
**Globalisation in Africa: Examining if Economic Integration and
Privatisation of Most Public Enterprises in West Africa Instigates
Migration Crisis in the ECOWAS Sub-region**

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Abstract

This study broadly examined if globalisation instigated migration crisis in the West African sub-region. Specifically, the study investigated the role of economic integration in the rise of migration and the positive link between privatisation and increased movement in West Africa. The Growth Pole theory was adopted to explain the interconnection between globalisation and migration. The study employed the documentary method of data collection and the qualitative descriptive method of data analysis otherwise known as content analysis. The study found that the paucity of implementation of economic integration schemes adopted in the West African sub-region has led to the rising trend of various forms of migration, ranging from irregular migration, forced migration, labour migration etc. It also found that privatisation measures in West Africa have been implicated in the increased movement of people across the sub-region, especially intra-regional movement, from rural to the urban area. Consequently, the study recommended that since rising trend of various forms of migration within the West African sub-region is traceable to the paucity in the enforcement of the economic integration schemes adopted in the sub-region, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), among others, therefore, should strengthen enforcement structures, collaborate with member states, and establish an ECOWAS Cross-border Cooperation Fund.

Keywords: Globalisation, Migration, Economic Integration, Privatisation, ECOWAS

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Introduction

Globalisation emerged as a dominant concept in the world in the early 1900s. Its range has expanded past the economic sphere to accommodate the domain of social, cultural, and political norms and practices (Ghai, 1977). Although scholars are always concerned with economics when they define globalisation, diverse contemporary researchers have attempted to expound globalisation from the above various dimensions. Al-Rodhan and Stoudmann (2006) gave an indiscriminate and convincing definition of globalisation. They observed that globalisation is a progression that includes the reasons, sequence, and significances of international and trans-cultural amalgamation of human and non-human activities. Likewise, Hebron and Stack (2013) describe globalisation as the additional expansion of the procedure started over many ages, replicated in trade increase, exploration, conquest, migration, colonisation, technological advancement, and so on, that have taken place throughout world history.

Researchers have not agreed on when globalisation started. Some trace the history of globalisation beyond the 18th and 19th centuries. However, the first surge of modern globalisation is traced back to 1914, with Great Britain dominating the world through the invention of the steam engine and industrial weaving machine. This led to the First Industrial Revolution, resulting in increased trade and exports. The invention of the refrigerated cargo ship in the 1870s further impacted other countries. The outbreak of World War I ended everything the flourishing society of the West had become used to, globalisation inclusive. The follow-up of World War II from 1939 to 1945 crippled trade to 5% (Vanham, 2019). However, a new beginning of globalisation emerged during the post-World War II period, with the Bretton Woods Conference and the establishment of international institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Facilitated by the expansion of multinational corporations, technological advancements, and trade negotiation rounds, globalisation became powerful after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the fall of the Soviet Union. The internet and deeper value chain integration further accelerated globalisation (Osterhammel & Petersson, 2005; Vanham, 2019).

Undoubtedly, modern globalisation has accelerated various global trends, one of which is migration. This does not refute the early existence of migration, which was affirmed by Akanji (2012), who posits that human beings have continually involved themselves in movement activities since the beginning of creation.

According to him, this has played a significant role in the history of both Africa and the world at large. People move from one location in the world to another for the aim of settling somewhere permanently or semi-permanently, typically across national boundaries. Migration is the term used to describe this movement of people over a specified period of time and space (Ikwuyatum, 2016). It involves people moving between locations for permanent or semi-permanent settlement, often crossing national boundaries. Migration can be internal or international and includes economic migrants, refugees, displaced people, and uprooted individuals. It can be voluntary, involuntary, legal, or illegal (World Economic Forum, 2017).

The globalisation phenomenon has been characterised by migration crises (both intra- and inter-state) across the globe. Besides the conventional reasons for migration (i.e., wars, political subjugation, economic downturn, and ecological crisis), globalisation could be viewed as the force behind the migration crisis around the globe. Akokpari (2000) asserts that a curious connection, often unobtrusive, exists between globalisation migration (both intra- and inter-state). He further posits that the increasing trend in the incidents of migration is partly attributable to the phenomenon of globalisation, which not only weakens the state but also renders its borders irrelevant. Udeoji and Osondu (2018) also assert that there is no doubt that globalisation has brought with it increasing state connections and also movements of not only capital and goods but also people. The above was made clear through the report of the Eighty-sixth session of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Council (2003), which succinctly posits that globalisation can be seen as a facilitator for migration and development. Through advances in communication technology and the decline in travel costs, globalisation has made it easier for migrants to keep in contact with diaspora and transnational networks (Eighty-sixth session of IOM Council, 2003, p.1). Validating the above, Benkova (2017) observes that in recent years, civil wars, environmental issues, and globalisation have all contributed to a noticeable increase in the number of migrants and refugees entering the European Union (EU). According to the World Migration Report (2024), there were around 281 million foreign migrants worldwide in 2020, which equates to 3.6 percent of the world's total population. In general, the estimated number of international migrants has increased over the past five decades (IOM, 2024). This globalisation-induced migration phenomenon is not elusive in Africa. According to the most recent data on international migrants, around 21 million Africans were living in other African nations in 2020. This represents a substantial rise from the 18 million Africans who

were expected to be living outside of their countries of birth but within the region in 2015. Over the same time period, the number of Africans residing in various regions increased as well, rising from over 17 million in 2015 to over 19.5 million in 2020 (IOM, 2024).

The 15-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which is made up of the Anglophone countries of Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, and the Francophone countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo, and the smaller Lusophone countries of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau, nearly covering the whole terrestrial part of West Africa, is not exclusive in this migration trend. In the peak of globalisation, the region has also been ravaged by the migration crisis. Migration levels remain high in the region today. The total number of emigrants more than doubled in the past 30 years. In both absolute numbers and as a percentage of its population, Côte d'Ivoire remains the country that hosts the greatest number of migrants. Nigeria is the country with the second-highest number of migrants (1.3 million), while the Gambia has the second-highest percentage of migrants relative to its population (8.98%). (UN DESA, 2020). Additionally, more than 90% of migrants from Niger, 75% of migrants from Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and Togo, and 97% of migrants from Burkina Faso reside in other Western African nations. (UN DESA, 2020). Other significant migrant routes connect Mali with Côte d'Ivoire, Benin with Nigeria, Ghana with Nigeria, Guinea with Liberia, and Senegal with Gambia (Devillard, Bacchi, & Noack, 2015).

Migration out of the region is also on the high side. According to Adepoju (2005; 2015) and Flahaux & de Haas (2016), there are more West Africans living abroad, especially in the United States, South Africa, and Great Britain. France also has a significant population of immigrants from former West African colonies. Nearly half of the 387,739 immigrants arriving in Europe in 2016 were from Nigeria (Onajin, 2018). The percentage of Western African migrants in Europe and North America increased from 12% to 19% between mid-1990 and mid-2020, with destinations driven in part by residual colonial ties and common languages (UN DESA, 2020).

Akokpari (2000), Onu (2003), Udeoji (2018), and Osondu (2018) argue that globalisation has widened the scope of migration and facilitates migration problems in Africa. The position of these scholars, though true, did not specify the globalisation factors that account for this migration problem in Africa. On the other

hand, Findley et al. (1995), Crisp (2006), de Haas (2007) (2015), and Adepoju (2005, 2006 and 2008) argue that poverty, political instability, civil wars, marginal ecological conditions, low productivity, high population densities, and difficult socio-economic conditions are the factors that facilitate migration in the ECOWAS sub-region. These factors posited by these scholars have been in existence in Africa throughout history and, thus, cannot satisfactorily be viewed as the only factors that compound migration flows in the ECOWAS region. Flahaux and De Haas (2016) and Awumbila (2017) differently argue that state policies, social processes of development, and social transformation are the drivers of migration in Africa. However, their argument did not affirm if the economic integration of West African states and privatisation of public enterprises are drivers of the migration crisis in the ECOWAS region.

None of the studies specifically interrogated the impact of globalisation in Africa by focusing on how economic integration of West African states and the privatisation of most public enterprises in West Africa instigate the rising trend of migration and increased movement of people in the ECOWAS sub-region. This study therefore attempts to bring literature up to date and fill the noted gap.

Methodology

The study utilised the documentary method for data collection, a method that mostly entails a thorough analysis of papers that offer pertinent details regarding the subject event (McCulloch, 2004). It is a method primarily used by academics in the social sciences and humanities for historical or social analysis. This method offers faster, more affordable and challenging access to data compared to direct methods like surveys. The documentary technique of data collection in this study was useful in recognising data gaps that needed to be filled, articulating the investigation problematic, and outlining the research approach. It gave us the chance to examine in-depth studies on globalisation (economic integration and privatisation) and migration issues in the ECOWAS sub-region. Wide-ranging scholarly discussions and literature were thus culled from a variety of sources, including journal articles, books, newspapers, periodicals, book chapters, materials from civil society organisations, and official publications from the African Economic Outlook, ECOWAS, IOM, UN, and so on. As a result, a content analysis method was used to analyse data. With the aid of this analytical approach, data were evaluated using this analytical approach to enable comprehension of the

concealed and evident intent of the information. This made their symmetries and configurations far more easily discoverable.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this investigation is the *Growth Pole* theory, which was propounded in 1955 by *Francois Perroux* (1903–1987). A French economist, Jacques Boudeville, further developed it by proposing the regional implications of the theory. The fundamental and significant underpinning of the theory is Perroux's stance on the process of economic growth. According to Perroux (1955), "The bitter truth is this: growth does not appear everywhere at the same time; it becomes manifest at points or poles of growth, with variable intensity; it spreads through different channels, with variable terminal effects on the whole of the economy."

Basic Assumptions of the Growth Pole Theory

Growth or economic development is uneven over an entire region; it manifests at different points and poles.

This pole is usually indicated by essential industries around which connected industries develop, directly or indirectly. These essential industries can include a wide range of subdivisions such as aeronautical, electronics, agroindustry, etc.

Direct effects suggest the essential industry procuring goods and services from its supplier or delivering goods and services to its clientele, while indirect effects may comprise the request for goods and services by employees of the essential and connected industries supporting the development and growth of economic activities such as retail.

The growth of the essential industries suggests an increase in output, employment, and associated investments, as well as the emergence of new technologies and industrial subdivisions. Due to the scale and agglomeration of economies near the growth pole, regional development is uneven.

Movement, particularly migratory terminuses, plays a substantial role in this process. The more connected or related an activity is to movement, the more likely and strong this relationship. In the long term, the advent of secondary growth is probable, mostly if a secondary industrial subdivision develops with its own connected industries, contributing to the regional economic variety.

The growth pole theory explains why certain regions experience growth at the expense of others, leading to uneven development and increased migration. Globalisation tenets, which include structural adjustment programs, labour deregulation, privatisation, and economic integration, have led to uneven economic growth and development throughout the West African region and Africa at large.

This has resulted in increased mobility, and the rationale behind this increased movement is not far from the perceived economic opportunities inherent at these poles. These economic opportunities, which are a result of economic output in these poles, are not limited to employment, educational, business opportunities, and so on. Drawing from the foregoing, we specifically state that:

Globalisation, through its tenets and principles, which are not limited to structural adjustment programs, deregulation of labour, trade liberalisation, privatisation, and economic integration, has brought about economic growth and development that is not uniform but rather has different degrees in different poles throughout the West African region and Africa at large.

This economic growth and development, which is not uniform, has resulted in the development of certain areas at the expense of others, creating room for inequality in the region.

This inequality is evident in the sighting of multi-corporations, firms, and industries, the concentration of new technology, investments, economic activities, income growth, and expansion at these poles, which are usually urban areas, and the often neglect of the rural areas (the peripheries).

The sighting of multi-corporations, firms, and industries, the concentration of new technology, investments, economic activities, and income growth and expansion at these poles have created employment, educational, trade, and investment opportunities and have increased demand for goods and services from the upper stream and provision of goods and services to the downstream.

Employment, educational, trade, and investment opportunities perceived in these poles and the demand/provision for/of goods and services from the upper stream and downstream, respectively, have in turn increased the movement of people within and to and from these poles in the West African region, African continent, and the world at large.

Economic Integration of West African States and Rising Trend of Migration

The ECOWAS, since its creation in 1975, has taken determinant steps to regional economic integration indicated through the abolition of customs duties for products approved under the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS), adoption of the Common External Tariff (CET), and the adoption of protocols to consolidate free movement of persons in the region. However, these integration steps have been hypothetically posed to account for the rising trend of migration in the ECOWAS sub-region. Therefore, this section shall assess and analyse these economic integration processes and schemes, and examine if they account for the rising trend of migration in the sub-region.

ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement, Trade Liberalisation Scheme and Migration across West African States Corridors

The ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement is significant to the general objectives of the ECOWAS integration policies, as it ensures the free movement of citizens. Despite the challenges of cross-border movement due to state maturity and custom laws, ECOWAS policies recognise the necessity of free movement for regional economic integration and regulation. Hence, freedom of travel and residence is allowed in the initial treaty (Chapter IV, Article 27) and strengthened by the 1979 ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Free Movement of Persons and the Right of Residence and Establishment (Protocol A/P.1/5/79) signed in Dakar on 29 May 1979. The protocol guarantees free mobility for the citizens of member states. If they possessed a valid travel document and an international health certification, it permitted people of member states the ability to arrive and remain in the terrain of any other member state. Nevertheless, this protocol, though geared towards strong regional integration, has accounted for the large stock of migrants across West African state corridors.

According to Lanneau and Scarlett (2013), most human movement in West Africa occurs within its borders. According to the data that are currently available, 90% of migration in West Africa is directed toward another country in the area (UNDESA, 2020). The flow from West African nations to other parts of the world is seven times smaller than this. Only a small number of countries, four in number, have emigrant populations who selected an OECD nation as their topmost terminus: the United States for Nigeria, Portugal for Cape Verde, Portugal for Guinea-Bissau, and Spain for the Gambia. The above situation is validated by data on the origin of migrants residing in the countries in 2020. Following this trend,

the topmost origin countries are mostly other West African countries, with the exception of Cape Verde, which frequently hosts immigrants from São Tomé and Príncipe. The above situation cannot be justified without outsourcing the economic integration policies of the ECOWAS (i.e., the Protocol on Free Movement and so on) as a key factor in the dynamics of migratory patterns within the sub-region.

Table1:Top Destination Countries of Migrants in ECOWAS Sub-region and the Share of Migrants in their Population at Mid 2020

Member states	Total Number of Migrants	Percentage migrants of total population
Cote d'Ivoire	2,564,857	9.7%
Nigeria	1,308,568	0.6%
Burkina Faso	723,989	3.5%
Mali	485,829	2.4%
Ghana	476,412	1.5%
Benin	394,276	3.3%
Niger	348,056	1.4%
Togo	279,936	3.4%
Senegal	279,929	1.6%
Gambia	215,659	8.9%
Guinea	121,437	0.92%
Liberia	87,947	1.74%
Sierra Leone	53,746	0.67%
Guinea Bissau	17,945	0.91%
Cape Verde	15,788	2.8%

Source: UNDASA (2020).

Observation from Table 1 shows that immigration and emigration are common in all ECOWAS Member States. Côte d'Ivoire has the highest number of migrants, both in absolute numbers and as a share of the population, with 2,564,857 migrants. Nigeria is the next-highest, with 1,308,568 migrants living there. In stark contrast to population size, the Gambia and Côte d'Ivoire have the highest proportion of immigrants. Nigeria, on the other hand, has the third-largest immigrant population, yet only 0.6 percent of its population is made up of immigrants because of its enormous general population (the country is home to more than half of the ECOWAS region's population.). Mali and Niger are also among the countries with the lowest proportions of immigrants. However, it's

crucial to recognise the difference between an immigrant and a foreigner, as well as the fact that censuses in certain countries only assess the stock of foreigners, not immigrants.

Table 2: Migration Corridors in ECOWAS Sub-region at Mid 2020

Country of Origin	Number of Migrants	Country of Destination
Burkina Faso	1,376,350	Cote d'Ivoire
Cote d'Ivoire	562,117	Burkina Faso
Mali	522,146	Cote d'Ivoire
Benin	377,169	Nigeria
Ghana	238,284	Nigeria
Cote d'Ivoire	195,271	Mali
Mali	172,481	Nigeria
Guinea	167,516	Cote d'Ivoire
Togo	158,262	Nigeria
Senegal	154,739	Gambia

Source: UNDESA, 2020

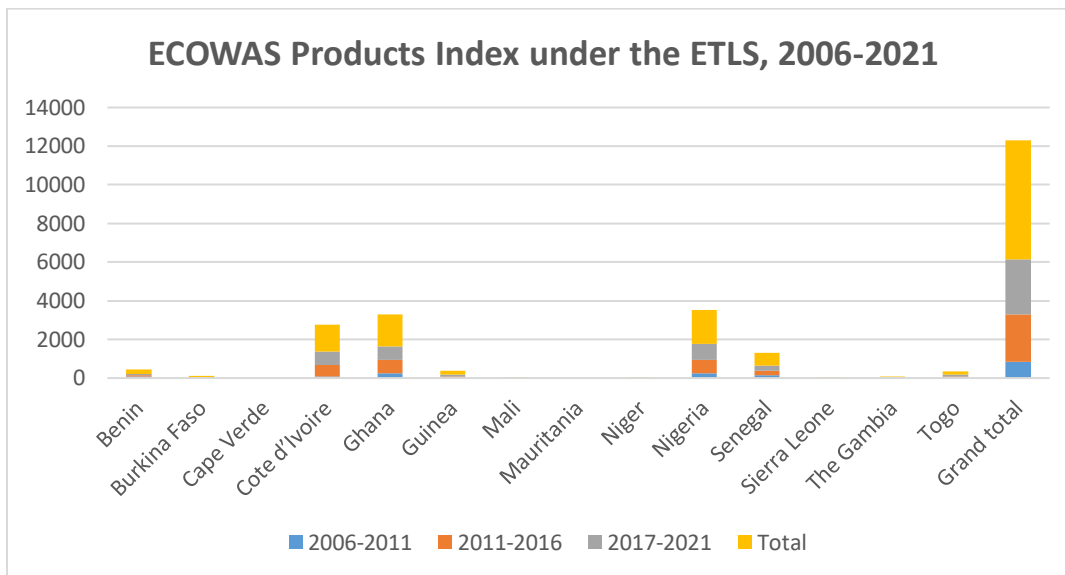
According to data from Table 2, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire have the highest number of migrants in between their corridors. By the middle of 2020, the ECOWAS sub-region was home to 7.64 million foreign migrants. Nearly 34% (2.6 million) resided in Côte d'Ivoire, whereas 17% (1.3 million) did the same in Nigeria (UN DESA, 2020). By the middle of 2020, about 90% of the 7.4 million migrants residing in the sub-region were from other sub-regional nations. In 2020, two out of three migrants from ECOWAS countries reside in another ECOWAS nation, indicating that the majority of migrants remain in the region. On the other hand, migratory destinations have changed in the last few years. In 1990, only 3% of all Western African migrants lived in North America; by mid-2020, that number had increased to 10%, and in Europe, it had increased from 12% to almost 19% over the same time period (UN DESA, 2020). The ECOWAS regional policies, particularly the free movement of persons, contribute to this increase in migratory trends, especially within the region.

The above clearly demonstrates that the Protocol on Free Movement has resulted in rise to migration trends, especially as it concerns irregular/illegal forced migration and movement of the internally displaced persons. The ECOWAS institution's inherent political brittleness has hindered the smooth implementation

and control of the protocol (Adepoju, 2015). Stout internal partitions between Francophone and Anglophone members as well as diverse state interests among ECOWAS members cannot be exempted as reasons for this. The problem of member nations' inadequate financial support, the tension between states' sovereignty and regional loyalty, national interests and structural impediments, and the EU's interests (ultimately its bilateral strategy), particularly in four select ECOWAS member states (Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, and Niger), are also not exempt. Despite member states adoption and acceptance of the protocol, there is poor commitment to the community protocol. Also, the existence of numerous coinciding regional and sub-regional groups/bodies with relatively coinciding fiats complicates the protocol. An example is the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), made up of eight member-states that use the Franc CFA currency. It has a zone of freedom of movement that, in certain aspects, is more progressive than that of ECOWAS, such as student mobility (Zoma & Congo Manassé, 2022). The spillover effect is increased irregular/illegal movement and cross-border criminal networks. No wonder Opanike, Aduloju and Adenipekun (2015) note that the difficulties of the Protocol have not aided the security sector of the sub-region. ECOWAS dignifies itself as the leading region in Africa to introduce the free movement protocol; however, the poor implementation of the protocol is instituting more security worry than improving regional trade and economic growth. A noticeable and significant factor confronting movement in the ECOWAS sub-region is the rarity of the implementation of the protocol. Yaro (2008) states without prejudice that the capability of the ECOWAS to regulate migration in the subregion is in doubt due to the frequent infringement by member states on regional treaties on migration policies in reaction to their political and economic eccentricities. This paucity in the enforcement of the Protocol has not moderated migration in the ECOWAS sub-region; however, it has led to the rising trend of movement across the sub-region, ranging from forced/involuntary migration to irregular/illegal migration and the movement of refugees or internally displaced persons. Since two and a half decades ago, when the protocol was in place, the population movement has significantly risen (Agyei & Clottey, 2007). Lately, relentless endeavours by ECOWAS at advancing the free movement of persons and goods and regional integration have helped to sustain migration flows (Agyei & Clottey, 2007; Fayomi & Adeola, 2015).

The ECOWAS sub-region has also adopted in 1979 the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS) as another economic integration policy. It aims to promote intra-community trade by eliminating tariff and non-tariff barriers on import and export of goods from Member States. Implemented in 1990, its objectives include strengthening trade ties, easing free movement of goods and traditional handicrafts, gradually abolition of customs duties and taxes, and phased liberalisation of industrial products. It consists of two phases: the consolidation of non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and customs tariffs and complete trade liberalisation.

Figure 1: ECOWAS Products Index under ETLS, 2006-2021



Source: Adapted from the ECOWAS Database

Undoubtedly, the ECOWAS Liberalisation Scheme has migratory consequences. This is notable from the fact that the liberalisation of goods cannot be separated from the movement of people. The liberalisation and removal of tariffs, levies, and taxes from certain products invariably entail unfettered and consistent movement of merchants and industrialists. This scheme, though geared towards strong regional integration and promoting intra-community trade, is implicated in the large stock of movement across West Africa. It makes sense, then, that Adedeji (1970) asserts that obligations to smooth the movement of people, goods, and services within the specified geopolitical space of the union or common market area are inherent in most forms of regional economic integration, in addition to the goal of a vital shift to political integration. Correspondingly, the cumbersome nature of the conditions of acceptance that manufacturers must fulfil for their goods (especially industrial goods) to obtain the necessary authorisation

for addition in the scheme has made a great number of industrialists resort to illegal/irregular migration and the usage of illegal routes. The more administrative constraints are put on the liberalisation scheme, the more merchants resort to illegal or irregular routes and means of movement. This in turn constitutes a security challenge to the sub-region, as criminals have availed themselves of this ingenuity to commit cross-border crimes across the sub-region.

Privatisation and Increased Labour Migrants in West Africa Sub Region

Privatisation is another element of globalisation that has movement consequences. One major feature that trails the privatisation of public enterprises is labour mobility. Labour migration in Africa is mainly intra-regional (80%) and mostly characterised by the migration of low-skilled workers. Africa is saddled not just with intraregional movement by refugees and undocumented migrants but also labour migrants. The configurations vary enthusiastically and are replicated in swelling female migration, the divergence of migration termini, and the change of labour flows into commercial migration (Adepoju, 2006).

Until recently, most West African countries dealt with telecommunications, power, transport, and petroleum as a national entity to be managed by a government department or ministry. However, the impetus for denationalising the telecommunications, power, transport, and petroleum sectors was instigated by the pitiable performance of the national operatives and the need to redefine the roles of public and private segments in power, telecommunication, transport, and petroleum geared towards increasing service and advancing quality. This was also the reason behind the denationalisation of other infrastructure. The opinion that public enterprises have not met the prospects of their investors and inventors has been heatedly emphasised, and that in country after country, unrestrained state growth has resulted in economic incompetence in the manufacture of goods and services by the public sector, ineffective delivery of goods and services, hasty growth of bureaucracy, harshly draining the public budget with enormous shortfalls, and pitiable fiscal performance of Public Enterprises, reproducing a history of enormous fiscal deficits, overstaffing, and the load of extreme debts (Obadan 2008, Paul 1985, Samuel 1999).

The tempo of denationalisation and divestiture heightened in West Africa in the 1990s, with the entire sum of deals growing from 200 in 1990 to 818 in 2002 and with 117 pending privatisation as of March 2003 (World Bank 2004, Obadan 2008). Trade liberalisation in the ECOWAS sub-region and rapid technological

progress have made greater coordination and denationalisation of telecommunications, power, transport, petroleum, and other sectors more attractive. This denationalisation is driven by international trade configurations, the need for government budget cuts amid financial shortfalls, and the rebirth of economic liberalism across the globe.

Table 3: Privatisation in West African Countries

Country	Date of first privatisation	Total number of privatisation up to 2002	Pending privatisation as at March 2003	Total proceeds (\$ millions)
Benin	1986	37	10	43.8
Burkina Faso	1992	28	—	26.1
Cape Verde	1993	41	17	101.8
Cote d'Ivoire	1979	80	2	423.6
The Gambia	1987	19	3	13.6
Ghana	1989	180	—	946.2
Guinea	1985	109	13	80.7
Guinea Bissau	1989	23	8	5.6
Liberia	None	—	—	—
Mali	1979	71	17	90.9
Mauritania	1989	35	2	56.1
Niger	1983	28	6	25.2
Nigeria	1989	63	12	672.4
Senegal	1986	36	14	217.1
Sierra Leone	1993	8	—	0
Togo	1984	60	19	103.9

Source: Adapted from the OECD African Privatisation Database, 2004

Regrettably, there is no comprehensive data on privatisation in West Africa after 2004, making it difficult to compare privatisation-induced migration post-2004 to those of earlier decades. The statistical analysis undertaken in Table 3 is founded on the World Bank African Privatisation database. It covers the 16 West African countries (Mauritania inclusive), of which one country (Liberia) had not started a privatisation program as of the time of the survey. It also provides information on pending privatisations. It showed, country by country, the starting date of privatisations, the total number of transactions, and the resulting proceeds. While the economic slump following 2008 caused a slowdown in West African

privatisation activities, there were a few noteworthy privatisations that took place, such as the 2009 and 2010 privatisation of the cotton and public utility sectors in Benin (IMF 2010). In 2013, Nigeria raised \$2.50 billion by selling 15 electricity-generating and distribution enterprises, which made it noteworthy (see Megginson 2014).

The denationalisation and divestiture of public enterprises in West Africa has led to rapid urban growth, causing rural-urban migration. This has led to people moving between countries for economic interests, leading to a dominance of labour migration across the ECOWAS sub-region. No wonder, the core features that appear from national censuses and migration surveys permit labelling West African migration as an impermanent or spherical labour migration (Lalou, 1996). Great records of migrants from West Africa moving to North Africa seasonally for work drives, and this drift has been reasonably unswerving over the years. The "push" and "pull" effects of privatisation on labour migration have been considerable. Through significant advancements in information and communications technology, (ICT), it has made it possible for worldwide labour markets to link. The demand for high-tech skills has increased opportunities for skilled labour mobility. Many West Africans have been relocating to Central African nations with abundant oil, particularly Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, in recent years. Additionally, more and more West Africans are moving to South Africa in pursuit of employment. There is also a labour component to the migrant movements from West Africa to Europe. Regular or irregular migration to Europe continues to include both highly skilled and unskilled individuals. Many low-skilled West African migrants have been recruited by private agencies and intermediaries for work placement in Middle Eastern nations such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates due to stringent visa regulations in European countries (Teye, 2022).

Due to the denationalisation and divestiture of public enterprises across West African states, many firms, organisations, and industries merged and sprang up, and the consequence has been a large intra-regional migration flow (see SWAC and OECD, 2012), of which many of these migrants are labour migrants moving within the sub-region to take advantage of economic changes in other parts of the sub-region.

Conclusion

This study broadly focused on examining if globalisation instigates a migration crisis in the ECOWAS sub-region. Specifically, the study investigated if the economic integration of West African states accounts for the rising trend of migration within the sub-region and also examined if there is a positive link between the privatisation of most public enterprises in West Africa and the increased movement of people within the sub-region.

Firstly, the study found that the ECOWAS sub-region's economic integration schemes, geared towards accelerated growth and development by creating a borderless economic bloc, have led to a rise in migration, including illegal, irregular, forced, and labour migration. This is due to poor enforcement and its spillover effects on the region. Consequently, these have accentuated the trend of movement across the sub-region, ranging from forced or involuntary migration to irregular and illegal migration, and the movement of refugees or internally displaced persons. Hence, instituting more security worry than improving regional trade and economic growth. It is, therefore, not surprising that human trafficking, arms proliferation, illegal cross-border trade, and so on are brewing in the subregion.

Secondly, the study found out that West African states have implemented denationalisation and divestiture policies to raise income and fund public expenditure. This has led to the privatisation of public enterprises and the liberalisation of economies. However, these measures have also increased human mobility, particularly intra-regional movement, particularly among labour migrants. Despite the commendable nature of privatisation, it has implications for human mobility in the region.

Recommendations

As a result of the aforementioned findings, the study recommends that:

The ECOWAS sub-region faces a rise in migration due to paucity of the enforcement of economic integration schemes. To combat this, the ECOWAS should strengthen enforcement structures, collaborate with member states, and establish an ECOWAS Cross-border Cooperation Fund. This will enable joint border posts, a shared digital database for immigration departments, technical training programs, and public awareness campaigns to combat illegal and unauthorised immigration.

Since privatisation of public enterprise measures has been implicated in the increased movement of people across the sub-region, especially in intra-regional movement, West African states should consider the 'labour mobility clause' in the privatisation process and also adopt privatisation methods like contracting out services, leasing, joint ventures, and public flotation, as they are more labour mobility-friendly.

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