A Critical Analysis of Migration in ABC Duruaku's a Mirage for a Dream and the Nigerian Experience

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Abstract

Until recent past, migration which is often a palatable means of development, assimilation, exposure, wealth creation between a state and her citizen has ironically positioned as menace ridiculing the development of the Nigerian space in the 21st century. This is fathomed through the consistent repatriation, killings, importation of deadly virus and diseases, destruction of life and properties, and heinous prison sentences of Nigerian nationals in other nations of the world as a result of crime-related activities. These crimes ranges from drug trafficking, armed robbery, human trafficking, and other malicious activities that ridicules the identity of the country as portrayed in ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage for a Dream*. This consistent migration by Nigerians into other countries for greener pasture is often as a result of an increase in the level of corruption that has unequivocally affected her fronts – economically, politically socially, and otherwise. The gargantuan effect of this is seen in the consistent increase in poverty, lack of job opportunities, suffering, death, sickness, and pain of the people and underdevelopment to the nation. This cankerworm has thus prompted the citizenries to seek greener pasture in other nations of the world, thereby engaging in any malicious activities. This issue has therefore created impetus for creative portraiture in dramatic and argumentative representations by dramatist and critics. Thus, with content analytical methodology, this study therefore investigates how ABC Duruaku attempts to establish the cause and effect of migration on the Nigerian space using the instrument of drama. The effect of it will create positive change amongst Nigerians, thus, create change in their society. The study therefore recommends that maximum attention be made against corrupt practices as that would create massive development in the Nigerian space.

Keywords: *Critical analysis, Effect, Migration, A mirage for a dream, Nigerian experience.*

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Background to the Study

Migration, from past till present is considered as a palatable means of development, assimilation, exposure, wealth creation between a state and her citizen. As a way of definition and understanding, migration according to Adewale (2005), in Edith (2016) "is the movement of people from one geographical region to another for advancement either in knowledge, technology, wealth or other purposes which may be on a temporary or permanent basis. Migration is broadly understood as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. On the other words, migration may be defined as a form of relocation diffusion (the spread of people, ideas, innovations, behaviours, from one place to another), involving permanent moves to new locations (Hugh and Drake, 2007).

More so, the reasons that people migrate are determined by push and pull factors, which are forces that either induce people to move to a new location, or oblige to leave old residences. These could be economic, political, cultural, and environmental. More so, migration may as well be described as a way to move from one place to another in order to live and work (Cantle, 2005). Movement of people from their home to another city, state or country for a job, shelter or some other reasons is called migration. It can as well be known as the movement of people from rural areas to urban areas. This movement according to Lee (1966) has increased in past few years in most countries of the world, thus has contributed economically. On the economic development as a major importance of Migration as noted by Lee, Card & Weber (2010) later noted that "international migration all over the world has been playing important roles in the respective economies". They further stated that "cross-border migration is among the strong factors that are driving globalization in recent decades".

The patterns of this movement over the years according to them have been changing the size, structure and efficiency of labour markets, culture, political situations, and people in many countries across the globe. Some 215 million people or 3 percent of the world's population are believed to live outside their countries of birth (United Nations 2009). This explains that migration is, first and foremost, a normal human activity. Human beings have always moved from 'one country, locality, [and] place of residence to settle in another'. We tend to migrate from the homes of our families or guardians into our own homes. We migrate between regions, cities and towns. And human also migrate between countries (Castle & Davidson, 2014).

Furthermore, human migration is the movement of people from one place to another with the intentions of settling, permanently or temporarily at a new location (geographic region). The movement is often over long distances and from one country to another, but internal migration is also possible; indeed, this is the dominant form globally (Wikipedia, 2020). People may migrate as individuals, in family units or in large groups. There are four major forms of migration: invasion, conquest, colonization and immigration. They may as well migrate voluntarily or involuntarily. The distinction between involuntary (fleeing political conflict or natural disaster) and voluntary migration (economic or labor migration) is difficult to make and partially subjective, as the motivators for migration are often correlated (Butschek & Walter, 2014).

Notably, the World Bank (2014) estimated that, as of 2010, 16.3 million or 7.6% of migrants qualified as refugees. This number grew to 19.5 million by 2014 (comprising approximately 7.9% of the total number of migrants, based on the figure recorded in 2013). At levels of roughly 3 percent the share of migrants among the world population has remained remarkably constant over the last 5 decades. Both distinctly differs from Nomadic movement. Clearly, nomadic movements are normally not regarded as migrations, as the movement is generally seasonal, there is no intention to settle in the new place, and only a few people have retained this form of lifestyle in modern times. Temporary movement for the purpose of travel, tourism, pilgrimages, or the commute is also not regarded as migration, in the absence of an intention to live and settle in the visited places (Cangario, 2014; Hugh & Drake, 2007).

In the Nigerian space, migration of people into other countries is alarming as over 80% of its populace wishes to leave the country for other countries which they believed are already developed. Since the earliest times, Nigerians have been on the move. Some move in search of work or economic opportunities, to join family or to study. Others move to escape conflict persecution terrorism or human right violations. Still, others move in response to the adverse effects of climate change, natural disasters, or other environmental factors (United Nations, 2019). This distinctly explains that so many fundamental reasons prompt them into leaving their native country in pursuit of greener pasture in the developed countries, thus, wishes to naturalize in these countries once they are out of their native country. Most of these reasons generally include lack of employment opportunity, educational opportunities, lack of social safety nets, poor governance; corruption, lack of social justice, equity, and airplay, among others.

Extensively, youth unemployment in Nigeria is 52.7% which could be one of the push factors for illegal migration among this vulnerable group (Hugh & Drake, 2007).While others are of the opinion that Employment opportunities are the most common reason due to which people migrate. Elaborately, there are an estimated one (1) billion migrants in the world today and demographic imbalances, economic inequality, increased globalization, political instability and climatic changes all forecast further episodes of large-scale migration in the coming decades. As an important force of development in sending and destination regions, migration forms a top-priority issue in the global policy debate. To assess the impact of future migrant flows and to develop appropriate policies to manage them, knowledge of their size, composition and distribution is crucial. There are, however, inherent difficulties in predicting the scale and dispersion of the ensuing migrant flows. Empirical analyses are typically subject to binding data constraints, inducing a reliance on a (very) coarse spatial and temporal aggregation of the data. The first and second objective of AMIREG, then, grouped in Work Package one of the project, are to provide a deeper understanding of the root causes of migration with a specific focus on the role of financial incentives and constraints; and to identify the effectiveness of and scope for regional agreements to ease mobility responses to such geo-localized shocks (Hugh & Drake, 2007).These causes are painstakingly raised in ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage for a Dream* which forms the thrust of the study.

Evereth Lee's Push and Pull Factor Migration Theory

Push-Pull theory propounded by Evereth Lee (1966) provides the mould with which this paper is shaped, which, when properly harnessed, would provide guides required towards grasping in a lucid way the cause and effect of migration. When mastered and applied, the push-pull theory becomes a model of fathoming patterns of mutual communication between the state and its nationals. In geographical terms, the push-pull factors are those that drive people away from a place and draw people to a new location. A combination of push-pull factors helps determine migration or immigration of particular populations from one land to another. On isolation note, push factors according to Lee are often forceful, demanding that a certain person or group of people leave one country for another, or at least giving that person or people strong reasons to want to move—either because of a threat of violence or the loss of financial security. Pull factors, on the other hand, are often the positive aspects of a different country that encourage people to migrate in order to seek a better life. While it may seem that push and pull factors are diametrically opposed, they both come into play when a population or person is considering migrating to a new location.

Against this backdrop, Lee (1966) specified that "any number of detrimental factors can be considered push factors, which essentially force a population or person from one country to seek refuge in another country". He went further to note that "conditions that drive people to leave their homes can include a sub-standard level of living, food, land or job scarcity, famine or drought, political or religious persecution, pollution, or even natural disasters. Under the worst circumstances, it may be difficult for a person or group to pick and choose a destination—speed out is more important than selecting the best option for relocation". Still, he noted that "although not all push factors require a person to leave a country, the conditions that contribute to a person leaving are often so dire that if they do not choose to leave, they will suffer financially, emotionally, or physically".

Furthermore, Angelina and Blagojce (2012) write that "pull factors according to Evereth Lee are those factors in the destination country that attract the individual or group to leave their home or country. Those factors are known as place utility, which is the desirability of a place that attracts people. Better economic opportunities, more jobs, and the promise of a better life often pull people into new locations. Furthermore, Blagojce writes that "globalization, economic crises, political instability, conflicts, wars, ethnic cleanings, social inequality, market economy, discrimination, and the wider processes of transformation, especially in the last ten years were and still are the main reasons for an even bigger wave of migration". He further noted that "having such a suitable ground, trafficking in human beings became an important player in the world of suffering, money and crime". He finalized by stating that "the theory of push and pull factors makes a synthesis of conditions that exist in the two 'worlds'-the poor and the rich countries".

In a nutshell, Sometimes individuals have ideas and perceptions about places that are not necessarily correct, but are strong pull factors for that individual(Lee, 1966). As people grow older and retire, many look for places with warm weather, peaceful and comfortable locations

to spend their retirement after a lifetime of hard work and savings. Such ideal places are pull factors too. Very often, people consider and prefer opportunities closer to their location than similar opportunities farther away. In the same vein, people often like to move to places with better cultural, political, climatic and general terrain in closer locations than locations farther away. It is rare to find people move over very long distances to settle in places that they have little knowledge of.

Conclusively, the research employs the push-pull factor theory because it interrogates the root causes and possible effects of migration on the Nigerian space in the 21st century as portrayed in ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage for a Dream*.

Methodology

This research work employs the case study and content analysis research approaches of the qualitative research method. It involves explaining the issue, describing, analyzing and interpreting data on the bases of cause and effect of migration as portrayed in ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage for a Dream.* It is qualitative because it deals with the analysis by a notable Nigerian playwright, and descriptive because it involves the use of ideas to describe and analyze the issue of migration within the play contexts. To achieve this, the study employs the primary and secondary sources. The primary source is the play text and the researchers' idea concerning the cause and effect of migration in Nigeria, while the secondary source includes materials from the institutional publications, articles, journals, text books, internets, research materials, amongst others.

Possible Causes of Migration in Nigeria

Many reasons may prompt one to migrate to other countries. The reasons are fundamental such as they are prevalent in the Nigerian space in the 21st century. Against this backdrop, Oluwafunmiso (2014) writes that "the poor state of the Nigerian economy limits the extent of infrastructural development in the area; these are characterized by poor roads, poor water supply, poor health facilities etc., contributes to the high rate of migration in the country". On the other hand, most towns and cities have a better share of such facilities and better job opportunities. Oluwafunmiso further asserts that "as a result of this, inequality in the availability of resources and infrastructures are push and pull factors for the youths. This coupled with increasing population heighten food insecurity and poverty because food supply and employment opportunities will not match the increasing demand.

Population growth leads to an increased pressure on existing social infrastructures and poverty and food insecurity in the poor areas. The reflections of poverty in the rural areas include under employment of labor and over use of resources particularly land. This enforces a vicious cycle of low income-low productivity-low resources which pushes individuals or whole families to migrate. On the other hand, Oluwafunmiso (2014) writes that "lack of opportunities, better education; construction of dams, globalization, natural disaster (flood and drought) and sometimes crop failure forced villagers to migrate to cities". The rate of migration in the Nigerian space is one of the highest in the African continent and is fueled by population growth and the adverse economic and political situation in the country.

Conclusively, Nigeria space in the 21ˢᵗ century continues to experience high internal and external migration due to the size of its population, economic climate, as well as its porous borders.

Negative Effects of Migration to the Nigerian Economy
Migration is a decision that impacts the welfare of the household, the home community, and in the end the whole economy in various ways, thus creates massive change of the people and development to the nation. The welfare implications of migration on the origin country are often, though not always, sizeable and positive. While migration has economic, social, and cultural implications for the sending and host societies, the negative effect most felt on the society is often undermined. Thus, its negative effects on the Nigerian space in the 21ˢᵗ century include:

1. **Naturalization:** Naturalization is fervently a blow on the economy of a developing society where knowledgeable nationals with technical abilities abandon their native country for other countries. They prefer using their technical abilities to develop other countries while their native countries are left unattended. Due to the economic and political dichotomy, most Nigerian nationals prefers to naturalize in most of the developed countries that their political, economic and way of life are properly organized and maintained.

2. **Ridiculed identity:** Due to the consistent crimes which ranges from drug trafficking, cyber thief, armed robbery, human trafficking, and other malicious activities engaged in by most Nigerian nationals in most developed countries, the Nigerian identity is unequivocally ridiculed that most countries nationals resist indulging in business activities with Nigerians. They believe that all Nigerians despite their religious inclinations are corrupt, thus proximity in business transaction is a big risk. Often times, most Nigerian nationalist are repatriated back to the country while most are meant to serve jail sentences and some are killed. Furthermore, the rate at which Nigerians dies in Mediterranean Sea and Sahara Desert on daily, weekly, monthly and yearly bases while trying to migrate to European nations through seas and land illegally, shows how desperate and unorganized the Nigerians are, thus, such oblivion acts also ridicules the identity of the Nigerian space.

3. **Importation of deadly virus and diseases:** It is plausible to deduce that migrants often imports deadly viruses and diseases from European countries into the Nigerian society. Evidence of this is seen in the importation of the deadly Corvid-19 virus by some Nigerian migrants who returned to the country when the issue of the Corona Virus pandemic was ravaging the world and lots of death cases were daily reported all over the world. In a nutshell, the effect of the Corvid-19 virus pandemic on the Nigerian economy was alarming as it affects the fronts of the Nigerian system in all ramifications. Schools, markets, tertiary institutions, amusement parks, religious activities, sports activities, and other social gatherings were spontaneously put to a hold as citizens in all class of life save the military, police, civil defense, and medical practitioners were requested to stay at home to curtail the rapid spread of the pandemic.

Synopsis of *a Mirage for a Dream* by ABC Duruaku

The play *A Mirage for a Dream* revolves around Chimdi, an ambitious, stubborn, greedy, overzealous, illiterate, and a motor park tout who due to his quest of making quick money, decides to travel through the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea to Europe, being mindful of the risks involve. He considers himself a failure after his wealthy father died when he was in class four and his two stepmothers made away with all his father's properties leaving little or nothing for his handicapped mother, the junior wife. This brought about his suffering that made him drop out from primary school and choose to be a conductor for his close uncle; thereafter, a motor park tout. Chimdi believed that marrying an educated woman would solve his illiteracy and poverty issues, yet, Berna, the educated wife turned out to be a torn in his life. He strives painstakingly towards satisfying her in all ramifications.

The major action in the play started when Chimdi, saw a passenger who he later discovered was Mike, his primary school classmate who is now a barrister and also running for State House of Assembly position. After lengthy discussion between Mike and Chimdi, Mike vehemently requested that Chimdi should visit him in his office when he eventually wins the election as a member, State House of Assembly. Few months on, the relationship between Chimdi and Mike grew and Chimdi was persuaded to enroll in an adult class for his Primary Six Common Entrance Examinations, In order to fit in the present terrain, thus capable of managing the new bus that he planned buying for him. To achieve this, Mike handed Chimdi to Charlie, his Personal Assistant.

Not quite long after the reunion between Mike and Chimdi, Charlie revealed to Chimdi how he moved on to Europe after leaving Barrister Mike and the magnificent chances of meeting up at Europe. Chimdi, overwhelmed by the ecstasy of Charlie's exposure and sudden wealth, acclaimed, demanding further explanation on the procedure of traveling to Europe. Fulfilled by the explanation, Chimdi abandons the new bus that Barrister Mike bought for him for commercial purpose as a mark of his academic improvement. He quickly related his traveling intention to his pregnant wife Berna after luring her into borrowing the sum of Two Hundred Thousand naira from Egondu, her elder sister in order to augment the amount needed for the traveling. Observing the nature of Chimdi's traveling intention, Berna with the support of Egondu, queried Chimdi, demanding he should have a rethink regarding his copious intentions, requesting that most people with such quest, never gets to Europe nor returns to tell the outcome. Chimdi, overzealous of the frivolities in Europe succeeded in eloping with Obinali and Ginger through Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea for Europe after convincing Mike into lending him money for his wife's business. At the Sahara desert, due to exhaustion, hunger, and dehydration, Chimdi and one of the travelers, who were already left behind by the other travelers, where captured, killed and their lungs harvested by human parts harvesters from Libya.

The play comes to conclusion as Chimdi's village people in their separate groups, molested, abused and manhandled Berna over the death of Chimdi, accusing her of being responsible for Chimdi's death due to her consistent nagging and demands which prompted Chimdi to elope to Europe through illegal Sahara traffic.

Mirage for a Dream and theme of Migration in Nigeria

The play *A Mirage for a Dream* is a microcosm of the macrocosm of the Nigerian space because it interrogates the issue of migration such as it is prevalent in the Nigerian space in the 21ˢᵗ century. It heightens the causes of migration in the Nigerian space which ranges from globalization, economic crises, political instability, conflicts, wars, ethnic cleanings, social inequality, market economy, discrimination, and the wider processes of transformation which defines the thrust of the study. These menaces creates an avenue for the continuous eloping of Nigerians into European countries in search of wealth. Example of this is seen in the play as characters such as Chimdi, Charlie, Ginger, and Obinali who represents most Nigerian youths decided to elope to Europe through deadly routes. Few of these youths such as Charlie, Ginger, and Obinali succeeded the acrobatic nature of the illegal Sahara traffic while most youths such as Chimdi have died and their body parts are harvested by human part harvesters due to dehydration, fatigue, and hunger.

These youths decide to migrate because they believed that the government has pragmatically failed them in many fronts-economically, politically, socially and otherwise. Example of this is seen in the play as Chimdi, a brilliant boy then in the primary school that unequivocally turned illiterate due to his inability of furthering his educational process due to his father's death. His handicapped mother was unable to assist in his education and the government is far to lend a helping hand. This made him to be unable to read and fill the visitor's form that was handed to him by Ginger, Barrister Mike's confidential secretary, the day he came looking for Barrister Mike.

The humdrum nature of the society of the play aggravated Chimdi's inquisition of insisting of traveling out of the country. Such as Chimdi, most Nigerians are presently languishing in jails of most European countries; some are killed, while most are deported on daily bases after losing their possessions and businesses to the government of these countries, because they believed that most Nigerians engaged in heinous activities such as drug trafficking, cyber crime, armed robbery, human trafficking, and other malicious activities. The Xenophobic issue against Nigerians residing in South Africa and the heinous killings of Nigerians in Libya and other countries of the world, most especially North African countries is a plausible example. Thousands of Nigerians are reported to have died in the Mediterranean Sea and the Saharan Desert as they strive to migrate to European countries. On like Chimdi whose body was returned to his family except his lung and kidney, most Nigerian migrants who toll the route of Chimdi, die in prisons of most foreign countries and most of them are killed by human harvesters in the Sahara Desert. Their remains are either returned or illegally disposed after most of their body parts such as lung and kidney are harvested for medical examinations.

Conclusion of Findings/Recommendations

From the findings, it is plausible to deduce categorically that the cause and effect of migration in the Nigerian space in the 21ˢᵗ century is alarming, thus, threatening the peace, tranquility and development of the country. From the same study, it is fathomed that the major cause of migration in the Nigerian system includes poverty, hunger, sickness, diseases, pain, suffering,

and death, caused by lack of job opportunities due to high level of corruption that is masterminded by corrupt politicians. These politicians in the federal, state, and the local government strata, occupying positions such as the head of the executive arm, members of the national assemblies, state house of assembly, local government chairman, ambassador, political party leaders, ministers and every other who are one way or the other connected to the aforementioned actors. These corrupt politicians oppressed and repressed the people who they lead, thereby abusing the mandate confined in them by their people. They have made the system unbearable that the cost of living is pragmatically on the increased. They prefer a haphazard development which in a short while would increase in the level of pain, suffering, death and sickness of the people and underdevelopment to the nation. They loot, embezzle and steal public funds meant for national and societal development for their egocentric aim. These corrupt politicians even prefer sending the looted money into foreign banks with the intension of securing the future of their 10th generations to come. They also prefer owning flamboyant businesses in foreign countries which copiously develops the countries while their native country, presently rated as the poverty capital of the world by European Union is wallowing in underdevelopment, poverty, lack of employment, hunger, suffering, agony, anguish, penury and pain.

This oblivious reason prompts most skill and unskilled Nigerian youths to resort into traveling through the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara Desert to countries in Europe despite the heinous risks involve. Once they succeed arriving Europe, they eventually engaged in malicious activities which include drug trafficking, armed robbery, prostitution, drug abuse, and other social vices that negatively affect the society of the country, thus ridiculing the image of their native country. While the skill and intelligent ones prefers to naturalize and develop these countries while their native country Nigeria is lagging behind in advanced technology, modernization, creativity and technical knowhow. Despite these meticulous effects of migration on the Nigerian society in many fronts – economically, politically, socially and otherwise, the Nigerian government is yet to proffer plausible solutions towards curtailing the negative effect of massive migration and immigration, as the issue is unequivocally increasing by the day.

It is against this backdrop that the study distinctly insists that the push and pull factors that causes migration in the Nigerian society can be curbed if maximum attention towards rehabilitating the laws against corrupt practices and heinous punishment meted against offenders are considered top priority. Next is that the Nigerian government should pay attention towards solving the issues of poverty, hunger, pain, suffering, and sickness by provided facilities which would enhance massive development in the Nigerian space. Lastly, the Nigerian security should be straightened and encouraged to be able to manage the boarders which is presently considered dilapidating.

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