THE NIGERIAN DIASPORA SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT CREATORS AS *JAPA* AMBASSADORS

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Abstract

Japa has become one of the most used words in the Nigerian migration lexicon. Generally substituting migration in the context of international migration in Nigeria, the word simply describes the robust disposition of youths to international migration in Nigeria. Social media content creation has become a viable means of achieving both information campaigns and economic livelihood. The Nigerian diaspora latching on the socio-economic gains of the social media are using the platform to bridge the information gap in migration and educating younger Nigerians on country specific migration policies and practices. This research analyzed the contributions of Nigerian diaspora migration themed social media content creators to international migration promotion and education in Nigeria. Using Noxacomedy, an American based Nigerian as a case study, this study argued that Nigeria diaspora migration themed content creators are *Japa* ambassadors who through their contents impact on younger Nigerians seeking information on safe, orderly and regular migration. The study hinged on the digital diaspora framework to analyze selected contents of Noxacomedy in light of his efforts to provide migration education to intending Nigerian migrants.

Key words: Diaspora, Social Media, Content Creators, *Japa*, Ambassadors

Introduction

Migration has become a career endeavor for many Nigerians. The desire to migrate outside the country and make a living has once more gained a tremendous momentum among the Nigerian middle class and youths many of whom emigrate through the study route system. Largely propelled by the worsening economic and security situations in the country, *Japa* the raging Nigerian migration lexicon which contextually is used to represent emigration (Okunade & Oladotun, 2023) is variously narrated in diaspora skits and other social media contents. Diaspora experiences, experiences of the migration process and other country specific information are most times contained in these skits. Through a thematic analysis of Noxacomedy's contents on social media, this research argues that the Nigerian diaspora skit makers and social media content creators are *Japa* ambassadors who through their skits and contents provide country specific information for intending migrants in Nigeria.

Nigeria is experiencing a very high rate of emigration. There is a general acceptance and adoption of economic migration model as a survivalist strategy to the challenging socio-economic and security situations in the country which in recent times have become very dire. Nigeria's net emigration in 2024 is **-** 0.267 which is a decline from a net emigration of **2.273** in 2023 (MacroTrends, 2024). The implication is that the migration dynamics is largely skewed towards emigration. The negative trend implies that Nigeria is experiencing an unbalanced international migration flow with the number of people leaving

the country far outweighing the number of persons coming into it. This is predicated on the rising economic inflation which has seen many businesses close down and unemployment rise. In effect, the raging poverty has become an intrinsic factor pushing many youths out of the country (Anene & Njoku, 2019). Insecurity too which seemed to have worsened over time has also contributed to this trend (Osayemwenre, Olayemiomolola, & Meluwa , 2023). According to the National Bureau of Statistics, inflation rate increased to 29.90% relative to the December 2023 headline inflation rate which was 28.92% (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2024). Food inflation which has made the cost of living increasingly high rose to 24.32% in January from 23.75% in December 2023 (Omobolaji, 2024)**.** This has pressured the general economic landscape making it difficult for businesses to thrive and has made the cost of living very dismal. Amidst the rising inflation which has also significantly affected the cost of doing business in the country, companies like GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Nigeria, Equinor, Sanofi, Bolt Food, and Procter & Gamble who were also major employers of labour all folded up between 2023 – 2024, (Leadership News, 2024). In a bid to escape the winding economy and experience better living condition, migration is largely viewed as an escape option by many Nigerians and this directly impacts emigration trend in the country (Nwosu, Eteng, & Orakwe, 2022)

The continued spate of insecurity has also contributed immensely to the growing trend of emigration amongst the youths and working class. The activities of unknown gunmen, kidnappers, bandits and Boko haram have undeservingly posed existential threats with many citizens seeking an escape route (Ngwama, 2014). The constant killings and kidnaps have created

a big scare and this has resulted in multifactor migrations both within and outside the country. Thus, emigration is seen by many who can afford the financial burden as the immediate alternative to the worsening problem of insecurity and restiveness in the country. Thus, insecurity has constituted a major push factor and actively contributes to the *Japa* trend in the country (Yahaya, 2019).

However, the migration trend in the country also sweeps through the middle-class income group many of whom are gainfully employed (John Campbell 2019). Bank workers, University lecturers, business owners, engineers and many other middle-class groups many of whom are skilled workers are also engaged actively in the outward migration trend. Countries like Canada, United Kingdom, America, Australia and other parts of Europe form the major destination places for the skilled worker migrants. Drivers of skilled work migration in Nigeria include breakdown of the educational system, rising unemployment, poverty and other general dissatisfaction with the political trajectories in the country (Campbell, 2019).

The term *Japa* best describes the trend of economic emigration in Nigeria. *Japa* is used in Nigeria in reference to migration. It is a Nigeria slang that literally means "to flee from an unpleasant situation" (Adegoke, 2023). It is contextually used in terms of migration to depict deprecating state of the economy in Nigeria and the migratory actions of fleeing from its biting effect in the struggle for survival (Ebisi, 2023). Amidst the burgeoned emigration trend and the *Japa* drive that has become very fashionable amongst many Nigerians, migration education is rising with the social media at its vanguard. The social media has become a very useful source of information dissemination in the

country (Erhiegueke, Esimone, & Ugoo-Okonkwo, 2022). With its decentralized nature, it has made communication and access to information easy, timely and interactive. The implication is that individuals who have basic access to the social media can share real time information and other personal experiences for the benefit of people within and outside their social media circles. Thus, social media applications like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X formerly called Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube and many others have become very useful for social interactions and information dissemination. It has also become a serious employer of labour with its numerous value chains. The most popular with the monetization feature in many of the applications is content creation. Content creation is the art of sharing ideas and social programs on social sites. This has become lucrative and has provided employment for lots of youths in Nigeria. Thus people in different fields of life take advantage of the social media platforms to tell stories about themselves, other people and share news about happenings in their immediate environments.

More so, many Nigerian Diasporas in a bid to create contents, widen their social media following and broaden their earning power make use of these platforms to share their experiences and other country specific information to their followers many of whom are young Nigerians with the intention to someday migrate. In a bid to give out firsthand information about the countries where they stay and the immigration realities in these countries, these content creators make videos discussing topics bordering on the many realities of their stay in their respective countries, about labour needs, culture differences, visa processes and requirements, job openings for job seekers and economic policies that impact their migration experiences. It is

these migration themed social media contents of the Nigeria diaspora bloggers that this research evaluates with the view to aggregating their blog activities as ambassadorial functions to other Nigerians seeking to emigrate. Noxacomedy's contents on facebook and youtube are used as case study and analysed to underscore the research arguments.

Methodology

This study adopted the qualitative research method for its data gathering and analysis. Anchored on the content analytical approach, the study purposively picked selected works of Noxacomdey, a Nigerian diaspora living in the United States of Ameria. The contents are analysed and interpreted in line with the relevance of the migration messages contained in them. Four contents of his contents are randomly selected and analyzed in line with their efforts to educate young Nigerians on country specific information on legal and orderly migration.

Theoretical Framework

This work is best guided by the digital diaspora framework. The digital diaspora framework refers to the retinue of online networks, platforms and communities that serve as an interactive space for individuals and communities across the world. It is a way of connecting individuals and communities divided by physical geographies through the aid of interactive technologies. Digital frameworks anchored on the internet communicative system has changed the ways in which people interact, relate and define their realities. Technology has significantly impacted on the diasporic experience and has given them a reach that was hitherto denied by physical absence. In effect, migrant groups are

able to impact even their home communities and a host of other places around the world (Wittenborn, 2019). The internet has made the world a global community devoid of geographic limitations. Thus, international migrants are able to become a part of the global community, participate in events and communicate in real time through the aid of interactive media platforms like Facebook, Instagram,
TikTok, zoom etc. Digital Diaspora is the "connectivity to participate in virtual networks of contacts for a variety of political, economic, social, religious, and communicational purposes" (Languerre, 2010). The works of Nigerian Diaspora social media content creators are able to provide migration education to Nigerians living in Nigeria via facebook, Tiktok, youtube and a host of other social media platforms. Through their videos, they are able to gather followers and virtual communities who consume their online contents and information and apply it to their migration needs.

Analysis

Noxacomedy is a Nigerian social media content creator that is based in the United States of America. According to his Facebook bio, he is a content creator, a comedian and a social media influencer. With Four thousand and Five followers on Facebook and fifty-eight thousand and eight hundred subscribers on YouTube, Noxacomedy has built a community of internet followers who are robustly impacted by his contents. His contents are migration based and are targeted at young Nigerians who are intended on moving abroad either for education purposes or in search of greener pastures. Resident in the United States of America, many of his contents are geared towards educating

Nigerians on migration, country specific policies and the very many attractions for intending migrants to different countries in the west. Noxacomedy believes that with the current state of Nigeria with specific regards to its economy, out migration especially to America and Europe poses a great opportunity for every young Nigerian who wants to make a good living and enjoy a stable life.

Through his content, Noxacomedy tries to encourage younger Nigerians to seek greener pastures abroad with the conviction that they will have better chances than in Nigeria due to the numerous challenges of economic instability and policy somersaults that hinder development in Nigeria. In a video content he posted on the 18th of March, Noxacomedy reiterates his strong belief in migration as the most realistic way out for young Nigerians due to lack of infrastructures that aid socioeconomic growth. For him, the factors of insecurity, lack of sustainable electricity and other 'social vices' makes it difficult for businesses to survive which inadvertently also affects the quality of life of citizens.

> As a result of no electricity, as a result of insecurity, and other social vices wey dey happen for Nigeria, coupled with the fact that there are many policies wey the government don implement wey no dey help businesses, a lot of businesses don close more than the businesses wey survive.

For him, *Japa* is an option every willing and able young Nigeria must explore to circumvent the frustrations that come with living in a society with no sustainable economic plan. Noxacomedy's convictions about Nigeria and its dispositions to young people

stems from the variegated cases of sudden and abrupt policy changes and implementation which directly impacts the economy and negatively affects the standard of living in the country. President Tinubu's economic reforms since taking over in 2023 typifies these policy inconsistencies and its debilitating impact on businesses and standard of living. Fuel subsidy removal at the heels of President Tinubu's inauguration totally shattered many businesses and rendered many Nigerians jobless. That singular unplanned policy pronouncement which was made during his inaugural speech on March 29, 2023 began a series of policy changes that have had an adverse effect on the economy of the country, individual businesses and the standard of living. These policies have "contributed to Nigeria's worst cost of living crisis in almost 30 years pushing more people into poverty" (Ewang, 2024). Thus, Noxacomedy believes that Nigeria is holding a lot of youths back and does not give them the right platform, exposure and support needed to fully explore their potentials. Narrating his *Japa* experience, Noxacomedy opines:

> The very first time I landed at the in the USA, under five minutes in the airport in, that was when I realized I have been wasting my time in Nigeria. See let me advise you, no matter how much you make in Africa make it a necessity to travel abroad one day because one thing I have come to realize here abroad is that these *oyibo* people, they value life more than our people. When you come abroad, that is when you will realize that you have potentials. There are many things we are putting our effort back home that are not working. If you put one-quarter of that effort into something here abroad, trust me, you will

> notice change in your life. When you come abroad, you will realize that so many things you believe in back home are not true. Coming abroad is therapeutic (Noxacomedy, 2025).

Thus, Noxa believes that *Japa* is an economic investment for Africans across class divide. His perspective of *Japa* goes beyond the push factor of economic inconveniences on young and struggling Nigerians. He believes that *Japa* is an investment that even the rich are always disposed to undertake for their children and families. This according to him is the reason why many wealthy Nigerians send their pregnant wives abroad to give birth in order to give their children dual citizenship status that will give them a significant survival edge in the future. Replying to a controversial tweet by Dele Momoudu claiming that anyone who has at least 30 million naira in Nigeria has no reason to *Japa*, Noxacomdy gives the following reply:

> Travelling abroad na still investment. There are people wey travel today with their wives come born children abroad, give their children citizenship and those children come get free education get scholarship. No be investment be that? With what I know today, if I have 30 million in my account, if I don marry, I go package me and my wife, leave some money in my bank account and japa with wife (Noxacomedy, 2025).

In an effort to provide easy migration education to many Nigerian potential migrants, Noxacomdy makes contents that also teaches migration routes and the opportunities that abound in different

countries, most especially Europe and America. He researches into country specific policies, immigration agenda and tries to make the findings readily available to his Nigerian audience through his social media handles. One thing consistent in his videos is his attempt at exposing the nefarious activities of predatory visa agents who prey on the gullibility and desperation of intending Nigerian migrants. Thus he dedicates his contents to offering migration education aimed at arming his audiences with the knowledge of how to apply for visas and facilitate their travel arrangements without the aid of travel agents many of whom are fakes preying on naïve and desperate Nigerians. In a 2 hour and 25 minutes video he posted on YouTube on July 8, 2024, Noxacomedy encourages his audience to learn the art of visa application so that they can avoid the hassles of going through third party agents who may in the process dupe them. In his words:

> This visa application thing is not as difficult as many of us are seeing it. You can apply for these visas yourself. You must not consult a travel agent. Many of these travel agents have succeeded in making you think that without them you cannot apply for visa. That is not true, you can. (Noxacomdey, 2024)

While visa and travel agents have proven helpful to the migration industry, the industry too is rife with fraudulent and fake agents who dupe migrants of their hard-earned money. Some of these agents sometimes collect monies for travel documents and deliver forged documents to unsuspecting Nigerians thereby plunging them into serious troubles with immigration officers.

Cases of visa and travel documents related scams abound. It is the prevalence of fraud in travel agency that led to the issuance of alert to Nigerians against marauding visa scammers by the UK agency on the 28th of January 2025. This concern is aptly captured in the following scam alert by VFS Nigeria:

> UKVI has identified a growing scam where fake travel agents collect payments for faster visa processing services, such as priority and super priority services, but fail to purchase these services from official suppliers, causing customers to lose money without the faster processing service they paid for (VFS Global, 2025).

These scam alerts have been issued to Nigerians in the past by different diplomatic consulates in the past. For example, the US embassy had on the 9th of April 2021 issued similar warning alerting Nigerians not to fall prey to visa scammers (U.S Mission Nigeria, 2021). The Australian High Commission to Nigeria had in the past also issued such alert warning "West African countries offering false offers of employment and visas to Australia. These scams are run by criminal gangs with the intent to steal your money by fraud" (Australian High Commission to Nigeria, 2024). Furthermore, in reaction to the activities of visa scammers, Nigerians living in the UK on the 23rd of February staged a protest against visa fraud by fake travel agents. Noxa's contents add to these voices decrying the activities of fraudulent agents defrauding Nigerians of their travel funds.

More so, Noxacomdy has devoted many of his contents to educating his viewers on the importance of having legal documents and permits to regularize their stay in their respective

destinations and countries of stay. He stresses on the futility of living in Europe and America without valid immigration documents that permits the migrant right of stay. In his video posted on Facebook on the 22nd of March, he continues on his legal migration education campaign. According to Noxa in the video:

> If you come this abroad without the right document, it is very important for you to chase document before you chase money. E get a lot of people wey just choose money and they no get papers, some of them they don deport them from this yankee because no matter how much you get and you no get paper, you dey that country illegally. Once you go another man country, the most important thing for you to get is their document because na that document you take dey that country legally. You dey chase money then you leave document and you no get paper, if the immigration for that country come catch you how you want waka?

Noxa makes it very clear that the most important thing to any immigrant are the documents that authorize his/her stay in the country. According to Noxa, there are many people who travel to places and rather than invest their time and resources in getting the work permit, they would rather find ways to cheat the system, remain and work in the country illegally. His admonition to his audience is to prioritize getting the right immigration documents over every other thing as that is what will make their stay legal and recognized. Travel documents are very essential in international migration. Travel Visa, work permit, resident permit

and other forms of permits are what give migrants authority to travel to countries, work and possibly settle down either as citizens, temporary or permanent residents. Noxa's campaign on regular migration makes his contents very rich and very important to intending migrants. His subtle reorientation agenda and radical push for legal migration in destination countries makes him a very worthy ambassador of *japa* in Nigeria. He exposes the illegal practice of faking work permit by many Nigerians in countries in Europe and the consequences of such irregularities. Reiterating the importance of being properly and legally documented, he states that "it is better to stay in any country with paper and not have money than to have money and stay in diaspora without the right documentations". This according to him is the reason many Nigerians are deported from different countries around the world. Noxa's admonitions in this video is a campaign that directly aids the reorientation of many potential migrants in Nigeria towards safe, orderly and regular migration. The importance of this video lies in its focus on irregular migration which has become a problem Nigeria has been battling over time. The factors of unemployment, inflation, insecurity amidst many other factors have led to an increased propensity for out migration amongst many youths in the country. Due to fear of the future, many of these youths resort to migrate through irregular means in desperation to escape poverty and the feeling of powerlessness (Ikuteyejo, 2024). Nigerian citizens constitute a large number of immigrants with irregular migration status in
Europe and also "make up the largest group of people attempting to cross into Europe through the sea" (Ob, Bartolini,
& D'Haese, 2019). More so, a total of 3,207 *Nigerians* were *detected* irregularly entering an *EU country* in 2022 (Observatory

on Smuggling of Migrants, 2022). Noxacomedy's dedication to discussing these distressing issues in his contents makes him a worthy ambassador on migration and its related issues. By continually contributing to topical and sensitive areas of international migration with a view to educating Nigerians and campaigning against irregular migration, he has become a voice impacting the lives of many migrants and potential migrants in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Migration is a route many Nigerians undertake as means to solving the socio-economic problems of poverty, insecurity, poor education infrastructure, unemployment etc. The international migration industry is blossoming in Nigeria due to these obvious push factors which is making the country very unattractive to many of its youths. Due to the wide adoption of internet and social media in the country, information on migration have even become more readily available to these youths who have keyed into the internet as an information resource. Thus, the works of Noxacomedy and other social media content creators who are focused on educating Nigerians on regular and safe migration becomes even more significant. With their continued effort at promoting safe and regular migration through their social media contents, they have become ambassadors whose impacts are helping resolve the irregular migration menace in the country.

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