

Youth and the 21st Century South-North Migration: In Search of a More Relevant Perspective on Causes, Trend and Flow

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Received October 3rd, 2013; revised November 12th, 2013; accepted November 26th, 2013

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Advancement in communication and transport technologies has reduced the world to a global community. This has also improved and therefore increased potentials for the movement of individuals, commodities, and capitals across international borders as they respond to global political and socio-economic stimuli. It is apparent though, that transnational borders are relatively more open to capital and commodities than they are to migrant individuals. However, there are vast literature and data on the socio-political and economic dimensions of adults' involvement in international migration. But the youth are treated as part of their families; hence very few literatures that devoted to youth migration exist. But movement of young adults as independent transnational migrants is an emerging trend in international migration. In this paper, I examined existing perspectives on causes, trend and flow of the 21st century youth transnational migration with a view to providing appropriate lenses for understanding the phenomenon, particularly as it affects the contemporary massive flow of youth from developing African economies to the industrialized Europe. Reviewed literature focused on the "push and pull" factors considered to be wielding major influence on migration-decisions of transnational migrant subjects. Push and pull approaches essentially construct immigrants as problems to receiving countries. This paper advances the understanding of youth migration from indigenous and anti-colonial perspective in order to disrupt and disturb existing approaches and give a more pellucid lens for understanding this emerging social trend. Significant attempt was made in this paper to highlight the often overlooked outcome of transnational migration which, to the sending and receiving nations, has both positive and negative reflexes. The underlying assumption of the theoretical approach is that any appropriate theory that will inform meaningful migration policy formulation on youth transnational-migration experiences, must consider the cultural environment of these youth. It must as a matter of necessity consider the influence of colonization and neo-colonial processes on their remote social spaces, and engage relevant strategies to establish ways in which reinventing the indigenous worldviews subverted by colonization can equip and empower local youth, thereby balancing, if not reducing the negative trend in transnational youth migration.

Keywords: Transnational; Youth; Migration; Policies; Trend; Flow

Introduction

Advancement in communication and transport technologies has reduced the world to a global community. This has also improved and therefore increased potentials for the movement of individuals, commodities, and capitals across international borders as they respond to global political and socio-economic stimuli. It is apparent though, that transnational borders are relatively more open to capital and commodities than they are to migrant individuals. And while there are copious literature and data on the socio-political and economic dimensions of adults involved in international migration, the youth are treated as part of familial collectives; hence very few literatures that devoted to youth migration exist. But movement of young adults as independent transnational migrants is an emerging trend in international migration. Since existing transnational

migration policies are adult-specific, transnational migrant youth might be facing peculiar social, legal and documentation challenges in several fronts.

This paper examines existing perspectives on causes, trend and flow of the 21st century migration with a view to both providing appropriate theoretical lenses for understanding the phenomenon, and accentuating the urgent need for a reinvention of African indigenous worldviews to make positive changes to the experiences of African youth involved in transnational migration. This paper is necessitated by contemporary massive flow of youth from developing African economies to the industrialized world. The underlying assumption to this theoretical approach is that any appropriate theory that will inform meaningful migration policy formulation, with a specific interest on youth transnational experiences, must consider the cultural environment of these youth. It must as a matter of necessity con-

sider the influence of colonization and neo-colonial processes on their remote social spaces, and engage relevant strategies to establish ways in which reinventing the indigenous worldviews subverted by colonization can equip and empower local youth, thereby reducing the unhealthy trends in youth emigration. My analysis will be shaped therefore by anti-colonial, framework and African indigenous worldviews. Analytical approach anti-colonial framework and African indigenous worldviews are discourses that challenge all manifestations of discrimination, hegemony and imposing structures, ideas and practices of cultural and socio-political domination. This study, beyond inspiring the formulation of new policies on transnational migration, intends to contribute to literature on youth migration.

Locating Myself in the Work

About fifteen years ago in Benin City, Edo State Nigeria I had sever difficulty digesting the news of and cushioning the shock from the death of two of my diploma students who attempted to migrate to Europe. As a lecturer, then with the Federal University of Technology Owerri FUTO, Benin Extension, I found it difficult to understand why these young adults with promising future were convinced to take the trip, what their aspirations were; what informed their decisions to emigrate and the ordeals that ended their lives so abruptly. The story of their gory deaths, one across the Sahara Desert and the other afloat a raft crossing the Mediterranean Sea from North Africa was so hard for me to bear that in 1999, I left the institute. Today, as a Western-educated Nigerian migrant residing in Canada I can attempt to answer some of the questions surrounding why adults like me would decide to leave our familiar environments of birth, ignoring the uncertainties of being an alien in a foreign country and migrating thousands of miles across transnational borders to find new abodes overseas. I was nudged to rethink my positioning as a Nigerian endowed with Western education on the 31st of March, 2005 during my trip to secure a permanent residence in Canada. Because our flight made a stop-over in Netherlands en route to Canada, during check-in routines, my wife and I, as young African migrants were surprisingly separated from the queue and taken into an office with complex surveillance technologies for special checks on our travel-documents. Apologies were made to us later and we were hurried into the plane. This experience, discriminatory and racializing as it was, did set in a dissonance that kept me ruminating over my belief and pride in my Western education. This also left me with the lingering question, Why Nigerian youth? For it is still astonishing that despite daily inundation with news of tragic ordeals of young Nigerians involved in migration across the international boundaries to Europe, Nigerian youth are more than ever ready to risk it to Oversea. Also the current global economic recession digging at the heels of most nations including European nations—means hostility from the citizens of these nations who would look on immigrants with suspicion—that they constitute strains on their nations dwindling resources (Kimon, 2009; Ngai, 2005; Li, 2003). I most certainly acknowledge, as a matter of intellectual humility, the privilege I enjoy as a naturalized citizen of Canada, and a student of one of the best post secondary institutions in Canada, and must not therefore, assay a claim that arguments raised in this work represent the opinions of millions of transnational migrants out there who neither can boast of attaining similar socio-political status, and afford the simplest shelter over their heads as legal migrants,

nor be endowed with economic capacity to receive any kind of formal education in transition, as I presently do. I am therefore writing bestride two worlds—one in which academic, economic and socio-political privilege enjoyed by a few negates the right of other citizens enmeshed in bureaucratic bottlenecks and policy imperatives—and the other in which the limitations imposed on me by natural positioning in birth, political policies and material realities of the social environment conflate to re-define migrants identity and humanity. I am writing from the standpoint of epistemic saliency defined by George Sefa Dei (2011) as speaking from the authenticity of one's own experiences and voice. In other words, a space that allows a local subject to speak of his/her informed knowledge-base as distinct from being spoken for. It is the consciousness of my positioning in these two distinct worlds and inherent experiences which, constantly nudge me up to attempt to explore the ever-widening gap between the transnational migrants (specifically, migrant youth) and the receiving societies that informs my decision to explore in this work, the theoretical explanations on the causes and flow of youth transnational migration. Three questions will guide the thrust of this paper, which includes: how are colonization and current neo-colonial projects in countries of origin serving to prepare people (specifically, youth) to be prospective migrants, and equip them to respond to the challenges imposed by their status as immigrants? What role could the disruption of the various indigenous practices by colonization be playing in the current youth emigration from the global South to the North? How might we begin to rethink youth transnational migration?

Review of Literature

The literature used in this review fall into two major categories: scholarly academic contributions, and studies and reports conducted by renowned international agencies and organizations such as the United Nations, UN, International Organization for Migration, IOM, the World Bank, to mention a few. Under academic contributions, the broad perspective examines conceptual issues of migration such as the pressing need to theorize migration: its causes, motives, processes and consequences. The studies and reports of international organizations on the other hand, are shaped by the urgent need for an informed data on transnational migration, including: statistical information on its global political and socio-economic consequences; and documented demographic data on transnational migrants. Each of these broad categories of information is deemed relevant for predicting the trend and patterns of international migration in other to develop policies and praxis that will both ensure good management of transnational migration and safeguard the rights of migrant individuals across international border.

Transnational Migration Defined

Before delving into the question of how current neo-colonial projects in countries of origin serve to prepare people (specifically, youth) to be prospective migrants, and equip them to respond to the challenges imposed by their status as immigrants, I will attempt to define the concept, migration. In natural and social spheres, the world's geographical, economic and technological resources are not equally distributed. This means that to survive, living organisms, including human beings may, at a given time, leave certain locations in which they are running out

of resources that meets their survival needs, or in which their survival is challenged and prospects of procreation questioned, for areas they can thrive. Such programmed movement in large numbers, of a species to new locations of survival is deemed migration. In the words of Clugston (1998) migration is “*The seasonal movement of, usually, whole population of organisms in response to environmental stimuli such as temperature and daylight hours*” (p. 501). In human societies, because migration is a demographic process that can bring about changes in the size of human population in a geographical space, its demographic importance is equated albeit differently with mortality and fertility. Teevan (1992) states that, “*Human migration can be defined simply as the movement of people across significant boundaries for the purpose of permanent settlement*” (p. 531). So, who is an international migrant? The significant words in the definitions of migration above include movement, boundaries and settlement. International migrants therefore are persons who travel from their countries of birth, across transnational boundaries into a destination country where they would live temporarily or permanently. “*The term ‘migrant’ is understood to mean any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country*” (UNESCO, n. d.). Thus, it includes those who enter a country irregularly, through trafficking or fleeing from human rights violations, as well as immigrants who are regularly (legally) and permanently present in a country. For these reasons, it has been repeatedly emphasized that deprivation of human rights in countries of origin is a foremost migration push factor (see also Save the Children, 2008; ECA, 2006; Abramovich, Cernadas, & Morlachetti, 2011).

Theorizing the Causes, Trend and Flow of 21st Century Transnational Migration

Scholars of international migration and economy have continued to speculate on factors that nurture the desire of individuals to migrate from their countries of origin to foreign countries (Chua, 2003; Castle & Miller, 2009; Appadurai, 1996). Outstanding among the factors originally thought to be insinuating this movement from developing to the developed nations were the push and pull factors which include: poverty, overpopulation, unemployment, environmental degradation, war, natural and man-made disasters (Simms, 2009; Mueller, 2009; Chomsky, 2006; Klein, 2007). There is also an argument of thought that some economic or fiscal structural policies and changes exerted on developing economies by the West and Western-based international agencies such as the World Bank and IMF have been majorly though indirectly responsible for this trend in migration (Valiani, 2012; Adepaju, 1993; Parrenas, 2005; Sassen, 1988). Among relevant narratives is that of the inflow of migrant youth from the so called minorities of Europe. This flow informed by the 1991 disintegration of the former Soviet Union generated a pattern and flow of immigrants from Eastern to Western Europe, such as from the Balkan states and less economically buoyant members of the European Union, to the more industrialized European states which is met with stiff resistance by both the states and citizens of main destination countries. As depicted in the dialogue session of Youth in Europe organized by the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe, in destination countries such as Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Australia, Denmark, France Sweden, Italy, the UK, Slovenia and Greece the current relationship between immigrant European youth and their host societies have been largely

characterized by issues of socio-economic dimensions. Most of the existing challenges stem from ignorance, prejudice, stereotypes and media influence (European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe, 2010). Agitations are also polarized depending on which side an individual finds her/himself. While youth participants in this session, as prospective immigrants, appeal for the recognition of their rights as migrants based on the articles of the European Convention on Human Rights; citizens of the host societies nudged by the current global economic recession perceive immigrant youth as threats—and look on immigrants with suspicion—that they constitute strains on their nations dwindling resources (see Wong, 2009; IOM, 2009). Nevertheless, transnational mobility of human (labor), goods and money is vital for transfer of knowledge, ideas, capital and entrepreneurial skills, although as observed earlier international borders are more porous to goods and capital than to people (Allen, 2008; Solimano, 2010). This is not different from what obtains in North America. In Canada and to a large extent, the United States of America discourses around the experiences of immigrants are not divorced from the questions of discriminations based on ethnicity and race because the skin color of immigrants factors in directly or indirectly to often distort immigrants contributions to, and therefore influences how they are perceived and received in North American spaces (Li, 2008; Issahaku, 2008).

In her *Mobility of labor and capital: A study in international investment and labor flow*, Sassen (1988) charts a different trajectory by compellingly arguing that the West’s foreign interests in developing nations often masked in their Foreign Direct Investments, FDI has much to do in disrupting existing subsistence socio-economic structures; and nurturing people with foreign ideological leaning, who are adapted, and therefore addictive to foreign culture and taste in developing economies (at the expense of their indigenous) systems; but also forcefully displacing these category from their natural environment to the foreign countries. This perspective is also shared in the *World on fire: How exporting free market democracy breeds ethnic hatred and global instability*, in which Amy Chua (2003) argues that rather than ensconcing peace and development Western projection of free market and democracy to developing economies tends to yield economic and cultural conflict, and socio-political displacement of people in developing countries. From the foregoing, the displacement of individuals from their countries of origin among other factors becomes one of the major forces of the South-North migration, and the counter border gate-keeping measures in receiving nations create the notion of illegal immigration which itself results from binary categorization of migrants into wanted and unwanted, desirable and undesirable immigrants (Li, 2003). Nevertheless, the phenomenal and persistent rise on the cases of African youth emigrating to European countries; the paradox of defying the uncertainties of transnational migration, and the emerging economic and logistics crisis in receiving nations are enough evidence that the motives, patterns and costs of the 21st century youth migration on all the parties concerned are unscathed by the current thrusters of discourses and speculations in finding solution to the problem.

Patterns of Migration and Why People Migrate

Again, reflecting on Giovanni Arrighi (1994)’s work on the system of capitalist expansion that has bedevilled the world from the earlier part of 20th century, which metamorphosed into today’s globalization, it becomes imperative to connect coloni-

zation with the spread of Western militancy and use of force in quest for control of economic territories from Europe to the Americas, to Africa, Asia and the rest of the world (see also Allen, 2008). In many of the periods of capital expansion Arrighi portrayed, what is not highlighted is the subtle link colonization of indigenous peoples' culture and ways of knowing shared with the colonizers' ploy of raising from the ashes of the ruins they created, a host of migrant laborers who, being equipped with Western education and culture may no longer find themselves relevant in their environments and cultures of birth but must migrate to serve at the master's tables. Anderson (2006) in the *Colonial pathologies: American tropical medicine, race, and hygiene in the Philippines* shows how the United States' colonization of Philippines in the late 19th century shaped the present pattern and flow of contemporary emigration of Filipino labor to the US, in which, their skills and qualification were under-valorized, and they were both under-employed, exploited and underpaid.

In a different thrust, the Norwegian Emigration Center conducted a session on Youth and Migration aimed at providing European youth with a basic knowledge of migration so as to help them understand the causes and course of action in the 21st century migration with a view to drawing connection between the emigration of Europeans to the "New World" in the last two centuries and the twenty first century immigration taking place today. Documentation of the outcome of this session is critical to this paper because of its emphasis on the need to create global awareness on tolerance amongst immigrants sending and receiving societies of the world, especially among young peoples. According to the Norwegian Emigration Center (2008), knowledge of the processes of migration will provoke discourses on the concept between young people from the various European cultures and other parts of the world, including: USA, Latin America, Africa and Asia, which in turns will be a potent weapon to eliminate xenophobia by entrenching better understanding, openness and tolerance between the native inhabitants and the immigrants of Europe. It is a stunning discovery that two to three hundred years after the major emigration of citizens of Europe to the Americas, Africa, New Zealand, Australia etc., the same set of motives and compelling factors could be traced to underpin most of the current migration of peoples from the former recipient nations to Europe. "*More than 50 million Europeans, among them some 900,000 Norwegians, were directly affected by a process that had fundamental consequences for both the countries from which, and to which, the migrations took place. To some, the motivation to emigrate was a desire for freedom from religious and social oppression, while others fled wars and persecution. However most of them pursued a dream of improved economic circumstances*" (p. 3). It is interesting that Norwegian Emigration Center could draw connection between the past two centuries Europeans' migration to the New World and the present mass movement of people across international borders, from the developing world to Europe. Of considerable importance to this work though, is the observation that the motives of the twenty first century immigrants are similar to those of their peers in the previous centuries.

It is not an understatement to insist that international mobility of human (labor), goods and money is vital for transfer of knowledge, ideas, capital and entrepreneurial skills, yet as noted earlier transnational borders are more porous to goods and capital than to people (Allen, 2008; Solimano, 2010). Going beyond the banality of push and pull debates on the factors un-

derlying the 21st century migration, Solimano, opting for a freer and more humane international border management, extensively accentuates some critical themes on the contemporary globalization as it affects the nations and nationals of source and receiving countries. Most relevant to this paper is his insistence that the global North should not always be fingered as prime architect and culprit of current South-North flow in global migration. He argues that migration of citizens of the global South to the North might and have been a response to economic and political failures in the global South. In fact, his view affirms Sefa Dei (2012), which blames the underdevelopment of the Global South, specifically Africa, on poor judgment, mismanagement, and lack of accountability among the leadership. This paper strongly suggests however that it might be simplistic to ascribe all South-North movement of individuals across international border to economic factors since a host of other factors could possibly be at play. Also, as plausible as Solimano may sound, his work came short of drawing attention to how the insidious, pervasive and pernicious Western socio-economic policies and practices has continued to perpetuate albeit indirect hegemonic domination on the South—and through this subtle processes—rendering all positive development efforts of Southern economies ineffective, so that the developing countries of the South remain economically subservient to the industrialized North. One good example is the structural adjustment policies, SAP that was developed by the IMF/World Bank (Bretton Woods Institutions) against Southern developing economies. Because these practices have continued to weaken all meaningful efforts made by most independent Southern states towards economic self-sufficiency, one could justifiably claim that the North is responsible for the economic woes of the global South, and is therefore indirectly responsible for the current trend in the South-North migration. It is however important to mention that the pattern and flow of international migration is no longer altogether mono-directional, as implied by South-North migration. Instead, there are omni-directional flow of human, goods, capital, ideas, cultures and technology (Appadurai, 1996). For instance, as nationals of Southern states and raw materials migrate North, many Northern-based multi-national corporations, in attempt to reduce manufacturing cost have resorted to establishing oversea plants in developing countries, and by deploying their technical and high management staff to these Southern locations; North-South migration flow also takes place. One of the positions of this work is that migration of individuals across national borders may be, not just as a result of economic factor but due to other potential factors that are natural or socio-political in nature, example war or natural disaster. I will argue that the current migration trends and patterns have always revealed the fluidity of migration flow shaped by non-palpable social and environmental factors as man-made or natural disasters, economic recessions and political instability. Immigrants' demographic constitution therefore change from one geo-ethnic location to another in varying times of history, and so do destination locations change with time. For instance, in late 19th century A. D, (1870-1914), citizens of Western European countries such as Ireland, Italy, Spain, Poland and the Scandinavia formed the bulk of immigrants to the New World countries comprising: the United States, Canada, Argentina, Africa, Australia, Brazil and New Zealand (Solimano, 2010; Allen, 2008). But in the recent economic recession (2007-2009), because capital and labor flow simultaneously to nations that offer better economic opportunities than what obtains in the migrants'

countries of origin; immigrants are met with hostility and skepticism. Yet immigrants' contribution to the economic prosperity of host countries is indisputable (Deaux, 2006; Sassen, 1988; Solimano, 2010).

Reconnecting with Sassen (1988) again, it would be noted that from a broadly global perspective, her work insists that a comprehensive analysis of factors prompting migrants to leave their countries of origin to settle in foreign country must in addition to domestic considerations of sending and receiving nations, reflect on how the foreign policies and economic practices of receiving nations results in influx of migrants from developing economies, (one can point to the active role of US firms in the disruptions of traditional economic structures due to large-scale development of commercial agriculture with its associated displacement of small holders and subsistence growers, or due to massive recruitment of young women into labor for export manufacturing). My position in this paper however, is that while Sassen's explanations of the connection between US foreign policies, her economic practices and the flow of immigrant labor into the country may, to some extent be true of few other developing economies, such bilateral links may not adequately account for the massive exodus of citizens of a country like Nigerian to Europe for instance, because no single European nation has the kind of massive foreign direct investments in Nigeria that could wield the sort of monopolistic influence Sassen illustrated. However, Western representation in Nigeria's oil industry is increasingly enormous to entrench a different kind of ideological influence in Nigeria's socio-cultural environment. In this respect, I would acquiesce in Sassen's argument on the indirect consequences of Western foreign direct investment on developing countries to stress that "*it is here that the facts of foreign investment and general cultural Westernization acquire weight, as do a liberal immigration policy and a tradition of immigration*" (p. 7). On the other hand, the spreading of US military bases in almost all the regions of the world in which they have economic interest might create what Amy Chua (2003) refers to as aggressive marketing of US free market and democracy, which has the tendency to generate middle-class political refugees who may share the desire to emigrate to the US. If however the US economic, military and diplomatic activities were strong inducers for citizens of developing countries to migrate to the US, the premise does not substantiate contemporary surge in youth emigration from Africa to industrialized countries of the North for instance. In fact the reverse seems to be the case. Until recently, there has been no apparent European military presence in Nigeria. Of course, some diplomatic and economic ties thrive, especially in Nigerian booming oil and gas industry. But there is no obvious subversive diplomatic activities from the other European countries Nigerian youth tend to migrate to. It is interesting though that Sassen believes that the foreign direct investment, FDI in itself does not cause emigration but is a structure, a highly mediated process that creates conditions for migration as an option.

Shifting from Sassen's views on factors that forms, drives and facilitates emigration of citizens from developing countries to the industrialized North, Amy Chua (2003) argues that it is the aggressive spread by the West (spear-headed by the US) of free markets and democracy that creates the 21st century middle class international migrant individuals. Chua is of the notion that the internationalization of global economy (globalization) which the United States of America is frantically marketing to

developing world has dire consequences in the socio-economic and political stability of these nations. Her work features, for the first time, ethnicity in the core of a thesis on globalization and migration. She believes that Western propagation of free market and democracy to developing world creates lopsided binary powers in these nations that tend to instability and war. A rich and economically powerful minority is created by free market while democracy invents a politically powerful but economically marginal large population which becomes envious and resentful of the market dominant minority. Chua argues that instability and war will result as globalization exacerbates ethnic disparities in wealth and political power distribution, thus producing a middle class refugee that emigrates to the West. While Chua's work is only indirectly linked to emigration, it is crucial for understanding how the mediated socio-economic and political activities of the West have continued to disrupt existing socio-economic equilibrium in the developing countries. Chua is apt to argue that she does not aim to prevent the promotion of free markets and democracy in the world but insists that the version of free market and democracy exported by the US is ill-conceived because no Western nation has adopted the *laissez-faire* system that West is imposing on developing countries (see also: Sassen, 1988; and Adepaju, 1993). Sequel to this direction of argument, this paper urges for a re-evaluation of the IMF-World Bank hegemonic policies in developing economies as a way of understanding how its introduction of structural adjustment policies manifests as cut-throat measure to further cripple developing economies of the South. While US and other Western countries subsidize farm produce, award tax leverages to corporations and even dole out lump sums as recovery loans to their suffering industries during economic recessions, the West uses SAP to forbid such gestures in developing economies and insists on open-door to free market which exterminates domestic industries of poor nations and force them to accept the role of dumping ground for Western products, and to a large extent, foreign cultural practices. Chua and Sassen however agree that Western external influences pose disruptive threat to the socio-economic and political stability of developing countries, resulting in the harvest of forcefully displaced peoples from developing economies who migrate as either economic or political refugees to the West.

Sculpting Southern Migrants: SAP to the Rescue of Western Neo-Colonial Project

In the impact of structural adjustment on the population of Africa: the implications for education, health & employment Adepaju (1993) reviews the impact of the Western imposed Structural Adjustment Policies, SAP on African nations shortly after they gained political independence from Europe. He argues that the disruptions, stagnations and eventual decline of the economic growth of independent African nations replaced the optimism of Africans at the wake of their attainment of political independence from Europe. In his work which teases out the socio-economic implications of SAP introduced to the nascent African economies shortly after independence by the Western-based Bretton Wood institutions (IMF and World Bank) Adepaju incriminates the pre-independent structures craftily established to perpetuate Africa's supply of primary commodities, including labor to the industrialized world for the woes of the continent, and therefore the current brain-drain in the continent. This is an economic position which in addition to the imposition of Western colonial education provided no room for

environmentally relevant technological advancement. In Adepoju's view this rather secures perpetual dependence on importation, and outsourcing of finished goods and technical manpower from the West. Among the salient points in Adepoju's work was that SAP does not provide for African countries to survive the effects of unfavorable long run external economic shocks. The second point which is the most relevant to this paper is that the structural adjustment programme has debilitating socio-economic consequences on citizens of Africa nations. For instance, the removal of government subsidies from domestic manufacturing systems, agriculture and the basic social subsectors such as education and health; coupled with high domestic interest rates resulted in closure of many domestic businesses and manufacturing units. The resulting poverty, unemployment and population surge boils down to regional and international emigration. The serious but indirect effect of SAP on African nations, as a hegemonic neo-colonial project that could account for emigration of the citizens of Africa to the West resonates with Sassen's earlier arguments. However each differs on the nature of external influences. Sassen believes that Western foreign direct investments, diplomatic and military practices constitute some disruptive effects on the existing socio-economic structures of developing countries, which eventually facilitates the formation and flow of labor migration to the West. Adepoju insists that the use of jeopardizing fiscal policies on Africa by the Bretton Wood institutions was the bane of the continent's socio-economic life-wire. Both Sassen and Adepoju agree however that the end result of the negative external socio-economic pressure is the formation of acceptable migrants, and eventual emigration of these individuals as political or economic refugees seeking safe haven or greener pastures in the West.

This paper intends to shift the trajectory of the discourse by arguing that if the other factors of migration Adepoju analyzed, including: high population growth rate, poverty, economic stagnation, and unemployment were to be the focus of analysis, one would be playing into the hands of industrialized nations in viewing migration as a domestic matter that lies solely in the inadequacies of the sending nations, thus constructing transnational migrant subjects as liability and therefore an unnecessary burden to the receiving nations. This posture of argument exonerates the West's neo-colonial propagations from blames in maltreatment of immigrants, thus granting automatic power to the industrialized world to accept immigrants under stipulated conditions. With the trajectory that views transnational migration from the lenses of labor and capital flow, Sassen (1988) as in Solimano (2010) believes that while capital mobility has necessitated mobility of labor, and economic practices collaborate with technological advancement to create an international space for the circulation of capital; it is actually a set of policies originating in the West, specifically, the United States that demarcates, regulates and makes this space viable. In other words, what could normally be seen as transnational movement can as well be viewed as a movement within a single global entity in which countries that are parties to international migration operate.

Sassen further explores how this transnational space continues to influence the circulation of capital on international labor formation which in itself shapes the pattern and flow of migration of individuals. Interestingly, her work reviews Brimley Thomas analysis of international migration in the Atlantic economy of the 19th century which posits that free trade induces international migration of labor and capital if subjected to im-

mobility of labor and capital across social classes. Sufficing to argue that the emigration of labor and capital from England to the United States within the century was informed by conditions of social stratification which existed in England but was absent in the United States. This leaves an unsavory question: could this situation still account for the increasing emigration of youth from the developing world to industrialized nations? To this question this paper would differ, for going by the existing arguments, the emigration of Nigerians for instance, applies to a different historical period which might espouse a different process of internationalization, leaders of organized investors and locations of investment operation. Besides internationalization of trade previously mentioned, today there is also the internationalization of production sites epitomized in foreign investment so that one begins to examine the conditions under which internationalization of production could generate labor immigrations. Sassen locates the connection between national labor migrations and internationalization of production at the intersection of three prominent forms of internationalization, viz: development of (for export) production in several developing nations in the later part of the century, such as the sub-contracting, off-shore production sectors and export processing zones; the development of major cities into centers for the control and management of global economic systems; and lastly, the emergence of US as the major recipient of direct foreign investment in the world. So by establishing the links between USA and countries that become major senders of immigrants to the US, the paper concedes to the argument that some forms of internationalization of production could interact with basic socio-economic conditions (such as poverty, overpopulation, war, natural disaster, unemployment and so on), to generate migration inducing conditions. But the view that these factors are the major causes of the 21st century migration is altogether unrealistic because as suggested earlier in this paper, focusing on these factors alone might give a constricted view that sees international migration as a domestic problem that could be traced to the socio-economic inadequacies of the migrants' countries of origin. Thus immigration becomes constructed as a problem for the receiving country, specifically, the West.

Transnational Migration in a Polarized World: Trend and Flow as Functions of Unequal Power-Play

That governments of African nations (and of course other sending countries of the South) wield a little or no influence on welfare outcomes of their migrant citizens whose remittances have so much implications for the fiscal well-being of their domestic economies is highlighted in Ratha, Mohapatra, Özden, Plaza, Shaw, and Shimeles (2011). Of great import to this paper are the observations that information on the nature, impact and patterns of migration is an indispensable precondition for improved management of migration, and such understanding is lacking among developing economies due to inadequate information on migration processes in these countries. The paper further shows that economic prosperity and acquisition of the colonialist form of education influence the flow and pattern of human migration from the developing South to the North. The reverse is not the case with North-South migration, going by the earlier discussion. Shimeles et al. also observes that approximately two-thirds of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, especially migrants who are both economically indigent, and do not possess some recognized level of Western education migrate to other countries in their economic region. The contribution of their work to the understanding of migration patterns

and flow that is relevant to this paper is the connection it makes between the economic status of the migrants and the destination of migrants. The economic status of migrants is often one of the factors determining how far and to what destination they can go. For example migrants from richer countries tend to migrate more to destinations outside Africa, while potential migrants from economically disadvantaged countries would choose to migrate more to their neighboring countries, assessed to have more buoyant economies. The argument raised here might well apply to adult migrants, but the spontaneity and flux in the 21st century youth migration, as observable from other data sources (see IOM, 2009; Collins, 2011; Higley, Nieuwenhuysen, & Neerup 2011; and European Youth Centre MOE, 2010) seem to contradict this claim. In fact, poor migrant youth from Eastern Europe and Asian countries as well as those from the Middle Eastern and North African countries seem to be influenced by economic status only with respect to the mode of transportation and movement they employ during their migration, but not their choice of destination countries. The outstanding thesis of the above analysis that this paper also considered critical to understanding migration causes, patterns and flow is the revelation that current patterns and trends of migration are shifting with demographic composition of migrants. Noteworthy is the result of household surveys conducted in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal which shows *“that migrants tend to be young adults (two-thirds of Burkina Faso’s emigrants were between the ages of 15 and 40) and male (more than 90 percent in Burkina Faso), generally with some education beyond primary school”* (p. 2). This observation is in agreement with most of the literature used and is an indication that studying the causes, patterns and flow of transnational migration as well as the migratory experiences of youth is urgently becoming a necessary step towards generating crucial data to enhance reasonable and humane policies for both the citizens and migrants in global societies.

Gender and the Flow of Transnational Migration

It is important to explore the influence of gender on the patterns and flow of the 21st century migration. Salima Valiani draws from Nicola Piper’s edited volume on *New Perspectives on Gender and Migration* to accentuate the pattern of feminization of migration flow over the past five to ten years which she traces to four phenomenal shift in global socio-economic structures to include: improved statistical visibility of women as migrants, increasing participation of women in most migration streams, growing unemployment among men in migrant-sending countries, and increasing demand for labor in feminized sectors in migrant-receiving countries (Valiani, 2012). The paper argues that more than anything else, the change in socio-cultural norms, values and mores in developing countries, has greater impact on the gender constituents of migrating categories. It is also the view of the paper that the effects of colonization on mostly indigenous societies of the South tended to subvert and modify gender roles in developing economies which might account for the increased recognition of women’s roles in the flow of international migration. Drawing on DESA (2006) which projected figures indicates that female international migrants constitute almost fifty per cent of all migrants in the year 2005, as compared to forty seven per cent in 1960, Valiani’s work elaborates on the complicit activities of some migrants’ state of origin in the preparation and export of labor to receiving countries (mostly Western economies). A good example be-

ing the roles of the Philippines’ state policies in establishing the country as the leading international exporter of labor. By challenging the popular Push and Pull explanations, Valiani underscored the role of structural adjustment programs of the 1980s as giving rise to low wage employment, and in turn, labor migration. He argues that *“it is the historically-entrenched structure of the Philippines state which is underlined here. It is argued that the Philippines state embarked upon a labor export policy, from the early 1970s due to contradictions arising from trade relations shaped under colonialism, severely unequal land distribution, and weighty US American political influence”* (Valiani, 2009: p. 114). While her work affirms the arguments of Adepoju (1993), Sassen (1988) and Amy Chua (2003) respecting the role of the West in the formation of Southern migrant subjects, and the flow of labor from developing countries to the Western industrial capitals, it falls short of revealing how the potential South-North Philippines migrant subject (for instance) are complicit to their lopsided immigration experiences and has little or nothing pointing to the surge in youth transnational migration. Also the migrants are depicted in Valiani’s work as devoid of agency—being victims of their own state architecture, and those of Western neo-colonial propagation. Yet they are not, if we consider Fanon’s injunction on matters of imposition of domination and hegemony. In fact, a deconstruction of her work would show how, by acquiring Western education and trainings the migrants began to perceive the indigenous Philippines’ traditions and environment in the spectacles of the West and by themselves nursed and executed the desire to migrate to the Americas.

Migrant Subject and Identity-Crisis, the Legal and Illegal: South-North Migrants and Transnational Border Surveillance

Immigrants and international border restrictions are becoming predictable oxymoron. It is no longer a myth that series of political and socio-economic activities of industrialized North have continued to perpetuate disruptions in the developing South (Simms, 2009; Chomsky, 2006; Willinsky, 1998), constituting citizens previously settled and peaceful into stateless forced migrants (Baxter, 2008; Chua, 2003). These forcefully displaced migrants, mainly from the global South are continuously faced with enormous restrictive rules designed to check their entry into receiving societies of the North. Michelle Lowry and Peter Nyers (2003) explore the global movements of refugee and migrant rights. Their work expresses concern on the impact of the heightened securitization of migrants and intensification of selective surveillance on the cultures of political asylum (of countries like Canada for instance), as it affects international freedom of movement. The key idea pervading their work remains the identification of the verity and source of migrants’ political agency. Lowry and Nyers’ work as expose on critical border interactions between migrants and receiving nations, shows different measures adopted to refuse immigrants entry when state and media prey on their citizens’ gullibility by framing migrants as murderers (Australia), criminals, and fanatical terrorists (Europe). The work in addition reflects on struggles of activists for migrant rights, and the migrant peoples’ resistance. It draws extensively from Mai Kaneko’s and Helena Schwenken’s contributions on the active contestation of oppressive and restrictive immigrant and refugee policies in Afghanistan, Canada, the European Union, Australia, and Japan.

With no intention to negate existing international laws, my views in this paper are different from Lowry and Nyers position. In fact, there seemed not to be any trace of international freedom of movement for citizens of the Southern hemisphere at any particular point in the history of colonization and Western domination. What apparently exists is an international freedom of movement that is limited to citizens of specific race who apparently share lasting immunity over international border surveillance systems. Because of the obvious imbalance in the power dynamic between industrialized countries of the West and independent countries of the South, the identity of privileged citizens of the Northern states are constructed to permeate with no restrictions, the territorial borders of developing countries of the South either for leisure-seeking or official diplomatic relations at any time or within a given period. This binary construction of peoples' identifiers into legal, and illegal; citizen and alien, smuggled or trafficked or genuine and refugee could in fact be traced to the previous colonization and hegemonic domination of most countries of the global South by Europe and other colonizers. It is as Sassen (1988) suggested earlier, a ploy to tag immigrants as "problem" to the receiving nations (see also: Sharma, 2008, Li, 2003). It is therefore the view of this paper that the lopsided power relationship in international boundary policing and surveillance is a renewed ploy of Western colonial overlords to control the flow and trend of transnational migration by tightening their hegemonic grips on the rest of the world.

In an attempt to expose the challenges posed by ambiguities and insecurities resulting from the erosion of the traditional components of modernity to both the sovereign subject and sovereign nation state as it affects transnational borders and regulation of national border-crossing migrant, Kapur (2005) examines how the current extraordinary movement of people across international borders exposes "*the porosity of borders, the transnational reality of subaltern existence, and the contingent foundation of international law*" (p. 137), by interrogating how, on one hand, encounters with the constitutive "Others", or the transnational migrant subject disrupts and disturbs universalists' notion of international law, and on the other, the modernists' perspective on international law that attempts to counter, curtail, restrict and resist the cross-border migrants. Kapur's work is relevant to this paper in helping to expose the power imbalance in the management of international border and movement of goods and persons across these borders. It is especially disconcerting that the whole idea of universality of cross-border movement as it relates to the international migrant subjects receives its definition, interpretation and meaning from the West. Documented evidence doesn't however suggest that citizens of the industrialized West are more involved in transnational migration than citizens of the developing South (Higley, Nieuwenhysen, & Neerup, 2011; Deaux, 2006). This lopsided structure and control system ostensibly apportioning power of attorney of international borders to Western states and their citizens—to enter and leave any sovereign territory without restriction—when such opportunities are denied international migrant subjects from the South. If therefore the legitimacy in international law as it affects cross-border migration is validated, challenged or altered based on the individual's position about modernist argument of human progress, or level of alignment with the dominant social group, it leaves much to be desired. Deaux (2006) reviewed how the patterns of US immigration influence domestic policies to explain how combination of

three socio-political factors—policies, demography and social representation—have continued to shape the trends and flow of contemporary transnational migration and immigrant experiences. In his view, United States government's policies on immigration and the demographic realities of the country are two elements interlocking to produce specific flow into the country and immigrants' experiences in the United States. The third factor, social representation is not as tangible as demographic data, yet is, according to Deaux, even more critical in shaping immigrants' experiential realities in their host society. Social representation as the articulation of "*attitudes and images that a community holds about immigration—in general, as well as about particular groups of immigrants—is a critical member of the triad*" (p. 13). This becomes the case considering that often policies are influenced by the subjective views of a country's authority rather than on objective derivatives of data analysis. In the same vain the process of social representation and interpretation of events, ideas and processes also influence a people's political actions. The primary thesis of his paper is that a shift in public opinion in the US for instance, resulted in the 1986 promulgation of Immigration Reform control, as a precautionary deterrent measure to replace open door policies with border surveillance and gate-keeping aimed at checking the surge in illegal immigration and punishing those who are implicated in the influx of illegal immigrants. This paper argues however that Deaux subsumed the experiences of transnational migrant youth in his analysis of the US national Immigration Reform control of 1986, for we are learning nothing special about how this restriction of immigrant flow influenced youth migrants' experiences in the country. Also his work did not show the voices and opinions that were silenced even among the US citizenry, for it was certainly the voices and opinions of the dominant Euro-Americans individuals that are reified and valorized as the voice of America. In other words it is the opinion of this segment of Americans that determines who becomes legal, or illegal and who must be repatriated or retained to become American citizen—not the opinions of the indigenous peoples of America, African Americans, Latin Americans and other immigrant settlers—whose narratives must not be swept under the carpet if the history of United States must be viewed through a holistic spectacle.

In a comparative analysis of the efforts of immigration authorities in the United States and Australia to effectively sustain a balance between the continuous large-scale inflow of immigrants majority of whom were from developing countries, and the task of immigrants' economic and social integration Higley, Nieuwenhysen and Neerup (2011) corroborate Deaux (2006)'s thesis of the use of social representation by the citizenry to construct images and identities of immigrants. Relevant to this paper is the demonstration which, derives from their earlier work, the *Nation of Immigrants*, that so long as positive economic conditions thrive, state authorities would have no difficulties balancing the surge of immigration and the pressure such influx poses on available socio-economic amenities and life support systems, but this is not the case during economic recessions. Sufficing to argue that immigrants are made scape-goat of the destination countries economic woes. Nevertheless, Higley, Nieuwenhysen and Neerup only featured the experiential realities of adult migrants with no details of how social representation, immigration policies made by authorities at various periods of economic shifts, and the economic condition influence the current outburst of transnational youth migrants. In the

Migration and remittances: Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Mansoor and Quillin (2007) analyzed the flow of persons, capital and commodities from Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union into Western Europe. This work documents the history and flow of migration and migrants remittances since the dissolution of the former Soviet States, and discusses the determinants of migration. The study also attempts to tease out some tentative policy interventions that might limit the negative effect of emigration and brain-drain (outflow of individuals who constitute the workforce) in developing economies while enhancing the gains from migration and remittances for countries affected by transnational migration and for migrants and their families. Migration thus remains the crucial part of socio-political and economic shift process in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECA) sequel to the dissolution of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic. Interestingly aging population and economic motivations, as is the case with Europe and North America remain the most driving force in labor migration in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The initial migration was spurred by the emigration of former citizens of Soviet states who suddenly became “stateless” to the ethnic and traditional homelands. Also the creation of new borders, political conflict, and the removing of restrictions placed on movement by the Soviet regime paved way for a larger and second flow of migration necessitated by new economic opportunities. The drive for permanent migration and flow of undocumented migrants is therefore informed by the structure of immigration policies applicable to immigrants from ECA who are migrating into Western Europe and other immigrant-receiving countries in Commonwealth of Independent States.

The pattern of migration in Europe and Central Asian region is appreciable but distinctive. It is important to observe that in addition to intra-regional migration happening within industrial countries of ECA, the region is still responsible for sending out a large proportion of immigrants of world migration. According to Mansoor and Quillin (2007), migration patterns in the Eastern European region is spelt out in two-pronged pattern—on one end is the system that emerged among the countries of Western, Central, and Eastern Europe and on the other, a system of movement involving the countries of the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS). It is important to highlight the pattern indicating that as majority of migrants from Central Asia travel to the industrialized CIS countries like Russia and Kazakhstan, some migrate further west in search of more vibrant economic conditions of living, thus finding hope in the flourishing economic atmosphere of Turkey and the European Union countries. The differences in the patterns and flow of migration throughout Eastern-Europe and Central Asia therefore could be explained by a combination of economic and social motivation factors. In fact, a number of generic motivators seemed to add force to the decisions to migrate. Among these motivators is the disparity in the developing countries’ gross domestic product and per capita income which, as hinted earlier in this literature, implies that the widening of the fiscal gap in income between the industrialized and developing economies in the ECA sub-region is a major barrier to surmount if equilibrium must be struck in migration imbalances in the sub-region. In the report on migration and remittances in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, it is argued that anticipation of better economic possibilities at home or abroad is also an undeniable factor contributing to population movements. These socio-economic considerations fall under the category of

push and pull migration inducing factors. It is observed among other things that anticipation of higher level of income, greater chances of finding employment and improved quality of life abroad play a strong role in immigrant decision-making most of the time, but the decision could also be influenced by a host of other factors (Katsu, 2007; IOM, 2009; Shimeles, 2010; Solimano, 2010). The saliency of economic needs as the major factor of motivation in migration decision runs through most of the works in the literature, but socio-political considerations also featured in some African and Middle Eastern countries, as well as in the ECA and the Commonwealth of Independent countries in Europe. It is deducible at this juncture that all literature reviewed have in different perspectives theorized the causes, trends and flow of migration through the lenses of adult transnational migrant subjects. There has been no hint on what inspires the youth to travel to settle in other countries as independent migrants. Nor has there been disclosure on the flow and trend of youth cross-border movement. But given youth’s overwhelming participation in the 21st century cross-border movement, there exists an urgent need for social science scholars, and stake-holders in transnational migration and policy formulation to begin to re-imagine the whole process of trans-border movement in terms of the motives, trends and flow of youth migration, because this phenomenon deserves more attention than it receives at the moment.

Perspectives on Youth Migration: What Factors Move Youth to Cross International Borders as Independent Migrants?

In *The world’s potential migrants: Who they are, where they want to go, and why it matters* Esipova, Ray, and Srinivasan, (2010) observed through a survey on youth migration conducted by Gallup from all the regions of the world that, “*Factors that fuel the desire to leave one’s country vary by country, region, and human development level, but a common theme is opportunity—whether it is the chance to reunite with family members who are already abroad, to start a new business, to feel free to express one’s views without fear, or to live where children are treated with respect*” (p. 19). As earlier stressed, the predominant emphasis is on migration and migrant decisions and experiences of adults, while youth and children are accounted for only as reuniting with family members who are economically established abroad. This posture of reasoning does not take into account the sheer size of youth migrants admitted to currently represent the largest segment of the 21st century global migrant population. The most salient of the survey’s finding is the positive correlation between existence of transnational social networks and the people’s desire to migrate. In other words, a potential youth migrant develops the desire to travel and live overseas after listening to the experiences of family members, friends or others who have traveled overseas. Thus social network becomes a kind of boulder of confidence for the potential youth migrant to explore the overseas option. While Esipova, Ray, and Srinivasan, (2010) framed their survey around discourses of “push and pull” experiences that many scholars have viewed to be very parochial in understanding the complexity of 21st century migration (Sassen, 1988; Valiani, 2012; Appadurai, 1993), the findings, specifically with respect to increasing migration of young adults is important to this paper. For instance, the observation that quest for employment opportunities overseas is a determinant factor only to the desires of older adults to migrate is in sharp contrast to earlier findings

that generalized this factor as a key motive for migration. “*In Europe, the Middle East and North Africa region, and the Americas, older, underemployed adults aged 30 to 65 are more likely to say they would like to migrate than those who are the same age and are employed or not in the workforce. Millions of young people worldwide would move away from their countries permanently if they had the opportunity, regardless of whether they have jobs at home. In most places, except the Middle East and North Africa, Gallup finds adults younger than 30 who are employed, underemployed, or not in the workforce are equally likely to desire to migrate*” (p. 18). It was also obvious from the responses that like in many other works analyzed in this paper, employment opportunity, improved income and standard of living remained the fundamental push and pull factors underpinning Egyptian youth migration. The International Organization for Migration in Egypt conducted a survey to understand how Egyptian youth perceived the social, political and economic future of their country and to what extent the turmoil, reform and uncertainty might directly or indirectly influence their decision to migrate. The responses were affirmation of findings of previous surveys and the current distribution of Egyptians working abroad (Pitea & Hussain, 2011). “*Young Egyptians are willing to migrate mainly to Arab countries especially Saudi Arabia (26%), UAE (23%) and Kuwait (11%), followed by the United States (12%) and Italy (5%)*” (p. 6). It is interesting to notice that the current political crisis and the resulting socio-economic uncertainty in Egypt do not have a significant impact on their decision to migrate. Fifteen per cent of respondents agreed that the current situation makes them want to migrate, while forty one per cent confirmed that the current crisis situation has minor influence on their decision to migrate. An upwards of forty four per cent of respondents indicated they had decided to migrate before January 25, 2011 crisis. The findings of this survey challenge some of the earlier works suggesting that crisis situations in developing economies fan people’s desire to migrate. However this could be true of adult migrants, but this paper is focusing on independent youth migrants. While theorizing youth’s transnational migration may require more than reviewing the influence of colonization on the migrant subject, this work strongly recommend that appropriate rethinking of this trend would do well to accentuate the role of colonization and the disruption of migrants subjects’ indigenous cultural environment in generating potential transnational immigrants in the 21st century.

Through the Lenses of Anti-Colonial Theory and African Indigenous World-View

This paper will make a quick reference to Frantz Fanon (1963)’s analysis of colonialism and its impact on the psyche of the colonized peoples to explore ways in which colonial encounter has helped to create migrant subjects and shaped the current trends in flow of transnational migration. Fanon’s treatise on anti-colonial discourse helps our understanding of colonialism and imperial power relations, social movement and the politics of social liberation (Sefa Dei, 2010). This segment of the paper uses anti-colonial theoretical framework and African indigenous worldviews to foreground youth’s experiences in the 21st century migration. As analytical approaches anti-colonial discourse and African indigenous worldviews challenge all manifestations of hegemony and imposing structures, ideas and practices of socio-economic, cultural and political domination.

In this paper I argue that contrary to the dominant (coloniz-

ers’) views, what colonization introduced to the colonized peoples of Africa were first the Arabic, then Western cultures, ways of knowing and world-views that were deliberately imposed to subvert the existing ontological and epistemological apparatuses of development, and ways of knowledge creation and transmission rooted in the indigenous peoples’ spirituality. It therefore becomes necessary to disturb and interrogate the causes, trends and flow of African youth migration to Europe using African indigenous worldviews because, first these youth are sons and daughters of Africa, so, narratives on their lived experiences will best be relayed around their peculiar philosophy and knowledge base, and second, Western ways of knowing came with a hegemonic philosophy that continuously fail to acknowledge the humanity of African peoples located in their past history and civilization (Lebakeng, 2010), so it is imperative that deconstruction of dominant worldviews becomes part of this paper. Using anti-colonial theoretical lenses, this study draws from Frantz Fanon’s analysis of colonialism and its impact on the psyche of the colonized peoples to point to ways in which colonization and neo-colonial socio-political structures have continued to influence migration of young adults from developing countries of the South to the industrialized North. Interrogating the processes of 21st century youth migration using indigenous world views might provide an insight into the insidious and pernicious impact of colonialism on the psyche of individuals at societal level, an attempt that will potentially bud opportunities towards decolonization of the minds of colonized subjects (Wa Thiong’O, 1986; Memmi, 2004).

Subversion of Indigenous Education as It Affects Transnational Youth Migration

A review of scholarly contributions and discourses on indigenous education reveals the massive disruptions and suppression induced on indigenous peoples’ cultural heritages by colonization. This paper is arguing that such insidious, pernicious and pervasive manipulation has helped in no small measure to shape cultural perceptions of majority of the new generation young Africans, and wet their appetite for the colonizers’ world and world-views. African indigenous education is integrative; job oriented education with emphasis on social responsibility, political participation as well as spiritual and moral values. It implies that children and adults learn while engaging in communal social and economic activities; through ceremonies rituals, recitation and demonstrations. It also shows that practical economic activities such as farming, fishing, weaving, cooking, carving, and knitting were interlaced with recreational subjects such as dancing, wrestling, acrobatic display and racing. While intellectual exercises included studies of local histories, legends, the environment (including local flora and fauna), poetry, proverbs, mazes and riddles and storytelling. This integrated model that combined physical education with character-building and manual with intellectual activities is not rigidly hierarchized and compartmentalized like the Western model (Fafunwa, 1974). Children are taught life-survival skills such as patience, resilience, agility and resourcefulness; and tested appropriately and one graduated into higher ranking age grades or social categories that serve as different levels of knowledge acquisition. His illustration on indigenous education does not just situate Africa as comprising different indigenous societies and cultures with similar educational aims, but shows variation in the modes and method of transmission. Outstanding in Fafunwa work is the argument referring to Western writers who condemn Indi-

genous African education as punitive and barbaric, as products of ignorance and lack of understanding of the process of informal education. Fafunwa's observation is re-echoed in Lebakeng (2010) and Sefa Dei (2010), on the urgent need for decolonization exercise that would center African indigenous world views in both educational and developmental projects of the continent. Sefa Dei's (2009)'s appeal is on democratization of knowledge production and inclusion of the other ways of knowing. He contests any manifestation of hegemony and oppression in the educational policy formulation and implementation with particular reference to Africa. His is an all encompassing proposition considering the present pluralistic and multi-culturally globalized societies, meaning that irrespective of location, it would amount to erroneous construction for any cultural group to impose their belief systems or ways of knowing on others or assume and claim superiority of their educational policies and practices on others. The West (Europe) has peddled globalization as the panacea to all problems of social, economic, and educational factors tailored to engender modernization and sustainable development. Since then, most elites of the developing nations Nigeria inclusive, having acquired Western education, tend to digest it hook, nail, and sinker. Thus equipped with pervasive and pernicious doctrine of "global education" (devoid of any consideration of its relevance to their local environment, the indigenous youth became themselves agents for destroying their own cultural heritages and indigenous ways of knowing. This posture renders them irrelevant to their local environment and converts them to potential migrants. It is vital to stress that there is always a connection between the structures, practices and contents of education prevalent in a given society and the overall developmental progress made by the products of this system. Often, certain forms of education are not universally applicable but environment-specific. These forms of education are cultural in nature and emanate from a people's epistemic realities as they relate with their geo-spiritual environment. For instance while Nigerians' idea of development embedded in indigenous African conception of development tends to emphasize the articulation and interconnectivity of material well-being, philosophical, environmental, spiritual and technological advancement, the West for instance focuses on material well-being at the expense of the holistic approach to social well-being. The conservative, Western notion of development remains the external control and the re-colonizing of indigenous communities into the wider "*global cultures of globalization, trade liberalization and ever-spreading democracy*" (Lauer, 2007 cited in Sefa Dei 2011). On the other hand Abudu (1996) argues that neo-colonial ideologies have reified global trade practices that perpetuate the conditions of Africa's "*dependency on foreign aid and its economic incapacity*". Therefore re-colonization is produced and reproduced by forces of globalization and contemporary geo-politics of global power structures. This paper insists that the imposition of foreign ideas of education and development on the developing countries of the South through subtle economic manipulations must be resisted if any meaningful impact must be made in addressing youth migration through environmentally and culturally relevant development efforts.

Sefa Dei (2011) in his *indigenous philosophies and critical education* wonders if indeed contemporary African academia would ever shed the slough of its colonial past which raises concerns as to whether or not the focus should be on thrusting aside the existing system—that is replete with structures and

patterns of foreign hegemonies—and replacing it altogether with new philosophical thoughts and indigenous knowledge representations. This becomes imperative as the past continues to accord currency and validation to, and therefore is a representation of the essentialized (Western) ways of knowledge production, legitimization and dissemination. Dei insists that as a body of thought, indigenous knowledge is set in opposition to the dominant ways of knowing, because it reveals itself "*through resistance as counter-hegemonic and as tangential to conventional knowledge systems*" (p. 2). Lending his voice to the call for reinvention of indigenous philosophies of education Dei opts for the counter-narrative that sees indigenous knowledge as the body of indigenous social thoughts embedded with critical oppositional and resisting knowledge. In this way, he posits philosophy as "*a body of knowledge central to the epistemological framework, one that accords discursive authority, power and privilege onto the pedagogue*" (p. 2). It is important however to observe that Dei does not call for abrogation of Western philosophy per se, but is challenging "*the positioning/authenticity of the episteme, which reveals itself through a particular historic primacy that at the same time forms colonial relations with the 'Othered' discursive episteme*" (p. 2). In other words philosophy should not be solely about what Europe does but must also incorporate the philosophical articulations on education of other peoples from distinct geo-cultural locations. In a similar scholarly contribution Wane (2011) examines the epistemological underpinnings and contributions of African indigenous healing practices to contemporary healthcare knowledge and practice in Kenya. This was aimed at drawing attention to African philosophical principles underlying the belief systems, values, signs and practices—constructed around the burgeoning realities of multiple ways of knowing—and embedded in social phenomena such as intuitions, dreams, visions, proverbs oral narratives, songs, fables, myths, superstitions, and praxis in African spirituality. Her work is relevant in this paper because it both highlights the need for recognition of indigenous and challenges the dominant colonial oppressive knowledge systems and neo-colonial ideologies that privileges Western thoughts on education, health and healing and repudiates as primitive any frame of knowledge not located within the parameters of Cartesian or behaviorist terms. Wane's work becomes increasingly relevant to this paper in its reaffirmation of the argument that the failure of Western educational systems (structures) and environments to validate non-Western ways of knowing is unfortunate colonial scheme. It argues that Western discourse on knowledge production has served to justify and legitimize neo-colonial vestiges in the contemporary educational systems in all its manifestations. No doubt, the crop of Africans, largely the youth, nurtured solely on the colonialists' education have little or no relevance, and therefore are incapacitated to make any meaningful contribution to the development of their indigenous societies. Wane advocates for all knowledge bases to be open to academic and intellectual contestation as a measure toward advancing solid knowledge base critical for to universal growth and human development and based on this reasoning, posits the urgent "*need for centering African research on African indigenous systems of thought as a way of privileging and documenting that which has been decentered in the Western discourse*" (Wane, 2011: p. 283). However, as a way of reclaiming African "*indigenous knowledges as alternative frameworks of historically denied values and worldviews*" (Wane, 2011: p. 283), it is still expedient to highlight the need

to also contest non-Western hegemonic knowledge bases that also imposed their civilizations on indigenous African ways of knowing. For instance the Arab colonization and cultural subjugation had happened earlier before Western incursions on Africa. And at present, some Arab cultures are wrongly subsumed under African indigenous heritages. Also Asian countries in another wave of capitalist expansion, are buying over lands and doubling as largest foreign investors in the continent, this paper argues that academic discourses had better taken a proactive step to contest the future economic and socio-cultural implications of this development on African indigenous systems.

There is urgent need for a shift towards locally planned and executed educational programs and policies that are based on the people's socio-cultural, environmental and experiential realities. For whatever the foreign imposed basic education priorities, it remains indisputable that the outcome would be nothing short of equipping Africans to be Europeans in Africa. These set of acculturated indigenous peoples are more likely to be potential migrants than those who would find their niche in the society. With the colonizer's ideologies, practices, and frames of reference, the grants and aids meted out to developmental education must be initiated from the recipients' local, experiential and environmental perspective, and foreign ideals of development must not be imposed on a people in the name of aids or grants. If therefore wrong educational doctrine is absolved at this point, it would be ideally difficult and realistically counter-productive to relearn later at a higher academic plane. This might account for why most products of the existing Arabic and Western school systems in Nigeria are hardly ever equipped to counter challenges emanating from their cultural, political and economic environments. Thus unable to fit into their socio-cultural and economic environment, and anticipating to find niches for themselves in the Middle-East and Europe—having been equipped with Euro-Arabic education—these youth seek the slightest opportunity to migrate. It is a historical verity that Islamic education was not formally established in Nigeria until the fourteenth century, but indigenous education was, and persists even today. This paper is therefore not arguing for a complete discountenance of Arabic cum Western educational policies and structures but insists that until these structures and systems established and sustained through colonization and neo-liberal projects begin to articulate and incorporate the indigenous Nigerian ways of knowing and knowledge dissemination which are both culturally and environmentally relevant, no significant success will be recorded in effectively reducing youth emigration from the country.

Colonization, Unequal Yoking in Unending Scheme: Do Neo-Colonial Projects in Countries of Origin Turn People (Specifically, Youth) into Migrant Subjects?

Anti-colonial framework is applied in this segment of the paper to first articulate the psycho-social damage caused by colonization on the minds of the colonized peoples, and draw its connection to youth migration. Second, to challenge imposed structures of foreign socio-political subjugation, and economic and cultural domination that hitherto perpetuate amputation of the colonized persons from themselves, their environment and culture while predisposing them to accept the colonizers ways of knowing as the only valid and legitimate way of knowing. Using African indigenous worldviews on the other hand both serves to contest imposed systems of knowing and foreign cul-

tural hegemonies that continues to deny African humanity and philosophies. In this paper, African indigenous worldviews will also help to situate the migrant experiences of African youth as children of African ancestry. I have to stress again in this work that many contemporary young Africans are unfortunate strangers to their indigenous ways of knowing, and have ignorantly come to incontestable belief that the current colonial systems of education, cultural practices, religion and spirituality, values systems, norms and mores of the societies in which they were born, were indeed indigenous to them, simply because they were born into such material environment. Suppression of African indigenous ways of knowing and the cultural heritages by the valorization and imposition of the colonizers knowledge systems and ideologies has left many Africans strangers in their motherland. Colonization brought about major severance (that Frantz Fanon termed amputation) of the colonized peoples first, from themselves, and then from their environment, culture and knowledge base. Thus alienated from their languages (Wa Thiong'O, 1986), knowledge of their past, and their environment (Sefa Dei, 2011; Lebakeng, 2010), and having lost touch with their identity and humanity, devoid of liberty and freedom as human beings (Fanon, 1967), and completely oblivious of the basis of their humanity, that is, spirituality (Sefa Dei, 2011; Wane, 2007), the colonizers' imposed ways of knowing became reified, essentialized and taken up as the way of salvation from the supposedly "primitive" entrapment the colonized knew before the dawn of Arab and European redemption reached them. After the partitioning, and subsequent colonization of Africa by Europe for instance, the West realized that the task was not just to rid the continent of its epistemological and ontological bases and cultural heritages but to also contest the legacies of earlier Arab colonization and cultural vitiation. In his *Black skin, White masks*, Frantz Fanon (1957) depicts his view on human nature which must not be encased or subjugated for it is human destiny to be free. The annexation of Africa, imposition of foreign rule and cultural suppression coupled with ruthless brutality meted out on the colonized bodies, was in Fanon's view a measure of "violence" that left significant damage on the psyche of the colonized; depriving them of their freedom, and liberty. Oppression occurred through alienation of the colonized subjects from the two aspect of being human; the force of violence leaves the African (Black) bodies with psychological trauma. According to Fanon, violence must answer to violence and since colonization is in itself violence, to regain their freedom and liberty, the colonized must use violence in two fronts: physically free themselves and their territories from external control of the colonizer, and perform the psychological cleansing to free the consciousness of the colonized indigenous peoples from alienation caused by colonization. To Fanon each of these tasks might require violence for "*decolonization is always a violent phenomenon*" (p. 99). It is the view of this paper that colonization is a hydra-headed monster that continues to thrive with any of the multiple heads if one is decapitated. Decolonization must not just assume "violence dimensions" but must be flexible and easily adaptive to combat all of its manifestations. For instance, African countries including Nigeria have gained political independence from the colonizers, but our academic policies, curriculum, and praxis have remained the relics of the colonizers' tools; and so are most constitutional references. This paper is therefore under pressure to ask, "*why can't independent African countries re-invent their indigenous socio-political, economic and cultural systems that would be suitable,*

adaptable and more germane to their environments?” Economically, our countries are still unequally yoked with the colonizers economic systems and processes. This later entanglement is worst than physical colonization because it is so subtle that globalization has defied definition in any known language. It is in this unhealthy political, economic and socio-cultural environment that African youth (and by extension youth of other previously colonized, developing countries) are born and raised. As offspring of the colonized Africans they are reliving the pains of colonization because the initial trauma and amputation was not healed. African epistemologies, cultural heritages and ways of knowing are not reinvented and reinstated. Instead the colonized (leaders) have in Memmi (1991)’s view become colonizers of their fellows. The youth thus see Western and Arabic education and culture as prerequisites for gaining entry into their former colonizers’ countries, and migration as a way out of the sorry state they have to leave behind for a supposedly “greener pasture” oversea. In other words, the problem of migration must not be blamed entirely on neo-colonial policies of the West, for African (specifically, Nigerian) leaders are complicit to the problem youth migration is likely to cause in the future development of the country, and African continent at large. Abebe Shimeles (2010) which examines the migration trends, patterns and determinants in Africa, affirms that the bulk of African emigrants have not only lost their ties altogether with their countries of origin. Thanks essentially to the perpetuation of neo-colonial projects in almost all the facets of the continent’s fifty two countries who albeit have gained political independence from the colonizers, are still largely ideologically, philosophically and economically in the yoke of Arabic, and Western colonization even as the new dawn of Asian invasion apprehends the dusks of the past. One of his salient arguments relevant to this paper is Abebe Shimeles’ skillful connection of past colonization to the patterns and flow of the present migration in and out of Africa. Unfortunately, Shimeles willfully ignores a reappraisal of how this unequal-yoking with the former colonizers has continued to perpetuate underdevelopment in African continent (Rodney, 1973; Senghor, 2001; Fanon, 1963; Mbembe, 2001). His argument that the “*Post independence Africa maintained close economic, political, cultural and linguistic relationships with former colonizers that continue to this day. Particularly France, Belgium and the United Kingdom cultivated special relationships with their former colonies in Africa that included privileges for travel, study and business opportunities*” (p. 3), obscures the subtle imbalance in power dynamics of the so called relationship and how the cultural and economic repression the West engages (see Adepoju, 1993) as strategies have continued to engender resource-drain in the continent through subtle pillaging of the continent’s abundant human and natural resources, symbolized in the unending emigration of skilled Africans youth to the industrialized West.

Conclusion

Given the urgent and critical need for data on the trend and experiences of youth currently involved in transnational migration, the thought patterns and available literature on the phenomenon appear to have left substantial lacunae in guiding our understanding of the problem by deferring the answers to some of the vital questions on the 21st century youth migration. The questions are: what motivates the youth to migrate and how have their migratory experiences been shaped by the prevalent

neocolonial projects and the existing transnational migration policies? Despite increasing cases of youth migration all over the world, their movements are still accounted for as part of family reunion. Emphasis in few of the literature is directing our gaze to a rather dangerous and surprising reality—that movement of young adults across international boundaries as independent migrants is intensifying (Wong, 2009; IOM, 2009; European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe, 2010). There is also apparent lack of consensus on the factors influencing people’s decision to migrate (Chua, 2003; Sassen, 1988; Adepoju, 1993; European Youth Centre, 2010; IOM, 2009). The diversity of views expressed by the various studies on motives of transnational migration will neither congeal to reliable data for serious policy decisions, nor will the paucity of information on the trends flow and patterns of youth migration. Granted, people from different regions of the world might have peculiar motives for migrating to settle oversea, and most of the works reviewed hid their shortcomings under the cover of inadequate data, specifically, as it affected migration from developing countries. As plausible as this claim may sound, the reality is that the world is facing a crisis of enormous dimension, if nothing is immediately done to address the increasing flow of young adults from developing South to the industrialized North. Both the sending and receiving nations will be adversely affected one way or the other (developmentally and logistically), and it is only through adopting empirically sound thought-posture on the matter that policy-enhancing information on youth migration would emerge. Throughout this paper, significant attempt is made to accentuate the often overlooked outcome of transnational migration which, to the sending and receiving nations, has both positive and negative reflexes, but could be more of a positive outcome if youth migration is properly managed by all the stake-holders. More so, the existing few literature on youth migration simply discussed the generic and fundamental issues of human rights protection and labor market prospects for migrant youth, thus placing the priorities of youth migrants at par with their adults’ counterpart. My view however is that some kind of distinction would naturally exist between the inspirations and motives of transnational migrant youth and their adult counterparts, no matter how insignificant and such underpinnings could be a pointer to the information on patterns of the rising trend, and flow of youth transnational migration.

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