

A Textual Discourse of Migration and Human Trafficking in ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage For A Dream*

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Abstract

Until recent time, Migration, a veritable tool for industrial enhancement, economic development, political inclination, scientific and technological discoveries, and social obligations has ironical positions, whose other view, geared by exploitation from mid-twentieth century to twenty-first century, somewhat affects the centuries before them. This is made possible through its inclusion of illicit transactions, such as labour and commercial sexual exploitation, human trafficking, forced labour, child soldiers, drug trafficking, domestic servitude, and the removal of organs or tissue for sale as portrayed in ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage for a Dream*. This menace is meticulously alarming especially in the Nigerian state in the 21st century. This cankerworm, caused by corruption, poverty, weak governmental system and unemployment ultimately triggered malicious activities like prostitution, armed robbery, kidnapping, incessant killings, and rape, thus, increased pain, suffering, sickness and death among the people and ridicules the identity of the Nigerian nation, thereafter, threatens its existence as a sovereign state. Amongst the major findings is that human trafficking has created a lot of creative punches and dramatic representations by critics and dramatists over the years, yet the issue is heinously prevalent. The study therefore aims at interrogating the connection between migration and human trafficking in the Nigerian society, as portrayed in ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage for a Dream*. To achieve this, General System Theory and Content Analytical Methodology are employed. The study therefore recommends the establishment of an agency to monitor all cases of migration and human trafficking in the Nigerian state.

Keywords: *Textual Discourse, Migration, Human Trafficking, A Mirage for a Dream*

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Background to the Study

Until recent time, Migration, a veritable tool for industrial enhancement, economic development, political inclination, scientific and technological discoveries, and social obligations has ironical positions, whose other view, geared by exploitation from mid-twentieth century to twenty-first century, somewhat portray a contradiction to the positive efforts of the centuries before them. This adventurous tendency, metamorphosed through illicit transactions, such as forced marriage, labour and commercial sexual exploitation, human trafficking, forced labour, child soldiers, drug trafficking, domestic servitude, and the removal of organs or tissue for sale has thus ridiculed the pragmatic and holistic nature which it portrays.

For instance, the sexual exploitation of men, women and children through sex trafficking continues to occur in the United States and the globe at an increasing rate (Stacey, 2017). Despite the fact and misconceptions that sex trafficking requires transportation across state or country borders, the majority of victims are domestically trafficked within their own country by persons of the same nationality and locality (Stacey, 2017, quoting Shelley, 2010 and U. S. Department of State, 2009). This statement clarified the National Healthier Scotland (2009) conclusion that “human trafficking is shameful and abhorrent violation of human rights”.

While historically there have been inconsistencies and disagreements regarding the definition of human trafficking among politicians, practitioners, and scholars (USDHHS 2011, Quoting Laczko, 2003 ^Richard, 1999). But the legal definition of human trafficking set forth in the Trafficking Victim Protection Act of 2000 as used in USDHHS (2012) is used for this study. In the TVPA, Congress according to USDHS defines severe forms of trafficking in persons as>

- a. Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age , or
- b. The recruitment, harbouring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labour or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, personage, debt bondage, or slavery.

It was to this definition of human trafficking that World Health Organization (2008) also noted that “the widespread contemporary exploitation of men, women and children is unacceptable to people of conscience the world over, thus, the use of deception, coercion and abduction to enslave people into situations of commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour or domestic servitude is an affront to all civilized societies”. The testimony given to the enquiry by people trafficked in and across the country revealed horrific cases of prolong abuse (Omotere, 2011).

The system of control exercised by traffickers is maintained through intimidation, threats, and violence. Although some victims are held in a state of captivity, under lock and key, others have some freedom of movement because of the psychological hold exerted by the traffickers. Some are subjected to horrific levels of violence and abuse (Omotere, 2011). By way of calculation, Stacey (2017) avers that “however, the International Labour Organization (n.d.) estimates 27 million people become trafficked annually-4.5 million of whom are victims of forced sexual exploitation. Children and adolescents according to Stacey are exceptionally vulnerable to forced entry into sex trade.

More so, migration ultimately plays a central role in human trafficking and in the spatial dynamics of mobile populations, and is largely distinct in both form and function from the within-population mixing arising from postnatal dispersal and from the interconnect movements characteristic of met populations (USDHHS (2011)). For the public and for many biologists, the word migration evokes visions of “heroic” movements of whole populations over long distances.

Drawing on dictionary definitions, USDHHS (2011) avers that the word *migration* (as applied to animals) can evoke four different but overlapping concepts: (1) a type of locomotory activity that is notably persistent, undistracted, and straightened out; (2) a relocation of the animal that is on a much greater scale, and involves movement of much longer duration, than those arising in its normal daily activities; (3) a seasonal to-and-fro movement of populations between regions where conditions are alternately favourable or unfavourable (including one region in which breeding occurs); and (4) movements leading to redistribution within a spatially extended population.

These interpretations according to USDHHS (2011) encapsulate some significantly different perspectives about what migration entails. They clarified these notions by specifying that first, types 1 and 2 relate to individual organisms, while types 3 and 4 explicitly concern populations. Second, type 1 describes a process, whereas the remaining three types describe outcomes (for individuals or populations) of locomotory activity by individuals. Third, types 2 and 3, but not 1 and 4, invoke a time or spatial scale.

The process-versus-outcome distinction according to USDHHS (2011) lies at the heart of the debate among entomologists about whether migration should be defined for individuals (behaviorally) or for populations (ecologically). The former approach according to Hugh and Drake appears more compatible with our contemporary understanding of the mode of action of natural selection, namely, that it acts principally on individuals (and their genes). Available reports show that Nigeria is a source, transit, and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation (Paul, 2015). Within Nigeria, women and girls are trafficked primarily for domestic servitude and commercial sexual exploitation, while boys are trafficked for forced labour in street vending, agriculture, mining, stone quarries, and as domestic servants (Linus, 2007) due to the fact that there is high demand for child workers at the household level, agricultural, construction, quarries and brass melting mostly in the informal sector (Paul, 2015).

Human trafficking has put Nigeria on the map of notorious (Samuel, 2012). The problem according to Samuel has assumed wider dimensions not only to the individual traffickers but also to the country and society at large. This problem of human trafficking among Nigerians has called for a search of immediate solution as the traffickers have destroyed the image of the nation (Nigeria) among comity of nation (Samuel, 2012). Nigeria according to Samuel has continued to defy solution. Recent media reports as avers by Samuel tends to portray Nigeria as the major hub for the illicit human trade (trafficking). Further, Samuel noted that “daily busts at the nation's seaports, airports and borders give the

impression that human trafficking in the Nigerian state is an insolvable problem". Till date, human trafficking is on the apex. It is therefore to interrogate the nexus between migration and human trafficking in ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage for a Dream* and relating it to the Nigerian Experience that forms the thrust of this study. To achieve this, General System Theory and Content and Analytical Methodology are employed as guide.

Causes of Migration

There are many reasons why people migrate from the own country to the other. To this, National Healthier Scotland (2009) noted that "many trafficked persons have sought to escape poverty, unemployment, war, or natural disasters within their own countries". Further, Paul (2015) identified poverty, desire to migrate to study and work in the urban city and abroad, conflicts, weak legal system, lack of adequate legislation and of political will and commitment to enforce existing legislation or mandates.

Effects of Human Trafficking on the Individual

The human consequences of trafficking are compelling. It has an impact on the individuals it victimizes in all areas of their lives. Every stage of the trafficking process can involve physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and violence, deprivation and torture, the forced use of substances, manipulation, economic exploitation, and abusive working and living conditions. Unlike most other violent crimes, trafficking usually involves prolonged and repeated trauma (WHO, 2008).

The traumas experienced by victims of trafficking according to WHO includes post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, alienation, disorientation, aggression and difficulty concentrating. The long term consequences of human trafficking for the individual are complex and depend on many factors, with no guarantee of recovery. While subject to the same harmful treatment as adults, World Health Organization insist that child victims are especially vulnerable to trafficking because of their age, immaturity and lack of experience to abusive practices that may, for example stunt their further physical development and their continued victimization as a result of attachment, developmental and social difficulties. The behavior of trafficking victims can be difficult for third parties to understand, while victims can find it difficult to comprehend what has happened to them.

On the political note, human trafficking, according to WHO (2008) is an issue of major international discussion and concern, because it involves trans-national movement of people. It is thus an important related area of debate in migration policy. Unequivocally, an unintended consequence of efforts directed principally at illegal migration can be the non-identification and victimization of trafficked persons. World Health Organization also avers that "the difficulties in assessing the impact of human trafficking are most apparent when attempting to qualify its economic costs, thus, the key economic consequences of trafficking are described". However, the cost of the crime trafficking in person incorporates many elements, including the value of all resources devoted to its prevention, the treatment and support of victims and the apprehension and prosecution of offenders. This costs according to WHO may upset in parts of the recovery of criminal proceeds and assets of the traffickers.

Next, WHO avers that trafficking in person also result in loss of human resources and reductions in task revenue”. Trafficking in persons redirects the transaction benefits in migration from migrants, their families, communities, government and other potential legitimate employers to traffickers and their associates. All indications according to WHO are that the incomes generated by the related organized crime are significant and global. Given the ongoing nature and exploitation, human trafficking according to WHO generate a suitable and regular source of income for criminal networks, with a consequent impact on other forms of criminal activities as well as legitimate business.

Conclusively, WHO noted that the destabilizing and dangerous consequences of human trafficking range from rapidly recognized violence, direct economic loss of major migration concern to the less easily quantified, equally serious, but more complex effects of risk and harm to environment, social, health and safety and violations of human right. Trafficking in persons directly challenges the development of suitable, more prosperous societies and legitimate economies, and works strongly against the reconciliation of political interests with humanitarian and human rights obligations.

General System Theory

General System Theory, propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1928), provides the mold with which this paper is shaped. The theory is a science investigating general laws for arbitrarily complex arrangements system which constitute functional integrities. General System Theory according to Tim (2007) is linked with cybernetics and informative theory. The major ingredients (components) of system theory include: basic definitions, system thinking, system topologies, life circles, system performance, conceptual designs, current state evaluations, related science, solving methods, creative solutions, system synthesis, system analysis, optimization, and solution assessment, virtual optimizing, system engineering, and evaluation of knowledge in economy and society. This theory, as mastered, would help identify the pragmatic link between migration and human trafficking in the play understudied and subsequently relate it to the Nigerian experience in the 21st century.

In a summary, Linus (2011), quoting UNICEF (2000) writes that the major causes behind the trafficking of women are widespread poverty which sparks off the push-pull factors, a high level of illiteracy, unemployment and poor living standards as well as burdens of poverty of and desperation of poor and illiterate parents with large families who are ignorant of the impacts of nature of child trafficking.

Research Design

This research work employed 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 analysis of migration and human trafficking as portrayed in the selected text. It is qualitative because it deals with the analysis of a play by notable Nigerian playwright and descriptive because it involves the use of ideas to describe and analyze the link between Migration and human trafficking in the play texts.

Nature and Sources of Data

Data for this study were gathered from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include the plays by prolific writer and my personal experiences and observations in the course of carrying out this research of identifying the link between migration and human trafficking in the Nigerian state. These were supported with a reliance on the researcher's competence or knowledge of the research area. In specific terms, *A Mirage for a Dream* is analyzed based on the use of the principles of General System Theory. The secondary sources include the opinions or views of people already documented about the research area, in the form of information from journal articles, books, research projects, internet etc.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises the play text which is ABC Duruaku's *A Mirage for a Dream*.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument that was used for this study was a comparative discourse of selected play which *A Mirage for a Dream*.

Validation of Data Collection Instruments

The validity of the instrument was ascertained through simple conventional means of analysis of the selected plays as well as an analysis of relevant texts in the field of theatre criticism. This ensured the detection of any ambiguities, questions and statements that would prove irrelevant to the aim and objectives of the study. Hence, the entire research process is redefined and improved upon to take care of observed shortcomings, in order to enhance validity and make the study a generally accepted one.

Reliability of the Data Instrument

Reliability suggests consistency and dependability of data. It further implies that any instrument (s) adopted should provide similar results if repeated. The consistency of the information gathered in this study through repeated application of the same measuring instruments for all the plays, validates the reliability of the data instruments employed in this study.

Synopsis of *A Mirage for a Dream*

The play *A Mirage for a Dream* according to Deborah and Frank (2020) revolves around Chimdi, an ambitious, stubborn, greedy, overzealous, illiterate, and a motor park tout who decides to travel through the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea to Europe for greener pastures. He became hopeless when his wealthy father died and his stepmother took his entire father's wealth, leaving nothing for him and his illiterate mother. This ultimately made him to forfeit school and started assisting his maternal uncle with his taxi driving business as a conductor; and thereafter, a motor pack tout. Chimdi according to Deborah and Frank (2020) believed that marrying an educated woman would solve his illiteracy and poverty issues, yet, Berna, his educated wife turned out to be a torn in his life. Egondu, Berna's elder sisters'

persistent nagging and demanding that Berna must divorce Chimdi, further complicated issues which made Chimdi to strive painstakingly towards satisfying Berna in all ramifications.

The major action in the play according to Deborah and Frank started when Chimdi, saw a passenger who he later discovered was Mike, his primary school class mate who is now a barrister, who is 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, according to Deborah and Frank handed Chimdi to Charlie, his Personal Assistant.

Not quite long after Mike handed the bus to Chimdi, Charlie revealed to Chimdi how he moved on to Europe after quitting his job with Mike. Charlie also explained to Chimdi the chances of meeting up at Europe. Overwhelmed by Charlie's exposure and sudden wealth, Chimdi acclaimed, demanding further explanation on the procedure of traveling to Europe. Fulfilled by the explanation, Chimdi according to Deborah and Frank abandons the new bus that Barrister Mike bought for him for commercial purpose as a mark of his academic improvement, started planning on how to elope to Europe.

Later on, Chimdi according to Deborah and Frank related his traveling intention to Berna after he lured 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, with the notion that most people with such quest, never gets to Europe nor returns to tell the outcome.

Chimdi, overzealous of the frivolities in Europe succeeded 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, Chimdi understood that Charlie, Ginger and Obinali were into human trafficking, of which, him and twelve (12) others were victims. due to exhaustion, hunger, dehydration, and not being able to withstand issues in the desert and the Mediterranean Sea, Chimdi and one of the travelers, who were already left behind by the other travelers, were captured, killed and their body parts were harvested by human parts harvesters from Libya.

The play according to Deborah and Frank comes to conclusion when 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.

Thematic Thrust and Subject matters discoursed in *A Mirage for a Dream*

Thematic thrust refers to the message, the central idea, or the point and argument the playwright is trying to make. It can also be the seed planted in the story, to be harnessed by the spectator. Every play has a message it carries, and this messages differs according to playwrights understanding of the immediate society he or she is in. The theme or thematic thrust comes with subject matters; which are ideas discussed under the broad spectrum of the theme. Whilst the theme is the central message of the play, the subject matters are ideas discussed under the theme.

The play *A Mirage for a Dream* mirrors the issue of migration and human trafficking that is prevalent in the Nigerian society in the 21st century. It discourses how human trafficking business is made possible through migration and quest to travel to Europe and Asian countries for greener pastures, weak governmental system, poverty, conflict, environmental degradation, or poverty. The victims are either forced to engage in illicit transactions, such as labour and commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour, child soldiers, drug trafficking, domestic servitude, or their organs or tissues harvested for sale as portrayed in the play.

Subject Matters Discussed in *A Mirage for a Dream*

The sub-themes in the play include the following:

Greed and Betrayal: Greed and betrayal are major issues discussed in the play and is seen in the characters of Chimdi and Charlie. First, Charlie decided to betray Mike by quitting his job and eloping to Europe and Chimdi abandons the bus that Mike bought for him for commercial use and leaving Berna his wife for greener pastures abroad after luring Berna into borrowing money from her sister Egondu and making Mike to lend him money for business. With the money he realized from Berna and Mike, Chimdi was able to execute his travelling plans.

Unemployment and Poverty: Unemployment and poverty are also discussed in the play. It is as a result of unemployment and poverty that Chimdi, a vibrant and a promising school drop out to take up the job as a motor park tout. Chimdi also decided to abandon his wife Berna, his adult classes, and his new commercial bus and elope to Europe with Ginger and Obinali for greener pasture. He believes that once he arrives any country in Europe, his poverty and unemployment issues will be solved.

Death and Sorrow: Theme of death and sorrow are raised in the play. Chimdi's death in the hand of human part harvesters from Libya made Berna, Mike and Chimdi's community people to mourn and whirl.

***A Mirage for a Dream* and theme of Human Trafficking in Nigeria**

From the foregoing, it is pertinent to deduce categorically that migration, once a veritable means of achieving industrial enhancement, economic development, political inclination, scientific and technological discoveries, and social obligations has maliciously become a vehicle for illicit transactions, such as labour and commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour, child soldiers, human trafficking, drug trafficking, domestic servitude, and the removal of organs or tissue for sale. This is rather pensive as the demand for human parts such as lung, heart, liver, and other sensitive parts are highly demanded and hundreds of thousands of Dollars staked for any, if gotten.

This is rather pensive in the Nigerian state in the 21st century and the play understudied as most Nigerians dreams of migrating to Western and Asian countries of the world, in search of greener pastures to reminisce the suffering, pain, poverty, unemployment, greed, and weak governmental system in the Nigerian state. Such as in the play where Charlie decided to forfeit his job as Barrister Mike Personal Assistance and migrate to Europe for better employment opportunities, most Nigerians in the working industry also abandons their jobs to grab the opportunities of traveling abroad due to the fact that their present jobs, either government or private could not meet their immediate demands.

These Nigerians migrate to any European or Asian countries without minding the risk, deprivation, segregation, and humiliation involved. They prefer suffering and dying in the foreign countries rather than living in a state filled with corruption, nepotism, divide and rule system, favouratism, religious fanaticism, and tribal sentiment. They prefer dying in a lawful country rather than a lawless state where everything is possible and politicians abuse the privileges and mandates granted to them and funds for public projects and public treasury are daily embezzled, thereby leaving the people with abject poverty and the society underdeveloped.

Example of these unpatriotic and draconian act is envisage in the play as Chimdi, a promising and adventurous young man accepted to travel with Charlie, Obinali, and Ginger to Europe through the Sahara desert bearing in mind the risks involve. Chimdi abandons his beautiful wife Berna, his taxi business, and his friend Mike, in search of greener pasture abroad. He believes that all his poverty and unemployment problems will be a thing of the past once he traveled to Europe; a promising continent.

Like Chimdi who uses dubious means to take money from Mike and Egondu his sister in-law in the play, most Nigerian youths engages in different forms of malicious activities that are not limited to armed robbery, kidnapping, shop breaking, prostitution, and other heinous acts that causes death, pain and suffering of the people and underdevelopment to the country, just to meet up with the financial requirements for traveling abroad. The traffickers in the Nigerian state, such as Charlie, defrauds huge sum of money from the Nigerian migrants and end up trading them to the highest bidders. Charlie in the play defrauded Chimdi of huge sum of money with the intention of traveling legally but ended up convincing Chimdi to travel with other migrants though the Sahara desert.

Furthermore, most Nigerians would as well go to the extent of trading their human parts such as lung and liver for foreign or local currencies just to meet up with the targeted levy of traveling abroad. While few who succeeded traveling abroad, engages in activities such as drug trafficking and sex hawking for their supposed owners. Handful of them such as Chimdi who decided travelling illegally, dies at the Mediterranean Sea and Sahara Desert or caught and their body parts harvested by human parts harvesters from other African and European countries. Conclusively, the thematic thrust, subject matters, character and character delineation, discussed in the play are microcosm of the macrocosm of the Nigerian state. For example, characters of Chimdi, Charlie, Obinali, and Ginger are direct representatives of the

Nigerian youths who migrate to European countries for greener pastures due to the overwhelming unemployment and poverty issues in the Nigerian society. Most of these youths like Chimdi, ends up dying before they could arrive Europe while some like Obinali, Ginger, and Charlie, luckily survives the risk. On the same note, character of Mike is a direct opposite of most Nigerian politicians that daily oppress and repress their people.

The corrupt Nigerian politicians employ the services of the Nigerian youths for the dubious activities such as assassination, kidnapping, drug trafficking, armed robbery and other malicious activities. The same politicians will also lure the same youths into travelling abroad in order to continue with the unpatriotic activities. Hopefully, some Nigerian politicians, like Mike, would employ the services of some Nigerian youths, educate them and engaged them in meaningful jobs. Evidence of this is seen in the play when Mike decided to enroll Chimdi 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 later bought for him.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it was established that there is a veritable link between migration and human trafficking which has pragmatically positioned as a major menace plaguing the Nigerian state in the 21st century. It is also established that the gargantuan effect of human trafficking in the Nigerian state are the increase in crime and disorderliness which includes likes of drug abuse, drug trafficking, labour and commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour, child soldiers, and domestic servitude; caused by an increase in unemployment, poverty, suffering, and total deprivation of the means of livelihood of the people and general underdevelopment to the Nigerian fronts. This is as a result of a rapid increase in corruption, nepotism, tribalism, cultural oblivions, political pauperization and divide and rule system that have been in existence since the creation of the Nigerian state, thus, threatens its existence as a sovereign state.

Recommendation

Sequel to the above discussion, it becomes pertinent to proffer the following recommendations which would help in curbing the issue of human trafficking in the Nigerian state:

1. There should be a law enforcing agency that will be charged with monitoring migration and human trafficking cases in Nigeria.
2. Anyone or agency found indulging in human trafficking should be made to face the law without fear or favour.
3. Government should as a matter of urgency, provide functional and payable employment opportunities for her citizens as that would help control the rapid rate of migration that has unequivocally increased human trafficking in the Nigerian society.
4. There should be an established law against corruption, nepotism, divide and rule system and other related issues in the Nigerian constitution.
5. Trafficked victims should be provided with adequate medical care that would help cure some viruses, emotional and psychological traumas, and physical anomalies.

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