



SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DETERMINANTS OF ‘JAPA’ SYNDROME: THE EMERGENT PLIGHT AND FLIGHT OF THE PRODUCTIVE NIGERIAN YOUTH¹

John Lola OKUNOLA²

Department of Adult and Development Education, College of
Specialized and Professional Education, Tai Solarin Federal
University of Education
Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria
E-mail: okunolalj@tasued.edu.ng



Abstract. *The current youth migration in Nigeria, often colloquially referred to as “Japa Syndrome” in Nigeria, has become a significant socio-economic phenomenon with far-reaching implications for both individuals and society. This study investigates determining factors driving Japa syndrome type of migration among Nigerian youths. The study adopted an exploratory research design and a qualitative method. The study utilized that convenience sampling method to select 40 people whose ages were between 18 and 35 years. The data were gathered through in-depth interviews and thematically analyzed. The findings reveal a complex interplay of economic, social, political, and transnational factors shaping migration decisions among Nigerian youths. Economic factors, including high unemployment rates, stagnant wages, and limited job opportunities, emerged as primary push factors prompting migration, while social factors such as educational attainment, family background, and peer influence also played crucial roles. Moreover, political instability and governance failures were identified as contributing factors driving youths to seek opportunities abroad. Base on the findings, the study proposes a series of policy recommendations to address the socioeconomic determinants of Japa Syndrome migration among Nigerian youths.*

Keywords: *Youth Migration, Japa Syndrome, Socioeconomic Determinants, Political Instability, Governance and Policy Implementation.*

JEL CODE: F22; J61; H11

¹ DOI: doi.org/10.69581/RJPA.2025.11.03

² ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9870-3462>



1. Introduction

The concept of “Japa Syndrome” has emerged as a notable migration phenomenon among Nigerian youths. This concept refers to the trend where young Nigerians opt to leave their homeland in search of better economic prospects abroad (Adewuyi, 2019; Odeyemi, 2020). Nigeria, as Africa’s most populous nation, faces significant socio-economic challenges. These include high unemployment rates, widespread poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and political instability (Okunola, 2020; Olasupo, 2021; Oyeboode, 2017). These challenges contribute to a sense of disillusionment among Nigerian youths, many of whom perceive limited opportunities for personal and professional growth within their homeland. Japa Syndrome is driven by a complex interplay of socioeconomic factors (Ajani and Fakunle, 2018; Oluwatobi *et al.*, 2018; Oyeboode, 2017). Economic disparities, limited job opportunities, income inequality, and perceived lack of social mobility prompt Nigerian youths to consider migration as a means of escaping economic hardships and pursuing a better quality of life elsewhere (Ajayi and Adebayo, 2018; Faist, 2018; Amole and Ayoade, 2019). Additionally, political instability, corruption, and insecurity further contribute to the allure of migration among young Nigerians (Uwazie and Umejiesi, 2019).

While previous research has explored migration trends among Nigerian youths, there remains a gap in understanding the specific socioeconomic determinants of Japa Syndrome (Afolabi and Oni, 2020). Most existing studies focus on broader migration patterns or general youth demographics, overlooking the motivations driving the phenomenon (Bankole, 2016). Thus, there is a pressing need for empirical research that examines the socioeconomic dynamics underpinning Japa Syndrome. The purpose of this study is to investigate the socioeconomic determinants of Japa Syndrome among Nigerian youths. By examining the intersecting influences of economic, social, and political factors, the study aims to shed light on why and how young Nigerians decide to embark on this migratory journey. Through a comprehensive analysis of these determinants, the study seeks to inform policy interventions and youth empowerment initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of Japa Syndrome (Adeyemi and Oladipo, 2022).

2. Statement of problem

The phenomenon of Japa Syndrome among Nigerian youths is influenced by a myriad of socioeconomic factors that intertwine to shape migration decisions (Adepoju, 2017; Bakewell,



2018). These factors encompass economic, social, and political dimensions, each playing a crucial role in driving the migration trend and its implications (Fakunle *et al.*, 2023). Nigerian youths are confronted with stark disparities in opportunities and living standards (Aderinto, 2018). Despite Nigeria's status as an oil-rich nation and possessing abundant natural resources, economic development remains unevenly distributed, leading to high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth demographic. Many young Nigerians face limited job prospects, stagnant wages, and inadequate access to essential services such as healthcare and education (Adeyemi and Oladipo, 2022; Alkali, 2019). In this context, the allure of better economic opportunities abroad becomes compelling, prompting individuals to seek avenues for upward mobility beyond the confines of their homeland. Also, Nigerian youths grapple with pervasive societal challenges that impact their quality of life and sense of belonging (Ojo-Ebenezer and Fakunle, 2024). Corruption, nepotism, and inequality contribute to a sense of disillusionment and mistrust in the country's institutions (Ojo-Ebenezer and Fakunle, 2023). Moreover, cultural norms and expectations place considerable pressure on young people to achieve success and provide for their families, creating a sense of obligation to seek opportunities wherever they may be found (Afolayan, 2015).

The desire to escape societal constraints and pursue personal aspirations motivates many youths to embark on the journey of migration, seeking a fresh start in foreign lands (Agunbiade, 2020). Nigeria's volatile political landscape adds another layer of complexity to the migration equation (Adewuyi, 2019). Political instability, governance failures, and security concerns exacerbate the challenges faced by young Nigerians (Ajayi and Adebayo, 2018). These situations erode confidence in the country's future prospects. In regions plagued by conflict and insecurity, migration may be perceived as a means of escaping violence and securing a safer environment for oneself and one's family. Additionally, disillusionment with the political system may drive individuals to seek refuge in countries with more stable and transparent governance structures. The implications of Japa Syndrome extend beyond the individual level to encompass broader societal dynamics.

The departure of skilled and ambitious youths contributes to a brain drain phenomenon, depriving Nigeria of valuable human capital and impeding socio-economic development (Akande, 2020; Omilola, 2019). Furthermore, the loss of young, productive members of society exacerbates demographic challenges, potentially leading to an aging population and labor shortages (Bakewell, 2018; Osaghae, 2016). Addressing the root causes of Japa Syndrome



requires a multifaceted approach that tackles the underlying socioeconomic disparities and fosters an environment conducive to youth empowerment and economic prosperity (Black *et al.*, 2020; Oluyemi and Atanda, 2020; Uwazie and Umejiesi, 2019). Policymakers must prioritize investments in education, job creation, and infrastructure development to provide young Nigerians with viable alternatives to migration. Additionally, efforts to combat corruption, improve governance, and enhance security are essential for restoring confidence in Nigeria's future and stemming the tide of youth emigration. There is a need to conduct empirical studies on the factors that promote this syndrome among Nigerian youth as one of the ways to contribute to finding solutions to the syndrome.

3. Objective of the study

The sole objective of this was to examine the factors that promote Japa syndrome among Nigerian youth.

4. Literature review

Youth migration patterns in Nigeria constitute a complex phenomenon shaped by various social, economic, and political factors. Adepoju (2004) provides comprehensive insights into the prevalence and dynamics of internal migration among Nigerian youths, highlighting the significant role of rural-urban migration in search of educational and employment opportunities. Similarly, Afolayan (2015) examines the motivations behind youth migration within Nigeria, emphasizing factors such as economic disparities, educational aspirations, and family dynamics. Moreover, Black *et al.* (2020) offer valuable perspectives on international migration among Nigerian youths, exploring migration routes to destinations in Europe, North America, and the Middle East. These studies collectively underscore the diverse trajectories and motivations underlying youth migration in Nigeria, contributing to an understanding of migration patterns and trends.

The economic impacts of youth migration are a crucial aspect to consider when analyzing the phenomenon of Japa Syndrome among Nigerian youths. Aderinto (2018) investigated the role of remittances sent by migrant youths to their families in Nigeria, highlighting their contributions to household income and poverty alleviation. Additionally, Alkali (2019) examines the broader economic implications of migration, including its effects on labor markets, entrepreneurship, and local economies. Understanding the economic motivations and



outcomes of youth migration is essential for assessing the opportunities and challenges associated with migrating for employment and economic advancement. Exploring the social and cultural dimensions of migration offers valuable insights into the experiences and challenges faced by Nigerian youths as they navigate the migration process. Bankole (2016) and Falola (2018) investigate issues such as identity formation, social networks, and cultural integration among young migrants, highlighting the complex interplay between individual experiences and broader societal dynamics.

Additionally, Odeyemi (2020) examines the impact of migration on family dynamics and social relationships within Nigerian communities, shedding light on the complexities of migration as a social phenomenon. By exploring these dimensions, researchers gain a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural factors influencing migration decisions and outcomes among Nigerian youths. The political economy of migration in Nigeria is shaped by a myriad of factors, including political instability, governance failures, and policy frameworks. Omilola (2019) and Osaghae (2016) explore the role of political instability and governance challenges in driving migration patterns, highlighting how issues such as corruption, conflict, and weak institutions contribute to migration pressures. Moreover, Adepoju (2017) and Bakewell (2018) analyze the intersection of politics, economics, and migration governance in Nigeria, emphasizing systemic barriers and opportunities for intervention. Understanding the political economy of migration is crucial for contextualizing migration decisions and developing effective policy responses to address migration challenges.

Youth empowerment and development initiatives play a vital role in addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by young people in Nigeria. Oluwatobi *et al.* (2018) and Oluyemi and Atanda (2020) evaluate programs focused on education, skills training, entrepreneurship, and employment generation, highlighting their potential to empower young people and create sustainable alternatives to migration. Additionally, Amole and Ayoade (2019) examine the effectiveness of youth-focused policies and interventions in promoting socio-economic development and reducing migration pressures. By assessing the impact of these initiatives, researchers can identify best practices and inform policy decisions aimed at promoting youth empowerment and socio-economic development.

Trans-nationalism and diaspora engagement offer unique insights into the links between migration, development, and social change in Nigeria. Faist (2018) and Levitt and Jaworsky (2017) explore the impact of diaspora remittances on economic development and poverty



reduction, highlighting the significant contributions of migrant youths to their home communities. Furthermore, Agunbiade (2020) analyzes diaspora-led development initiatives and the role of migrant youths in contributing to development efforts, emphasizing the importance of harnessing diaspora resources and expertise for sustainable development. By examining transnational dynamics, researchers gain a deeper understanding of the inter-connectivity of migration and development processes and their implications for Nigerian youths.

5. Theoretical framework

The current study adopted several theories to explain several factors that promote Japa syndrome. One of them is neoclassical economics theory. This perspective posits that individuals make rational decisions based on cost-benefit analyses to maximize their utility. In the context of youth migration, neoclassical economics suggests that individuals migrate in search of better economic opportunities, such as higher wages, improved living standards, and increased employment prospects. This perspective highlights the role of economic factors, such as income differentials, labor market conditions, and economic development disparities, in shaping migration decisions among Nigerian youths. This study also adopted social network theory, which focuses on the role of social relationships and networks in shaping individuals' behaviors and decisions. In the context of youth migration, social network theory posits that migrants are influenced by the social connections and information networks available to them, including family ties, peer relationships, and community networks. Migrants may rely on these social networks for practical support, emotional assistance, and access to migration opportunities, thereby shaping their migration decisions and experiences.

Structural violence theory is another perspective that this study utilized. This theory examines how social structures, institutions, and power dynamics perpetuate inequalities and injustices, leading to the marginalization and disenfranchisement of certain groups in society. In the context of youth migration, structural violence theory posits that the systemic barriers and inequalities, such as poverty, unemployment, political instability, and social exclusion, that push young Nigerians to migrate in search of better opportunities. This perspective pinpoints the need to address the root causes of migration by challenging structural inequalities and promoting social justice and equity. Also, this study adopted trans-nationalism theory emphasizes the inter-connectivity of social, economic, and cultural processes across national



borders. From this perspective, youth migration is viewed not only as a one-time event but as part of broader transnational social fields characterized by flows of people, ideas, and resources between sending and receiving countries. Trans-nationalism theory harps on the importance of understanding the transnational ties, identities, and practices of migrant youths, as well as their contributions to both origin and destination societies. In line with this perspective. This study set to examine the factors that promote Japa syndrome among Nigerian youth.

6. Methods

The study adopted an exploratory research design. The purposive sampling method was adopted to select Lagos State. The rationale for this selection was the presence of youth from different Nigerian tribes in the study location. Also, Lagos State harbors several sea ports and one international airport, which makes the State one of the major exit and entry points in Nigeria. The State has 20 Local Government Areas namely, Agege, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Alimosho, Amuwo-Odofin, Apapa, Badagry, Epe, Eti-Osa, Ibeju-Lekki, Ifako-Ijaye, Ikeja, Ikorodu, Kosofe, Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland, Mushin, Ojo, Oshodi-Isolo, Shomolu, and Surulere. The study utilized that convenience sampling method to select 1 young male and 1 young female, whose ages were between 18 and 35 years, from each of these 20 Local Government Areas, making a total of 40 participants for this study. The study employed qualitative data. The data were gathered through in-depth interviews. A semi-structured interview guide that contained questions on reasons for their preference for being desperate to leave the Nigeria for foreign land was employed to explore the study objective. The thematic analysis was utilized for the gathered data. Various in the analysis included thematic coding to identify patterns and sorting into themes. Ethical principles were adhered to throughout the research process. An informed consent was obtained from each of the participant while their confidentiality, anonymity, and protecting their rights were ensured. Attention was also paid to the credibility, transferability and dependability of the study findings.

Table 1. Participants' socio-economic features

Socio-economic status	Frequency	Percentages
Sex		
Man	20	50.0
Woman	20	50.0



Total	40	100.0
Age		
18-23 years	13	32.5
24-29 years	16	40.0
30-35 years	11	27.5
Total	40	100.0
Education		
No formal education	3	7.5
Primary	7	17.5
Secondary	10	25.0
Post secondary	20	50.0
Total	40	100.0
Occupation		
Public servant	2	5.0
Private worker	11	27.5
Sole proprietor	10	25.0
No job	17	42.5
Total	40	100.0
Religion		
Christians	9	22.5
Muslims	28	70.0
Traditional religion practitioners	3	7.5
Total	40	100.0

Source: *Author's filed survey (2024)*

7. Implication of the sample table

1. That the plight and flight of the youth is no gender bias



2. The syndrome is not religion, ethics or culturally bias.
3. The type of plight and flight is mostly encouraged by both disguised and real unemployment, failed government policies, education, awareness and fear of suffering and poverty. However, this factor where discusses under findings.

8. Hypothesis

The study is more of qualitative than quantitative in the sense that the syndrome is physically felt in all facets of Nigeria socio-economic, education and political space. The only relevant hypothesis is that great percentage at the educated and active Nigeria were within the web of Japa syndrome QED.

9. Findings

9.1. Socio-economic feature of the study participants

Data on the socioeconomic characteristics of the study participants as presented in Table 1 revealed that 50 percent were young males and 50 percent were young females. Regarding age distribution at the time of the study, 32.5 percent were aged 18–23 years, 40 percent were aged 24–29 years, and 27.5 percent were aged 30–35 years. In terms of highest educational attainment, 7.5 percent had no formal education, 17.5 percent had primary education, 25 percent had secondary education, and 50 percent had tertiary education. Occupational distribution showed that 5 percent were government workers, 27.5 percent worked for private organizations, 25 percent were self-employed, and 42.5 percent were unemployed. On religious affiliation, 22.5 percent were Christians, 70 percent were Muslims, and 7.5 percent practiced traditional religion.

9.2. Factors influencing Japa syndrome

The study, drawing on qualitative data, identified several factors that drive Nigerian youth to develop a desperate desire to emigrate by any means. These factors are presented thematically below, supported by excerpts from the data.

(i) Inability to find a suitable job

The study established that the persistent inability of Nigerian youth to secure desired employment opportunities fuels their desperate urge to emigrate in pursuit of better prospects abroad, often referred to as “greener pastures”. This frustration stems from high unemployment



rates, mismatched skills in the local job market, and limited economic mobility, which collectively erode hope and intensify migration aspirations. A male participant vividly captured this sentiment, explaining how the pervasive belief that foreign lands would offer him greater opportunities and fairness cultivated an overwhelming desperation to leave Nigeria at any cost. The finding that unemployment drives desperate emigration among Nigerian youth carries profound sociological implications. These finding signals deeper structural failures in social integration and national development. The excerpt below illustrates this finding.

You see, after NYSC, I sent CV to several organisation for work but nothing. My mates that travel to Canada or UK have been sending money, but here I am, managing one bag of rice per month. I believe going abroad will give me chances that Nigeria cannot give. I will Japa by all means - trek, swim, anything (IDI participant 10).

(ii) Poor remuneration

The study revealed that inadequate salaries and wages received by Nigerian youth - often insufficient to cover basic living expenses amid rising inflation and economic hardship - intensify their desperate yearning to emigrate in pursuit of “greener pastures” abroad. This dissatisfaction arises from stagnant real incomes, exploitative labor conditions, and a glaring disparity between local remuneration and global standards, which undermine financial stability and future prospects. Participants articulated how the widespread hope that foreign employment would deliver fair, competitive pay and professional respect fueled an urgent compulsion to depart Nigeria at any cost. The finding that low salaries drive desperate emigration among Nigerian youth underscores systemic economic inequities, exacerbating social stratification and undermining national human capital development. The excerpt below captures this sentiment.

Every month I get my salary, but after paying rent, transport, and food, nothing is left. Inflation takes everything, and my boss still demands overtime without extra pay. My sister who works as a nurse in the US sends 500,000 naira monthly to our family, buys land, and travels. Me? I survive on an 80,000-naira salary like a beggar. I know abroad will pay me well-fair money to properly care for me and my family. I will sell everything and borrow if needed to leave Nigeria, because this suffering is not a life (IDI participant 25).



(iii) Limited job opportunities

The study revealed that scarce job opportunities in Nigeria - stemming from structural economic constraints, rapid population growth, and insufficient industrial expansion - intensify the desperate impulse among youth to emigrate in pursuit of “greener pastures” abroad. This scarcity manifests in fierce competition for limited positions, chronic underemployment even among graduates, and a mismatch between workforce skills and available roles, which collectively shatter aspirations and breed profound disillusionment. Participants conveyed how the entrenched belief that foreign destinations offer plentiful, stable employment opportunities cultivated an unrelenting urgency to depart Nigeria, regardless of the risks involved. The primary sociological implication of limited job opportunities driving desperate youth emigration from Nigeria is the acceleration of brain drain, which depletes human capital and perpetuates inter-generational inequality. The excerpt below illustrates this finding.

After university, I applied to over 50 companies, but no job. I believe too many graduates chasing few positions, and they want five years’ experience for entry-level work. My skills from school do not match what is available here. Friends who went to Europe now have stable jobs and send money home. I believe abroad offers real opportunities, not promises. I will leave Nigeria no matter the danger, because staying means no future for me or my family (IDI participant 13).

(iv) Educational purpose

The study identified the pursuit of superior educational opportunities as a key driver propelling Nigerian youth toward desperate emigration to foreign destinations. This motivation arises from systemic deficiencies in the domestic higher education system, including overcrowded institutions, outdated curricula, inadequate funding, and limited access to quality postgraduate programs or specialized training, which stifle academic and professional growth. Participants articulated a firm belief that countries like those in Europe and the United States offer abundant, high-caliber educational prospects - such as scholarships, modern facilities, and flexible learning environments - that would unlock their potential far beyond local constraints. For instance, one participant highlighted how reports of students combining part-time work with studies in Western nations ignited an intense urgency to depart Nigeria at any cost. The primary sociological implication of Nigerian youth’s desperate pursuit of foreign educational opportunities is the intensification of brain drain in academia and skilled professions, which



erodes national intellectual capital and perpetuates educational inequalities. The excerpt below captures this aspiration.

In my opinion. Nigerian universities are overcrowded with old books and no equipment. Lecturers go on strike every year, and there are no scholarships for master's programs here. I heard students in Europe and America get modern labs, work part-time while studying, and finish with good jobs. That is what I want - to learn properly and build my career. Nigeria cannot give me that chance. I will find any way to leave, even if it means selling my possessions, because staying means wasting my potential (IDI participant 23).

(v) Familial influence

The study established that familial pressures significantly propel Nigerian youth toward desperate emigration in pursuit of “greener pastures” abroad. This influence stems from cultural expectations of financial provision, where young adults bear the burden of supporting extended families amid economic strain, escalating living costs, and parental reliance on remittances for survival. Participants described how the optimistic belief that foreign employment would yield lucrative remuneration - enabling them to adequately care for siblings, aging parents, and household needs - intensified their urgent compulsion to depart Nigeria, often overriding personal risks or sacrifices. However, family pressure as a driver of desperate youth emigration from Nigeria reinforces inter-generational dependency cycles and alters traditional family structures, straining social solidarity. The excerpt below illustrates this familial obligation.

My parents and five younger siblings depend on me completely. With rising food prices and no steady income from them, I must provide everything - school fees, medical bills, even daily food. They keep saying neighbors' children abroad send money to build houses and help families. I believe working overseas will give me enough salary to care for everyone properly. Staying in Nigeria means watching my family suffer, so I will leave by any means, even if it risks my own safety (IDI participant 32).

(vi) Peer influence

The study data revealed that peer influence significantly fuels the desperate emigration aspirations of Nigerian youth in pursuit of “greener pastures” abroad. This stems from intense social comparisons, where visible displays of wealth - such as luxury items, remittances, or



success stories from peers who have migrated - create envy and pressure among those left behind, amplifying a collective obsession with rapid riches. Participants highlighted how the pervasive belief that foreign opportunities deliver superior remuneration and financial breakthroughs intensifies this competitive mindset, compelling them to seek departure from Nigeria at any cost, often fueled by social media portrayals of emigrants' lavish lifestyles. Peer influence driving desperate emigration among Nigerian youth fosters a culture of social comparison and materialism. This undermines collective solidarity and promotes individualistic escapism. The excerpt below illustrates this peer-driven phenomenon.

My friends who traveled to Dubai and the UK post pictures of new cars, houses, and vacations on Instagram. They send money home and live large, while I struggle here with the same salary. Everyone talks about how abroad pays well and gives quick success. Seeing them succeed makes me feel left behind and desperate. I must leave Nigeria too, no matter what it takes, because staying means missing out on that life (IDI participant 37).

(vii) Insurgency in Nigeria

The study data indicated that pervasive insecurity - manifesting through insurgency, banditry, and Boko Haram activities across Nigeria - propels youth toward desperate emigration in search of safer, more stable environments abroad. This existential threat is compounded by the government's perceived failure to safeguard citizens, resulting in widespread abductions, violence, and disrupted daily life that shatter any sense of security or normalcy. Participants emphasized how the urgent yearning for freedom from unrest, political instability, and constant peril, coupled with the conviction that foreign nations provide peaceful, enabling conditions for thriving, intensifies their compulsion to flee Nigeria at any cost. Insecurity from insurgency driving desperate youth emigration in Nigeria signals a profound breakdown in social contract theory, where state failure to ensure safety erodes citizen loyalty and trust in institutions. The excerpt below captures this security-driven motivation.

I ran away from the North to escape being a victim of insurgencies. Boko Haram and bandits attack our village every month, kidnapping people, killing farmers, burning houses. I cannot farm safely or send my children to school without fear. The government promises protection but does nothing while we suffer. Abroad offers peace where I can work, live normally, and raise my family without



constant danger. I will escape Nigeria by any route, even though the desert, because staying here means death or endless fear (IDI participant 17).

(viii) Kidnapping

The study data revealed that rampant kidnapping - perpetrated by bandits and Fulani herdsmen through heinous acts of abduction and ransom demands - propels Nigerian youth toward desperate emigration in pursuit of “greener pastures” and safer havens abroad. This pervasive terror disrupts livelihoods, instills chronic fear, and renders everyday activities like farming, schooling, or travel life-threatening, with victims often facing torture, exploitation, or death if demands go unmet. Participants underscored how the fervent longing to escape unrest, political instability, and such existential dangers, alongside the conviction that foreign lands offer secure, enabling environments free from violence, heightens their unrelenting drive to depart Nigeria at any cost. Kidnapping by bandits and Fulani herdsmen driving desperate youth emigration from Nigeria signifies a collapse in collective security and social trust. This situation fosters a refugee-like mindset among the population. The excerpt below captures this fear-driven impetus.

I am from Nassarawa. State in the North-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Bandits and Fulani herdsmen kidnap people daily on our roads and farms - they demand millions in ransom, torture families, and kill if payment fails. I cannot go to school or market without fear of being taken. My cousin was abducted last year and never returned. The government does nothing to stop them. Abroad means safety where I can study, work, and live without this terror. I will leave Nigeria through any means, even risking my life on dangerous routes, because here every day feels like waiting to die (IDI participant 19).

10. Discussion of findings

The study meticulously identified and analyzed the multifaceted socio-economic determinants driving “Japa” Syndrome migration among Nigerian youths. Economic factors, such as high unemployment rates, stagnant wages, and limited job opportunities, emerged as primary push factors prompting migration. These findings resonate with previous research by Ajayi and Adebayo (2018), who emphasized the pivotal role of economic disparities in driving youth migration in Nigeria. Furthermore, Olasupo (2021) emphasized the intertwined relationship between political instability and migration decisions, underscoring how governance failures and



corruption contribute to a sense of disillusionment among young people in the country, motivating them to seek opportunities abroad.

Moreover, social factors influenced migration decisions among Nigerian youths. The study revealed that educational attainment, family background, and peer influence played crucial roles in shaping individuals' perceptions of migration and their willingness to embark on the journey. This aligns with findings from previous studies by Afolabi and Oni (2020), who emphasized the influence of social networks and cultural norms on migration behavior. Additionally, the study identified political instability and governance failures as contributing factors driving youths to seek opportunities abroad, corroborating research by Oyeboade (2017), which underscored the detrimental effects of political instability on migration patterns in Nigeria.

In exploring the individual impacts of Japa Syndrome migration, the study unearthed a complex array of outcomes for Nigerian youths. Conversely, Uwazie and Umejiesi (2019) highlighted the psychological and social challenges faced by young people. Furthermore, the study shed light on the nuanced experiences of Nigerian youths navigating the migration process, highlighting the need for comprehensive support systems to address their diverse needs and challenges. This resonates with research by Oyeboade (2017), who emphasized the importance of holistic approaches to migration management that address not only economic factors but also social and psychological well-being.

11. Conclusion

This study and the position of the author on the socioeconomic determinants of Japa Syndrome among Nigerian youths provide explanations the complex phenomenon of youth migration in Nigeria. Through a comprehensive analysis of economic, social, political, and transnational factors, the study has elucidated the multifaceted drivers and implications of Japa syndrome among Nigerian youths. The findings pinpoints the significant role of economic disparities, limited job opportunities, and educational aspirations in shaping migration decisions, as well as the influence of social networks, cultural norms, and political instability on migration experiences.

12. Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are made:



1. Policy-makers should prioritize investment in education and skills training programs to equip Nigerian youths with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to thrive in the local job market. By enhancing educational opportunities and vocational training initiatives, young Nigerians can develop the capabilities required to access meaningful employment opportunities and contribute to economic development.
2. Efforts should be made to stimulate job creation and entrepreneurship initiatives, particularly in sectors with high potential for growth and innovation. Policymakers should implement policies that support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), attract foreign investment, and promote sectors such as technology, agriculture, and renewable energy. By creating a conducive environment for business growth and innovation, Nigeria can generate employment opportunities and reduce the incentives for youth migration.
3. Addressing governance failures and political instability is essential for creating an enabling environment for economic growth and social development.
4. Efforts should be made to promote social inclusion and community development initiatives that address the root-causes of social inequality, marginalization, and exclusion. Therefore, policymakers should implement programs that empower marginalized groups.

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