Illegal Migration and the Reshaping of Foreign Policies of Destination Countries: The Case of United States of America

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Abstract
Illegal migration is a global phenomenon that has affected the International community and relations among nations. Migration is the movement of people from place to place and has existed since the history of Man. Migration is also a means of economic survival and of power struggle. It becomes illegal when people enter other countries without permission. Illegal migration, therefore, means the movement of persons from their own country to another nation across the borders through ways that are in violation of the destination country's immigration rules. This has been on the rise in recent times particularly among migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, to more developed countries in the West and from research Nigerians make up a large proportion of these undocumented migrants. The rising number of these undocumented immigrants has impacted significantly on international relations worldwide and has made the issue of migration a major concern in international relations and international law. The study relied on secondary data and reviewed extensively literature on the subject and analyzed it using content analytical approach. From the analysis, the study revealed that illegal migration particularly from Africa greatly influenced US foreign policy on migration in recent times. Given the zero tolerance policy on illegal migration by US, the study recommends amongst others that Safe and legal migration avenues should be established and extended to illegal migrants and refugees resettled in receiving countries. Again, there should be renewed cooperation between the receiving countries and source countries so that adequate help and succour can be provided to illegal migrants who voluntarily return.

Keywords: Illegal migration, immigrant, foreign policy, Africa, United States

Introduction
The rise in illegal migration recently from Africa to other nations has been attributed to various factors majorly because of economic opportunities in richer, developed nations. Economic instability, war, natural disasters, political unrest and unemployment are some of these reasons that have driven many from mostly the African continent to Europe, North America and Asia, often through hazardous and dangerous routes of the Sahara Desert and crossing the Mediterranean Sea in overcrowded boats. While the steady arrivals of illegal migrants are usually from poorer, developing countries to these wealthy countries, the migrants involved are often not the most economically deprived in their countries of origin and residency, they are only persons with more knowledge, information, ambition and motivation who desire better life by migrating. African youths often risk everything, including their lives by taking perilous journeys across several borders, the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea in search of a seemingly "better life". Some do die on the way; others are forced back to their countries of origin while those who eventually arrive to the destination countries often realised that life is not easier

across the borders. But without jobs and dim prospects in their country of origin, millions of young people still choose to migrate for greener pasture.

Illegal migration is a problem in Africa and this is a major cause of brain drain in the continent. This phenomenon has robbed the continent of talents and has contributed to manpower shortage in various sectors of the economy because a greater percentage of these irregular migrants are the youths. In the end, most affected African countries' economies are crippled. Unfortunately, Nigeria had the most of irregular migrants, accounting for up to 60% of 10,000 illegal migration cases recorded between November 2017 and January 2018. While various studies have been carried out on illegal migration, there is less focus on how irregular migrants have influenced foreign policies of destination countries. The research questions that guides the study are: What are global policies on illegal migration and how has these policies influenced the fight against illegal migration and how has illegal migration from Nigeria shaped the foreign policies of destination countries? Objectively, the study seeks to Identify and analyze global policies on illegal migration and its impact on the fight against illegal migration and examine how illegal migration influenced foreign policies of destination countries.

The Qualitative approach was *mainly* adopted to understand specific concepts, experiences, and thoughts and to gain insights on the questions above. It was mainly adopted because to get a near accurate statistics of illegal migration from Nigeria, a mixed method which allows both the *qualitative* and the *quantitative* methods was utilised. This approach was considered the best for this research because it provides in-depth insight into discovering the underlying motives and causes leading to a phenomenon and explains the reasons behind certain human behaviours. In this research, the phenomenon in this study is illegal migration and the goal was to address this problem which is on the rise among Nigerians now.

This approach was most suitable since it involved interviews; with readily accessible migrants, known on a personal level, to understand their motive for migration, most times, illegally and identify the factors responsible for this recent trend of migration. Also focus groups on public social forum in Nigeria like the Travel Section of Nairaland, real life stories of returnee migrants found on the website of the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), case studies were accessed as well as eye witness accounts from Benin City in Edo State, which happens to have the highest numbers of illegal migrants in Nigeria and finally third person verifiable accounts.

As earlier mentioned, a mixed method was employed in this research. The *quantitative* method was required to conclude this study. Statistics and figures based on surveys and observations were retrieved from several online websites of International NGOs, regional and world organizations, monitoring migration flow and trend worldwide in three decades.

Conceptual Review

This paper grapples with such concepts a migration, illegal migration, immigrant, emigrant, among others. Migration depicts 'the permanent change of residence by an individual or group', from one defined place to another with the intentions of settling permanently or temporarily in a new location (Britanica, 2019).Joshua et al defines migration as the multidimensional phenomena that deals with social, economic and political factors and can be international or internal(Joshua and Makama, 2017).The International Organisation on Migration (IOM), in its 2018 Report defines migration as the movement of an individual or group of people, across an international border, or

within a State, denoting movement from a point to another within one's country of origin. It further stated that migration is a population movement which involves all sorts of movement of people, differing in its length, composition and causes such as relocation of refugees, economic migrants, displaced persons and persons going away for other purposes, including family reunification (International Organization for Migration, IOM, 2019). Sue Le Mesurier, a Senior Policy Officer Migration, describes migration as;

> "A process of relocating, either across an international border, or within a country. Encompassing any kind of people whatever its length, composition and causes; including refugees, displaced persons uprooted people and economic migrants"

She further noted that Migration is definitely, not a recent occurrence but has been part of human history from inception (Mesurier, 2012).IOM further elaborated on the term "migrant" as any person who is moving or has moved from an international border to another or within a country away from his or her regular place of residence, regardless of the person's status, be it legal or illegal and whether the movement is volitional or under compulsion, what the reasons for the movement are or what the duration of the stay is. The organisation further classifies the different types of migration, namely *Forced Migration*, which is a migratory movement in which there exist an element of coercion, including threats to life and of one's livelihood, whether arising from natural or artificial causes, for example, people dislodged by natural and environmental disasters, food shortages, nuclear and chemical disasters, movements of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Illegal migration, therefore, means the movement of persons from their own country to another nation across the borders through ways that are in violation of the destination country's immigration rules. This has been on the rise in recent times particularly among migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, to more developed countries in the West and from research Nigerians make up a large proportion of these undocumented migrants

Migration Routes

Table .1: Top Countries Origin of African Arrivals in Europe via the Mediterranean Sea

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
Eritrea	33,559	Eritrea	38,791	Nigeria	37,554	Nigeria	18,163	Morocco	13,698	Morocco	8,049
Nigeria	8,233	Nigeria	21,914	Eritrea	20,721	Côte d'Ivoire	12,854	Guinea	13,590	Algeria	5,273
Côte d'Ivoire	1,847	Côte d'Ivoire	4,501	Guinea	14,328	Morocco	10,918	Mali	12,779	Guinea	3,961
Guinea	1,729	Guinea	3,577	Côte d'Ivoire	14,239	Guinea	10,350	Algeria	7,586	Côte d'Ivoire	3,693
Cameroon	1,497	Algeria	1,059	Algeria	1,693	Mali	7,700	Tunisia	5,764	Tunisia	3,544

*2019 data through November 30, 2019

Data sources: Frontex and UNHCR

The Central Mediterranean route

The Italian shore in the centre of Mediterranean Sea, has been a major entry point in Europe for thousands of migrants coming from all the countries bordering the sea from

Tunisia to Turkey. For a decade, 1991 to 2001 the channel of Otranto which is the shortest sea route to Italy was also the most used. The Channel of Sicily is another main route to Italy, with the islands of Lampedusa and Pantelleria very reachable by boat in a day from Tunisia, and at most three days from Libya, which is a popular migration route for most West Africans including Nigerians.Many undocumented migrants departed from Tunisia and Morocco. However Tunisia adopted a legislation criminalising illegal exit just as Morocco and Algeria followed suit thereafter.

According to Rocchini (2016), from the 2000s, the Maghreb states proceeded to revise their obsolete laws that regulated people's movements across national borders. Thus in 2003,Morocco adopted the LAno.02 -03 on the entry and stay of foreigners and on irregular immigration and emigration repealing a couple of legal acts that were in place in the colonial era as a French Protectorate. During Morocco's colonial era (1912 – 1956), migration was naturally gravitated towards France, mainly for commercial work and enlistment into the French army in the two World Wars. In the post-colonial era, labour migration extended to other European countries following strong industrial growth in Western Europe between 1962 -72. These temporary workers resorted to becoming permanent settlers in Europe at the end of the 1973 oil crisis which affected the world's economy up until early 1980s.

Since the 1990's Morocco had developed into a transit country for thousands of sub-Saharan African migrants from war ravaged and politically unstable countries like Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Mali and Nigeria who hoped to enter Europe. Those not able to get into Europe, preferred to settle in Morocco on long term basis, most on irregular status. The increased amount of those irregular migrants and pressure from the EU States affected, prompted the adoption of the 2003 law. Tunisia followed Morocco in 2004 and amended some migration related provisions that were included in 1975 law on passports and travel documents.

Finally in 2008, Algeria replaced a previous law from 1966, and in place adopted a new law on conditions of entry, stay and circulation of foreigners and also amended the penal code, introducing the crimes that involved illicit traffic of immigrants and illicit departure from the country for both citizens and foreigners (Rocchini, 2016). Marion Macgregor stated that Libya now became the major host country of over 1 million migrant workers from neighbouring countries and even sub-Saharan Africa. It became the hub for cross-Mediterranean journeys. According to Frontex, a European border agency, in 2018 one third of migrants came from neighbouring countries of Tunisia and Eritrea. Most of the migrants had the sole aim of arriving Malta (MacGregor, 2019).

The Eastern Mediterranean route can be found between Turkey and Greece. According to Marion MacGregor, in 2015 about 885,000 persons travelled to Europe, this was 17 times the number that crossed into the EU region the previous year of 2014. Considering the location of this route, most refugee migrants came from majorly war torn Syria, followed by Afghans and Somalis (MacGregor, 2019). While this route was not popular with Nigerian illegal migrants, Philippe Fargues observed that while Greece had been an entry point to Europe for undocumented migrants coming by land since it became a member of the EU in 1981, Turkey was the most accessible and a hub for different distant countries of the world trying to come to Europe without visa, through its land border with Greece.

In fact, Nikolaj Nielsen in his article noted that in 2011 alone, some 55,000 illegal migrants were spotted at the Evros River bordering Greek and Turkish border. By December 2012, Greek government completed a 12.5km fence on the Turkish border toward off illegal migrants. While this act was hailed by some amid the controversy of its

construction, it did not stop irregular migration (Nielsen, 2012).It did stop the land borders but encouraged migrants to be smuggled through an alternative route, by sea to the Greek island a few miles west of Turkey. Fargues further stated that in three years, between 2014 and 2016, Greece alone received over 1 million undocumented migrants by sea. These 1,047,939 precisely, irregular migrants are said to have represented 66 per cent of the 1,582,759 sea arrivals. In fact from the perception of Europe, the "Mediterranean migration crisis", was at first, a Greek crisis.MacGregor agreed that in 2017 and 2018, most migrants that crossed that route were from Syria and Iraq. He further mentioned that by March 2016, Turkey agreed to return migrants attempting to cross into Europe in exchange for billions of Euros from the European Union. This resulted in a sharp fall in the figures of illegal migrants arriving Europe. By 2017 only 41,720 migrants illegally arrived into Europe, about 77 per cent less than in 2016 (MacGregor, 2019).t was observed earlier that the EU and Turkey signed a migration statement in March, 2016, in which Turkey was to stop undocumented migrants from entering Greece in exchange of a visa liberalization regime for her citizens and for financial compensation. The details of this compensation were well clearly documented in the press release from the European council on 18 March, 2016. In the statement, all irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into the Greek islands as from 20 March, 2016 were to be returned to Turkey, with the EU covering the costs of returning such migrants.

Also Turkey was to take all necessary steps to stop fresh entrants either by sea or land routes into Europe. The financial compensation was the disbursement of an initially allocated 3 billion euros under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey and an additional 3 billion euros up till 2018 ended, inclusive of a string of concrete projects for refugees in the areas of health, education, infrastructure, food and general living costs (Council of the European Union, 2016).This strategy worked because irregular migration through this route reduced drastically by 97 per cent but it was seen as infringing on human rights and refugee law while Europe is perceived as flouting its ethics of protection.

The Western Mediterranean route is the third route by land and sea that illegal migrants from Africa pass through to Europe. This south –to-north route of cross-Mediterranean was the shortest route for unauthorised migration, from the shore of Tangier in Morocco to Algeciras in Spain, a few miles away. Using small dinghies or hiding underneath trucks ferried from Morocco to Spain, most illegal migrants crossed into Europe and stayed in Spain till they regularised their stay, if not caught. However, most of those caught are not often returned to Morocco because Morocco does not readmit irregular migrants. Fargues further explained how Spain in an attempt to curb the rising trend of irregular border crossing to her country, adopted a stricter migration policy by imposing visa on citizens from the Maghreb states in 1991.

Realistically, a lot of North Africans were not eligible for the new visa rule raising illegal movements across the borders. Working with the statistics provided by Philippe Fargues, it showed a rapid increase of barely 5,000 illegal crossings recorded in 1999 to almost 20,000 in 2003. And it continued to rise uncontrollably with Spain fighting it alone, until Morocco stepped in 2003.Morocco enacted a law that criminalized the exit of illegal migrants to Europe and heavily penalized all those involved in the crossing; undocumented migrants and others who aid their journey. This act did reduce the number of illegal crossing from the short route of the Strait of Gibraltar but it did not stop crossings to Europe,instead a longer and more perilous route was discovered from Mauritania to Senegal and then to the Canary Islands more than 1,000 km away. This route was popular from 2006 to 2008 for irregular crossings and saw about 50,000 migrants embark on very dangerous journeys by sea on small boats towards the Canary

Islands. By 2008, though, this route was forced to shut down due to the harsh policies by Spain, her power over the shores of Mauritania and Canary Islands and a readmission agreement with Spain including the high risk associated with such perilous journeys by sea. However, six years after, there was a rush once more on illegal crossings in mid–August 2014 and it went on till 2017 making Spain a "migration crisis" destination.

According to MacGregor (2019), the numbers of migrants who risked their lives to cross from West Africa to the Canaries increased once more, bringing one to the question of how Spain would handle the influx .In 2017,421 people reached the Canary Island. By 2018, 1,531 entered the Island. From MacGregor's report, the Spanish government statistics show that from January to May 2019, about 397 migrants in 35 boats reached the shores of the island. Since there is no data showing the number of departures, the dead in this dangerous trip were probably not documented and so was not reflected in the diagram below.As MacGregor noted, in 2018 more than 1,531 people travelled through this route between January and November that year, more than twice the number that crossed in 2017 (MacGregor, 2019).

The Western Balkan Route: passes through Macedonia and Serbia to Croatia, Slovenia and Hungary. Some irregular migrants using this route continue their journeys to Austria and Germany. In 2015, MacGregor, stated that about 764,000 undocumented migrants' crossings was registered on this route but by 2017 the number reduced to 12,000. This was as a result of the closure of the Balkan route and the EU – Turkey 2016 agreement. Other countries such as Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia and Macedonia followed suit and shut their borders. Thus, illegal migrants opted for alternative routes from Albania via Montenegro or Serbia to Bosnia Herzegovina, while a smaller group opted for the Bulgaria and Romania routes. The report from Frontex showed that the rate of illegal migrants crossing from the Western Balkan route dropped to 2,100 by early 2018 from the eastern route borders between Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia and smaller eastern member states of the European Union. However, irregular crossings from this course is quite small compared to other routes (MacGregor, 2019).

Global Policies on Illegal Migration

Migration can be seen from mainly two different but complementary angles. These are:

i. The principles and standard derived from a State sovereignty. This include the right for a country to protect its border, to let in and deport foreigners, confer nationality, combat trafficking and smuggling and to safeguard overall national security.

ii. The second angle is the human rights of the persons involved in migration. Universal and regional conventions exist, although most of them do not particularly make direct reference to migrants nor recognise them as a specific group. They are found in various branches of law; human rights law, criminal law, humanitarian law, refugee law and labour law (IOM, 2020).

Today, more people are on the move than before. In 2017, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs estimated that 258 million persons are living in a country other than their country of birth, an increase of 85 million or 49 per cent, as compared to 2000. As clearly stated in this research, economic and social factors are the major reasons why people resettle to other countries. Presently, political instability and conflicts plus insecurity are other factors that have influenced global migration trends. Globally, most governments, about 61 per cent, have a policy to maintain current levels of immigration. Among all regions, Europe has the highest number of countries who sought to raise immigration levels at 32 per cent while Asia and Africa seeks to reduce current

levels of immigration at 23 and 13 per cent respectively. North America has the highest percentage (1000) of at one or more policies that are aimed at integrating non-nationals into their society. Integration policies are necessary in order to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth in destination countries and for the wellbeing of the immigrants. Almost all countries in the world have adopted certain action plans to address the issue of illegal migration. Worldwide, 99 per cent of all governments employ fines, detention or deportation of illegal migration. About 77 per cent use penalties as a check against employers of illegal migrants. Another 34 per cent of all governments have adopted measures to regularise the legal status of illegal migrants through defined schemes or conditions. Irregular migrants are known to susceptible exploitation, discrimination and abuse because of their illegal status and are in fear of being used by crime groups involved in human trafficking and migrant smuggling(United Nations Department of Economic andSocial Affairs, 2017).

Irregular migration from Africa to Europe and America presents a great challenge to policy makers in Africa and Europe. Of great worry to the Nigerian government is the issue of people getting out of the country. Nigeria is one the major source countries of illegal migration. In 2016, about 30,000 undocumented migrants from Nigeria sailed the Mediterranean Sea to Europe with hundreds dying every year, in failed attempts to cross into Europe. Human trafficking has become the norm and has tarnished Nigeria's image globally. As at 2017, at least 10,000 Nigerian women were prostitutes in Europe. To tackle this issue, new rules were enacted. According to the then Minister of Interior Abdulrahman Dambazu, it is an adjustment to the dynamics of modern-days migration realities. The government believed the only way to stop the menace was to adopt harsh measures would stop Nigerian illegal migrants from dying in the desert and at the sea. Thus new regulations include severe punishment for illegal migration. The old immigration law from 1963 established only little fines of less than one euro (Scholz, 2017).

To curb human trafficking in Nigeria, the Federal Government of Nigeria adopted the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act in 2003. The law banned all forms of trafficking and it initiated severe penalties for the crime of human trafficking for the first time. In 2015 the government passed amendments to the Act by increasing the penalties for offenders of human trafficking, ranging from at least five years imprisonment and 1 million naira fine, to life imprisonment. Also, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons(NAPTIP) was established by the Trafficking in Persons Enforcement and Administration Act 2003and presently governed by the 2015 replacement Act (Accountability Hub, 2016).

United States of America's Foreign Policy on Migration

It is the sovereign right of every nation to take charge of their borders and territories by enacting immigration laws and policies that not only protects and put her citizens' interests first but also decides who enters their country and the duration of the foreigners stay. A well-managed legal immigration system supports national economic competitiveness and promotes financial growth. It equally increases the faith citizens have in their governments' ability to enforce laws. However, illegal immigration across international borders often threatens national security and strains public funds. It also exposes the illegal migrants to dangers of exploitation and abuse. According to the United States Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (2019), the United States hosts the most immigrants more than any other country in the world. At least one

million persons arriving each year as permanent legal residents, refugees, asylum seekers and tourists.

In 1875, the United States Government under President Ulysses. S. Grant enacted series of restrictions on immigration. It banned people with contagious diseases, criminals, beggars, polygamists and people from China and other parts of Asia. By 1921 and 1924 laws were changed to favour immigration from northern and western European countries. 1943 saw a collapse of these restrictions when a law allowed a limited number of Chinese to immigrate. Legislation was passed in 1952 that removed race officially as grounds for exclusion and allowed a limited number of visas for Asians. The landmark Immigration and National Act was passed in 1965 that saw a system that favoured family reunification and encouraged skilled immigrants of all races and colour rather than strictly based on country quotas. Although this Act was dominated by Asians and Latin Americans immigrants more than Europeans. Other laws that focused on refugees were passed over the years including the law created for Indochinese refugees who fled wars in the 1970s.

The American Congress enacted the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986 that legalised the stay of millions of unauthorised Latin American immigrants who met certain conditions and sanctioned employers who hired illegal migrants. A 1990 law was enacted that granted 'temporary protective status' to mainly Central American immigrants who faced deportation to disaster prone as well as conflict ridden countries. Immigration laws enacted in 1996,2002 and 2006 were as a result of concerns raised by terrorism and illegal migration, embedded in the laws were measures to control borders, tightening admission eligibility as well as enforcement of hiring laws of immigrants. In particular, the attacks of September 11, 2001 changed the entire landscape of both the United States and global security beyond borders and immigration. Migration has always had security implications, mostly linked to 'social' security in terms of jobs, welfare and recently the threat of terrorism. The 2005 House bill is called the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 (Koslowiski, 2006).

President Barack Obama took executive action in 2012 to make it possible for young adults who arrived illegally to the United States to apply for work permit and deportation relief. This executive action was expanded to the DACA program (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) in 2014. According to Pew Research (2004), a new program that offer similar benefits to illegal migrant parents of U.S born children was proposed but challenged by 26 states in the United States.However, his successor was not so liberal in his immigration policies. During his campaign in 2016, President Trump had constantly linked immigrants with security threats, crime and job competitions for U.S citizens. His administration's approach to immigration was distinct from that of his predecessors, with his negative perception of migration and its effects on the country. He adopted the 'zero tolerance' policy on immigration (Barros, 2020). Within 2 years of his inauguration, President Trump signed nine executive orders related to immigration. Some changes adopted in these orders included; building a wall along the Mexican/United States border, eliminating so called 'sanctuary cities' where illegal migrants are not prosecuted or detained, hiring 15,000 more border and interior enforcement officers, attempts to ban travel on visitors and refugees from selected Muslim-majority countries (Pierce, Bolter and Selee, 2018).

The administration attempted to implement policies that would deter illegal migrations and to frustrate those who enter. The most controversial part of Trump's zero tolerance policy on migration was the separation of migrant children from their parents who are taken into custody for immigration related offences. In another move to stop illegal migrants from entering the United States, the then U.S Attorney General Jeff

Sessions, in 2018, decided to make it more difficult for migrants who fled their countries because of domestic abuse and gang violence to be granted asylum. The administration also took steps to temporarily suspend and eventually reduced the admission ceiling of refugees from the projected 110,000 expected in 2017 to 50,000, citing security concerns. In 2018, the numberwas further brought down to 45,000 refugees which were the lowest number the nation had received since the start of the resettlement program in 1980 (Pierce, Bolter and Selee, 2018).

The administration continued to implement more stringent immigration policies by scaling back the number of visas issued, including making changes to the H-1B program which is a temporary work visa that allowed employers to hire highly skilled employees and making it hard for immigrants to get green cards. President Trump further announced the 'unwinding' of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in September, 2017. This meant that the DACA holders would not renew their two year status visas once it expires. Expectedly, several U.S courts weighed in on the matter and this led to a complicated legal atmosphere and created uncertainty in government and communities. Immigrant communities maintained low profile and there was a sharp increase in the asylum seekers in Canada from United States. Within a year of President Trump's entry in office, over 20,000 border crossers were apprehended at the U.S – Canada ports of entry which were eight times the number in 2016. The number of unauthorised immigrants at the U.S-Mexico border fell to the lowest number since 1971.International arrivals dropped by 2.3million in 2017 as compared to 2016. The associations of higher education in United States reported a drop in international applications to colleges and universities with the highest decrease coming from the Middle East. In 2018, applications for the new H-1B visas reduced by 15 percent. Most of President Trump's mandated changes needed funds that required Congress approval, such as building the U.S – Mexican border wall and hiring of 15,000 more border enforcement officers (Pierce et al., 2018).

Illegal migration is a global phenomenon in the 21st century and has impacted greatly on international relations in both source and destination countries. There are political, economic and security implications. Illegal migration is a critical issue in international law and relations negatively affecting inter-personal relations and global peace and security. The relevance of international migration is inferred from the Britain's proposed exit from the European Union known as Brexit. One argument for the exit of United Kingdom from EU was the heavy inflow of immigrants particularly from the EU. Since 2008, Britain had felt the economic impact of the EU rules that allowed citizens of the union from other countries in the zone to freely travel to, live and work in other EU countries and from illegal migrants from non EU states. Illegal migration challenges national unity and security of destination countries particularly at a time where nationalist movements are starting to emerge again in the developed countries, that is not only anti-immigration but clearly detest illegal migration. Migration has taken centre stage in international politics, more so in an era of Islamic fundamentalism often associated with terrorism.

The West African region with Nigeria as a major source country is quickly becoming part of a dynamic and unstable global migration system and usually affected by favourable and unfavourable economic and migration policies of source and host countries alike. Based on recent migrations patterns worldwide, the way nations relate to one another have significantly changed. Migrations policies are been reviewed to keep the host citizens safe economically and stricter border controls are being adopted to keep off immigrants, especially illegal ones. A migrant is a security risk and in European countries

the current refugees' inflow have been seen as a terrorism risk. Europe is currently dealing with the largest migrants and refugee crisis since World War 2 which is also exacerbated by the migration streams from the African continent, most arrive by sea to Italy, Spain and Greece. In order to address the issue of this security threat to their countries that is related to migrants, the EU member states took certain measures; Germany, Austria, Slovakia and the Netherlands all tightened their borders in 2015. Hungary built a fence along its border with Serbia. As a matter of fact, there was a temporary suspension of the Schengen Agreement in 2016 in the European Union which allowed free movement within 26 countries in Europe due to the teeming migrants' crisis. Article 26 of the Schengen Borders Code allowed EU countries to maintain temporary border controls in place for a maximum of two years in 'exceptional circumstances'. Uncontrolled migration was considered 'exceptional circumstances'. Irregular migration has also created economic insecurity, and political and social tensions amongst the EU states, especially when it involves the management of the problems. The mass migrants' influx is said to compound the deepening economic crisis in Europe. With massive unemployment and worsening crisis in the European labour market, migrants are willing to take any form of jobs even the conditions of the work fall below European standards and that could be used as a pretext by various governments to reduce the protection offered to regular workers(Valentia, 2016).

Europe is not the only region affected by irregular migration problems. The United States President Donald Trump and his administration have never been sympathetic to immigration whether legal or illegal. Barely one year in office, President Trump signed the Executive Order of January 27, 2017 that banned nationals of some countries from entering the United States. Section 1 of the Order states that border security was 'critically important to the national security of the United States' and those aliens who illegally enter the United States without inspection or admission do present a 'significant threat to national security and public safety'. It further stated that 'transnational criminal organisations and human trafficking networks and smuggling operations contribute to the increase in violent crimes and deaths through drug abuse in the United States' and terrorism. It posit that continued illegal immigration posed a great threat and danger to the U.S (The Whitehouse, 2017).The countries banned were Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Syria and Yemen.

The administration continued in its clampdown on countries whose citizens have a high rate of overstaying short term tourists and business visas in the United States with the introduction of travel restrictions as part of its immigration measures. The most affected by this policy were African countries including Nigeria. By October, 2019 the number of tourists visas issued in Nigeria was reduced drastically by 34,000 representing a 21% drop, considered the highest drop in visits to America (Wahab, 2019). On February 21, 2020 an additional six countries were subjected to visa restrictions to the United States. Amongst these countries were four African countries namely; Sudan, Eritrea, Tanzania and Nigeria. According to the Whitehouse, the addition of Nigeria was because she failed to meet up to the U.S. security and information sharing standards. There was fear Nigeria could be at risk of harbouring terrorists like Boko haram, who may sneak into the United States to carry out terrorist acts (Ayeni, 2020). The immigration ban is said to likely dampen the development of closer economic ties between the United States and Nigeria. It is also speculated that the ban would likely reduce the remittances that are sent to Nigeria from the United States which currently stands at $24 billion annually(Campbell, 2020).It has been argued that remittances are a vital development tool and a source of foreign exchanges for most source countries.

It was estimated that in 2002 alone, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States spent about $17 billion collectively in trying to combat the issue of irregular migration. Also the human security implication is a key concern to various governments in source countries like Nigeria and affects the international community. Human insecurity like loss of lives, human trafficking and smuggling are problems related to irregular migration. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 27% of deaths at the Sahara desert.

Illegal migration had exposed the ruthlessness of human trafficking, smuggling and criminal cartels often organised by Nigerians that make huge profits off vulnerable young people. The immediate past Nigerian Senate President, OlusholaSaraki noted that the number one issue the European Union has with Nigeria are human trafficking and irregular migration (Kari, Malasowe and Ogbu, 2017).It has continued to put Nigeria in a negative light in the international community and media following recurring tragedies at the Mediterranean Sea or the Sahara desert that involved Nigerians risking their lives by undertaking these dangerous illegal journeys to Europe, visa overstayers in the United States or border crossers to Canada.

The social consequences of illegal migration even when migrants get to the destination countries are racial discrimination and xenophobia as the case is some African countries. Others get involved in drug peddling, fraud, criminal activities, prostitution, cybercrime and human trafficking as the only way of economic survival. Unfortunately, some migrants pay the price with their lives or are jailed at various destination countries. Many illegal migrants are caught in countries where cultural and religious tensions abound, unable to benefit from the economic, political and social rights of legal residents. They are constrained to only low income menial jobs in dangerous areas as they lack proper travel documents and subjected to all sorts on inhumane treatments. The vulnerable group comprising of women and children are easily exploited and forced in to child labour or end in the sex industry. Of course, as earlier observed illegal migration from Sub-Saharan Africa to Europe and North America has been described as a security problem associated with international crime, terrorism and human trafficking. Illegal migration also means a decrease in rural labour and reduced food production in the sending countries as a result of the migration of the young populace to the west which is a way of survival and as a means to a better life so they can improve the standard of living of their families. Furthermore, another implication of illegal migration is the depletion of the population growth of sending countries. This, though, does not apply to Nigeria whose population is exploding despite the outflow of migrants.

According to Mohammed Ayuba, most scholars agree international migration is not decreasing in the near future because of how powerful the growing disparities in the level of wealth, socioeconomic development and human security that exist in the different societies. It is not to be changed. The sending countries are stereotypically poor who use migration as a way of survival. Also, increase in the number of educated young people in Sub-Saharan Africa only makes them more susceptible to migration to host nations where there exist more opportunities to excel and their skills as professionals are adequately rewarded. Nonetheless this only means there would be ‘brain drain’ in sending countries when skilled citizens are lost to developed countries, impeding development in their countries of origin.Thus points such as unemployment, insecurity, humanitarian crisis, poor infrastructural development, weak healthcare system, poverty and political instability encourage illegal migration in Nigeria. If properly addressed and pragmatic solutions implemented would significantly keep most Nigerians home. Recommendations would be proffered in the last chapter of this research.

Discussion of Findings

Illegal migration has over the years redefined the foreign policies of affected destination countries in Africa, Europe and North America. For instance, Libya under Muammar Ghaddafi was a destination country for many migrants. The nation adopted policies that favoured African migrants and encouraged many to work and live in permanently, promoting the spirit of a 'United Africa', under a rapidly flourishing economy. Also with good resource support from Italy and Spain, the Libyan government kept potential migrants away from Europe. However, with the lack of a formal migration policy, Libya became a major crisis hub for migration after the death of Muammar Ghaddafi in 2011.

In Italy, policies on labour migration were based on a system that relied on the employer-driven mechanism that required a resident employer to request for particular employee if needed. There are yearly quotas for the number of workers that are admitted into the country. Since 2011, the quotas for non-seasonal workers have been reduced. This is attributed to the growing presence of eastern EU migrants and non EU asylum seekers from Nigeria and other West African countries. These irregular migrants often meet up these labour demands often in the agriculture sectors with the possibility of exploitations. This was made even worse with the abolishment of the Decree No. 286/98 that protected people in humanitarian needs including vulnerable migrant women, minors and victims of torture. This new Law-decree was adopted in October, 2018 and meant that more asylum applications would be rejected and increase the number of irregular migrants, making them more susceptible to exploitations.The 2018 new decree also excluded asylum seekers from a decentralised state reception system SPRAR (Sisitema di Protezione per RichiedentiAsilo e Rifugiati), a system that supports migrants' social and labour inclusion. This means that illegal migrants were kept in crammed emergency centres without proper hygiene and safety conditions, inadequate structures and services. They too are not provided with effective inclusion programme. With many of these centres situated in isolated rural areas, the migrants are vulnerable and easily exploited as sources of cheap labours and for prostitution. The Italian government has also put in more efforts to protect her borders from illegal migration. The Minister of interior Roberto Maroni introduced two new laws in July 2008 and 2009 that introduced illegal stay status as an 'aggravating circumstance' for other crimes, keeping illegal migrants at detention centres for six months, obligation to leave the country though migrants could not afford the finances and introduction of the territorial surveillance team known as the citizens patrols.

However, these new policies were later annulled by the Constitutional Court. Italy claims to be one of the few European countries that sees the need for an active entry policy and has made liberal provisions to accommodate illegal migrants, but immigration have been connected to national security and public order with the immigrant population being seen as potentially dangerous and to be closely watched. The naturalisation process in Italy is also difficult and restrictive. Troops are often sent to streets and neighbourhoods of major cities for the purpose of enforcing law and order. There is more thought on the fight against illegal migration as less emphasis on funds for immigrants' integration. The government has continued to assist Libya with funds to keep migrants and refugees away from the shores of Italy. While it is a common notion that most illegal migrants to Italy arrive by the sea, many migrants come into the country with both valid and fake tourist or student visas and eventually overstay. Nonetheless, international media attention focuses on illegal migrants who cross from the sea to the shores of Europe.

The reduction in the flow of illegal migrants in two years and more has been tied to the drastic measures taken by European countries like Italy and Spain in collaboration with the Libyan government. These measures which prevent migrants to file for asylum to

escape the harsh treatments experienced in Libya have been heavily criticised by UNHCR and other humanitarian organisations. These claims have been refuted by the Italian government and strained relationships with the UNHCR and Italy (Olaoluwa et al, n.d).

The United States had approximately 12 million illegal immigrants by March, 2007 according to Pew Research, mainly from sub-Saharan Africa, precisely Nigerians. The United States had policies in place to check illegal immigration. There were penalties for employers of illegal immigrants ranging from $2,000 - $10,000 and up to six months imprisonment. However, some of these measures were hardly enforced and this encouraged illegal immigration from the 1980s up till recent times. The Trump administration is highly intolerant of illegal immigration and encouraged tougher measures to be adopted. This 'zero tolerance' policy in 2018 separated children in the United States from their parents who came as illegal immigrants. Some of such parents were deported back to their home countries. Nearly 2,000 immigrant children were separated from their parents during six weeks in April and May according to the Department of Homeland Security (Rizzo, 2018).The Trump administration further proceeded to impose stricter visa restrictions and immigrant visa ban on countries with high rate of visa overstays and potential risks of terrorism, of which Nigeria was affected.

The Canadian government has equally stepped up its acts on the fight of illegal immigrants. Most of those immigrants enter the country by foot from neighbouring United States. They come into the U.S on valid tourists visas and cross over to Canada by road through Quebec. In 2018, the Canadian government sent two of its officials to Lagos to meet with their United States counterparts, to stem migrants crossing into Canada illegally from the U.S. The measures advised include stricter U.S visa issuance policies. Canadian government adopted a newer stringent policy to deal with these categories of migrants. Border crossers from the United States were classified as criminals and subject to deportation by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). A faster process was adopted for asylum claims and deportations as opposed to previous policy in the past years that allowed asylum seekers to live in Canada for as long as three years while their applications were processed. There were quicker hearings on cases of asylum claims from Nigerians and Haitians due to the high number of illegal immigrants from these countries to Canada in recent years (Toromade, 2018).

There were between 550,000 and 950,000 illegal immigrants living in the United Kingdom in 2009. As of 2018, it was estimated to be from 300,000 to over a million. The country is not accessible by sea as in the case of Italy and Spain. Therefore, illegal immigrants come in on valid tourists visa and overstay or through nearby European countries like France. Most of the undocumented migrants in the U.K are of African origin especially Nigeria. Illegal immigrants in the United Kingdom are excluded from social care. Although tough rules have been gradually introduced by successive government in Britain, the 2012 'hostile environment' policy made life harder for illegal immigrants in the country. Same year legal aid was removed for immigration cases and there have been a reduction of cases heard in recent times (BBC News, 2018).Thus they are unable to access healthcare, education, police protection and other vital public services. The children born by these migrants are exposed to exploitation and destitution particularly as there are constant changes in the rules governing immigration. The Home Office claims that there are 4,000 to 10,000 applications annually on the basis of sham marriage.

In 2016, the Immigration Act introduced new sanctions on illegal workers and rogue employers. Other parts of the Act prevented illegal migrants in the UK from accessing housing, driving licences and bank accounts and introduce new ways to enforce immigration laws and to remove illegal migrants (The Gov. Uk, 2016). In 2017, 53% of

the total claims ruled on were out rightly rejected and was up to 60% if asylum tribunals are added. Recently, it was posited that the Prime Minister Boris Johnson might offer illegal migrants in the UK amnesty. But that was shut down; the major issue with the idea was that it was not a part of the Conservative party's ideology. The home secretary, Priti Patel has also strengthened her position and has taken the hard line in illegal migration in the United Kingdom, urging illegal migrants to return to their countries of origin (Edwards, 2020).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The migration phenomenon from Africa is increasingly becoming a challenge to the Nigerian government, receiving and transit countries of Europe and North America with concerns about the international relations, security, economic and social implications of a constant inflow of undocumented migrants. On the other hand, the result of the constant flow of emigration to the West is the brain drain on the part of the source countries because if conditions were conducive for the citizens of these countries most would stay back and make various contributions towards its development. From the research, the migrants interviewed that left the country illegally mentioned the lack of job opportunities, poor healthcare system and insecurity.

In the fight against illegal migration, several measures and policies have been implemented by source, transit and receiving countries. The host countries have adopted stricter immigration policies to restrict illegal migration; however, these policies are said to have encouraged migrants to seek diverse ways and routes of entering the E.U and thus escalated instead of reducing illegal migration. Safe and legal migration avenues should be established and extended to illegal migrants and refugees resettled in receiving countries.Again, there should be renewed cooperation between the receiving countries and source countries so that adequate help and succour can be provided to illegal migrants who voluntarily return.

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