

Content Analysis of Japaism Themes in Newspaper Reports on Youth Migration in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study focused on newspaper coverage of "Japaism": youth migration in Nigeria by contextually analysing the various themes used in Vanguard and The Nation newspapers' reports. Thematic content analysis was adopted to investigate this phenomenon. A total of 162 online articles were sourced from Vanguard and The Nation newspapers within 2023 out of which 149 were selected as the study sample. A code guide was used as a research instrument, and themes and subthemes were generated for proper analysis based on the three research questions raised for the study. The study however revealed that Nigerian newspapers did a great job within 2023 by reporting the "Japa" syndrome for national development. The discouraging frame was dominant in Nigerian newspapers' reportage of "Japa". At the same time, the sources of stories emerged from professional individuals who are seriously feeling the heat of youth migration from Nigeria. Also, the investigation showed that Nigerian newspapers paid serious attention to the "Japa" report by reporting the phenomenon in the straight news. It ensured the consistent use of the word "Japa" in the headlines to capture readers' attention. The study suggested that though Nigerian newspapers should be applauded for the serious attention given to the reportage of "Japa" syndrome, they should do more by reporting the phenomenon using editorials that consider its positive impact on setting societal agendas.

Keywords: Japaism, Migration, Newspaper Coverage, Youth.

Introduction

Nigeria is generally considered one of the most blessed nations in the world regarding natural resources and human capacity. Sad enough, with her enormous resources citizens are faced with different problems ranging from insecurity, economic instability, corruption, and other national problems as a result of bad, selfish and corrupt leadership since 1960 when the country gained her sovereignty from Britain (1). Although many governments, present and past have promised and continue to promise a change in government attitude towards national development, nonetheless, no government has thrived in advancing the course of the nation. In the second quarter of 2023, Nigeria's external debt

stood at a total of #33.25 trillion which was an equivalent of 43.16 billion US dollars, and a total of N54.13 trillion which was approximately 70.26 billion US dollars in domestic debt (2). However, with this huge debt and the availability of the nation's natural and human resources, one begins to wonder whether the country is under a spell of underdevelopment. When one considers the various problems bedevilling the country as a result of bad leadership, what comes into mind as a citizen is an alternative route to better one's life within and or outside the country when there seems to be no light after the tunnel. As established in previous study, to better one's life within the country, one gets involved in corrupt practices

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(Received 02nd September 2024; Accepted 19th January 2025; Published 31st January 2025)

such as bribery, misappropriation of funds, nepotism and other social vices which have become norms amongst the people (3). On the other hand, is to consider a better life through Japa, a mere slang that originated from the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria meaning to “run away or escape”, and which has found its way into the Nigerian everyday language regardless of tribe to mean migration from ones’ home country to another in search of a better life. Many youngsters who are perceived to be the hope of the nation have continued to lose hope in the future of the country, hence their strong desire to find a better environment where their efforts, capacity, technical knowledge and skills would be appreciated and thus translate to a better life for them and their families (4).

It is on this basis that the desire for Japa from Nigeria has become the other of the day, and has taken huge prominence amongst Nigeria citizens since a person with skilled or professional experience can make triple the amount he will make in his home country in another country such as the United States or any other developed nations. The context in which Nigerians perceived the exodus of people from one country to another before and after independence in the early '60s through the late '80s was based on exploration and adventurism. Many who left the country at that time did so to better their lives though, yet leaving Nigeria at the time was not as pronounced as what is obtainable in Nigeria today. For instance, between 1960 and 1990 Nigeria's net migration rate was around 0.009 with a growth rate of -18.180% and -0.199 with a growth rate of -4.190% respectively (5). What this implies is that within 30 years of Nigeria's independence, the country witnessed a -0.208 net migration rate.

This however translates to mean a negative implication on the socio-economic and socio-political stability of the country. Nigeria experienced a net migration rate of -0.29 per 1000 population in 2021 which means that there was a slightly higher percentage of Nigerians who left the country in 2021 (6). It was concluded that between 2000 and 2021, the Nigerian net migration had a negative balance where more citizens were leaving the country than those coming in (6). Furthermore, study revealed that the number of Nigerians leaving the country would likely increase slightly by -0.16 per 1000 population by the year 2050 (7).

The word Japa as depicted within the contextual and empirical analysis and data presented earlier shows the desperation of many Nigerians leaving the shores of the country in search of a better life which many referred to as the search for a greener pasture. This phenomenon has bred two basic schools of thought within the academia, entrepreneurs and even politicians. Some are of the view that to Japa from one’s home country in search of a better life is better for the people and their home countries considering the various benefits. The national integration it brings to both countries where citizens leave and migrate to; using the money raised from foreign nations to build migrants' home country; the injection of foreign business ideas, technology and scientific knowledge acquired from the foreign country to migrants' home country are some of the advantages seen by the supporters of this idea. Meanwhile, scholars are of the notion that to Japa is a serious disservice to one’s nation whose growth in all ramifications depends solely on her citizens (4). This school of thought argues that such countries where citizens consistently migrate to other countries are leaving their home country for backwardness, reduction in generation production, and leaving the nation for brain drains in all sectors.

However perceived, the Japa syndrome has come, and has continued to surface in everyday discussion due to the problems Nigerians are battling with. More important is the fact that the Nigerian media has continued to pay serious attention to this problem as a result of its effects on the country. One can argue that no one sector within Nigeria is affected by the daily increase of Nigerians migrating from the country. To show how badly things have gone, on the 9th of October, 2023 the federal government of Nigeria was reported to have re-employed retired doctors, nurses and other medical professionals on a part-time basis due to a shortage of medical practitioners in the country (8).

This action by the federal government was taken to fill the gap created in the country’s health sector due to Japa syndrome. Also, on the 27th of November, 2023, and the 5th of October, 2023 the Nigerian Punch, and Guardian newspapers reported a shortage of university lecturers across the country (9, 10). This was also blamed on the Japa situation that has become the other of the day

in Nigeria amongst skilled and professional individuals as many Nigerians continue to lose hope and faith in the country and the country's leadership.

Going by these arguments, this study is to investigate the efforts of the Nigerian newspapers in reporting Japa by thematically analysing the following objectives and research questions: to know the frames and sources used in the articles in Vanguard and The Nation newspapers, examine the nature of stories on japa, and examine the prominence given to reports concerning Japa by establishing the nature of the articles to know the importance given to the Japa phenomenon by journalists. The research questions remain: what are the frames and sources of articles used in reporting japa; what is the nature of stories on japa and what is the level of prominence given to japa by the Vanguard and The Nation newspapers? The two newspapers were chosen because they are among the top ten newspapers in Nigeria (11).

Recently, different scholars have delved into the conceptual meaning of Japa, many of which were able to trace its evolution to the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria (4, 12-14). However, before examining this concept as an emerging ideology, it is rather important to first comprehend it from a layman's perspective as other scholars have examined. Japa refers to urban Yoruba slang used mainly by young Nigerians to describe the recent emigration trends and patterns by those within that demographic category (14). Furthermore, the word Japa simply means: to quickly flee a difficult situation, and this word is a simple term used by many young Nigerians who are willing to or have already left the country in search of a greener pasture.

In a more succinct and clearer explanation, Japa means the mass exodus of people from the shores of Nigeria to another country (4). In a clearer perspective, the word Japa originates from the Yoruba language which means to run, flee, or escape. Japa word takes its meaning or evolution from the aspiration of young Nigerians who are of the view that leaving the country is the best way to escape the many problems Nigerians are facing due to bad governance which has birthed crises such as corruption and socio-economic and socio-political issues thereby resulting into bad economy, unemployment, underemployment, insecurity of lives and properties etc (14).

However, one thing that has remained consistent within each perspective of Japa meaning is that the word contextually emerged from the Yoruba tribe, and has continued to make sense amongst the vast majority of Nigerian youths when it comes to the notion of migrating from Nigeria to other countries of the world in search of a better future which seems very unachievable in Nigeria. Therefore, going by this notion, this phenomenon is fast becoming an ideological concept when perceived beyond mere migration. The desperation and zeal at which many Nigerians pursue their exodus from Nigeria is highly alarming. For instance, the desires of many prospective "Japaists" to sell off their properties such as cars, land, houses, and other things show the levels of desperation (15). Sadly, professionals such as bankers, accountants, lecturers, medical doctors, and other medical practitioners and engineers earning close to #300,000.00 (approximately USD 315) monthly resign from their work to Japa. This however does not leave behind many skilled workers like mechanics, heavy-duty drivers, barbers, hairdressers, etc. (16).

So, the fundamental question is to know why "Japaism" has become an ideological concept. One serious reason why many Nigerians are leaving the shores of the country is usually for economic purposes (4). This perspective was further established when it was pointed out that three factors: macro, meso, and micro are usually responsible for peoples' migration from their homeland to another country (13). To put these factors straight, it was explained that socioeconomic, environmental, and political issues form the macro factors (13). Issues like diaspora kinship affinity, effects of armed banditry, and the evolution of social media which showcases the better lives that could be available to migrants form the maso factor; while issues such as religion, education, and marital consideration for the basis for the micro factor.

The Nigerian media industry is a versatile one having a long history even before the birth of the country's independence. Its historical timeline covers pre-colonial, independent, and post-independent eras (17, 18). From politics to economic, social, sports, agriculture, scientific and technological events, the Nigerian media have continued to be socially responsible in the dissemination of information, educating, and

entertaining the public (19, 20). Hence, media in Nigeria are known for framing and setting agenda through the coverage of critical issues affecting the society (21-24). The industry is faced with different challenges ranging from government and sometimes individual repression, lack of finance, shortage of staff and inadequate modern equipment, epileptic power supply, ownership dominance, and many more (25, 26).

Despite these challenges, the Nigerian media have continued to remain the nation's fourth estate of the realm in discharging its constitutional and statutory functions to the Nigerian public (20). Therefore, it is argued that for media to make an impact on national development, the institution relies on three major factors: the media itself; the society in which this media operates, and; the specific audience they reach out (27). Considering this notion, the press is duty-bound to ensure a consistent reportage of issues that could be dragging the nation backward just as it reports those issues that are capable of moving the nation forward. Meanwhile, the issue of Japa has continued to surface in the Nigerian media space considering how the likely projected dangers that may come with people fleeing out of the country. Many of these media outlets reveal the very many dangers such as brain drain, low productivity due to insufficient manpower, and other problems waiting to befall the nation in all spheres of national advancements. Meanwhile, people: scholars and citizens alike are of the view that Japa wouldn't have been the other of the day in Nigeria if not because of the challenges people are facing in the country as created by the leaders who pay little or no attention to the suffering of the people. These problems are viewed to include a high unemployment rate, limited access to education and medical care, inflation, insecurity, political unrest, and many other reasons why Nigerians leave the country in search of a place where they can make life better for themselves even if it cost them borrowing or selling of their properties (28). Considering the nature of this study, it is expedient to draw from the framing theory of the press. This theory was propounded around 1974 through social constructionist and symbolic interactionism perspectives forming parts of the audience research approach described as frame analysis (29). This notion is further argued that human beings use cognitive skills to make sense of our

daily lives, which affects our decisions. Framing theory has a clear relationship with the agenda-setting media theory which explains that through media reportage of events, the media does not tell the public what to think about but unconsciously directs public thinking about a particular event towards a particular direction. However, while agenda-setting media theory focuses on a specific subject matter, framing theory focuses on the importance or essence of the subject matter the media is bringing face-to-face with the public.

What this implies is that media while media is presenting an event to the public for deliberation, how such event is presented is however dependent on how such event is coined or woven together and presented to the public. The style, or how such events are coined or woven together by a presenter or writer of a story is referred to as frame. Framing is described as how the media packages and presents information or messages to the public (30). In other words, the media in discharging its social responsibility function highlights some specific events, then presents or places them within a particular context or perspective to either encourage such events or discourage them.

Consequently, because this study is focused on the activities of Nigerian newspapers in the reportage of youths' migration from the country in search of a greener pasture which has become an ideology currently referred to as Japaism, the adoption of framing theory is premised on the assumptions of the theory. First, for the press to determine what issue is publicly discussed, journalists intentionally become selective of the topic or event to put in the public domain, and also determine how such information is presented to them. Based on this assumption, this study will determine what importance is given to the reportage of "Japa" in the print space. Also, stemming from another assumption of this theory that for the press to draw public attention to a specifically selected event, the need to reinforce such report becomes expedient to determine the positive or negative perception about such event, it is on this ground that the study exposes the press consistency in the coverage of youth migration in Nigeria.

However, scholars have argued that naturally audiences often interpret information through their pattern or frame thereby subjecting the media frame to either overlap or contradict. This,

therefore, shows that audience perception or reactions about an issue or information disseminated by the press may be subjective rather than that which is presented by the press. Furthermore, in the cause of creating public support or raising public awareness concerning a socio-political or economic issue, the media strives to do its best through a thorough crusading of such information.

Methodology

This study is a qualitative one that is premised on content analysis design where a total of 162 online articles relating to “Japa” were extracted from two Nigeria newspapers: Vanguard and The Nation from their official websites. Meanwhile, the selection of these newspapers was based on their wide coverage, and most importantly the fact that both newspapers are mostly read by Nigerians (31, 32). With the wide coverage and public acceptance of these newspapers, and their editorial policies the Vanguard newspaper aims to serve the people through an unflinching commitment to free enterprise, the rule of law, and good governance; while The Nation newspaper is focused on three missions statement: to provide the general public with information they need to be free and self-governing in a democratic society; to vigorously campaign a return to fundamental principles of federalism, believing that it is the arrangement that can best advance the multifarious interest of citizens of many nations and fait such as Nigeria; and to serve as an independent monitor of power and hold those entrusted with its exercise accountable. The focus of this newspaper is based on the freedom of the citizens, justice for all irrespective of status, and their interest in the market economy. Both newspapers, Vanguard and The Nation are daily publications.

Based on the editorial policies and principles of these newspapers, it is believed that the reportage of youth migration which is also referred to as Japa would be seriously considered as a result of the challenges it poses on national development. As a result of the dangers associated with the “Japa” syndrome, it then becomes sacrosanct of such a widely accepted medium to attach great importance to this national problem for the sake of national development. Meanwhile, the articles selected were within a period of one year: 2023. The reason for choosing a year was because preliminary searching revealed that the “Japa”

phenomenon started gaining media and public attention in early 2023.

On these newspapers’ websites, the term “Japa” was considered for search, a total of 129 online articles relating to Japa were generated from the Vanguard newspaper website, while a total of 33 articles were generated from The Nation’s website, thereby making a total of 162 articles for both newspapers covering 2023. Rather than choosing one newspaper, these two national dailies were purposively selected to avoid monotony. Another reason for choosing these two newspapers is to provide a level playground that allows the researchers to make judgments on press efforts on the reportage of the Japa syndrome. Thereafter, 13 of these articles were deleted because they were not relevant to what the research intended to measure. The exclusion of these articles therefore reduced the number of online articles available for the study to a total of 149 to make the study sample size. These 149 articles were then coded for analysis. Of these 149 articles, Vanguard newspaper had (81%), while The Nation had (19%) articles. The unit of analysis that formed the thematic analysis includes the frame of reportage such as encouraging japa, discouraging japa, pressure or worries of japa syndrome on society, issues around japa to educate or inform the public, the neutrality of stories on japa syndrome and the prominence of the stories in the articles. The period examined covered January to December, 2023.

The themes for the study were generated based on the research objectives. In other words, the research approach is deductive as it draws themes’ perspectives from the study objectives. To apply these themes, the 149 online articles relating to the subject matter: Japa stories were thoroughly read and cross-examined for two months along with a co-researcher to determine the validity and reliability of the research instrument: coding guide and coding sheet. Consequently, an inter-coder reliability test was conducted and yielded 78% respectively. More so, to further expand the scope of the analysis, themes were broken down to generate sub-themes that explain the ideas within the themes for analysis. These themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 1 showing the number of articles (n) and percentage (%) each of these articles takes in the total number of reports extracted online to establish the frequency of

coverage of “Japa” in the newspapers. In addition, these articles were also coded to identify the primary source of information journalists used in writing and presenting their reports on the Japa syndrome.

Furthermore, the type of article: straight news, feature, editorial, opinion, and commentary was used to establish the nature of reportage to further capture the place Japa syndrome occupies in the heart of the media. More so, the issues confronting those who have migrated (Japa) from Nigeria to other countries were extracted from the articles to address research question three. This is to establish the fact that those who have gone to reside in other countries also face different challenges. This was done by establishing themes as challenges emanating from government, and personal challenges resulting from those emerging from the government.

Results

In the case of analysing the texts, of the 162 articles found on the websites of both newspapers: 129 were from the Vanguard and 33 were from The Nation, 13 were deleted because they did not capture what the study focused on. Therefore, a total of 149 of the articles were analysed where Vanguard had 81% articles, and The Nation had 19%. This shows that the majority of the articles analysed emanated from the Vanguard newspaper. What this implies is that in the coverage of Japa syndrome which has continued to bother the nation’s growth, unlike The Nation newspaper whose focus is based on freedom, justice, and market economy, Vanguard newspaper has done great work by living to its tenets of “serving the people through an unflinching commitment to free enterprise, rule of law and good governance in the interest of national growth. This is therefore a lacuna to be further interrogated by other studies vis-a-vis national issues and the media industries.

Table 1: Thematic Analysis of the Frames Used

Thematic Analysis of The Frames Used			
Themes	Sub-Themes	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Frames	Articles that encourage Japa	24	16%
	Articles that discourage Japa	60	40%
	Articles revealing the pressure or worries Japa syndrome has put on society	36	24%
	Articles that explain in detail issues around Japa to educate or inform the public: Neutral	29	20%
Total		149	100%

Table 1 above reveals the frequency distribution of themes and sub-themes relating to how Vanguard and The Nation newspapers framed the Japa phenomenon and also provides the different sources of the news events making the articles in both newspapers vis-a-vis the research question one. In this regard, for Table 1 of the 149 articles studied within the period of one year: 2023 covered for this research, 16% of the articles encouraged Japa amongst Nigerian youths, and

40% discouraged this idea of migrating from the country. Meanwhile, 24% of them revealed the pressure or worries Japa has put on society vis-à-vis the various problems confronting different sectors of the country. Also, 20% of these articles were neutral in the sense that these specific articles neither encouraged nor discouraged the migration of youths from Nigeria but rather gave detailed information surrounding Japa through educative and informative writings.

Table 2: Thematic Analysis of Source of Stories

Thematic Analysis of Source of Stories		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Sources	Nigerian Government: Fed, State, LGA, Govt. Agencies	31	21
	Nigeria Organisation: Media, NGOs, Industries	32	22
	Professional Individuals: Lawyers, Health workers, Lecturers, Skilled Workers	42	28
	National Leader: Politicians, Opinion Leaders, Religious Leaders	18	12
	International Government: The government of other countries, such as the government of Agencies	20	13
	International Organisation: WHO, UN, EU, Other groups	6	4
	Total	149	100

To further expand the thematic frames used in the reportage, the source of the reports was examined to ascertain the approach given to Japa reports. Therefore, Table 2 shows the sources used in generating the news relating to “Japa”. These sources range from the Nigerian government which includes federal, state, local, and all government agencies; Nigeria organisations such as media, non-governmental organisations, industries, and other types of groups within Nigeria; professional individuals which include lawyers, health workers, lecturers, skilled workers etc.; national leaders such as politicians, opinion leaders, and religious leaders; international government such as the government of other countries, and their various agencies; international organisations such as the World Health

Organisation, United Nations, European Union, and other groups independent of government interference. To this end, of the 149 articles analysed 21% of the entire articles from both Vanguard and The Nation newspapers were sourced from the Nigerian government, 22% were generated from organisations within Nigeria, and 28% were sourced from professional individuals. Also, 12% of the articles emanated from national leaders, 13% from the international government, and 4% emerged from international organisations. What this implies is that the sources for Japa reports in the two newspapers emerged from professional individuals such as lawyers, health workers, lecturers, skilled workers, and other professional individuals in one sector or the other within the country.

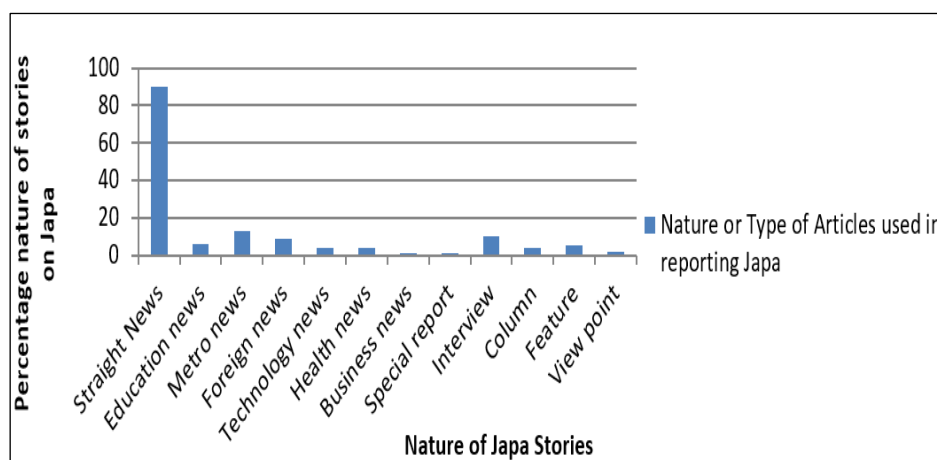


Figure 1: Frequency Distribution of Nature or Type of Articles used in Reporting Japa Issue

Considering Figure 1 above, it is revealed that out of a total number of 149 articles being analysed, the majority of the articles in the newspapers: Vanguard and The Nation reported the Japa phenomenon majorly in straight news with a total of 60% of the entire articles, followed by metro news 8%, interview 7%, foreign new 6%,

education news 4%, feature 3%, while column had 3%, technology new 3%, health news 3%, a viewpoint also had 1%, and special report 1%, business news 1%. More so, prominence was also determined by observing where the word “Japa” was placed in the article either in the headline or within the body of the article.

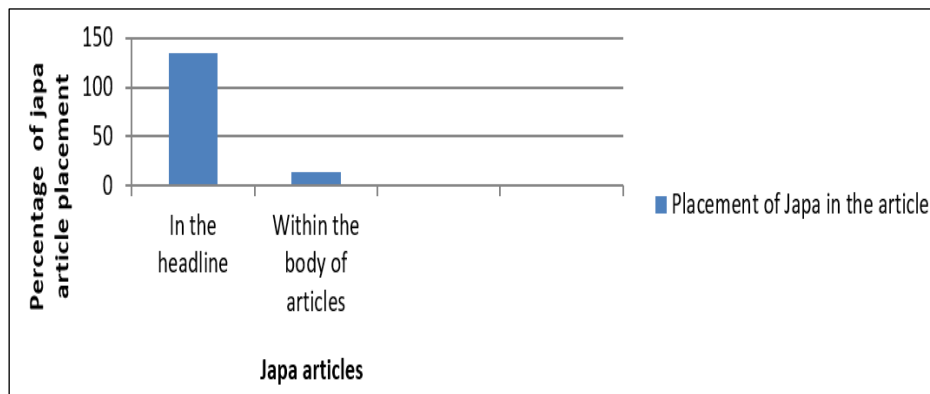


Figure 2: Placement of the Word “Japa” within the Article

Sequel to Figure 2, the use of the word “Japa” appeared in the headlines of 91% of articles, while 9% of the articles paced the word within the body of the text. This reveals that the word “Japa” was mostly used in the headlines of most of the articles analysed. Examining the various challenges facing Nigerians in the diaspora, these challenges were thematically classified as government-related challenges, personally-related challenges, and general-related challenges. In this regard, clear observation of the contents within the 149 articles being analysed reveals that the government-related challenges confronting Nigerians in the diaspora range from the government creating fewer working hours, increased proof of funds for those aspiring to immigrate, imprisonment for drug-related matters, government crackdown of illegal migrants, the mounting pressure of immigration policies by the government.

Discussion

Consequent to Tables 1 and 2, the study shows that the most used frame in reporting Japa syndrome is that which discouraged the migration: “Japa” of youths from Nigeria to other nations of the world. From these findings, it is clear that the Japa syndrome is a serious problem in Nigerian society and has continued to create problems in various sectors such as health, education, technology, business organisations, telecommunication, and even skilled professionals. This sector was highly referred to in many of the articles. The problems

many of these sectors are faced with range from inadequate medical professionals due to the migration of many health workers such as doctors, and nurses (33). Even graduates within the health sector are not left behind the Japa mentality as many of them often leave the country immediately after graduation and the scenario has affected the health sector (34, 35).

In the education sector, lecturers are leaving the country’s higher learning institutions in search of greener pastures thereby leaving the sector with few research-driven and capable lecturers who would help train students who are research-driven for national growth in science and technology (36). This condition does not also leave behind prospective students who prefer to study abroad considering the benefits such as a little time to work and earn money and other opportunities that come with studying abroad. Meanwhile, some of the problems facing the education sector include inadequate wages, late payment of salary, enumerations, and other benefits, and inadequate teaching materials and equipment most of which often lead to prolonged strike actions by the academic and non-academic staff unions across institutions (15). This situation is the reflection of the “pressure frame” that showed how the Japa syndrome has put so much worry on society through the various problems it has created in many sectors. The study replicates the fact that migration is certain as a result of economic purposes (4). This perspective was further

established that macro, meso, and micro are usually responsible for peoples' migration from their homeland to another country (13).

The second research question raised for this study sought to examine the prominence, in other words, the importance given to reporting the Japa phenomenon. This was determined by observing the nature or type of article a story relating to Japa was written. In this context, the theme: nature, or type of report was categorised using the following sub-themes: straight news, educational news, metro news, foreign news, Technology news, health news, business news, special report, interview, column, feature, and viewpoint. The study buttressed the framing theory which explains that human beings make use of cognitive skills in making sense of our daily lives which affects our decisions. Most of the Japa stories and decisions came from professional sources like lawyers, health workers, lecturers, skilled workers, media, non-governmental organisations, industries, federal, state, local government workers, and government agencies among others. The stories from these sources shaped the decisions of the migrants. The stories that the media reported shaped and set agenda for the migrants on what to think about as a result of the agenda-setting media theory. The way the media reported the opportunities in foreign countries goes a long way in shaping the decisions of young Nigerians. The prominence given to migration stories and greener pastures in foreign countries also contributes to youth migration in the country. More so, for the personally related challenges, Nigerians in the diaspora are confronted with such problems such as issues of improper or incomplete documentation, migrants being stranded abroad, corruption, financial problems, homelessness or accommodation problems, irregular migration problems, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, employer maltreatment, child exploitation, medical risk, organ harvesting, social and financial risks, death, joblessness and destitution, depression and unhappiness, increase in the cost of living and accommodation, risk of life during travelling, high cost of tuition, limited working hour, humiliation and human devaluation. Also, migrants face generally related challenges such as government and citizen fear of population increase caused by migrants, global economic downturn,

and the fear of foreign dominance by indigenous citizens.

In line with these problems as reflected in many of the articles analysed, and investigating the plights of Nigerians living abroad on the various challenges confronting them, it has been established that Nigerians face problems such as apathetic attitude towards the Nigerian embassy in other nations, lack of part-time job opportunities, high exchange rates, and visa issues (37). Previous studies also showed that Nigerians who live abroad have continued to contribute to the growth of Nigeria's economy through the money they invest in the country from abroad (38). However, despite their efforts, they are still confronted with problems such as cultural challenges, discrimination and racism, health and health care, and financial constraints (39).

Conclusion

The focus of this study is to contextually analyse the themes prominent in the newspapers' reports on Nigerian youth migration to other nations in search of a better life which is today referred to as the Japa syndrome across all cultures, tribes, and schools of thought. Sequel to an investigation, the study was able to show that even though the usage of Japa as a conceptual phrase for the act of migration from Nigeria to other nations evolved in late 2022. Nonetheless, the term became a national slang when it started featuring in the media. This speaks of the media status conferral theory which explains that the consistent reportage of a phenomenon gives such an issue or person a sense of recognition in society (40). Resulting from finding, the Nigerian media can be adjudged to have contributed greatly by not only informing the public about the Japa phenomenon but also continuing to educate the nation on the issue of youth migration from Nigeria.

The Nigerian news institutions are playing a vital role in fulfilling their social responsibility functions to nation-building through their coverage of Japa syndrome. Many of these articles did not only capture the phenomenon as a mere report but also exposed the problems Japa has caused the country and the dangers ahead if governments and other stakeholders are not working to arrest the situation. In addition, many of these reports also provided solutions such as the provision of jobs, prompt payment and increase in workers' salaries, discouraging corruption

amongst the political and elite class, and provision of social amenities such as stable power supply, good roads, security of life and properties to discourage youth migration from the country. Based on the good effort displayed by the Nigerian newspaper in reporting the Japa syndrome, it is recommended that the Nigerian media should continue in this great effort as this will continue to grow the nation in all spheres of national development. However, there is a need for the media to do more in the area of editorial on the issue of Japa. This recommendation is a result of the fact that of the whole 149 articles analysed no one editorial article was found in the whole month of 2023. Meanwhile, the importance of editorial to agenda-building and agenda-setting cannot be jettisoned in such issues relating to national development in all ramifications (41). The practical implication is that this study will help policymakers design policies that will encourage the youth to have a positive mindset about their countries. At the same time, media organisations will equally continue to put the government on its toes to make life better for the Nigerians.

Abbreviation

Nil.

Acknowledgment

All authors whose works were cited are duly listed in the references.

Author Contributions

All the authors contributed equally.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest among the authors.

Ethics Approval

Not applicable.

Funding

The study is funded by the authors.

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