

Socioeconomic Integration: A Determining Factor Of Migrant Workers; A Case Of Nigerian Labour Migrants In Russia

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ABSTRACT

Migrants' participation in the economic activities of the host country is a major determinant in the decision making in the migration process. The question should be asked: "Why there are more labour migrants of country X in country A than country B?" The answer to this question is however not far-fetched. The level of the socioeconomic integration of migrants in the labour market influences their employability. This paper takes a look at four factors that explain the levels of socioeconomic integration which is adaptation into the socio-cultural setting of the new environment, level of educational, employability and accommodation. Each of these factors is discussed individually to explain the level of socioeconomic integration of migrants in their host country and how it influenced their decision on migratory strategy. The paper examines the experience of Nigerian labour migrants in Russia. The qualitative method of research is adopted to analyze and explain this thought. According to Todaro's model of migration which argues that migration is stimulated primarily by rational economic considerations, the purpose of this paper is to find the line between the push and pull factor of labour migrants from the socioeconomic perspective. No doubt that the quest to have a better standard of living and "escape" from poverty is a major determinant of migrants' that necessitates their decision to emigrate but the level of socioeconomic integration meted on migrants determines which country to migrate to.

Russia has a better economic condition than Nigeria and most of these migrants have emigrated for economic reasons but the inability to be gainfully employed by a Russian firm has made them handicapped of achieving a better economic condition. For most of the respondents, as a result of the inability to gain employment, they have to eke out means of survival for themselves. All the respondents learnt the Russian language and could speak it fluently. Having stayed in Russia for so long, they could all communicate fluently with the Russian natives. Despite having a higher education, most of the respondents interviewed were unable to get employed and when privileged to get one, they hold on to it because they don't know when they will get another if that is lost.

Socioeconomic integration is a factor that allows migrants enjoy free mobility in the labour market of the host country and thereby achieving a better life. The case of Russia, it is recommended that a policy of social inclusiveness that will enable migrants to have free economic mobility and integrate into the social sphere be pursued.