INFLUENCE OF MIGRATION ON WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY: SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE

[1]Rachael **MISAN-RUPPEE** & [2]Sunday **OBRO**
[1]Department of Social Science Education,
Niger Delta University,Irri Campus
[2]Department of Social Science Education,
Delta State University, Abraka

Abstract

The migration process has been a vital part of human existence. This study examined influence of migration on women's peace and security. The study population comprises Social Studies students of Delta State University. The study adopted the quantitative research design. Sixty-three participants were selected through a simple random sampling and a structured questionnaire administered. Descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequency were determined. Pearson's Chi-square was used for testing the hypothesis. The results indicated no significant relation between Social Studies perspectives on influence of migration on women's peace and security based on their gender and course level. The study concluded that it imperative and necessary for more sensitization on the impact of migration on women's peace and security. It was recommended that the government and stakeholders develop gender-responsive, human rights-based migration policies supporting non-discrimination and gender equality.

Keywords: Migration, Women, Peace, Security, Social Studies

Introduction

The migration process has played a vital part or aspect of human existence. Since the beginning of time, several individuals have migrated for social, economic, or political reasons (Koser 2016). Any individual relocating across international borders or within a state out/away from their usual place of dwelling or residence is considered a migrant by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM 2019). This definition applies notwithstanding the individual's legal status, the nature/type of the movement (involuntary or voluntary), the reason for the migration, or duration of stay. Furthermore, it is vital to understand that internal (within) migration and international (foreign) migration are interconnected in certain instances. In this regard, an increase in internally displaced persons' population increases the escalating number of refugees (immigrants) and those seeking asylum, which contributes to the increasing pool of international migrants. Majority of people have been displaced due to continued violence in many countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Syria, and Myanmar (United Nations High Commission for Refugees., 2018). Consequently, the worsening political and social situations in a number of nations have put millions of people in danger.

According to Peri (2016), the economic significance of migration has long been recognized and rising global surges of international (globally) migration have placed more emphasis on it in recent years. Similarly, World Bank posits that "migration contributes significantly to human development, shared prosperity, and poverty alleviation" (World Bank, 2023). Though, this is not always the case, as they have remained a growing concern about the challenges faced by girls and women due to migration in recent years. It is imperative to note that women migration is both a social and a public health concern. Five to ten million individuals leave their home country each year to live in another, according to official statistics, with a higher percentage of women compared to men (Davis et al., 2009; Guruge et al., 2010). Migration, with around 281 million foreign migrants and an

anticipated 740 million internal migrants, is a worldwide occurrence that must be recognised as a social factor influencing health (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UN DESA], 2020; IOM, 2015; Davies et al., 2009). This is because mobility affects a person's mental and social well-being and physical vulnerability. United Nations estimates show that women and girls accounted for nearly half, or 134.9 million, of all migrants in 2017. (United Nations, 2018). Hence, the migration of women has always been an important component of migration internationally (UNDESA, 2006). Although, lots of migrants move voluntarily, however, evidence suggests that record number of women are coerced or forced to relocate from their usual residence to escape conflicts, persecution, environmental degradation, disasters, or other circumstances that jeopardize their safety, means of livelihood, or habitat (UNDESA, 2006). Arguably, the impacts and bearings of conflict on women's and girls' lives are severe and multifaceted. Sexual violence is often a byproduct or weapon of war, and women and children are especially vulnerable to gender-based violence or sexual exploitation and abuse in humanitarian contexts like internally displaced people's camps.

Furthermore, migration also influences women's peace and security by exposing them to sexual exploitation. Women who move or migrate illegally or become victims of human trafficking may experience sexual abuse and other kinds/forms of exploitation, that can be detrimental to their mental health (Davis et al., 2009). Moreover, research revealed that certain facets of the immigration procedure could be extremely stressful and degrading (World Health Organization, 2010). For instance, asking the same questions again and over about the victimization of immigrants may exacerbate mental health issues or problems for examplepost-traumatic, anxiety, stress disorder and depression by bringing up memories of traumatizing events (Guruge et al., 2010).

Additionally, women immigrants face greater difficulties from racism since they must meet the expectations of their homes,

families and peers while adjusting to a modern/new culture and peer pressure (Berman &Jiwani, 2008). For WHO (2010), women are systematically discriminated against when it comes to authority, prestige, and resources and are typically assigned lower positions than men in most countries. Particularly prevalent forms of gender discrimination experienced by immigrant women include lower-paying occupations, lower professional ranks, and work in the informal sector compared to men (Guruge et al., 2010).

Globally, the influence or impact of migration on peace and security is gradually increasing. However, the results are particularly severe for women (UNDESA, 2006b; Kurtuldu&Sahin, 2018). Immigrants have been flocking to North East Nigeria in recent years. North East Nigeria is home to a huge number of displaced people, one in three women has experienced some form of abuse (sexual and others), and one in five has experienced physical violence (IOM, 2020). Most incidents of sexual assault, exploitation, and trafficking in humans/persons go unreported, and victims often choose not to seek assistance due to fear of stigmatization by the community or retaliation from perpetrators. According to Gurol and Turfan (2019), children and women are the most susceptible groups in war and migrant movements, and adverse effects are most probable to befall these groups.

The purpose for migration, the place/abode of destination, the way society views migrants, and the ease of accessibility to services are all significant factors influencing how well migrants adjust. Kara and Naz (2018) opine that women-specific immigration is frequently motivated by family mobility. In addition, factors including better living conditions, economic reasons, and war have made it possible for women to involve themselves more actively in the process of migration p. The problem has made women more vulnerable than ever to a wide range of physiological and mental consequences.

On the other hand, according to Oluremi (2021), the United Nations Women, Peace, and Security agenda is generally regarded

as the foremost international framework for increasing women's involvement in resolving conflicts. It is now acknowledged that women and children are vulnerable and that women should play an active part in peacebuilding efforts. As a result, more are beginning to grasp how migration affects women's safety and security, especially in times of war and related concerns like sexual abuse. Hence, this paper seeks to know the perspective of Social Studies students on the subject matter.

Objectives of the Study

The paper examined the influence of migration on women peace and security from the perspective of Social Studies students.

i. determine Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women peace and security based on gender.
ii. ascertain Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women peace and security based on course level.

Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no statistical significant relationship between Social Studies students' perspectives on migration's influence on women's peace and security based on gender.
Ho2: There is no statistical significant relationship between Social Studies students' perspectives on migration's influence on women's peace and security based on course level.

Methods

The study population comprises Social Studies students at Delta State University. Sixty-three participants were selected through a simple random sampling and a structured questionnaire administered. Descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequency were determined. Pearson's Chi-square was used for testing the hypothesis. P-value <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results

Table 1: Frequency distribution of Social Studies students' perspectives on the influence of migration on women's peace and security (N=63)

Variables	No		Yes	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Have you ever considered emigrating?	31	49.2	32	50.8
Do you know anyone who has emigrated?	33	54.2	30	47.6
Would you advise any woman to migrate?	31	49.2	32	50.8
Migration can be voluntary or involuntary	3	4.8	60	95.2
Human trafficking is also a form/types ofmigration	14	22.3	49	77.7
Sexual violence and abuse are more prevalent among female immigrants.	14	22.3	14	77.7
Migration has done more harm/damage than good	18	28.6	45	71.4
Is there a policy that protects female immigrants?	33	52.4	30	47.6
Do you think it is effective?	43	68.3	20	31.7
AVERAGE%	*39.2%*		*60.8%*	

Key: 0-25% = Low; 26-50% = Moderate; 51-100% = High

Table 1 presents the percentage distribution of Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women's peace and security. The results revealed that 50.8% of the respondents have considered emigrated and will advise women to migrate while 47.6% knows someone that has emigrated. Furthermore, 71.4% indicated that migration has done more harm/damage than good. Moreover, 52.4% are not aware of any policy that protects female immigrants and 68.3% of the respondents indicated that the policy to protect female immigrants is not effective. Overall, the table shows that the respondents have a high level of perspective about migration (60.8%).

Ho1: There is no statistically significant relationship between Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women peace and security based on gender.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis on significant relationship between Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women peace and security based on gender

Variable			No	Yes	Test Statistics
Gender	Male	F	99	15	
		%	14.3%	23.8%	$X_2(1)$=0.992
	Female	F	10	29	p.319
		%	15.9%	46.0%	

From table 2, we can see here that $\chi(1) = 0.992, \rho = .319$. This tells us that no statistically significant association between influence of migration and women peace and security based on gender from in Social Studies students' perspective. It shows that both males and females equally have high perception of how migration influence women. Hence, the null hypothesis was hereby accepted.

Ho$_2$:   There is no significant relationship between Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women peace and security based on course level.

Table 3: Chi-square analysis on significant relationship between Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women peace and security based on course level

Variable			No	Yes	Test Statistics
Course Level	200	F	10	20	
		%	15.9%	31.7%	$X_2(1)$=0.000
	300	F	11	22	p.1.000
		%	17.5%	34.9%	

From table 3, we can see here that $\chi(1) = 0.000, \rho = 1.000$. This tells us that no statistically significant association between influence of migration and women peace and security based on course level from Social Studies students' perspective. That is,

students in both levels equally have high perception of how migration affects women. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Discussions

The result shows that majority and cluster of the respondents (60.8%) have a high perspective on influence of migration on women's peace and security. This finding is in agreement with Gurol and Turfan (2019) who posit that women and children are the most exposed or vulnerable groups in war and migrant movements, and adverse effects are most likely to befall these groups. Furthermore, the result revealed no significant relationship between Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women peace and security based on gender. This tells us that both genders are knowledgeable on how migration negatively impacts women. This aligns with Guruge et al. (2010) who opine that immigrant women face greater instances of gender harassment and discrimination due to their employment in informal sectors, lower professional ranks, and lower-paying positions than men. Additionally, the study showed no significant relationship between Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women peace and security based on course level; that is, students in both levels equally have high perception of how migration affects women. This is in line with the study carried out by Davies et al. (2009) who reported a no relationship. They discovered that migrants' social factors impact their health. Researchers noted that women who participate in unlawful migration or become victims of human trafficking may experience sexual abuse and several other types of exploitation, leading to detrimental impacts on their mental health.

Conclusion

Although there are numerous advantages to immigration, however, immigrant and refugee (migrant) women face significant challenges that have a bearing on their peace and

security when settling into a different culture and way of life. This study examined Social Studies students' perspective on the influence of migration on women's peace and security. Although the majority or array of respondents felt that migration had caused more problems than it has solved, nevertheless, a significant proportion of the participants expressed their support for women/female migration. Moreover, the generality of the participants lack knowledge regarding immigration rules that safeguard women. This highlights the necessity for increased awareness regarding the influence of migration on the peace and security of women.

Recommendations

Government and stakeholders must develop gender-responsive, human rights-based migration policies that support non-discrimination and gender equality and provide more opportunities for regular movement so that people who migrate, principally women and children, can access services, legal protection, and social networks in their countries of nationality or origin, movement/transit, and destination. Additionally, the national regulations and laws governing migration should be revised to make them more gender-responsive by incorporating provisions that prohibit discrimination, uphold gender equality, mandate health insurance for migrant (refugee) workers at all stages and   levels, and provide extra protection for vulnerable worker groups, for instance domestic workers.

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