

Assessing the Operational Capacities of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) in Combating Irregular Migration in Kwara Border Controls

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Abstract

In many parts of the world, irregular migration has remained a global security challenge, exposing many migrant victims to human trafficking, and human rights violations with induced security threats. Despite the efforts of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) at countering irregular migration in Nigeria, the menace still persists in Kwara border control posts. This leads to undocumented entry of persons of concern, which includes smuggling and trafficking in humans, among other acts of security breaches. This study assessed the operational capacities of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) in combating irregular migration in Kwara border control. It specifically identified the **security challenges of irregular migrants** along Kwara border axis, and the operational tactics of NIS in controlling irregular migration. and the challenges confronting NIS in combating irregular migration along Kwara border axis. The study adopted a qualitative method of In-depth Interview (IDI) and Key Informant Interview (KII). Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used in selecting participants for the interview. A total of nine (9) respondents were interviewed and analyzed using content analysis. Findings of the study revealed that the security challenges in Kwara border

axis included smuggling of children for domestic workers, motorcycle/car theft, armed robbery and kidnapping for ransom. The operational control of irregular migration was effective in the area of sufficient **border control designs**, regular training and retraining of personnel. This is in addition to synergies with other security agencies, but ineffective in border patrol capacity, staff strength, logistic needs, funding and sufficient staff motivation to navigate difficult working environment. The challenges of controlling irregular migration by NIS along Kwara borders included: the porous nature of Kwara borders, lack of adequate NIS manpower for effective border management, deficiencies in coordination and sharing of information between NIS and other security agencies. The study concluded that the NIS remains relatively effective in controlling human trafficking in Kwara borders but with many operational challenges. The study recommended that **the NIS should recruit more men and strengthen Border Surveillance Technology, including cutting-edge instruments, drones, cameras, and sensors to enhance the operational capacity of NIS at curbing irregular migration at Kwara borders.**

Keywords: Nigerian Immigration Services, Operations, Border Control, Migration, Kwara State, Manpower, Surveillance

Introduction

Migration is one of the most dynamic features of human interaction and population re-distribution in the world (Jacobsen & Khosravi, 2021). The most challenging is irregular migration, which from the perspective of the country of origin, is the migration of persons across international borders without valid travel documents or passports to live temporarily or permanently in foreign countries other than their birth country. This movement violates the immigration laws of both countries of origin and destination. Irregular immigrants are also known as undocumented or unauthorized immigrants. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that there exist 281 million international migrants across the world in 2020, with a substantial proportion of them being irregular migrants (World Migration Report, 2022). These migrants frequently go on dangerous treks, exposing themselves to exploitation, human trafficking, and human rights violations (Jacobsen & Karlsen, 2020).

Irregular migration is also prominent throughout Asia, with the Gulf countries hosting a significant number of irregular migrants, accounting for up to 26% of the overall population in some countries (Frontex, 2020). Furthermore, those found to be Nigerians seem to be on the increase in recent times (United Nations, 2020). In sub-Saharan Africa, migration has been a permanent characteristic of the region long before colonization. However, Irregular migration is among the major challenges confronting several countries in Africa (Blum, 2014). According to Vespe and Pappalardo (2017) some of the African countries that have experienced irregular migration in the world include Israel, Sudan, Niger, Chad, Benin, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, amongst others. The destination of these irregular immigrants in Africa is majorly Egypt, South Africa, and Nigeria (Vespe *et al*, 2017; IOM, 2019).

The rapidly deteriorating security situation in most part of West Africa, especially in Benin,

Togo and Nigeria has its genesis from irregular migrants who migrate across various porous or illegal borders that are located of these States. The porosity of the land borders has paved way for the proliferation of illegal routes to promote illicit activities and security breaches, including but not limited to smuggling of arms, drug and human trafficking, terrorism, inter border armed robbery, and other transnational organized crimes along the borders which impedes economic development (Vespe and Pappalardo, 2017).

Nigeria's porous borders are major reasons behind irregular international migration problems (Adepoju, 2005). There are various illegal pathways mostly in Damaturu and Maduguri in the Northern part of Nigeria that links other neighboring countries like Cameroon, Chad and Niger. These countries further connect to other countries like Libya, Mali, and Sudan. These illegal pathways are unprotected and majorly used by irregular migrant for illegal exchange or purchase of arms and other businesses that are considered illegal such as sales of rice, cars, guns, oil, amongst others (Musa, 2013). There are various unprotected routes that are used by irregular migrants. In Nigeria there are about four thousand and eighty (4,080) routes in Nigeria out of which only ninety-one (91) are legally authorized and protected, this situation puts Nigeria in an unsecured migrant situation (Evans, 2016).

The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) is the para-military government agency charged with the responsibility of migration management in the country. The primary functions of the NIS include controlling of persons entering and living Nigeria, issuance of travel documents, including Nigerian passports to bona fide Nigerians within and outside the country, issuance of visas and residence permits to foreigners in Nigeria while also carrying out border surveillance and patrol against irregular migrants (IOM, 2014). Thus, the NIS is primarily responsible for effective enforcement of the federal government policy on border security towards regular immigration and emigration of persons. Therefore, this study assesses the operational capacities of NIS, with a view of strengthening its capacity in combating irregular migration in Kwara Border Axis.

Clarification of Key Terms

Border

There is no universally accepted definition of border as Musalli (2015) defined a border as an invisible margin and legitimate jurisdiction between political units such as sovereign states, or federal states. It is also seen as the main line, which demarcates one country from the other. Akinyemi (2013) defines border as the line that links and separates one country from another at the same time, and that it could be a source of benefit, as well as of detriment to the contending states, depending on the degree of their security. As such, countries find it mandatory to apply essential measures in order to protect their borders, on land, air and sea points of entry.

Migration

Migration has been defined as movement of a person or group of persons from one geographical unit to another across an administrative or political border, who wish to settle definitely or temporarily in a place other than their place of origin (IOM, 2021). Migration is the mobility of people from an area of a country (or from one country) to another area of the

same country (or to another country) to establish a new residence (IOM, 2010). Migration is also seen as the movement of people from one place in the world to another for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi-permanent residence, usually across a political boundary (Alkasim, 2018). Irregular migration is the movement of a person or group of persons into another currently illegally.

Human Trafficking

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (2018) defined trafficking in persons (otherwise known as human trafficking) as another dimension of the violence, brutality and abuse that occur in the context of armed conflict. Trafficking involves exploitation in forced labor, for domestic servants, sexual exploitation, or armed combat (UNODC, 2018). According to Ifeyinoluwa and Oluwaleye (2018), human trafficking is also the buying and selling of persons for the single purpose of exploiting individuals. The main goal of human traffickers according to Odelola (2020) is the exploitation of their victims to their advantage.

Literature Review

According to Sanchez (2019), migration is an old phenomenon and an emotional one because it essentially deals with individuals who, in many cases, were forced to leave their home countries by the hardship they experienced. As noted by Charles (2022), The rhetoric of disaster gives an impression of the tensions and resentments that can easily be mobilized when the topic of migration is raised. The risks, especially for 'recipient' countries, are widely acknowledged while migrants' risks often receive little attention. This is the first important connection between migration and security: the population in the destination countries harbors fears that migration could lead to a lack of security in the broadest sense, i.e. violence and crime but also social insecurity such as the loss of one's job, competition over social benefits, etc. In the discussions about migration, there is all too often a tendency to adopt a one-sided, negative attitude from a security perspective (Blum, 2014). The reasons for migration are many and varied. These include poverty as almost half of the 680 million people in Africa are still living in extreme poverty while violent conflicts, civil war and displacement of persons from their natural place of abode have curtailed sustainable development in the affected areas. In addition, environmental degradation has continued to cause severe and lasting damage to the environment and deprive people of their livelihood (Musa & Arostar, 2017). Experts call these factors the push factors of migration.

Adeola & Fayomi, (2012) in their study revealed that irregular migration has a lot of implications for human security as it encourages commission of crimes and acts of criminality such as terrorism and insurgency. Babatunde (2009) equally argued that irregular migration has posed a broad variety of security challenges for all actors involved in the process. The scope of migration-induced security risks only becomes visible when applying comprehensive security concepts that address state, regional and human or societal security aspects. The author argues further that even though migration does not cause conflict directly, it influences it under certain circumstances as migrants are sometimes recruited as war combatants. There is no doubt that all the reviewed studies made valuable input on the reasons for migration and its

security implications. In spite of these efforts, few studies were focused on the efforts of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) without focusing their studies on the operational capacity of the security agency to counter irregular migration, an academic lacuna this study intends to fill.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts securitization theory as its theoretical basis of analysis. The proponent of securitization theory could be traced to the work of Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998). The main thrust of Securitization theory is that national security policy is not a natural given but carefully designated by politicians and decision-makers. The Securitization theory states that issues in politics constitute an extreme security challenge with the urgent attention to the label and deal as dangerous, menacing, threatening, and alarming by a 'securitizing actor.' It has the social and institutional power to move the issue 'beyond politics' (Eroukhmanoff, 2018).

Irregular migration on this basis, is a security issue that is not just out there but requires its handling as a major crisis by security actors (Government) (Albert-Makyur and Mbanaso, 2022). Irregular migration is a 'threat to national security as it shifts immigration/irregular migration from a low priority political concern to a high priority issue that requires proactive actions, such as securing borders (Eroukhmanoff, 2018). Securitization theory therefore, provides a powerful lens for understanding how seemingly ordinary issues can be transformed into urgent security threats, demanding extraordinary measures.

Methodology

Data were primarily generated through the Key Informant Interview (KII) and In-depth interview comprising of Immigration officers (4), government officials (2), and (IDI) village heads (2), community members (3), that were selected through purposive sampling. Participants were drawn from Ilesha- Baruba border post, Okuta border post Kenu border post, Kosubosu border post and Yabua border posts. The respondents were considered relevant to this study because they possess first-hand information (expert knowledge) and have considerable field experience on the issues of border security and the operational capacities of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) in combating irregular migration in Kwara border axis. Primary and secondary data were utilized for this study. The qualitative data in form of semi-structured interview was recorded, transcribed were analyzed using inductive reasoning to generate meanings.

Data Presentation and Discussions

Security Challenges of Irregular Migrants along Kwara Border Axis

An investigation into irregular migrants' problems along the Kwara borders shows a complex tapestry of interconnected challenges that contribute to the ongoing problem of illegal migration. Findings from interview sessions and questionnaires revealed that smuggling of children for domestic workers, motorcycle/car theft, armed robbery, and kidnapping for ransom are the most prevalent crimes perpetrated along the Kwara border axis. Other crime common in the area are the trafficking of people for farming work, smuggling of unauthorized products, smuggling of fake products, and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The problem is exacerbated by the permeable nature of the borders, which allows traffickers and

smugglers to exploit vulnerable migrants. Oral evidence from the interview session affirmed that stealing, smuggling of vehicles and trafficking of persons and drugs are the associated crimes and security threats in the Kwara land border axis that were linked to many irregular migrants. A respondent interviewed in Okuta border axis revealed that:

For instance, if a vehicle is stolen from Nigeria, there are people in the other side, Benin Republic that will receive it from migrants, especially those who do not document their crossing with border immigration posts to conceal their detection by security agencies. Apart from car theft, many undocumented migrants just kill somebody and cross to the other place because he knows that they will not be able to trace him. (IDI/Resident/45yr/Okuta/2023)

Similarly, the village head interviewed in Ilesha-Baruba revealed that the security challenges associated with irregular migration are mostly car theft and human trafficking:

The insecurity associated with irregular migration has been stolen properties like vehicles or cars. The criminal element uses an avenue of porous border to carry out this crime. Imagine, last week a vehicle was stolen in Ibadan and we found it here at the point of crossing it to Benin Republic. Every other crime that I had witnessed here has to do with trafficking in of persons either for hard labor or sexual work. (KII/Male/Village head/63yr/2023)

Corroborating the above submission, a senior officer of Nigeria Immigration working at the control border post states that;

The insecurity linked with irregular migration has to do with human trafficking. Just last week my men caught a woman trying to cross an illegal route with children up to five without a document. We have to refer the case to the NAPTIPs for further investigation. So also in previous years, particularly at the inception of former president Muhammadu Buhari, issues of stolen vehicles and contraband goods have been a major concern for every security personnel stationed at the border. (KII/NIS/5yr/Baruteen/2023).

In line with the above, a village head interviewed in Kenu border post identified human trafficking as the crime associated with irregular migration along the Kwara border post. According to him:

The insecurity linked to irregular migration along Kwara border posts I would say is human trafficking because, like some of the farmers, they will tell you they need laborers. The laborer is now a kind of mediator. He will go bring the farmers to you, that how many do you need. Well, I would call that trafficking because... Yes, it's trafficking. Even if you call me to come

and farm somebody, trafficking does not mean you have to come and do prostitution first. For anybody to bring you to come and work without proper documentation is trafficking. Be it young people or old people, women or men. So, they do it here. (KII/Male/Village head/58yr/2023)

Findings from interview sessions revealed that smuggling of children for domestic workers, motorcycle/car theft, armed robbery, and kidnapping for ransom is the most prevalent crimes perpetrated along the Kwara border axis. Other crimes common in the area are the trafficking of persons for farming work, smuggling of unauthorized products, smuggling of fake products, and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The problem is exacerbated by the permeable nature of the borders, which allows traffickers and smugglers to exploit vulnerable migrants. It is quite easier for irregular migrants to perpetrate the above acts of criminality because they are often not subjected to regular checks since many of them did not pass through the regular borders. The study emphasizes the critical need for a comprehensive approach that addresses not only the symptoms but also the underlying reasons of irregular migration. Strengthening diplomatic ties with neighboring nations to address regional inequities collectively can also play an important role in lowering the motivation for migration.

Nigeria Immigration Service Operational control of Irregular Migration

Many tactics are being employed by the NIS to control irregular migration. These include detection and prevention of irregular exits and entering points. Due to the porous nature of borders in Kwara State, NIS created a synergy with the border host communities to identify the illegal routes within their areas and usually mount officers and men to block and control movement through such routes. A special corps named "border corps" was also established basically to combat trans-border crimes and as well monitoring the exit and entry points of irregular migrants. In an interview with the head of control in Chikanda, he avers that:

We have staff to carry out the expected duties of registering people going in and out the country at this control post. In most cases when migrant is referred to us, we screen the migrant and cross-check his/her document to ascertain if is allowed in or out of the country (KII/Male/DSC/54yr/SHQs/2023)

The Deputy State controller explained further on the strategic deployment of personnel at the border post thus:

We have Border Patrol, Chikanda, Gure Border Patrol, and Kosubosu. These are the major border patrol. If you are posted from the office, they will say go to maybe Kosubosu patrol base, it is the boss there that will then assign to you the border point to mount. Sometimes they may use their discretion, maybe they notice that people are diverting, passing through another road, he may use his discretion to go and cover up for that place (KII/Male/DSC/54yr/SHQs/2023)

In a similar view to the above discussion, the deputy state controller who doubles as border management head in Kwara border commented on monitoring the exits and entry points to prevent irregular migration. He asserts that:

We have nine (9) patrol routes. They are called border patrol units; Border patrol as the name implies, they move to monitor the movement of people along the border axis and these are the ones we may call illegal routes. We make sure that we mark them that anybody who takes that illegal route must be apprehended. If the person has his papers and the rest of the travel documents, we refer the person to the control posts to take that route because that is where his papers will be documented.
(KII/Male/DSC/54yr/SHQs/2023)

Furthermore, NIS engages in Joint border patrol and sharing of intelligence information with other sister agencies, community stakeholders, and as well as relevant government agencies. While commenting on the joint border patrol, a patrol leader said:

One of the tactics used is that we detail some surveillance to be at the border. Even we use information from the locals to gather intelligence If you see, then we get information, that's why we are able to detect some of where we have not been going before. Let's say maybe like arms now. The worst we do, because we are not on our own when we are playing something like that, we make contact to the office, the office now will direct on how to go about it. Majorly, it is the duty of the police to handle such criminals but you will not say because I am the OC, they ask, you have to contact the office to give you the directive for referral.
(KII/Male/DSC/54yr/SHQs/2023)

Speaking on the collaborative efforts of NIS with sister agencies, an Immigration officer revealed that:

Yes, the collaboration is very superb. The collaboration, inter-agency collaboration and the synergy is very strong, it is not just to have an antagonism with anybody, the friction is not there, there is no friction, everybody play his role. All of us are doing the same work. we meet at one point or the other. If I come across this in my area of duty, what do I do? I refer the matter to the appropriate agency and that is why there is an understanding. We have... Joint Border Team
(KII/Male/DSC/54yr/SHQs/2023)

NIS engages in public sensitization and awareness program by engaging vulnerable groups such as youth association and members of the public on illegal migration as well as "Japa syndrome". Another key tactic employed by NIS is regular training and retraining of its personnel. They embark on both local and international training and programs particularly on irregular migration and other trans-border crimes. While reacting to this, a senior officer revealed that:

The agency is passionate about training and retraining of officers on border management. Border security is one of the very important things that federal government has concern for. Border management training in immigration is one of those issues that the federal government does not play with, because they know our functions and what we can do. So I will tell you that the border management is deepened by the day through several workshops, retraining and so on. (KII/Male/PBO/51yr/ Okuta /2023)

Study on the effectiveness of NIS in controlling irregular migration revealed that a sizable number of respondents believed that the detection and prevention of unauthorized exits and entry along the Kwara border were unsuccessful. Only few thought it was very effective. This indicates the need for better methods and tools to increase the NIS's ability to identify and stop irregular movement operations along this specific border. While commenting on this, a community leader revealed that;

I am of the opinion that the staff strength capacity of NIS in controlling irregular migration at the Baruten Border area is not enough considering the large expanse of the area which consists of so many inlets and outlets at the Border axis in Baruten. There should be more strategic and effective personnel deployment policies in favor of the land borders because what we have existing at the moment is not producing results. As we witness mass influx of foreigners from Benin, Togo and Burkina Faso to Nigeria from those areas. There is no efficient operational logistics support. Considering the nature of the Border (Baruten) technological knowledge should be incorporated. Motorcycles should be provided to ply the non-motorable routes (IDI/Male/Community leader/44yr/2023)

Also, a representative of Local government chairman in Kaima while commenting on **detection and prevention of unauthorized exits and entry along the Kwara border** revealed that:

The capacity of NIS to tackle irregular migrant in our local government is very weak due to the inability to have enough logistics on every porous entry point. The worst period is during the rainy season because they did not have a house or place to stay at their patrol units. So, when it start raining you hardly see the NIS staff again patrolling and it is during this period that irregular migrants pass through coming into Nigeria for farming activities (KII/Male/LGA/49yr/2023)

The study on Nigeria Immigration Service's (NIS) tactics in controlling irregular migration along the Kwara border demonstrates the positive and transformative impact of these efforts. NIS's varied initiatives have generated considerable results in terms of border security, reduced incidents of human trafficking and smuggling, and raised public awareness about the dangers of irregular migration. One of the most noticeable outcomes of NIS initiatives is increased

border security. NIS has strengthened its ability to detect and deter irregular migration efforts by implementing advanced monitoring technologies and increasing patrols. This increased surveillance has served as a deterrent, discouraging potential migrants from crossing the border illegally and deterring traffickers and smugglers from exploiting vulnerable persons.

On the effectiveness of NIS operational tactics, mixed opinions were expressed on forming alliances with regional and international organizations to advance the fight against unauthorized immigration. While few respondents thought it was effective, a sizable portion said it was ineffective. This shows how crucial it is to fortify current alliances and forge new ones in order to successfully tackle the problems posed by irregular migration by working together and pooling resources. A sizable majority of respondents expressed favorability toward the NIS and other security services' cooperation in intelligence gathering, while few respondents indicated they are ineffective. This emphasizes the value of inter-agency collaboration and information sharing to strengthen intelligence gathering and raise the overall efficiency of operations to restrict irregular migration. Responses to advocacy presentations and awareness campaigns on various media channels and at public events were inconsistent. While few of the respondents said it worked, a sizable portion thought it didn't. In order to reach a larger audience and raise public awareness of the problems associated with irregular migration, this implies the necessity for more focused and effective awareness initiatives.

In addition, insignificant number of respondents thought those officers' training and retraining in irregular migration control and management was ineffective. While insignificant number of respondents agreed that it was extremely effective. This demonstrates the value of ongoing professional development initiatives and training programs to provide NIS officers with the expertise and information required to successfully manage the issues posed by irregular migration.

Challenges of Countering Irregular Migration by Nigeria Immigration Service along Kwara Border Axis

There are many challenges of countering irregular migration as distilled from this study. Findings from the interview conducted revealed that the majority of respondents regarded the permeable nature of Kwara's borders as a key difficulty. A significant number of respondents indicated a lack of manpower and logistics to effectively counter irregular migration. Commenting on the challenges of countering irregular migration by NIS along the Kwara border, a NIS officer revealed that:

I would say some; number one, logistics like mobility, number two shelter you understand? Shelter, infrastructure, that's basic things. Well, based on the, how do you call it, ECOWAS protocols, you know, we have free... in Africa. You know, you can easily move in and out. And if you want to look into that area of paper, you see, some Nigerian foreigners are also in our own country there. And you will see that if you think of Benin Republic or Togo, they are not too harsh on the Nigerians on their paper also. I think that is the same thing applicable to foreigners in Nigeria (KII/Male/PBO/39yr/Kosubosu/2023)

Another Immigration officer while commenting on this revealed that:

In terms of manpower, it's poor. As it is now, in this very locality that we are in, there are so many roads people can use that are not motorable, people can even walk. In terms of logistics, and manpower, to be sincere, it's poor working as an Immigration personnel. (KII/Male/NIS personnel /44yr/2023)

Furthermore, a significant number of respondents indicated a lack of information sharing and coordination issues as a challenge between the NIS and other security agencies. In addition, majority of the respondents voiced their worry over the absence of a legislative framework to handle the issue of migrant smuggling. To prosecute offenders and discourage irregular migration, it is critical to have the right laws and regulations in place. The NIS can successfully prevent smuggling and associated activities by establishing and improving legal frameworks. Another challenge cited by the respondents was inadequate funds for staff to patrol border stations. The NIS's capacity to conduct frequent and thorough border patrols may be hindered by a lack of funding.

Also, lack of current technology to track the flow of migrants across border posts was another issue mentioned by respondents. Adopting cutting-edge surveillance technologies like drones, sensors, and biometric systems can improve the NIS's monitoring capabilities and make it possible to track and identify irregular migrants more effectively. The difficulties noted include open borders. A significant number of respondents agreed that lack of motivation for NIS personnel could hamper their performance. For instance, a participant noted that posting immigration officers without adequate motivation and logistics to work could be counter-productive. While commenting on this, a respondent revealed that:

You see, for everybody to do his own work, there should be motivation. You understand? If, probably, the government want people and they know the causes of every trouble may start from the border area. The people that are supposed to be manning that point should be motivated. So that whatever you want them to go and do it there, they will do it without compromising your work with any money. (KII/Male/Immigration officer/39yr/Kosubosu/2023).

From the above analysis, irregular migration persists in the study areas because NIS has operational and structural challenges. These challenges include inadequate number of immigration officers at the border posts, lack of resources and equipment to fight smugglers, traffickers and other illegal migrants. The analysis also indicated that most of the immigration officers posted lack adequate knowledge of the areas. The study on challenges confronting NIS in combating irregular migration along Kwara Border revealed fundamental issues confronting the Nigeria Immigration Service in combatting irregular migration along the Kwara border and indicates crucial areas that require concentrated effort. The lack of resources, particularly insufficient staffing and technology, prevents border control initiatives from being fully realized. The permeable nature of Kwara's borders highlight the need for creative ways to

prevent unwanted entry. Because of the versatility of smuggling networks, NIS personnel must maintain constant vigilance and adaptation. Corruption among border control agencies continues to be a source of concern, necessitating strict anti-corruption measures and internal changes. The study's findings highlight the importance of developing a comprehensive plan to handle these difficulties methodically, guaranteeing that NIS can effectively perform its role in ensuring national security and well-being.

The identification of obstacles confronting the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) in its efforts to fight irregular migration along the Kwara border provides a thorough picture of the complexity involved in this undertaking. These obstacles points at the importance of adaptive methods, capacity-building, and structural reforms in ensuring the success of NIS projects. Limited resources emerge as a major impediment to NIS's objective to reduce irregular migration. Inadequate staffing, low financial allocations, and technology inadequacies limit the organization's ability to monitor and secure the Kwara border comprehensively. The vast and diverse geography, along with the ingenuity of trafficking networks, allows for unauthorized entry and criminal activity. Taking on this task necessitates the development of additional border posts, which is the introduction of mobile patrols, and the use of technology-driven monitoring tactics.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and the subsequent discussion, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the appraisal of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) in its efforts to combat irregular migration along the Kwara Border in Nigeria. According to the study, unlawful migration brings with it a host of problems, including money laundering, illegal mining, child smuggling, domestic workers, human trafficking, and migrant smuggling. The efficiency of several institutional tools used by the NIS to stop irregular migration has also been assessed by the study. While certain abilities have demonstrated level of usefulness, others need to be improved in order to produce the best results.

The study has revealed a number of issues that the NIS must overcome in order to stop irregular migration along the Kwara Border. The permeable nature of the borders, insufficient manpower and personnel resources, deficiencies in coordination and information sharing between the NIS and other security agencies, a lack of a legal framework to address the issue of migrant smuggling, insufficient funding for staff to perform border patrol duties, and a limited use of contemporary technology for monitoring the movement of migrants across the border posts are some of these challenges.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed based on the findings and conclusion of the research:

- i. **Securitization of the border:** Nigeria government should prioritize the procurement and deployment of cutting-edge instruments such as drones, cameras, and sensors to strengthen border surveillance and technological infrastructure. Given the ongoing issues created by irregular migration along the Kwara border, it is critical to invest in

cutting-edge border monitoring equipment. This will improve real-time monitoring and early detection of irregular migration efforts.

- ii. **There should be Cross-Border Collaboration and Intelligence Sharing.** Because irregular migration is transnational in character, the Nigeria Immigration Service should continue to strengthen its partnership with neighboring nations and international organizations. By establishing cooperative task forces and intelligence-sharing procedures, crucial information on trafficking routes, migratory trends, and criminal networks may be exchanged more easily.
- iii. **Nigeria government should strengthen the institutional capacity of NIS through recruitment of personnel and regular funding to increase the overall performance of the agency in controlling irregular migration**

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