

GLOBALIZATION, MIGRATION AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN WEST AFRICA

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Abstract

Migration is not a new phenomenon. However, globalization has put a new spin on migration, which results in greater economic opportunities for the developed nations to the disadvantage of developing nations of Africa. Globalization implies and does entail free movement of goods and ideas between and across borders, trade liberalization, movement of capital for greater and speedier returns and repatriation of profits from quick yielding investments from the developing to the developed nations. The consequence is that, globalization exacerbates inequality between the developed and the developing nations. This paper demonstrates the various ways by which globalization impacts on migration and in the process engenders underdevelopment in West Africa. In the first place, the unencumbered movement of capital, trade and technology accompanied by capitalists “experts” from the developed nations into Africa has led not only to disruptions in African economies but also contributed to the high level of unemployment especially of the youth, wage decline, job insecurity and general poverty in the continent. In West Africa, agriculture is rendered purposeless on account of the massive agricultural subsidies enjoyed by the developed nations thereby increasing the tendency to dump their agricultural products in the sub-region. The migration of the disadvantaged and economically displaced peoples of Africa to the developed nations is a natural response to the severe pains and plunder inflicted on the continent by the forces of globalization and capitalism. In an attempt to address the imbalance created by globalization and to prevent Africans seeking economic refuge by migrating to their countries, the developed nations dangle such palliatives as debt relief and development aid that provide only cosmetic solutions to the problems of underdevelopment in West Africa that generates migration in the first place. The question is: What are West African leaders doing to contend with the challenges posed by globalization and migration in the West African sub-region? Finally, the paper examines policy contradictions within the global system towards migration and recommends a more integrated approach.

1. Introduction

Globalization is one of the most important phenomena in economic and geopolitical trends in the contemporary world. Globalization has been described as a “planetary phenomenon” because of its ubiquitous reach recognizing either national or international boundaries (Akindele et al 2002:1). The far-reaching nature of its consequence can hardly be over played. Regardless of its widespread tentacles, we intend in this paper to focus most directly on its role on migration and its consequences for underdevelopment in West Africa.

As a continent, Africa is very much used to criss-crossing migration within its borders. The most notable of these movements may be identified as migration of whole peoples from one part of Africa to another. Among this is the movement of the Zulu and related people across Southern Africa to Zimbabwe and other adjoining areas, the Fulani from the FutaJalon parts of present day Nigeria, and others that are less well known. Apart from the fact that many of these migrations occurred several centuries ago, and are therefore not occupying current attention, their nature

imbues them with less international profile. More recently, the refugees problem could in some sense be seen as a form of forced migration, but these are also largely within the continent.

The Migration that engages our attention in this paper specifically relates to the voluntary movement of people from one continent to another to settle and being impelled by multifarious impulses. It entails mostly movement from less economically developed nations of Africa to the more highly economically developed nations of Europe and America. Migration is not a new phenomenon. However, its character and consequences have been intensified by numerous forces, foremost among which is globalization.

Globalization represents the now ubiquitous process whereby “a greater influence is being exerted on socio-economic, political and cultural processes all over the world” (UN, 2002:3). In its effect, globalization has come to predominate over national and regional influences and can no longer be ignored wherever man finds himself in the contemporary world.

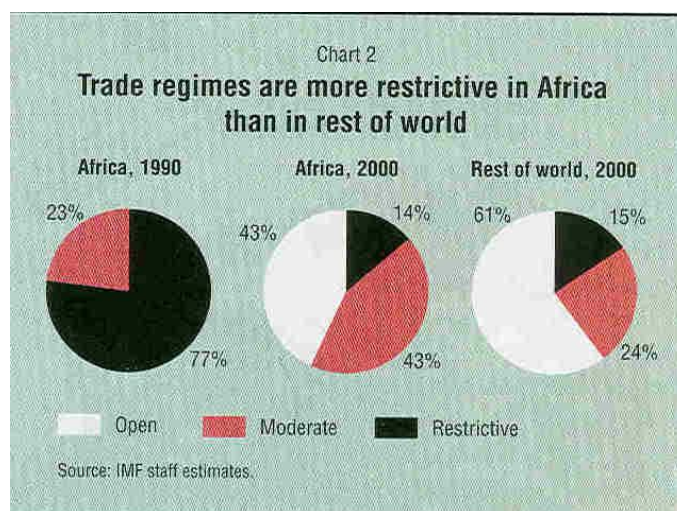
This paper focuses on how globalization has impacted on socio-economic and political lives of African peoples, especially in the West African sub-region. The paper will also examine the socio-economic and allied policies in the West African sub-region focusing particularly on Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal, and how they contribute to the generation and intensification of migration.

2(a) Dimensions of Globalization:

By its nature, globalization implies and does imply free movement of goods and ideas between and across borders, trade liberalization, greater and speedier returns and repatriation of profits from quick yielding investments from the developing to the developed nations. It also implies the loosening of national and international ties. International trade has been on the upsurge since the post medieval era, but it affected the African continent at a later period (The pre-slave trade era and the subsequent era of legitimate trade). The effects of these on the able bodied manpower of this continent, though discussed extensively is yet to be fully exhausted. But even these appear not to have had the magnitude of effects which globalization has produced in terms of its pressure, leading to trade liberalization quite often enforced. Less than two decades ago “restrictive trade” was said to have characterized the economies of “more than 75 per cent of the African continent” (Sharer, 2001:14). Since then, gigantic strides have been made in the area of trade liberalization as supported, encouraged and driven by IMF, WTO programmes.

In theory, trade liberalization is meant to promote the growth of trade worldwide and should be beneficial to countries and states, which adopt the policy. In actual fact however, developing countries find themselves very much shortchanged in this arena when compared with the developed nations of the world. In this context, trade liberalization generates many of the ills, that characterize the asymmetrical relationship between the industrial world and the mostly agricultural and raw material producing countries of the world. As noted by Sharer (2001) trade regimes are more restrictive in Africa than in the rest of the world. This is succinctly demonstrated in fig. 1.

Fig. I: Trade Regimes are more restrictive in Africa than Rest of the world



Liberalization that is normally linked with globalization gives rich nations terrific advantages over poorer countries by enabling them to flood poorer countries with mass produced goods at the same time as the disadvantages world barely has items for worthwhile exchange. Worse still, in the context of the so-called liberalization, the rich parts of the world still retain policies that work against liberalization in the international trade. Put together, these are factors that create and intensify unemployment in Africa leading to migration of the able bodied for economic survival. Awowole (2007) noted that the current unemployment rate in Africa is 10.3 per cent compared to the global average of 6.3 per cent in 2006. To reduce Africa's unemployment rate to the world average of 6.3 percent by 2015 would require an increase in employment of around 11 million per year. The deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals aimed at reducing poverty by half). (Awowole, 2007).

It is in this context that we respectfully part company with Akindele et al (2002:1) that globalization "is a positive or powerful force for improved material well-being of human kind that will aid developing countries to 'create' better economic environment...." We rather argue that by the way it has operated; globalization could better be seen as a neutral force having potentials for positive and or negative effects particularly in connection with developing countries. This is because while it could be argued that the consequences for the industrialized world, 'order givers' may be predicted in their invariably asymmetrical relationship with 'order takers' in the economic realm, for the powerless sections of the world, globalization could have dire consequences, and this is the gravamen of our present task.

Globalized has imposed heavy constraints on the internal management dynamics of most if not all the policies in Africa such as in Nigeria where the government now finds it difficult in most cases to meet the genuine demands of the governed on many issues of national urgency e.g. the continuous hike in the prices of petroleum and related products and its attendant crippling strikes by Nigerian workers. The reality in Nigeria today as for most West African nations, is that globalization has made it immense difficult for governments to provide social security - one of their central functions and one that has helped many developed nations to maintain social

cohesion and domestic political vibrancy. Trends like this have been largely dictated by the asymmetry of powers that accompanies globalization. The low status in the status of the members of the “viljlagized world” has led to the inability of the poorer nations to resist imposed policy options, thrust down their throats by richer and more powerful nations and international agents that they control.

In fact, this asymmetry which is under girded by a system of production where capital rules is in a large measure a:

... result of globalization in Africa, is basically a competition between the palatial centers (Developed world) and the slums (Africa) of the village where a preponderant majority of the people daily sink deeper into poverty and misery.

As aptly observed by Otakhine (2002:2),

the world is gradually moving in an unidirectional manner and, the tendency towards uniformity has never been so appealing as it is now... Consequently, there is a serious concern that African nations like Nigeria whose contributions to the internet pool is low may lose their identity.

Left by itself, liberalization occasioned by globalization will work best in a situation of equality, but when this policy is confronted by the now well known heavy subsidies of agricultural products, and variants of protectionism by America and the European Economic Community, the cards are stacked against African nations that produce such items. With all these happenings, the various emerging nations are hamstrung and saddled with policies which quite often are created externally by the IMF and the World Bank, and foisted on our national governments. These policies invariably lead to retrenchment, down sizing, (now dubbed rightsizing) or whatever name is used for laying off labour with the effect that able bodied members of the African population are left with very few alternatives among which migration properly conceived or not, seems a viable option. When these are added to be effects of Information Communication Technology (ICT) on information dissemination that goes paripasu with present day globalization, many people in the third world perceive as irresistible the external and infrastructural disparity between the developed nations and Africa. These are all factors impinging on migration.

2(b) Dimensions of Migration in West Africa

We realize that movements of people could occur in many dimensions. There is child trafficking for labour, which has gained and retained the attention of the world for quite a while now. There is also the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation. This paper however focuses on voluntary movement of able-bodied people as opposed to human trafficking, which connotes some elements of coercion. West Africa has had a long history of population mobility, both internal and external (Black et. al. 2004). As observed by De Haan 2000:17), “around one-third of West Africans live outside their district or village of birth, whilst 42 per cent of the total number of international migrants residing in Africa are located in West Africa.”

Kalasa (1994:23) noted “that over a thirty-year period from 1960 to 1990, it has been estimated that international migration alone involved 7.2 million, excluding Nigeria, representing around 11 percent of the median population of the region in that period”. Recurrent studies have shown

that for a long time, West Africa has been a net loser of population due to the effects of migration Kalasa (1994); De Haan, (2000); and Black et al 2004) adverted to this topic. Of the 16 countries in contemporary West Africa, 11 are net losers of population. Of the 16, the only exceptions are Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Liberia, Togo and Mauritania as shown in table 1.

Table I: Selected Development and Migration Indicators for West African Countries

Country	Population (millions) 2000	G.D per capital (US PPP) 2000	Human Development Index (HDI) 2000	Migrant Stock (%) 2000	Average Annual net migration rate per 1000 1995-2000
Benin	6.3	990	0.420	1.6	-3.2
Burkina Faso	11.5	976	0.325	9.7	-5.5
Cape Verde	0.4	4,863	0.715	2.4	-2.5
Cote d'Ivoire	16.0	1,630	0.428	14.6	0.8
Gambia	1.3	1,649	0.405	14.2	9.1
Ghana	19.3	1,964	0.548	3.2	-1.2
Guinea	8.2	1,982	0.414	9.1	-6.2
Guinea Bissau	1.2	755	0.349	1.6	-2.9
Liberia	2.9			5.5	36.5
Mali	11.4	797	0.386	0.4	-4.7
Mauritania	2.7	1,677	0.438	2.3	3.4
Niger	10.8	746	0.277	1.1	-0.1
Nigeria	113.9	896	0.462	0.7	-0.2
Senegal	9.4	1,510	0.431	3.0	-1.1
Sierra Leone	4.4	490	0.275	1.1	-7.8
Togo	4.5	1,442	0.493	4.0	6.1

Source: Culled from Black et al. 2004:8

For some of these countries, migration has been essentially internal i.e. within the region. The responses to local economic attractions such as cocoa farming, timber, rubber and palm wine tapping and even wars and other disruptions had caused such internal movements for decades. Beyond these, however, there has remained a long history of movements far beyond this region and Africa continent itself. For the West Africa region, the relatively nearness of many parts of Europe seems an added impulse to set off from home. To many, Europe seems merely like just beyond the Sahara Desert. The reality of obstacles is only of consequence much later. Favourable routes of attraction have been from West Africa across the Sahara desert to Europe

through Morocco, the Canary Islands, Algeria, and neighbouring areas of the Magreb. From these areas the migrants hope to gain direct entry to the Southern countries of the European Community particularly Italy, Spain, Portugal and Malta regardless of the militarized barriers.

Movements to Europe and North America also appear to have been higher in West Africa than other parts of the continent. As noted by Robin (1997), figures from the 2000 US census show that West Africans made up more than half of those born in sub-Saharan Africa, with most entering the country since 1990. Robin (1997) also quoted data from EUROSTAT and other sources for the period (1985-93) which suggests that 45,000 West Africans already lived in Europe at that time, around a third (128,000) in France, followed by the UK (82,000), Germany (74,000) and Italy (63,000).

Black et al (2004) contended that,

Migration to Europe have traditionally followed old colonial linkages, with the bulk of West Africans in France coming from francophone countries, and those in the UK coming from Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia and Sierra Leone...

3. The West African Region

The West African region here being discussed represent exactly the same geographical unit known as ECOWAS countries, with Nigeria as its eastern most border and Mauritania as its Western frontier. Within this region, there are sixteen countries, five English speaking namely Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Liberia; two Portuguese speaking, Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau, and nine French speaking countries namely Republic of Benin, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. In all, this region has a population of about 328 million as projected (from the 1998 population of 245 million (Olukoshi, 2001:4). Remarkable about this population is its high fertility rate. The West African region also has a rate of polygyny higher than other parts of Africa (Dorjahn 1965). The trend has persisted. Higher fertility connotes sizeable youthful population. When these factors are compounded by regional policies that foster unemployment in the sub-region it is no wonder that many able bodied youths find themselves traversing through formidable obstacles to look for better lives outside the continent.

This region witnessed historically the exploitation of British colonialism, French colonial and imperial activities as well as the Portuguese colonial activities. These influences are still felt in the entire region in a variety of ways despite the formation of post-colonial regional Economic and Political unions like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the sub-regional groupings like the Mano River Union. These unions have however not dampened the telling effects of globalization and neo-colonialism.

Having looked at West Africa in general let us in greater detail examine some key impulses driving emigration in the three selected countries namely: Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal. Together, the three countries account for about 60 percent of the total population of West African region as at the year 2000 (Black et al 2004).

Senegal

Even before the end of the last decade, precisely by 1999, half a million Senegalese were reported to be living outside their country. Most of these people are however illegal migrants. A breakdown of the figures can be seen in table 2.

Table 2: Senegalese Migrants Worldwide

Destination	Registered	Non-Registered	Total
Cote d'Ivoire	50,000	100,000	150,000
France	45,000	60,000	105,000
Gambia			100,000
Italy			60,000
Mauritania	12,000	45,000	57,000
Egypt	2,000	30,000	32,000
North America	3,200	15,000	18,000
Iberian Peninsular			Over 15,000
Gabon			15,000
Germany	1,500	5,000	Over 6,000
Total	113,700	255,000	558,700

Source: Diatta and Mbow, 1999

An examination of these figures indicates that the greatest numbers of Senegalese were living in France, the homeland of their colonial masters; while Germany recorded the least number of migrants. Some of the attractions to France include the affinity of language and the ease in communication, the certainty of locating people from their home country who would in many ways smoothen the trauma involved in the process of relocating to a place totally new. It has also been observed by earlier writers that the rapidity with which people adjust to foreign environments has to do with the similarity of the environment of the migration origin and that of the migration destination. The position of Senegal on the tip of the West African coast suggests nearness to Europe and the sea trip to Europe as a very attractive route. The population of countries more inland seem to prefer the Trans Saharan routes. The foregoing can be considered as attracting forces for migration by Senegalese into Europe in general and to France particularly.

Following her independence from France, Senegal expected but got very much less than satisfactory levels of aid from the colonial power. Migration from Senegal to France increased as is reflected by the negative net migration. In 1999, for instance, migration of Senegalese to France was put at 105,000 and to Europe in general minus the United Kingdom exceeded 186,000. This absolute number does not reflect properly the number that set out from home to confront dangers, the deaths on the way and various failures to reach the desired end of these migrants. There have been suggestions that at least half of those who set out on this perilous journey never get to their destination and never come back. When we consider Senegalese in France for example we observe that the living conditions, as are those of the other populations from West African countries are dismal. One need not live very long in Paris to note with dismay the suffering of West Africans in the land reputed for its equality, liberty and fraternity.

Successive governments in Senegal have not had adequate policies to accommodate the employment of school leavers not to talk of the entire able-bodied population in which the urge

for migration is most felt. The inauguration of the Wade government in 2000 came in with high expectations as he had been in opposition for a long time. In actual performance however, the result has been business as usual. Whereas in Euro-America unemployment represents a very crucial force closely monitored by responsible and responsive governments, West African governments have not considered these issues, that hack at the root of their peoples security and welfare. It is well known that the very high level of unemployment in Germany was an important contributor to the fall of the government of Chancellor Schroeder.

Government policies in Senegal have not had favourable effects on the employment of the able bodied. Added to this factor which engenders the urge for migration, is the effect of the subsidization of agricultural products by the Euro-American world as well as the importation of cheap and low quality goods from China. The importation of cheap textile materials from China for instance has for quite a long time wrought havoc on the profitability of producing cotton goods in Senegal and other West African countries. Local textile industries have suffered heavily from this kind of trade liberalization. Again, Senegal that was well known for fisheries is now steadily lagging behind on account of the fishery policies of industrialized Europe and Asia, which encroach on fishing grounds even in the very backyard of Senegal and other West African countries. These mounting disadvantages were expected by some optimists to be taken care of by aid from Europe and America. But such aid has always been inadequate. In any case aid is invariably accompanied by numerous conditionalities in addition to depriving the Africans of their self worth and national pride. It has also been established that aid cannot really be a substitute for homegrown policies geared towards the reduction of unemployment and institution of development policies for Senegal and other West African countries. Besides as a CNN programme on the 1st June 2007 revealed “two years after Glenegal in 2005, of the \$500 million pledged by the G8 for Africa, only 20 per cent has been given”.

The NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development) was finally put in place on October 23, 2001. Its inauguration was spearheaded by Presidents Tabo Mbeki of South Africa, Abdel Aziz, Bouteflika of Algeria, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal. An important part of its expectation was vigorous economic policies that will impact favourably on employment, on the welfare and security of Senegalese and not on the emphasis on peer review and inane political statements while migrations of the able-bodies continue to grow unabated. No wonder the NEPAD has humourously been termed “KNEE PAD” indicating the willingness of its African subscribers to “stay longer on its knees while pleading for aid” (Wikipedia, 2006). Although growth and development were among its primary objectives of NEPAD, its actual performance has fallen short of these expectations. The sum total of the policies in Senegal that brought little, if any discernible change in the restiveness of the younger population who contribute almost exclusively to the migrant population if anything the situation is being exacerbated more so with rising expectations.

Ghana

Among Anglophone West African countries, Ghana has occupied an enviable position for quite sometime. It is unarguably the most disciplined among all the Anglophone countries its activities having been streamlined by the government of Kwame Nkrumah and successive governments notable that of Jerry Rawlings. The lack of uniform and sustained policies however impacted negatively on the population at various times. By the 1960s Ghanaian economy had

experienced a downward plunge, which reflected in many aspects of the economy particularly in massive unemployment. Hundreds of thousands of Ghanaians began to migrate not only to neighbouring African countries but also to Europe and North America. Just as France is desirable as a distinction point for Senegalese, so do Ghanaians prefer the United Kingdom as their place of choice in Europe. The attraction stems from the linkage with UK as their past colonial masters. Apart from Nigerians, Ghanaians are probably not only the most populous but also the oldest West African community in the United Kingdom.

According to the 2001 census in the UK, England and Wales alone had 15,537 persons of Ghanaian origin (Bump, 2006:3). This represents a rise of 72 percent from 32,277 persons as reflected in the 1991 census. This number is composed of people on students visa, work permits and a rising number of African refugees and migrants as the years have progressed. A sizeable population of Ghanaians in UK are experts (Doctors, nurses, etc.). Ghanaian migrant populations are also found in Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, and some other European countries. In Germany for instance, there are 20,000 Ghanaians , 18,000 in the Netherlands, and 32,754 in Italy.

By the onset of the Busia government, the prices of cocoa had begun to decline appreciably at the same time as imports were rising. This led to huge trade deficits that neither the half hearted debt relief nor the various forms of foreign assistance could stem. This again is a reflection of the disadvantaged position in foreign trade in which the producers of agricultural raw materials in Africa find themselves vis-à-vis the producers of industrialized goods. The succeeding government 1972-1978 placed its policy around self-reliance on food production, which it could neither effect nor put on a firm footing. Again, unemployment grew leading ultimately to mass exodus of refugees and migrants. None of these governments had any economic policy tailored towards the worthwhile diminutions of unemployment even though every government had spoken of rural and social development and the alleviation of poverty. The result was that by 1992 an estimated 31.4 percent of Ghanaians were living below poverty line, while by 1997 unemployment was put at 20 percent (Ghana in Wikipedia 2006). Out of the estimated labour force of 10.62 million in 2005 unemployment still remained about 21 percent. From comparative observation, this 21 percent comprise of most active members of the population. Neither the membership of the African Union (AU) nor of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the newfangled New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) has eliminated the Ghanaian urge to migrate. Many of these migrants suffer with others, the indignities, disgrace and privations that migrants face in their bid to get to Europe illegally. With these go, the national disgrace and opprobrium meted out to countries of West Africa.

Nigeria

At independence, Nigeria had functional effective labour offices and labour exchanges that recorded and updated statistics on the movement of labour, the level and incidence of unemployment, geographical and sectoral areas of surpluses and shortages. With that sort of arrangement, it was possible for government to know at each stage approximately who was unemployed, their qualification and length of unemployment. These facilities are totally lacking in present day Nigeria. There are no statistics, no reliable data base so the government cannot say at any stage the number of the unemployed. Thus, for instance when President George Bush

of the United States declared as he did on May 5th 2005 or thereabouts that “274,000 new jobs were created in April 2005 and that the jobless population then stood at 5.4 percent”, he had a good idea of what he was talking about. That could provide the basis for further planning. This is not the case in Nigeria.

In Nigeria today, the issue of unemployment, which provides the major impetus for migration, has assumed a paramount position. We are informed by the nationwide government economic policy called the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) document that “the percentage rate of unemployment declined from 18 percent to 10.8 percent in 2003 (with estimated 3.5 million jobs created during the period)”. Even the most charitable would demur at this set of statistics, which has not been our forte in our recent history. The major contributors to this sizeable but ignored unemployment in Nigeria has been such economic policies, as privatization not well considered, the carryover effects of SAP not remedied over the years, the policy of massive retrenchment of staff following strictly the recommendations of IMF and the World Bank, and the plight of pensioners (until recently almost totally ignored). Added to these is the reckless liberalization policy, which has opened the entire economy of the country to the inroads of the industrialized economies that have taken advantage of the weakness of our bargaining position. In this type of situation, there is no parity. There is no justice as the setting is inherently asymmetrical.

4. Migration and Underdevelopment

Like the Trans Atlantic and Trans Saharan slave trade which was destructive to the development of Africa. Migration of able bodied manpower from this continent has the effect of depriving the West African region of choice segments of the population that forms and spearheads to growth of any nation. This is because, it physically removes from circulation within the continent potential contributors to the growth of the area thus affected. True, remittances represent an important contributions from the migrants away from home especially those in Europe and America, nevertheless, this is more offset by the fall in family contributions from the able bodied male members of the population in the development of their countries in West Africa in general and their respective families in particular. It is sometimes argued that most of those who migrate are not the most expertly trained and that Africa benefits from the exile of the less desirable of their population. This is moot. What Africa loses by migration, the destination countries gain from the availability of labour invariably cheap as migrants are content to “fill the three D jobs: *Dirty, Degrading, and Dangerous*” (Reynieri 2001) .

Moreover, development cannot be really defined outside the total improvement of the human population, thus enabling it to contribute meaningfully to the betterment of its environment. Thus, the uncoordinated migrations of West African peoples in this present age should be seen as a blow to our development. It is a major factor, which contributes to our underdevelopment. Now and again, various African leaders appeal to Africans in the Diaspora to come back home and contribute to the development of their countries. We consider as less than genuine these calls since no concrete dependable and trustworthy policy back up such calls to bring out the best in the population thus conducing to the maximal development of the country for the peoples good rather than for the benefit of foreign powers and their agencies.

5. Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the various ways in which globalization impact on migration and in the process engenders underdevelopment in West Africa. The unhindered movement of capital, trade and technology from the developed nations in West Africa has not only disrupted the economies of West Africa but also contributed to the high level of unemployment especially of the youth. Wage decline, job insecurity and general poverty have also been intensified in the region. The paper notes that commercial agriculture has been rendered purposeless in West Africa on account of the massive subsidies enjoyed by agricultural sector of the developed nations of the world that increasingly dump their own agricultural products in the region. The migration of the disadvantaged and economically displaced peoples of West African nations is thus a natural response to the severe economic hardship inflicted on the African continent by globalization and the accompanying forces.

Unfortunately, West African leaders presently seem incapable of doing much to contend with the challenges posed by globalization and migration. The economic policies enunciated by ECOWAS, NEPAD and other bodies drastically fall short of expectations in addressing the challenges posed by globalization in West Africa. Unemployment as a major driving force in migration is not given prominence in policy formulations by West African leaders to tackle underdevelopment and poverty in the region. Until the issue of unemployment is squarely addressed, poverty and underdevelopment will continue to stare Africa in the face. So too will migration remain a crucial matter touching the soul of West Africa.

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