53$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ), indicating that it is the most influential factor driving migration intentions among respondents. This was followed by insecurity ( $M = 4.38$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ) and overall economic conditions ( $M = 4.31$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ), both of which also received high ratings. These results suggest that professional advancement, financial prospects, and concerns about personal safety are the primary considerations influencing the decision to migrate. Although political stability had the lowest mean score ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ), it was still rated above average on the 5-point scale, implying that it remains a significant factor in shaping migration decisions. The overall high mean values across all variables demonstrate that young professionals perceive multiple, interrelated systemic challenges as contributing to their desire to seek opportunities abroad.

**Table 4: Awareness of Professional Migration and Destination Countries for Skilled Professionals (N = 892)**

Category	Response Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Are you aware of young professionals migrating from other countries?	Yes	734	82.2%
	No	158	17.8%
Which countries do you think attract the most skilled professionals globally?	United States	742	83.2%

Canada	671	75.2%
United Kingdom	625	70.0%
Australia	512	57.4%
Germany	473	53.0%
United Arab Emirates	308	34.5%
Other	119	13.3%

**Source: Author's Work, 2024**

As presented in Table 4, 82.2% of respondents indicated awareness of young professionals migrating from other African countries, suggesting a high level of global migration awareness among Nigerian participants. This finding reflects an understanding that skilled migration is not a uniquely Nigerian issue, but part of a broader international phenomenon affecting many developing nations. In contrast, 17.8% of respondents reported no such awareness, which may reflect limited exposure to global discourse or a more localised perspective on migration. Participants were also asked to identify countries they believe attract the most skilled professionals worldwide. The United States was the most frequently mentioned (83.2%), likely due to its well-established reputation for high-paying employment, career advancement opportunities, and high living standards. Canada (75.2%) and the United Kingdom (70.0%) followed closely, both being known for stable political systems, robust healthcare and education sectors, and inclusive immigration policies. Other commonly cited destinations included Australia (57.4%) and Germany (53.0%), which are perceived to offer strong economies and high demand for skilled labour, particularly in technical and healthcare fields. The United Arab Emirates was selected by 34.5% of respondents, reflecting its emergence as a regional hub for skilled professionals, particularly in sectors such as construction, engineering, and finance. These responses collectively demonstrate participants' awareness of global labour markets and the varied factors that shape international migration trends among skilled professionals.

**Table 5: Public Library Usage (N = 892)**

Question	Yes	No
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Have you used a public library in Nigeria in the past 12 months?	600 (67.2%)	292 (32.8%)
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**Source: Author’s Work, 2024**

*How would you rate the capacity of public libraries in your area to support young professionals?*

A significant proportion of participants (67.2%) indicated that they had utilised public libraries in the past 12 months, signaling that libraries remain important for young professionals despite facing challenges such as limited resources and underfunding. The primary reasons for using libraries were related to study and professional growth. Many participants visited libraries for research and study purposes, especially when preparing for exams or conducting jobrelated research. A medical doctor shared, “I often visit the library when I need to focus on studying for professional exams or conducting research for work-related projects”. This emphasises the critical role that libraries play in fostering academic and professional development in a peaceful, resource-rich environment. In addition to study and research, career development was another significant reason for library visits. Many young professionals reported using libraries to engage in career-related activities such as accessing professional development resources and participating in workshops.

“I visit the library for career development seminars and networking events. It has helped me stay informed about trends in my field” (An Engineer). Libraries, therefore, serve as hubs for career growth, offering more than just books but also professional guidance and networking opportunities. Another notable finding was the high percentage of participants (over 60%) who used libraries to access free internet services. Given the often-unreliable internet access at home or in workplaces, public libraries provide an essential access point for young professionals seeking to conduct research, communicate, or engage with online learning platforms. “I rely on the library for internet access, especially since my home internet connection is unreliable” (A lawyer stated). This highlights the crucial role that libraries play in

bridging the digital divide, especially in a country where internet access remains a significant barrier for many.

### *Rating the Capacity of Public Libraries*

When participants were asked to evaluate the capacity of public libraries in their area to support young professionals, mixed reviews were received. Many participants rated the availability of up-to-date resources, pointing to the outdated nature of materials in certain libraries. One participant, a lawyer, noted, "The resources in my local library are outdated, especially in my field of Law. It would help if there were more current legal materials". This feedback underscores a key challenge for libraries: the need to modernise and update their collections to match the evolving demands of the professional world. The perspective on the internet and ICT facilities was similarly divided. While some participants expressed satisfaction with the available internet access, others pointed to challenges with slow connections and occasional outages. "The internet facilities at the library are slow and sometimes unusable, which makes it hard to complete tasks efficiently" (Engineer). This suggests that while libraries are seen as important resources for digital engagement, there remains a need for significant investment in improving ICT infrastructure to ensure a smooth and efficient user experience. Career development programmes in public libraries also received mixed ratings. Many participants (about 40%) rated the availability of these programmes as "Fair," with some expressing a desire for more structured and specialised career development initiatives. This points to a significant gap in services that could be filled by public libraries, which are uniquely positioned to offer ongoing career development resources tailored to the needs of young professionals. In terms of training and entrepreneurial programmes, the responses echoed similar sentiments. While some participants recognised the importance of skill-building activities, many rated these programmes as only "Fair." This suggests that libraries could do more to cater to the specific skill development needs of young professionals, especially in areas like digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and soft skills. Lastly, participants also evaluated the youth engagement and empowerment initiatives offered by public libraries. Many participants rated these programmes as "Fair,"

acknowledging their existence but highlighting their limitations in terms of impact.

**Table 6: Potentials of Libraries (N = 892)**

Question	Yes	No
Do you believe public libraries can help reduce youth migration through skill-building and empowerment?	660 (74.0%)	232 (26.0%)

**Source: Author’s Work, 2024**

Of the 892 respondents, a substantial majority (74%) indicated that they believe public libraries can play a role in mitigating youth migration. In contrast, (26%) did not share this view. These results highlight a strong perception among young professionals that public libraries possess the potential to serve as platforms for skill development and empowerment.

*In what ways do you think public libraries can contribute to professional development and reduce the need to migrate abroad?*

Participants widely expressed that public libraries hold untapped potential to serve as catalysts for professional development and local retention of young talent in Nigeria. A recurring theme in the responses was the idea that libraries could serve as access points for upskilling, especially for professionals in underserved regions. An engineer noted, “If public libraries offered consistent ICT training and certification programmes, I wouldn’t need to consider spending so much to access these services elsewhere or think about relocating abroad just to grow professionally.” Several participants emphasised the importance of career development programming. A medical doctor explained that “public libraries could organise career talks, mentoring programmes, and CV writing workshops, which would help young professionals better navigate local job markets”. In this view, libraries can act as bridges between academic qualifications and real-world employability,

something that is often cited as a reason for professional migration. The issue of digital access and resources was also central. Many respondents suggested that with upgraded internet infrastructure and online learning partnerships, public libraries could serve as “learning hubs for global certifications,” such as Microsoft, Google, or Coursera-based programmes (stated by a pharmacist). This would reduce the need to migrate for such qualifications. Additionally, entrepreneurial support was mentioned frequently. Overall, the consensus among participants was that public libraries could significantly influence professional development and youth retention if strategically repositioned. Their role as inclusive, community-centred platforms was repeatedly highlighted as a powerful, yet underutilised, solution to Nigeria’s ongoing migration challenges.

## DISCUSSION

This study sought to investigate the dynamics of migration among young professionals in Nigeria and assess the role of public libraries as mediating institutions capable of reducing professional emigration through empowerment and skill-building. The findings corroborate existing literature on the migration trends and drivers among young professionals and highlight the latent potential of public libraries in offering localised solutions to this challenge. The study revealed that a significant proportion (74.8%) of young professionals in Nigeria have considered migrating abroad in the past two years. The leading factors influencing this decision included better job opportunities, higher income potential, and insecurity, each cited by over 75% of respondents. These findings are in line with previous studies, such as those by Liu<sup>117</sup> and Ojo et al.<sup>118</sup>, which identified economic hardship, limited professional advancement, and safety concerns as dominant “push” factors prompting skilled migration from Nigeria. Oguejiofor

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<sup>117</sup> Liu, J. J. “Middle-Class Youth Fleeing Nigeria: Rethinking African Survival Migration through the Japa Phenomenon.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 50, no. 16 (2024): 4021–4040.

<sup>118</sup> Ojo, T. O., Oladejo, B. P., Afolabi, B. K., Osungbade, A. D., Anyanwu, P. C., and Shaibu-Ekha, I. “Why Move Abroad? Factors Influencing Migration Intentions of Final Year Students of HealthRelated Disciplines in Nigeria.” *BMC Medical Education* 23, no. 1 (2023): 742.

and Onwuasoigwe<sup>119</sup> further reinforce this narrative by identifying unemployment and political instability as major drivers behind the surge in youth migration under the "Japa" phenomenon. The global migration awareness among participants was also high, with over 82% acknowledging that similar trends exist in countries like India, Ghana, and the Philippines. Popular migration destinations identified by respondents, such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, correspond with global reports that emphasise the pull of these countries due to better work conditions, higher living standards, and political stability. This awareness situates Nigeria's experience within a broader global context of professional mobility driven by socio-economic inequalities between nations. The study revealed that a considerable number of respondents (67.2%) had used a public library in Nigeria within the past 12 months, primarily for research,

study, career development, and internet access. This reinforces literature from Adebayo<sup>19</sup> and Igwebuike et al.<sup>120</sup>, which highlights the essential services public libraries provide, especially in underserved areas. Participants in this study viewed libraries not just as academic spaces but as critical access points for professional growth and digital empowerment. However, mixed assessments regarding the capacity of libraries were notable. While respondents recognised their value, many pointed out shortcomings in up-to-date resources, reliable ICT infrastructure, and structured programming. These findings echo those of Adeyemi et al.<sup>121,122</sup>, who reported a lack of formalised CSR frameworks and inconsistency in library programming, despite the

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<sup>119</sup> Oguejiofor, P. O., and Onwuasoigwe, C. "Hordes of Struggling African Youths Will Continue to Migrate en Masse to Developed Countries: The Political Economy of 'Japa' from Nigeria to the United Kingdom (2015–2023)." *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 8, no. 4 (2024).

<sup>120</sup> Igwebuike, E. C., Udeh, S. N., and Okonkwo, O. M. "Effects of Financial Deepening on Economic Growth of Nigeria (1981–2016)." *International Academy Journal of Business Administration Annals* 7, no. 1 (2019): 54–67.

<sup>121</sup> Adeyemi, I. O., Abiona, B. F., Adebisi, A. I., Ishola, K. I., and Ogunlowo, H. D. "Assessment of Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Selected Public Libraries in South-West and NorthCentral, Nigeria." *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility* 9, no. 3 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-023-00086-4>.

<sup>122</sup> Adeyemi, I. O., Abiona, B. F., Adebisi, A. I., Ishola, K. I., and Ogunlowo, H. D. "Assessment of Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Selected Public Libraries in South-West and NorthCentral, Nigeria." *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility* 9, no. 3 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-023-00086-4>.



presence of some socio-economic initiatives. Eiriemiokhale and Sulyman<sup>123</sup> also acknowledged that despite strong leadership within the library sector, underfunding and weak policy support have hindered the full realisation of libraries' strategic roles. Participants proposed practical ways in which libraries could be repositioned to curb youth migration. These included offering certification-based ICT training, entrepreneurship development programmes, job readiness workshops, and acting as incubators for start-ups. As noted by a pharmacist, "Public libraries could become certification hubs for Google, Microsoft, and Coursera programmes this alone would attract many young people who are looking to upskill." This suggestion aligns with Bashorun<sup>124</sup>, who emphasised the need for professional empowerment within Nigeria as a core strategy to slow emigration.

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<sup>19</sup> Adebayo, F. A. "University Education and Poverty Alleviation as Mechanisms for Enhancing Youth Development in Nigeria." *International Journal of Psychology and Counseling* 4, no. 1 (2012): 1–5.

Notably, 74% of respondents believed that public libraries could help reduce youth migration if equipped with relevant programmes. Respondents emphasised the need for libraries to provide tailored services for career growth, especially in areas like CV writing, mentorship, business funding information, and digital literacy training. These perspectives reflect the findings of Aregbesola et al.<sup>125</sup>, who argue that libraries, as knowledge hubs, must transition into roles that promote sustainable development by directly addressing the economic and social gaps that compel migration. The study findings suggest that libraries are uniquely positioned to respond to Nigeria's brain drain crisis by facilitating local empowerment. However, to unlock this potential, systemic investment, strategic partnerships, and policy reforms are needed. Strengthening public libraries should not only be a

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<sup>123</sup> Eiriemiokhale, K. A., Sulyman, A. S., Oloruntola, M., Iskil, A. B., and Raji, M. F. "Roles of Library Leaders in Positioning Libraries for Sustainable Development in Nigeria." *MiddleBelt Journal of Library and Information Science* 22, no. 1 (2024): 84–94.

<sup>124</sup> Bashorun, B. *Migration Trajectories: A Case Study of High-Skilled Youths in Nigeria*. Bachelor's thesis, Malmö University, (2023).  
<https://mau.divaportal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1795435>.

<sup>125</sup> 25 Aregbesola, A., Owolabi, S. E., and Adebisi, T. "Going to the Cities: The Strategic Roles of Public Libraries in Promoting Sustainable Development Goals." *Public Library Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (2024): 367–384. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01616846.2023.2253692>.

cultural or educational agenda it should also be considered a migration intervention strategy aimed at making local environments more viable for skilled professionals.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study affirms that the migration of young professionals in Nigeria is driven by structural push factors like those seen in other developing countries. While the desire to migrate is strong, public libraries hold substantial promise as local institutions that can be repurposed to address professional disenfranchisement. Echoing the literature and the lived experiences of participants, the study emphasises the importance of revitalising public libraries as community-based platforms for skill-building, professional development, and youth empowerment. Therefore, libraries can become pivotal in reversing the tide of professional migration and fostering sustainable national development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the key findings of this study, several actionable recommendations were developed.

1. The government and relevant stakeholders should address key challenges pushing young professionals to migrate, such as unemployment, insecurity, and poor working conditions. This can be achieved by creating more job opportunities, improving safety, and enhancing the working environment, especially in critical sectors like healthcare, law, and engineering.
2. Nigeria should study and adopt strategies used by other developing countries like India and the Philippines. These include engaging skilled professionals in the diaspora, encouraging them to return or invest in local industries, and creating partnerships that promote skills transfer and professional reintegration.

3. Public libraries should be modernised with current books, digital tools, reliable internet, and trained staff. They should offer services like digital literacy training, access to online courses, and professional development events to make them more relevant and useful to young professionals.
4. Libraries should be part of national plans to reduce youth migration. They can host programmes like entrepreneurship training, job readiness workshops, and mentorship schemes. Providing access to global certifications through platforms like Coursera or Google can help young people gain valuable skills locally, reducing the desire to move abroad.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I, Ailakhu, Ugonna Vivian, declare that there is no conflict of interest in the study/paper titled The Mediating Role of Public Libraries in Mitigating Young Professionals' Migration in Nigeria submitted to IJMGS Journal.

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## **PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF CONOIL PLC, ABUJA, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the effect of participative leadership on the organisational performance of Conoil Plc in Abuja, Nigeria, using the PathGoal Theory of leadership to analyse the connection between leadership style and performance. A survey design was employed, testing two hypotheses. A sample of 102 employees was selected from six Conoil Plc stations in AMAC, Abuja, out of a total workforce of 145, using a stratified random sampling technique. Data was gathered through self-administered questionnaires and analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. Inferential statistics were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. The results indicated a strong positive relationship between participative leadership and organisational performance, as well as between effective communication and service quality. This implies that organisational success or failure is closely tied to leadership style, emphasising the importance of participative leadership in fostering organisational productivity. The study concluded that participative leadership significantly influences the performance of Conoil Plc (AMAC), Abuja. Based on these findings, it is recommended that organisations adopt participative leadership to enhance employee responsibility. Management should prioritise participative*

*leadership as a key policy, involving employees in decision-making and encouraging effective communication to gather feedback and ideas. This approach would lead to higher employee engagement and improved organisational performance.*

**Keywords:** Leadership Style, Participative Leadership, Organisational Performance.

## **STYLE DE LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATIF ET PERFORMANCE ORGANISATIONNELLE: ÉTUDE DE CONOIL PLC, ABUJA, NIGÉRIA**

### **Résumé**

*Cette étude examine l'effet du leadership participatif sur la performance organisationnelle de Conoil Plc à Abuja, Nigéria, en s'appuyant sur la théorie du cheminement vers le but (Path-Goal Theory) pour analyser la relation entre le style de leadership et la performance. Une méthode d'enquête a été adoptée, avec la mise à l'épreuve de deux hypothèses. Un échantillon de 102 employés a été sélectionné à partir de six stations de Conoil Plc situées dans la municipalité d'Abuja (AMAC), sur un total de 145 employés, selon une technique d'échantillonnage aléatoire stratifié. Les données ont été collectées à l'aide de questionnaires auto-administrés, puis analysées à l'aide de statistiques descriptives telles que la moyenne, l'écarttype, l'asymétrie (skewness) et l'aplatissement (kurtosis). Des statistiques inférentielles ont été effectuées à l'aide du logiciel SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), et l'Alpha de Cronbach a été utilisé pour évaluer la fiabilité du questionnaire. Les résultats ont montré une forte relation positive entre le leadership participatif et la performance organisationnelle, ainsi qu'entre la communication efficace et la qualité du service. Cela implique que le succès ou l'échec organisationnel est étroitement lié au style de leadership, mettant en lumière l'importance du leadership participatif dans l'amélioration de la productivité organisationnelle. L'étude conclut que le leadership participatif influence de manière significative la performance de Conoil Plc (AMAC), Abuja. Suite aux résultats, il est recommandé aux organisations d'adopter le leadership participatif afin de renforcer le sens des responsabilités chez les employés. La direction devrait faire du leadership participatif une politique centrale, en impliquant les employés dans le processus décisionnel et en favorisant une communication efficace pour recueillir leurs idées et suggestions. Cette approche permettrait d'accroître l'engagement des employés et d'améliorer la performance organisationnelle.*

**Mots-clés :** Style de leadership, leadership participatif, performance organisationnel

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## INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a broad area of research that spans both public and private sectors. However, there remains some uncertainty regarding which leadership styles and behaviours are most effective in enhancing organisational performance. In today's competitive business landscape, where quick decision-making is vital, leaders often struggle to make timely and effective decisions on their own. Consequently, there is a growing trend of involving employees in organisational decision-making processes. The adoption of modern information technologies, such as computer networks and systems integration, has facilitated a bottom-up flow of information within organisations. This shift has elevated the importance of "employee opinions" in leadership decision-making across various levels and functions.

Employee involvement in decision-making is increasingly recognised as crucial for enhancing an organisation's competitive edge, achieving sustainable development goals, and improving overall performance. Today's leaders, who are tasked with managing both human and material resources, are embracing new leadership styles to transform their organisations and meet their goals in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Leadership, in the context of social interactions, is defined as the process of influencing subordinates or other group members within an organisation. Leadership style refers to how a leader interacts with and guides their followers. Without effective leadership, organisations struggle to turn resources into competitive advantages.

There is a clear connection between an organisation's growth and the leadership style of its managers. Research indicates that leaders account for 45% to 65% of the factors determining an organisation's success or failure. The leadership style adopted influences employee behaviour, including adherence to organisational values and strategic objectives, which subsequently impacts both individual job performance and overall organisational results. Participative leadership is marked by openness and the inclusion of employees in the decision-making process. This style can be found in organisations of all sizes, types, and stages of development. To achieve success, it is essential to reevaluate the strategies and value systems that guide decision-making processes. Participative leaders engage employees in strategic decision-making, distributing authority and consulting them to collaboratively address work-related challenges.

Sax and Simon (2015)<sup>126</sup> define participative leadership as the practice of consulting subordinates before making decisions, with an emphasis on their perspectives. In essence, the term "participative" in participative leadership is often synonymous with "democratic." It suggests that all members of a human and organisational system have an equal say in determining the fundamental objectives, guiding principles, and core values that characterise their collective efforts and overall direction. Rollinson (2005)<sup>127</sup> defines leadership as the act of influencing others to work towards the attainment of a goal, emphasising the proactive nature of leadership in making things happen rather than letting them happen.

On the other hand, organisational performance refers to how well an organisation positions itself in the commercial market by utilising its informational, financial, and human resources.<sup>128</sup> Organisational performance has always been a primary concern for all organisations,

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<sup>126</sup> Sax, J. and Simon, C. "Speak Up! Improving Risk Performance Through Enterprise Risk Management, Leadership Styles, and Employee Voice." *Management Decision*, vol. 53, 2015, pp. 1452–1468.

<sup>127</sup> Rollinson, D. *Organizational Behaviour and Analysis: An In-Depth Approach*. Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2005.

<sup>128</sup> Contu, E.G. "Organizational Performance – Theoretical and Practical Insights: A Study on Students' Perceptions." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Business Excellence*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2020, pp. 398–406.

whether for-profit or not. Managers must understand the factors that influence performance to capitalise on them and take appropriate

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actions.<sup>129</sup> According to Cascio (2014)<sup>130</sup>, organisational performance is measured by the extent to which work missions are achieved, as determined by work outcomes, intangible assets, customer relationships, and quality services. Considering the above, this study aims to examine the leadership style that Conoil Plc. in Abuja should adopt to enhance organisational performance. The study investigated the theory of participative leadership and its relationship to employee productivity within the company. Given that an organisation's success largely depends on the interactions between its management and employees, it is essential to explore and develop strategies to address the challenges posed by different leadership styles in relation to employee performance. The increasing competitive pressures have compelled organisational managers to devise and implement innovative approaches to enhance institutional efficacy and efficiency. By focusing on Conoil Plc. as a case study, this research intends to contribute to the understanding of participative leadership and its impact on organisational success.

Historically, due to various factors, including the prevailing leadership style in Nigeria, lower-level employees had limited opportunities to participate in decision-making or voice their opinions. However, advancements in communication technology are changing this status quo. Effective leaders influence their followers in ways that help achieve desired goals. As a key player in Nigeria's oil and gas sector, Conoil Plc. plays a vital role in job creation, income generation, and industrialisation. To thrive in the ever-evolving global business landscape, Conoil Plc.'s leaders must articulate a clear vision and

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<sup>129</sup> Akpa, V., Asikhia, O., and Nneji, I. "Organizational Culture and Performance: A Review of the Literature." *International Journal of Advances in Engineering and Management (IJAEM)*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2021, pp. 361-372.

<sup>130</sup> Cascio, P. "Cultural Change: An Opportunity, a Silent Killer, or a Transformation?" In R.H. Kilman, M. Saxton, and R. Serpa, *Gaining Control of the Corporate Culture*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2014.

support it with entrepreneurial initiatives. Leaders must be aware of their competencies, style, and goals.<sup>131</sup> Different leadership philosophies can significantly impact an organisation's effectiveness or performance, and leadership behaviour influences a leader's ability

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to motivate, inspire, and guide subordinates in achieving organisational goals. Participative leadership significantly influences job satisfaction and overall service quality. The ability of Conoil Plc to thrive in the oil industry hinges on its capacity to employ effective leaders who can inspire their workforce to accomplish strategic business objectives and cultivate an innovative environment. This highlights the critical connection between leadership style and performance.

Participative leadership, a form of democratic leadership, involves the active incorporation of subordinates' aspirations into the organisation's objectives, thereby enhancing employees' sense of ownership through their participation in decision-making and management processes. Leaders employing this style of leadership practice, "participation management," in their daily interactions with subordinates, which includes communicating core values, facilitating regular reporting, and using flexible promotion strategies.<sup>132</sup> This leadership style values the opinions of others, encouraging group members to engage and contribute, thus making them feel valued and integral to the decision-making process. Participative leadership involves the joint decision-making or shared influence between a superior and subordinates.<sup>133</sup>

Robbins (2001)<sup>134</sup> defines participative leadership as the ability of an individual to influence group behaviour to achieve organisational goals. From this perspective, leadership is a phenomenon where leaders guide others' actions towards achieving set objectives within the

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<sup>131</sup> Sawaeana, J., and Alib, M. "Entrepreneurial Leadership and Learning Orientation Effects on SME Organizational Performance: The Mediating Influence of Innovation Capacity." *Management Science Letters*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2020.

<sup>132</sup> Jing, Jianshi, Jinlian, and Yao. "A Case Study on Strategies to Promote Innovation Contests within a Corporate Setting." *Scientific Research Management*, vol. 38, 2017.

<sup>133</sup> Somech, A. "Directive and Participative Leadership: Complementary Methods for Enhancing School Effectiveness." *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 5, 2005.

<sup>134</sup> Robbins, S. P. *Organizational Behavior* (9th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2001.

organisation, distinguishing them from their followers. It is also suggested that consensus, consultation, delegation, and participation are closely associated with participative leadership. Research indicates that employees who perceive their managers as consultative or participative tend to be more satisfied, committed to the

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organisation, and perform better.<sup>135</sup> Employees under participative leaders generally exhibit higher levels of engagement, commitment, and loyalty.

According to Hasibuan (2018)<sup>136</sup>, performance is the result of an individual's efforts in fulfilling the responsibilities assigned to them, based on their ability, experience, sincerity, and available time. Performance is a function of both ability and motivation. Every employee in an organisation contributes to its overall performance. When all members work diligently, achieve their goals, and give their best, the organisation as a whole performs effectively. Thus, individual performance reflects organisational performance. Organisations must also consider various factors that may influence employee performance. Organisational performance refers to how well an organisation positions itself in the market using its information, financial, and human resources.<sup>137</sup> Regardless of whether an organisation is for-profit or non-profit, performance is always a primary concern. Cascio (2014)<sup>138</sup> defines organisational performance as the extent to which work missions are achieved, as measured by work outcomes, intangible assets, customer relationships, and service

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<sup>135</sup> Youssef, D. A. "Organizational Commitment as a Mediator in the Relationship Between Leadership Behavior, Job Satisfaction, and Performance in a Non-Western Context." *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2000.

<sup>136</sup> Hasibuan. *Human Resource Management*. In *Human Resource Management*, 2018.

<sup>137</sup> Contu, E. G. "Organizational Performance – Theoretical and Practical Perspectives: A Study on Student Perceptions." *Proceedings of the International Conference on Business Excellence*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2020.

<sup>138</sup> Cascio, P. "Cultural Change: An Opportunity, Silent Threat, or Transformation?" In R.H. Kilman, M. Saxton, and R. Serpa (Eds.), *Gaining Control of Corporate Culture*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2014.

quality. Therefore, organisational performance is closely tied to the achievement of organisational goals.

The Path-Goal Theory serves as an effective leadership model aimed at achieving goals. Formulated by House and Mitchell in 1974, this theory asserts that an employee's perception of their work and performance is shaped by the behaviours of their leader. It posits that a leader's essential functions include establishing clear objectives tailored to the characteristics of team members and the surrounding work environment, selecting the most suitable leadership style to

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meet these goals, identifying effective indicators of success and motivation, and actively working to eliminate any barriers that their subordinates might face. This study employed the Path-Goal Theory of leadership as its theoretical framework to elucidate the connection between participative leadership style and organisational performance at Conoil Plc (AMAC), Abuja.

This study reviewed past related empirical studies as found in the literature. Northouse (2017)<sup>139</sup> describes participative leadership as involving subordinates in the decision-making process. Ayesuwa, and Okwuokei (2023)<sup>140</sup> examined participative leadership and organisational performance, exploring various concepts such as types of participation, strategies, and the dos and don'ts of participative leadership. Their study found that participative leadership motivates employees by empowering them to share in decision-making. The study recommended that leaders foster open communication, involve employees in decision-making, delegate authority, encourage teamwork, provide necessary resources, and acknowledge employees' contributions to organisational decision-making.

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<sup>139</sup> Northouse, P. G. *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practices*. Sage Publications, 2017.

<sup>140</sup> Ayesuwa, and Okwuokei. "Participative Leadership and Its Influence on Organizational Performance." *International Journal of Economics, Environmental Development, and Society*, vol. 4, no. 3, 2023.



Research in Tanzania by Edgar, Mbwapbo, and Mngarah (2022)<sup>141</sup> showed that directive supervision by Ward Education Officers led to better teacher performance compared to supportive and participatory supervision techniques. In Kenya, Rana, K'aol, and Kirubi (2019)<sup>142</sup> concluded that participative leadership significantly impacted employee performance, while supportive leadership did not. Ochieng, Koshal, and Bellows (2023)<sup>143</sup> studied the effect of participative leadership on the organisational performance of small and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises in Nairobi County, Kenya. Using a

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stratified random sampling method, 369 managers/owners were selected, and data were collected via self-administered questionnaires. The results indicated that participative leadership strongly and positively predicted organisational performance.

Itodo (2016)<sup>144</sup> explored participative leadership as a potential turnaround strategy for organisational productivity. The study recommended strategies such as consultative leadership, advisory committees, workers' councils, labour-management cooperation, management by objectives (MBO), and total quality management (TQM) to make participative leadership more viable. The study concluded that participative leadership is essential for organisational productivity and that an organisation's success or failure is closely linked to its leadership style. Chang et al (2021)<sup>145</sup> investigated the intermediate relationships and boundary conditions between unit-level

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<sup>141</sup> Edgar, Mbwapbo, and Mngarah. "Close Supervision of Schools in Tanzania: Collective Perspectives on Teacher Job Performance." *American Journal of Arts and Human Science*, vol. 1, no. 3, 2022, pp. 10-13.

<sup>142</sup> Rana, K'aol, and Kirubi. "The Impact of Supportive and Participative Path-Goal Leadership Styles with Task Structure as a Moderator on Employee Performance." *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, vol. 8, no. 6, 2019.

<sup>143</sup> Ochieng, Koshal, and Bellows. "The Effect of Participative Leadership Style on the Performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises (SMEs) in Nairobi County, Kenya." *Research Journal of Business and Finance*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2023.

<sup>144</sup> Itodo, S. M. "Participative Leadership Style as an Effective Strategy for Enhancing Organizational Productivity." *International Journal of Advanced Studies in Business Strategies and Management*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2016, pp. 89-101.

<sup>145</sup> Chang, Chang, Chen, Seih, and Chang. "Participative Leadership and Unit Performance: Exploring Evidence of Intermediate Linkages." *Journal of Knowledge and Management Resources Practice*, vol. 19, 2021, pp. 355-369.

participative leadership and unit-level performance. Their study, "participative leadership and unit performance: evidence for intermediate linkages," used data from 174 units in 75 high-, medium, and low-technology enterprises. Two practical implications of this study are: 1) human resource professionals should provide specialised educational training for each unit; and 2) organisations should create a platform for knowledge exchange within each unit.

Despite the importance of leadership style in an organisation as a potential predictor of organisational performance, there is limited empirical evidence on the effect of participative leadership style on organisational performance in the oil and gas sector. Past studies explored more leadership studies to address other sectors like the manufacturing industry and geographically covered other areas not Abuja. It becomes imperative to address this gap.

The broad objective of this study was to investigate the impact of participative leadership on the organisational performance of six selected stations of Conoil Plc within the Abuja Municipal Council

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(AMAC), Abuja, while the specific objectives were to: (i) evaluate the effect of employee participation in decision-making on organisational performance at Conoil Plc (AMAC), Abuja; and (ii) investigate the relationship between effective communication and organisational performance within the specified area.

Based on the objective, the study posed the following questions: (i) What is the relationship between employee participation in decisionmaking and organisational performance at Conoil Plc, Abuja? (ii) How does effective communication influence the organisational performance of Conoil Plc, Abuja? The study therefore hypothesised thus:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between employee participation in decision-making and the organisational performance of Conoil Plc, Abuja.

H<sub>02</sub>: Effective communication does not have a significant positive impact on the organisational performance of Conoil Plc, Abuja.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study utilised a descriptive survey design, employing a structured questionnaire titled "Participative Leadership Inventory (PLI)" within a cross-sectional and quantitative research framework. The participant population comprised employees from six selected Conoil Plc. stations located in Abuja. The criteria for inclusion were mandated employment at Conoil Plc. Abuja. The total population for this research included 145 employees, specifically from the Kado Conoil Station (29), Conoil Station Area 1 (31), Conoil Station Airport Road (27), Conoil Millennium Station (25), Conoil Station at Area 10 (18), and Conoil Station at Karu (15). Incomplete responses were excluded from the analysis. Utilising Yamane's Formula, a sample size of 102 was established. Convenience sampling was employed to ensure proportional representation across the participant population, and simple random sampling was applied to select employees from each stratum. Data collection occurred over two weeks through the personal distribution of the questionnaire, and the data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Regression analysis was performed to investigate the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable using SPSS software.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections: Section A gathered demographic information about the respondents, while Section B focused on the participative leadership style and organisational performance. This 20-item questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale for evaluation. For scale validation, translation and backtranslation methods were implemented, alongside exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Content validity was assessed to confirm the questionnaire's relevance to the study objectives, and reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha (CA), with an acceptable threshold set at 0.8.

The demographic characteristics of respondents were analysed through descriptive statistics, and the relationships between variables were

evaluated using correlation analysis. All 102 distributed questionnaires were returned, forming the basis for the analysis.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Demographic distribution of respondents and response rate**

<b>Respondents Occupation</b>	<b>Questionnaire administered (sampled)</b>	<b>Percentage of total response (%)</b>
Top Level Management	31	30.3%
Middle Level Management	38	37.2%
Lower Level Management	33	32.5%
Total	102	100
<b>Gender/Category</b>	<b>Questionnaire administered (sampled)</b>	<b>Percentage of total response (%)</b>
Male	67	65.6%
Female	35	34.4%
No of Returned	102	100%

**Source:** Author's Computation (2024)

The sample consisted of 102 employees from selected Conoil Plc. stations in Abuja. Male respondents accounted for 65.6%, while females made up 34.4%. The distribution of respondents across different management levels is shown in Table 1, with top-level management comprising 30.3%, middle-level management 37.2%, and lower-level management 32.5%.

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics (Factor Analysis) of all the variables**

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>NO OF ITEMS</b>	<b>CRONBACH'S ALPHA VALUE</b>
Decision-making process	10	0.873

Communication	10	0.798
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Source: Author’s computation (2024) - significance level is 1% ( $p<0.01$ ).

**Table 3: Regression analysis of independent variables (Participative leadership (R-Squared = 0.56 (56%) at significance level of 1% ( $p<0.01$ )).**

Specification	B	Beta (Standardised)	t-value
Decision-making process	0.502	0.315	11.4642
Communication	0.448	0.429	13.572

Source: Author’s computation (2024)

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics**

N	102	102
Mean	3.37	2.97
Std. Dev.	.998	1.075
Skewness	-.386	-.097
Kurtosis	-.089	-.312

Source: Author’s computation (2024)

**H<sub>01</sub>:** A significant relationship does not exist between employees’ involvement in the decision-making process and the organisational performance of Conoil Plc, Abuja. Table 3 presents the regression results of the key variables analysed. A significant relationship was found between the decision-making process and the organisational performance of Conoil Plc. Abuja. The R-Squared value of 0.56 indicates that 56% of the variations in the dependent variables were explained by the independent variables (decision-making process). The adjusted R value of 0.52 tests the model's goodness of fit. Table 5 shows that the mean value of responses on participative leadership style ranged from 2.97 to 3.37, rounded to a Mean=3. The standard deviation ranged from 0.998 to 1.075, indicating high agreement among respondents on participative leadership style as the independent variable. The skewness and kurtosis values were  $<1$ ,

showing that the data on the participative leadership style were normally distributed.

**Table 5: Correlation analysis using Pearson coefficient r2**

SPECIFICATION	Pearson Correlation	r2 sig.(2-tailed)	N 102
Constant			
Decision-making	.423	17.8929%	
Communication	.435	18.7225%	

Source: Author’s computation (2024) - significance level is 1% (p<0.01).

**Hypothesis H02:** Effective communication does not significantly and positively influence organisational performance at Conoil Plc, Abuja. The Pearson correlation coefficient of  $r=0.435$  indicates that there is an 18.72% shared variance between effective communication and organisational performance (employee service quality). According to the data presented in Table 5, a significant positive correlation of .435 exists between these variables, with a significance level of 0.000. This implies a notable relationship between effective communication and the quality of employee service at Conoil Plc, Abuja. As a result, we reject the null hypothesis (H02) and accept the alternative hypothesis (Ha2).

**DISCUSSION**

This study investigates the influence of participative leadership style on organisational performance at Conoil Plc, Abuja, utilising the Path Goal Theory of leadership. For the first hypothesis, the independent variable is decision-making within the framework of participative leadership, while the dependent variable is organisational performance, as outlined in Table 2. The data reveal a significant relationship between the participative leadership style and organisational performance at Conoil Plc, Abuja. This finding aligns with prior research that indicated involving

employees in decision-making significantly enhances their productivity. It also supports the notion that organisational success or failure is closely tied to leadership style, emphasising the importance of participative leadership in fostering organisational productivity.

Regarding the second hypothesis, it was found that effective communication, an aspect of participative leadership, has a significant impact on organisational performance, particularly in terms of service quality. The correlation coefficient of 0.4350 and a p-value of less than 0.010 demonstrate that effective communication positively impacts service quality. This finding reinforces previous studies that have emphasised the importance of frequent communication and interaction between supervisors and employees in enhancing decision quality and performance. Additionally, it was shown that the quality of communication is strongly correlated with team performance, more so than the frequency of communication.

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate whether participative leadership enhances organisational performance at Conoil Plc. (AMAC), Abuja. The results affirm a significant relationship between participative leadership and organisational performance at Conoil Plc (AMAC), Abuja. This suggests that employees respond favourably to participative leadership practices, advocating for their broader implementation in Nigeria's civil service and both private and public sectors, thereby supporting administrative reforms.

## **CONCLUSION**

Participative leaders empower employees by involving them in decision-making processes, fostering confidence and creativity. Employees are more motivated to engage in creative work and feel valued when they can influence decisions and provide alternative solutions.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Organisations should integrate participative leadership as a core policy. Managers should adopt behaviours that involve employees in decision-making and maintain effective communication to solicit feedback and ideas. This approach will enhance employee engagement and improve organisational performance.

Implementing participative leadership creates a positive work environment, which can boost employee performance and morale. This leadership style addresses fundamental human needs for acceptance and self-worth, as identified by Maslow. To foster employee creativity and incorporate their ideas for the company's growth, management should create a supportive and encouraging atmosphere.

Understanding the impact of participative leadership on Conoil Plc. (AMAC) Abuja can guide the development of effective policies that support this leadership style across various organisations. Future research could employ longitudinal and other analytical methods to gain further insights into organisational dynamics. The findings from this study could also serve as a basis for more detailed investigations in other organisations within and beyond Abuja.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest in the study.

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## LINGUICIDE AND AFRICAN LANGUAGES: GREEN ECONOMY AS A STRATEGIC PLATFORM FOR PRESERVATION

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### Abstract

*The threat to the Nigerian/African languages usually appears distant. However, the reality is that, just as global warming caught up with us without warning, linguicide is proving to be a high probability in the world. This study thus engages a systematic analysis of some speech events to exemplify the palpable threat to the existence of Nigerian/African languages. An ethnographic study was conducted to identify instances of linguistic erosion through psychologically negative attitudes towards using indigenous languages among Africans in certain significant social contexts. It was found that, beyond mere trendiness in the choice of English on such occasions, the colonial psychological damage done to the Nigerian/African languages through deliberate policy choices to downgrade them continues to hold sway in the psyche of many Nigerians/Africans. It was thus concluded that, except the trend is stemmed through deliberate linguistic salvation, the linguistic ecology of Nigeria/Africa may soon suffer total desertification.*

**Keywords:** African indigenous languages, ecocriticism, linguicide, linguistic salvation, green economy

# LINGUICIDE ET LANGUES AFRICAINES : L'ÉCONOMIE VERTE COMME PLATEFORME STRATÉGIQUE DE PRÉSERVATION

## Résumé

*La menace qui plane sur les langues nigérianes et africaines demeure, pour beaucoup, une abstraction lointaine. Pourtant, à l'instar du réchauffement climatique qui s'est imposé sans avertissement, le linguicide, un processus d'extinction des langues, représente aujourd'hui une probabilité élevée à l'échelle mondiale. La présente étude s'appuie sur une analyse systématique de manifestations orales contemporaines afin d'illustrer la réalité tangible de cette menace qui pèse sur la vitalité des langues africaines. Une enquête ethnographique a été menée dans divers contextes sociaux significatifs, révélant des cas d'érosion linguistique liés à des attitudes psycholinguistiques négatives envers l'usage des langues autochtones. Les résultats montrent que, bien au-delà d'un simple glissement vers l'anglais dans les interactions publiques, les langues nigérianes et africaines subissent les effets persistants d'un traumatisme colonial, renforcé par des politiques linguistiques qui ont historiquement contribué à leur dévalorisation. Ce poids historique continue d'agir sur la conscience collective de nombreux locuteurs africains, accentuant le processus de marginalisation linguistique. L'étude conclut que, sans une intervention stratégique et délibérée en faveur du « salut linguistique », l'écologie linguistique du Nigéria et, par extension, celle du continent africain court le risque d'une désertification totale. Dans cette perspective, l'économie verte est envisagée comme une plateforme stratégique pouvant intégrer des politiques de revitalisation linguistique, en liant les enjeux de durabilité écologique à ceux de diversité linguistique.*

**Mots-clés :** linguicide, langues autochtones africaines, économie verte, revitalisation linguistique, écocritique

## INTRODUCTION

Flora and fauna are usually perceived in terms of physical vegetation/ecology in society. However, the fact that the linguistic structure of a society is part of its eco-diversity is what most language users do not usually take into cognisance<sup>146</sup>. It is thus of much interest to those who see linguistic eco-diversity as an important heritage of the modern world, as part of what makes the world what it is today. The loss of this diversity will likely lead to much confusion in the world, if allowed. To avoid such an anarchic state, it is necessary to find ways of preventing the loss of this diversity, whether it is in linguistic or ecological form. The fact that nature has made it possible for us to be unique in terms of cultural diversity appears to make a lot of sense. This justifies this study.

Essentially, the reality that many languages of the world seem to be on their way out of existence is of great concern. It has been found that 95% of the world's population speaks just about five percent of the world's languages<sup>147</sup>. To us, this is a worrisome trend. This is more so in the case of Nigeria, where the English language has overtaken many indigenous languages. In the colonial and immediately postindependence periods, it was a case of 'Don't speak in vernacular!' However, these days, it is the self-colonising sense of the Nigerian that makes them constantly speak English to their children, even at home<sup>148</sup> even though research has proven over and over that exposing the child early to the mother tongue increases the performance level in the educational attainment of the child<sup>149</sup>. This move is against the

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<sup>146</sup> David Crystal, *Language Death*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). See also Simon Ager, *A Study of Language Death and Revival with Particular Focus on Manx Gaelic*, 2009, MA Dissertation.

<sup>147</sup> David Crystal, (2000) and Simon Ager, (2009).

<sup>148</sup> A. O. Ogunsanya, *The Emergence of English as a First Language in Nigeria*. Seminar Presentation, 2007, Ibadan: Department of English, University of Ibadan.

<sup>149</sup> Iyabode O. A. Daniel, 'The Role of Parents in Poetic Appreciation among Secondary School Students: Poetic Appreciation as Focus'. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*. 2,1: 2013,116-130; Halima O. Sulaiman, 'The Role of Mother-Tongue in Education in Nigeria' *Gusau Journal of Education* 1995,138-149.



preservation of the diversity that makes up the entity that is called Nigeria.<sup>150</sup>

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## OBJECTIVES

This study looks at the nature and form of the forces working against the linguistic diversity of Nigerian languages. It focuses particularly on the role of the average Nigerian in terms of hegemonic consent to the perpetuation of the colonial colossus and its domination of the Nigerian linguistic landscape. The implications of this colossal domination of the English language mark the major theme of interest to the study. This is then related to the green economy as a concept that can help to explain how to make progress in saving these languages from extinction, as the green economy promotes social inclusiveness and intergenerational equity. These are outlined below.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. examine the effect of the colonial policy of 'Do not speak in vernacular' on the psyche of the average Nigerian towards the English language;
2. determine the persistent domination of the English language in the consciousness of the average Nigerian;
3. identify the role domination plays in the linguistic choices and usages among Nigerian speakers;
4. find out the future of the Nigerian languages, looked at from the angle of the English linguistic domination that bestrides the Nigerian linguistic landscape;
5. determine the place of the green economy as a concept in preserving the Nigerian languages.

The study seeks answers to the following questions:

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<sup>150</sup> United Nations Environmental Programme, 2011, Towards a Green Economy.

1. What is the effect of the colonial policy of 'Do not speak in vernacular' on the psyche of the average Nigerian towards the English language?
2. Why is there a persistent domination of the English language in the consciousness of the average Nigerian?
3. How is this domination played out in the linguistic choices and usages among Nigerian speakers?
4. What is the future of the Nigerian languages, looked at from the angle of the English linguistic domination that bestrides the Nigerian linguistic landscape?
5. What is the place of the green economy as a concept in preserving the Nigerian languages?

The answers to these questions were integrated into the analyses, and the discussion of its results, in line with the ethnographic nature of the research design.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This section discusses some literature relevant to this study, the research design, which was ethnographic, data collection procedures, as well as the framework of analysis. These are discussed under the different subsections, as presented below.

### ***Language Death because of Colonial Domination***

Daniel asserts that at the root of the present unfair sway that the English language holds in the Nigerian linguistic landscape is the deliberate policy of making Nigerian languages appear inferior.<sup>151</sup> She avers that the constant refrain that little children have to come to see as an important part of their schooling is 'Do not speak in vernacular!'. In her view, speaking this 'vernacular' is the easiest way for a child to get punished, either through the cane or some other form of punishment. Apparently, speaking in vernacular became linked with getting

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<sup>151</sup> Iyabode O. Daniel, 'The Linguistic and Pictorial Representation of Nigerian Women's Assertiveness in Selected Nigerian Newspapers'. Unpublished PhD Thesis, 2008, Department of English, University of Ibadan.

punished. With such operant conditioning [apology to B. F. Skinner<sup>152</sup>], who needs the indigenous languages? After all, it is normal for people to avoid what brings them pain and punishment. In such a deliberate manner, children learned to regard the Nigerian indigenous languages as evil, undeveloped, and uncivilised.

This gave birth to another problem: Nigerians themselves began to look down on these languages that are part of their being and identity. It thus becomes shameful to speak the languages or even study them at school. Unfortunately, such was the effect of the downgrading of Nigerian languages by colonialism that it is assumed that it is only

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those who could not get admission into more 'respectable' courses, such as medicine or law, or even English, that will opt for any indigenous Nigerian language. Consequently, these courses are left for those who have tried other courses and could not get admitted into them in universities and colleges.

Such a deliberate policy of downgrading the language of the colonised is not new or restricted to Nigeria. Simon Ager claims that this was the case in Ireland and in Wales. The languages of the indigenous peoples were systematically ridiculed and exterminated by the colonialists.<sup>153</sup> Mustapha Abolaji presents Ngugi wa Thiongo's argument that the retention of the colonialist's language is an effective instrument of the destruction of the African psyche, consequently ensuring cultural and economic dependence on the colonial powers. This is what is regarded as neo-colonialism.<sup>154</sup> Senier asserts that such attitudes and policies have been operational even in the America, where the indigenous peoples were deliberately made to feel that their languages are of no use in modern America. The idea is that: 'This is America; you have to speak English!' Such impunity is what has worried scholars and still

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<sup>152</sup> Moji A. Olateju, *Introduction to Applied Linguistics*. Lagos: 2010, NOUN.

<sup>153</sup> Simon Ager, *A Study of Language Death and Revival with Particular Focus on Manx Gaelic*, 2009, MA Dissertation.

<sup>154</sup> Abolaji S. Mustapha, 'A Sociolinguistic Answer to Nigeria's National Language Question'. *Ife Studies in English Language*. 2010, 8.1: 61-75.

worries scholars.<sup>155</sup> To Senier Siobhan, the promise of the 'green economy' has failed all of us as it continues to allow the global north to discharge its poisonous gases into the atmosphere unchallenged while the landscape continues to suffer distortions.<sup>11</sup> If we like, we may call this new environmental pollution from the cultural hegemony of the West that continues to spew all kinds of cultural balderdash into the global atmosphere, while it is lapped up by the people of the global south. This has been called neo-colonialism.

The question we need to ask ourselves is: Is anybody being forced to buy the products of the West being spewed out for the world to see? Of course not! Nonetheless, it is obvious that the same foundation

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that makes a Nigerian laugh at a fellow Nigerian 'See, s/he cannot even speak simple English' or a Ghanaian regard themselves as superior to that person struggling to even speak Broken English, is at the root of such an attitude that makes people buy the products spoken about. Cultural hegemony remains an important part of the continued colonisation of the global south. The West thus remains the standard.

How does this result in linguicide, you may want to know? Ogunsanya raised the alarm that some Nigerian homes have started using the English language as the L1 (first language) in their homes. If this is not the fastest way to kill Nigerian languages, I do not know of any other.<sup>156</sup> Senier and Ager assert that this is one of the easiest ways of determining the possible survival of a language. One of such important means is the non-passing on of a language to the younger generation. Evidence abounds to show that many Nigerian languages are under this sort of threat. Some have been identified as dead.<sup>157</sup> Nonetheless, UNEP insists<sup>158</sup> that green economy is meant to help preserve social

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<sup>155</sup> Siobhan Senier, 'Commentary: Sovereignty and Sustainability in Mohegan Ethnobotanical Literature'. *The Journal of Ecocriticism*. 2014, 6:1. 1-15. <sup>11</sup> Senier, 2014.

<sup>156</sup> A. O. Ogunsanya, *The Emergence of English as a First Language in Nigeria*, Seminar Presentation, 2007.

<sup>157</sup> Senier, 2014 and Simon Ager, 2009

<sup>158</sup> United Nations Environmental Programme, 2011. *Towards a Green Economy*<sup>15</sup>  
David Crystal, 2000

inclusiveness and intergenerational equity. The expectation is that this study will show us how this can be realised.

At this juncture, the question is: What is language death? David Crystal's bible on linguicide is regarded as a classic in the field of language obsolescence.<sup>15</sup> It cannot be denied that his book has paved the way for many to be concerned about the survival of indigenous languages the world over. As much as ecocritics have raised a lot of awareness on the importance of maintaining eco diversity, it has also become important to retain linguistic diversity of the world. The simple reason for this is that language is the identity of those who own it. Clearly, then, language death is not just about the extinction of a language, but the transition of a people, their personhood and reality. Language death thus goes beyond mere extinction of a language but the destruction of a peculiar, rare part of us, a section of

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our being as *Homo sapiens*. This is antithetical to the idea of a green economy, which is about sustainable development. Linguicide is antidevelopment.

### ***Ecocriticism and Linguistic Diversity***

Ecocriticism has been applied mostly to the fight against environmental degradation and the greenhouse effect. Like most critical studies, it queries the way things are done and expects that better ways of doing them should be followed. Ecocriticism essentially seeks to make sustainable development a reality. Nonetheless, Ecocriticism keeps faith with its source and commitment to eliminating the greenhouse effect.<sup>159</sup> Nonetheless, scholars in the humanities have seen that there is a parallel in the issues that informed ecocritical studies and human dignity. This informed the adaptation of the theory for studies in the humanities. Ecocriticism and the concept of the green economy are interrelated.

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<sup>159</sup> John W. Foster, 'Challenges to an Irish Eco-critic'. *The Journal of Ecocriticism*, 2013, 5,2: 1-13; Senior, 2014.

Daniel<sup>160</sup> used the theory for the analysis of poetry by two authors to query the continued social inequality that is expressed in the social degradation with the consequent environmental pollution and female commodification (cf. Lewis & Bosswell, 2002). She concludes that hegemonic consent is at the root of what makes the oppressor to easily succeed against the oppressed.<sup>161</sup> Foster and Senier have argued for the necessity of Ecocriticism to the study of literature. They can show how literature is an important instrument that is a central weapon with which to fight the unrepentant capitalist.<sup>162</sup> As crucial as these studies have proved to be, they fail to bring to the fore the importance and relevance of ecocritical studies in the preservation of the linguistic diversity of the world, just as the flora and fauna are crucial to the importance of the planet earth. One could give kudos to Senier's efforts at bringing to the fore the role of the ethnobotanical

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literature of the Mohegan's as a kind of survivalist literature that preserved the culture of the people for the future. It still did not focus on the place of language in the whole process.

This study thus carefully attempts to do a critique of the forces of the green economy in making a surface attempt at linguistic preservation while leaving out the most essential root of the problem that continues to threaten the very core of the survival of the Nigerian indigenous languages. Cultural domination that came from colonial oppression has been identified above. The other issues identified include an acceptance of the colonialists' standard assessment of Nigeria's indigenous languages. By this very submission, the identity construction is predetermined for the Nigerian. The psychological base of such an acceptance is what informed this choice that Ecocriticism is considered

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<sup>160</sup> Iyabode O. Daniel, 'Barren Rivers and Flowery Women: Metaphors of Domination and Subjugation in Select Poems of Ebi Yeibo and Molara Ogundipe-Leslie'. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 2008a, 2:5. 99-110.

<sup>161</sup> Iyabode O. Daniel, *The Linguistic and Pictorial Representation of Nigerian Women's Assertiveness in Selected Nigerian Newspapers*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of English, University of Ibadan. 2008.

<sup>162</sup> Foster, 2013 and Senier, 2014

an important instrument in unravelling this psychological submission to the dominant paradigm.<sup>163</sup>

Like all critical theories, Ecocriticism is about finding fault with the system. As CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) has shown, asking questions is the only way to get the national and regional leaders to give an account of their actions. In light of this, Ecocriticism is about asking questions about why our languages are dying, and we seem helpless to do anything about it. As CDA has also shown<sup>164</sup>, asking questions is the way we make ourselves responsible for the happenings around us. For the ordinary citizens, then, saving the Nigerian languages is more of our duty, beyond government deliberate policy. This much was asserted by Kole Omotoso in his paper on the research into the way of preserving Nigerian indigenous languages. He categorically states that the responsibility for preserving the indigenous languages lie with the populace of Nigeria.<sup>22</sup> This position was supported by the Nigeria Institute of International Affairs, Prof Aji. Prof Aji on his part insists that the indigenous languages are instruments of development and national unity.<sup>22</sup> What greater need does Nigeria have at this time of her

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history than development and unity? But the fact is that government policy is not the issue now, but the individual determination and commitment.

Why do we say this? The truth is that we do not need government policy to behave like responsible parents and guardians by passing our languages down to our children. Ager and Senier assert that this lack of linguistic continuity has remained a major hindrance to linguistic preservation because parents are not passing their language down to their children.<sup>165</sup> Daniel notes that most parents are apparently ignorant

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<sup>163</sup> Iyabode O. Daniel, 2008.

<sup>164</sup> Teun A. Van Dijk, 'Discourse Analysis as Ideology Analysis.' *Language and Pace*, 1995, 17-33. Accessed February 18, 2008 from <http://www.discourse.org/OldArticles/Discourseanalysisidologyanalysis.pdf>. <sup>22</sup> Nigeria Television Authority, Network News. 9.00 pm. 28 February 2014.

<sup>165</sup> Senier, 2014 and Ager, 2009.

of the important role that the L1 performs in improving their children's overall intellectual performance in school.<sup>166</sup> Daniel and Sulaiman present the finding by Fafunwa that shows that children taught in the indigenous language throughout their primary education performed better than those who were taught in English.<sup>167</sup> Despite this empirical finding (which is not a hidden one), many Nigerian caregivers still seem bent on turning their children into little English Masters and Missuses. People with such a mind-set can only be on their way to the grave. But this does not have to be the case as following the provision of green economy will likely lead to intergenerational link and social inclusiveness.<sup>168</sup>

***Cultural Eco-diversity as Identity Maintenance and Preservation*** The question one may need to ask is: What seems to be the way out in all these? The obvious answer is that the maintenance of eco-diversity in the *glocal* world. The term 'glocal' is borrowed from Ekpe<sup>169</sup>; it means the local application that has its root in global existence. As such, the maintenance of Nigeria's local linguistic diversity is the maintenance of the global diversity of languages. This is why Crystal<sup>170</sup> maintains that all must get involved in the fight to preserve

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the Eco-linguistic diversity of the world. As suggested by scholars like Ager and Crystal,<sup>171</sup> the fact that the percentage of people of the world speaking a large percentage of the world's languages is so small notwithstanding (5% of the world population speak 95% of the world's languages), language as the transmitter of culture is a crucial function that cannot be denied. It is thus obvious that it should concern everybody, as asserted by Crystal<sup>172</sup>. This is what makes the concern

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<sup>166</sup> Iyabode O. A. Daniel, 'The Role of Parents in Poetic Appreciation among Secondary School Students: Poetic Appreciation as Focus.' *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 2013, 2,1: 116-130.

<sup>167</sup> Iyabode O. A. Daniel, 2013 and Halima O. Sulaiman, 1995. 'The Role of Mother-Tongue in Education in Nigeria.' *Gusau Journal of Education*. 138-149.

<sup>168</sup> United Nations Environmental Programme, 2011. *Towards a Green Economy*.

<sup>169</sup> Ekpe Mfon B., *The English Language in Nigeria*. 2010, Lagos: National Open University of Nigeria.

<sup>170</sup> David Crystal, 2000.

<sup>171</sup> Simon Ager, 2009 and David Crystal, 2000

<sup>172</sup> David Crystal, 2000



here *glocal*. This paper is about the Nigerian/African situation, but the situation is not peculiar to Nigeria/Africa.

The issue here is that the identity of a people is reposed in their language. This accounts for why the lexemes of a language contain the things that exist in the culture of the people who speak the language. It is this identity that determines who we are. This is why everyone should be concerned. This is because an identity crisis can occur at two levels if the languages are lost. One, the people concerned lose who they are and thereby become rootless. Two, the world loses a part of itself and consequently becomes less enriched.

### ***The Place of Green Economy in Stemming African Languages Linguicide***

The first question to ask ourselves is: What is a green economy? United Nations Environmental Programme<sup>173</sup>, following UNEP,<sup>174</sup> describes the green economy as having to do with “improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities.”<sup>175</sup> Looking at the issue of social equity, one cannot say that African indigenous languages have enjoyed this in comparison to the English language within the African social milieu. They have been downgraded and browbeaten into submission. This has led to the obvious threat to their becoming scarce commodities in the nation. However, taking on the green economy model as a means of stemming this evil tide will help stop the progress of African languages towards linguicide. Why do we say

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this? The fact that the green economy is about the preservation of the ecology of the world to avert such terrible environmental consequences as are being seen all over the world presently, one cannot help but say that it has relevance to the preservation of African languages from extinction. It should help towards the prevention of the loss of

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<sup>173</sup> United Nations Environmental Programme, 2011

<sup>174</sup> United Nations Environmental Programme, 2010

<sup>175</sup> United Nations Environmental Programme, (2011). 16

biodiversity and ecosystem services and result in social inclusiveness.<sup>176</sup> Social inclusiveness in the mindset of the average African concerning the indigenous languages will restore them to their place of pride. Once this is done, it is obvious that preserving African languages as well as other world languages in such a situation from this terrible threat of linguistic scarcity will be easier.

In this wise, one could safely say that the application of the concept of green economy as a preserver of wealth and heritage is a relevant instrument in preserving African indigenous languages. As such, one could see a relationship between the Green Economy Coalition and Senier's<sup>177</sup> assertion that a green economy should naturally result in sustainable development. As much as one could really agree that Senier's accusation that the green economy has not fully delivered on its promise, this model appears very relevant to the sustenance of the world as we know it today, except that we are ready to relocate to the 'moonland'. The question to consider in the next section is determining which languages are under threat within the Nigerian socio-economic milieu.

### *Languages under Threat in the World*

The minority languages are the ones mostly under threat in Nigeria. Like everywhere else in the world, the minority languages are under great threat. However, as noted by Ager, even the so-called major languages in Nigeria are not spared. This is not far-fetched, as noted above. Many so-called educated Nigerians are seemingly bent on destroying the Nigerian indigenous languages. The not-so-literate also got on the bandwagon. The fact that many now speak English to their

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children at home indicates their readiness to sell their identity to the god of modernity. The more you can bastardise your L1 by code mixing, the more 'civilised' you supposedly are. This is the issue. As found by

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<sup>176</sup> United Nations Environmental Programme, 2011; Georgeson, L., Malsin, M., Poessinouw, M. 2017. 'The global green economy: a review of concepts, definitions, measurement methodologies and their interactions. *Geography and Environment*', 4,1:1-23. <https://rgsibg.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/geo2.36>.

<sup>177</sup> Green Economy Coalition 2020 and Senier, 2014.

Nwachukwu<sup>178</sup>, the Igbo/English bilinguals tend to code mix a lot in informal settings, while they do not code mix in formal settings, which usually involve the use of the English language.

In another vein, we could see from the assertion of Daniel<sup>37</sup> that the essential problem here is psychological. It is in a situation where people feel that their language is inferior because of how one will explain a situation where someone will not code-mix when speaking English, but will when speaking their L1 (Igbo, in this case). Other Nigerian languages are not different, as will be seen below. Only a psychological lessening of the self can account for this.

This is also found to be the case in Yoruba as well as some other Nigerian languages.<sup>179</sup> But the strangest part is formal situations in which the interlocutors still feel it necessary to add English to what they are speaking or translate outright what they have said into the English language. The Yoruba home video producers are the guilty ones of this, as many of their productions encourage such needless code mixing or outright code switching. It is most times the excuse that they are only presenting what they are seeing around them, but it is also true that they are influencing many of those around them, especially the youth. The fact that there is such needless code mixing will make many assume that this is the proper way to speak. This makes the death knell on Nigerian languages sound louder and faster.

### ***Models of Linguistic Recording and Preservation***

This is an ethnographic design in line with Hymes' model of research. This involves real-life data being used for research in their natural habitat. Pike model was followed to get data for this study. This essentially involves doing electronic recordings of data in the field.

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<sup>178</sup> Christopher Nwachukwu, Code mixing among selected Igbo speakers of English as a second language: A case study of Ojo Local Government Area, Lagos. BA Project, National Open University of Nigeria, Lagos, 2014. <sup>37</sup> Iyabode O. Daniel, 2008.

<sup>179</sup> Senier, 2014; Iyabode O. A. Daniel, 'Nigerians Utilisation of Code-mixing as a Communicative Device.' English Review: Journal of English Education, 2016, 5,1: 101-114.

Two types of mobile devices were used in recording the data analysed in this study: these are an Android phone (Samsung Galaxy Note II) and a tablet (Apple iPad). There are two speech events that were recorded. These were a marriage ceremony and a church sermon. The two events occurred in two different States (Edo and Delta) in Nigeria and at two different times. The marriage ceremony occurred in November 2013, while the church sermon was recorded during the Christmas mass in a Catholic church in December 2013.

These were recorded by the researcher, basically out of being intrigued by the language employment. It was interesting because in these instances, the interlocutors had the choice to use the indigenous languages fully, but seemed to consider it natural to mix them

## RESULTS

The first one was a traditional marriage ceremony in which the language of the procedure was expected to be strictly in the indigenous language (Okpe dialect of the Edo language). However, it was observed that the Master of Ceremonies (MC) of the programme continually mixed the proceedings with quite a chunk of English. The location was the Okpe Kingdom in Edo State of Nigeria. A large section of the guests or participants in the ceremony is from the locality. Just like with the second speech event, about 99% of the participants in the ceremony are from the town or the vicinity. Nevertheless, it needs to be mentioned that the groom and his family are Britons. The bride herself and her nuclear family hold dual citizenship of part Nigerian and part British. It is also a known fact to this researcher that the bride and her siblings not only lack linguistic competence in the Okpe dialect of Edo, but also speak their English with a British accent. Once again, the worries of Crystal<sup>180</sup> and the accusation of Senier<sup>181</sup> find reality in this sort of setting.

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<sup>180</sup> David Crystal, 2000

<sup>181</sup> Senier, 2014

The question then is: In what other manner, rather than code mixing or directly translating, would the Master of Ceremonies (MC) have handled the linguistic awkwardness that is called this traditional

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marriage? This shows that the root of language death is beyond mere theorising.

The second speech event was recorded in the church. The church is in Akumazi-Umuocha in Delta State. The preacher had a mixed congregation. However, if this is the reason for the manner in which he was delivering his sermon, the researcher could not ascertain this. Why is one saying this is because the researcher could only follow the sermon in English, as she herself is a linguistic stranger to the locality. Her interest was aroused due to the seemingly persistent intrusion of English into the sermon. However, considering that the preacher speaks the language of the area perfectly well and that 98% of the congregation in attendance seem to be from the same Ika linguistic division, one would have expected that the whole of the sermon would have been rendered in Ika. However, the observation of researcher is that the preacher continually code-mixed his presentation, using both English and Ika.

Looking at this second scenario, one wonders at the choice of the preacher. Is it that he was assuming that there are strangers in the congregation (as it is the festival period of the Yuletide), or is this the actual way he normally delivers his homilies to his congregation? An answer to this question will help in determining the linguistic propensity of the reverend father. With his celibate oath anyway, he appears not to be a threat to the passing on of such linguistic legacy to his children. It should, however, seem that the spiritual children he has and can thus influence negatively are more than his possible biological offspring – a whole church of people, young and old.

One may, therefore, say here that, as much as one may want to excuse the first event, it appears to one that the second event is actually a play out of the same psychological deficiency that makes parents turn their children to linguistic mulattoes through code mixing their indigenous languages with the English language rather than teaching them to speak

their indigenous mother tongue. On this point, even the excuse for the participants in the marriage ceremony becomes untenable. This researcher had challenged the mother of the bride on the inability of her children to speak the Okpe dialect when she and her husband converse perfectly well in the language (this is, despite her originating from another dialectical extraction in Edo State). Her excuse was that if the children had had a Nigerian accent in their school in Britain, they would become objects of ridicule. It appears that the hegemonic consent of the oppressed to help their oppressor maintain their hold on power is endless. And we know the language is an instrument of power.<sup>182</sup> This obviously leads to children becoming rootless because they are cultureless. The enrichment they would have brought to the linguistic flora and fauna of the world thus ends up in the trash can. The most saddening of the consequences of language death, therefore, becomes the loss of selfhood by many Nigerian citizens through the loss of their language, that is, their identity.

A third scenario arose out of the data collected by this author from another research situation. Research on children's language learning processes involved collecting data from children's conversations with adults, and these were then recorded. While transcribing the data, it was found that the children were doing a lot of the conversation with their parents in English. One member of the research group then asked the lead researcher why her grandchildren and their parents were discussing in English. Is it that the parents have different linguistic backgrounds or what? This set the lead researcher thinking and started to insist that the children, especially those with linguistic sameness with their spouse, should make it a matter of policy to speak their language to their children.

The next set of instances includes taking the issues beyond the Nigerian borders. The meeting of Africans on foreign soils. The researcher visited Ireland and found that many of the signs there have the English and Gaelic versions.

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<sup>182</sup> Brown, R. & Gilman, A., 'The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity.' In P. P. Giglioli (Ed.) *Language and Social Structure*, (London: Penguin, 1972), 253-281; Daniel, 2008; van Dijk, 1995

Ironically, her visit to Ghana saw that most of the writings in the public spaces are done strictly in English. The only Akan word you may likely meet in the public space will be 'Akwaaba'. This means 'welcome'. However, is this enough to preserve a people's language?

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Except it is a pointer as we have in the name of Kinta Kunte that helped Alex Haley to trace his roots in *Roots*!

There are other instances of Africans meeting in the diaspora but unable to communicate except in the language of the colonialists. This was the experience of the researcher when she visited Paris, France, during the ISOLA-14 conference. During the dinner party to round off the conference, she keenly observed the fact that the Africans from the different African countries could not relate well with one another except in either French or English. The hosting Caucasians did not have this problem, as they easily communicated with one another in French and interacted with the Africans colonised by their forebears in French, which the Africans spoke proudly. How do you preserve such African' languages? I must mention, though, that the Nigerians there who could converse in Yoruba among the conferees also exchanged their own side talks in the Yoruba language. This sounds relieving, it appears. Nonetheless, the colonialists have their languages well displayed, used, and preserved for their posterity.

## DISCUSSION

The study investigated the linguicide of African indigenous languages in relation to the objectives listed above. While analysing the ethnographic data collected for this study, we were able to answer the research question raised and integrate it into the discussion, providing sensible solutions to the identified problem.

From the data, it is obvious that the 'Don't speak in vernacular' school rule holds on the average African runs so deep that even in events that

would normally be considered informal and outside of the school system, would be conducted in English to maintain the status quo. This could also be the explanation for the second research question. The domination of the English language in the consciousness of the average African is so deep that where you would expect them to use the indigenous language without fail, English still takes the lion's share of the exchange. The psyche of the African observed from this date is not quite pretty. The future of the African indigenous languages is threatened by the attitude put up by many, as discussed in the literature earlier. In essence, within the frame of the Green Economy, it is important that the diverse nature of the African linguistic landscape be maintained. This is further expanded below.

### ***Committed Patriotic Employment of the Language to Help Its Preservation***

The question to ask at this stage is: How do we prevent the slide that has taken hold of Nigerian languages? Essentially, the issue is that the patriotic zeal in Nigerians for their language needs to be awakened. This is in terms of parents speaking to their children in the language that is their L1. If a Nigerian parent speaks their mother tongue to their children at home, it will improve the standing of these Nigerian languages in the minds of the people. As noted by Daniel<sup>183</sup>, unless the parents take their responsibility towards their children's linguistic education seriously, there will always be such a cultural gap in their children's education. The truth is that this is getting to a crisis level, as shown by Nwachukwu's study. Dike<sup>184</sup> laments that the amount of damage that parents do to their children with such irresponsibility on their part is not quantifiable. She asserts that her personal experience of dissonance with the parents' carelessness of not exposing her and her siblings to their native language has been traumatic in terms of identity crisis. She notes that even though they are expected to be Deltans, they cannot speak their native tongue. And not being Yoruba in origin, they do not speak the language because their parents did not encourage them

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<sup>183</sup> Daniel, 2013

<sup>184</sup> Evelyn A. Dike, 'Historical development of the English language in Nigeria from the 16th Century to Date: An Investigation of the English Language Role in Modern Nigerian Homes.' BA Project, National Open University of Nigeria, Lagos, 2012.



to speak it. As such, without being English people, they are English speakers in their homes. She has found it a most unnerving experience for her and her siblings. As an adult now, she feels she does not have a true affiliation because the English language she can speak fluently is foreign to her environment. This seems to be the story of the African youths. The author also found a nephew whom she assumed, having grown up at home within the vicinity of the village from which his parents came (just ten minutes' drive from where the family resides), would be speaking the language fluently. She was shocked to find the young man struggling to converse in the L1 with the parents with the grandmother.

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All these show that the failure of language transmission is actually the failure of parents' duties to their children. It is clear then that the solution to the problem lies a lot more with parenting. This confirms the findings of Daniel and Dike <sup>185</sup>. An understanding that the death of our indigenous languages is the death of our personhood and identity as Nigerians/Africans should be of utmost concern to us. One cannot over-emphasise the fact that the indigenous languages need to be preserved – for social balance and self-preservation of our personhood, culture and identity.<sup>45</sup> These are what make Nigeria truly Nigeria; the same goes for the other African languages, of course. The clarion call then is to all to begin to use the indigenous languages at home and pass them to their children. This is the only way to save the indigenous languages. It is thus heartening to see that the Lagos State House of Assembly is taking the lead in this by having one day of its legislative business conducted in the Yoruba language. If this is not a correct application of the concept of green economy, I do not know what is.

## CONCLUSION

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<sup>185</sup> Daniel, 2013 and Dike, 2012. <sup>45</sup> UNEP, 2011

This paper looked at the current situation of the African indigenous languages. It applies the eco-critical theory to investigate the situation and the usage level of the African indigenous languages. It was found that many of the indigenous languages are under serious threat from the dominant world languages, such as English, which is the number one threat to many languages of the world. It was found that the essential problem of the negative psychological disposition of many Nigerians/Africans to the use of their mother tongue puts indigenous languages at risk of extinction. Therefore, saving African languages requires saving parents and caregivers from their psychological hangups, which makes them think of English as superior to their indigenous languages. This is the submission of this paper.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is, therefore, suggested that the transmission route of the indigenous languages, which is the home, should be made a vibrant means of passing on the language to the next generation for continuity. A need for psychological rejuvenation through the patriotic zeal of identity preservation by speaking the indigenous language to the children at home is the only way to save the African indigenous languages and, by inference, her people. If the more than a century existence of the nationhood of many of the African countries cannot inspire such commitments from Africans, one wonders what else will.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I state clearly that there is no conflict of interest in the presentation and writing of this paper. It was fully conceptualised and written by me. Therefore, I take responsibility for the ideas shared in the paper.

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