

**GLOBALIZATION AND THE ECONOMICS OF AFRICANS' MIGRATION
TO CANADA 1960-2000**

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Abstract

Immigration has become a recurring decimal in the discourse of globalization and global political economy. Though contemporary migration has been fast tracked by the forces of globalization, globalization as a force has led to the continued peripheralization of the African continent, its people and its economy. The export of Africa's skilled and unskilled manpower to Canada has not yielded the desired dividends. This paper argues that the earlier wave of African migrants to Canada (1960 – 1979) have continued to fare well in their areas of core competence without impacting negatively, to a large extent, on their host country. However, the same cannot be said about the latter wave of African migrants 1979 – present, who are either unemployed or underemployed. To this end, their presence in their host communities has continued to exert undue pressure on Canadian finance and infrastructure. The paper also interrogates the HIV pandemic allegation against Africans and perhaps how that has also impacted on Ontario's funding for health issues and subsequent implications for immigration policy in Canada. The paper concludes that globalization in the context of African migrants has only served to benefit private capital and global international economy to the detriment of source countries, in this case Africa and the host country (Canada).

Introduction

Within the last twenty five years there has been the constant talk about the Post Cold War world. That is, we have defined the world by what it is not. However, there is a new international system that has clearly replaced that of the Cold War, it is globalization.¹

This is true because what the global arena is witnessing now is the integration of markets, finance and technologies in a way that is shrinking the world into a small size breaking barriers and enabling each of us to reach around the world farther, faster and cheaper than ever before. It is not just an economic trend: Like all previous international systems, it is directly or indirectly shaping the domestic politics, economic policies, immigration policies and foreign relations of virtually every nation.²

There are two paradigms that influence the concept of globalization. The first is the model of communication, which has subtly replaced a major driver of the last two centuries progress. The second model is the market. This model has replaced social cohesion, the idea that a democratic society must function in a unified way. Now everything operates according to the criteria of the “market” and the new values fundamental are windfall profits, efficiency and competitiveness.³

¹ Thomas Friedman, *Dueling Globalizations: Dos capital* in Robert M .Jackson (ed.), *Global Issues* (Connecticut, McGraw-Hill, 2003), p4.

² Ibid p.65

³ Ignacio, Ramonet, “A New Totalitarianism”, in Robert M. Jackson (ed.), *Global Issues*, p. 62.

Globalization as a distinct concept consist of all those forces that impel individuals, groups and institutions to engage in similar forms of behavior or to participate in more encompassing and coherent processes, organizations or systems. In fact any technological, social, economic or political developments that foster the expansion of interests and practice beyond established boundaries are both sources of and expression of the process of globalization. Developments in these realms that limit or reduce interest are both sources and expression of localizing processes. The processes of globalization are conceived as only capable of being worldwide in scale; integrating markets for goods, services, capitals, workers, knowledge and ideas.⁴

The diffusion that sustains the process of globalization is a century old dynamic but the difference is that the present era has achieved a level of economic development in which it is possible for innovations occurring in any sector of any country's economy to be instantaneously transferred to and adapted in any other country or sector.⁵

Historical Synopsis of Globalization – Highpoints

It is often thought that globalization is a recent phenomenon that was initiated in the West, especially the US, and is driven by the rapid technological advancement and the growth of multinational companies. The reality is far from the case. Globalization has a long history of multiple roots in different civilizations.

Four stages of globalization have been identified by A. G. Hopkins. The first is archaic globalization, which refers to the form of globalization facilitated by kings, kingdoms and religions in the 16th century. This linked a greater part of Eurasia and North Africa by trade,

⁴ Julie Howell, Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization, in Xiaohang He, Mohammed Elalee, Robert Engle, Chadwick Nehut and Ford Sadrieh,(eds.) *Living Ever Closer Together: Globalization debates* p.3

⁵ James Rosenau, "The Complexities and Contradictions of Globalization, in Robert M. Jackson (ed.) , *Global Issues*, p. 62.

through land and sea routes. Goods such as herbs, medicine and exotic goods were frequently moved from China and India to North Africa and Europe in exchange for silver, textiles and glasses. The second is referred to as Proto-globalization it began in 1600 and continued till 1850. This phase was marked by the rise of the West and decline of the East. During this stage trade expanded to the newly discovered America and Australia. It was during this stage that slave trade and colonialism originated. This stage witnessed tremendous growth in finance, service and manufacture.

The third phase is Modern globalization, it began in the middle of the 19th century and continued up until the middle of the 20th century. The phase is characterized by a tremendous improvement in communication and a massive increase in the volume of global trade, which was followed by unprecedented growth in intercontinental migration especially Europe to the United States. During this time European powers forged closer ties between Western and non-Western nations through imperialism.

The fourth stage is the Post-Colonial globalization stage. It started in the 1950s and continues till date. The stage was characterized by the rise of supra-national organizations, as power brokers, and a growing trend toward regional integrations. Links between the advanced economies of US, Europe and Japan grew stronger and multi-national companies emerged as the engines of growth and real linchpins in this phase of globalization. The stage also saw an unprecedented growth in communication and information technology that built bridges and made geographical boundaries less important. This development led to the development of the notion of the world been a “global village”.

A key feature of this latest stage of globalisation is growing interdependence.⁶ To this extent thus, contemporary globalization has several inherent inconsistencies:

- (a) Stimulating Western models into societies of the South.
- (b) Rushing the process of world unification, it encourages affirmation of individual characteristics.
- (c) Endowing international order with a center of power more structured than ever, it tends to intensify conflict.
- (d) Seeking to bring historical development to an end through the convergence theory.

To this extent globalization has deprived peripheral societies of the means to correct themselves. This vicious circle is, of course, related to a network of forces that is further nourished by strategic considerations and notably by the advantages from which the north benefits⁷ at the expense of the south.

Globalization and Migration Nexus

The growing development in technology has intensified human migration. Technology facilitates human migration in two ways. The internet for one has enabled people to create virtual communities. First, development of new technologies have dramatically reduced the cost of travel and made the time of travel faster and less stressful, for example, before the advent of modern planes, travel by ships took months from Europe to Sub-Sahara Africa .Today that journey could be covered in six hours. This development led to an increase in the number of people traveling abroad to explore opportunities elsewhere. Secondly, the emergence of Internet and wireless phones allow a growing number of people to maintain contact with their family and

⁶ Xiaohong He, et.al, *Globalization Issues*, p.7

⁷ Bertrand Badie, *The Imported State*, (California, Stanford University Press, 2000), p.2

loved ones in their home countries. This development aided migrants in overcoming culture shocks they often experience in their adopted countries and also serve as an opportunity to share information on prospective immigration opportunities.⁸ Acting on this information, the prospective immigrants, who often at times are friends or relatives of the immigrant make moves and join the earlier migrants in the supposed country of destination. The flow of contemporary migration has been from the global south to the north. Factors responsible are basically the push and pull factors.

Causes of International Migration: The theories-

There is no single well developed theory of international migration. However, five major approaches have been used to apprehend and comprehend migration. These approaches are offered by Sharon Stanton Russell. They are:

- (a) The Neo-Classical Economics Macro Theory – This view states that the major factor that drives migration is the geographic differences in supply and demand for labor in origin and destination countries. To the proponent of this approach, migration will not occur in the absence of these differentials because it is the labor markets, not any other market that drives international migration. To them their elimination will bring an end to international movements and that labour markets are the primary markets that induce movements. Government policy interventions affect migration by regulating or influencing labour markets in origin and destination countries.
- (b) The Neo-Classical Economics Micro Theory – This view focuses on the level of the individual rational actors who make decision to migrate based on the cost-benefit

⁸ James M. Henslin, *Sociology: A Down to Earth Approach*, (Boston; Allan Bacon, 1993) p. 97.

calculation that indicates a positive net return to movement. The approach argues that it is human capital characteristics that raise the potential benefits of migration, and individual social, or technological factors that lower costs that will lead to increased migration. Thus it is governments that influence migration through policies that affect income through development policies that raises incomes at the point of origin, decrease the probability of employment at destination or increase the costs of migration.

- (c) New Economics of Migration – They view migration as a family strategy to diversify sources of income, minimize risk to the household and overcome barriers to credit and capital. The model argues that international migration serves as a means to compensate for the absence or failure of certain types of markets in developing countries. In essence absence of social safety nets.
- (d) Dual Labor Market Theory – The theory states that demand for low-level workers in more developed economies is the critical factor shaping international migration. To avoid structural inflation that would result from raising entry wages of native workers, and to maintain labor as a variable factor of production, employers seek low wage migrants workers. The theory concludes that international migration is demand-based and initiated by recruitment policies of employers and governments in destination areas.
- (e) The World Systems Theory – The theory focuses on the structure of the world markets. It focuses on “penetration of capitalist economic relations into peripheral, non capitalist societies” which takes place through the concerted actions of neo colonial governments, multinational firms and national elites. They argued that international migration is

generated as land, raw materials and labor in their areas of origin are drawn into the world market and traditional systems are disrupted.⁹

Antecedents of African Migration

To understand African immigration to other countries, we will have to look at two basic factors that have been postulated by a number of scholars on African migration. First is the push factor. The push factor are things within the society that people want to escape from – poverty, lack of religious and political freedom, among a plethora of other factors. Second is the pull factor. These are magnets that draw people to a new land, such as a chance for higher wages, job opportunities, good living conditions etc..

Around the world the flow of immigration is from the less developed nations to the more industrialized nations. After “migrant path” are established, immigration often accelerated as networks of kins and friends become further magnets that attract more people from the same nation and even from the same villages. With the United States of America as the worlds’ number one choice for immigrants, Canada is next in line with its variegated immigration policy.¹⁰ Scholars are not agreed whether immigrants are a net contributor to or a drain on their host country where they are now settled. Some claim that the net results benefit the country. Part of the task of this paper is to unravel this issue.

Antecedents of International Migration

⁹ Donald P. Chimankire, African Migration: Causes, Consequences and Future Prospects and Policy Options, Paper presented at WIDER, United Nations University *Conference on Poverty, International Migration and Asylum* 7 – 18 September 2002 Helsinki, Finland. Pp 6-8.

¹⁰ James M. Henslin “Sociology: *A Down to Earth Approach* ”op.cit, p. 561.

Human migration is as old as human existence. People in all the areas of the world and in all ages have been moving from one area to another in pursuit of a better life.¹¹ For centuries, Europeans were immigrating to other countries. Beginning with the colonization in the 10th century, a large number of Europeans immigrated to their rich colonies in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, Africa and Hong Kong. Europe's role as a major sending partner compared with other continents was maintained up to 1970s. Only then did it join the US, Australia and Canada as a net intake continent compared with other parts of the world. In the same period, Latin America and Africa moved from being new importers of people to join Asia as net exporters. Thus from 1970s Europe and North America started to experience net immigration and Africa and Latin America, net emigration. Europe also leads the developed world league in annual registered immigration since 1984 – 1985 with an annual average of 0.8 – 0.9 million foreign residents allowed to settle in Western Europe and 100,000 – 150,000 in Canada. This conversion of Canada and European nations from a region of net emigration to one of major immigration in the course of a few decades is mainly a by product of their economic growth. In Canada access to foreign labor was a pre requisite for postwar economic expansion. Though the immigration policy of Canada favored permanent settlement while those of Europe were directly towards temporary stay for guest workers, the end result was the same. The presence of large immigrant communities, continued economic growth and rising living standards have made Canada and the North act as a pole of attraction for large segments of the population in less developed countries and regions.¹²

¹¹ Xiaohong He, op.cit, p. 146

¹² Jonas Widgren, "International Migration and Regional Stability" *Journal of International Affairs, The Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Chatham House, London,(RIIA) UK Vol. 66, 4, 1990. pp. 752-753.

Pattern and Trends of African Migration

The present population distribution of Africa by race, ethnic groups and culture, indicate that the continent has been, in the past, the theater of large population movements. In ancient times, there was an exchange across the Mediterranean Sea between North Africa (Carthage) and Italy (Rome). During the Middle Ages, the Arabs followed later by the Turks coming from the East , invaded North Africa and the coastal regions of East Africa. During the same period, the Fulanis, Tutsis, and Masai left the Nile Valley and moved towards the South. The import of this was that the people were involved in mass migration. Migration of individuals was not common. The bond a person had with his kinsmen or family was so strong that to be away from it was considered a punishment. However, at the end of the 16th century and during the 17th and 18th centuries, contacts were established between Africans and Europeans who built trade centers in some areas near the sea board. These trade centers very quickly became slave centers. Weakened by internecine wars, Africa easily became the prey of slave merchants. It is estimated that between 8 and 20 million slaves were shipped from Africa across the Atlantic to the Americas. The slave trade completely changed the demographic configuration in many parts of Africa.

Immediately after the slave trade, the process of colonization of the African continent by Western European powers started. The strong resistance by the Africans led to a number of wars that further encouraged the movement of the population. Subsequently there was the entrenchment of colonial powers through the establishment of administrative controls, civil wars ceased and their demographic distribution once again stabilized.

In the 1960s, most African states became independent with the last colony in Africa-South Africa achieving majority rule in 1995. The first development plans in Africa accentuated the existing disparities between urban areas, which benefited from a number of investments than rural areas, which were largely neglected. In some African countries, the most elementary freedoms were denied. This led to mass exodus of the peoples of Africa. The gap between the economic and social development of different regions within countries, and of different countries within and outside of the continent, has continued to widen over the years.¹³

Portrait of Contemporary Migration to Canada: Factors and Forces

The influence of cheaper travel cost, rapid communication and Internet services, the concept of New World Order as exemplified by the Structural Adjustment Program and the democratization projects have generated both negative and positive forces that have driven the unending desire for Africans to seek better life in North America.¹⁴ Thus in this regards, from the 1980s, when many African economies began to feel the strains and stress of the New World Order and debts crises, International monetary institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank came to their assistance. However, the assistance came in the form of loans that were accompanied by strict conditions. Part of the conditions were the deregulation of the market, withdrawal of government subsidies on essential foods and services, etc..¹⁵ All of these made the African environment hostile for the ordinary Africans. To this end, there was a massive

¹³ Donald P. Chimankire, African Migration; op.cit p. 9.

¹⁴ Mojubaolu O. Okome, "The Antimonies of Globalization, Causes and Consequences of Contemporary Africa Migration to the United States" in O. Vaughan et.al (ed.), *Globalization and Marginalization*, Ibadan, Sefer Books, 2005. p. 94.

¹⁵ John Ravenhill, "North-South Balance of Power" *Journal of International Affairs* p. 732.

recourse to migration to the developed countries, which had “saner” environments that were seen as conducive for individual growth and development. It is within this context that we examine African migration to Canada and the mutual impact it had on Africa and the North American country.

Immigration has been central to the historical production and reproduction of the Canadian nation since its inception. The nation was founded through the colonization of aboriginal peoples and the subjugation of their sovereignty. Along with this the immigration of European settlers (Preferred races), was critical for nation building and capitalist development. In the racialized project of nation building, immigration policies sought to strictly control and often halt the entry of third world immigrants, designating them as “non preferred races”. The state organized the provision of their labor to the economy but discouraged their permanent settlement. This overt racialization was maintained into the 1960s and the 1970s.¹⁶ The discrimination soon became less respectable and regulations were completely changed to establish, for the first time the comprehensive and transparent principles known as the “points system” governing the admission of immigrants.

Thus between 1981 and 1991 two-thirds of the immigrants who had migrated to Canada were of non-European racial origins, that is, Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans. This period coincided with the changes that information technology generated – the broadening of global awareness about better economic opportunities in the developed world and the economic recession in the third world. One impact of this immigration is that the three largest metropolitan areas of Canada that is, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver now became diversely multicultural

¹⁶Sunera Thobani, “Sponsoring Immigrant Women’s Inequality” in, *Canadian Women Studies journal*, Vol. 19. No. 3, 1999 .p.11.

communities¹⁷. Between 1991 and 2001, thirteen percent or 2.9m of the immigrants that came into Canada were of non-European descent. The most frequent origins were the Chinese and East Indians.¹⁸ Africa's figure to an appreciable extent was infinitesimal even in this age of globalization. In actual fact, it is difficult to determine the flow of migrants from Africa into Canada because of the poor statistical records. However, it is quite obvious that the contribution and impact of African migrants on their adopted country's economy and politics is quite negligible though at great cost to the continent. With the rising educational standards in the global south, brain drain has increased and aggravated the scarcity of experts indispensable for national economic and social development.¹⁹ We will come to this later.

In Canada, the Legislative Review Advisory Group in 1997 affirmed that the new migrants in Canada settled into local communities where they sought basic necessities, health and welfare services, education, employment as well as social, cultural and recreational opportunities. The federal government in partnership with the provinces incurred an annual welfare budget of an estimated \$200 million on defaulting sponsors and \$150million for refugee claimants. This is a serious drain on Canada's financial resources as these are avoidable costs if the new migrants and their sponsors (Financial guarantors) were sincere with Canadian immigration officials and regulations before setting out to Canada.²⁰ The costs incurred by the Canadian Government contrasts well with what obtained in the 1970s and early 1980s before the

¹⁷ Tom Kent, "Immigration Now: How to regain control and use it well" Ontario School of Policy Studies, 2001 pp. 2-3.

¹⁸ Major Releases, "Ethnic Diversity Survey, Canada Statistics Canada, *"The Daily"*, (Canada), September 29, 2003. P. 2.

¹⁹ Jonas Widgren, *International Migration and Regional Stability*. pp. 49- 50.

²⁰ The Federal government has been subsidizing the insincerity of new immigrants and their sponsors who willingly defaulted by not keeping their own side of the bargain. *A History of Federal Provincial Relations in Immigration*. p. 54.

contemporary globalization phenomenon. During this period African migrants to Canada were well to do people who had the ways and means to deal with the financial challenges they might encounter in Canada. To this extent this initial wave of migrants did not really bother the Canadian government for assistance on arrival in Canada. However, since the late 1980s the table has turned because of the high influx of economic migrants into Canada by historical standards, exceeding 200,000 annually since 1990.²¹

The HIV Pandemic among African Migrants in Canada

There are serious claims in Canada that Canadian HIV crisis is occasioned by the influx of immigrants and refugees from Africa and the Caribbean. Health Canada released its epidemiological data which showed that those infected with HIV are those from Africa and the Caribbean and they now form the fourth largest HIV group in Canada. The Canadian government was even indicted for having failed to protect these most marginalized communities. The federal government has not developed federal guidelines on how to deliver services to the HIV endemic areas. According to Health Canada, about 10 percent of those living with the disease are heterosexuals of African descent. In Ontario, Africans are the second largest group of people living with HIV. Financially, Health Canada has supported HIV funding projects to the tune of \$84.4 million. Consequently, the Canadian government has started refusing work and study permits to potential African immigrants who fail the HIV test. This is because of the excessive financial demands on Canadian health care system defined as needing more than

²¹ Derrick Thomas, The Social Welfare Implications of Immigrant Family Sponsorship default: An Analysis of Data from the Census metropolitan Area of Totonto, *Final Report*, July 1996, p. 5.

\$15,016 billion worth of publicly funded health care over five years.²² Constitutionally Canada's Federal Government sees the health needs of all Canadians as her responsibility hence the massive injection of public funds into that sector.

Immigrant Challenges and Pressure on Canada's Finance

According to Canadian Prime Minister, Paul Martin, in order to meet labor markets needs caused by an ageing population and low birth rates, Canada would need to attract and retain more immigrants. He concluded that by the year 2010, Canada's labor market growth will rely entirely on its immigrant population. Interestingly enough the new comers, Africans and Caribbeans, in Canada seem not to be doing very great, economically, if they are compared with those who arrived a few decades earlier in the 1970s and 80s.²³ Many of the newcomers in Canada, today, are either unemployed, underemployed and living in poverty. What is puzzling is that most African skilled migrants are underemployed. For example, it is estimated the over ten thousand engineers migrate to Toronto on a yearly basis overwhelming the support system. Of this number, about seventy percent are underemployed while the skills of these migrants have not translated into any healthy contribution to the diverse local economy.²⁴ To this end, these immigrants, a number of whom are skilled Africans, end up on welfare, thereby, straining the already lean purse of the municipal governments who bear 20% of the cost of welfare. For example the Peel region had to spend some \$10 million dollars annually in supporting refugee claimants since 1990.

²² Marina Jiminez, *Coming to Canada with dreams and HIV*, 2004, pp2-3

²³ R. Scott, *Toronto's Diversity: The Context*, 2000, p. 6.

²⁴ Sandra Lopez, "Immigration and Policy Issues", *Public Policy Forum* Ottawa, October 5, 2005 pp 1-2.

The pressure on the lean purse of the Canadian government has become so acute that there is a number of instances where the federal government has chosen to ignore migrants bills. This development has led to constant conflict between the federal government and provinces. In fact the federal government since 1995, under Harris cut down funding for small social agencies supporting immigrants by 20%. This showed that immigrant bills were taking their toll on Canadian finance.²⁵

Be that as it may, the Provinces and the Municipalities have continued to bear the enormous weight of fiscal downloading to promote and protect public good and the common interest of immigrants. In Toronto, for example, federal downsizing has created critical pressures on the financial capabilities of Toronto. Toronto a global city in a global economy for whom the immigrant settlement is a critical ingredient in that mix has had to look for an additional \$600 million annually to fund the cost of emergency shelter, social assistance and public health for the new comers. In addition since the mid 1990s change from Canadian Assistance Plan (CAP) to the Canadian Health and Social transfer and the accompanying decrease in federal transfers from Ontario, devolution has left Toronto with a \$175m pressure in the funding of social services. These cut backs impacted negatively on the socially disadvantaged and they have a disproportionately adverse impact on members of the city's immigrant communities.²⁶

It is important to note that there is a growing rate of inequality among immigrant and ethno-racial communities in employment, income earnings, education and poverty levels, which has been revealed by the 1991 – 1996 census data. The patterns of inequality and serious

²⁵ David Stein, *Toronto Star* June 7, 2001 “Hazel Wants Ottawa to Pay for Refugees”, June 7, 2001,

²⁶ R. Scott, *Toronto's Diversity: The Context 2000*, p. 7

economic hardship appear to be largely determined on the basis of race. For example, African blacks and people of Caribbean origins are the worst hit in this regard as unemployment rate in Toronto is highest among them.²⁷ Taking into cognizance the above picture, it won't be out of place to say that Canada's immigration policy for Africans has not been responsive to her national and local market needs while the African migrants have not been assisted adequately to maximize their skills and contributions to the economy of Canada. What all these shows is that labor migration from poor economies to rich economies does not in essence help poor economies to transform nor does it address the underlying weakness in socio-economic structure of rich economies. It is mainly profitable to private capital and international economies by removing national boundaries for labor. In Toronto for instance, on April 1, 2005, company owners and greater Toronto Home builders Association pressed Ottawa to regularize the papers of illegal immigrants who were critical to the supply of labour to meet the demand for housing in Canada. They are the back bone of the industry's labour supply.²⁸ Poor economies' loss of their meager supply of skilled and productive people is not compensated for by the often marginal gains acquired from the skills and remittance of the African immigrant.

To reinforce my argument of underemployment of Africans in the Canadian state which did not better the lot of the Canadian society, neither did it empower my friend economically (as much as it is a loss to the Nigerian state) is a friend's experience in Canada .

The young man, a talented Computer Engineer by training from a first generation Nigerian University worked with several Blue chip companies in Nigeria, the last of which was Bristol Helicopters in Lagos after which he latched on to the Canadian immigration

²⁷ Ibid, p6

²⁸ Paul Moloney, Ottawa tapped to help skilled illegal immigrants :Workers essential to Economy, April, 1.2005

programme. He filed his papers while on a short course to the United States of America. Within a year of filling his papers he was privileged to enter Canada with a permanent stay immigrant visa. Thus he abandoned the promising job at Bristol Helicopters to face the uncertainties in a new land where he heard that opportunities abounded. On settling down in Canada he could not get a job commensurate with his academic qualifications and experience. He first picked up a job in a local college as a computer teacher. Subsequently, after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the USA, my friend lost his job as Americans were beginning to leave the United States for Canada in search of safe havens and also jobs to sustain themselves. An American thus took my friend's job and my friend had to start prospecting for another job. In the course of his prospecting, his utility bills and other family bills were mounting. Thus he had to put aside his University Master's degree certificate and pick whatever job that could sustain him and his family. He did several jobs ranging from truck driver to newspaper distributor etc. All this while he was bidding his time for the mandatory three years it takes to get full Canadian citizenship to lapse. Once the three years lapsed he picked up his Canadian citizenship for himself and his family members. He now looked elsewhere for his career fulfillment. He sent his resume to another friend of his in the USA who helped him push his Resume and secured a job for him in the United States regulated jobs sector. No sooner had he secured the employment (and now a Canadian citizen) that he moved to the USA where he now works as a Software developer. Now he is doing well financially and career wise, can conveniently pay his bills very much unlike when he was in Canada when in fact at a point he lost his mother in law and could not afford to fund his wife's trip to Nigeria, talk less of him accompanying her to Nigeria for the burial.²⁹ Using his case as a classic example of educated African migrants in Canada, contemporary

²⁹ Personal correspondence with Mr Kawodele Adabale, Adult, A Nigerian professional resident in the United States of America June 22, 2007

migration of Africans to Canada has marginally benefitted the Canadian state. The migrant has not benefited economically from Canada and the African states have not benefited from the skills of these migrants as they were lost to emigration. What is clear, however, is that a number of African migrant to Canada are using that nation as a spring board to jet into the United States where migrant policy seems to be more suitable.

African states are also robbed of the benefits that should accrue from migrant workers. In most cases migrants remitted a sizeable portion of their earnings to their home country. According to the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Africa recorded remittance flows worth over thirty-nine billion dollars. The three leading African remittance states are Morocco (\$6.4.bn), Algeria (\$5.399 bn) and Nigeria (\$5.397 bn) in 2006. On continental basis Asia received the largest share of the remittances worth over \$114billion, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean with \$68billion, Eastern Europe with \$51billion and Africa with \$39billion and the Near East with \$29billion. This remittances totaling over \$300billion were sent home by some 150million migrant workers in 2006.³⁰ When this figure is juxtaposed with migrant workers from other continents it is obvious that Africa benefited least from its migrant population. Much more importantly these figures to some extent underscore the relatively marginal impact of African migrant workers in their host countries (Canada inclusive) when placed side by side with remittances of migrant workers from other continents, India \$24.5billion and Mexico \$24.2billion, both jointly surpassed that of the whole African continent.³¹

³⁰ *The Punch on Saturday*, (Lagos), 20 October, 2007 p. 13

³¹ Ibid

Impact of Emigration on Africa: The Brain Drain Phenomenon

Since the 1940s, Africa has experienced strong political, economic, and social influence from the West and North America. This influence created a new outlook in which many Africans saw these countries as superior nations. The integration of economies around the world through the trade and financial flows in the 1980s fast tracked the movement of people and knowledge across international borders.

In recent times, the unreasonable level of low wages paid to African professionals in Africa and the breakdown of infrastructures have been the primary causes of brain drain. Statistically, Africa has lost over one-third of its skilled professionals within the past three decades. In the US alone there is an estimated one hundred thousand highly educated Africans. The contradiction is that African states spend four billion dollars annually to recruit and pay the over one hundred thousand expatriate workers.³²

The brain drain challenge has contributed immensely to Africa's growing marginalization in the global economy.³³ If these Africans in Canada and elsewhere had remained in the continent, they would have assisted the continent in engendering economic take-off. No doubt, remittances to Africa can drive some level of development if the investment climate in Africa is improved upon. Governmental authorities need to checkmate problems such as poor infrastructure, corruption, lack of access to credit facilities, lack of entrepreneurial skills and disincentives to savings. Until this is done can we expect remittances to help solve economic problems in Africa.

³² Akinola Gbolahan, "Brain Drain Phenomenon in Nigeria: 1970 – 1998, problems and Prospects," *B.A Long Essay*, Department of History and International Studies, Babcock University, 2004. p. 18.

³³ Ike Udogu, *African Development and the Immigration of its Intelligentsia, An Overview*

IFAD and IDB'S claims that one third of these remittances to Africa flow to rural areas and that they are mostly used for basic necessities such as food and medicines³⁴ can be faulted. This is because most of the recipients of the remittances in Nigeria live in urban areas. Also majority of these remittances go into productive activities such as cottage industries, transport services, purchase and sale of commodities, and educational pursuit.

Quite frankly there is more to development than remittances. It is not money that drives development but knowledge, initiative and purposeful leadership. That is why Africa needs the return of her intelligentsia to drive development. Unless this is done she would be further marginalized in the international division of labour and this would lead to a prolongation and intensification of poverty in the continent in this age of economic globalisation³⁵

Conclusion

African migration is an important phenomenon in the world's global economy. The earlier wave of migrants from Africa to Canada between 1960 and 1979 had established themselves and were highly independent. On their arrival most of them functioned and continued to function in their areas of core competence as they have distinguished themselves in their various fields. However this cannot be said for the latter (from the early eighties) wave of African migrants in Canada whose movement have been fast tracked by globalization. In the provinces that are primarily occupied by African migrants – Toronto, Ontario and Montreal, most migrants are unemployed and at best underemployed. In essence remittances from Africans in Canada to their countries of origin have not significantly improved development prospects of their home countries. What is clear is that Africa suffers a major brain drain phenomenon as most of her brightest are leaving

³⁴ *The Punch on Saturday*, (Lagos), 20 October, 2007, p. 13. See also Kathleen Newland, Migration as a factor in Development and poverty reduction, (USA: Migration policy Institute), June, 2003, pp35-36

the continent in droves in search of "greener pastures" in Canada through the "points system" How ever on getting to Canada they become unemployed or underemployed also because of subtle racial activities thus becoming little to assist the Provinces financial burdens on the provinces since the federal government does little to assist the Provinces with problems created by high migrant population. On the long run African migrants who eventually pick up Canadian citizenship inevitably relocate to the United States or some other countries in the North. Be that as it may, it is the private sector of the economy and international economy that has benefited tremendously from the activities and presence of African migrants in Canada.

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