

Innovations

The Dynamics of State Fragility and Mass Emigration of Nigerians

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Abstract: *The current massive emigration of Nigerians of all ages and professions to countries in Europe, United States of America, Canada, South Africa, Israel, Turkey, China, United Arab Emirate (UAE) and indeed all countries across the globe has assumed disturbing and alarming proportion. The immediate and long term effect of this uncontrolled outward migration is the disruption and stagnation of the national development potentials in all facets. Nigeria's critical human capital is leaving in droves to develop other countries. This paper hereby presents new perspectives on Nigeria's human flight explosion from the standpoint of the rapid drift towards state fragility nurtured by destructive politics and a parasitic leadership. Extant literature is awash with a string of factors which have been held responsible for the rising incidence of emigration of Nigerians on a massive scale in the last few years. These include the parlous state of the economy, unemployment, inflation, insecurity, political instability and failure of governance which epitomizes a fragile state. This study regards these factors as major triggers or drivers of emigration and not necessarily the fundamental cause because no country in the world is immune from economic, political and social crisis. Other remote and ancillary factors include sheer greed, obsession to travel abroad as a status symbol, and fear that the country is on the precipice of imminent collapse. This paper strongly contends that the intense rush to leave Nigeria at all cost and the spirit of despair and lack of patriotism among the people is borne out of some basic systemic chaos in the society. That crisis is what this paper has underscored as increasing wave of fragility of the Nigerian state. There is apparent nexus or correlation between state fragility and increasing tide of emigration by Nigerians. It is against this backdrop that qualitative research method is engaged to properly situate and analyze the data collected mainly from secondary sources in order to fully explain and understand this problematic reality and proffer sustainable resolution and remedy.*

Keywords: *Emigration, Fragile State, leadership Failure, Nigeria and Patriotism.*

Introduction

One of the most engaging current social problems in Nigeria is the steaming urge among Nigerians, especially the youths to emigrate from the country. The phenomenon has gained enormous attention that it has become known as '*japa*' a word in the local Yoruba language which is loosely translated to mean fleeing from somewhere, in this case, Nigeria. The *japa* syndrome has lately become an enchanting mantra for endless mass of Nigerians struggling to actually flee from the country. According to Alakitan (2023) a 2021 Africa Polling Institute Survey reveals that 7 out of every 10 Nigerians will choose to leave the country if given the opportunity. On its face value, it seems Nigeria deliberately wants to empty its huge population into the global space. Most Nigerians seeking to leave the country are prepared to do anything including falsely claiming asylum status in order to secure foreign visas to achieve their goal. The rate at which this emigration is going and the number involved is like a stream of hapless refugees escaping a country under the throes of war. Yet Nigeria cannot technically be said to be at war with any known enemy at least for now. According to the Editorial of Premium Times, (2023) Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) issued a total of 1,899,683 in 2022, the highest in a single year in the last seven years.

It is pertinent to note that emigration of Nigerians has not always been anywhere close to what is happening in recent times. For instance in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s when the exchange rate of foreign currency like the Dollar was either below the Naira, or slightly above it, the rate and magnitude of emigration to Europe and America was minimal and reasonable. Michael (2017) stated that not so long ago, the Nigerian Naira was a very strong currency, so strong that in the 70s and 80s and to be specific as at 1979/1980, fifty five kobo could fetch you about one US dollar. Currently the exchange rate of Naira against the US dollar has snowballed to more than one Thousand Naira (N) to a dollar. Akanle (2024) had also observed that as at 28 February, 2024, the US dollar was worth 1,630.66 Naira, the Canadian dollar was N1,201.09, the pound sterling was N2,064.18 and the euro was 1,766.83 Naira. In terms of global competitiveness, the Naira is of little or no value and continues to depreciate consistently and loose value against globally competitive currencies. Currency depreciation, unemployment, poverty, insecurity, absence of rule of law and widespread violence occasioned by poor governance are all metrics that drive emigration from Nigeria, a tendency that is directly proportional to the degree of fragility of the state. In other words, the more fragile the state becomes, the worse the symptomatic drivers become and the more the push and pull factors of emigration. Former British Prime Minister David Cameron (2018) argued that state fragility doesn't just condemn people to poverty; it impacts upon the world, driving

mass migration, providing safe havens for piracy and trafficking, and enabling terrorist training camps to thrive.

It is within this context of fear and doubt in the capacity of Nigeria's leadership to offer good governance and provide security and stable economy for the people that the zeal and desire to escape from the country is seen as liberation from what seems like a national bondage. This paper posits on the basis of historical and analytical evidence that the obvious lack of belief in the country, the near total absence of patriotism among Nigerians and the country's leadership has accentuated the crave to migrate out of Nigeria to any other country in the world. Olaoye (2023) observed that Nigerians criticize their country viciously as if the country means nothing to them. Most Nigerians do not believe in the country. They doubt that the country has a promising future as some others see the country as a farce. Beaumont (2021) noted that Robert Rotberg, and John Campbell, two prominent US academics-the latter a former US ambassador to Nigeria had asserted that Nigeria has long teetered on the precipice of failure, unable to keep its citizens safe and secure. Nigeria has become a fully failed state of critical geopolitical concern. Its failure matters because the peace and security of Africa and preventing the spread of disorder and militancy around the globe depend on a stronger Nigeria. External migration of Nigerians on the current massive scale is therefore not an isolated or monolithic phenomenon. The process is a logical outcome of a polity in which the parameters of genuine development in all its contours and diversities are on a negative slide. The country's governing elite, presides over a society of repressive system of government, corruption ridden administrative structures, collapsing infrastructures, low GDPs and per capita income, soaring two digits inflation in an environment characterized by insecurity and social violence. The Nigerian Economic Summit Group (2023) affirmed that real GDP growth of 2.4 was the lowest economic growth since Nigeria's full recovery from COVID 19 Pandemic. The performance was a result of a combination of policy mismatch and other challenges. The country experienced a surge in inflation, leading to a significant erosion of the local currency's value. Poverty level and other socio-economic indicators also deteriorated. Four million Nigerians were pushed into poverty cycle due to loss of purchasing power. Nigeria gradually descended into the cesspit of a fragile state of nature where life is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short'. The citizens literally gave up on the country. Akanle (2024) revealed that many Nigerians aspire to, and actually do, migrate abroad to obtain foreign nationalities for themselves, their families, and future generations so they can relinquish the Nigerian nationality, which they negatively construct as being globally uncompetitive and as an identity burden. In reality, the overwhelming rate of emigration of Nigerians is a symbolic rejection of the country

and what it offers the citizenry in the form of unrelenting underdevelopment in all socio-economic and political ramifications.

Conceptual Clarifications

According to Duru, (2021, citing International Organization for Migration, 2024) Migration can be defined as a process of moving, either across an international border or within a state. It is a population movement encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes. It includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people and economic migrants. The concept of international migration is dynamic. It involves movements across and also within borders propelled by different variables. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical office of the European Union (EUROSTAT,2010) states that International Migration is the change of place of residence from one country to another. This movement affects the population of the two countries and should be recorded twice, once as immigration in the receiving country and once as emigration in the sending country. In this regard therefore, migration is a movement across borders for purposes of acquiring new residence. With respect to state fragility, scholars and some global institutions have interpreted it from diverse perspectives with core denominators. For instance the European Union (2016) states that fragility refers to weak or failing structures and situations where the social contract is broken due to the state's incapacity or unwillingness to deal with its basic functions, meets its obligations and responsibilities, regarding service delivery, management of resources, rule of law, equitable access to power, security and safety of the populace and protection and promotion of citizens' rights and freedoms. In a similar vein, the International Monetary Fund (2016) maintains that fragile states have characteristics that substantially impair their economic and social performance. These include weak governance, limited administrative capacity, chronic humanitarian crises, persistent social tensions, and often, violence or the legacy of armed conflict and civil war. The seminal work on 'Escaping the Fragility Trap' (2018) noted that fragile societies are typically trapped in a syndrome of interlocking characteristics which makes it hard to make sustained progress. Usually, they are fractured into groups with opposing identities who see their struggles as a zero sum game. This impedes the inter-group cooperation to use of the state for national purpose. Instead, it induces a view of the state as a resource to be plundered if only the group can capture control of it. This syndrome brings to sharp focus the issue of leadership failure in fragile states. The dominant ruling and governing elite there are only interested in state capture for purposes of personal and class aggrandizement and expropriation of the national common wealth. Fagbadebo (2019) argued that most African leaders, overtly or covertly usually convert the state to their personal properties. The citizens are agonizing under

excruciating governance crisis, arising, mostly from the mismanagement of public resources, while the gap between the rich and the poor keeps widening.

The focal country Nigeria is a leading member of Economic Community of West African States with a Population of about 220 million, making the country the most populated nation in Africa. Nigeria was once the largest economy in Africa but now ranks fourth due to fragility crises. After gaining independence from Britain in 1960, Nigeria went through a prolonged era of military interregnum until 1999 when a democratically elected government was restored. According to Anuforo (2013) a former colonial Governor- General, Sir Hugh Clifford described Nigeria as a collection of independent native states, separated from one another by great distances, by differences of history and traditions and by ethnological, racial, tribal, political, social and religious barriers. As a result, patriotism is a scarce commodity in Nigeria. Patriotism is essentially a deep love and emotional attachment to one's country. Negedu and Atabor (2015) describe patriotism as an emotional journey of loyalty, allegiance, impartial love and total obedience to one's country....which bestows all the rights and privileges accorded to him/her by the constitution.

Theoretical Underpinning

In order to properly explain and situate the connection between the high rate of emigration of Nigerians and state fragility within a theoretical context, we would begin with understanding the nature and character of the postcolonial state. According to Ake (1981) the postcolonial state is interventionist and involved in class struggle, a state already dragged into politics and politicized....the boundary between the state, government and the ruling class is very blurred; a government used by the hegemonic faction to manipulate state power, a state with limited potentials for mediating the class struggle and endemic political instability arising from too high a premium on political power. The postcolonial state is therefore not autonomous or removed from contending social forces. Ordinarily, it has on the contrary assumed the role of an instrument in the hand of the dominant power elite who deploys it as it suits their interest. This is opposed to the proposition of the western liberal theory that regards the state as an independent force and an impartial arbiter that not only caters for the overall interest of every member of the society but also equitably regulates their socio-economic transactions and processes. (Obiekezie, etal, 2023). The theory of postcolonial state through the instrumentality of state capture by the cult of the ruling elite merely concentrates on primitive accumulation of capital by expropriation of nation's commonwealth. The implication and impact of this neocolonial brigandage in collaboration with advanced international capital takes time to fester and take its toll on the economy and governance of the postcolonial society. It is against this backdrop that

Obiekezie, etal (2023, citing Ibeanu, 2015,) still argue that the postcolonial state is implicated in Nigeria's governance maladies, insecurity, poverty, unemployment, corruption and population displacement (which includes the urge to migrate), In essence, the manipulation of the state apparatus of power by members of the political class and the subsequent abuse of state authority compromises legitimacy. With this social scenario, the people are daily confronted by a society that is slowly but steadily crumbling and incapable of meeting its responsibilities to her citizens. Under this condition, the state begins to manifest symptoms of weakness, frailty and inevitable fragility.

When a state fails in its social contract to guarantee basic security to its citizens, maintain the rule of law and justice or provide public good, it results in the prevalence of criminalities, refugees and outmigration (regular or irregular), of its populations. Accordingly a state of fragility is unleashed in a country when a government no longer meets the needs of its people, loses popular support and when the state and society relationship (social contract) in terms of security and service delivery is fraying, and the ripple effect is usually cross border issues such as migration which actually captures Nigeria's situation, (Okunade and Awosusi,2023, citing Menocal 2011, Rotberg, 2003). There is undoubtedly an organic relationship between the postcolonial state construct and mass emigration of Nigerians.

Methodology

Our approach to data collection and assessment of migration and state fragility is hinged on two related but not identical methods. Firstly, the qualitative method is engaged for the collection, analysis and interpretation of data on migration mainly from secondary sources of documented information from bilateral and multilateral institutions like International Organization (IOM) for Migration, World Bank, European Union, (EU) International Monetary Fund,(IMF) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development,(OECD) journals, textbooks, the internet and other periodicals. International migration is a global movement that impacts on both the origin and destination countries. According to Ullah etal, (2020), qualitative methods provide a more in-depth and rich description of a phenomenon. The second challenge has to do with collecting and analyzing data arising from state fragility. The method adopted is predicated on The Fragile States Index. The Fund For Peace, (2017) maintains that the index is based on Conflict Assessment System Tool, (CAST) analytical approach. Based on comprehensive social science methodology, three primary streams of data, quantitative, qualitative and expert validation, are triangulated and subjected to critical review to obtain final score for the fragile state

index (FSI). It is important to observe that the two methods reinforce each other. They are both adopted here to enhance data reliability.

State Fragility

This paper is poised to explode and demystify the seemingly popular narrative that the rapidly increasing massive emigration of Nigerians is essentially due to poor governance, insecurity, unemployment and sustained economic malaise. This may be technically tenable but lacks the merit of a complete researched and reliable study and therefore scholarly misleading. It is tantamount to putting the cart before the horse. The surge to move to foreign countries by Nigerians has steadily been associated with the service delivery levels of authority, capacity and legitimacy of the state as an institution. To that extent, the more the Nigerian state fulfills its natural obligations to the populace, the less the urge to leave Nigeria. This was the trend in the 1960s, 1970s 1980s and early 1990s. However, it is equally valid that the less the Nigerian state provides for her citizens, the more the determination and effort to escape from the shores of the country. Umana (2018) argues that in Nigeria, the political elites constitute an unproductive class of greedy persons who rely on the control of state structures to access economic rewards. Indeed the over politicization of the Nigerian state is also understood in the context of the struggle and quest for power, control of state resources and patronage. The nature of political struggle ensured the emergence of a local governing class that lacks ideological commitment.

State fragility has a dynamic of its own and has no single root cause. It emanates from a dysfunctional state which has been captured and privatized by a dominant section of the ruling class. As a result, the state consistently fails to deliver the appropriate goods to the society, a condition which ultimately manifests as drivers of emigration. In his contribution to the state fragility discourse, Fasan (2024) mentioned the six symptoms of fragility as follows:

1. A security threat from organized non-state violence
2. The government lacks legitimacy in the eyes of many citizens
3. The state has weak capacity for essential functions
4. The environment for private investment is unattractive
5. The economy is exposed to shocks with little resilience
6. Deep divisions in the society

In addition to the above scenario, Ismail (2022), listed the twelve conflict risk indicators that are used to measure the condition of state fragility to include security apparatus, factionalized elite, group grievances, economic decline, human flight, brain drain, state legitimacy, public service human rights and rule of law, demographic pressures, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and external intervention. Nigeria since 2009 has been under sustained attack by the Boko Haram

terrorist group, who at a time ceased and occupied a large swathe of Nigeria’s land in the northeast state of Bornu. Till date, the culture of unbridled insurgency, banditry, separatist agitations, kidnappings, extra judicial killings and constant break down of law and order is prevalent in Nigeria. The country’s successive governments always had issues with legitimacy because the elections that bring them to power have always been rigged against the will of the people including the 2023 general elections. Consequent upon this cold rejection by a large section of the polity, the state becomes weak and incapable of fulfilling its essential services. Robert (2009), had observed that where states fail to deliver these fundamental political goods, they lose the Weberian monopoly of violence and encourage the rise of non-state actors, insurgents and anarchy. This leaves private sector investments in tatters due to poor security guarantees. This trend takes a heavy toll on the economy of affected countries where all the indices of underdevelopment due to mismanaged economy start to manifest. Fragility is finally underscored by sharp divisions within the society among different groups jostling for relevance and survival in the midst of the emerging chaos. Again, ‘Escaping the fragility trap’ (2018) argued that fractured societies spawn greater insecurity, insecurity exposes the society to the risk of shocks, discourages investment, weak legitimacy undermines state capacity, and weak capacity worsens the investment climate and deepens social divisions; the small size of the formal private limits the tax base and so revenues will be small, constraining state effectiveness; the lack of salient national identity impedes building the legitimacy of the state and weakens the loyalty of public officials to national objectives.

Table 1 Fragile states index 2024

Rank	Country	2024 score	Change From 2023	Change From 2022	Change From 2021	Change From 2020	Change From 2019
1st	Somalia	111.3	0.6	1.4	0.4	-	1.4
2nd	Sudan	109.3	3.1	0.9	1.9	0.4	3.2
3rd	South Sudan	109.0	0.5	0.1	1.0	1.4	1.4
4th	Syria	108.1	1.0	1.3	1.3	-	0.8
5th	DR Congo	106.7	0.5	0.1	1.1	1.0	0.8
6th	Yemen	106.6	2.3	2.8	-	0.7	1.1
7th	Afghanistan	103.9	2.7	0.7	3.8	0.8	2.1
7th	Central African Rep.	103.9	1.8	2.4	1.1	0.5	1.4
9th	Haiti	103.5	0.6	3.2	2.2	0.2	1.6
10th	Chad	102.7	1.9	1.1	0.1	0.6	2.1

11 th	Myanmar	100.0	0.2	0.2	6.2	0.2	0.3
12 th	Ethiopia	98.1	2.3	1.1	0.3	3.4	0.4
13 th	Palestine	97.8	9.9	2.3	0.4	n/a	n/a
14 th	Mali	97.3	2.2	0.9	2.0	0.6	1.5
15 th	Nigeria	96.6	1.4	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.2
16 th	Libya	96.5	0.4	1.8	2.7	1.8	3.0
17 th	Guinea	96.4	2.1	1.1	2.2	0.2	2.2
18 th	Zimbabwe	95.7	1.2	0.9	1.3	0.1	0.3
19 th	Niger	95.2	1.8	1.8	0.8	0.7	0.9
20 th	Cameroon	94.3	0.3	2.0	1.2	0.7	0.9

Source: Fund For Peace (FFP, 2024 report/en.wikipedia)

Emigration as Escape Route

It is evidently obvious and inescapable that emigration is a major social issue in Nigeria. Emigration as already established is mainly driven by symptoms and outcome of fragility of the Nigerian state which include a depressed and failing economy, sustained poor governance, overwhelming insecurity, violence and a general atmosphere of imminent societal collapse, a notion that the country is sitting on a keg of gun powder, ready to explode anytime. External migration for the average Nigerian is likened to a major breakthrough in life. Indeed anyone who is lucky to get a foreign visa especially to the UK, USA, Canada or Germany is celebrated by the family and community. According to Isbell and Ojewale (2018), findings from a recent survey by Afrobarometer show that more than one in three Nigerians have considered emigration, though far fewer are making actual plans to leave. The data support concerns about brain drain. Young and educated Nigerians are most likely to consider going abroad. Finding work and escaping economic hardship are most often given as the main reason to consider emigrating. Uncontrolled emigration depicts a country on the threshold of underdevelopment. The citizens are moving out in droves to seek not just employment but a sense of human dignity and security from a totally anarchical society. It is a tragedy because Nigeria naturally has all it takes to be a great nation except a patriotic and committed leadership. Akanle (2024) had lamented that although the country has great socio-economic potentials, this is not effectively managed and optimized, keeping it underdeveloped and thereby leading to massive emigration of Nigerians seeking better life chances abroad. As a much sought after route to escape the Nigerian conditions, some unscrupulous agents use illegal means to take unwary desperate Nigerians through Niger, Libya and the deadly Sahara desert on a near suicide trip to Europe. Some equally use the sea on such illegal voyages simply to travel abroad in search of gainful employment and better life experience. Shehu

(2019) stated that the journey from Niger to Libya is even more chaotic. Migrants are expected to pay a minimum of 200 Dollars from Niger to Libya. People are loaded on the trucks like animals and could fall off the truck at any time. Migrants travel through a long distance of deserted land where they become dehydrated, hungry and may fall sick and die. This goes to betray the level of desperation of some poor and mostly uneducated migrants who are prepared to take life threatening risk to leave the shores of Nigeria without necessary documents. The irony is that when they eventually arrive their destination countries or are stranded mid way, they are usually imprisoned or at best deported back to Nigeria. Emigration of Nigerians mirrors the state of the nation. According to Wickramasinghe and Wimalaratana (2016) Poverty and lack of decent jobs have become reasons for leaving countries, which is considered as economic migration. This is often seen in migration from developing countries to developed countries. Migration therefore has emerged as a major demographic force throughout the world in the past few decades. However, through the process of unequal emigration Nigeria continue to supply other countries with high scale manpower at the detriment of national development. Brain drain is an aspect of emigration that is quite worrisome because it robs the country of quality human capital without immediate replacement. In this regard, many educated and highly talented Nigerians are attracted abroad by enhanced conditions of service, remuneration, availability of modern working facilities and equipment, rule of law and assured security. Brain drain retards and distorts the developmental paradigm of countries of origin like Nigeria. Ismail (2022) revealed that between 2020 and 2022, the country (Nigeria) has experienced the highest brain drain and human movement out of the country. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) reported that more than 39 billion Dollars was spent on schooling and accessing health care abroad between 2010 and 2020. More so, 220.86 million Dollars was reported to have been spent on foreign education between December 2021 and February 2022. Another sensitive area where emigration has taken its toll on Nigeria is the medical industry. Virtually all high caliber doctors, nurses and medical scientists are migrating abroad as part of the 'push and pull' syndrome. While Nigeria is groping with inadequate medical personnel in terms of doctors and nurses, the well trained ones are daily moving out on account of the hardship and frustration they suffer in Nigeria. A situation where there are no facilities, no drugs, and an environment characterized by corruption and kleptocracy, most skilled manpower tend to migrate where their services would be appreciated and duly rewarded. According to Peterside, (2022), a new report by the United Kingdom (UK) government shows that 13,609 Nigerian Health care workers granted working visas within the last one year (2021), are second only to the 42,966 from India. This is not just an isolated event. It is a continuous policy that is even encouraged by most governments of countries of Europe and America who are prime beneficiaries of this

brain drain. The impact has started to dawn on Nigeria with obvious shortage of doctors and nurses in a country already suffocating under the imbalance in the ratio between medical personnel (doctors and nurses) and patients. Editorial (2023), noted that the effect of this is becoming evident with the patient to doctor ratio in Nigeria now at 3,500 to 1, as against the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation of 600 to 1. Emigration indirectly promotes the health care system of destination countries while undermining the more the already shabby state of the originating countries.. It is only in this regard can one understand that available records show that over 5,600 Nigerian trained or licensed medical doctors have migrated to the UK in the last eight years. This record includes nurses/midwives and other health professionals. Recently, the Head of the Nigerian Medical Association lamented that the Nigerian Health sector is experiencing an unusual brain drain, with only 24,000 licensed medical officers, less than 10% of the World Health Organization's minimum required standard. He noted further that the proportion of the available doctor to patient ratio now stands at 1: 30,000 in some parts of the country. This reality is nothing but a red flag for the health sector in Nigeria. The situation calls for a serious review at the governmental level in order to curtail or minimize the migration push factors to be more attractive than the migration pull factors. We recognize the push factors as those conditions that motivate emigration from the country of origin and the pull factors as the attracting conditions available in the destination countries. Brain drain is about the most disturbing aspect of emigration because it involves the educated, mostly youthful upscale professionals in diverse fields of human endeavour. According to Alakitan (2023), what is more worrisome is the loss of young Nigerian professionals and academics to these massive waves of outward migration. In 2022 alone, Nigerian students in the UK grew five folds to reach 325,000.

Outlook of Emigration of Nigerians

S/NO	Emigration Considerations	% Of Population
1.	Those who have considered emigration	35%
2.	Those who have given a lot of thought to emigration	11%
3.	Respondents with post secondary education	44%
4.	Respondents who live in the cities	42%
5.	Those younger than 35 years	39%
6.	Employment as motivation for emigration	35%
7.	Escaping economic hardship and poverty	31%
8.	Pursuing better business prospect	10%
9.	North America as destination point	32%
10	Europe as destination point	21%

SOURCE: Isbell & Ojewale, (2018) Afrobarometer survey.

Results

This survey tallies with the momentum and dynamics of emigration in Nigeria. A situation where close to 40% of the population desire to relocate for good out of the country, calls for a serious national emergency. It is a confirmation that the country is under multidimensional distress of socio-economic, political and governance dimensions. The statistics above have become worse with time because according to Madowo et al (2023) a staggering 69% of Nigerians would relocate out of the country with their families if given the chance. A 2022 survey by the Africa Polling Institute found that only 39% were willing to emigrate in 2019. There is therefore a consistent upsurge in the desire by Nigerians to emigrate. The underlying factors of weak and fragile institutions are far from improving thereby generating social forces that drive relentless external migration. The paper by the application of qualitative and empirical indices presented the current phase of emigration in Nigeria as an existential threat to the country's development and social cohesion. With the prevailing massive brain drain of skilled and talented professionals, the country is not able to live up to its manifest destiny as a potential leading economy in Africa. The results also confirm the fragile status of the Nigerian state which makes her incapable of fulfilling core responsibilities to the citizenry through the provision of employment, security, good governance, rule of law and effective institutional framework for political inclusivity. In the comity of nations Nigeria occupies the not so impressive rank as the 15th most fragile country in the world. In essence the paper succeeded in establishing causality between state fragility and emigration in the context of Nigerian experience.

Conclusion

By the use of qualitative and slight quantitative (fragility state index) processes, this study captured salient relationship between emigration and state fragility in Nigeria. It also corrected a long standing narrative in extant literature that emigration was solely caused by a combination of socio-economic, political and governance failures or deficits. On the contrary, emigration is primarily a consequence of state fragility driven by economic, political, social drawbacks and governance failures. This connection is vital because it brought to the fore the preponderant role fragility plays in underdeveloped economies. Brain drain represents the most costly aspect of uncontrolled external migration or emigration due to its impact on the development trajectory of the country. Within the purview of this paper, we also touched on the issue of leadership challenges, the role of the postcolonial state and the culpability of the dominant political elite in the recent explosion of emigration. It is therefore the considered recommendation of this study that unless and until

Nigeria achieves good governance with improved economy, enhanced and assured security of lives and property, the issues of fragility and emigration would remain unresolved. To that extent the Nigerian state will be structured in such a manner that it is capable of fulfilling all functions relating to authority, capacity and legitimacy within the polity. This would significantly reduce the push for emigration and brain drain among Nigerian youths and restore the country back to a healthy developmental strategy based on good governance.

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