



**International
Journal of
Social Sciences**

**An Evaluation of Youth Patriotism to The Nigerian State and The
Penchant for Migration: Using Edo State as Its Unit of Analysis
between the Year, 2010-2018**

by

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Abstract

This paper evaluation the Edo state youth patriotism to the Nigerian state and their penchant for migration. The elusive expectations for a better life and improved standard of living have created a feeling in the youth that government is no longer the source of hope as far as job creation is concerned. This study therefore seeks to examine the variable of patriotism and youth migration in Nigeria. Hypothesis was formulated and the survey method was employed using the questionnaire to generate data from the three Senatorial Districts in Edo state as well as the conduct of an in-depth oral interview with the Returnees. Data gathered was analyzed and interpreted using the Spearman's Ranked Order Correlation Coefficient (r). It was found out that there was a significant positive relationship between youth patriotism and youth penchant for migration. This aforementioned issue had created in the youth the lack of patriotism to the Nigerian state, stemming from youth alienation from the social and economic prosperity that employment opportunities and earnings could bring which are comparable with what is obtainable outside the country. It was therefore, recommended that the government should work assiduously on its re-distributive policies. By this, we mean bridging the gap between the rich and the poor in terms of representing the interest of the youth in policy formulation and implementation. The re-distribution of wealth, should be positively skewed towards the youths.

Key words: Youth, patriotism, International Migration, Nigeria, Edo state and Remittances.

1. Introduction

Nigeria's migration history had witnessed a trans-continental migration that started, with Nigerians going to study abroad in the 1950s and the 1960s, on completion they often return home full of great expectations with deep feeling of love for their country. This was later preceded with political upheaval that made Nigerians political refugees in foreign lands (which was as a result of the Nigeria Civil War in 1967- 1970) (Falola, 2008). But, in the most recent times, Nigeria has been on the list of ten top most asylum seekers place of origin as occasioned by the increased desire for a better life in the midst where the means of livelihood becoming more and more precarious (UNHCR 2009).

This unpleasant environment has created in the minds of the youths a situation of hopelessness and no glimmer of success occasioned by youth unemployment that has reached its crescendo in Nigeria, (Okafor, 2011). Nevertheless, Nigerian Economy had gone through several structural changes and developmental growths that are capable of ensuring the provision of jobs for her teeming youths (Emeh, 2014). Bu failed to provide the re-distributive policies positively directed towards the Nigerian youths

Studies on migrants had further shown that about 40-60 percent of the migrants to the major cities and abroad have indicated the quest for jobs and employment opportunities (Adepoju, 1990 and 1984). Another study also revealed that the search for basic social services accounts for about 20-30 percent while, 10-15 percent of the migrants are as a result agricultural failure, environmental degradation and communal clashes among others (Adepoju 2012).

In relation to the above facts, Emah (2002), nevertheless, opined that poverty is endemic in Nigeria with one-half, of the population living on less than US1dollar per person per day. The human development index (HDI), which measure progress attained in the social domain (health, education etc,) were developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1980 as an instrument of the assessment for social development (UNDP,2008).Migration therefore, is motivated and influenced by different numerous motive which has become an issue that is being widely discussed and aptly documented in the various literatures of migration (Sada and Adepoju, 2000).Various attempts have been made in a bid to high light the primary causes of the international migration in Nigeria .These causes and factors have been adduced to the conditions at home that have compelled the decision for migration and such conditions could vary in magnitude from one place to another .Such include unemployment, obnoxious government policies and programmes, among others and conditions outside the emigrants, home countries could be seen as stronger motivating causes for emigration.

The "Pull" factors as represented in the theoretical framework of this study have created in the youth the lack of love to the Nigerian State. Such factors include employment opportunities, good life, provision of social amenities and security of life and properties among others. The compelled quest for these opportunities often times influence migration. The absence of these represents reflection of the in-balance in the re-distributive policies of the government. In Nigeria, government as well as policy makers have had difficulties in arriving at reasonable solutions that would successfully re-ignite

the lost hopes and aspirations of the youths which could be hinged upon the lack of the initiatives to include job creation and the provision of the enabling environment for the realization of their hopes and aspirations in their developmental plans, policies and programmes (Okafor, 2011). Indeed, the Post-Colonial developmental history of Nigeria is one of failed expectations and missed opportunities. It has not been able to create institutions that are geared towards nationalistic development of the country (Ebomoyi and Omigie, 2015).

The South Africa's National Youth population policy framework in the year encapsulates the youth definition to include the ages of 15 to 28. While in Nigeria, the concept of who is a youth ranges between the ages of 15 to 35. However, such age bracket had gone lesser (Michelle, 2019). These variations in this definition of who is a "youth", refers to someone within the above said age and not above 40 years of age. It can however, be asserted therefore, that a youth is one in the age bracket 15 years but however not above 40 years. The role of the youth in any society according to The National Youth Policy (2009) cannot be over emphasized without them there can be no future. Thus, the youth in any society is as important as a nation itself.

It can however, be asserted therefore, that a youth is one in the age bracket 15 years but however not above 40 years. The role of the youth in any society according to The National Youth Policy (2009:2) cannot be over emphasized without them there can be no future. Thus, the youth in any society is as important as a nation itself.

International migration can be classified into regular and irregular migration (Okah-Donli and Osadolor, 2018). Regular Migration is a movement that takes place within the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. It is the act of exiting from one state/country to another with necessary authorization required. Irregular Migration according to the Migration Observatory (Vollmer, 2011), irregular migration refers to 'the cross-border flow of people who enter a country without that country's legal permission to do so. It involves the crossing of international borders by migrant without legal documentation and authorization. It is an act that negates conventional practice and consequently it is considered as an aberration. There are two forms of irregular migration, and they include migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Migrant smuggling is a form of migrant movement that is facilitated with the agreement of the migrant and usually with payment from the migrant for the smuggling services. Smuggling can be exploitative and dangerous, fatal but not coercive. The prospective migrant approaches migrant smugglers or tour operators and they strike a deal on how to facilitate his movement into the desired country.

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of giving or receiving of payment or benefit to achieve the consent of a person of having control over another for the purpose of exploitation.

Young people migrate for a plethora of reasons. The decision to migrate is often related to important life transitions, such as obtaining higher education, finding and starting work, or getting married. With some 71 million youth, globally in 2016 the search

for work continues to be significant driver of youth migration in both developed and developing countries. Many youths also choose or are forced to migrate to escape poverty, violence, conflict, or are displaced due to the effects of war or climate change. As such, youth are heavily represented in migration for humanitarian reasons, including as refugees, asylum-seekers and as unaccompanied minors (UNDESA, 2016).

Okah-Donli and Osadolor (2018) categorized the drivers of youth migration as a combination the centripetal and centrifugal forces otherwise known as push-pull factors are the drivers of youth migration. The push factors include poverty, low income, insurgency and war, climate change, social marginalization, internal conflict, lack of opportunity in homes, political unrest, ignorance, agreed, peer pressures and dysfunctional homes are some of the factors that propel or push people out of their countries or communities. On the other hand, the pull factors include perceived better opportunities elsewhere, cheap labour, lack of workers, good social security measures, positive economic situation, political and social stability, good social infrastructure etc.

Internal or international migration can have a positive impact on young people by opening up new opportunities, a path to participate in higher education, a better and decent job, a chance to gain professional experience or to pursue personal development, by building self-confidence, and allowing them to acquire skills and competencies beneficial to themselves and their countries and communities of origin as well as destination. However, for some young people, especially young women and those in irregular situations, the migration process confronts them with particular challenges and confers to them certain vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities include discrimination based on gender, migration status, ethnicity or religion; poor working conditions (often exacerbated by the relatively low levels of bargaining power and trade union membership among young migrant workers compared to their adult counterparts); lack of access to basic social services such as health; risks associated with sexual and reproductive health; and lack of social protection or loss of social protection entirely once the migration status of the young migrant changes (from student to graduate, for example). Therefore, the migration experience can end up representing either an opportunity or a risk for young people and can either lead to their development or the very opposite, depending on policies and measures supporting them (UNDESA, 2016).

According to Okah-Donli and Osadolor (2018), the continuous movement of migrants (both legal and illegal) to developed countries especially the United State, has continued to generate debates in various arena. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 to a large extent has changed the traditional image of migrants which was that of an individual seeking for greener pastures and working hard in order to provide for his/her family back home. Today, many see the migrant as a threat to jobs, social amenities and even security of the host country. Thus, the migrant faces threat that hampers a migrant's survival, especially illegal migrants: fear of deportation, loss of income, access to economic and social rights as well as benefits of education and health systems are denied by host countries; abuse on the job; xenophobia; human rights violation racism; blamed first for increase in crime rate in the host country; easy prey for organs harvesters, flesh traders, drug lords and human traffickers. In November 2017, the bodies of 26 female

Nigerian migrants were found in the Mediterranean Sea by Spanish warship Cantabria, after they were purportedly sexually abused and murdered (The Guardian, 6th November, 2017).

2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are:

- i. To ascertain the extent to which the youth patriotism a desire for migration in Nigeria.
- ii. To proffer solutions capable of rejuvenating the patriotic feelings in the youths and the antecedence of youth migration in Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis

H_R¹: There is no significant relationship between youth patriotism and the youth's desire for migration.

3. Materials and Methods

Research Design and Population of the Study

The research employs the survey research design and the study research population comprises the youth population of Edo state in the three Senatorial Districts which stood at 4,235,800 (The National Population Commission, 2010) of the age bracket 16 – 40 years.

Questions for The Returnees

1. Is unemployment the main reason for your migration?
2. If not, what is the reason, what was your previous occupation before migrating?
3. Do you experience any hostile ordeal or abuse of your fundamental human rights in your course of migration?
4. Now that you are back to Edo State, what has the government done to ameliorate your plight?

Sampling Size and Sampling Technique

The cluster sampling technique shall be applied in this study. Cluster sampling is used when mutually homogenous yet internally heterogeneous groupings are evident in a statistical population. In this sampling plan, the total population is divided into groups known as clusters and a simple random sample of the groups is selected (Nachmias & Pyachmias, 1996). The entire population was grouped into clusters, these clusters (Senatorial Districts) were further broken down into local governments areas from where a sample size of 1,500 was randomly selected.

Edo Central has a population of 18% of the total population; Edo North 30%, while, Edo South 52%. It is on the basis of this percentage distribution that total samples of 1,500 questionnaires are distributed as follows:

Table I: Senatorial District, Population, Percentages and Sample Allocation

Area	Population	Percentage %	Sample Allocation
Edo Central	775,000	18	275
Edo North	1,252,100	30	443
Edo South	2,208,700	52	782
Total	4,235,800	100	1,500

From the table I, a total of 275 copies of the questionnaire were administered in the Edo Central senatorial district, while in Edo North 443 questionnaire were administered in the senatorial districts and a total of 782 questionnaires were administered in the Edo South Senatorial District.

4. Results and Discussion

In carrying out this research study, a total of 1500 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents. But only a total of 1466 questionnaires were retrieved from the field. Thus, the total sample for analytical purpose stood at 1466 questionnaire.

Table II: Frequency distribution of responses to questionnaire item 1 that “renouncing the Nigerian Nationality for another country’s Nationality induces migration”

Question One

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	122	8.3	8.3	8.3
Disagree	214	14.6	14.6	22.9
Undecided	216	14.7	14.7	37.7
Agree	438	29.9	29.9	67.5
Strongly Agree	476	32.5	32.5	100.0
Total	1466	100.0	100.0	

Figure I: Pie Chart Representation of the questionnaire item 1 “renouncing the Nigerian Nationality for another country’s Nationality induces migration”.

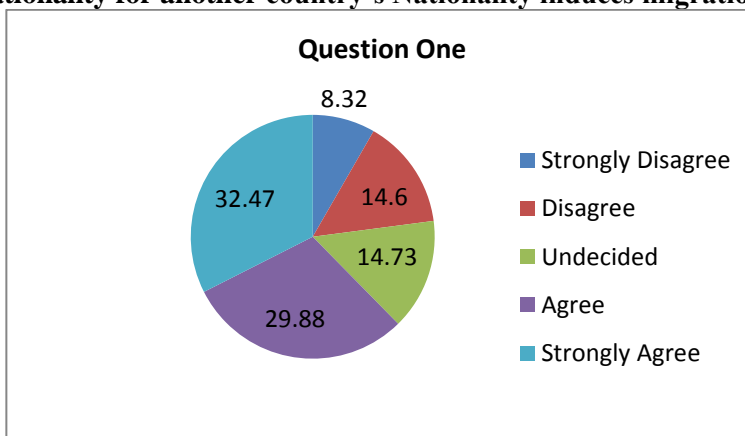


Table II shows the sense of patriotism and nationalism of respondents to Nigeria with 8.3% of respondents strongly disagreeing and 14.6 % percent disagreeing to renounce their Nigerian nationality and acquiring a foreign nationality while 14.7% were undecided. 29.9% of respondents representing 438 agreed while 32.5% representing 476 of the total sampled respondents strongly agreed to renounce their Nigerian nationality and acquiring a foreign nationality.

Table III: Frequency Distribution of responses to questionnaire item 2 that “no matter what happens, I will not surrender the Nigerian nationality for another Nationality induces migration”

Question Two

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	152	10.4	10.4	10.4
Disagree	258	17.6	17.6	28.0
Undecided	258	17.6	17.6	45.6
Agree	428	29.2	29.2	74.8
Strongly Agree	370	25.2	25.2	100.0
Total	1466	100.0	100.0	

Figure II: Pie Chart Representation of the questionnaire item 2 that “no matter what happens, I will not surrender the Nigerian nationality for another Nationality induces migration”

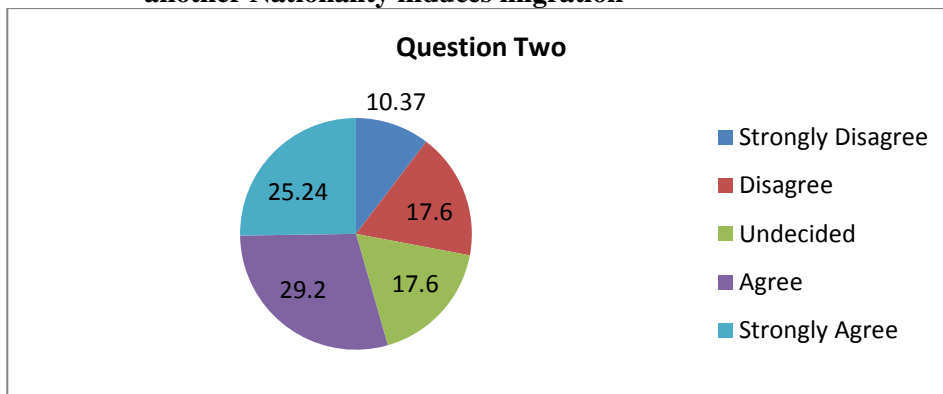


Table III illustrates the sense of devotion to the Nigerian nationality by respondents sampled in this study. It was discovered that 152 respondents representing 10.4% strongly disagreed while 258 respondents representing 17.6% disagreed to surrender the Nigerian nationality for another country’s no matter what happens while 258 representing 17.6% were undecided. 428 respondents representing 29.2% agreed and 370 respondents representing 25.2% of 1466 total sampled respondents strongly agreed to surrender their Nigerian nationality for another.

Table IV: Frequency Distribution of responses questionnaire item 3 that “Nigeria, given its potentials can become a developed country very soon prevent youth migration”

Question Three					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Strongly Disagree	360	24.6	24.6	24.6
	Disagree	336	22.9	22.9	47.5
	Undecided	280	19.1	19.1	66.6
	Agree	322	22.0	22.0	88.5
	Strongly agree	168	11.5	11.5	100.0
	Total	1466	100.0	100.0	

Figure III: Pie Chart Representation of the questionnaire item 3 that “Nigeria, given its potentials can become a developed country very soon prevent youth migration”

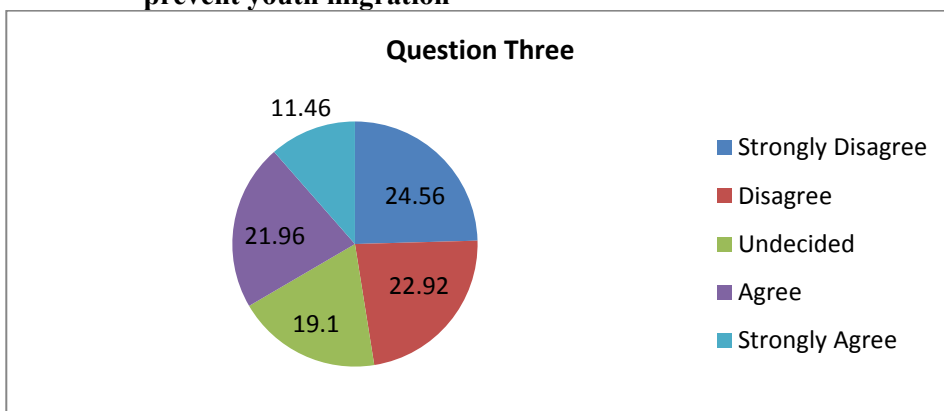


Table IV displays respondents believe in Nigeria giving its potential can become a developed nation very soon. 24.6% of respondents strongly disagreed while a total 22.9% disagreed that Nigeria can use its potential to become a developed nation very soon. 19.1% were undecided, 22.0% agreed and 11.5% strongly agreed that Nigeria given its potential can become a developed country.

Testing of Hypothesis

In testing the relationship between youth migration (independent variable) and patriotism to the Nigerian state (predictive variable) question three were utilized.

Question Three

No matter what happens I can never surrender the Nigerian nationality for another country’s nationality.

Statement of Hypothesis

H0¹: There is no significant relationship between the level of Edo State youth patriotism to the Nigerian state and their penchant for migration.

Table V: Correlation analysis between the level of Edo State youth patriotism to the Nigerian state and their penchant for migration.

		Sex	Question Nine
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.784**
	Sex		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	1466	1466
	Correlation Coefficient	-.784**	1.000
	Question Nine		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	1466	1466

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table V shows that there was a negative correlation (correlation coefficient = -0.784) between the level of Edo State youth patriotism to the Nigerian state and their penchant for migration. With the p-value (Sig. = 0.000) less than 0.01. This meant that the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between the level of Edo State youth patriotism to the Nigerian state and their penchant for migration and the research hypothesis was accepted.

The Spearman's R of -0.784 at alpha (α) 0.01 showed a high negative correlation between Edo state youth patriotism to the Nigerian state and their penchant for migration. Put differently, Edo state youths' penchant for migration may not necessarily be a resultant effect of patriotism or lack of it concurring to the theme of patriotism however, table 3.2 had an item on the youth preparedness to renounce the Nigerian nationality should they have the opportunity of acquiring a foreign one and 62.0% agreed to that assertion; 14.7% were undecided why 22.9% disagreed with the idea of Nigerian nationality renunciation. This was a further confirmation of the youths' alienation from the social and economic prosperity in the country hence migration. The 22.9% was however not negligible as it represented a sizable percentages of the sample.

From the in-depth interview, the majority of those who still held the Nigerian state in high esteem fell among the returnees who had had the worse of treatments from the foreign land and have come to the conclusion that Nigerian nationality is still the best for them. One of the returnee respondents to the in-depth interview recounted his experiences on the journey in his process of migration to Europe in the following words,

I made a very wrong decision to migrate and it was because of my family back ground. I wanted to change the narrative of my family. Another reason was because of my peer group, the kind of friends I kept and I know also there are no jobs; unemployment level is very high in Edo state and in Nigeria too. Even my friends and other people that I am better than took the illegal means of migrating and when I saw them on social media they appeared to be doing well even better. Some have come home to build big houses and some came to invest their monies in big businesses and things have become better for them. When I had a chat with them, they told me that the journey was very smooth though suicidal. It was one of my friends over there in Italy and Morocco who gave me the number of the trafficker that put me through the journey. Yes, I experienced

hostile ordeals and my fundamental human rights were gone in the course of my migration or my journey to Europe. Everything is hostile.

There is nothing like human rights on the journey... Even when you are dying you don't shout, even when they someone was being killed, you did not look but put your head down. Human beings were treated like animals. When we even got to Bennalin, they kept us in a camel farm for three days without food and you will just be hearing gun shots. Before you knew, some men will just come there to the camel farm, take out girls and rape them anyhow... the real suffer was in the sea side ghetto a place in Ganapolil not even the desert. In that place, there was no food, no water and no phone to call maybe friends, family members or anybody to send you money. Me, who do not like eating bread, had to join three other people to share a slice of bread just for something to touch the mouth. There you don't talk, you could not even cough, the Arab that was with us there and his children were carrying AK47. We were 127 and they said we were waiting for extra 11 persons. When it was in the night, around 12 mid night, they just packed all of us to the sea and brought what they call Labalaba (boat), they just help us to push it inside the sea and they said " go". We were in the sea until 9:00am in the morning that was when we discovered some parts of the boat was broken. Even the compass they gave to us stopped working, the worst was that we didn't even know where we were going. Then we started calling the number of the traffickers and the man that put us in the boat with the phone they gave to us. The numbers did not connect but after some time, one went through and the person instructed us to turn 360 degrees and wherever we faced, we should keep going.

We had no choice, we obeyed and as we were going we noticed that the balloon boat was sinking little by little. Later we saw a ship from afar distance, it carried the inscription "German Rescue". So they came, all of them with big guns and they shouted 'everybody sit down and bow down your heads' in their language which they also repeated in the English language. If you did not obey, they will just shot the boat and everybody will die. Before then, we passed three boats, balloon boats that capsized and all of them died. That was how they put us in their ship because we had one heavily pregnant Ghanaian woman with three kids and another man and his wife pregnant with other little children and women in the boat. If not that those people came to our rescue everybody would have been dead. They told us we were in Italy, but we could not enter because we were already having a broken boat, a large part of the balloon had already deflated.

So, they carried us for another 9 hours until we got to the sea side. That was their base. That was even when I knew that we were more

than 200 in that boat, so, they called media houses and all that, international organization for migration (IOM) also came. They said they were taking all of us back to Nigeria as majority of us were from Nigeria and we were filled with praises, I never knew that we were going to prison. Before you knew, they gave us shampoo and cleaner and singlet, they later separated the girls and took them elsewhere. The guys were also taken to somewhere else. Later we were taken to Tripoli, where we were accommodated in another Arab prison in Tripoli and we spent more than one month. It was because of the torture and all that some of us converted to Muslim I started bearing Mohammed Musa.

One day, they just counted 16 of us in the prison and asked us to follow a certain man. We do not know that they had sold us to the man and that was how we were taken to a watermelon farm to farm without food, he also took us to onions farm. Whenever we finished our work, the man will just bring out his chain and chain us. At a point, the man got tired of us because of the way we were requesting for food and water. So, he took us to the Libyan authority who sent us to another prison where we spent another 3 months. I was the head of the prisoners because of the way I talked and all of that. In that prison, people were dying of different sicknesses and diseases because the water we used to bath was salt water, the water you drink is salt water; people were dying almost every day. Until the Nigerian ambassador visited and we were brought back to Nigeria under an Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR). Even on that day that we left, 17 persons died, even in the plane, when we were coming back you will notice that some were mentally deranged, some had broken spinal cords that's why I cannot advise any one not even my enemy to embark on this journey, unless you have everything complete, all the papers and travelling documents and the rest"

With this kind of horrible and untold experiences by the returnees, their responses to questionnaire item 3 on whether Nigeria has a potential to become a developed country very soon, becomes instructive as 33.5% agreed why 47.5% still maintained their position of skepticism concerning Nigerian state. It then follows that the Nigerian state needs a lot of advocacy and image laundering among the Nigerian youths.

The Nigerian state needs to work extensively on its symbolic policies which must be supported by deliberate distributive and re-distributive policies positively directed towards the Nigerian youths. On the question of what the government is doing to ameliorate their conduction as returnees, one of the returnees again has this to say,

The only thing the government does is to train us in entrepreneurial skills through the NDE programme. I have been trained and I am self-employed now. I have a barbing shop which I am managing... but they said that government is giving them salary that's this one they call stipends. I don't know how much;

me I am not part of that one because I have work. Even the people (returnees) that are here, many of them don't even have jobs.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The aforementioned issues have engendered in the youth of Edo state and Nigeria at large the lack of patriotism to the Nigerian State. This stems from youth alienation from the social and economic prosperity that employment opportunities and earnings that are comparable with what is obtainable outside the country thus, guaranteeing the feelings of internal and external equity. The interval in the equity can be seen between choice jobs which are almost exclusively reserved for the cronies and relatives of the political elites and other jobs outside it which had made the youths with other less choice jobs prone to migration.

Despite all these, the 'returnees' who have seen the other side of migration have re-awakened though not as extensive as one would have expected the need to be patriotic and savage the country together perhaps against all odds.

It is strongly recommended that the country should leverage the experiences of the returnees to educate prospective migrants on the need to love their country and stay to savage it. This could be done through seminars organized by governments through the Ministry of Youth and Sports where returnees could narrate their experiences so as to dissuade or prevent others that might want to tread the same path, there should be also inter-agency institutional collaboration where the National Orientation Agency (NOA) would play a major role, such effort should include national value re-orientation where youth are inculcated with values of patriotism to their father's land and with less emphasis on monetary gains associated with migration as against loss of humanity and integrity resulting from mal-treatment meted on migrants out of the shores of Nigeria.

The government should also work extensively on its re-distributive policies by this, we mean, bridging the gap between the rich and the poor, with much emphasis and focus on the youth. Much of the taxation in the country should be made to address the issue of the re-distribution of wealth positively skewed towards the youth. This will no doubt rekindle the hopes and aspiration of the youth in the country and their concomitant love for their country.

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