

Full Length Paper

Migration and Visual Arts, Southeastern Nigeria Dimension

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The study tries to situate visual arts as therapeutic media that may help victims overcome trauma, emotional and psychological discomfort associated with migration. It may also be used as a social, healing and visual strategy to reform migration victims globally. The study submits that migration is a global phenomenon that may not be totally neglected or prohibited because of its immeasurable contributions to major economies, including entire human civilization and development. Different studies on migration may have been made, however, there is no comprehensive studies on this subject, hence the study. Primary and secondary sources of data collation are used to achieve the objectives of the study. However, the study underscores Southeastern Nigeria as a reference point. Some of the findings include: visual arts is a psychotherapeutic and psychosynthesis media and strategies administered to migration victims. Migration is a major setback to igbo culture and development as ndigbo are highly acclaimed for migration which is hugely responsible for the vanishing identity of igbo today. These paved way for possible recommendations.

Keywords: visual arts, sex and drug trafficking.

INTRODUCTION

Migration is an important phenomenon in the history and development of mankind. It is such a global trend that every living creature is directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously involved. It is such an irresistible and unavoidable trend that prospers some and ruins some nations, including human capacity and potentials. It is a social, needful and natural phenomenon that is bestowed to man as a living creature.

However, while most people see it as a prosperous and significant adventure, the study considers it as a dangerous and misleading phenomenon, that may wreck, ruin and destroy mankind in the long run. Despite the dangers associated with migration, it is commonplace to see people migrate from one place to another, either for pleasure, prosperity or exploration and most times they

never returned to their original places of origin. For examples, Nigerians migrate to United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, France and others, including others from other races migrating to other parts of the world in the pursuit of greener pastures and others battling to change their identity and destiny at all cost.

The study observes that many nations of great substance, economic world powers may not have attained their heights today without migrants from other races contributing significantly to their human, national, economic growth and development, America, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Japan, China, Netherlands and others are good examples.

However, the study may not delve into economic, social and historical analogy and development of the contemporary economic world

powers, in relation to migration influences to their present economic and social status globally, but focus will be on southeastern Nigeria, particularly, ndigbo, who have migrated to every parts of Nigeria and are seen in every nook and cranny of Nigeria and beyond. They also contribute effectively to the economic development of the places migrated to, thereby, subjecting their original places of origin to total neglect in terms of growth and development. The study observes that some of the resultant effects of such migration are loss of lives, values, identity, history, culture, security, nomenclature, enculturation and others. Most times, migrants who survive are reduced to third class citizenship and are over exploited. Most times, freedom are restricted, some, become slaves, others are used for rituals and human bodies are used for feeding of animals-Dogs, lions, Crocks and other wild animals that man have converted to pets to exhibit class distinction and definition of status symbols.

However, most, use these migrants to satisfy the sexual urge of their animals as narrated by Nwafor (2012) and Ekechukwu (2018) based on personal encounters and experiences in Malaysia, Italy, and Liberia, South Africa.

Apart from sexual taboos with animals, migration has led to increase in crimes across borders, ranging from drug trafficking and consumption by unqualified personnels and underage groups and individuals trafficking and smuggling of goods like firearms, weeds, tramadol, killings are among the border crimes influenced by migration.

In support of these views Azubuine (2019), raised an alarm over the high rate of igbo ladies from southeastern Nigeria, prostituting in Malaysia and also involved in other social vices constituting themselves a serious menace and embarrassment to the host communities. Many never returned alive, some give birth to unwanted babies and are sold and some for rituals and other unimaginable crimes across the porous borders. In southeastern Nigeria, migration is commonplace, though appears a blessing in disguise, but responsible to a larger degree, the varnishing identity of ndigbo and igbo culture as well as tradition which are seriously battling with extinction.

The study shares the view that southeastern Nigeria has lost more than seventy (70) million people of igbo origin to migration, the study, therefore, that submits ndigbo are scattered all over the world and more than half of these generations may not return to *Ala Igbo* (Igbo land) again. A visit to Lagos, Ibadan, Ogun state, Northern parts of Nigeria America, United Kingdom, France, Germany, India Italy, Russia and others may convince many, that Ndigbo are scattered all over the world and may never return to igbo land again. In the bid to survive, some commit themselves to crimes of different magnitude including border

crimes, armed robbery, advanced fee fraud and others.

Sex and Drug Trafficking.

The study shares the view that the rate of migration is phenomenal and accounts for hugely drug trafficking, human killings, extra judicial killings, human rituals, money laundering, advance fee fraud (419) and others. However, these impact negatively on the health and national status of the migrants including trauma and mental disorderliness.

It is for these reasons, the study tries to situate visual arts as therapeutic media that may help victims overcome trauma, emotional and psychological discomfort associated with migration. The study suggest that visual arts may be used as a social healing and visual strategy to reform, inform, persuade, calm the emotions of migration victims. Visual arts, particularly, painting, sculpture, graphics, textile design and others are psychotherapeutic and psychosynthesis media for victims reformation and readaptation back to the society, thereby contributing to the growth and development of humanity and society at large.

VISUAL ARTS

Different definitions abound as there are different people of different social and cultural backgrounds in the world. However, no matter the dimension everyone looks at it from, one thing is certain, visual arts borders on “expression of feelings, ideas or forms with intrinsic and extrinsic perceptual appeal”. One may look at it as a product, and a purifier of environment. On the other hand, the study observes that visual arts may be seen as an image or object that is so defined by its maker and which may not be implicitly and explicitly identified as such, but which also strikes the observer as expressive or aesthetically pleasing. In support of these views, Adams (1996), further opines that visual arts is the quality production or expression of what may be beautiful, appealing, or of more than ordinary significance. Visual arts deals with harmony, emotions and inspires creativity and entrepreneurship

Migration in relation to visual arts, most ideas, information or concepts are better expressed through visual forms. For examples, the implications of border crimes, drug and human trafficking, prostitution, ritual killing across borders may be highlighted or expressed effectively through painting, graphics, textile, designs, sculptures, photography and others, which are all embedded in the visual arts figures 1-3 are examples



Figure 1: Obianeri, Fabian, August Meeting, Oil on canvas, 90 x 70 cm, 2016 ABSU ©



Figure 2: Odikwa, Adanna, Unity, Oil on Canvas, 2018, ABSU, 90 x 70cm, © Osita Osita Williams A. Williams A.



Figure 3: Obioma Precious, Pen and Ink, Culture, ABSU, 2019, 70 x 60cm. © Osita, Williams A.

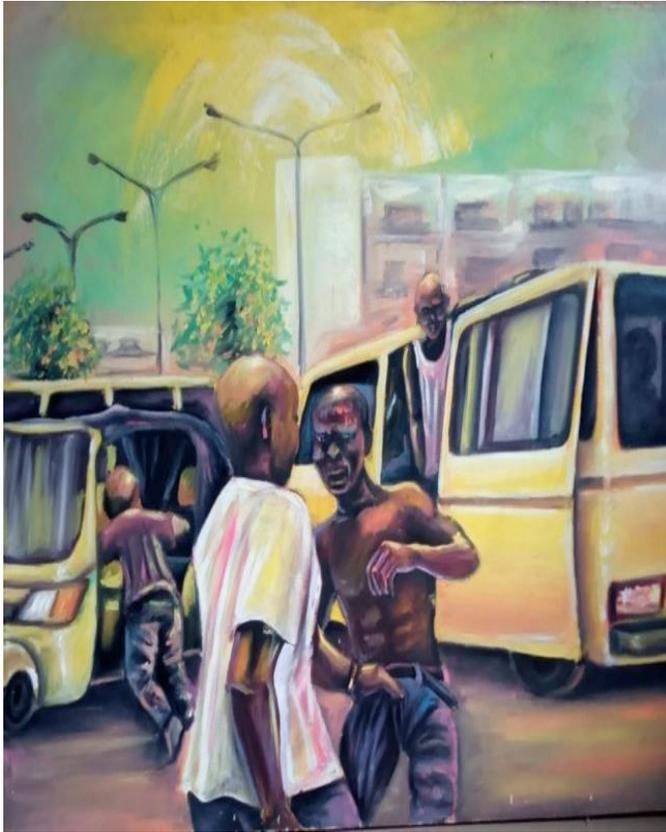


Figure 4: Odikwa, Adanna, Choas, Oil on on canvas, 90 x 70 cm, 2018 ABSU @ Osita William A.

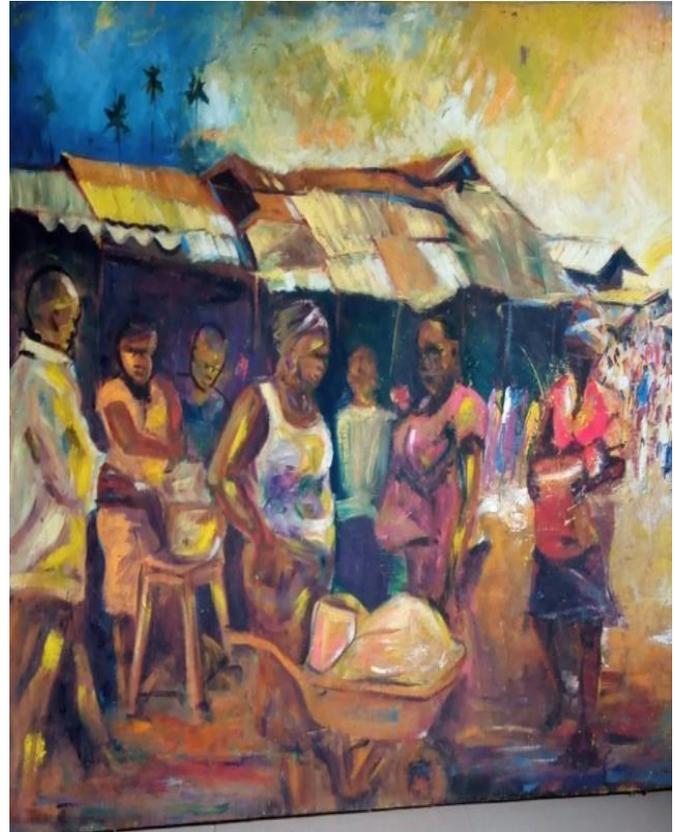


Figure 5: Osita, Williams A. Market, Oil on Oil Canvas, 2018, ABSU, 90 x 70cm, (c) Osita William A.

Osita (2014) shares the view that, merely viewing or seeing the art works in the garden help bring awareness to oneself, thereby, reducing stress and other traumatic experiences. However, it must be noted that visual arts, particularly, sculpture gardens help in reactivating and calming down emotion and other physical and mental including psychological disorders in human.

However, it must be noted that visual arts galleries or sculpture gardens serve as therapeutic centers for people with learning disabilities behavioural or social problems in the communities. Silently or subconsciously, these works, according to Osita, (2015) check, reduce, control or remove on the long run, such emotional or mental disorders that naturally oppress the mind. However, it must be noted that there is a feeling that emanates from the works in the various communities. The art studios, galleries or sculpture gardens particularly, when such works are viewed objectively. Such feelings become very intrinsic and such intrinsic perceptual appeal results to emotional healing, psychological healing, and remedies to other human disorders.

Apart from these, visual arts provide a suitable playground for entrepreneurship for migration victims. Visual arts in all considerations may significantly, situate such victims as job providers instead of Job seekers which textile design, graphics designs, painting technology, sculpture, photography, glass and ceramic technology could massively provide and equip the migration victims with skills and technical know how to survive and stand on their feet economically and contribute colossally to the development of self and the society at large.

Textile designing and photography as professional areas of human endeavour, could provide succor and self fulfilment for migration victims. Visual arts, to a greater degree, therapeutically works synergistically together with human emotions, psyche, dexterity, potential, psychology capacity to curb and or cure mental disorders and unfold as well as provide dependable solutions, skills and other abilities that may provide necessary environment for the victims to be self dependent and employers of labour in the society. Visual arts, however, provides a huge and massive platforms for capacity building.

Conclusively, migration is a healthy development in the contemporary times but a major setback to igbo culture and development as many of these migrants never or may not return to their original places of origin. Again, to those who may return emotionally embattled, psychologically traumatized and dehumanized, visual arts, therefore, becomes psychotherapeutic and psychosynthesis media and strategies that may be administered to the migration victims for quick rehabilitation and acceptance in the society.

The study, therefore recommends that visual arts as a mode of therapy must be encouraged in the schools, hospitals, public places and sculpture gardens for

sightseeing, made available in communities. Government and private individual may help establish art clinics, galleries and Art museums, those available should be upgraded and modernized for futuristic focus. Visual Arts should be massively encouraged in the schools at nursery-Higher institutions as it serves as an incubator for creative technological advancement.

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INTERVIEWS

Azubuine, E. C (2019) Interviewed at his office at Abia state Univeristy, Uturu, Senior Lecturer, 62 years old, February 16th 2:35Pm.

Ekechukwu, H. E. (2018) Interviewed at Rosenberg Houston, texas U.S.A. Civil.

Servant, 53 years old, March 10th 2018, 9:35Am

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Nwafor, C. N. (2012). Interviewed at Atlanta Georgia, US, Civil-servant 52 years old, march, 14th, 2018, 12:45pm.

Uzoanya, S. (2018). Interviewed in his office at ABSU, Uturu, Civil Servant, (Senior Lecturer) 62 years May 4th 10:23 Am.