

DYNAMICS OF CROSS BORDER AND ITS SECURITY IMPLICATIONS IN WEST AFRICA: NIGERIA- NIGER REPUBLIC EXPERIENCE 1999-2018

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Abstract

Numerous border incidences have been a source of irritant between Nigeria-Niger Republic borders. Borders which are created for contact purposes are expected to be harmonious but this is not the case with Nigeria-Niger borders as in many countries that Nigeria share conterminous boundaries with. Bilateral effect between the two countries such as the establishment of Joint Border Patrol is yet to stem tide of the infractions along the border. This is evident in the smuggling of arms, contraband goods, banditry and many more. This study employed historical research method by using primary and secondary sources. Qualitative approach was adopted by the study which involved gathering of data from primary and secondary source. Interviews were conducted with those who have directly or indirectly experienced forced migration and human trafficking across the West African sub region. The paper made use of oral and archival sources to analysis the process of forced migration and modern slavery of Nigerians in the West Africa region with the issue in contention. Oral interviews were conducted in Nigeria with the victims of migration. Similar interview was also carried out in Benin and Niger Republic with urban dwellers. The study concludes that cross border migration is an indispensable tool for development, but with adequate security apparatus for the receiving state in order to enjoy the perceived benefits of this trend, not only for Nigeria, but also her proximate neighbours. The study recommends that those who are in corridor of power should take a decisive step to decimate these ugly trends in the West African Region.

Keywords: Migration, Border, Security, Border, ECOWAS, Protocol, Movement

Introduction

The synergy between cross border migration and development cannot be overemphasized in the world today. Migration is considered as both a dependent and independent variable of development and also attributed to the speed and development on both the origin and destination countries (Akinyemi, 2013) thus, the West African Sub-region is of no exception of the significant contributions of cross border migration to socio-economic integration and development as evident in the movement of people across the borders. Migration could be regarded as a way of life in West Africa, as people move in response to population pressure; environmental disasters; poor economic conditions; conflicts and many more. For instance it's in recognition of the potential benefits of migration to West African Sub-region that the ECOWAS Treaty of 1975 clearly recognized the need to encourage intra-regional movement is a means to foster trade and tackle developmental challenges facing the region. Article 2 (2) (d) of the Treaty provide that: "The Community shall by stages ensure the abolition as between the Member States of the obstacles to the free movement of persons, services and capital." (Article

2, ECOWAS Treaty, 1975). The ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Goods was established in 1979 to guarantee the free entry of 'Community Citizens' without visa and the right to reside for ninety days was ratified by Member States in 1980 (Article 27, of 1979 ECOWAS Treaty). Indeed, the protocol allows the free movement of people as border becomes a safe passage for people without identities, leading to the abuse of this Protocol to mean an entry without valid documents as evident in Nigeria-Niger border relations (Adepoju, 2003). Nigeria's borders with Niger Republic are the longest and plagued with noxious discomfiture. The border of contact not that of separatism is expected to be harmonious but reverse is the case of Nigeria-Niger borders- as it obtains in many countries that Nigeria share conterminous boundaries. Bilateral efforts between the two countries such as the establishment of joint border patrol in 2011 are yet to stem tide of terrorism, banditry and other infractions on the border areas (Akinyemi, 2013). This problem, in the light of the above, raises fundamental questions about our security policy at the West African borders especially Nigeria-Niger border which is central to this study. This study tends to address the lacuna that existed in the body of literature on ECOWAS Protocol on free movement of persons as well as the globalization policy on free movement of people and goods across the international boundaries.

Beyond this, the study contends that the insecurity at the border spread to the internal security of lives and property, there is need to embark on more protective measures in order for the borders to be adequately secured because openness without credible controls make it possible for threats including terrorism to thrive.

Conceptual Exegesis

Two most crucial concepts will be reviewed with the intention to x-ray the area of intensity of literature and the gap arising from the review. The two concepts are: (1) cross-border migration and (2) border security.

Cross-Border Migration

The inherent nature of nations and countries in the West-African sub-region naturally suggests that the sub-region is a composite socio-economic unit with the people exploring and exploiting the potentials in the sub-region via migrations. However, globalization is impacting onevery aspect of human activity as people, and products flow across borders at unprecedented speed and volume which made cross border migration and insecurity in the region in the high proportion. Thus, while acting as catalysts for economic development, cross border movements in the region has also increased societal tensions, competition for resources and political stability. (Adepoju, 2009) noted that migrations often occur for a variety of reasons namely; population pressure, poverty, poor economic performances and endemic conflicts. In pre-colonial West Africa, migrations were inspired by motivations for secured place, good land for farming and peaceful place for settlement among others with the emergence of colonialism, there was an alteration in the pattern and motivation for migration. Colonial legislations brought about compulsory recruitment, contract, forced legislation and agreements. Migration from and within the west Africa sub-region includes; temporary cross-border workers, female traders and farm labourers, professionals, clandestine workers and refugees usually such countries are often attractive destination to migrants because of better economic opportunities. It is notable also that the partition of Africa left on its trail some unresolved issues of nationality, citizenship and kinship relations. Till date, a large number of some tribes in one nation of West Africa have dual homes

majority of the Yoruba tribe in Nigeria have homes in Abidjan, Ghana, Togo and Benin-Republic. In the same vein, some Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria also have dual citizenship status in Niger-Republic and Cameroon. Some Nigerians from Cross River also lives in the Southern parts of Cameroon with similar status. People in this category alone constitute serious migration concern because they constantly migrate across borders.

However, the establishment of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975 agitated for the push for a borderless West African migratory space in March 2000 at the meeting of West African Heads of State held in Abuja (Onwuka, 1982). The policy anchored on overlapping cultures and history of economic relations. This proposal was approved and brought to force on May 12, 2000 when ECOWAS Ministers for Internal Affairs and Security agreed to introduce a new passport for members of the sub-region. In spite of the prospect of the foregoing for economic development of the sub-region, Onwuka 2014 warns that the application and effects of the protocol should be meticulously monitored to avert ugly developments. While, Bonchuk (2013), have analysed migrations across international boundaries and citizenship question with special reference to Nigeria and Cameroon and noted that international boundaries are known more in their barrier functions against aliens than as zones of contact between splintered groups and cultures. It is not surprising that the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary from the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Chad lacks precise demarcation on the ground of its instability and limited means for its policing, and the disregard of the border by the divided and related ethnic groups- the Boki, Ejagbam, Akwaya, in the Cross River region and South West Cameroon, largely the fluid movements of citizens of both countries across the boundary. Bonchuk further analyses the implications of these boundaries that large number of Nigeria migrants to Cameroon, particularly South West Cameroon, constitute by far the largest number of foreign residents in that country with various sizes and character, which often reflect the motivations, destinations and preoccupations of the migrants. Thus, changing political, economic, security and demographic situations of countries in the region brought citizenship question in Southwestern Cameroon into focus. This is because the people known as “Cam-Gerians” are denied Cameroonian nationality and citizenship status, in spite of their long stay in the country and their contributions to the development of their host communities. He therefore concludes that both countries should put in place institutional mechanisms that would guarantee the lives and properties of the people. Although, he has a good argument by focusing on the implications of migration movement, but this argument is flawed by patiently ignoring the positive aspects of this movement.

As captured by Adeniran, migration in West Africa carries a significant potential contribution to socio-economic integration and development, particularly in developing societies. Regional trans-border migration has made positive contributions to the social and economic development of individuals and nations by increasing household incomes in the ECOWAS sub-region (Adeniran, 2008) In addition, there is evidence to suggest that the increase in cross border remittances, contribute to poverty reduction in the region through investment activities. For instance, the volume of fund transferred homeward by migrant workers within West Africa, such as from Cote d’Ivoire to Nigeria, Senegal and Burkina Faso and from Nigeria to Benin and Togo has rekindled interest in the development potential of remittances at the regional level (Yaqub, 2011). He gives an instance of the trans-border practice of the Ejigbo-Yoruba (Nigerian) migrants in Cote D’Ivoire who have formidably utilized the platform of informal cross-border networking to attain most of the integrative targets of the ECOWAS targets which have remained

largely elusive, within the formal realm. Through cross-cultural marriage and mastery of Ivorian languages (such as colloquial Abidjan French, Bete and Baure), the Ejigbo-Yoruba have been able to build on existing pre-modern ties in West African states to establish long-lasting trade networks across the region. It is as a result of this that the Ejigbo-Yoruba are able to retail Ivorian commodities in Nigeria and Nigerian commodities in Cote D' Ivoire. Some Ivorians (especially spouses, friends and benefactors of the migrants) are equally linked up with the Nigerian market. And such linkages have been feasible through the workings of the migrants' ethnic network operating between Nigeria and Cote D'Ivoire. However, there is no doubt that cross border migration has heightened the integration process in West Africa but his argument on migration reducing poverty in the region is flawed, due to increasing rate of poverty pervading the region.

It is on this note that the region has been known to be one the poorest regions in international system. It is important to note that migration patterns differed from pre-colonial to colonial and from colonial to post-colonial migration. Before colonialism, the intra-nation pattern of migration was rural-urban. The tendency was that the rural people tend to migrate to urban centres in cities closest to them to tap prospects for improved livelihood. Another notable pattern was migration southwards for better ecological conditions. It was a period when stronger empires or people used force to settle in a place adjudged to be safe havens. Notably, there are enough facts to show that certain pull and push factors predisposed the cross border communities to migrate from one side of the border to the other. While, Yaqub argues that a comparative analysis of the colonial administrative policies showed that when educational facilities were seen to have been provided more in one part of the international boundary, cross border communities do not hesitate to seize the opportunities across international boundary by moving from one section of the town or settlement to the other. Invariably, there would be neither cultural shock nor the need to strenuously strive to adjust, leading to the question of merging into a people with the same cultural background. Babatunde notes that the Yoruba Ketu in Benin Republic merely crossed the border into Nigeria to receive education among their kith and kin in Nigeria. Equally in the health sector, the finding reported that when a particular rural health facility was adjudged more effective on the other side of the border in Dahomey (Benin Republic), the Yoruba of Nigeria referred to it for medical treatment. At colonialism, Yaro, argues that European colonization of the African continent changed the contours of movement in West Africa along purely commoditized norms. These have been entrenched after independence as African economies have not broken the shackles of colonialisation but continue to feed the metropolitan cores in Europe and America through the international commodity markets. During the post-colonial period, the patterns of migration witnessed free labour migration for wage workers involving intra-regional mobility.

Strikingly, the new patterns of migration in the post-colonial era reflect patterns formed around new forces of globalization currently changing and remodeling the world economies along communication technologies. Thus, West African migrations are becoming part of a dynamic and unstable world migration system and are strongly affected by economic and migration policies both in developed and developing countries. It is also important to review the concept of cross-border area. Diarrah defines cross border area as a geographical area that overlaps between two or more neighbouring states and whose populations are linked by socio-economic and cultural bonds. Cross border area is the space where cross border activities take place.

Concept of Border Security

Border security is the set of measures a Country takes to prevents people or items from entering or leaving the country without permission. The goal of border security is to protect the country's sovereignty and security from threats like terrorism, illegal migration and illicit trafficking.

Border Security measures can include:

- *Border Infrastructure
- *Training
- *Information sharing
- *Technical detection
- *Cross border Cooperation

The concept of border can be real or artificial line that separates geographic area.

Security Implications in Nigeria-Niger Republic Border Migrations.

This section attempts to analyse the security issues and concerns that emanate from cross border activities between Nigeria and Niger republic between 1999-2018. There is no doubt that the peoples of Nigeria's north-west zone share ethnic, cultural and religious affinity with their neighbours in the contiguous states of Nigeria. This has facilitated cross border migration and interaction in the pre-colonial era. In the contemporary times, cross border interaction witnessed a dramatic change and motivated majorly by economic reasons. Interestingly, Nigeria looms as a giant in comparison with her neighbours. Nigeria has an estimated population figure of about 232,679,478 million people according to Nigeria population density 2024, which stands in sharp contrast to Niger with a population of 27.2 million (Woldometer, 2024) In the same vein, Harrison Church testified to the greatness of Nigeria when he gave a description of the political geography of the sub-region in his quote that:

The francophone republics occupied three-quarters of the areas; yet they are largely because some of these republics include vast tracts of the Sahara, under one third of the total population. Nigeria one of the largest and densely populated countries of the Commonwealth has a population of about 65 million (1963 census in an area four times that of the United Kingdom). Moreover, Nigeria has over one-half the population of West African states and about four times larger than Francophone Republics

Therefore, the overwhelming preponderance of Nigeria's population over Niger is reflected in virtually every other economic indicator. Beyond this, was the Nigeria's oil boom of the 1970s This stimulated an increase in the export of livestock and cowpeas from Niger, and a number of re-exported products from the international market mainly through Benin. While, the other impact of Nigeria's oil boom was the export of subsidized products from Nigeria, especially fertilizer which was smuggled across the borders to the benefit of farmers in the neighbouring states. Niger, because of poor harvests, also imported Nigerian cereals making Nigeria to be a major migration receiving country. But today, the commodities across Nigeria's northern border with Niger include; foodstuff, grains, livestock, petroleum products, drugs, arms, currency,

vehicles, and some re-exports. Thus, the cross border resulting to the movement of people and goods between Nigeria and Niger is occasionally threaten the security of the former.

It is in the foregoing context that the understanding of trade resulting from the migration flow becomes important. Cross border trade can be legal or illegal. It is legal when it is carried out in accordance with the existing laws and regulations while it is illegal when carried out without regard to the existing laws. The illegal trade dominates cross border interactions which are known as smuggling. Ironically, the people at the borderlands see these transactions as the continuation of pre-colonial trade relations which they consider as legitimate. Leading credence to this, was the study carried out by Nuhu-Koko (1993) that cross border trade relations between the town of Illela in Sokoto State, Nigeria and Birnin Nkonni in Niger Republic was estimated to be over 90% of the total volume of local shipment of foodstuff to Birnin, Nkonni and other border settlements originate from Illela. The food items that went to Niger include maize, millet, wheat, beans, yams, plantain and many more. Nigeria on the other hand received Thailand's rice; imported wheat's and date fruit. In fact, such shipment of food was able to provide food for Niger-republic that suffered massive food draught and famine because of insecurity. Thus, averting food crisis in both countries and beyond in the region. The argument here is that cross border migration has a definite advantage in terms of interaction and economic integration but the other side of it which has been accompanied by illegal trade and smuggling which tends to have a dire consequence on the country in the side of divide.

Furthermore, another sour point in Nigeria's north eastern border with security implications is the occasional attack and banditry by herdsmen from Niger Republic on farmers at border towns with Nigeria in the recent times. There have been reports of herdsmen from Niger Republic being armed with automatic weapons, as this constitutes a threat to the country. Adeola & Fayomi (2012) argued that cross border migration in West Africa has been spurred by new aspirations for economic and greener pastures. This motive for migration later transformed to crime related activities which cannot be explained outside economically or politically induced factors. In their analysis, they noted that migration between Nigeria and its neighbours is very important and sentimental issue as the people are historically, culturally and ethnically linked. Therefore, Nigeria will continue to be flocked by unwarranted immigration from countries such as Niger, Chad and even Cameroon. Indeed, Nigeria is the final destination for types of transit goods shipped from Togo and Benin Republics; in this case Nigeria has a hard nut to crack with her neighbours by permanently expanding her security network along the borders and making international security a major policy plank. Although, they blamed the political and social security challenges to the porosity of borders between Nigeria and its neighbours by giving an estimates of 921 illegal routes between Niger and Nigeria. Adeola & Fayomi concluded that Nigeria needs authentic economic development that guarantee political and social security of the people, as migration can be a source of economic transformation, innovation and development if well utilized.

Similarly, Akinyemi (2013) noted that the insecurity at the West African borders is as a result of the porosity of the borders and globalisation. To her, globalisation has turned the entire universe into a global village and allowed criminals to move across the borders unhindered and even continue with illicit business with impunity due the advancement in telecommunications, transportation and technology in general. This affects the socio-economic development and security of lives and property. She argues that Nigeria has been battling with all kinds of border

crimes posing a serious threat to the national security such as drug trafficking, money laundering, arms trafficking, smuggling of all kinds (contrabands, stolen cars, firearms) theft, kidnapping and many more. These activities constitute a threat to global and national security, as they affect the socio-economic development and tarnish the image of the country. Therefore, she concludes that there is high need for effective border security as its protection is equated to national security.

The challenges posed by trans-border activities are signs of substantial danger to the political, social and economic stability of states. However, these arguments are valid but the authors fail to consider other contributing factors to border insecurity between Nigeria and its neighbours. In a comprehensive work by Adetula (2009) seeks to assess the implications of migrant labour in West Africa for national security and political, social or economic threats in Nigeria. These threats to national security are ideally assessed in terms of the risk they constitute to the pursuit of a country's national interests or any of its attributes-territory, population, government and sovereignty. Furthermore, he takes cognizance of the growth and spread of migrant networks usually woven around unofficial (or parallel) economic activities and their linkage to the quest of human security by the migrants who challenge the official modes of West African integration. Adetula notes that the insecurity of lives and property in Nigeria gained much prominence since 1980s and continues to deepen. These include fraudulent business transactions, immigration frauds, drug trafficking and many more. Although, he debunked the assumption that foreigners are responsible for Nigeria's high levels of crime and violence. This is because violent crimes such as armed robbery, car theft and smuggling in the north-eastern border regions are allegedly linked with the presence of immigrants from neighbouring countries especially Niger and Chad around the fringes of Lake Chad Basin, and cities like Jalingo, Jimeta-Yola, Gashua, Dikwa, Mubi, Damaturu, Maiduguri and the Kaduna religious disturbances in the 1980s usually cited as centre of lawless activities of immigrants in the mentioned urban hubs, Adetula argues that these instances of disorder reportedly caused by migrants from neighbouring West African countries warrant nothing, as their enumeration is not sufficient, however, to justify generalisations, since, the proportion of foreigners who are actually engaged in reprehensive activities are not known. Consequently, one does not know either how it would compare with the proportion of Nigerians engaged in similar activities. Therefore, the absence of credible statistics to this effect makes the argument to be flawed. He concludes that the overall stigmatization of illegal aliens is bound to rely on xenophobic stereotypes, which are, in essence sponsored by segments of press and state officials. The argument is flawed based on the fact that there are evidences of crimes caused by irregular migrants in Nigeria.

However, cross border criminal activities In West Africa, the lack of effective control and regulation of cross-border activities is widely recognized as a key factor contributing to the absence of peace and stability in border relations. Statistics indicate that between 4 and 5 million ECOWAS citizens travel across the highways and borders of the community's territories each month. Addo (2006) attributes cross border crimes and instability to border porosity. This, he claims undermines good governance and security in countries of West Africa. The challenge has dire negative consequences for good governance, rule of law, cultural advancement and general human development in the sub-region. He therefore acknowledges that the atrocious activities commonly found in the border areas include illicit trafficking of light arms and weapons, ammunitions and human beings among others. Also, Okeke, Onyekwelu and Okechukwu (2014) worked on cross border crimes in West African sub-region toes the same lines as Addos. The implications of proliferations of weapons' on borders have led to death of military officers and

civilians. These have seriously hampered peace, good neighborliness and development. The use of small arms also has the tendency of preventing delivery of humanitarian and economic aid. They also identified sophistication in the nature of cross border crimes as owing to globalization forces. They conclude that cross border crimes have greatly undermined state security structures and implications for the abuse of human rights.

According to Akpomera & Kingsley (2013), the rate of terrorism that has engulfed Nigeria especially the northern parts of Nigeria is blamed on many foreign nationals from neighbouring politically-unstable countries of Chad, Niger Republic and Cameroon that accommodate radical and fundamentalist Islamic groups. They argue that these critical immediate neighbours of Nigeria have predominantly itinerant Fulani Islamic population that share common borders with Nigeria's eight states in the northern region, namely Sokoto, Katsina, Jigawa, Yobe, Adamawa, Taraba and Gombe. Cross border activities are defined in certain push and pull variables. According to the push factors consist of the domestic conditions in Chad, Niger and Cameroon with severe socio-economic dislocation that stalls sustainable development, perennial drought, famine, and political instability, social and ethnic conflicts and near collapse of state control of resources and institutions, as well as the survival pressure on immediate and extended family members. While, the pull factors to Nigeria are critically socio-economic prospects, food security, religious and cultural affinity with Nigerians and political freedom.

Akpomera and Kingsley (2013) likened the Nigeria relationship with her critical immediate neighbours on the North-East as United States-Mexican border situation that had to do with socio-economics and security challenges. This is because the United States-Mexico borderlands have gained notoriety for its security challenges to the United States; present certain similarity to the Nigeria-Chad, Niger and Cameroon borderlands in terms of perception, function and security challenges. The situation is attributed to a combination of factors, including the asymmetry in the size and resilience of the economies, significant disparities in resource endowments, and varying levels of socio-economic and infrastructural development. Differences in the quality of the population, particularly in terms of exposure to Western education—prevalent to some extent in the Nigeria-Niger and Chad borderlands—further compound the issue. Additionally, economic imbalances, environmental challenges, and a tradition of divergent political policies have collectively fostered and sustained illegal cross-border activities, entrenched crime as a central aspect of the border economy, and driven irregular migration among the populace. It is not surprising that the three critical immediate neighbours boast of over 300 dedicated Qur'anic schools with radical slant of Islamic ideology, which has given roots to the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria with sprawling of illegal small and light weapons in large quantity. However, the insecurity situation has worsened in 2012 with Nigerian government admitting that its security forces intercepted over 200 rocket launchers and rocket propelled grenades from terrorist gangs at the Nigeria borders with Chad and Niger Republic before June 2012 (Akpomera, 2013). To them, they blame Nigeria for operating a borderless official foreign policy with her critical neighbours especially in the North-East before the advent of the religious violence. Beyond this, is the non-implementation of proper demarcation of international borders with Niger, Chad and Cameroon in the past four decades, thereby, creating a huge challenge for the Nigeria security forces which is admitted by the Nigeria Immigration Service. The problem is basically the fact that the structure of our borders makes effective policing absolutely difficult. We are talking about over 4000 kilometers borders with the ocean. In some places, they are in the jungle. In some places, you have settlements along the borders. There are countless illegal routes into the country. Nobody can tell the number of such

unapproved routes. The border posts are not sufficient but the government cannot increase the border posts without increasing the personnel level. Our officers sacrifice a lot under very difficult conditions. The operational facilities in terms of border barrack, communication facilities and patrol vehicles are insufficient. The problem is with the illegal unofficial routes.

The reality is that Nigeria lacks adequate trained manpower and technical capacity to properly monitor and police the numerous border posts through which the religious extremists and criminals cross into the country. Nigeria operates the policy of good neighbourliness to its immediate neighbours in the north-eastern parts of the country which had encouraged irregular migration of nationals from Niger, Chad and Cameroon at the expense of its own national interest. Therefore, a foreign policy re-engineering that emphasis national interest would definitely affect the structure and operations of the present border control and management by the Nigerian government, to ensure land borders are effectively demarcated. In sum, foreign policy content must take into consideration the internal variables that would drive the external relations with other state actors. Although, Akpomera & Omoyibo (2013) have a valid argument on the subject matter but this study disagrees with their analysis on the policy of good neighbourliness as one the factors responsible for the influx of regular and irregular migrants in Nigeria. This is due to fact that on several occasions Nigeria had acted contrary to this policy as evident in the expulsion of aliens in the country.

It is important to note that the infractions at the Nigeria-Niger border is not limited to banditry, terrorism, human trafficking, smuggling of illicit weapons as well as fake drugs in circulations. In spite of the bilateral commission between the two countries such as the Lake Chad Basin Commission Agreement among four countries and other Bilateral Boundary Commission with Niger-Republics. These bilateral agreements have rarely effective to prevent these problems and infraction is still on the rise. The fact of the matter is that such efforts hardly succeed, not necessarily because the borders are porous nor the informal ties are not strong but due to ineffective structures put in place in the region. There is no doubt that porous borders are contributing to the current security challenges in the country resulting in unrestrained influx of illegal immigrants through the routes as evident by the report given by Nigeria Immigration Service in 2012 that Nigeria has 1,497 irregular and 84 regular routes to the adoption of ECOWAS protocol on free movement of persons and goods which has liberalized freedom of movement within the Community for all ECOWAS citizens. Indeed, this protocol is commendable and as part of the global, social, economic and political integration resulting in opening of borders as obtained in European Union. The reality is that before the enactment of this protocol in the region, measures and institutional framework should have been put in place to monitor the influx of migrants especially in the major receiving countries like Nigeria. Although, this protocol was adopted in good faith, but institutional capacity to monitor movement was missing. In the case of Nigeria, the protocol has negatively impacted and created enormous social, political, economic and security problems for the country. This is because Nigeria's geographical size as well as resource endowments have and continue to attract many nationals (both legal and illegal migrants). Beyond this, the high influx of migrants into Nigeria has over tasked the capacity of the immigration officials at the border posts and the security organizations to control them.

Conclusion

The study examined cross border migrations and border security in West Africa using Nigeria-Niger experience. The study discovered that the challenges posed by trans-border activities are signs of substantial danger to the political, socio-economic stability of the country. However, the extent of these crimes committed lead to the widespread crisis of fear, and violence as well as undermined the security of the country. The study attributed the insecurity at the Nigeria-Niger border to the ECOWAS protocol on free movement, government ineptitude policies to stern border insecurity which calls for the liberalization of movement within the region. It's important to conclude therefore that there is an urgent need by the Nigeria government to put in place institutional capacity to monitor the movement of people and goods in the country especially between Nigeria-Niger borders.

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