ILLEGAL TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION AND ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING IN NIGERIA

Aondowase Targba
Department of Sociology,
Federal University Gusau,
PMB 1001 Gusau, Zamfara State Nigeria
Email: aondowasetargba@fugusau.edu.ng
Phone No: +2347031313574

ABSTRACT

The paper is mainly focused on the effects of illegal transnational migration on drug trafficking in Nigeria. This is anchored on the basis that the rate of illegal transnational migration along the Sahel and other borderlines has played a key role in fuelling drug trafficking and other criminal activities in Nigeria. The paper adopts the network migration theory to explain how irregular movements and drug trafficking are masterminded by flows and counterflow of information across international borders. The paper was based on a desk review using secondary sources. The paper found that the porous borderlines between Nigeria and other neighbouring countries make drug trafficking activities highly undetected. The paper also found that drug trafficking is facilitated by well organized criminal syndicates, which are ready to force their way through if challenged. It was also found that drug trafficking is a transnationally organized crime that is sometimes aided and compromised by the conventional security formations in Nigeria. It was also discovered that internationally organized drug trafficking has accounted for the imprisonment and deaths of many Nigerians within and outside of Nigeria. The paper recommended, among others, that there should be a joint strategy on border security between Nigeria and other neighbouring countries. There should be retraining, re-orientation and a clean-up strategy within the Nigerian security agencies to curb corruption in the security system. There should be perimeter fencing along Nigeria's land border lines with Niger Republic, Chad, Benin Republic, and Cameroon to make border policing more easily.

Keywords: Irregular, transnational migration, drug trafficking, networks, Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

International migration is an inevitable phenomenon in human history. However, the nature, volume, and complexity of these movements are of great concern to nations all over the world. Irregular or illegal migration across international borders has been one of the phenomena that has contributed to the illicit trade globally and particularly in West Africa. The alarming use of drugs globally is a matter of concern. For example, globally, 284 million people between the ages of 15 and 64 used drugs in 2020, a 26% rise from the preceding ten years (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], World Drug Report, 2022). The report shows that young people are consuming drugs at rates that are higher than those of preceding generations in many countries. People under 35 make up the bulk of those receiving treatment for drug use disorders in Africa and Latin America. According to the report's predictions, 11.2 million people globally injected drugs (UNODC World Drug Report, 2022). The plague of drug

trafficking in the region and the increasingly coordinated operations have remained a major source of concern according to Mahamat Saleh ANNADIF, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS-UNODC 2022a).

Any country's growth is negatively impacted by the illegal drug trade, but Africa's is particularly affected. Africa, for instance, has the youngest population in the world, with more than 400 million people between the ages of 15 and 35, according to the United Nations Population Prospects. This offers both chances for economic expansion and challenges for sustainable development. The decline in poverty, starvation, and malnutrition, as well as issues with access to equality and education, are some of these challenges. In sub-Saharan Africa, inferior and counterfeit antimalarial medications are thought to be responsible for up to 267,000 annual deaths. Additionally, using contaminated and substandard antibiotics to treat children with severe pneumonia has been linked to up to 169,271 cases (UNODC, 2022b).

Transnational trafficking can also affect economic development. Underserved populations, especially those in border regions, may profit from the flow of illegal goods, eroding their links to the state. Being founded on international crime, these livelihoods cannot be sustained, but they may be viewed as better than poverty and may be defended brutally if challenged (UNODC, 2013). Legitimate commerce may find it challenging to compete with the facilitation of trafficking. This development model's long-term prospects are dismal. Instead of investing their money in transit nations, transnational criminals are more likely to do so in stable economies and hard currencies abroad. Some building may be encouraged, but frequently the goal is to serve as a front for money laundering, as in the case of unnecessary hotels and casinos. Traffickers have little incentive to maintain these premises, and their attention `shifts with the unpredictable dynamics of transnational organized crime (UNODC 2013).

It is concerning that one of the main ways that drugs are brought into Nigeria and other West African nations is through illegal migration. Report from UNODC (2022a) shows that West Africa is dealing with an increasing flood of narcotics traveling across the desert as well as the region's ports and airports. Dr. Amado Philip de Andrés, the UNODC Regional Director for West and Central Africa, cited three trends and chemicals as being of special concern: hashish, with 57 tons confiscated in 2021; cocaine, with 53 tons recovered from 2019 to 2021 in or headed for West Africa; and tramadol, with 77% of global seizures made in West Africa from 2015 to 2019. The majority of users are young people, who are the target audience for the continent's development promises, which is particularly concerning (UNODC, 2022).

It is disturbing that the number of drug users will keep rising if urgent measures are not taken to stop the illicit trade in drugs. According to Dr. Anselme Simeon Sanou, Head of the Health and Drug Demand Reduction Unit at UNODC's Regional Office for West and Central Africa, there is a projected 40% increase in the number of drug users and a 43% increase in populations at risk of drug use by 2030 in resource-limited countries. This phenomenon presents a real burden in terms of lost years of life for drug users.

The fact that narcotics, a transnational organized crime, directly fuels the situation in Nigeria and other parts of West Africa and makes the humanitarian crisis worse is cause for alarm. Fighting the drug trade is extremely difficult. This type

of international organized crime exacerbates political unrest and corruption while also aiding in the financing of terrorism and money laundering. In this regard, the UNODC's mission includes the fight against drug trafficking, which requires continued collaborative efforts in order to uphold the UN's core values of peace, security, development, and respect for human rights, as well as to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals (UNODC, 2022a).

Despite that there are no accurate figures of the total amounts of medical products that are trafficked in the Sahel countries in various methods and forms, studies suggest that between 19 and 50% of medical products are substandard or fake. It was determined that 40% of the subpar and fake medical products reported in the Sahel countries between 2013 and 2021 were substandard in the regulated supply chain. It is also possible for illegally produced medicinal supplies to enter legitimate pharmacies, demonstrating how intricately linked the supply chains of regulated (legal) and unregulated (illegal) goods are (UNODC, 2022b).

Conakry (Guinea), Tema (Ghana), Lomé (Togo), Cotonou (Benin), and Apapa (Nigeria) are seaports in the Gulf of Guinea that are significant entry sites for medicinal supplies headed for the Sahel countries (UNODC, 2022b). Smaller quantities of medicinal items are smuggled by air trafficking using postal parcels or commercial airline passengers. Smugglers who travel along established trafficking routes in buses, trucks, and private vehicles employ these methods to transport smuggled medical supplies from West Africa to the Sahel countries. Investigations have shown that a variety of opportunistic actors, all motivated by the possibility of financial gain, including employees of pharmaceutical companies, public servants, law enforcement personnel, and health agency personnel, as well as street vendors, are involved in the trafficking of medical products in the Sahel countries (UNODC, 2022b). Criminals have largely unrestricted opportunities to advertise themselves and challenge governmental authority in ungoverned spaces. A country's efforts to secure its borders and control the movement of people, products, and services are hampered by illegal borders. The porousness of Nigeria's borders causes problems for her and some of her West African neighbors (Nextier SPD, 2022).

The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) reports that Benin, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon all share a border with Nigeria that is 7,73 km long and 87 km long, respectively. The border with Niger is 1,497 km long, and the border with Cameroon is 1,690 km long. Only 853 km of Nigeria's borders are seaward, with Sao Tome & Principe, Ghana, and Equatorial Guinea largely in the Atlantic Ocean (Abdulazeez, 2021). Concerningly, the NIS acknowledged that there were only 84 official borders in the country, despite the existence of more than 1,490 unmanned unlawful entryways into Nigeria that act as ports of entry for individuals who could otherwise lose their nationality (Olaifa, 2022). The 2018 Drug Use in Nigeria Survey estimated that 80,000 people inject drugs in Nigeria (both in the previous 12 months and currently). The socioeconomic burden on the individual drug user and their families is enormous. The National Drug Control Master Plan (NDCMP) 2021–2025 It is against this backdrop that the paper is focused on the impact of illegal transnational migration on drug trafficking in Nigeria as a transnational organized crime.

2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

2.1 Illegal transnational migration: Irregular migration is simply the entry or exit of people and their goods without necessary documents especially permission to live or work in a country without proper registration by the authorities. In the context of this paper, it means illegal, unregistered or undocumented movement of people in or out of a geographical or political boundary. irregular migration also applies to the actions of entry, exit, or residence that violates the rules set by countries of origin, transit, and destination at the time when actions take place. In this work it is focused more on international and not internal migration.

2.2 Drug Trafficking: The crime of selling, transporting, or illegally importing illegal controlled substances, such as heroin, cocaine, marijuana, or other illegal drugs, is known as drug trafficking, also known as drug distribution. The production, distribution, and sale of chemicals that are illegal under international drug regulations is drug trafficking (UNODC, 2010)

3. NETWORK MIGRATION THEORY

The paper adopts the network migration theory to explain the interconnectivity between illegal transnational migration and illicit drug trafficking in Nigeria.

The term that was formerly referred to as "chain migration" has typically been characterized using the phrase "network migration." According to Massey et al. (1993:448), networks are collections of interpersonal links that bind migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in their places of origin and destination through ties to their shared ancestry, friendship, and community. This highlights the role that nation states, close proximity to other places, institutions, social networks, and cultural and historical elements plays in shaping new migration patterns. However, after a specific threshold of migrants has arrived at the destination, other forces start to operate. The frequently coincidental decisions made by early migrants or companies that hire labor tend to have a significant impact on subsequent migration trends.

Lee (1966) claimed that migration makes it easier for information to return from the place of destination to the site of origin, making it easier for later migrants to cross the border. Additionally, there is proof that migrants who have previously established themselves serve as "bridgeheads" (Bocker 1994), lowering the risks as well as the financial and emotional costs of subsequent movement. New immigrants may more readily be able to gather information and receive active aid from friends and family members when looking for jobs and a place to live, when setting up residency documents, or when looking for a spouse. Therefore, the likelihood of subsequent migration to a particular location will increase if a settled immigrant group develops there (Appleyard 1992).

Massey (1989) suggested that migration becomes self-perpetuating once the number of network connections in an origin place reaches a threshold level because it develops the social structure to support the activity. Regardless of the initial causes, network effects explain why migration persists, frequently across officially closed borders (Waldorf, 1998). The ability of such "family and friends' networks" to facilitate migration makes it infamously challenging for governments to limit migration.

People use their network ties as a sort of social capital to open doors to foreign employment (Masey et al., 1993). Social capital is a third, essential migration resource that, along with material and human capital (education, skills, and knowledge), is linked to the push and pull elements of migration and is essential in enabling and inspiring people to migrate. which stressed that while economic forces often play an important role as one of the root causes of migration and that people tend to move to places where the standards of living are better, this alone cannot explain the actual shape of migration patterns. This emphasized that while economic factors frequently play a significant role as one of the fundamental causes of migration and that individuals tend to relocate to areas with higher living standards, this alone cannot explain the actual shape of migration patterns.

Due to Nigeria's status as a source, destination, and transit country, the UNODC (2017) study reveals that migrant smuggling and human trafficking continue to be issues of concern. There is increasing evidence that Nigerian criminal networks are involved in the trafficking of young women and girls, mostly to Europe and other countries.

4. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is based on desk review from the publications of the UNDOC, West African Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (WENDU), The National Drug Control Master Plan (NDCMP) 2021–2025), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), The West African Epidemiological Network on Drug Use, and other relevant publications. The main focus of the study is Nigeria with reference to other countries in the West African subregion.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

5.1 An Overview of Drug Trafficking in West Africa

These illegal flows can have a variety of negative effects on development and stability. Trafficking can also be advantageous for non-state armed groups that hold territory that is conducive to smuggling. These organizations might buy weapons or encourage corruption with the money they make (UNODC, 2013). Conflict between groups may result from competition for trafficking routes. The land path across the Sahara appears improbable at first glance. The landscape is really rough. There are few roads and refueling locations. The path travels through areas with a volatile political climate as well as havens for armed insurgents and robbers. Multiple security barriers must be negotiated because there are numerous borders to cross. Additionally, entering Europe requires avoiding some extremely strict procedures, even after arriving at the Mediterranean shore. However, traders have been traveling across the Sahara for ages, and it is certain that both migrants and other types of contraband go there in large numbers every year (UNODC 2013).

Niger was a significant route and transit country for illicit migration, claim Molobe & Odukoya (2021). All of the survey participants traveled to and stayed in Niger. Agadez and Zinder, which are located in the desert region, were the main stopping points in Niger. Chad (35.1%) was another significant transit nation, as some people crossed from Niger into Chad before entering Libya. The main transit country for those traveling to Europe was Libya. 96.3 percent of the respondents (368) did not have valid travel documents when they crossed borders. During their migration, the bulk of them were trafficked and smuggled into other nations, respectively, 369

(96.6%) and 374 (97.9%). While those who were trafficked were taken advantage of by traffickers for the purpose of forced labor or commercial exploitation, those who were smuggled were migrants whose network recruiters assisted their admission into another nation illegally. But as respondents admitted, the majority of those who were carried from one nation to another were also trafficked at some point while migrating.

The West African Epidemiological Network on Drug Use estimates that in West Africa, 31.6% of those between the ages of 15 and 44 use drugs. As a nation with a long history of ties to Latin America, which accounted for 70% of drug shipments to Africa from 2015 to 2019 (UNODC, 2022c), Olga Cabarga Gomez, Spain's Ambassador to Senegal, emphasized the significance of Spain's commitment to Africa in the fight against drug trafficking. The Ambassador further emphasized that the fight against this type of international organized crime does not yield little triumphs. When a network collapses, lives are typically saved that are young, and there is less violence in the homes and streets. The number of users, on the other hand, is increasing, with 275 million users (among those aged 15 to 64) and 36.3 million individuals in the same age range suffering from drug use disorders (UNODC, 2022c).

The production and seizure of many illicit drugs are at record highs, according to the UNODC World Drug Report (2022), even as international crises exacerbate vulnerabilities. In the meantime, erroneous views about the severity of the issue and the harms they cause prevent people from receiving therapy and treatment and encourage young people to engage in harmful behaviors. According to the UNODC World Drug Report (2022), the production of cocaine reached a record high in 2020, increasing by 11% from 2019 to 1,982 tons. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, cocaine seizures rose to a record 1,424 tons in 2020. Around 90% of the cocaine that was captured globally in 2021 was transported in containers or by sea.

Data from seizures indicate that more cocaine is being transported to Africa and Asia, as well as other areas outside of the major markets of North America and Europe. Methamphetamine seizures were reported in 117 nations between 2016 and 2020, up from 84 in 2006 to 2010. This indicates that methamphetamine trafficking is becoming more widespread internationally. Between 2010 and 2020, the amount of methamphetamine that was found increased fivefold.

Between 2020 and 2021, opium output globally increased by 7% to 7,930 tons, primarily as a result of higher production in Afghanistan. However, throughout that time, the total area planted with opium poppies decreased by 16% to 246,800 ha. The availability of prescription opioids for medicinal use still varies greatly. In comparison to West and Central Africa, North America had 7,500 more controlled pain medicine doses per million people in 2020. Despite still being the minority of drug users worldwide, women tend to take drugs more frequently than men do and develop drug use disorders more quickly. According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2022, women currently make up between 45 and 49 percent of amphetamine users, as well as non-medical consumers of pharmaceutical stimulants, pharmaceutical opioids, sedatives, and tranquilizers.

6. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Origin of Drug Trafficking in Nigeria

Nwannennaya and Abiodun (2017) assert that the immediate post-World War II years were the origin of Nigeria's drug trafficking problem. Nigerian soldiers who had served in Burma and India had brought seedlings of cannabis sativa back with them. He persisted in experimenting with its cultivation and discovered that it grows well in some regions of Nigeria, which led to a rise in its cultivation. Nigeria's large population, growing economy, and developing air transportation network eventually made it both a producer and a potential market for drug trafficking. Later on, category "A" drugs like cocaine, heroin, and other illegal substances headed for markets in Europe, East Asia, and North America began to transit through or be trafficked through Nigeria (Daniel 1990). Large quantities of cocaine are transported through Nigeria from South America into Europe and North America, according to the Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency. Cannabis in its herbal form is the most often abused and locally trafficked illegal substance in Nigeria and indeed West Africa since it is relatively cheap and easily accessible (Nwannennaya & Abiodun, 2017).

The Dangerous Drugs Ordinance of 1935 marked the beginning of Nigeria's serious fight against drug trafficking. The Nigeria Police and the then-Board of Customs and Excise were directed by this decree to combat local drug trafficking. The Decree No. 20 of 1984, which prohibited the death penalty for all those implicated in drug trafficking, was a significant moment in Nigeria's fight against narcotics. Decree 48 of 1989 saw the establishment by the Federal Military Government of an independent body known as the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to tackle the menace of drug abuse and trafficking, but due to public outcry, this law was modified to between two years and life imprisonment, depending on the essence of the offense. The goal of Nigeria's National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) is to stop the production, distribution, sale, export, and trafficking of hard narcotics (Nwannennaya & Abiodun, 2017).

An extensive national study that looked at the prevalence and trends of drug use in Nigeria was conducted in 2018. According to the National Drug Control Master Plan (NDCMP) 2021–2025, 14.4% of people between the ages of 15 and 64 reported using drugs in the preceding year, totaling 14.3 million people. According to the World Drug Report 2019, this is much higher than the global prevalence rate, which is 5.6%. 10.6 million Nigerians report using cannabis, followed by 4.6 million who use opioids, mostly through non-medical use of prescription opioids and cough syrups (2.4 million). This is supported by data from the Nigerian Epidemiological Network on Drug Use (NENDU), which demonstrates that in 2016, prescription opioids such as tramadol, codeine, and, to a lesser extent, pentazocine, made up the majority of opioid use among patients. The highest prevalence of drug use -was among people between the ages of 25 and 39.

6.2 Border Control and Drug Trafficking in Nigeria

According to recent research, 75% of Nigerian migrants intended to go overland using smugglers or travel agents (UNODC, 2023). Also, a study from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), migrants from Nigeria are heavily reliant on smugglers and travel facilitators (who

arrange regular transit) due to bribe requests and security threats along their journeys. According to the study from the UNODC Observatory on Smuggling of Migrants, 30% of the Nigerians polled said that the only other option for achieving their immigration ambitions was to be smuggled (UNODC, 2023). According to a resident of southern Nigeria's Edo State, stated that Nigerians are currently subject to discrimination in Europe and other Western nations because obtaining a visa to leave Nigeria is so challenging, many people choose the illegal option of passing through the desert (UNODC, 2023). Due to the presence of officials or non-state actors who demand bribes and protection money along the road, many Nigerians assume that utilizing a smuggler will be more affordable, simpler, or safer than making the voyage alone. Surveys show that Nigerians still pay smugglers a premium fee, on average about US$610, for smuggling by land in West and North Africa. Fees typically do not include food and drink but do cover access to the network of smuggling contacts, transportation, and occasionally bribes and lodging (UNODC, 2023).

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region allows for the free movement of people and products; therefore, narcotics entering one West African nation may theoretically leave another without going through border checks. In reality, the region is divided by the few roads that exist in Sierra Leone and Liberia. In the south, it takes less than a day to go from Lagos (Nigeria) to Accra (Ghana), passing through Cotonou (Benin) and Lome (Togo). The cluster in the north is connected by necessity rather than proximity. There are no commercial plane connections from Guinea Bissau, one of the main entry points for cocaine, to the target markets, and the connections from Banjul (The Gambia) are not much better. As a result, the majority of air couriers in the north fly out of Conakry, Guinea, or Dakar, Senegal. At the height of the trafficking, a third hub in Bamako (Mali), specifically serving aviation aircraft landing inland, arose. Except for Guinea-Bissau itself, all of these centers are dominated by Nigerian traffickers. The majority use local partners and are residents of the countries where they operate, but the techniques they employ are common among Nigerian traffickers everywhere. One example of this is a preference for using commercial air couriers (UNODC 2013).

A military member of the Joint Task Force (JTF) revealed the extent of insecurity at Nigeria's borders, saying there are numerous footpaths leading into and out of border countries as well as sizable illegal entry points that are largely unknown to security agencies in Nigeria, especially in the North East (Musa, 2013). It is regrettable that these walkways lack protection and provide simple access for the direct shipment of weapons into Nigeria (Musa, 2013). According to reports, illicit drug economies can thrive in hostile environments and in places where the rule of law is lax, which can prolong or exacerbate hostilities (UNODC 2022a).

The National Drug Control Master Plan (NDCMP) 2021–2025 is an instrument of strategy for tackling the complex issues of drug trafficking, production, cultivation, and use in Nigeria. The general objective of the NDCMP 2021–2025 is to improve health and security for everyone living in Nigeria. It is based on the assumption that the problems originating from drug supply and consumption are not restricted to people who use drugs but have larger health, social, and economic implications for the family, community, and nation. The plan has four strategic pillars that culminate in an integrated multi-sectoral

strategic and operational plan to completely address drug concerns in Nigeria. The three pillars are: drug demand reduction, drug supply reduction, and, for medical and scientific purposes, access to controlled medications; governance; and coordination. Each of the government's MDAs that will be in charge of delivering targeted results is rooted in one or two of the strategic pillars.

Africa continues to be a significant transit region for drug trafficking, according to a 2018 report by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). According to data on drug seizures, trafficking in Nigeria involves more than just marijuana and cocaine; it also involves precursors like ephedrine (NDCMP, 2021–2025). Tramadol, a synthetic opioid that is not regulated internationally, is being abused more and more throughout Nigeria and the rest of West Africa. The manufacturing of marijuana and amphetamines is still a problem in Nigeria. According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2017, West, Central, and North African nations are currently the primary targets for prescription opioid seizures worldwide. Tramadol seizures increased globally from less than 10 kg in 2010 to nearly 9 tons in 2013, then hit a record high of 125 tons in 2017. Various markets in West Africa, Central Africa, and North Africa receive smuggled tramadol. Tramadol is sometimes diverted through legal or medical routes, although this is not always the case; the majority of the tramadol that was found between 2012 and 2016 in countries around the world appears to have come from undercover labs in Asia (NDCMP, 2021–2025).

6.3 Drug Supply and Drug Seizures in Nigeria (2018–2019)

6.3.1 Cocaine: Nigerian authorities recovered almost 125 kg of cocaine in 2018, while only about 113 kg did so in 2019. In West Africa, cocaine continues to be the most widely used illegal stimulant substance. Cocaine and crack use were more common in four nations over the reporting period (2014–2017). Between 2014 and 2017, there was a discernible rise in the trend of cocaine problem use. Cocaine was the most commonly used substance among those receiving treatment in the area, according to 762 (less than one per 100,000) and 801 (less than one per 100,000) individuals in 2016 and 2017, respectively. (West African Epidemiology Network on Drug Use [WENDU], Report 2014–2017).

6.3.2 Cannabis: In both 2018 and 2019, cannabis was the drug that the NDLEA seized the most of. Cannabis plantations are typically found in isolated locations with difficult access, which makes it difficult to prevent drug trafficking, eradicate it, and replace it with alternative crops.

6.3.3 Opioids: According to the NDLEA, tramadol came in second to cannabis on the list of narcotics seized in 2018. In the West African region, particularly Nigeria, this synthetic opioid analgesic is rapidly being used for non-medical purposes. 7 According to the National Drug Use Survey 2019, 4.7% of people between the ages of 15 and 64 reported using prescription opioids for non-medical purposes in the preceding year, with tramadol being by far the most widely abused opioid.

6.3.4 Amphetamine-type substances (stimulants) The INCB reports that concern over methamphetamine manufacture in West Africa is rising. The NDLEA destroyed 18 covert methamphetamine laboratories between 2011 (the year the first lab was constructed) and 2019. The NDLEA demolished a

"super lab" in 2016 that had the capacity to produce 3,000 kg of methamphetamine per cycle. The pre-precursor chemical benzaldehyde, an organic substance used as a food additive, was utilized by the "super lab" to create phenylacetone, also known as P2P, which was then used to make methamphetamine. At this covert laboratory location, the NDLEA seized 753 kg of methamphetamine. Five Nigerians and four Mexican nationals were detained at the location by the NDLEA, establishing a connection between the "super lab" and Mexican gangs. It was discovered that 14 of the methamphetamine production facilities destroyed in Nigeria used a process based on ephedrine as the precursor ingredient. Methamphetamine seizures were over 270 kg in 2018 and 146 kg in 2019, according to the NDLEA.

6.3.5 Precursors: Ephedrine was the main precursor substance confiscated in Nigeria in both 2018 and 2019, despite the lack of data on precursors. Other precursors may have been trafficked from neighboring West African nations and subsequently transported throughout Africa, while ephedrine was verified to have been diverted from distribution systems. Nearly 326 kg of ephedrine were seized by the NDLEA in 2018. A number that rose to almost 454 kg in 2019. About 7 tons of ephedrine-both in raw form and as finished goods-have been imported over the past five years. However, there are ongoing efforts to determine the precise sum needed by Nigeria for legal purposes. For that purpose, two surveys were undertaken in 2017 and 2019 by the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) and the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC). The surveys aimed to objectively measure the nation's demand for restricted drugs, psychoactive substances, and precursors.

However, statistics indicate that one in every four drug users in Nigeria is female. Drug use among women is heavily stigmatized, largely unreported, and hidden. This is also supported by data on treatment demand gathered over the previous five years, which reveals that only 6% of people seeking therapy were women (NDCMP, 2021–2025). This emphasizes how crucial it is to adequately address the special needs of women and expand treatments that take gender into account. The research emphasized the serious social repercussions of drug use in Nigeria, such as disruptions to families, diminished productivity, and legal problems brought on by drug use in communities. Additionally, one in eight adults reported being affected by drug use in their relatives, workplaces, and communities (NDCMP, 2021–2025).

The UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) calls for the encouragement of collaboration to prevent and combat transnational crimes more effectively; its Article 20 on Special Investigative Techniques provides guidance in this regard (NDCMP 2021–2025). Borders between countries are crucial areas where law enforcement can intervene to stop the transit of illegal narcotics. In order to prevent drug trafficking, it is essential that borders are efficiently handled and that all points of entry and exit, including ports and internal waterways, have integrated law enforcement systems that cooperate. In accordance with the sixth action of Article 7 of UNTOC, border control authorities should "strengthen cooperation by, among other things, establishing and maintaining direct channels of communication." Drug use has a tremendous negative impact on communities as well as border controls. Drug injections are a key contributor to illnesses like HIV, hepatitis, STIs, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). With over 1.9 million

PLHIVs, Nigeria is currently ranked fourth in the world. People who inject drugs (PWIDs), who have an HIV prevalence of 3.4% (self-reported at 9%), continue to be a significant group. 28 This is three to nine times greater than the 1.4% national average prevalence, according to the 2018 Drug Use in Nigeria Survey (NDCMP 2021–2025). A three-day workshop titled "Enhancing Inter-Agency Cooperation in Border Management to Address Smuggling of Migrants" was recently held in Calabar, Cross River State, according to UNODC (2017). Improving and consolidating the current synergy among agents of various security agencies in the nation to improve their performance in accordance with national objectives was one of the meeting's goals and one of the primary themes discussed.

6.4 Factors Encouraging Illegal Migration and Drug Trafficking in Nigeria

6.4.1. Desire for greener pastures: The level of unemployment and the deteriorating standard of living are two of the major factors that encourage Nigerians to seek greener pastures in other parts of the world. In Nigeria, poor quality of life and the quest to earn a better living in West Africa are blamed for illegal immigration and emigration in the country (Suro, 2005). Today, most of the young people in Nigeria and other African countries embark on very risky journeys through the Sahel and the Mediterranean Sea enroute to Europe in search of greener pastures, but the inhuman conditions and deaths that occur along the way, especially the incidences of ship mishaps, can simply be described as one case too many.

6.4.2.

6.4.3. Porous borders: It is a matter of concern that Nigeria shares a 1,497-kilometer border with the Niger Republic, an 85-kilometer border with Chad through Lake Chad, and Nigeria's longest border line is the 1,690-kilometer border with Cameroon. It is unfortunate that these borders are porous and unmanned. The porous nature of Nigerian borders was confirmed by the then Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Interior, Abubakar Magaji, who said that Nigeria is facing the challenges of manning more than 1900 illegal routs across the nation's borders (News Agency of Nigeria, 2015).

6.4.4. Lack of sound government policies: This has to do with national laws governing migration in a country. It also involves laws of citizenship with respect to the status of migrants, especially with respect to forced migration. Over the years, several attempts have been made by various governments at the national, regional, and global levels to control migration and the trafficking of people. For example, in Nigeria, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) was established by the Federal Government of Nigeria through the initiative of the then wife of the Vice President, Titi Abubakar, on July 14, 2003. The agency, among others, was saddled with the responsibility to coordinate preventive, regulatory, and investigatory machinery geared towards the eradication of human trafficking. Other policies include the National Migration Policy of 2015, the National Youth Policy, and social investment programmes that encourage youth empowerment.

6.4.5. Ungoverned spaces: Reports have shown that the Nigerian border communities along the Chad Basin have no or little government presence, thereby serving as comfortable zones for all manner of people who easily cross the border

without being challenged by any security agent. This has been emphasized by the International Crisis Group (ICG, 2015) that the porous borders in the savanna (Sahel area) have limited supervision and a high population and unemployment rates, which create instability and criminal networks that normally link the other African countries. ICG (2015) warned that without holistic and persistent action against these illegal networks, misrule, underdevelopment, and instability There is no doubt that a lot of trading activities take place along Nigeria's border with Chad, Niger, Cameroun, and more prominently, Benin Republic, but the disturbing aspect of these trading activities is that they are carried out in an illicit form, whether from or into Nigeria. Most of these trades involve dealings in illegal arms, vehicles, cloth, and other consumable items. Illegal trade in arms, particularly, has greatly facilitated the current security challenges in Nigeria and other neighboring countries (Achumba et al., 2013, cited in Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). It is unfortunate that many illegal routes that lead directly in and out of Cameroon, Chad, or Niger have been serving as channels for transporting weapons into the country (Musa, 2013).

6.4.6. Corruption from officials: It is unfortunate to note that these migrations are also facilitated by some security personnel at the border communities who facilitate the illegal exit of these migrants. For instance, Patricia Afolabi, the NDLEA's chief of narcotics, described to the Federal High Court in Abuja how she performed a forensic investigation on cocaine exhibits connected to Abba Kyari. The NDLEA is pursuing legal action against Mr. Kyari, a suspended Deputy Commissioner of Police and former leader of the IGP Intelligence Response Team (IRT). A charge of illegal cocaine trading between January 19 and January 25, 2022, punishable under Section 11(c) of the NDLEA Act, is brought against Mr. Kyari and the four IRT members. Two of their co-defendants who transported the illegal substance to Nigeria had already entered guilty pleas and received two-year prison sentences (Ejekwonyilo, 2022).

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the paper concluded that illegal migration across international borders and drug trafficking are propelled by poor border management, ungoverned spaces, and complicity from security agencies. The paper also concluded that poverty and conflict in West Africa have also made transnational migration and drug trafficking organized crimes. The paper also concluded that with unmanned borders and corruption from officials at the border post, it will be very difficult for Nigeria to control illegal transnational migration and drug trafficking. Based on the foregoing, the paper made the following recommendations:

1. There should be a deliberate effort to focus on the financial flows as they relate to drug trafficking and international organized crime to get to the main sponsors of drug trafficking in Nigeria and the West African sub-region.

2. Nigeria and other ECOWAS nations should develop integrated programs or strengthen existing frameworks to combat drug trafficking and organized crime at the national and regional levels in full coherence with existing international standards.

3. The use of technology, especially detectives' machines and surveillance cameras, should be adopted to curb drug trafficking in Nigeria. This is in addition to

collaborative efforts with neighboring countries, especially Niger and Chad, which serve as the major routes through the Sahel to other North African countries and Europe.

4. The border communities should cooperate with security agencies to provide timely information on the activities of illegal migrants at the borders. On the other hand, security agencies should fish out the rogue personnel that facilitate the irregular movements of drug traffickers so as to build trust between security agencies and the border communities.

5. Efforts should be made by the government and other stakeholders to maintain peace and security in Nigeria so as to minimize the large scale of displaced populations. This is because drug trafficking thrives more in conflict zones.

6. Strategic efforts should be made by various Nigerian agencies and the ECOWAS Commission to sensitize and discourage people from engaging in drug trafficking in Nigeria and the West African sub-region.

REFERENCES

Abdulazeez, A. Despite rising insecurity, Nigerian borders remain porous, under-policed. *Daily Trust* https://dailytrust.com/despite-rising-insecurity-nigerian-borders-remain-porous-under-policed. (2021, October 31). Accessed 31 October, 2022.

Bocker A. Chain Migration over Legally Closed Borders: Settled Migrants as Bridgeheads and Gatekeepers. Netherlands' *Journal of Social Sciences* (1994) 30:87-106

de Haas, H. *Migration and development a theoretical perspective. Transnational and development. Towards a North-south Perspective*. Center for interdisciplinary Research, Biefield Germany, (2007). May 31-June 01 2007.

Ejekwonyilo, E. Cocaine Deal: What forensic analysis reveals against Abba Kyari, others — NDLEA witness. https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/543471-cocaine-deal-what-forensic-analysis-reveals-against-abba-kyari-others-ndlea-witness.html?tztc=1. (2022) Accessed June 14, 2023.

Musa, S. How al-Qaeda, Boko Haram Smuggle arms into Nigeria. *Vanguard.*

International Crisis Group (2015, June 25). *The Central Sahel. A perfect Sandstorm*. Retrieved from www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/niger/central-sahelperfect-sandstorm, (2013, May 11). Accessed 3 October, 2019.

Lee, E.S. A Theory of Migration. *Demography* 1966. 3:47-57

Massey, D.S., Arango, J. Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., Taylor, J.E. Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal. *Population and Development Review* (1993). 19:431- 66.

Massey, D.S. (1989). *International Migration in Comparative Perspective*. Washington, D.C.: Commission for the Study of International Migration and Co-operative Economic Development

Musa, S. How al-Qaeda, Boko Haram Smuggle arms into Nigeria. *Vanguard.* (2013, May 11).

Nextier SPD. Disconnected Spaces. https://thenextier.com/disconnected-spaces/, (2022) Accessed 29 May, 2023.

Olaifa, B. 1,490 illegal routes enter Nigeria, says NIS. *The Nation.* https://thenationonlineng.net/1490-illegal-routes-enter-nigeria-says-nis/. (2022, May 20) Accessed 25 September 2022.

UNODC Nigeria. New research shows that 75 of Nigerian migrants planned to use smugglers or travel facilitators for overland. https://www.unodc.org/nigeria/en/new-research-shows-that-75-of-nigerian-migrants-planned-to-use-smugglers-or-travel-facilitators-for-overland-journeys.html. (2023) Accessed 25 May 2023.

UNODC. Drug trafficking in West Africa - a threat to youth. https://www.unodc.org/westandcentralafrica/en/2022-05-02-drug-trafficking-in-west-africa_-a-threat-to-youth.html. (2022a) Accessed 25 May 2023.

UNODC. UNODC supports government on border management to address smuggling of migrants. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2017/February/nigeria_-unodc-supports-government-on-border-management-to-address-smuggling-of-migrants.html. (2017) Accessed 26 May 2023.

UNODC. World Drug Report 2022. https://www.unodc.org/nigeria/en/unodc-world-drug-report-2022-highlights-trends-on-cannabis-post-legalization--environmental-impacts-of-illicit-drugs--and-drug-use-among-women-and-youth.html. (2022). Accessed 25 May 2023.

UNODC. Trafficking in Medical Products in the Sahel Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment — Sahel https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta_sahel/TOCTA_Sahel_medical_2023.pdf. (2022b) Accessed 29 May 2023.

UNODC. Drug Trafficking. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-trafficking/index.html, (2010). Accessed 29 May 2023

West African Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (WENDU) Report (2014-2017). https://www.unodc.org/documents/westandcentralafrica//WENDU_REPORT_VF_V5_291019_FINAL_VERSION.pd. Accessed 28 May 2023.