

## On the Quest to Study Abroad; Cultural, Linguistic and Economic Fallouts- matters Arising In Nigeria

Azunwanna Onesimus\*

Department of English (Language), College of Humanities Redeemer's University, Ede, Nigeria

**Corresponding Author:** Azunwanna Onesimus, Email: [azunwanna11458@run.edu.ng](mailto:azunwanna11458@run.edu.ng)

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### ABSTRACT

Nigerian language and culture are endangered because of a strong craving to study abroad. The upsurge in the number of Nigerian youths fleeing the country still grows for many reasons: while some go in pursuit of university education, others simply go in search of greener pastures. Yet, the cultural cum linguistic and economic implications of this mass exodus of the supposedly best brains of the country have received little or no scholarly attention. This paper therefore presents a discourse cum psycholinguistic analysis of some online newspaper publications on the presence and activities of Nigerians in oversea countries vis-à-vis, the aftermath on the Nigerian nation. The methodology involves a critical reading of selected online newspaper publications on educational issues in Nigeria and abroad. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis Linguistic Theory (1929), and Anchimbe and Janney (2017) Postcolonial Pragmatic Theory are used to account for the hybridic discourses resulting from the mixture of different sociocultural and linguistic elements as a corollary of colonization. The results show that the alarming taste for oversea education in Nigeria has not only corrupted our communication system and cultural demeanor, it has also impacted negatively on the value of our currency, contributed to the general weakness of the Nigerian local universities and ultimately led to brain drain in Nigeria. It is therefore concluded that this trend has taken from us far more than whatever good it has brought and should immediately be discontinued as a necessary route to our cultural and economic emancipation.

**Key words:** Linguistic Culture, Study Abroad, Online Publications, Psycho-linguistic Theory

### INTRODUCTION

There has been an upsurge in the number of Nigerian youths fleeing the country for many reasons. While some go in pursuit of university education, others simply go in search of greener pastures. For instance, Edema, G. (2022) has written of how Professor Omolade Adumbi; a Nigerian political and environmental anthropologist emerged the first African to be appointed the director of African Studies Center at the University of Michigan, United States of America. Edema (2022) also revealed that the said Omolade Adumbi read for three major degrees in the United States of America just after getting his first degree in philosophy from the then Ondo State University which is now Ekiti State University. However, the publication did not reveal the linguistic, economic and cultural implications of the said exploits of the likes of Professor Omolade Adumbi and a host of other Nigerians who are continually inspired by such success stories thereby hustling to join the train.

Additionally, (ICEF Monitor, 2022) reveals that Millions of Nigerian students daily seek opportunities to pursue higher education in some oversea countries. This is to the effect that Nigerian language and culture are endangered because

of this craving for oversea education which is possibly fueled by the prospect of self-realization, the need to make some necessary advancement as an individual in life and in career; in addition to the offer of scholarships as well as campus jobs by those international universities. The consequences however, of this mass exodus of the supposedly best brains of Nigeria have received little or no scholarly attention from the discourse and psycholinguistic perspective. This paper therefore presents a psycho-pragmatic study of some online newspaper publications on the presence and socio-cultural effects of Nigerians in oversea countries vis-à-vis, the aftermath on the Nigerian nation.

The cultural, linguistic and economic implications of the above can also be overwhelming, especially when viewed as an ever growing trend in Nigeria. Odebode, I. (2012) citing Hudson (1980) believes that the dual function of speech is to communicate and identify social groups. He thus opines that any linguistic study that fails to recognize the socio-cultural group that produces it is vague. Hence, this paper is poised to reveal some of the dangers of the growing thirst for oversea education on the economic, linguistic, and cultural heritage of the country; with the view of prescribing the way out of the quagmire.

Meanwhile, some African countries in a bid to solve this riddle and save their countries from the avalanche of trouble associated with the clamour for overseas higher education have come up with some ideas. Egypt for instance has been able to maintain a steady power supply for some years by upholding the rule that only Egyptian trained engineers are employed and retained in their power sector; (Obi, 2022). Even their civil service and ministries are also run solely by Egyptians who are educated in Egypt. With whatever policy that brought this trend to bear, there is no gainsaying the fact that Egyptians would generally patronize their local universities and invariably have their linguistic and cultural orientations duly preserved. More so, their economy would continually receive a boost, not just because there would be a great reduction in their demand for foreign currency, but also because only patriotic Egyptians are allowed to work in the mitochondrial sectors of the economy where the growth and development of the country's economic resources are midwifed, nurtured and sustained.

Rwanda is another African country that has relatively enjoyed a steady power supply. (Nduagwuike, 2022) The said development in Rwanda was made possible because most of their government officials were trained in Rwanda institutions. Though not by means of the operation of a national policy as was the case in Egypt, but simply because of a sense of nationhood; a national consciousness to encourage patriotism; a deliberate act of electing people with a sense of nationhood into power.

Britain for instance, has long made her universities to serve as model institutions for the rest of the world. Yet this was not a feat that is possibly achieved by an overnight dream. Definitely not by mere wishes and not without some deliberate efforts to make and enforce some policies that would encourage true patriotism. The said British universities, apart from bringing regular huge economic returns to the government, they also sustain the economic and value system of the country thereby ensuring that the linguistic and cultural norms are not eroded. All these are only made possible by the rule which allows only graduates of UK reputable universities to work in their public service. (Oyinyi, 2022)

All these deliberately point to the fact that there is a pressing need for the public policies of any country to align with the strategic interest of the nation. A reference to Ghana would further speak volume on this. Yet, a number of other countries both in Africa and the rest of the world would yet be worthy of mention.

The geopolitics of knowledge production must therefore ascertain that Nigerian universities are first repositioned to solve cultural and economic problems; by ensuring that only Nigerians who are deeply concerned about the all-round development of both the universities and the country are allowed to run them. Towards this aim therefore, and for the purpose of drawing the attention of both scholars and state actors in Nigeria to the nefarious effects of the mass exodus of Nigerian youths on the overall cultural and socio-economic stability of the country, this paper is written to score the following goals:

- i. Examine the value system of various stake holders in Nigerian universities and its relationship with the developmental agenda of the said universities
- ii. Compare the socio-economic roles of Nigerian universities with the global functions of other universities abroad
- iii. Discourage the maddening quest for overseas education by suggesting how the state and functions of our local universities could improve.

With its coverage of certain fundamental issues of national concern such as the standard means of communication in schools and colleges, the personality and value system of our state actors, political gladiators and stake holders in our various universities, the functions and socio-economic relevance of our universities, and the reasons for the preference for overseas education by our youthful population; this paper seeks to answer the following research questions via adherence to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis Linguistic Theory (1929), and Anchimbe and Janney (2017) Postcolonial Pragmatic Theory:

- i. Do the primary goals and value system of various stake holders in Nigerian universities align with the developmental goals of the said universities?
- ii. What are the reasons for the quest for overseas education among Nigerians?
- iii. Do the socio-economic roles of Nigerian universities compare with those of other universities abroad?

## Literature Review

The managing director of Seven-Up Bottling company; Mr Ziad Maalouf has been quoted as saying that Nigeria is one of the countries with the best young talented population who are making impact both locally and globally especially in the Fintech industry. However, he is said to have made the expression while presenting the twelfth 7Up Harvard Business School MBA Scholarship Award to one Miss Dafi Rogers-Halliday (Edema G. 2022). While the above has the colouration of good news or a comic relief in a tension-packed tragedy of our nation, it is yet worrisome to note that the said recipient of the award is a first class graduate of Economics from River State. The fact that a number of such awardees have gone out of the country without ever returning to give back to their nation or ever contribute to the national development of the country that raised them to international prominence or laid the foundation for the seeming bright future they enjoy in the West therefore brings up the need for us to reexamine our value system.

For instance, if the said awardee was sponsored to any of the Nigerian private or public universities, maybe the result would not be the same. Maybe our collective benefit as a nation would not be undermined. Since Miss Dafi is the twelfth person to receive the said award or scholarship, what has happened to the eleven former recipients of this same award and millions of others who have received similar opportunities to study in top overseas universities? How many of them have given back to the Nigerian society in terms of contributing meaningfully to her growth and development to cushion the effects of the capital flight that was occasioned

by their emigration to foreign countries? These and many other disturbing questions which are largely unanswered and unanswerable are some of the reasons Nigeria is still very backward both in her educational and economic sectors; and the very essence of this paper.

While the craving for oversea education and other accessories has started since the colonial era, it is only until the year 2022 that one of the major Nigerian Languages and culture was recognized as a field of study in Oxford University which nonetheless, has been the alma mater of countless Nigerian elites. According to Punch Online Newspaper of 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022, this is the first time Igbo language would be taught at Oxford University with the induction of Emmanuel Ikechukwu Umeonyirioha as the first lecturer for the course by Marion Sadoux who is the Head of Modern Language Programmes (Edeme, V. 2022). The questions that readily come to mind are: is Igbo actually a modern language? While the Europeans colonized Africa and even built schools in Igbo land, did they not take note of a major language generally spoken by millions of people in their colony? So many Nigerians have taken courses in English and other European languages both in Nigeria and in the West, with many making some good grades that stood them out to the evident admiration of their contemporaries, why did it still take some donkey years for the UK educational authority to recognize the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of these crops of scholars who have obviously contributed immensely to both their economy and educational enterprise?

It is highly believed that Nigerians mostly fund many of the European universities. Although they are usually attracted with certain scholarship schemes that tend to show that without Nigerians and of course the rest of African young population, many British, American and Canadian universities would largely be depopulated with not even a single soul enrolling in some of their departments. According to Mrs. Tinuade Olufolabi of Maple Canadian College, Lekki, Lagos:

Yearly, a total of 1.7 million scholarships are awarded. Statistics indicate that just seven per cent of college and university students will earn a scholarship nonetheless.... we are proud of our 100 per cent success rate for post-secondary applications for our graduating students into international universities and colleges as well as the over 90 percent of our graduates who got scholarships totaling more than \$1million in the just concluded 2021/2022 academic session. (Edema, G. 2022)

Meanwhile, the supposed 'good news' and success of Mrs. Olufolabi as noted above is not without some nefarious effects on the Nigerian economy. Apart from being a means of brain drain in Nigeria, the CBN data has it that Nigerians spent US \$90.67 million in December 2021 on foreign education. Then in January 2022, they spent US \$60,202,730.84. And in February 2022, they spent US \$69.9 million (Chila, A. A. 2022). The above clearly shows that between December 2021 and February 2022, Nigerians have spent about US

\$220.80 million on foreign education alone. Thus, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization once observed that about 76,338 Nigerians were studying abroad as of 2018 (Chila, 2022). This figure being the highest from an African country rather calls for worry on the state of the country's foreign reserve.

Saidu, F. (2022) further wrote that Nigerian students attending universities in the UK rose from 13,000 in 2018/2019 to 21,305 in 2020/2021 academic session. He added that Nigerians paid N152 billion in tuition into UK universities, making Nigeria the largest oversea market for UK universities among other African nations. While no one actually frowns at Nigerians patronizing European, American and Canadian universities for reasons of quality education and employment opportunities perhaps, the aftermath of this heightened patronage simply calls for worry as our cultural values are hurriedly being displaced with these imported perspectives that are hardly compatible with our traditional norms and values. This is in addition to the economic sabotage it poses on our collective desire for economic prosperity and emancipation. At the same time, the Western countries are feeding fat on the revenue generated from their universities which are largely from research grants, investments from spin-out companies and higher fees paid by international students. (Saidu, F. 2022)

The fact that these universities even generate revenue from whatever means to drive economic prosperity for the entire citizenry is rather a reason they have succeeded in attracting many Nigerians leading to the abandonment of our local educational system. It was Bamgbose, G. (2022) who wrote that Nigerian school system is a scam, simply because the courses taught are not channeled to contemporary realities. He further posited that academic writing and research in Nigerian universities are simply for the purpose of gaining promotion and that while the university ought to dictate the pace of cultural and economic advancement to the circular society, the society rather dictates for the university and greatly influences its programmes and prospects. Yet Bamgbose, G. (2022) ended up prescribing the need for students to face their primary interests in life instead of adapting to the ritualistic pattern of education obtainable in the country as a solution to the problem. This opinion therefore fails to realize the need for universities to have and pursue certain economic goals that could trigger a massive economic emancipation of the larger society thereby rejuvenating the general interest and confidence of the populace on our local educational system.

According to Falase, O. A. (2022) University of Ibadan started in 1948 as a college of the University of London until it became an independent degree awarding university in 1962. Other universities that were further established with the same excellent standard were that of Lagos, Ife, Nsukka and Zaria and all of them produced graduates of excellent quality who successfully took over from Britain in running the country. It is noteworthy that these universities initially ran as independent entities though with adequate support from government and other local and international donor agencies. The success of these universities led to the estab-

lishment of more and more universities in the 1970s such as Benin, Calabar, Jos, Ilorin, Maiduguri, Port Harcourt, Sokoto, and then, the universities of Technology and those of Agriculture in the 1980s.

But after the success of the initially established universities of the 1960s, the military came into power and the Udoji Panel Report and Recommendations got accepted by the government; making the universities which hitherto fixed and determined its own salary structure and condition of service to rather come under one single scheme of service with other parastatals – having the permanent secretary at the helm. In furtherance of this malady, the federal government also introduced JAMB to centralize admissions into the universities and to possibly cure the headache encountered by prospective university students in the course of seeking admission. JAMB however escalated the malady as it jettisoned merit on the consideration of catchment and educationally disadvantaged areas. Consequently, a teeming generation of unqualified students playing on the shrine of examination malpractice bought their ways through JAMB into the universities, occasioning the institution of cultism in the universities as gang-ups of unserious students whose major preoccupations were to riot and threaten lecturers for free scores to ensure that they do not fail.

As if the above were not enough damage to the system, the democratically elected government further returned with the policy of appointing members of the Governing Councils of universities among whom are politicians who have no university education except that they are loyal members of the ruling political party. Hence, they did nothing more than recouping the money they spent in electioneering periods by all means possible without considering the bankruptcy to which the universities are thus exposed.

Moreover, these Governing Councils mostly abandoned the goals and developmental plans of the various universities in favour of the political agenda of the government that appointed them. No wonder they were easily dissolved by successive governments which also halted the necessary decision making process for the running of the universities till another governing council is constituted which sometimes took a couple of years to happen.

The universities so managed by the government became largely underfunded. Yet the government does not allow the nuclear management to raise more money from tuition. Then the Structural Adjustment Program introduced in the 1980s further reduced the value of the naira, resulting in the reduction of the purchasing power of university lecturers and other public servants who are victims of meager salaries. Local and overseas grants for conferences were also cancelled. Funds were no longer made available for the purchase of research equipment. The science-based departments could no longer hold practical sessions, leading to the invention of a new method called “alternative to practical”. All these and many more led to the formation of ASUU, a powerful trade union that uses strike action as a tool to get the government attend to their demands. Alas, the said strike which has become a recurrent decimal has further crippled whatever that was left as a modicum of beauty in the Nigerian educational

system. Hence, a lot of students and even lecturers started running to Europe, America, Canada and Australia while a host of others switched over to private institutions just to make ends meet and to realize their academic goals and aspirations.

As at December 2019, it is reported that Nigeria has a total of one hundred and seventy universities. Forty three of which are owned by the federal government. Forty eight belong to the various states of the country while seventy nine are privately owned (Falase, O. A. 2022). This figure ought to cater adequately for the Nigerian schooling population except that employers of labour now feel that those trained abroad are better equipped to fill the few vacancies in our moribund labour market. This too should be considered as a major aberration because most of the privately owned universities can at least compete with their international counterparts in terms of having the necessary facilities and dutiful or dedicated staff of academics.

Bamgbose, G. (2022) seems to have a different view. He argues that Germany which has about half of Nigerian population rather has about double of the number of universities in Nigeria. His view therefore tend to provide a justification for the maddening migration of both Nigerian students and academics to overseas countries where there are enough universities to cater for their towering academic needs, especially because of the seeming decay of the public educational facilities in Nigeria as a result of the government’s ineptitude and dereliction over the years. This argument however came in the heat of the prolonged ASUU strike of 2022 when the country’s educational minister unfortunately advised the angry Nigerian students to sue their striking lecturers as the major culprits of their predicaments. Yet it is possible that Bamgbose, (2022) did not consider the possibility that Germany as well as many other western countries that seem to have a greater number of universities than Nigeria are possibly encouraged to do so by the teeming crowd of foreign patronage they enjoy. Hence, a serious reflection on this omen should rather trigger in well-meaning Nigerians, a hot desire to reposition the Nigerian universities for such foreign patronage that would lead to the birth of even more universities in Nigeria to cater for the overflow. This is a discussion that serious thinking Nigerians would obviously need a round table occasion for proper deliberation. In the words of Ajayi, O. B. (2022), if our universities are upgraded to expected standard, they will attract foreign students from across the globe. It means that our children will be fine with schooling in Nigeria instead of going abroad. Their going abroad he says, depletes our foreign reserve.

As if the above is not enough, Edokwe, B. (2022) wrote of how 243 Nigerian soldiers resigned in one day over allegations of corruption in the Nigerian army. According to the soldiers; “the army is the epitome of deep-seated corruption”. This corruption they say is affecting the prosecution of the anti-terrorism war in the North-East. Even the moribund university system for which ASUU was on strike for more than six months is said to be a product of corruption in the system. According to Olaniyan, L. (2022), ASUU said there is corruption in the university and requires the government

to investigate same. The government sent its officials to carry out the investigation but refuses to declare their findings since 2020. Given that the government is in charge of the university funds through her Governing Councils, ASUU became suspicious that they have a skeleton in their cupboard. Yet Omeihe, E. (2022) believes that the situation may even get worse since the government is tinkering with the proscription of the union for alleged intransigence in the festering strike. Olaniyan, L. (2022) ended up dropping a bombshell that could make any serious thinker possibly smell a rat in the attitude of Nigerian academics and attribute same laissez-fairness to the reason behind the dilapidation of the university educational system in Nigeria. How then should one respond to a renowned professor who said that:

Nobody gets a single promotion for teaching. Good teachers do not get promoted, only good researchers do. You don't have to teach well since your progression does not depend on it. Focus on your research as this is what your condition of service says. ASUU member, please develop your grant-seeking and Research delivery capacity and skills. If government believes that students should be taught well, let them change the conditions of service so that only teaching is used for promotion. Register an NGO to achieve your research objective and obtain your grants.” Olaniyan, L. (2022)

Such kind of mindset from intellectuals who are the supposed ministers in the country's temple of morality and cultural values are capable of driving more youths into saner climes where they hope to receive a sound teaching attention from academics whose spirits, souls and bodies are duly immersed in the service of raising intellectual giants. This is perhaps why it would be too difficult to blame those youths who make haste to flee the country to just any other part of the world in search of sound education.

As a matter of fact, another academic who is also a member of ASUU has stated emphatically that “an academic is employed to render three services: teaching, research and community service” (Nasir, M. 2022). On the authority of the above stated purpose of employment and the order of priority, it would not be easy to absolve any lecturer that focuses on research more than teaching for the selfish gain of being promoted. And to think of exonerating such fellow from the guilt of chasing our best brains out of this country for educational matters would be quite unthinkable. After all, an academic is first a teacher before a researcher. It is on account of this view perhaps, that Olayinka, I. (2022) feels that there is need for us to fashion out what is the best model for our country in order to reposition the Nigerian university system which is grossly underperforming for sundry reasons. The models Olayinka, I. (2022) thus proposes are: that of the German educational system which is mostly funded by the government while students study on a relatively low or almost free tuition in world class universities; the next is that of the United States of America where the elite schools are almost privately owned, making students to pay high tu-

ition while the government and other agencies offer grants and scholarships to assist indigent but brilliant students.

It is somewhat disheartening to start talking about the third purpose of employment as observed by Nasir, M. (2022); which is community service. One might just say, quite sincerely, that a lot of academics have obviously forgotten that that is also a part of the job they are called to do. And such important factor should not just be swept under the carpet as the absence of it is the primary reason Nigerian education seems to have lost its flavour. Hence, Atabo, S. (2022) thus affirms that the federal government has never denied that public universities are in poor conditions and require urgent rescue.

While the universities in UK are the toast of many Nigerians including most annoyingly, the children of some Nigerian academics and politicians, it is pertinent to note that these universities became what they are by means of the social and community services they heartily render. Thus, they sustain the economic and value system of the country as well as bring huge returns to the government from time to time (Okunoye, O. 2022). If the Nigerian academics cannot think like their counterparts in UK, then the educational system of this country is hugely *kwashiokored*. And being besieged by such great epidemic, who would not flee at the sight thereof?

Could this be why all those who have the wherewithal, especially the political class have always sent their kids abroad for university education? According to Kperogi, F. (2022), “most of Atiku Abubakar's children went to school abroad; Bola Tinubu's children went to school abroad too” (Kperogi, F. 2022). Given the above tipoff, anyone looking unto the government to provide a cure to our ailing university system might be waiting in vain. The fact that a politician who even owns a university in Nigerian has sent his children to study abroad is the height of sabotage on the collective educational goals and values of the nation. Unless and until a law is made to debar both politicians and academics from sending their children abroad for education, our state actors and stake holders would never be willing to do what it takes to get our universities running.

In the course of the ASUU strike of 2022, many Nigerian academics rather joined the fleeing category in search of greener pastures or possibly in search of a country where academics are seen as noble professionals. But why Nigeria cannot become one of such countries has become the most difficult question for neither the striking lecturers nor the political leaders to answer. In the words of Ushie, J. A. (2022), “the members of ASUU have been treated worse than slaves, worse than the very lowest of outcasts by the same country they believe they are laboring and dying for.” The above view simply identifies the reason a lot of Nigerian academics further decided to flee the country as there seem to be no hope of solving the riddle in the near future. This is because they feel backstabbed in the course of fighting a just course. It was Umar, A. F. (2022) who wrote that ASUU is fighting for a better condition of service, for the system to be attractive for the best brain; thus reducing brain drain, and rather attract foreign students as well as halt capital flight. While these are good reasons for one to stake one's neck and fight

to finish, it is not still out of place to reconsider the modus operandi in order to ensure that the end can actually justify the means. And ascertain that the stated goals can be scored in the general interest of Nigerian educational system.

It is to this end perhaps, that Osuntokun, J. (2022) wrote that ASUU needs to adopt a different strategy instead of going on strike every year and expecting different reactions from the government. "This is the height of madness." He lamented; "what ASUU should now be fighting for is university autonomy, which the law has in fact granted. ASUU should take governments, both federal and state, to court over university autonomy." The erudite emeritus professor thus believes that once university autonomy is granted, each university would come up with the actual economic cost of educating the students across various disciplines and consequently place the charge on parents of the students while the government would only support with annual grants as much as it could afford. In apparent support of this view, Olusegun, A. (2022) wrote that it is not enough for ASUU to call off the 2022 strike just in readiness for the next one. He thus opined that "this open-close regime must be stopped once and for all. Let universities take their autonomy seriously and let the councils do the needful, including paying good salaries to lecturers". He further wondered why the government should be directly involved in the running of universities and in the determination of lecturers' wages. This he believes is the reason Nigeria is losing her best staff and students to a globalized world at an unprecedented rate. In addition to these views, Edema, G. (2022) wrote that "the autonomy of the universities is thus critical to the stability of higher education." She further reasoned that the major problem of Nigerian universities is that of over centralization. The basis for this argument she said, is that there has been strike in some universities in America in recent times such as the Eastern Michigan University and the American University, Washington DC, but that these strikes were never on a national scale because the structure in the United States of America is significantly decentralized

### Theoretical Rationale

Anchimbe and Janney (2017) & Anchimbe (2018) posit that in postcolonial societies where multiple indigenous languages co-exist with English in complex multilingual and multicultural ways, it is normal that western pragmatic ideologies and theories would be insufficient for analyzing postcolonial linguistic behaviors since these theories are based on western contexts, which are mostly projected to be mono-lingual and mono-cultural.

No matter how they are adapted to suit these contexts, their suitability has often not been satisfactory. This has therefore led to the emergence of new frameworks such as the postcolonial pragmatics which considers the multilingual and multicultural contexts of these societies which obviously include Nigeria. It recognizes the state of *linguabridity* in which people live, routinely using, and having identity bonds to languages from competing and conflicting cultures (Anchimbe, 2007:66). This hybridity of language use occasioned by colonialism and still sustained by neocolonialism

in the guise of foreign educational trips has almost eroded the natural beauty of Nigerian indigenous languages and cultural orientations.

The postcolonial pragmatic theory of Anchimbe and Janney (2017) is therefore apt in accounting for the hybridic discourses resulting from the mixture of different sociocultural and linguistic elements as a crown of colonization. This theory thus recognizes the fact that many outer circle *Englishes* have substantial substrate influence from indigenous languages, a need that arises from the fact that certain socio-cultural practices have to be preserved and expressed in a variety of *Englishes* spoken in postcolonial territories. In a nutshell, it posits that any comprehensive investigation of social interaction in postcolonial societies must take into account the complex constitution of these societies marked by contact, hybridism and the emergence of linguistic and social behavioural patterns during and after colonialism.

Otung, G. E. (2021) has further examined the increase in academic mobility and the challenges that accompany it; one of which she observed is concerned with communication. Hence, she noted that it is necessary that discourse and pragmatic studies in intercultural communication investigates communication in academic communities especially in the international campuses involving a cross-cultural sampling of Nigerian and German student-lecturer communication in the university of Bayreuth; using Communicative Acts Categorization Frameworks from Anchimbe (2018), Cohen et al (1981), and Trosborg (1995). The results however show that Nigerian students' strategy portray norms such as consideration and respect for age, gender and social status, social roles of older persons, social value for family and education, the role of finance in education and religious beliefs

The Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis (1929) which is a time tested psycholinguistic theory further holds that to have a second language is to have a second soul. This means that a person's native language determines how he thinks and behaves; and by extension, his creative thinking and problem solving potentials. Generally, this linguistic theory states that the semantic structure of a language shapes or limits the ways in which a speaker forms conceptions of the world. This theory came about in 1929 and named after the American anthropological linguist; Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and his student; Benjamin Whorf (1897-1941). It is also known as the theory of linguistic relativity, linguistic relativism, linguistic determination, and Whorfianism

The application of the two theoretical frameworks above therefore helps to account for the cultural diversity as well as differing political, linguistic and economic views and orientations that have continued to negate the plea for national unity. This precarious situation consequently occasioned the need to curb further infiltration of the economic values and cultural ideologies of the nation.

Apart from the economic downturn occasioned by this maddening quest to study abroad by Nigerians, there is still the linguistic and cultural implication it has on our country. Anchimbe and Janney (2017) & Anchimbe (2018) identify three basic linguistic features of interactions in the postcolonial contexts which are:

- a. The concept of multilingualism
- b. The use of situational languages and expressions to depict language relations
- c. The society and identity projections.

Given the fact that language use is a veritable vehicle for the projection of identity, identity on the other hand is highly inseparable from culture. Identity is determined by language and one can hardly discuss language and identity without recourse to culture. As such, it is said that individuals do not project an identity from the inside out or from the outside in except that they are constrained by their environment which imposes same on them; (Krashen, S. 2013). In addition, Block, D. (2018) quoting Weedon (2004:19) wrote that identity is perhaps best understood as a limited and temporary fixing for the individual of a particular mode of subjectivity as apparently what one is, with one of the key ideological roles of curtailing the plural possibilities of subjectivity inherent in the wider discursive field, and to give individuals a singular sense of who they are and where they belong.

The above view probably captures the reason there is a crisis of identity among many Nigerians with the influx of our oversea-bred compatriots who tend to corrupt our identity and culture with the foreign linguistic and cultural elements they have brought from various western climes. Little wonder Whorf (1956) claims that language conditions our world view and that different speakers view the world along different lines laid down by their respective languages.

The implication of the Whorfian hypothesis is that language differences engender cultural differences; or that linguistic relativism engenders cultural relativism. Meaning that human beings live in different worlds because of the different languages they have. This clearly explains why the massive import of western civilizations and culture has rather heightened ethnic and religious crises thereby causing a total collapse of national values that make for unity, peace and progress in Nigeria. The Sapir-Whorfian theory of linguistic relativism (1929) therefore advocates a harmonious cultural and linguistic practice as a panacea for national unity and mutual understanding.

### Data and Methodology

This study is a qualitative research which specifically focuses on the aftermath of the massive migration of Nigerian youths to oversea countries for academic reasons. Two major publications in a leading Nigerian newspaper; Punch, were purposively selected for their rich content of emigration activities in Nigeria and the cultural cum economic effects they pose on the Nigerian educational industry. The said publications were closely read with penetrating attention on the details that stood against the prospects of educational advancement in Nigeria. The said primary data consists of:

- a. Edema, G. (2022). 'Nigerian don becomes University of Michigan director'. And 'Nigerian youths making impact globally – 7Up boss'. All published in *Punch Newspaper* of 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022. Retrieved from: the editor@punch.com
- b. Chila, A. A. (2022). 'How foreign universities are profiting from Nigerian universities poor funding, crises.

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- i. According to Edema, G. (2022), a Nigerian Professor named Omolade Adumbi; a political and environmental anthropologist emerged the first African to be appointed the director of African Studies Center at the University of Michigan, United States of America. Edema (2022) further revealed that the said Omolade Adumbi read for three major degrees in the United States of America just after getting his first degree in philosophy from the then Ondo State University which is now Ekiti State University.
- ii. In the second article, Edema, G. (2022) quoted the managing director of Seven-Up Bottling company; Mr Ziad Maalouf as saying that "Nigeria is one of the countries with the best young talented population who are making impact both locally and globally especially in the Fintech industry." However, he is said to have made the expression while presenting the twelfth 7Up Harvard Business School MBA Scholarship Award to one Miss Dafi Rogers-Halliday; a first class graduate of Economics from River State.
- iii. On the other hand, Chila, Andrew Aondofa (2022) wrote that CBN data has it that Nigerians spent US \$90.67 million in December 2021 on foreign education. Then in January 2022, they spent US \$60,202,730.84. And in February 2022, they spent US \$69.9 million. The above clearly shows that between December 2021 and February 2022, Nigerians have spent about US \$220.80 million on foreign education.

The crux of the message in the above publications is thus picked for analysis as highlighted above. The instances of contention and contradiction with the pursuit of national values and goals are analyzed on the basis of the provision of the chosen theories which are The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis Linguistic Theory (1929) and Anchimbe and Janney (2017) Postcolonial Pragmatic Theory. For ease of reference therefore, the essays above which serve as primary data are label accordingly:

- i. Article one
- ii. Article two
- iii. Article three.

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The emerging issues or items of national contention in the primary data are hereby examined in line with the provision of the chosen theories.

#### Emerging Issues in Article One

This article is centers on the exploits of Professor Omolade Adumbi; a political and environmental anthropologist who became the first African to be appointed the director of African Studies Center at the University of Michigan, United States of America. Edema (2022) reveals that the said Omolade Adumbi read for three major degrees in the United States of America just after getting his first degree in philosophy from the then Ondo State University which is now Ekiti State University.

Following the underlying view of The Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis (1929), a theory that generally holds that the semantic structure of a language shapes or limits the ways in which a speaker forms conceptions of the world. One would see why Omolade Adumbi would have to take a whooping three degrees in the United States of America before he is deemed qualified to become the director of African Study Center in the University of Michigan. Perhaps he was technically meant to understudy the American school system and the authorities needed to ascertain that he has fully keyed into the American value system before he would be allowed to take up a leadership position in her university. Given that The Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis (1929) is a time tested psycholinguistic theory which clearly posits that to have a second language is to have a second soul, this means that a person's native language determines how he thinks and behaves; and by extension, his creative thinking and problem solving potentials. Omolade Adumbi must have been allowed to technically go through a period of acculturation in order to weed himself of the soul and thinking pattern of his native language and culture while taking up American soul, language and cultural ideals.

### Emerging Issues in Article Two

This article is about Miss Dafi Rogers-Halliday; a first class graduate of Economics from River State who received the twelfth 7Up Harvard Business School MBA Scholarship Award. On the occasion of the said award, the managing director of Seven-Up Bottling company; Mr Ziad Maalouf was quoted as saying that "Nigeria is one of the countries with the best young talented population who are making impact both locally and globally especially in the Fintech industry" (Edema, G. 2022). Weighing the above scenario on the scale of Anchimbe and Janney (2017) & Anchimbe (2018) Postcolonial Pragmatic Theory which posits that in postcolonial societies where multiple indigenous languages co-exist with English in complex multilingual and multicultural ways, it is normal that western pragmatic ideologies and theories would be insufficient for analyzing postcolonial linguistic behaviors. Such behaviour as that of Mr Ziad Maalouf who knows quite well that Nigerians are doing well both nationally and internationally but still insists on sending a Nigerian first class brain to an oversea country for further studies and thereby encouraging capital flight when there are many elitist universities in Nigeria that could have benefited from the social largesse could be properly seen in the lens of this theory. Mr Ziad Maalouf possibly belongs to the class of Nigerians who believe that one must study abroad before one is fully regarded as a well-educated person. This behaviour is further explained with The Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis (1929), a psycholinguistic theory which holds that a person's native language determines how he thinks and behaves. Mr Ziad Maalouf must have been limited in thinking by his local language and therefore urgently needs an overhauling of his thinking pattern.

### Emerging Issues in Article Three

Article three has it that Nigerians spent US \$90.67 million in December 2021 on foreign education. Then in January 2022,

they spent US \$60,202,730.84. And in February 2022, they spent US \$69.9 million; Showing that between December 2021 and February 2022, Nigerians have spent about US \$220.80 million on foreign education (Chila, A. A. 2022). The Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis (1929) would further help to explain this malady. Its position that having a second language connotes having a second soul aptly captures and describes this scenario. It thus entails that having seen the intellectual exploits of the West, Nigerians possibly crave for such soundness of mind. And given that the acquisition of language comes with the acquisition of cultural values and thinking pattern, it is obvious that many Nigerians do not just travel abroad for university education, since there are various classes of universities here, most of them rather go there to acquire the cultural orientation of the West, their ingenuity and problem solving potentials with which they succeeded in colonizing Africa and solving her numerous problems including the lack of civilization.

The Postcolonial Pragmatic Theory of Anchimbe and Janney (2017) & Anchimbe (2018) in addition to the above, further explains that any comprehensive investigation of social interaction in postcolonial societies must take into account the complex constitution of these societies marked by contact, hybridism and the emergence of linguistic and social behavioural patterns during and after colonialism.

### Findings and Discussion

In view of the objectives of this study which are: to examine the value system of various stake holders in the Nigerian universities and its relationship with the developmental agenda of the said universities, to compare the socio-economic activities of Nigerian universities with the global functions of other universities abroad, and to discourage the maddening quest for oversea education by suggesting how the state and functions of our local universities could improve, the following thematic issues have emerged from the analysis of data:

#### a. **Conflit of value system and linguistic culture**

It is possible to assert in relation to 'Article One' above, that the major problem with the acculturation of the likes of Omolade Adumbi is that most times they would later return to Nigeria and quickly intimidate the homebred intellectuals to ascend the rung of the leadership ladder wearing the same American cloak of cultural cum linguistic variance only to constitute a nuisance in the arena of Nigerian value system and linguistic orientation since they neither share the same leadership goals with the homebred Nigerian scholars, nor the same 'soul' as posited by The Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis (1929)

#### b. **Preferences for oversea education as a means of economic sabotage**

In relation to 'Article Two'; Such behaviour of the likes of Mr Ziad Maalouf who knows quite well that Nigerians are doing well both nationally and internationally but still insists on sending a Nigerian first class brain to an oversea country for further studies thereby encouraging capital flight and brain drain when there are many elitist universities in Nigeria that could cater for the educational needs of the awardee and consequently benefite



from the social largesse of the benefactor; purely reeks of cultural irresponsibility, economic sabotage and a lack of patriotism which possibly are by-products of colonialism as viewed in the Postcolonial Pragmatic Theory of Anchimbe and Janney (2017) & Anchimbe (2018).

**c. The negative side of western wisdom**

In relation to 'Article Three', The Sapir-Whorfia psycholinguistic theory (1929) provides explanations for the malady; given that the acquisition of language comes with the acquisition of cultural values and thinking pattern, it is obvious that many Nigerians do not just travel abroad for university education, since there are various classes of universities here, most of them rather go there to acquire the cultural orientation of the West, their ingenuity and problem solving potentials with which they succeeded in colonizing Africa. This further explains why the said class of people who read abroad most times only return to recolonize their countrymen through a display of such western wisdom with which Africa was initially conquered, subjugated, raped and thoroughly harvested. Hence, one can evidently say that these problems are the seeds sown with the weapons of colonialism. And to remedy same in totality, there is a crucial need for urgent decolonization.

In response to the research questions earlier postulated for this paper, the following answers are elicited from the data:

- i. Given the above findings and discussion, it is not possible that the first question would receive a positive response since many of the said stake holders of Nigerian universities are rather holders of oversea university degrees. Having gone through acculturation in the said oversea universities, they are most likely prone to pursue Western values and civilization with their concomitant colonial agenda which clearly negates the developmental agenda of the local universities they administer.
- ii. The reasons for oversea education among Nigerians vary as the analysis has already shown. They can thus be classified into two, which are: a. The good reasons and, b. The real reasons.

While the good reasons are easily tenable, the real reasons are always hidden. The goods reasons are the actual need for sound education as opposed to what obtains in Nigeria as a result of incessant ASUU strike and other maladies that besiege the Nigerian educational system. But the real reasons are the need to acquire the colonial wisdom of the Whiteman so that they would return to recolonize Nigerians in the guise of leadership in every sphere of its manifestation; the need to get westernized and possess a dual identity for showing off and for security; and the need to have access to such international jobs that make for financial stabilit .

- iii. In response to the third research question, a lot of things easily come to mind. First, the scholarly opinion of Nasir, M. (2022) who wrote that "an academic is employed to render three services: teaching, research and community service." Given that the third function of a typical Nigerian academic has been highly neglected, it could be said that the socio-economic activities of Nigerian

universities are rather abandoned and can hardly compare with other universities abroad. Secondly, on the strength of the report from Oyeniyi (2022) which shows that universities in the UK generally sustain the country's economic and value system as well as constantly bring huge economic returns to the government, one can simply say; in comparing Nigerian universities with those in UK, that Nigerian universities have rather been in coma and should urgently be revived to face their social and economic responsibilities.

### Summary and Conclusion

Following the above findings, and bearing in mind the aim or purpose of this study, it is necessary to summarize that the effects of the mass exodus of Nigerian youths on the overall cultural and socio-economic stability of the Nigerian nation are so negatively huge that if nothing is urgently done to curtail the trend, Nigeria would eventually lose her best brains to the West until only the blind is left to lead the blind on the Nigerian soil.

In view of the underlying goals as restated below, this research further concludes accordingly:

- i. (To examine the value system of various stake holders in the Nigerian universities and its relationship with the developmental agenda of the said universities)

With respect to the above objective, this paper reveals that the value systems of various stake holders in the Nigerian universities such as the vice chancellors, the pro-chancellors, the members of the governing councils and the executive government are hardly in line with the developmental agenda of the local universities as most of the said stake holders are neither true representatives/ambassadors of the said universities nor patriotic Nigerians. This is evident on the ground that most of them are rather alumni of various oversea universities where they continually pay their dues in support of the development of those foreign universities while neglecting the local ones where they work and earn.

- ii. (To compare the socio-economic activities of Nigerian universities with the global functions of other universities abroad)

In view of the second goal as stated above, this research discovers that the socio-economic activities of Nigerian universities can rarely compare with those of their oversea counterparts. This is because while the universities in UK for instance are responsible for molding and modeling the culture and value system of the nation as well as engage in research to solve national problems such as energy crisis, inflation, natural disaster, insecurity, political misnomer, economic crisis, and still help the government to generate financial resources, the universities in Nigeria rather indulge in incessant strike actions as a means of getting funds from the government to pay their unmotivated staff in arrears.

- iii. (To discourage the maddening quest for oversea education by suggesting how the state and functions of our local universities could improve.)

With regards to the third objective of this research, it is seen that the quest for oversea education by the best of Nigerian youths leaves much to be desired. Yet a necessary control measure would first seek to reposition the local universi-

ties to compete favourably with their counterparts abroad in all fours. To this end, the current leadership of most Nigerian universities should change to reflect their zeal to function effectively and measure up with their international counterparts. So that it would become obvious that whatever obtains in any university abroad would also obtain in the Nigerian educational system.

### Recommendations

On the strength of the above findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are necessitated:

- i. No one should be appointed or selected to lead a university as the vice chancellor who is not an alumnus of the same university to show that the person has passed through the same university to understand her plight and identify thoroughly with both her goals and challenges in order to pursue them honestly.
- ii. Only Nigerian bred scholars or at least those who have one degree or the other from a Nigerian higher institution would be entrusted with the membership of the governing councils of Nigerian universities or be allowed to head any faculty in a typical Nigerian higher institution.
- iii. No one should be allowed to vie for a political office in Nigeria unless and until the person is a Nigerian who is also educated in the Nigerian higher educational system to ably understand and appreciate the plight and prospects of the system. To this end, a national policy should be formulated to enforce the rule that a major criterion for anyone to qualify to contest for a political office in the country is that the person must be an alumnus of a Nigerian higher institution with evidence of paying the necessary dues or making other contributions for the development of the said institution and the country at large.
- iv. A policy should also be formulated to compel the Nigerian universities and their staff of academics to indulge in issue-based research and social development services such as molding and modeling the Nigerian cultural and linguistic values, formulating and upholding Nigerian economic policies, providing campus jobs for deserving students who wish to work and study as it is done abroad, formulating and pursuing national development programs, correcting socio-political anomalies via the instrumentality of academic research, as well as providing blueprints for sustainable development of both energy and infrastructure for national growth.
- v. The Nigerian universities should be taxed with the need to play a serious role in revenue generation both for their internal sustenance and for the nation at large.
- vi. Job opportunities in major sectors of the economy such as energy, educational, economic and political sectors should consider Nigerian trained professionals first and above those trained abroad in the spirit of patriotism no matter the expertise the others appear to command.
- vii. First class products of Nigerian universities should never be sent abroad but should be granted scholarships for

post graduate studies in elitist Nigerian private or public universities and should further be engaged in the economic or political sector of the country.

- viii. Children of Nigerian politicians should never be allowed to study abroad for any reason.
- ix. Children of Nigerian academics should be meant to study in the very institutions where their parent(s) work or any sister institution but should never be allowed to study abroad.
- x. People who devotedly study in Nigeria up to PHD level should be considered for any employment opportunity in Nigeria first and above all others as a reward of their true patriotism.
- xi. Nigerian language and culture (Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba and NigE) should be taught and encouraged at all levels of undergraduate education in Nigeria.
- xii. Tuition payment in Nigerian institutions for both Nigerian and international students should be charged and paid in the national currency and never in a foreign currency to encourage the demand for the national currency above that of other foreign currencies.

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