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## Assessing the effect of international migration on the livelihood of the Bini people of Edo State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study investigates the impact of international migration on the Bini people of Edo State, Nigeria who are renowned for their rich cultural heritage, arts and historical migration patterns. The primary objective is assessing how international migration affects their economic and social life. This study posits that migration is primarily motivated by the search for better employment opportunities with individuals making well-considered decisions to enhance their economic prospects using neoclassical theory. Furthermore, the new economic migration theory is applied to examine the broader impacts of migration on the Bini community's lifestyle in Edo South. Data for this research were gathered through focused group interviews and structured questionnaires. A linear regression analysis was conducted to assess the role of remittances in the community's economic dynamics. The analysis indicates that remittances are crucial in shaping the Bini people's economic activities. It also suggests that these remittances should be strategically invested in business ventures to maximise the benefits. This study concludes that international migration plays a significant role in improving the livelihood of the Bini people enhancing their economic stability and growth. The findings highlight the need to channel remittances effectively into productive investments to benefit the community. The Bini people can better leverage the economic advantages provided by international migration leading to sustained community development and economic resilience by strategically investing in business ventures.

**Keywords:** Bini people, Edo State, International migration, Livelihood, Neoclassical theory migration theory, Remittances, Economic effect.

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**Transparency:** The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** The Ethical Committee of the Covenant University, Nigeria has granted approval for this study on 11 April 2023 (Ref. No. NHREC/CU-HREC/11/04/2023).

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## 1. Introduction

International migration is a significant source of discussion globally driven by economic downturns and armed conflicts. Millions of migrants seek better opportunities in diverse countries affecting their households and communities. This migration is associated with global transformation processes, affecting migrants, their households and communities pushing them to seek more significant opportunities [1, 2]. Migrants are primarily driven by financial crises and displacements caused by natural disasters like war, civil unrest and underdevelopment. They seek education, skills and social capital with potential economic development and emancipation benefits. However, migration presents challenges for migrants, their families and communities at the destination and origin [3-5].

Nigeria has experienced increased international migration in the 21st century. According to Ango et al. [6], this increase in international migration is due to poverty, civil unrest, environmental degradation and a lack of sustainable livelihoods. The desire to improve the socio-economic security of one's family leads to migration to Europe and other countries even at the sacrifice of family members. One of the major hubs for international migration in Nigeria is Edo State acknowledged for its high rate of youth emigration considerably through the desert to Libya [7, 8]. International migration appears to be the norm in Edo State particularly among the Bini people.

This migration pattern was supported by networks established over four decades ago. It began with a group of seasonal agricultural migrants heading to Europe but has since evolved into a business of irregular migration run by traffickers in Edo State. Young people's failure to achieve the ideal lifestyle in Edo, social media influence and varied socio-cultural influences contribute to migration [9]. According to Kazeem [10] and also noted by the Nigeria Human Trafficking Factsheet [11], economic security for one's family is a primary motive for overseas migration in Edo State. According to statistics, 94 per cent of all trafficked women to Europe came from Edo State with Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria and accounting for seven out of every ten. Again, poverty is the primary cause of these incidents in Benin City [9, 12].

This study focuses on the Bini people of Edo State because they constitute one of the leading centres for migration and remittances in Edo State and Nigeria [13]. The Nigerian Bureau of Statistics [14] reported that Edo State has the country's highest international migration rate with Benin City as its epicenter. According to the International Organisation for Migration, Edo State is a common starting point for migrants leaving Nigeria particularly young people. In fact, about 37% of migrants returning from Nigeria come from Benin City, Edo State under joint initiatives of the European Union and IOM [15]. According to SEEFAR [16], 62% of Nigerians interviewed en route to Europe were from Edo State where migration has been prevalent for decades. Beber and Scacco [17] estimated that in Edo State, one out of every four homes had a family member who had left Nigeria in an attempt to reach Europe.

While studies exist on the socio-economic effect of international migration on Edo State [8, 18-20], less has been written about the effect of international migration on the livelihood of the Bini people of Edo State creating a gap that this study is addressing. This study concentrated on the effect that international migration has and continues to have on the well-being of Edo State's Bini community. It aims to examine the effect of transnational migration on people's livelihoods in their place of origin. The study asked the following: What effects does international migration have on the livelihood of the Bini people of Edo State? It addresses the following hypothesis: International migration has no significant effect on the livelihood of the Bini people of Edo State, Nigeria. This study is structured into an abstract, introduction, literature review, international migration and livelihood, theoretical framework, research methods, ethical consideration, results, discussion of findings and conclusion. This study will contribute to a broader debate in migrants' home countries about the benefits, or otherwise, of international migration.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. International Migration

International migration is defined by the International Organisation for Migration [21] as the movement of people across national borders or within a country's borders. It entails people moving across short or long geographical distances to achieve various goals such as reuniting family units, meeting or fulfilling economic goals, educational pursuits or other interests. However, it differs from the way Boucher and Gest [22] see it; in their view, international migration can be described in three ways, namely: a change in residence, a change in job and a change in social ties. It should cover internal migration and the definition offered by Boucher and Gest [22] should precisely describe the various changes in residence. Social relationships or employment changes might occur right where you are, so they do not necessarily require moving far away or across the border.

In contrast, Sundari [23] describes it in psychological terms as being primarily a movement of people from one place or location to another that is not casual like a visit or tour. Furthermore, Sundari asserted that migration is not a preventive move but an instinct for survival in search of better prospects. In this definition, Sundari [23] merged the earlier stated definitions by the International Organisation for Migration [21] and Boucher and Gest [22] by elaborating that it is not just about moving away from one location but added that it is done in instinct in search of better living conditions and improvement of one's general well-being and not just an extended visit or tour away from home.

Nevertheless, Lee [24] defined migration as changing one's residence in a semi-permanent or permanent manner regardless of whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary without any restriction on distance and with no distinction between migrations within and between countries. He posited that migration emanates from calculations done by an individual based on beneficial factors at the destination and gloomy projections at the origin. Lee [24] discussed the concept of intervening opportunities between origin and destination places. According to him, the factors that influence migration are not fundamental at origin and destination as much as personal contacts and sources of information about the destination highly influence the perception of migration. Lee [24] encapsulates a seemingly more elaborate notion of

migration, reflecting local and international migration. It highlights the migration-initiating process described as the result of individual calculations on the profitability of such a journey. It also mentions that factors that appear terrible at the place of origin and good at the place of destination may turn out to be a mirage. According to [Attoh \[25\]](#) international migration is a complex issue influenced by numerous variables and there are efforts to understand better the factors influencing the process. Changes in the geographic distribution of employment, demographic imbalances and country actions and policies have significantly impacted long-distance migration. From [Attoh \[25\]](#) standpoint, migration is not just about moving. It is more complex than that and involves various factors but it is ultimately a function of states' actions and policies in determining international migration.

In a nutshell, international migration is the movement of people across international borders to enhance or satisfy a need, yearning or aspiration [\[26\]](#). It has been a complex phenomenon throughout human history with significant consequences for migrants and the cultures they leave and rejoin. International migration is not a new global phenomenon despite widespread acceptance [\[27\]](#). Both forced and voluntary international migration have long been essential and ongoing components of demographic change and mankind [\[28\]](#). However, the extent of international migration, its sources, causes and consequences have recently changed dramatically [\[29\]](#). International migration has recently undergone dramatic transformations, transforming human mobility into a major worldwide issue with many viewing it as the defining issue of the twenty-first century. International migration has impacted every major world region's social, political, cultural and economic development. Its impacts have resulted in public debate, legislation, government interventions, interstate disputes, international accords and various responses from humanitarian and human rights organisations [\[30\]](#). The ongoing expansion of the international migratory population was only slowed in 2020 by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which caused severe disruptions in human movement, including a near-halt to transnational migration. According to the United Nations Population Division, the number of international migrants decreased by about 2 million in mid-2020 [\[31\]](#).

International migration involves the sending, source or origin countries and the receiving or destination countries. However, a third state may appear as the transit state depending on the route or the migrant. Migration is considered based on various factors including economic concerns, security, living standards or for better welfare and healthcare system [\[32\]](#). International migration has repeatedly been one of the significant strategies for survival adopted by people in the face of natural or human-induced disasters either on a temporary or permanent basis. It is a decision that impacts the welfare of the household, the home community and the whole economy in various ways [\[33\]](#). International migration heightens hope and deepens fears; those who migrate often represent a beacon of hope for a better tomorrow. It can be precarious as many people die annually crossing borders [\[33\]](#).

According to [McAuliffe and Ruhs \[34\]](#) international migration is a feature of globalization since it increases the possibilities of interstate movement or movement beyond national boundaries either by regular or irregular means. It encompasses various actions involving people in an age of entrenched globalization. It deals with geopolitics, cultural exchange, and trade providing enormous opportunities for businesses, communities and states to benefit. The international migration has become more diverse as migrants have progressively travelled longer distances. Consequently, they have extended their places of origin and destination, boosting the notion that migration is becoming more global. [Li and Samini \[35\]](#) maintained that all countries are affected by international migration flows with some countries serving as source countries or transit or destination countries for migrants. Sub-Saharan Africa is a significant hub of emigration globally. This situation implies the possibility of simultaneously increasing the acute effects of migration on different nations. International migration is a powerful expression of people's desire to improve their circumstances in an unequal world whether in terms of wages, opportunities, safety, lifestyles, health or education [\[36\]](#). According to the [World Social Report \[36\]](#), 280.6 million people lived outside their origins in 2020.

International migration often occurs at different levels from inter-regional (between nations on a continent) to migration between continents. The global migration process starts when people leave their home countries and cross borders to another either for safety abroad (constrained migration) for better financial opportunities [\[37, 38\]](#). However, these choices are not the only determinants of international migration. Living conditions at home, income openings abroad, and the immigration arrangements of potential destinations all influence whether people choose to emigrate and where they go [\[39\]](#). Individuals and family members are often burdened with relocating expenses and migrants must respond by sharing their future higher wages abroad with relatives back home.

The number of people moving worldwide is at its highest level ever with millions (of all sexes and ages) relocating across international borders and many more awaiting their turn. However, some are unable to do so due to a lack of resources. Human mobility has evolved into a vast global problem, some even dubbed the greatest challenge of the twenty-first century due to the dramatic changes in global migration in recent years [\[2, 40\]](#). Migrants do not move across the world uniformly. Most people choose high-income countries for economic, political and social stability. In terms of numbers, international migrants are still a tiny minority as their share has never exceeded 3.5 per cent of the world population over the last 50 years [\[41\]](#). According to the [International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) \[42\]](#) number of people residing outside their countries of birth grew from 191 million in 2005 to 220 million in 2010.

According to the [United Nations \(UN\) \[4\]](#) report, approximately 73% of all migrants come from developing countries making them the destination of the highest number of immigrants. The report mentioned that over half of these migrants (about 56%) live in developed countries constituting 12% of the population. Another 44% of international migrants are in developing countries making up about 2% of the population. [International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) \[42\]](#) noted that Europe and Asia host about 87 and 86 million migrants making up 61% of the global international migration stock. North America hosts 59 million international migrants or 21% of the global international migration stock; Africa hosts 9%, the Caribbean and Latin America at 5%, and Oceania at 3%.

International migrants come from a diverse array of sending countries. In 2019, the top ten sending countries were responsible for just over one-third of all international migrants. India had the highest number of international migrants, with 18 million followed by Mexico with 12 million, China with 11 million, Russia with 10 million and Syria with 8.2 million [41]. According to Sasu [43] Nigeria has Africa's ninth-highest emigration rate with a conservative estimate of 1,670,455. However, determining the overall number of emigrants from most countries is difficult because there are no records of individuals who went illegally or travelled for reasons other than migration but chose not to return to their homes [44]. The number of international migrants has increased significantly with 169 million workers in 2019 accounting for nearly 5% of the global workforce. These workers are mostly in low-skilled industries with women comprising nearly 42% of all workers. The rapid growth of international migration has led to a significant increase in remittances sent home by migrants, with annual remittances reaching over 700 billion dollars in 2019.

Additionally, foreign education by international students contributes significantly to the international migrant stock, with the top five destinations being the US, Australia, the UK, Germany and Russia [45-47]. The global refugee crisis has led to a surge in international migration with United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) predictions for 2022 showing 31 million refugees and asylum seekers worldwide. This includes 11.8 million Ukrainians forced to evacuate causing one of the largest mass displacements since WWII [48, 49].

The 2019 coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan, China halted international migration and led to a global health crisis leading to countries like the US restricting travel to protect workers' jobs and economic well-being. This resulted in a sharp decline in migrant remittances affecting food security and poverty levels in migrant-sending states where a significant proportion of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) relies on migrant remittances [46, 50-52].

## *2.2. International Migration and Livelihood*

International migration and livelihoods refer to the relationship between migration and how individuals and households generate income and sustain their lives. The effects of migration on livelihoods can range from positive to negative depending on various factors such as the reasons for migration, the destination and the skills and resources of the migrants. As a result of migration, new income-generating opportunities, improved educational and healthcare opportunities, and improved living conditions can be realized. Nevertheless, it can also result in economic vulnerability, social exclusion and exploitation [53].

The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration states that migration is often motivated by a desire to improve one's standard of living Cohen [54]. Cohen [54] also points out that migration can be a strategy for coping with various problems, such as environmental degradation, political instability, economic hardship, and social discrimination. Cohen [54] argues that the Encyclopedia mentions that "livelihoods encompass not only income but also social relationships, cultural identity and the ability to access resources." According to Yendaw et al. [55] migration can be a livelihood strategy to generate income or access resources unavailable in one's home area. They assert that migration is not just a one-time decision but rather a process characterized by various stages of mobility and immobility.

Furthermore, Zaami [56] points out that migration is a vital livelihood strategy in West Africa and can provide opportunities for diversifying revenue sources acquiring new skills and gaining access to social networks. However, they also note that migration can result in social dislocation, family separation and exploitation. Griffith et al. [57] suggest that several factors contribute to migration such as economic opportunities, political instability, environmental degradation, and social networks. They conclude that each of these factors has an impact on migration. Their view is that migration can positively or negatively impact livelihoods depending on the circumstances under which they occur and whether the migration is beneficial or detrimental.

In terms of food production and agriculture, for example, migration results in the absence of individuals primarily young males but occasionally women alone nuclear or extended families or entire households with ramifications for agricultural and livelihood activities. The lack of young males likely responsible for critical industrial elements and animal husbandry decreases available labour. It makes food and livelihood scarce and expensive until migrants contribute by sending remittances and machinery to help with agriculture and food production. However, the money and agricultural goods brought by migrants can help to alleviate the labour shortage [58]. Individuals and households have long relied on mobility to improve living conditions [59]. The adoption of international migration as a source of livelihood has gained more visibility and significance in the twenty-first century as a result of the global economic meltdown, an escalated crisis in the Middle East, poverty and a lack of opportunities in many countries, a slow pace of development, natural disasters and other phenomena that have led to people choosing relocation as a source and strategy of livelihood [59].

International migration in developing nations is used to diversify household income sources while helping to reduce poverty, increase remittances, promote economic development and enhance living conditions. However, it comes at a cost that inhibits impoverished people's capacity to use migration to alleviate poverty [59, 60]. International migration viewed through the lens of livelihood reveals the complexity of people's lives, involving human, social, financial, natural, and physical capital. It enhances these livelihoods through monetary and in-kind remittances, educational support, and investment, promoting migrants' social status and economic well-being [57]. International migration is not a chance occurrence. It is a well-thought-out and planned process to generate a sustainable livelihood and alleviate economic challenges such as unemployment in migrants' home countries [61]. In Nigeria, for example, the unemployment rate is 40.6 percent in 2023 and is expected to climb to 43.9 percent in 2024 [62] prompting many to contemplate migration as a potential source of income. Livelihood is more than just income. It also includes access to and benefits from public services such as education, health, water supply and transportation [61].



International migration promotes a remittance-based economy in addition to the loss of human capital, brain drain, and scarcity of educated workers in industries like healthcare and education. Many migrants send money home to help support their families and invest in local companies. This infusion of money stimulates the local economy and raises the standard of living for many households. However, it can lead to over-reliance on remittances and decrease the interest of people left at home in labour [63]. Migration and livelihoods are complex and linked phenomena that require careful examination of their numerous elements. Migration can give chances for revenue production, resource access and lifestyle diversification but it can also lead to economic vulnerability and social marginalization [64].

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### *3.1. Neo-Classical Theory*

The neo-classical theory is considered one of the oldest and most general theories of international migration. It was initially advanced to explain labour migration in economic evolution [65]. The main thrust of the neo-classical theory is that geographic variations in demand and supply for labour focus on the differential in wages and employment conditions between nations leading to international migration. Ravenstein [66] and Ravenstein [67] laid the foundations for neoclassical theories by explaining that the main driver of migration is economic development. He opined that labour moves from redundant areas to locations with lab deficiencies [68].

However, the theory was propounded by Sjaastad [69] and notably championed by scholars like Todaro [70], Harris and Todaro [71] and De Haas [72]. This theory emphasises the labour market dimension of migration. It relates migration-induced population changes to the origin and destination countries' relative wage and employment conditions. It simply implies that the primary cause of migration is variance in wages and access to jobs [73, 74]. According to macro-level neoclassical economic theory, the fundamental driver of migration is the disparity in earnings between countries. It precisely forecasts that the degree of global inequality among countries is strongly and directly correlated with the amount of transnational movement. Neoclassical economic theory (macro) pointed to the difference in wages between countries as the main reason for migration. It provides a precise prediction that the volume of transnational movement is significantly and directly related to the extent of international inequality across countries. According to neoclassical economic theory, the Bini people migrate to areas with better opportunities, higher living standards, and higher pay primarily due to wage differences between countries. This predicts a high level of transnational movement.

The neoclassical (micro) theory went further to illuminate the decision-making process. It defined the individual immigrant as accountable for choosing to migrate after carefully assessing the benefits and drawbacks of such movement and the options accessible at home and the destination. It makes sense to estimate the advantages of a successful migration, compare the weaknesses of remaining and also take into account the risks of travel such as the loss of one's current source of support, deportation, accidents, or even one's death as well as the decline of friendships and relationships with family and friends. Migrants search for better possibilities in a foreign nation based on these tactical decisions. The theory applies to international migration among the Bini people of Edo State in various ways. The first reason for migration from Benin was to work and earn income. As enunciated by the theories, the Bini people moved to locations where opportunities to earn more income abound and where labour is most required and duly appreciated. The decisions to migrate are made by individuals involved or by a family. The latter occurs more among the Bini people who trade family properties such as plots of land, houses and household items to finance or send a family abroad. The Bini people even obtain loans to prosecute migration which requires remittances back home once the migrating family member settles appropriately in his destination. In many instances, international migration encourages a remittance-based economy in addition to the loss of human capital, brain drain, and scarcity of educated workers in industries like healthcare and education. After settling into their new life in the destination country, the immigrant is expected to support the family back home and other migrants, forming and maintaining a migratory chain.

### **4. Research Methods**

#### *4.1. Research Design*

This study employs a cross-sectional survey research design which allows for the collection of data at a single point in time from a diverse sample of individuals. This design captures information across various characteristics and demographics, known as variables, including age, gender, income, education, and geographical location. This study provides a snapshot of the population's attributes and their relationships at the time of data collection by examining these variables [75, 76]. The design is used because it aids the researcher in understanding the subject matter and exploring the depth, richness and complexities inherent in the study. The findings help remove assumptions and replace them with actual data on the specific subject matter. This understanding is obtained by collecting information from the study population familiar with the subject matter, in this case, the Bini households, without manipulating the variables.

#### *4.2. Population*

The population of the study comprises all the local government areas in the Edo South Senatorial District where the Bini people are located. It is also the place of origin for the Bini people. Edo South senatorial district comprises seven local government areas with a cumulative population of 1,686,041 where the Bini people are more than 90% natives or indigenes. These seven local government areas were chosen because they are the places of origin for the Bini people. The local government areas are as follows: Egor (340,287), Ovia North East (155,344), Ovia South West (138,072), Uhunmwonde (121,749), Orhionmwon (183,994), Oredo (374,515), and Ikpoba-Okha (372,080) [77, 78].

#### 4.3. Sampling Size of Participants

The sampling size for this study is the households of migrants and returnee migrants among the Bini in the seven local government areas of the Edo South senatorial district of Edo State. The Slovin [79] sample size calculation formula is employed to determine the sample size of this study. This formula is used in research when it is impossible to sample an entire population even though it is finite. It allows the researcher to sample the population with the desired degree of accuracy. A smaller sample size out of 1,686,041 is required for workability and Slovin provides the formula represented as follows:

$$n = N/(1+Ne^2)$$

Where

n = Sample size (at a 95% confidence level).

N = Total population.

e = Error margin/margin of error.

The sample size will be calculated as follows: a confidence level of 95% and a 5% error margin and the total population in the seven local government areas of Edo South senatorial district where the Bini people are located (1,686,041).

$$n = 1686041/(1+1686041*0.05^2), n = 1686041/(1 + 1686041 * 0.0025), n = 1686041/(1+4215.1), n = 1686041/4216.1$$
$$n = 399.90 \text{ or approximately } 400$$

From this formula, the sampling size will be 400.

#### 4.4. Sampling Technique

This study adopted the following sampling technique:

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method taken from a conveniently available pool of respondents or a group of people easy to contact or reach. This non-probability sampling technique distributed the structured questionnaire to population members.

#### 4.5. Data Collection

This study uses a mixed data collection method combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Primary data was collected through focus group discussions and questionnaires while secondary data was sourced from various sources. The mixed-methods approach allows for easy comprehension of research problems and gives participants a voice in the findings. A 5-point Likert questionnaire was administered to the population for quantitative data to understand the context investigated through numbers and statistical analysis. Focus group discussions were conducted in seven local government areas to collect qualitative data. This approach ensures that the study's findings are based on participants' experiences and provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

#### 4.6. Data Collection Tool

This study used quantitative and qualitative data sources to collect information on international migration from the families of international migrants in Edo State's seven local government districts. A structured questionnaire was distributed to the families and homes of international migrants providing quantifiable data. The questionnaire included 30 questions divided into three sections: Section A contained demographic information while section B contained questions related to the research questions. The study used a 5-point Likert scale, with strongly agree (SA) = 5, agree (A) = 4, undecided (UD) = 3, disagree (D) = 2, and strongly disagree (SD) = 1. Questionnaire responses and focus group discussions were conducted in each of Edo State's seven local government areas where the Bini people are concentrated to collect qualitative data. Each group consisted of 5 to 7 participants.

#### 4.7. Data Analysis

The qualitative and quantitative data were evaluated and computed following the research purpose. A primary data check was performed on all copies of the returned questionnaire by sorting them to look for errors and deal with the data received for coding and evaluation. Data from the questionnaire were compiled, coded, and loaded into the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics V21.0) for analysis. The demographic data content of the respondents was presented using percentages and frequency, including gender, age, marital status, education, position held, and years of service in the company. The study's hypotheses were examined using simple linear regression analysis. Inferential statistical and correlational analysis was used to analyse the independent variable's effect on the dependent variable.

Linear regression was adopted to evaluate the relationship between the variables whether positive (+) or negative (-). The correlation coefficient estimated by the linear regression was used to determine the depth of the relationship between the two variables that comprise the study's hypotheses. This will aid in determining the strength of the relationship whether it is negligible (0.50-0.69), weak (0.10-0.29), moderate (0.300-0.49), substantial (0.50-0.69) or strong (0.70-1.00). Thematic analysis was used to analyse and transcribe the focus group discussion. Both quantitative and qualitative data were triangulated accordingly.

#### 4.8. Ethical Consideration

The Ethics Committee of Covenant University reviewed the research to ensure it adhered to ethical standards. This review confirmed that the study was conducted without causing risk or harm to either the researcher or the participants. The committee also verified that the researcher avoided deceptive practices and upheld the respondents' anonymity, privacy,

and confidentiality throughout the study. The researcher's Covenant Health Research Ethic Committee (CHREC) registration number is NHREC/CU-HREC/11/04/2023.

## 5. Results

The targeted respondents in this study are the Bini people of Edo State from the seven selected local government areas (LGA). More questionnaires were administered beyond the calculated sample size (401) to avoid less representation from any LGAs. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the response rate.

**Table 1.**  
Breakdown of response rate.

S/N	LGA	Copies administered	Copies used	% retrieved
1	Egor	80	73	91%
2	Ikpoba Okha	89	79	89%
3	Oredo	89	81	91%
4	Orhionmwon	44	42	95%
5	Ovia North East	37	35	95%
6	Ovia South East	33	31	94%
7	Uhunmwode	29	27	93%
	Total	401	368	92%

Table 1 reveals the breakdown of the response rate of the questionnaires administered in the seven local government areas. Most distributed questionnaires were retrieved successfully and used. The high number of questionnaires was retained due to the strategically consistent follow-up methods to ensure no questionnaire was left with any respondents.

### 5.1. Biodata of Respondents

This section shows the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents in this study. The responses were analysed and presented using frequency and simple percentages, as shown in Table 2. The respondents' biodata requested are sex, age, marital status, employment status and academic qualifications.

**Table 2.**  
Background information of respondents.

Variables	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	213	57.9
	Female	155	42.1
	Total	368	100.0
Age	30-39	171	46.5
	40-49	141	38.3
	50-59	51	13.9
	60 and above	5	1.4
	Total	368	100.0
Marital status	Single	155	42.1
	Married	188	51.1
	Divorced	19	5.2
	Separated	5	1.4
	Widowed	1	0.3
	Total	368	100.0
Employment status	Unemployed	63	17.1
	Self-employed	256	69.6
	Employed	47	12.8
	Retired	2	0.5
	Total	368	100.0
Academic qualification	No education	1	0.3
	Primary education	7	1.9
	Junior secondary school	28	7.6
	Senior secondary school	232	63.0
	Tertiary education	100	27.2
	Total	368	100.0
Relatives abroad?	Yes	368	100.0
	No	0	0
	Total	368	100.0
Relatives' countries	Italy	64	17%
	USA	62	17%

Variables	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Other European countries	76	21%
	France	19	5%
	Spain	27	7%
	Canada	28	8%
	Others	92	25%
	Total	368	100.0

Table 2 shows that 57.9% of the respondents are male. In comparison, 42.1% of the respondents are female indicating more male participants than female respondents. The age distribution of the respondents shows that most respondents (46.5%) are between 30 and 39 years old. Table 2 shows that 38.3% of the respondents are between 40 and 49, 13.9% are between 50 and 59 and the remaining 1.4% are above 60. Having the minimum age considered as 30 years of age is essential for the study to harvest facts and data from more mature and experienced Bini people.

Furthermore, the table shows that most of the survey respondents in the study representing 51.1% are married. Moreover, 42.1% of the respondents are single, 5.2% are divorced, 1.4% are separated, and the remaining 0.3% are widowed. The table also shows that most of the respondents representing 69.6% are self-employed. In comparison, 17.1% of the respondents are unemployed, 12.8% are employed and the remaining 0.5% are retired implying that most are self-employed. The predominant self-employment rate among the Bini people also speaks to their well-being status.

In addition, the table above also reveals the frequency distribution of the respondents' educational qualifications. Accordingly, it shows that most respondents representing 63% have at least a secondary school leaving certificate. In comparison, 0.3% of the respondents had no education, 1.9% had primary education, 7.6% had junior secondary school education, and 27.2% had tertiary education showing that most respondents had senior secondary school education. The demographic distribution of responses is due to the willingness and availability of respondents to partake in the survey. Finally, 99% of the respondents have relatives abroad with most of their relatives (17.0%) in Italy, 17% in the United States of America, more than 21% in European countries, 8.0% in Canada, 7% in Spain, 5% in France and 5% in Germany. Their other relatives are also in more than 25 countries in different parts of the world, many of whom have relatives in more than one or two countries at the time.

## 5.2. Test of Hypotheses

*H<sub>1</sub>: International migration has no significant implication on the livelihood of the Bini migrants' families.*

Table 3.

Test of hypothesis one.

Model summary						
Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square		Std. error of the estimate	
1	0.631 <sup>a</sup>	0.399	0.397		0.58575	
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	91.288	1	92.288	264.417	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	137.751	367	0.345		
	Total	229.039	368			
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.326	0.113		11.698	0.000
	International migration	0.627	0.039	0.631	16.261	0.000

Note: a. Dependent variable: Livelihood of bini migrants' families and community.

According to Table 3, the R is 0.631 indicating a substantial and positive relationship between the two key variables (international migration of Bini people and the livelihood of Bini migrants' families). The R-Square indicates that the model's overall performance in the table is satisfactory with an R-Square (R<sup>2</sup>) value of 0.399. As a result, the independent variable (Bini people's international migration) accounts for 39.9% of the dependent variable (the income of Bini migrants' families). As seen in the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) section above, the p-value is 0.000 with an accompanying F-value of 264.417. This implies that the test is significant as the p-value is less than the significance level (0.05). The result is statistically significant because the independent variable (international migration of the Bini people) predicts the dependent variable (livelihood of the Bini migrants' families).

The international migration of the Bini people significantly impacts the livelihood of their family and community with  $F(1,399)=264.417$  and  $p<0.05$ . The coefficient table further shows that each unit increase in Bini people's international migration correlates with increased security issues within the community. The p-value of 0.000 which is less than the 0.05 significance level indicates that the result is highly significant. Consequently, the findings suggest that international migration has a substantial and positive effect on the livelihood of the Bini communities in Edo State. Therefore, there is strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis and support the alternative hypothesis.



## 6. Discussion and Findings

The research aims to shed light on how international migration affects the way of life of the Bini people in Edo State. The livelihood activities include providing clean water, food, clothing, shelter, healthcare and financial stability. In addition, they earn money, develop human resources, encourage community growth, offer labour and break family ties [53, 59]. As illustrated in the study's research, linear regression was used to determine if international migration affects the livelihoods of Bini villages. The study found that international migration had a considerable impact on the livelihood of the Bini people of Edo ( $f(1,399) = 264.417$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This study demonstrates migration's positive and negative effects on communities supported by Griffith et al. [57] that migration can positively or negatively impact livelihoods.

According to Yeoh et al. [58] migration leads to the absence of individuals, primarily young males but occasionally women alone, nuclear or extended families or entire households which has implications for agriculture and livelihoods. The available labour pool is reduced without young males capable of handling food production and animal husbandry. As a result, food shortages tend to occur until migrants begin to assist by sending remittances and machinery to stimulate agriculture and food production. Furthermore, they believed that migrants could alleviate the labour shortage by providing money and agricultural goods which is supported by the findings of this study which found that 62.1 per cent of respondents affirmed that money and commodities sent from abroad were supportive and eased labour shortages. According to Tilahun and Holden [61] migration abroad also improves access to water supply (2023). They noted that having access to drinkable water is one aspect of livelihood. The results of this study refute this claim because 175 respondents or 43.7 percent of the participants think that the Bini migrants have not contributed in this area.

According to Liang and Song [80] migration causes brain drain and a labour shortage in various industries including healthcare and education. However, it also helps to reduce the country's high unemployment rate. According to KPMG (Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler), Nigeria's unemployment rate will be 40.6% by 2023. It is expected to climb to 43.9 percent by 2024, forcing many to view migration as the best livelihood option. This study finds that international migration helps to alleviate unemployment by allowing many unemployed youths and young adults to seek better prospects overseas and contribute to the livelihood of their families. This is consistent with the views of Dotsey [59] who believes that relocation allows households to diversify their sources of income, reduce unemployment and poverty and improve their financial ability. Money and clothing are also provided from abroad, giving people adequate shelter and accommodation [60]. According to Liang and Song [80], money provided by migrants increases dependency on remittances and diminishes the desire of people left behind to work. On the other hand, the study's results counter this viewpoint as 51.4% of respondents confirmed that it does not result in a loss or diminished interest in working among those left behind.

## 7. Conclusion

The desire for a better life motivates the Bini people of Edo State to travel abroad. Economic factors drive this migration which includes obtaining education, healthcare, jobs, and financial stability. Remittances allow the Bini people to access better healthcare, education and other requirements improving their quality of life. The diaspora facilitates these remittances which help the Bini people in Edo State establish jobs, lessen poverty, and experience general economic prosperity. Migrants and their families enjoy quality education, healthcare, and living circumstances while they earn money and gain knowledge. Remittances and investments from the diaspora benefit the livelihoods of the Bini people of Edo State by reducing poverty, providing jobs and leveraging technology, capital creation, and innovation resulting in economic growth.

It is crucial to emphasize that they do not exceed the benefits particularly given the current socio-economic realities in Edo State while there are certain negatives to foreign migration. Among these disadvantages are brain drain, a loss of human capital, poor security due to the absence of individuals travelling, racism and prejudice in the destination country and a loss of invested money for those who did not succeed or whose projections did not come true. Furthermore, international migration appears to be the best way for the Bini to improve and sustain their livelihoods. This study suggests that it benefits the Bini people. Furthermore, foreign migration improves the lives of the Bini people in Edo State. This study finds that the Bini people of Edo State see migration as a way to advance economically.

### 7.1. Implications

From the study, it is evident that international migration is more beneficial. Therefore, the migration channels should be fine-tuned to reduce irregular migration. The diaspora should also be encouraged to send more remittances through official channels so that the government and businesses can also benefit in more than one way as their families benefit.

### 7.2. Limitations

This study concentrated only on the Bini people of Edo State, Nigeria limiting it to just that ethnic group while other groupings exist in the state such as the Esans, Afemais, Okpameris, and others.

This study is also limited to the effect on the livelihood aspect of welfare whereas there are other areas such as the standard of living and personal and physical security among others.

### 7.3. Suggestions for Future Research

Further studies should be conducted on the effect of international migration on other groups both individually and collectively.

Moreover, studies on the security effect of international migration on the personal and physical security of migrants' families and communities left behind should be carried out.

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