Reducing Unemployment, Poverty and Promoting Empowerment through Skills Acquisition (TVET): A Case Study of Returnee Migrants

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ABSTRACT

This paper explains recent statistics and phenomena related to returnee migrants in Edo state, Nigeria. The significance of this paper is that it creates awareness on causes and motives behind irregular migration leading to repatriation (returned migrants). Based on data gathered from most research participants (returnee migrant) – the quest to improve one's socioeconomic living conditions are the motives behind most Nigerians' migration journey (regular or irregular) to western countries (i.e., Europe, Canada, USA, etc.). The socioeconomic imbalance in Nigeria is mainly caused by the high rate of unemployment and poverty; thus, the majority of Nigerians are of the opinion that migrating to western countries, is a potential pathway to an improved socioeconomic living condition. This paper further suggests – skill acquisition (TVET) as an approach to reduce unemployment and poverty; thus, economically improving the socioeconomic living conditions of the majority of Nigerians.

Keywords: Migrants, Returnee migrants, Poverty, Unemployment, Skill acquisition (TVET), and Empowerment

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, cases of returnee migrants' gory tales have become a thing to worry about. A typical example was the infamous 'Libya slave-trade' saga, where migrants en-route European countries, were held hostage and or slave-traded at their transit point, Libya. Some of the 'Libya slave-trade' victims (migrants) were repatriated to their respective countries; with over 90% of the overall migrants being of Nigerian nationality, thus repatriated to Nigerians (see: CNN, 14 November 2017; IOM, 2018).

This incident led both the federal, state government, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Nigeria to establish productively engaging activities to boost the socio-economic living conditions of Nigerian returnee migrants. For instance, the Edo state government established Edo State Taskforce Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT) – an agency that among other things have collaborated with NGOs (i.e., IOM, etc.) to organizes skill acquisition (TVET) programmes for returnee migrants; in order to equip them with skills that would be productively and financially rewarding to the participants (returnee migrants) in the future.