

Ayomide ADEOYE¹
Afolabi OLABAMIJI^{1,2}
Israel ADEMILUYI¹

SPATIAL ACCESSIBILITY OF NON-INDIGENES TO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN LAGOS METROPOLIS, NIGERIA

Abstract. In rapidly urbanising regions of the Global South, migration plays a significant role in labour markets as it increases the number of people competing for available employment opportunities. This study examines how internal migration influences employment access across the Kosofe Local Government Area of the Lagos metropolis, providing clear spatial evidence to inform better policy decisions that address unemployment issues. Data were gathered from 138 respondents using Kobo Toolbox across the study sites. Pearson correlation and spatial interpolation were used for data analysis. The study found that 47.8% of the respondents attributed unemployment to poor government policies, highlighting this as a major constraint to employment in the study area. There is a significant positive relationship ($p < 0.01$) between employment opportunity and migration, indicating that employment prospects influence the migration pattern in the study area. The study concludes that the majority of migrants do not perceive their indigene status as a barrier to access employment opportunities; they identify poor government policies as a main challenge. The study suggests that policies promoting inclusive vocational training would help migrants acquire skills in demand for employment.

Keywords: urban migration, non-indigenes, employment, spatial accessibility, government

1. Introduction

In many regions of the world, unemployment is still a major economic and social problem. The International Labour Organisation (International Labour

¹ Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria.

² Corresponding author email address: <olabamijiafolabiemmanuel@gmail.com>.

Organization, 2023) states that several factors, such as migration, economic conditions, and demographic shifts, affect people's ability to find work. Rapid population growth, economic instability, and technological advancements that lower the demand for human labour make it more difficult to create sufficient employment opportunities in urban areas (Otieno & Busili, 2024; Lu, Zeng, & Hu, 2025). Because of this, many migrants are unable to find long-term work, especially in the formal sectors where entry requirements and competition are higher.

Migration has varying effects on labour markets based on the receiving area's economic structure and capacity (Roed & Schone, 2012). Migrants with skills boost economic productivity and innovation in some developed nations. But in many African countries, particularly those where migration is poorly regulated, the outcome is frequently labour market saturation and restricted access to good jobs (Akopari, 2000; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2022). In Nigeria, migration from rural areas and neighbouring nations has contributed to rapid urbanisation in major cities like Lagos. Due to its perceived economic opportunities, improved living conditions, and industrial growth, Lagos State draws many migrants (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). However, there is intense competition for the few available jobs as a result of the rapid migration inflow often surpassing the state labour market's capacity to absorb new workers.

However, migration imposes different challenges, which include rapid population growth and high demand for accommodations, which are capable of increasing the level of unemployment, poverty, and pressure on available social amenities. The movement of people in search of jobs has caused 'brain drain' at the source region, where educated workers leave their own area and move to metropolis in search of better jobs. This has affected economic growth and social progress at the source regions, which in most cases are rural areas or medium size urban areas (Ratha *et al.*, 2022; Onuoha & Etiebet, 2023; Isiaka, 2025; Gyanwali & Bashyal, 2025; Edino, Onalo, & Simon, 2025). Governments in destination regions face financial strain that cannot cater to the employment needs of every migrant. A high level of migration and increased unemployment lead to greater government expenses on social welfare programmes (Moridian, Radulescu, Kumar, Radu, & Mohammad, 2024; Horne, 2024; Bello & Akpan,

2025). High unemployment rates have led to increased crime, especially in urban areas where there is job scarcity (Christiana, 2012; Osho & Ojumu, 2024; Onwuka, 2025). It has been observed that long-term unemployment can lead to mental challenges such as stress, anxiety, and depression.

In Lagos State, many migrants find informal work in industries like transportation, street trading, and domestic services, which lack long-term stability, good pay, and opportunities for career advancement (Adeosun, Owolabi, Eshiet & Owolabi, 2023; NBS, 2023). Therefore, assessing the spatial accessibility of non-indigenes to employment opportunities will help in identifying and designing targeted employment programmes that are non-indigene inclusive. This study thus analyses the spatial accessibility of non-indigenes to employment opportunities in Lagos, with a focus on the factors that influence the accessibility, and strategies for improving the accessibility of everyone to employment opportunities. This study examines the non-indigenes' spatial accessibility to employment opportunities in the megacity of Lagos State.

The study is anchored on the Spatial Mismatch Theory, which was propounded by Kain in 1968 (Kain, 2004). The theory argues that employment opportunities are spatially separated from low-income migrant populations, who are restricted to residing in more distant, affordable locations. This spatial separation leads to their limited access to employment due to high transportation costs, higher commuting times, and low access to information networks. In this study, the theory explains how non-indigene migrants experience challenges in accessing jobs, not only due to a lack of opportunities but also because of spatial accessibility. Thus, employment may be influenced by the interaction between residential location and the spatial distribution of jobs, which may also be shaped by government policy.

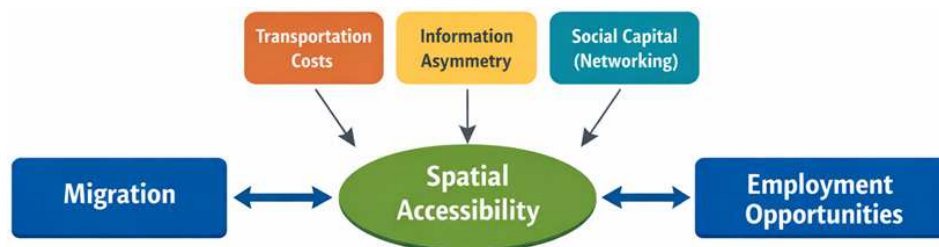


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 reveals that migration and employment opportunity are connected by spatial accessibility, which is functions of transport costs, information asymmetry, and social capital. The relationship between the two major variables (migration and employment) was established. The study, however, inferred from the suggestions of the respondents on how the employment opportunity can be improved for migrants in a megacity with a highly dense population.

2. Data and Methods

Kosofe Local Government Area is one of the twenty local government areas (LGA) in Lagos State, southwestern Nigeria (Figure 2). It has an estimated population of 1,010,800. The sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula, based on a marginal error of 0.05, and 95% confidence level, which resulted in a sample size of 398 for the whole population (Equation 1),

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \text{ (Equation 1)}$$

where: n = Sample size, N = Population and e = Level of error (set at 0.05 for the study).

Based on field survey estimates indicating that migrants constitute 34.5% of the study population, 138 migrants were purposively selected across the area to ensure adequate spatial representation.

The study utilised a Kobo Toolbox for data collection, which was distributed to respondents across the area. Kobo Connect Toolbox is a free and open-source platform for collecting field data with mobile devices.

A Kobo Toolbox questionnaire with pre-defined questions was purposively administered to migrants in Ketu, Isheri, Agboyi, Shangisha, Ikosi, Mile 12, and parts of Gbagada and Maryland in the Kosofe LGA of Lagos State, Nigeria. Responses were digitally captured, extracted from the Kobo Toolbox, and exported as CSV format. The data were then imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software

for detailed data analysis. A shapefile of the study area was downloaded from the portal of Georeferenced Infrastructure and Demographic Data for Development (Grid3).

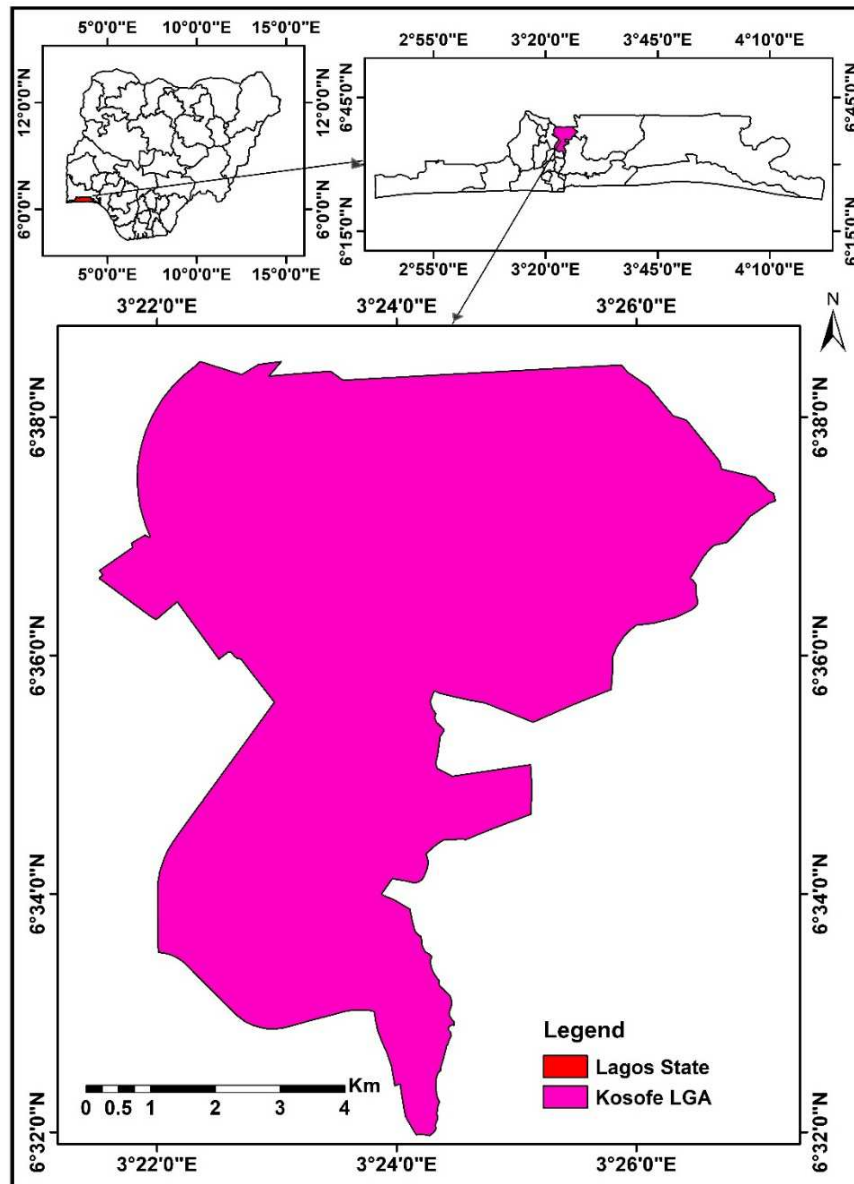


Figure 2. Kosofe Local Government Area (LGA)

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation and spatial interpolation. Descriptive statistical tools included frequency counts, percentages, charts and graphs to summarise data. Pearson correlation was used to test the hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between migrants' influx into Lagos State and their access to employment. This test determined how strongly and in which direction the two variables were associated. The formula for the Pearson correlation coefficient is shown as Equation 2,

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}} \quad (\text{Equation 2})$$

where: n = number of respondents (migrants) surveyed, x = scores representing the level of migrants' influx, and y = scores representing access to employment. These variables were based on three Likert scale of Low coded as 1, Moderate as 2, and High as 3.

The research adopted Geographic Information System (GIS) for the spatial analysis using the spatial interpolation tool in ArcMap to reveal the non-indigenes' perceptions on their access to employment. The design of this research included the collection of point-based data (x, y) of the migrants and attribute values to interpolate migrants' access to employment.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of data gathered from respondents at the Kosofe Local Government Area, Lagos State.

3.1. Spatial Patterns and Trends of Non-Indigene

Table 1 shows that the majority of non-indigenes in the area are from the southwest geopolitical zone of Nigeria, accounting for 60.8% of migrants. This suggests that a large proportion of those who relocate to Kosofe are from neighbouring states. Fewer migrants came from other geopolitical

zones of Nigeria and outside Nigeria. A major reason for migrating was searching for employment, as approximately 43% of respondents stated that they relocated to Lagos primarily to find employment. This indicates that employment opportunities in Lagos serve as pulling factors of non-indigenes from different parts of Nigeria to the area. Not all non-indigenes migrated primarily because of searching for a job, 31.2% of non-indigenes migrated in order to join their family in Lagos. To these people, searching for employment was a secondary reason (Table 1). Based on this, family and economic factors contribute more to the migration of the non-indigenes to Lagos. Economically, 71% of respondents were full-time employees, 15.9% were part-time employees, 10.1% were unemployed, and 2.9% were interns or trainees.

Table 1

Main Reason for Migrating, and Employment Opportunities

Variables	Options	Frequency	Percent (%)
Geo-Political Zone:	North Central (NC)	14	10.1
	North East (NE)	3	2.2
	North West (NW)	6	4.3
	South East (SE)	11	8
	South South (SS)	12	8.7
	South West (SW)	84	60.8
	Outside Nigeria	8	5.8
Total		138	100
Main Reason for Migrating to Lagos:	Education	14	10.1
	Find a job	59	42.8
	Others	22	15.9
	To join family	43	31.2
Total		138	100
Employment Status	Full time	98	71
	Intern/Trainee	4	2.9
	Part time	22	15.9
	Unemployed	14	10.1
Total		138	100

These employment figures suggest that the majority of migrants are economically active, potentially meeting the primary reason (seeking jobs) for their migration to Lagos. The strategic location of Kosofe with mixed socio-economic structure within the Lagos metropolis might be a factor responsible for high employment opportunities, as well as access to major industrial hubs such as Ikeja, Victoria Island and Apapa.

Considering the spatial distribution, places like Ojota and Shangisha have high concentrations of migrants who moved primarily for work. Migrants in Ogudu migrated primarily for educational purposes. In contrast, areas, such as Isheri show that migration is linked to family reunification. The spatial pattern also reveals that job-seeking is the most common migration reason, particularly in central and southwestern Kosofe. The central region of Kosofe, particularly around Shangisha, has moderate to high access. Access to employment is also low in the southwest, in Ogudu. In the northwest and north-eastern parts of the area, job opportunities are more available, as most respondents in those locations have access to employment, which is relatively high among migrants (Figure 3).

3.2. Key Factors Influencing Non-Indigenes' Employment Opportunity

The factors influencing migrants' employment are displayed in Table 2. Regarding employment status, 15.9% of respondents work part-time, while the majority (71.0%) have full-time jobs. 2.9% are interns or trainees, and 10.1% are unemployed. This reveals that although a large number of migrants are employed, some still have difficulty locating full-time or stable employment. Ease of getting job is low for 5.1%, moderate for 37.7% and high for 57.2% (Table 2). This suggests that although many migrants perceive availability of employment opportunities, many still encounter difficulties in their job search.

Table 2 also shows the causes of unemployment among migrants. The most frequently cited causes were a lack of jobs (44.2%) and poor government policies (47.8%). Few respondents cited discrimination (4.3%) or a lack of skills (3.6%) as the primary issue. Furthermore, only 19.6% of respondents claimed to have participated in a job training programme, while the majority (80.4%) had never done so.

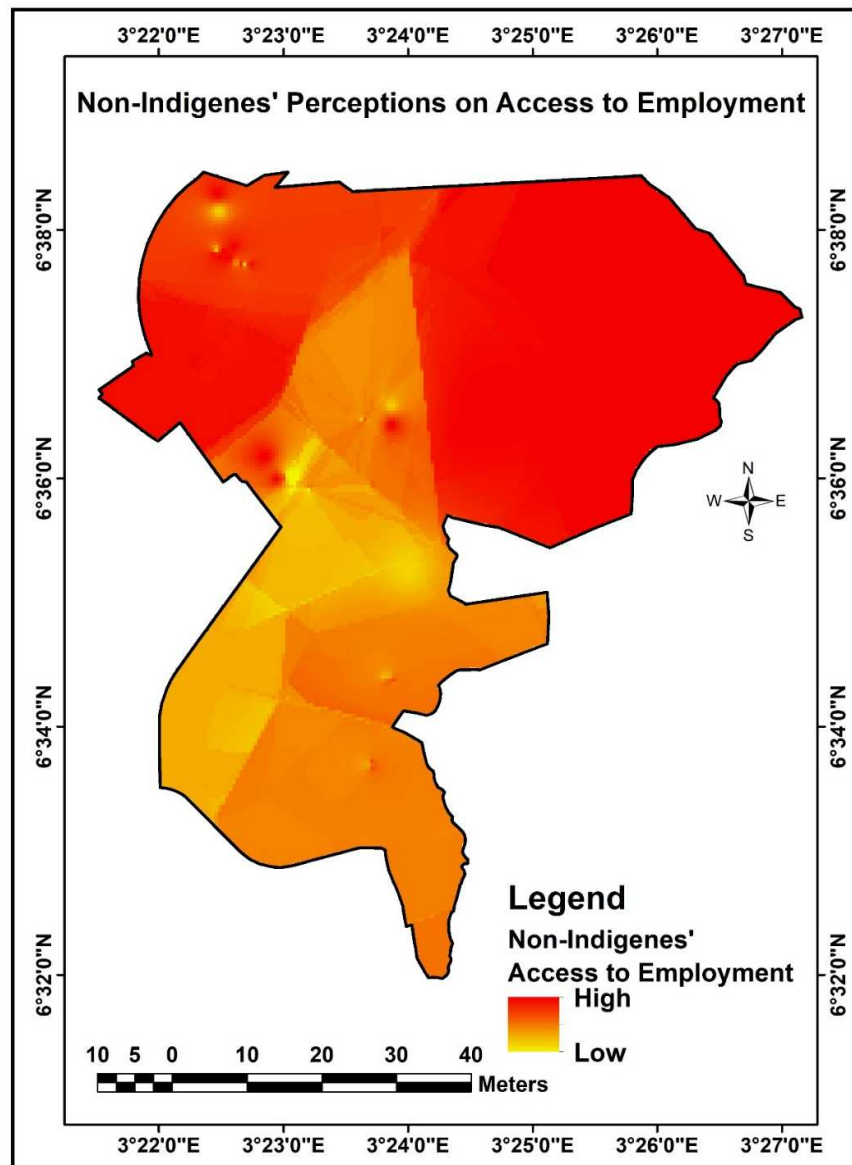


Figure 3. Non-Indigenes' access to employment

Just 8.0% of attendees reported that the training aided in their employment, compared to 74.6% who said it did not, and 17.4% who

said it was not relevant. This implies that the existing training programmes might be ineffective or poorly aligned with market demand.

Table 2

Key Factors Influencing Migrants' Employment

Variables	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Current State of Migrants' Access to Employment	High	79	57.2
	Moderate	52	37.7
	Low	7	5.1
		138	100
Major Reason for Migrant Unemployment	Lack of skills	5	3.6
	Job scarcity	61	44.2
	Discrimination	6	4.3
	Poor government policy	66	47.8
		138	100
Attendance in Job Training Programs	Yes	27	19.6
	No	111	80.4
		138	100
Training Improved Employment Chances	Yes	11	8
	No	103	74.6
	Not applicable	24	17.4
		138	100
Total		138	100

3.3. Strategies for Improving Employment Accessibility for Migrants

According to Table 3, most of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there are various strategies that would improve the employability of migrants in Lagos. For example, 87% agreed that providing language training schemes would help migrants secure employment, and only a small percentage disagreed. Migrant networking events and job fairs are found to be very effective, with 88.4% agreement. Job placement and mentorship programmes with the help of local businesses also received

a 90.6% level of support. Certification and vocational training programmes are also well supported, where 92.8% opined that it would help in imparting useful skills to migrants. Finally, cultural sensitivity training of employers is also advocated by nearly 90% of respondents as a way of doing away with hiring bias and promoting inclusiveness.

Table 3

Strategies for Improving Employment Accessibility for Migrants

Strategies for improving employment accessibility	Strongly disagreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Agreed (%)	Strongly Agreed (%)
Providing language training programs	2.9	8.7	87.0	1.4
Job fairs and networking events tailored to migrant communities	0.0	11.6	88.4	0.0
Partnering with local businesses	0.0	8.0	90.6	0.7
Offering vocational training and certification programs	2.2	4.3	92.8	0.7
Cultural sensitivity training for local employers	1.4	8.0	89.1	1.4

Table 4 illustrates suggestions to increase employment accessibility among migrants in Lagos. The majority, 93.5% of the respondents, view increasing job opportunities as the best answer to increase employment access. Another minor percentage, 2.2%, showed it would help if industries and infrastructure were developed, while 4.3% gave other answers like developing other states to reduce the burden on Lagos State.

Table 4

Other suggestions to Improve Job accessibility for Migrants in Lagos state

Response Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Creation of more job opportunities by government and private sector	129	93.50
Infrastructure and industrial development	3	2.20
Others (development of other states)	6	4.30
Total	138	100

To test the hypothesis (H_0), which claimed that there is no significant relationship between non-indigenes' influx into Lagos State and their access to employment, Pearson correlation was used. This test determined how strongly and in which direction the two variables were associated. Table 5 revealed that the Pearson correlation coefficient between the rate of migration into Lagos State and the current state of migrants' employment opportunities is $r = 0.332$, with a p-value of 0.000. This connotes a weak positive correlation, which implies that as the accessibility to employment opportunities increases, the rate at which non-indigenes migrate to Lagos also increases.

Table 5

**Relationship between Non-indigenes' Accessibility
to Employment and Rate of Migration**

Variables	Pearson correlation	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Rate of Migration into Lagos State and migrants' Employment Access	0.332	138	0.000

The findings show that a reasonable number of migrants in Lagos are from the neighbouring states, and they mostly migrated for work and family reasons. This shows how economic opportunities and social connections drive migration in many parts of the world (Gong, Cao & Tong, 2024). Based on the study, most migrants are employed full-time, which supports their desire to work. However, a large-scale migration may increase pressure on local resources and services. Even, there is a spatial variation in migration across Nigeria as migrants from Ogun, Kwara, Osun, and Imo natives constitute a significant proportion (Adedokun & Karzanova, 2019; Oyokunyi & Adomi, 2019).

According to the results, many migrants feel that it is challenging to compete for jobs, but they also think that they have chances of getting employment. Migrants experience mixed outcomes in the labour markets. The various interventions towards improving migrants' access to work, especially those from other parts of the world, are language training, job fairs, networking, and vocational training align with global best practices.

For instance, the International Labour Organization emphasises that vocational education and training (VET) are powerful drivers of migrant integration into the economy. Also, cultural sensitivity training has, concurrently, been established to improve expatriate performance in Nigeria (Enatto, 2024). These findings provide guidance for policymakers on how to plan for more job creation and social welfare according to the International Labour Organization (2021). This can be more effective if internal migration patterns and spatial disparities in employment opportunities can be considered at the micro-scale level. The results of this study validate a significant relationship between migration and job access at the micro-levels of mega cities in Global South.

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that the level of spatial accessibility to employment opportunities for non-indigenes is high in the northern and northwestern parts of Kosofe Area of Lagos. The majority of migrants to this area are from the neighbouring states. The high employment opportunities in Lagos attracted many people to the area. Employment is not a sole motivation for migration, as some consider searching for job as secondary to family reunification in the area. It was revealed that the majority of migrants are economically active, suggesting that the primary objective of migration (employment) is largely achieved. While a small percentage identified lack of needed skills, discrimination, and poor government policies as primary barriers. These policies may not explicitly target non-indigenes, but their implementations can disproportionately disadvantage some migrants in a case where quotas systems are applied, causing perceived job scarcity among non-indigenes. This study recommends that offering inclusive vocational training coupled with favourable urban transport policies, would help migrants acquire skills that are in demand in labour markets. It also recommends that quotas systems that bring inequities and intra-urban disparities in access to employment should be abolished, especially at the micro-scale level of local government areas.

References

- Adedokun, O. A., & Karzanova, I. V. 2019. Impact of migration on the economy of Nigeria: Recent Trends. *Вестник*, Vol. 2, pp 204-211.
- Adeosun, O. T., Owolabi, K. E., Eshiet, I. C., & Owolabi, T. J. 2023. Exploring the transition from informal to formal jobs and its consequent impacts on the livelihood of migrant youths in Lagos metropolis. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, Vol. 17, nr.6, pp 1135-1153.
- Akokpari, J. K. 2000. Globalisation and migration in Africa. *African Sociological Review/Revue Africaine de Sociologie*, Vol. 4, nr. 2, pp 72-92.
- Bello, P. O., & Akpan, U. J. 2025. Exploring the influence of socio-demographic context on prejudice towards migrants in Lagos, Nigeria. *African Identities*, pp 1-15.
- Christiana, U. 2012. Influence of youth unemployment on crime rate in Lagos Island and local government area of Lagos state, Nigeria. *Faculty of Social Sciences*, 22-28.
- Edino, K. F., Onalo, E. Y., & Simon, O. P. 2025. Brain Drain and Development in Africa: Challenges, Opportunities, and Mitigation Strategies. *Brain*, Vol. 9, nr. 10, pp 67-80.
- Enatto, H. E. 2024. Cross-Cultural Training and the Performance of American Expatriates in Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Innovation Research*, Vol. 12, nr. 1, pp 29-41. <https://doi.org/10.37745/ejbir.2013/vol12n12941>
- Gong, Y., Cao, Z., & Tong, D. 2024. Social ties and talent migration: Considering the intentions of migrants to permanently settle in Chinese cities. *Applied Geography*, Vol. 165, pp 103227-103227. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apgeog.2024.103227>
- Gyanwali, G. P., & Bashyal, K. 2025. Brain-Drain: Challenges and Opportunities in Nepal. *SS Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, Vol. 2, nr. 1, pp 17-45.
- Horne, R. 2024. Employment and social trends by region. *World Employment and Social Outlook*, Vol 1, pp 37-60.
- International Labour Organization 2023. *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2023*. <https://www.ilo.org>
- Isiaka, O. S. 2025. Strategic human resource management and brain drain in Nigeria: An empirical study of retention practices and workforce mobility (2020-2024). *Innovation Journal of Social Sciences and Economic Review*, Vol. 7, nr. 2, pp 37-49.
- Kain, J. F. 2004. A pioneer's perspective on the spatial mismatch literature. *Urban studies*, Vol. 41 nr. 1, pp 7-32.
- Lu, H., Zeng, K., & Hu, W. 2025. Does the rise of robotic technology reduce fertility? longitudinal evidence from China. *Review of Economics of the Household*, pp 1-30.
- Moridian, A., Radulescu, M., Kumar, P., Radu, M. T., & Mohammad, J. (2024). New insights on immigration, fiscal policy and unemployment rate in EU countries-A quantile regression approach. *Heliyon*, Vol. 10, nr. 13, pp 1-14.
- National Bureau of Statistics (2023). *Labour Force Statistics: Unemployment and Underemployment Report Q1 2023*. <https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng>
- Onuoha, C. B., & Etiebet, I. 2023. Migration Trend and Brain Drain in Nigeria's Healthcare Sector: Challenges and Pathways Forward. *World Health*, Vol. 3, nr. 14, pp 1278-1285.

- Onwuka, C. C. 2025. Urbanization and Unemployment in Anambra State, Nigeria: Issues and Challenges. *GOJAR Editorial Board*, Vol. 4, nr. 1, pp 7-25.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2022. *International migration outlook 2022*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/30fe16d2-en>
- Osho, G. S., & Ojumu, O. 2024. A critical investigation of Lagos state socioeconomic and economic challenges: does urban growth policy matter in Nigeria. *J Appl Bus Econ*, Vol. 26, nr. 2, pp 173-183.
- Otieno, P. O., & Busili, P. A. 2024. A Research on Labor, Finance, Technology, and Sustainable Growth. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, Vol. 9, nr. 9, pp 3570-3597.
- Oyokunyi, J. I., & Adomi, K. O. 2019. Coverage of Migration Stories by Select Nigerian National Dailies. *The Nigerian Journal of Communication*, Vol. 16, nr. 1, pp 211-226
- Ratha, D., De, S., Kim, E. J., Plaza, S., Seshan, G., & Yameogo, N. D. 2022. *Migration and development brief 36: A war-induced slowdown and migration resilience*. World Bank.
- Roed, M., & Schone, P. 2012. Does immigration increase labour market flexibility? *Labour Economics*, Vol. 19, nr. 4, pp 527-540.

All links were verified by the authors and found to be functioning before the publication of this text in 2026.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial-No Derivatives 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)