The International Journal of Social Sciences World
TIJOSSW is Available Online at:
https://www.growingscholar.org/journal/index.php/TIJOSSW
Vol. 3 No. 01, June 2021, pages: 1~14
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4461738
ISSN **2690-5167**
Growingscholar Publisher

Irregular Migration and Security Challenges in North Western Nigeria: Trends, Issues and the Way Forward

Yunusa Uba Muhammad [1]

Article history: Received 20 September 2020; Accepted: 29 November 2020; Displayed Online: 25 January 2021; Published: 30 June 2021

Keywords

Irregular Migration;

Security Challenges;

National Security;

Migrants;

Nigeria;

Abstract

Irregular migration is the migration of people across national borders in a way that violates the immigration laws of the destination country. Recently, it has been noted that there is a rising trends in irregular migration worldwide, especially from poorer to richer countries. Most migrants within and outside Africa are irregular migrants. However, those found in Nigeria appear to be on the increasing in the recent time especially in North Western region. The purpose of this paper is to examine the issue of irregular migration and its effects on Nigeria's national security with particular reference to North West region, and with a view of providing suggestions on how the security challenges faced in the country could be addressed. Thus, the paper began with presenting an historical and conceptual background of the issue of irregular migration and security challenges in Nigeria. The trends and issues of irregular migration and security challenges in North Western Nigeria were reasonably discussed. It then reviewed the causes of irregular migration. It specifically dwelt extensively on the impacts and consequences of irregular migration on social, economic, political and security in north-western Nigeria. In the light of all these, recommendations were proffered as a way forward for reducing insecurity challenges in northwestern part of the country and the nation at large.

[1] *Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS) Unit, Nigeria Immigration Service, Kano State Command; Email: yunusadanguguwa77@gmail.com; Phone Number +2348039648414.*

1. Introduction

Movement is innate tendencies of all living things and human beings have been found wandering (migrating) from place to another in search of basic necessities of survival since creation or evolution. This movement can be to short or long distance, for the purpose of temporal, semi-temporal or permanent residence. It is therefore a natural phenomenon, as such is not out of context to move (migrate) in search of life's necessities or improvement, however, it is paramount to view this movement in the face of present realities to ascertain its benefits or otherwise. Migration, according to Nigeria's National Policy on Migration (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2015), is a fundamental part of human nature as such it is not unnatural for man to move. It has always been part of human behaviour and one of the historical forces that shaped the world (International Organization for Migration, 2011).

Some evolutionary theorists postulated that the first evolved humans, *homo sapiens*, originated from Africa and move out or emigrated to the other parts of the world some millions years ago (IOM, 2011). However, religious or faith based accounts of human existence (Islam and Christianity), began with the creation of the first man, *Adam*, followed by that of his wife, *Eve*, who later violated the instructions that their Creator (Almighty God) gave them, by eating the forbidden fruit and were sent out of the beautiful Garden of Eden (Paradise), that when migration began (Qur'an 2:35-36; and Bible 3:23-24).

Migration is the movement of a person or group of persons from one geographical unit to another across an administrative or political border, who wish to settle definitely or temporarily in a place other than their place of origin (IOM, 2011). Migration is also seen as the movement of people from one place in the world to another for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi permanent residence, usually across a political boundary (Human Migration Guide of National Geographic Expeditions, 2009 in Alkasim, 2018). Factors identified to have been causing this movement are generally or broadly classified into Push, Pull and recently Network/Globalization factors (Migration and Globalization, 2015 in Alkasim, 2018).

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another either permanently (in which case they settle down) or temporary (which case they return home after a period of stay). It has been a feature of geography from time immemorial. In ancient times, people move from one place to another in search of better agricultural land, richer hunting grounds, better fisheries, abundant commercial activities, refugees from hostile armies etc (Dahiru, 2017).

From the early days, Africans have through the ages moved from one place to another as cattle herders, traders, invaders or refugees. There was also been a considerable migration in West Africa sub-region resulting from economic, social and political problems. This phenomenon has been in existing even before the independence of African countries and even before the idea of international boundaries which received prominence in 1884 that resulted in partition of Africa at Berlin. As a result of this partition by colonial masters, free movement of people and goods across the borders were curtailed and various regulations requiring certain formalities to be accomplished before admittance of non-citizens were introduced. However, in spite of the control measures, irregular immigrants still cross international boundaries mostly through unapproved routes/entry ports.

It is clear that immigrants exist before and during colonial era, restriction were not enforced. This is because African empires overlapped each other due to extended family system. The aggressive nature of colonization or quest for colonies and the need for trading partners resulted in the scramble for Africa. Presently, there are significant evidences of irregular migration occurring in Africa, in particular within West Africa, to North Africa (mainly to Libya), in the Horn of Africa and towards South Africa. It has been estimated that cross-country movements within the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) are much more significant than extra-regional

movements, representing over 80 per cent of total migrant flows from countries in the region (Alkasim, 2018). In 2009, IOM estimated that between 17,000 and 20,000 male irregular migrants from East Africa and the Horn of Africa were smuggled to South Africa yearly, a large majority of them being Somali and Ethiopian nationals (IOM, 2014).

Recently, it has been noted that there is a rising trend in irregular migration worldwide, especially from under develop to develop countries. Most migrants within and outside Africa are irregular migrants. However, those found in Nigeria appear to be on the increase in the recent times (Yakeen, 2017). Against this foregoing background, the main aim of this paper is to examine the issue of irregular migration and its effects on Nigeria's national security with particular reference to North West region, and with a view of providing suggestions on how the security challenges faced in the country could be addressed. In pursuance of this central theme, the paper therefore discusses the following:

i. Conceptual Clarification of (irregular migration and national security)
ii. Trends and Issues of Irregular Migration and Insecurity in Northwestern Nigeria
iii. Causes of irregular migration
iv. Impact of irregular migration on Nigeria's national security
v. Recommendations and The Way Forward

2. Materials and Methods

For better appreciation of the issues raised in this paper, it is imperative that the following concepts are initially clarified:

Irregular Migration

Defining irregular migration has been the subject of considerable debate. Terms such as illegal, undocumented, non-documented, and unauthorized migration can have different connotations in national policy debates. Due to this and the association with criminality the term "illegal migration" should be avoided, as most irregular migrants are not criminals. Being in a country without the required papers is, in most countries, not a criminal offence but an administrative infringement. While the UN use the term 'irregular' or 'undocumented' migration, the European Commission favoured for a long time the term 'illegal migration', but more recently refers to 'irregular migration' as well. But these terms "illegal", "irregular", "undocumented", and "unauthorized" are used interchangeably in this discussion.

Irregular migration is the migration of people across national borders in a way that violates the immigration laws of the destination country. It also means a movement of people that do not have the permission of the country or borders they are entering into. The International Organization for Migration "IOM" (2011) defines it as "movement of person(s) to a new place of residence or transit that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving country". It further stated that a migrant in an irregular situation may fall within one or more of the following circumstances: *He or she may enter the country irregularly, for instance with false documents or without crossing at an official border crossing point; He or she may reside in the country irregularly, for instance, in violation of the terms of an entry visa/residence permit; or He or she may be employed in the country irregularly, for instance he or she may have the right to reside but not to take up paid employment in the country.*

On the other hand, irregular immigrant is the person or group of persons that cross the Nigeria borders without documentation and reside in. they are the person or group of persons that violate

the immigration laws of the destination country, with the intention to remain in the country. Irregular immigrants are also referred to as unauthorized/undocumented immigrants.

Irregular immigrants are people who live in a place without permission and the authorities have no record of them. It also includes people who visit a country for tourism or education or health purposes legally, but do not go back. This means even though they went there legally, they are now irregular immigrants because they have over-stayed the period granted to them. In a similar vein, immigrants who have expired documents, or who came in with fake documents all fall under undocumented.

National Security

The concept of national security would be best understood by first presenting the concept of security. Section 14 (1) of chapter 2, of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states that "security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government; and the participation by the people in their government shall be ensured in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution". Seen this way, security is a social contract between the state and the citizens, in which the former is expected to protect, defend and provide for the latter in the public area.

In the view of Adeola and Oluyemi (2012) security refers to "the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions". It is the existence of conditions within which people in a society can go about their normal daily activities without any threat to their lives or properties. It embraces all measures designed to protect and safeguard the citizenry and the resources of individuals, groups, business and the nation against sabotage or violent occurrences (Dambazau, 2007). According to Igbuzor (2011) Security demand safety from chronic threats and protection from harmful disruption.

Ani (2010) argues that the term 'national security' came into use in the twentieth century, particularly after the World War II. Edem (2010) conceptualized national security as the ability of the Nigerian State to successfully pursue her national interest, being able to protect the values of the state and being able to maintain the same. According to Dambazau (2007) security of the state in the traditional sense meant the protection of the state, its boundaries, people, institutions, and values, from external attack. National security is therefore a collection of plans, actions and institutions built by a state in order to protect themselves from both internal and external attack. It is the act of promoting the core values of a state that would enhance the protection of lives and properties of the citizenry (Okene, 2010).

According to Adebakin and Raimi (2012) national security covers critical dimensions, viz: Economic security, Political security, Food security, Health security, Environmental security, Personal security and Community security. However, nation like Nigeria has its own peculiar security threat determined by the aforementioned dimensions. Thus, this paper is concern with migrant threats to Nigeria's national security as exemplified by the activities of illegal immigrants.

From the forgoing definitions, we can deduce that the main essence of national security is the protection of the national interest /value of a state and upholding what the state believes to be valuable to it and its people. Some issues of national value can be found in the norm of a country i.e. its Constitution, from actions of government or other state policies that are manifest from its relationship and interaction with other states.

3. Results and Discussions

Trends and Issues of Irregular Migration and Insecurity in North Western Nigeria

Nigeria, and the North West region in particular is characterised by deep security challenges that have created vulnerabilities and push towards conflicts and rising violence. Poverty has been growing and deepening over the past decade while inequality and conspicuous consumption by the rich, with doubtful source of funds, is creating anger among the people. Northern Nigeria has the highest population growth rate in the contemporary world which has created a huge youth bulge confronted by unemployment and underemployment. The family is in crisis and high poverty levels have created a significant push factor leading to poor families stepping away from their responsibility for good parenting. In addition, the rise of new religious movements has affected socialisation and religious education within the family creating a crisis of values. Meanwhile, social cohesion and family life are being torn apart by a serious and growing problem of drug addiction (Bugaje, 2019).

The security situation in Northern Nigeria at present has attracted much attention in view of its status and role as a powerful geopolitical zone in the country whose security is threatened by many forms of crimes and jihadist activities especially the Boko Haram insurgency. Other threats to include the illegal spread of small arms and light weapons, illegal drug trade, human trafficking, irregular migrants, farmer-herder conflicts, ethno-religious conflicts, rural banditry and communal conflicts, kidnapping, armed robbery, urban youth violence and drug abuse. It is noted that kidnapping is in the increased in the north western states most especially Kaduna, Katsina and Zamfara states. Cattles rustling is also rampaging against the cattle owners and farmers in the North West states. They have created panic and chaos among Fulani cattle rearers and farmers, it is also noted that cattle rustlers and bandits have become the major security challenges in these areas. Due to the aggressive military operations against the cattle rustlers and bandits in the region, they have now turned to kidnapping for ransom. The bandits heavily armed with sophisticated weapons have taken side in the bush turn to kidnappers for ransom of millions of Naira (Musa & Arostar, 2017).

It is well known that the widespread of criminal activities in north west states has it is genesis from illegal migrants who are mostly passed from various porous or illegal borders that are located in the neighboring states of Sokoto, Kebbi, Kastina and Jigawa States (Yahaya, Liman & Adadu, 2018). Irregular migrants are the primary tools that trigger both ethnic and internal conflict and other related violent crimes that pose a threat to internal security, democracy and the operation of good governance not only in North West but in Nigeria. Irregular migration is one of the key major factors that generate to various categories of crime like armed robbery, kidnapping, farmer-herder conflict, community violent conflict, insurgent attacks and the host of many other crimes.

According to Joshua and Makama (2017) irregular migration in Nigeria is multi-factorial, and it is on the rise in the recent time. It will continue to be a major, unstoppable factor of global life until the different push and pull factors associated with this migration, and including social and economic disparities are eliminated. Irregular migration is no doubt has serious negative consequences on Nigeria and Nigerians, and there is need to mitigate and possibly prevent that urgently. The importance of this menace cannot be overlooked and the time for action for Nigeria is long overdue. This is a wake-up call for Nigeria!

Causes of Irregular Migration

The causes of irregular migration differ from individual to individual and from community to community (Mohammed, 2016). Sociologists have long analysed migration issues with the "push-pull" model. "Push factor" refers to circumstances at home that propel to migrate; examples include famine, drought, low agricultural productivity, and unemployment while "pull factor" refers to those conditions found elsewhere (abroad) that attract migrants. These causes include the following:

Poverty

While economic models do look at relative wealth and income between home and destination countries, they do not necessarily imply that irregular immigrants are always impoverished by standards of the home country. The poorest classes in developing countries may lack the resources needed to cross illegally, or the connections to friends or family already in the destination country. Nigeria is the 6th largest producer of petroleum in the world, it is the 8th largest exporter, and has the 10th largest proven reserves (UNICEF, 2007). In spite of the country's vast oil wealth, the majority of Nigerians are poor with 71% of the population living in object poverty (UNICEF, 2007).

Overpopulation

Population growth that exceeds the carrying capacity of an area or environment results in overpopulation. Spikes in human population can cause problems such as pollution, water crisis, and poverty. Virginia Abernethy notes that immigration is a road that provides a "relief valve" to overpopulation that stops a population from addressing the consequences of its overpopulation and that exports this overpopulation to another location or country. The population growth rate of Nigeria is 2.61%, one in every five Africans is a Nigerian and it contributes 2.64% of the world's population (World Population Review, 2018). Based on the above indices, one may be tempted to say Nigeria is overpopulated and probably, it is gradually approaching the status of overpopulation as a cause of migration both legal and illegal.

Family Reunification

According to Joshua and Makama (2017), some illegal immigrants seek to live with loved ones, such as a spouse or other family members. Family reunification visas may be applied for legal residents or naturalized citizens to bring their family members into a destination state legally, but these visas may be limited in number and subject to yearly quotas.

Wars and Asylum

Illegal immigration may be prompted by the desire to escape civil war, repression, genocide, political and religious persecution among others in the country of origin for example, Rohingya in Myanmar, 1994 Rwanda genocide, the insurgency in Nigeria among others.

Other causes include lack of employment, educational opportunities, lack of social safety nets, poor governance, corruption, lack of social justice, equity, and fair play, among others. Youth unemployment in Nigeria is 52.7% (National Bureau for Statistics, 2018) which could be one of the push factors for illegal migration among this vulnerable group.

Effects/Consequences of Irregular Migration on Nigeria's Security

Irregular migrations have serious effects or consequences on Nigeria's security, particularly the North West region. Thus, for the purpose of this discussion, the problems with irregular migration can be divided into dangers faced by irregular migrants and problems faced by the host or receiving communities. These effects could broadly divide into social, economic, political, and security challenges.

1. Security Challenge

Since its independence in 1960, Nigeria's internal security has been threatened by cross-border crime such as trafficking in arms, persons, drugs, arms banditry, vehicle theft, smuggling, touting and illegal or silent migration (that is unnoticed or undocumented movement across the borders), illegal lumbering, bunkering of petroleum products and of course the trans-human activities of cattle rearers who move their herds across national borders regardless of any regulations. Others are terrorism, insurgency, expatriates hostage taking, expatriate quota abuse, violation of immigration laws, document fraud and financial crimes (Afolayan, 2009).

As it is widely known, the north-western part of Nigeria experiences an increase in the crime rate that may be perpetuated by the illegal immigrants. According to Ebert (2014) illegal/undocumented migrants pose security threats to the northern Nigerian states, mostly due to porous borders. Anuforo (2006) affirmed that where there is security threats investors will be discouraged to invest in that nation state because it is assumed not to be safe for business especially terrorism threats. Majority of the illegal/undocumented immigrants in Nigeria are from the West African neighboring States and are mostly not the desired immigrants because of the low or no skill status they possess which cannot improve Nigeria's productivity to its maximum (Muhammad, 2016).

Terrorism has become a global trend, and it is thought that illegal immigrants are in the forefront facilitating the act and also partake in terrorist activities. It is alleged that among the illegal migrants there may be militants, who may enter the nation and carryout terrorist activities (Joshua & Makama, 2017). The exportation of religious extremism into Nigeria adds another dimension to the challenge of insecurity in the country especially the northern Nigeria. as reported by Alli (2012) nationals mainly from countries in the Sahel and Western Sahara, have been linked with religious uprising in Nigeria. Imported religious values and orientations have, at different times, challenged the secular status of the Nigerian state. Illegal/ undocumented migrants mostly engage in illegal activities due to their undocumented status as a result when various acts is perpetrated the perpetrators are usually nowhere to be found. Where there is a greater population of undocumented immigrants, crime rate increases, such as armed robbery, thefts, kidnapping, and banditry to mention a few.

In Nigeria, the notion that illegal immigrants contribute to religious conflicts has gained ground especially in official circles. They received significant public attention in the 1980s with incidents of Matatsine religious disturbance in Kano, Maiduguri and Kaduna (Ering, 2011; Sunday and Okechukwu, 2014). It is also on the record that undocumented migrants contributed a lot to the Maitatsine's religious riots, which took place in Kano and claimed many lives. The event also led to the huge destruction of public and private properties in that vicinity. It was confirmed that Muhammadu Marwa Maitatsine is Cameroonian (Chahngani, 1983).

While delivering a lecture entitled "Challenges of Modern Migration Management: The role of Nigeria Immigration Service" at the National Defence College (NDC) Nigeria to course 26 participants. The Comptroller General of Nigeria Immigration Service, Mr. Mohammed Babandede, confirmed that irregular migration is a threat to national security. He said that receiving countries of irregular migrants would experience criminality and threat to societal culture. The CG also explained that the influx of irregular migrants to Libya was as a result of lack of central authority in Libya, where warlords use migrants as an alternative deal in place of oil (Babandede, 2018).

The persistent cases of illegal movements of persons through the borders, some of whom are suspected to be Fulani herdsmen migrating from neighbouring countries especially Chad can be said to be as a result of the porous character of the country's borders. The ease of access at the border also makes it quite easy for illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (Ibrahim, 2015)

which in turn makes it easy for the Fulani herdsmen especially those from other countries like Chad and Niger to gain cheap access to weapons (Hazen & Horner, 2007). Adebola (2008) also support the views of other scholars that the porous nature of the border has caused unwanted influx of migrants from neighboring countries and the combination of both the illegal migrants and the proliferation of weapons has worsened the security issues in Nigeria.

The availability of Small Arms and Light Weapons is one of the major security challenges currently facing Nigeria, Africa and the world at large. The illegal movement and trafficking of SALW has become a trigger point that fuels the genesis of insecurity in Kano State that lead to criminal activities like communal conflict, political instability, kidnapping , armed robbery all these has contributed immensely to the level of insecurity in Kano State (Yahaya, Liman & Adadu, 2018).

2. Social Effects

Socially, the influx of illegal/undocumented migrants into a nation state poses security threats to the nation state in question (Musa, 2011). Also deportees are more likely to constitute great social and environmental risk not only to themselves but also to the already Nigerian (image) society on the receiving states (Nduneche, 2016).

Most of the undocumented immigrants are unemployed or unemployable, as well without means of livelihood; this means they have no good houses to live in. For example, in Kano state majority of undocumented immigrants live under the bridges, flyovers or uncompleted buildings, while some of them have built shanks in recreational places. They live in unhygienic, poor conditions and polluted environment. The inappropriate housing facility without basic amenities can spread diseases to other persons (Chhangani, 1983). The security implications here is that such kind people can become public charge and they can be recruited easily by the insurgents or other criminals.

As reported by Dahiru (2017) reasonable amount of migrants from Niger Republic, Mali and Chad have taken to begging in virtually all parts of the nation state as they have little or no skill to be employed. Also due to their inability to secure a good residential accommodation, these large numbers of illegal/undocumented migrants resides in slums and shanty residential areas. More so, the impact on the influx of undocumented immigrants in Nigeria can be an additional pressure on the social amenities provided by the nation state to her citizens. The nation state, who is still suffering from lack of proper economic planning herself may find it as a burden and can also render the government efforts ineffective (Okeoghene, 2017).

According to Joshua and Makama (2018), a rapid influx of immigrants often lead to crisis of identification among the indigenous people and endangered the cultural survival of such society by bringing unusual behaviours that could creep in and dilute the rich cultural heritage of the indigenous people. They further said, illegal immigrants resulted into environmental degradation, whereby compete for space with indigenous people, and such causing undue stress over social facilities. So also the high level of unidentified persons in the community often leads to undue tension within that community.

3. Economic Effects

Economically, illegal migrants have both positive and negative impacts on the two (2) countries (sending and receiving states). Illegal immigrants reduce the number of unemployment in the state of origin while increasing the rate in the receiving state known as the host nation state. Though it is true that illegal migrants (immigrants) take up jobs that the citizens reject but in the process jobs belonging to the citizens are also taken by these migrants. The uncontrollable influx of illegal/undocumented migration can cause destabilization in a nation-state (Rezouni, 2010). The

influx of illegal immigrants also triggers unemployment in the receiving state, they also create a high rate of inflation in the nation state's essential commodities due to their hiding underground leading to undocumented statistics as their needs cannot be budgeted for due to the incorrect calculated figure as such there can be scarcity of essential food items or have inflationary effect as undocumented migrant cannot transfer money legally through commercial banks, so they indulge in smuggling, trafficking of currency, while some of them patronize the black market where various countries' currencies are sold as commodities.

Illegal immigrants over stress the state economy by increasing financial burden on government. According to Joshua and Makama (2018) illegal immigrants often add to what the Government of the host community or nation could cater for, thereby increasing the financial burden of the Government, particularly, to very vital sectors as education and health. They further stated that immigrants take jobs which would otherwise be taken by local people; in particular places and circumstances, there can be competition and conflict as deprivation of native citizens and lack of employment opportunities. Moreover, illegal migration lead population growth, whereby resulting to an overwhelming increase in the population of the host country and bring about negative economic and social development of the country.

4. Political Effects

Babatunde (2009) also noted that in the Northern part of Nigeria, illegal aliens are often recruited to vote by unethical political parties taking advantage of the weak Nigerian borders from Niger and Chad. Often undocumented immigrants are used by unethical politicians as machineries to carry out crimes, posing threats of insecurity in the nation state. According to Okeoghene (2017), 40 Beniniose were found with the Nigeria's Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) during the 2015 General Elections. This place a question on how these Beniniose entered the nation state unnoticed. Illegal immigrants could get their names enlisted in the voting list illegally, thereby claiming themselves as citizens of the nation and creating a vote bank for the political parties. The unemployed illegal immigrants could equally be used by some politicians to create political violence as witnessed in some parts of northern Nigeria especially Kano state even during recent concluded 2019 general election.

According to Muhammad (2016), elections and electoral activities could easily be jeopardised in Nigeria by Nigerian citizens and nationals of neighbouring nations and vice versa, in view of the border proximities and it poor management. Non- Nigerians could and do take advantage of the vast and complex borders, marital affinity and other commercial attractions to visit Nigeria, get registered and cast their votes during elections. Some of such alien do or could be claiming dual citizenship, while that might not be the actual case. Unscrupulous politicians could or do recruit and use such categories of people to undermine credible elections in the nation. Genuine Nigerians could as well engaged in electoral malpractices or disrupt elections and cross over to any of the neighbouring nations unhindered.

The influx of undocumented migrants from the African Western neighboring countries into Nigeria strains nation states relations because of their conflicting interests. While the receiving state wants to get rid of the illegal unskilled migrants who by any means poses undesired result on the nation state, the sending states practically is interested in their prolonged residence in the receiving states as they are a burden to their state of origin. In this same vein Nigerian illegal/undocumented Migrants to the developed countries affect her bilateral relations. Majority of Nigerians can testify to the unwelcome and hostile attention given to them by foreign migration agencies and security officials (Anofi, 2009). The imprisonment and deportation of Nigerians in various developed

countries for various reasons but not limited to immigration offences such as fraud, incomplete travel documents or overstaying in the nation state in question to mention a few has a negative effect on the Nigerian image (Nduneche,2016). Due to the various experience of Nigerian illegal/undocumented migration activities, Nigerians are exposed to various inhuman treatments at respective embassies and high commissions in an attempt to leave the nation state for their various destinations.

On the whole, national security is threatened as a result of the numerous migration challenges. Essentially, security is primary a pre-occupation of an individual state to protect its sovereignty, territorial integrity, citizens and their values. It is on this basis that Nigeria and northern Nigeria in particular will have to gear up and take preemptive measures to manage migration in a way to enhance its national security. So, what roles can NIS play in promoting security in Nigeria? How can the security challenges in the North Western region could be solved? These two questions are briefly addressed in this section.

4. Conclusion

This paper began with presenting an historical and conceptual background of the issue of irregular migration and security. The trends and issues of irregular migration and security challenges in North West were reasonably discussed. It then reviewed the causes of irregular migration. It specifically dwelt extensively on the impacts and consequences of irregular migration on social, economic, political and security in north-western Nigeria. In the light of all these, recommendations were proffered as a way forward for reducing insecurity challenges in northwestern part of the country and the nation at large. It is hoped that this paper would not only present a focus for this discussion, but would also contribute to the socio-economic and political development in our great country.

Recommendations

From the foregoing discussions, it is evident that with her enormous resources, sustainable development in Nigeria remains elusive due to the menace of irregular migration activities and general insecurity. Against this backdrop, the paper made the following recommendations as a way forward for reducing insecurity challenges and irregular migrant's activities in northwestern part of the country and the nation at large:

i. For effective border security in Nigeria, there is need for integrated border management, in which all the stakeholders in border management and security such as the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Department of State Security (DSS) and Military Intelligence can come-up as a team in order to address the problem.
ii. There is need for paradigm shift from manual to digital (e-border) control mechanism in order to tackle terrorism and other trans-border criminal activities in northern Nigeria. This could be done by the introduction of bio-metric cards to ECOWAS citizens which is similar to that obtainable in Europe. This would help in minimizing the problem of irregular migration and other security challenges in the North West.
iii. Efforts must therefore be made to curtail the influx of illegal migrants, refugees and ex–combatants from our neighbouring war torn countries through collaborative efforts with its neighbouring law enforcement agencies.
iv. Provision of qualitative and functional education. Most of the people arrested for criminal behaviours lack education which often influence their criminality. Lack of education therefore

is itself insecurity and is a source of vulnerability to other forms in the north. Therefore, providing qualitative education could promote national security and development.

v. For much success to be recorded in security policing there is need to liaise and collaborate with border communities, traditional leaders, youth leaders and local security groups. These collaborations with these local communities are in appreciation of the fact that the locals are more familiar terrain they are.

vi. Creating job opportunities to the teeming youths since unemployment is one of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria. This enables them (youths) to develop their potential and become full participants in decision making.

vii. Government at all levels should create and implement policies that will reduce the rate of poverty among its people.

viii. Mobilize the communities on the effective modalities for promoting their security; this can be done through awareness campaigns, rallies, media advertisement, conferences, seminars and workshops on security issues.

ix. Federal government should include Security Management in school curriculum at all levels of education in Nigeria. This will enable the Nigerian youths to appreciate the importance of security in a secular state like Nigeria.

x. Finally, there is need for the Nigeria government to develop certain aspects of life such as infrastructure, economic, social, environmental and human needs in order for security in Nigeria as well as her borders to be adequately secured.

Acknowledgements

The author gratefully acknowledges the great help and cooperation of the officers of the Nigeria Immigration Service, Kano State Command who have given kind assistance and guidance in this write-up. The author would also like to thank Mr. Alkasim Inusa for his assistance and insights on an earlier draft of this article.

References

Adebakin, M.A. & Raimi, L. (2012). National Security Challenges and Sustainable Economic Development: Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Studies in Social Studies*, 1(1), 11-29.

Adeola, G. L., & Oluyemi, F. (2012). The Political and Security Implications of Cross Border Migration between Nigeria and Her Francophone Neighbours. *International Journal of Social Science Tomorrow*, 1(3), 1-9.

Afolayan, A. (2009). *Migration in Nigeria: A Country Profile 2009.* International Organization for Migration (IOM). Geneva: IOM Publications.

Alkasim, I. (2018). *Impact of Pendular Migration on Family Welfare in Katsina State, Nigeria*. Unpublished Materials, Department of Adults Education and Community Services, Bayero University, Kano.

Ani, K.J. (2010). *National Security in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges for Human Capital Development*. Unpublished Paper Presented at the Annual Lit Conference Organized by The Lit Organization: Ladies of the Ivory Tower held at Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu from 11th -15th October, 2010.

Anofi. D. (2009.August 22). 3,719 Nigerians Awaits Deportation 52 on death row-Federal Government. *The Nation Newspaper.*

Anuforo, E., (2006, May 22). Immigration to get arms, Udeh sets agenda for officers. *The Guardian*, 5. Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.

Babandede, M. (2018). Irregular Migration: Threat to National Security*. Daily Trust*, published on Wednesday 07 February, 2018.

Babatunde, O.A. (2009). *National Security and Migration: towards an Effective Cross-Border Management in Nigeria*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

Bugaje, U. (2019). *Northern Nigeria's Security Challenges and the Way Out*. A Communiqué for a Conference on Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Northern Nigeria's Security Challenges, held in Kaduna between 1st and 2nd July.

Chhangani, R.C. (1983). Causes, Consequences and Characteristics of Ilegal Immigrants. In Illegal Aliens under Nigerian Law, (Eds.) Exclusive distributor, Proveen Enterprises, pp:17-32. 1SBN No 1630974

Dahiru, I. (2017). *The Impact of Migration on the Socio-Economic Development of Kano State (2010-2015).* Unpublished B.Sc Project, Department of Political Science, Bayero University, Kano.

Dambazau, A.B. (2007). *Criminology and Criminal Justice.* Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd.

Edem, O. (2010). The Nigerian State and National Security. Retrieved from *http://www.nigerdeltacongress.com/narticles/nigerian_state_and_national_secu.htm* (accessed 19/05/2016).

Ering, S.O. (2011). Trans-Border Crimes and Its Socio-economic Impact on Developing Economies. *Journal of Sociology and Anthropology,* 2(2), 78-82.

Federal Government of Nigeria (2015). *National Migration Policy*. Abuja: International Organization for Migration.

Igbuzor, O. (2011) Peace and Security Education: A critical Factor for Sustainable, Peace and National Development. *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies,* 2 (1), 61-69.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2010). *Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning: A Handbook for Policy-makers and Practitioners*. Global Migration Group, IOM, Geneva. Available from https://publications.iom.int/books/mainstreaming-migration development-planning-handbook-policymakers-and-practitioners. (Access On 27th March, 2020).

International Organization of Migration (2004).International Migration Law. Glossary on migration.3.Available from:www.iomvienna.at/sites/default/files/IML-1-EN.PDF.

International Organization of Migration (2014). Irregular Migration and Cross Border Cooperation.3- 6.*International Dialogue Report.* Retrieved from https://nigeria.iom.int/sites/default/files/newsletter/Annex%20XXVl%20%20Report20 of%20International%20%Dialogue%20on%20irregular%20Migration%Crossborder%20co operation.pdf

Joshua, I. A. & Makama, J. G. (2017). Is illegal migration on the rise among Nigerians? A wake-up call!. *Achieves of Medicine and Surgery*, 2 (2), 35 -37. Online available from: http://www.archms.org/text.asp?2017/2/2/35/231626. [Accessed on 02 June, 2019].

Mohammed, Y.A. (2016). Cause and consequence of cross border illegal migration from South Wollo, Ethiopia. *Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 1 (8): 2-20.

Muhammad, Y.U. (2016). *Trans-Border Crimes and Its Implications on Nigeria's National Security.* Unpublished Paper Presented at the 11th Annual National Conference of the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Federal College of Education, Kano, held between 30th May – 3rd June, 2016.

Musa, N. M., (2011, September 17). Immigration Repatriates 230 illegal aliens over Boko Haram menace. *The Guardian*.8.

Musa, S. & Arostar, J. B. (2017). The Role of Social Studies Education to Curb Insecurity for National Development. *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies and Civic Education*, 1(1):96 -101.

National Bureau for Statistics (2018). *Youth unemployment in Nigeria*. Online available from: http://www.nigeriastat.gov.ng. [Accessed on 02 June, 2019].

National Bureau for Statistics; (2018). Available from: http://www.nigeriastat.gov.ng. [Last accessed on 2019 June 30].

Nduneche, G. (2016 September 14). Tribulations of Nigerian migrants. *Thisday*, 18.

Okeaghene, E. P. (2017). *International Migration and the Study of Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria: The Role of Nigeria Immigration Service*. Unpublished Dissertation, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Convenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Okene, A.A. (2010). *'National Security, Good Governance and Integration in Nigeria'*. A Lead Paper presented at the 6th Annual National conference of the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Federal College of Education, Kano, on 13th July, 2010.

Rezouni, S. (2010). Illegal migration causes, consequences and National security Implementations. *Strategy Research Project*.

Sunday, O.V.O. & Okechukwu, O.R. (2014). Cross-Border Crimes in West African Sub-Region: Implications for Nigeria's National Security and External Relations. *Global Journal of Human and Social Science (f), 14*(3), 45-57.

UNICEF (2007). The Nigeria Situation. Available from: http://www.unicef.org/nigeria/1971_2199.html. [Accessed on 02 June, 2019].

World Population Review (2018). Nigeria Population. Available from: http://www.worldpopulationreview.com/countries/nigeria-population. [Last accessed on 2019 June 30].

Yahaya, J. U., Liman, A. N. & Adadu, Y. (2018). An Assessment of Challenges Faced by Security Agencies in Fighting Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Kano State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Science Studies*, 6 (7), 47-56.

Yakeen, A. (2017). Over 1,500 Migrants Have Died in Mediterranean in 2017 and Many are Nigerians*. International Centre for Investigative Reporting*; 13 August, 2017.