

Reflection on Intra-Africa Migration, Migration Securitisation and Africa's Development Agenda

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Abstract

Intra-regional mobility is now an important factor in the development of states globally. African countries have not been left in this regard. Apart from the effort of the African Union (AU) in changing the narratives of brain drain to brain gain through the recognition of Africans in the Diaspora as the sixth region, there have also been concerted efforts to promote intra-African migration. Intra-African migration is an essential variable in the movement of goods, distribution of services, and increase in Africa's economic capacities. It has become more important with signing trade agreements such as the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (ACFTA) and Common External Tariff, as well as Regional Economic Cooperation's free movement policies. However, despite the importance, increasing securitisation of migration is becoming a growing threat. Securitisation connotes that migration is perceived as an existential security threat to the host state and thus deserves at least control and stopping at best. The securitisation of migration has been evident in the case of South Africa's xenophobia cases, Ghana's economic protectionism, and the case of Botswana and Zambia, among others. The constellation of these securitisations not only constitutes immigrants' vulnerability but endangers Africa's development agenda, especially in the sphere of trade. The article offers a vivid perspective on the threats associated with migration securitisation within the context of Africa's development agenda. The article relies on secondary sources of information drawn from books, peer-reviewed journals and online newspapers

Keywords: Intra-Africa Migration, Development, Migration securitisation, Africa

Introduction

Migration has become an inescapable reality of our contemporary period. The African continent, in particular, has been described as a mobile continent, given its population on the move (ECOWAS Commission, 2015). The 2020 World Migration Report indicates that out of 281 million global migrants on the move, around 21 million Africans were living in another African country, a significant increase from 2015, when around 18 million Africans were estimated to be living within the region (McAuliffe, 2021: 3). Given the percentage of global migration patterns, the movement of people has been considered an important cornerstone of development. The emphasis on the interconnections between migration and development has become evident with the introduction of programmes and policies that focus on brain gain and brain circulation rather than brain drain and structural dependency. In this regard, African states have focused on creating viable and official channels of remittances, volunteerism from the Diaspora and institutionalising Diaspora voting, among others.

Beyond the purview of State actors, there are also notable non-state actors (international organisations) in Africa which focus on addressing the issue of migration and development.

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One category is the African Union (AU) which focuses on incorporating Africans in the Diaspora (immigrants beyond Africa's continent shore) into the development of Africa (Jinmi, 2017: 29-50). In this regard, the African Union (AU) recognised Africans in Diaspora as an important partner in development by naming it the sixth zone of development. Two, there is also the category of Regional Economic Cooperations (RECs) that focus on promoting intra-Africa migration in what they considered paramount to solving permanent brain drain and deepened structural dependency on the developed countries. These RECs have not only focused on creating an unprecedented area in which capital, goods and services can move around but also where people can move freely to increase Africa's development circles.

Despite the increasing rise in intra-Africa migration, the securitisation often manifested in xenophobia, deportation of African immigrants from African countries, harassment of immigrants, and the introduction of protectionist policies to eliminate the presence of immigrants in the host countries is a major barrier. However, despite the laudable objectives of free movement policies initiated by RECs, the problem of migration securitisation is becoming a clog in the wheel of intra-Africa migration. The article seeks to bring into the limelight crises attached to the continuous securitisation of migration in Africa and the implication for Africa's development agenda. In this regard, the article is divided into three sections apart from the introduction and conclusion. The first section examines the state of migration and free movement policies in Africa through the Regional Economic Cooperations (RECs) perspective. The next section examines the free movement and migration securitisation in Africa through some case studies, and the last section examines the interconnections between migration securitisation, African integration and the development agenda.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This study is a qualitative study that depended on secondary documents from books, journals and edited chapters for its analysis. The study collective extensive data on the theme of migration, which it interpreted and presented thematically. It used Everett Lee theory of migration, which he propounded in 1966 to explain the study. Lee identified for factors that drive migration to include:

- i. Factors associated with the place of origin,
- ii. Factors associated with the place of destination,
- iii. Intervening obstacles, and
- iv. Personal factors.

In West Africa, the securitisation of migration and harassment of immigrants is exhibited between Nigeria and Ghana. Nigeria and Ghana have a shared history of point of origin and destination for nationals of both countries. Also, both countries have a shared history of migration securitisation, as in the case of the Alien Compliance Order of 1969 by Dr. Kofi Busia of the People Party (PP) led to the deportation of Nigerians and other countries' nationals and the deportation exercise of 1983 under President Shehu Shagari regime. The exercise leads to the deportation of about two million people following the drop in oil prices and increasing economic hardships, with Ghanaians constituting 45–60% of the deportees (Akinyinka, 2015: 217). By 15 February 1983, at the peak of the expulsion exercise, about one and a half million foreigners had officially left the country which, includes 700,000 Ghanaians, 180,000 Nigeriens, 120,000 Cameroonians, and 150,000 Chadians, 5,000 Togolese, 5,000 Beninese, “and a host of others (New York Times, 1983). However, despite both countries' contributions

to the activities of ECOWAS and achieving its goals since its establishment, the recent manifestation of protectionist economic policies endangers ECOWAS free movement policies.

The case of South Africa stands out regarding migration securitisation leading to xenophobic violence, deportation and harassment of immigrants. South Africa has a rich history of labour migration and migration securitisation leading to xenophobia in Africa. The major drives of large immigrants into South Africa are shaped by perceived economic opportunities, especially in the mining sector. The relative development indices attracted immigrants as far as West Africa and other regions. However, since South Africa's independence in 1994, migration governance has witnessed significant setbacks due to the increasing securitisation of migration governance leading to xenophobic violence and deportation. South Africa has had a record of xenophobic attacks on immigrants since 1994. However, research over the past three decades has shown that attitudes towards non-nationals, though varied across the cross-section of South African society, are increasingly pessimistic. For instance, between 2008 and 2021, there were several attacks targeted at African migrants. Xenowatch data further reveals that the 796 xenophobic attacks have resulted in 121, 945 total displacements, with a total shop of 4, 693 shops looted and a total death of 588 immigrants (Jean et al. 2021: 6). Evidence abounds that 'non-nationals living and working in South Africa face discrimination at the hands of citizens, government officials, the police and private organisations contracted to manage their detention and deportation' (Misago, 2012: 4).

Another case is that of Botswana. In Botswana, the largest immigrant group is from Zimbabwe, while there are other minority groups, such as Nigerians and non-African immigrants, such as Chinese. Louw-Vaudran argues that the Botswana government, as early as 2000 adopted harsh policies that affected migrants, culminating in the erection of an electric fence between Botswana and Zimbabwe (Louw-Vaudran, 2014). However, while the government denied that this was to deter illegal migration and claimed that the fence aimed to stop the spread of foot and mouth disease, illegal immigrants faced deportation, with more than 50,000 people deported to Zimbabwe in 2009 alone (Louw-Vaudran, 2014). Dube notes that Botswana's government has extended its hostilities outside the range of refugees and average citizens of foreign origin (Dube, 2014). The Regional Commissioner in the Kagera region, Salum Kijuu, warned against National Identification Cards falling into the wrong hands, meaning foreigners (Mulisa, 2017). The Regional Commissioner advised all concerned "to conduct the exercise diligently and with maximum caution, considering that Kagera Region borders four neighbouring countries - Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Kenya." The screening exercise was to be closely supervised to avoid issuing the cards to 'aliens.' Recently, thousands of Rwandans in Tanzania were expelled from Rwanda. A press release reads that "tens of thousands of residents of northwestern Tanzania who speak the Kinyarwanda language were deported to neighbouring Rwanda because they allegedly refuse to acquire residents permits or become neutralized Tanzanians " (BBC, 2013). Humanitarian groups claim that over 60000 deportees live in transit camps in the Kirehe, Ngoma and Nasho areas of Eastern Rwanda.

Literature Review on Migration and Free Movement Policies in Africa: RECs Perspective

African countries consist of fifty-four countries and are divided into five regions: West, East, North, Central and Southern Africa. The continent migration history is deeply rooted in historical antecedents, which can be discussed within three prisms, namely pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods (Awumbila et al. 2014). In the pre-colonial period, African migration was driven by social, economic and political factors. These factors include inter-

group relations, trading activities, labourers (seasonal and permanent), security, chieftaincy and religious reasons, among others. Migration during the pre-colonial period facilitated inter-group relations (Kwabena, 2018: 375; Mlambo et al., 2019; Adepoju, 2004). As noted by Adepoju, the pre-colonial form of population movement was a borderless one. African population and goods are moved freely from one sub-region to another without any form of hindrances (Adepoju, 2003). The free flow of people contributed to building great empires that existed on the continent before their destruction by the slave trade and colonialism (Manuh, 2005).

During the colonial period, the various socio-economic and political policies initiated by the colonialist also significantly impacted population movement. Under colonial contact, there were records of forced migration through the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, which forced millions of Africans across the shore of Africa to the New World (North America, Europe and the Caribbean) (Joseph, 2022: 6-7). Also, colonial economic policies such as the development of urban centres, transportation infrastructures, and cash crop economy facilitated large-scale migrations and the labour movement in Africa. Movement during the colonial period featured prominently among African countries under the same colonialist influence. For instance, Nigerians gained access to Ghana's cocoa and the petty trading economy as 'British Subject,' allowing them to move freely. In the post-colonial period, intra-Africa regional mobility experienced significant development. In the post-independence African states, which started around the 1950s and 1960s, labour migration dominated Africa's migration patterns. For instance, Joseph et al. (2022: 4) noted that the post-independence period witnessed the movement of labour migrants from landlocked African countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger to coastal countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Senegal and The Gambia. Also, economic crises such as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), high levels of unemployment, low incomes, poverty, low prices of agricultural products, and insecurity from increasing terrorism and insurgency are significant drivers of African migration in the post-colonial period (Van Heer, 2012).

The free movement policies entered in African migration and development lexicon based on three primary reasons, namely: the increase in the flow of unregulated migration, the securitisation of the migration process and immigrants activities in host countries, and the migration-development development pattern pushed the free movement policies to the centre stage of discussion among Regional economic cooperations in Africa. In Africa, eight (8) regional economic cooperations are established on a regional basis. These include the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), and Arab-Maghreb Union (AMU). These Regional Economic Cooperations have primarily incorporated the free movement of goods, services and people as part of their core mandate and objectives. In other words, RECs have identified the movement of people as an important aspect of their goals which is also paramount to the goal of the African Union. However, the free movement of people is usually conceived as a long-term goal to be established gradually.

Regarding the free movement policy, ECOWAS remains the most advanced (Faisal et al., 2022: 19-34). As early as 1979, ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol was instituted. The policy was split into three phases, namely: the right of entry, right of residence and right of establishment. **Table 1.1** summarises Africa's Regional Economic Cooperation policies and some of their free movement policies.

Table 1.1: Regional Economic Cooperation and Free Movement Policies

Organisation	Free Movement Policies Instruments
ECOWAS	1975 ECOWAS Treaty; The 1979 Free Protocol Movement. Other free movement initiatives include: the eECOWAS Brown Card Motor Vehicle Insurance of 1982; the ECOWAS Travel Certificate of 1985, replaced with Intra-ECOWAS travel and the National Biometric Identity Card in 2015
EAC	The EAC Common Market Protocol; EAC Protocol on the free movement
COMESA	The 1992 original treaty; 1994The Protocol on the Gradual Relaxation and Eventual Elimination of Visas as early as 1984; The Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Labour, Services, Right of Establishment and Residence in 1998
SADC	The Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons was drafted in 1996 (later revised and adopted in 2005)
AMU	The three-member states have adopted Free Movement Protocol
CEN-SAD	Free movement remains stagnant but is promoted through temporary bilateral agreements, such as that between Sudan and Libya.
IGAD	No protocol but a Bilateral free movement agreement between IGAD members such as Kenya-Uganda, Ethiopia-Djibouti and Kenya and Ethiopia
ECCAS/CEMAC	The treaty establishing ECCAS; the 1983 Protocol on Freedom of Movement and Rights of Establishment of Nationals of Members States. A decision on free movement was made in January 1990 and amended in June 2000 with the enactment date as 2005, but decisions are still ongoing. Free movement is only effective in four CEMAC states – Chad, Cameroon, Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo, while other member states require a visa for fellow ECCAS citizens. The problem of security has been identified as a major stumbling block to the implementation of the Protocol

Source: *African Union Commission and the International Organization for Migration (2018)*

Free Movement and Migration Securitisation in Africa: Some Case Studies

Despite the laudable objectives and achievements recorded in the sphere of free movement of people through the RECs platform, the current wave of migration securitisation poses a significant challenge to future development in this field. The securitisation of migration implies the “framing of migration as a security threat to a state or society leading to governments to limit regular migration pathways as government responds by instituting more restrictive policies against migrants such as greater surveillance, detention and deportation” (Buzan, 2019:3). Papadopoulos and Tsianos (2013) conceptualised the securitisation of migration to mean that “migration is regarded as an existential security threat to a nation-state and thus deserving at least control and stopping at best.” Hence, the securitisation of migration for the present study is examined from the perspective of crises faced by immigrants in host countries leading to potentially xenophobic events and deportation of immigrants. Adeoye notes that, unlike cases of South Africa and Ghana, where the manifestation of securitisation are violent, there are also non-violent cases such as the Botswana and Zambia case Adeoye, 2018: 1)

Since 2007, the Nigerian business community in Ghana have raised the alarm over the maltreatment of Nigerian traders in Ghana at the hand of Ghana business owners and Ghana

officials consisting of the Committee on Foreigners in Retail Business, among others. At the helm of these various attacks were Ghana traders' and officials' demands that Nigerian traders comply adequately and stringently with the Ghana Investment Promotion Acts (GIPA) (865), 2013. The Ghana Investment Promotion Act (GIPA) is a protectionist economic policy specifically designed to increase Ghana's domestic economy as regards trade and employment. The GIPA outlined conditions that must be met by foreigners interested in investing in Ghana's domestic economy and Ghana retail sector. Article 27 and 28 of the GIPA outlines these conditions. For instance, Article 28 (2) states that a foreigner may engage in a trading enterprise with an investment of not less than \$1, 000, 000 in cash, goods or services relevant to the investment (Article 28 (2), GIPC). The GIPA reserved the retail sectors, which immigrants from other countries dominated for Ghanaian nationals.

Since the efforts of the Ghanaian business community emphasise the implementation of GIPA, it has disrupted Nigerian business community trading activities. The Nigeria Minister of Information – Alhaji Lai Muhammed, claimed that 300, 600 and 250 shops belonging to the Nigerian business community were shut down in 2018, 2019 and 2020, respectively (Olugbenga, 2021). The implication of the crisis has led to the loss of investment. More than 300 Nigerian shops were locked for four months in Kumasi in 2018 (Premium Times, 2020). In December 2019, a few months after the policy was further enacted, the Ghana Union of Traders' Association (GUTA) shut down about 1000 Nigerian shops in the country (Punch, 2020). Comrade Evaristus Nwanko – the Secretary of the NUTAG, claimed that the 3000 members of the trade union have lost over \$5, 000, 000 in forfeits of rent paid and expired goods (Daily Trust, 2021). In 2020, at the height of the Covid-19 Pandemic, 753 members of the Nigerian Union of Traders Association in Ghana (NUTAG) addressed a “Save-Our-Souls” letter to the Chair of the Nigerian in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) - Abike Dabiri-Erewa, requesting their evacuation from Ghana (People Gazette, 2020).

The case of Zambia in the Southern African region is another timed bomb expected to explode if not addressed promptly. Zambia has also served as a point of destination for African immigrants, majorly from Zimbabwe, Somali, Rwanda, and Congo and non-African immigrants such as the Indians, Chinese and Britons (Adeoye, 2018). Zambia also has a record of legal and illegal immigrants. The xenophobic attack has been directed toward the Rwandese in the country. The Rwandan population in Zambia was said to have migrated at the height of the 1994 Rwanda genocide. However, there have been a series of attacks on immigrants, especially the Rwandese, by the Zambia population. In 2006, about 62 Rwandan-owned shops were looted across the country (Kaluba, 2016). Also, there have been consistent outbreaks of violence in areas of Lusaka and other poor residential zones and involved other immigrants over incessant ritual killings, which the immigrants were accused of perpetrating this crime for sacrificial purposes (Adeoye, 2018: 26).

Zambia also has a record of social, political and economic exclusion against immigrants. In the areas of social exclusion, on 11 January 2017, the Inspector General of Police, Kakoma Kanganja, issued a warning to the police officers in the state to desist from marrying immigrants in order not to jeopardise national security (BBC, 2017). In the economic sphere, Kaluba notes that Zambia's xenophobic sentiments are more potent in local and shanty townships than in middle and high residential areas where successful immigrants amidst local society are known (Kaluba, 2016). In addition, the Home Affairs Ministry has cautioned employers to refrain from offering expatriate workers jobs that the local population could do. According to the Zambian Department of Immigration:

There is no justification for having foreigners working as cleaners, plumbers, bricklayers and shopkeepers in Zambia when thousands of our well-qualified citizens in those fields are roaming the streets in search of anything they can do to earn a decent living. If such jobs, for which there is no shortage of skills on the local market, can be swallowed up by foreign nationals, then when will our people ever be empowered? We are not being xenophobic. Far from it, we are just stating the facts as they are everywhere else in the world, except in Zambia (Zambian Department of Immigration, 2015).

Findings on Migration Securitisation, Africa integration and Development Agenda

The importance of migration to African development cannot be overemphasized. Over decades ago, the movement of able-bodied African men to the New world contributed to these countries' economic development while Africa remained underdeveloped. Also, in the post-colonial period, the increasing rise in number of brain drain among African professionals (doctors, engineers, nurses, academics) moving abroad as well as students in developed countries in an attempt to legitimize their stay has increased tremendously. However, while the African Union have sought to encourage the Africans Diaspora to invest in their countries and societies of origin by declaring the Diaspora as the sixth zone, it is important to state that their contributions can only solve a fragmentation of African problem. However, while intra-Africa migration will help expand Africa's economy and achieve internal development without reliance on the developed countries, the increasing securitisation of migration is contributing to Africa's development challenges and affecting its concerted development efforts to forge ahead.

Securitisation of migration has a gross implication for rebuilding the African economy. The African Union's goal of establishing an African common market, the monetary and economic union has witnessed a series of initiatives, policies and programmes rolled out by the organisation over the years. At the Abuja Treaty, the organisation established the implementation process using Regional Economic Cooperations (RECS). The implementation plan requires strengthening all RECs through coordinating and harmonizing all activities, such as eliminating trade barriers and tariffs causing significant crises to Africa's trade and economic integration. Given the importance of RECs and the goal of the Abuja treaty, the integration of African countries through RECs has made the issue of migration securitisation an important matter. In creating a Free Trade Area, the movement of people through which trade and services can be fostered will become important. However, the implication of migration securitisation will be a major stumbling block. Recently the Continental Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) was signed under the auspices of the African Union. Migration has been identified as a critical index that can drive the Continental Free Trade Agreement. Article 3 of CFTA states that CFTA is set to "Create a single continental market for goods, services facilitated by "movement of persons" to deepen the economic integration of the African continent and following the Pan African Vision of "An Integrated prosperous and peaceful Africa" enshrined in Agenda 2063". However, creating a restrictive environment filled with securitisation policies, harassment of immigrants, and xenophobic tendencies will make such a goal difficult to realize. Also, in ECOWAS Africa, the issue of Ghana's economic protectionist policies was raised by Nigerian traders when it was chosen as the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement headquarters.

The securitisation of migration in Africa will also encourage another wave of brain drain among African immigrants. The migration of African skilled and unskilled labours to developed countries has increased exponentially. The record of skilled African labourers seeking an opportunity abroad and unskilled or irregular migrants crossing the Mediterranean sea with boats and climbing barbed wires in order to reach Europe cannot be quantified. However, while this problem abounds, there has been a recent increase also in the number of

Africans seeking opportunities within the African continent. The African migration report shows a significant increase in intra-Africa migrants. For instance, Intra-Africa migration increased from 18 million in 2015 to 21 million in 2019. The implication of this development is the growth of the African economy as labour migrants use their potential to develop African countries. However, in the face of the rising securitisation of migration, African migrants' intensity to migrate to developed countries will increase exponentially since intra-Africa migration is considered a threat in Africa.

Recently, there has been an ongoing emphasis on the importance of migration governance within the framework of migration-led development discourse. However, the primary focus of African countries has been shifted to drawing migration development of brain gain and circulation from developed countries. This, in particular, led to the African Union's naming of Africans in the Diaspora as the sixth development zone. Within the African sub-region, the free movement policies have been the primary continental development designed to develop intra-Africa migration and drive migration-led development. However, given the rising case of migration securitisation, it will be difficult for African countries to engineer any meaningful development using intra-Africa migration patterns. It is important to state that relying on migration from Africa in Diaspora rather than building intra-Africa migration can further deepen Africa's dependency on developed countries. The bone of contention is that it will be out of place to assume that remittances from abroad, brain circulation or brain gain are often advocated as a positive development that can substitute for the negative impact of brain drain on Africa's development. This is because the profession and unskilled population making headway in developed countries are more important for African development initiatives and agendas. Hence, promoting intra-Africa migration and addressing matters regarding rising migration securitisation is the best way to contend with brain drain migration and perpetual dependency.

Conclusion

Migration securitisation in Africa is fast rising to become a significant impediment to intra-Africa migration and the continent's socio-economic development. In the twenty-first century, migration issues have transcended beyond movement. It has become a development issue and occupies an essential aspect of the governance of the state. In the case of African countries, migration has featured consistently in the history of the continent. However, an important aspect is the increasing migration brain drain which has characterised Africa's post-colonial history. In the context of brain drain, the article means the movement of African professional skilled and unskilled migrants to developed countries. However, despite the perennial challenges, African countries, through regional economic cooperation putting in concerted efforts to reverse this development by introducing free movement protocols and policies that will boost intra-Africa migration.

The importance of intra-Africa migration cannot be underestimated. Intra-Africa migration boosts intra-Africa trade and Pan-African identity and fosters a comprehensive approach to development, such as the success of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement, among others. However, despite the importance of intra-African migration, the rising migration securitisation leading to the harassment of African migrants in African countries, the rising spate of xenophobia as in the case of South Africa, Ghana, Zambia, Botswana, Tanzania, and Algeria, among others have been challenging the idea of Africa we want. Despite promoting free movement protocols and policies by regional economic cooperation in Africa, securitization has been a major hindrance to realizing the full potential of intra-African

migration. The securitisation has been a significant hindrance to the realization of the Abuja treaty, bolstering brain drain and African desires to migrate to developed countries and creating another cycle of Africa's dependency on developed countries.

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