

# “WHY ARE YOU STILL IN NIGERIA?”

## GENEALOGIES OF JAPA MOVEMENT AND FUTURE OF NIGERIAN RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM

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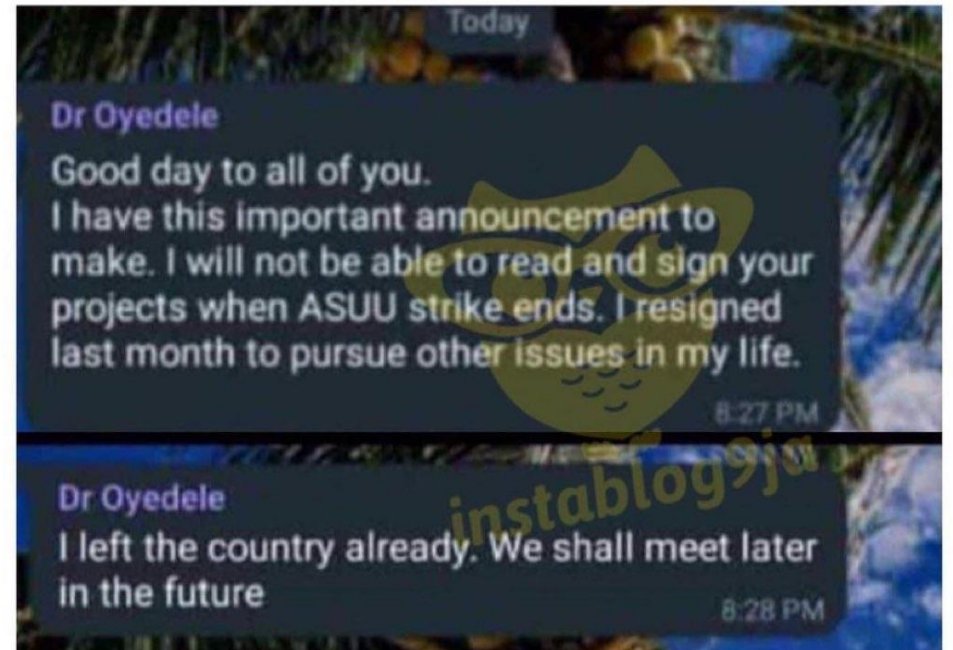
# Introduction

- What is this *japa movement* and how does one make sense of it the context of Nigerian academia?
- “We shall meet later in the *future*.” (Italicised for emphasis)



Muneer Yaqub 🇺🇸🇳🇮  
@elMunir5

”I've left the country already. We shall meet later in the future” — Project Supervisor



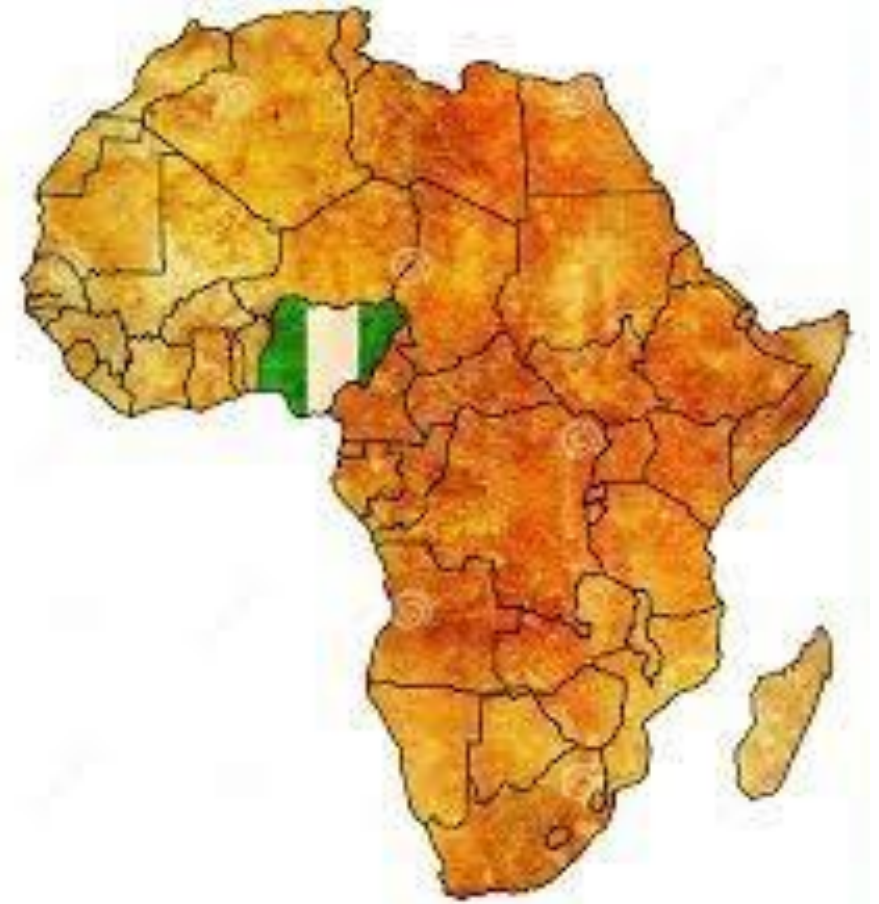
Viral screenshot of *japa* notice from lecturer to students



Fig 2: Memeified “Eniola Salami” character from *King of Boys: The Return of the King*

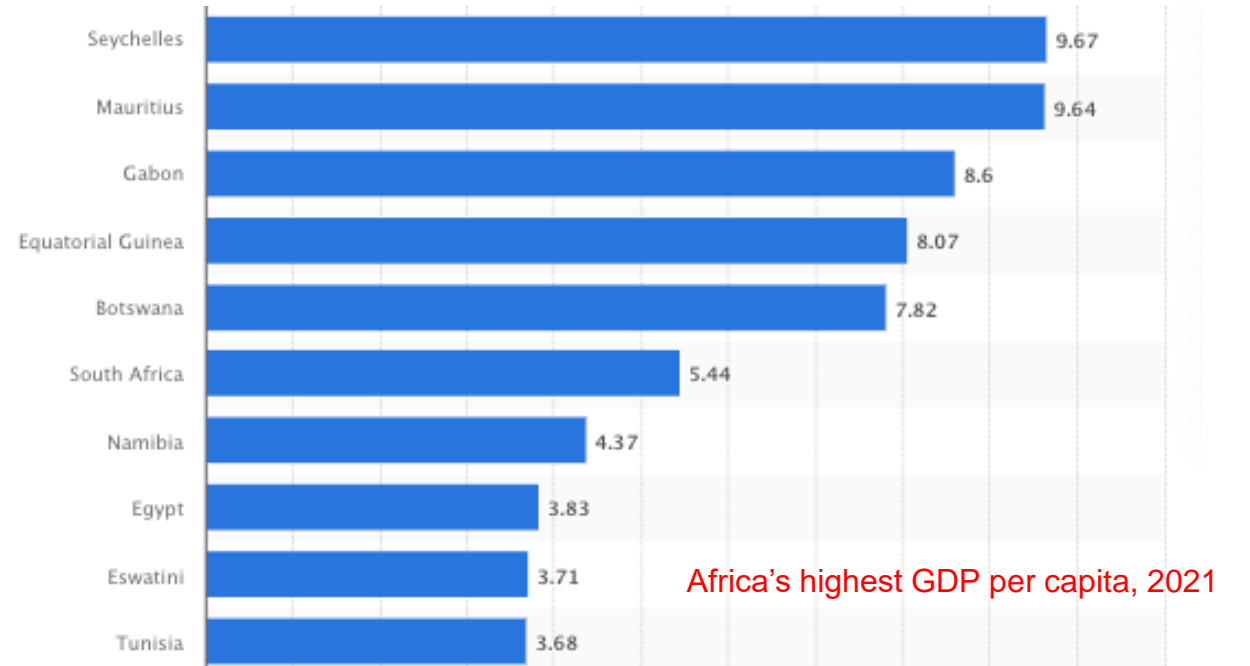
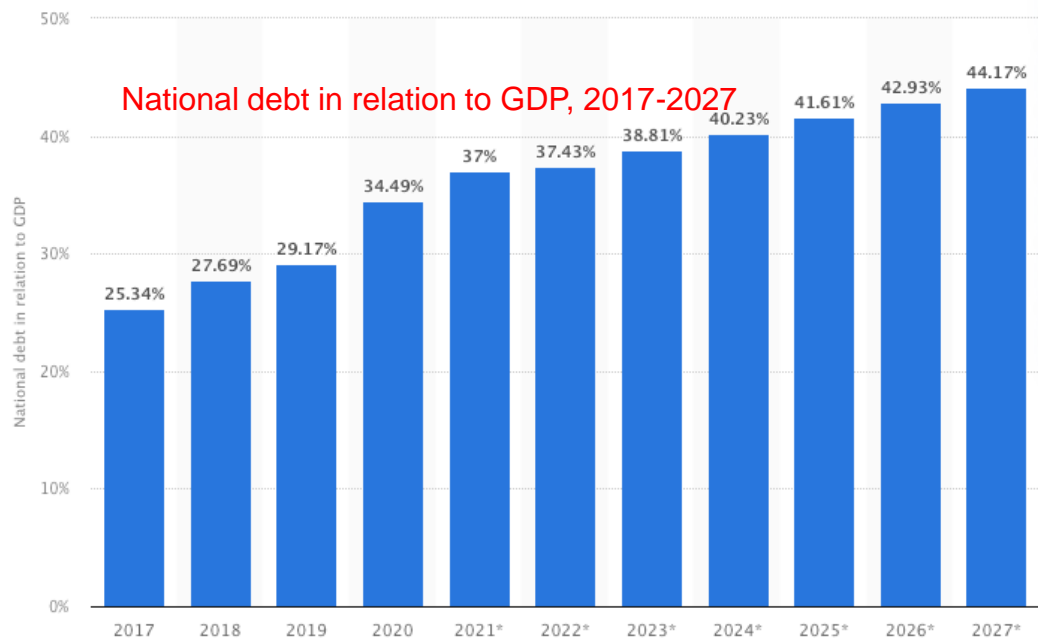
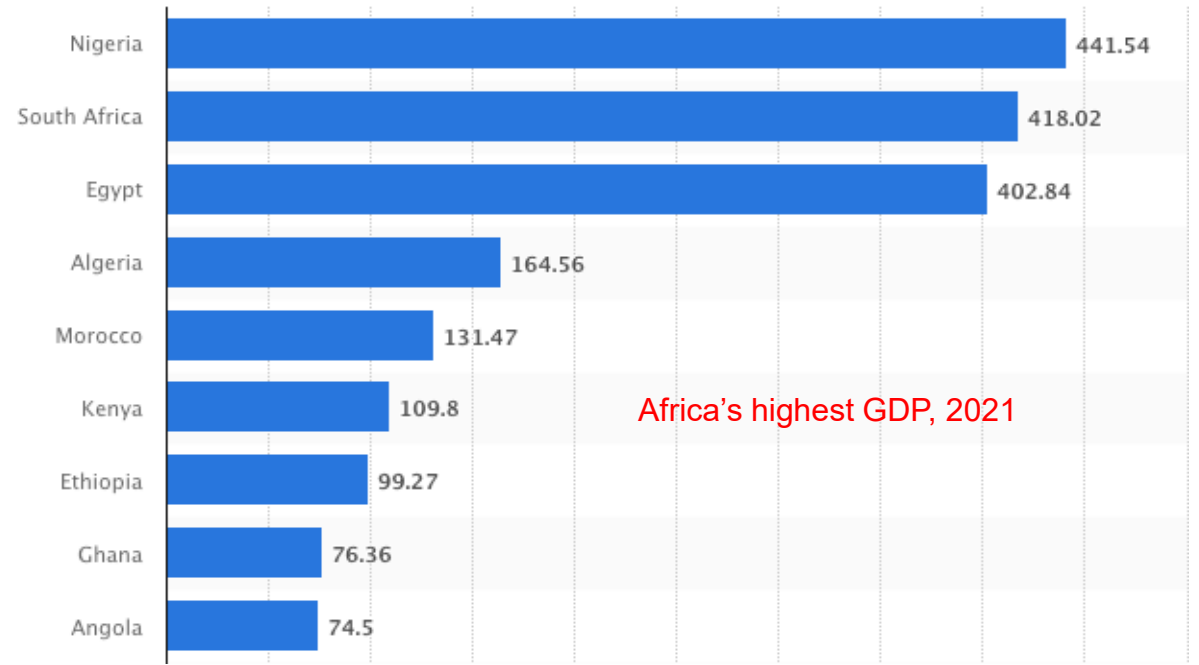
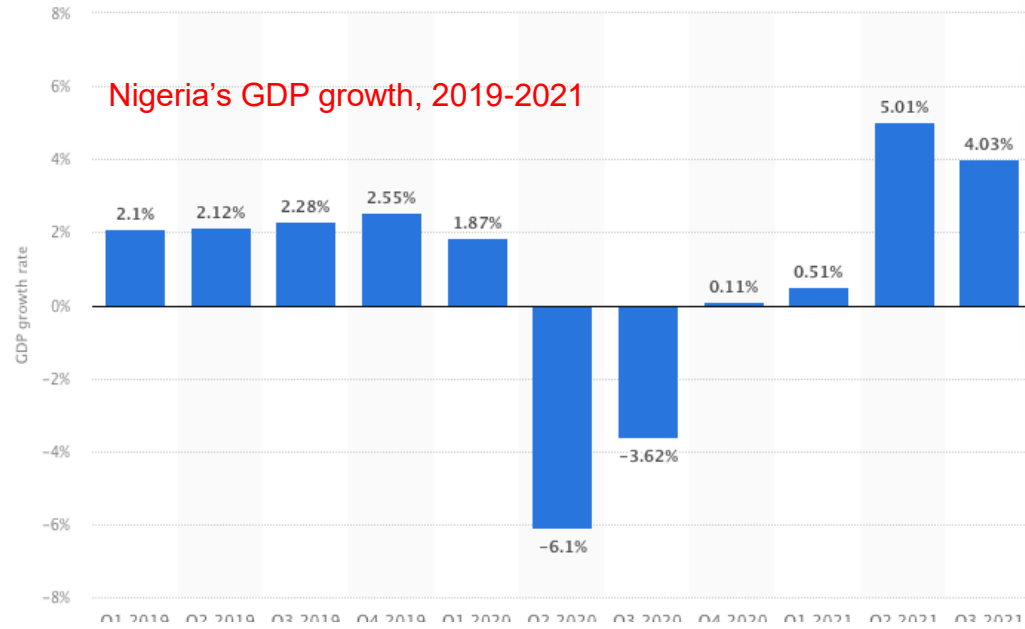
# **Nigeria's socioeconomic context and out-migration**

- Nigeria: a demographic giant
- Young population
- Centralised federal democracy



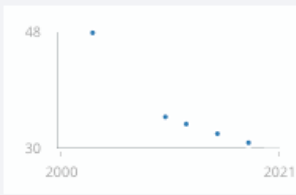

Nigerian map within Africa

Source: statista.com




Source: The World Bank (2022)


## Poverty & Inequality

Indicator	Most recent value	Trend
Poverty headcount ratio at \$2.15 a day (2017 PPP) (% of population) ⓘ	<b>30.9</b> (2018)	
Income share held by lowest 20% ⓘ	<b>7.1</b> (2018)	

## Fragility, Conflict and Violence

Indicator	Most recent value	Trend
Refugee population by country or territory of asylum ⓘ	<b>77,132</b> (2021)	


## Urban, Disaster Risk, Resilience, and Land

Indicator	Most recent value	Trend
Internally displaced persons, new displacement associated with disasters (number of cases) ⓘ	<b>24,000</b> (2021)	

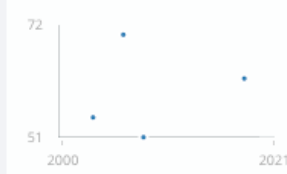

## Health, Nutrition & Population

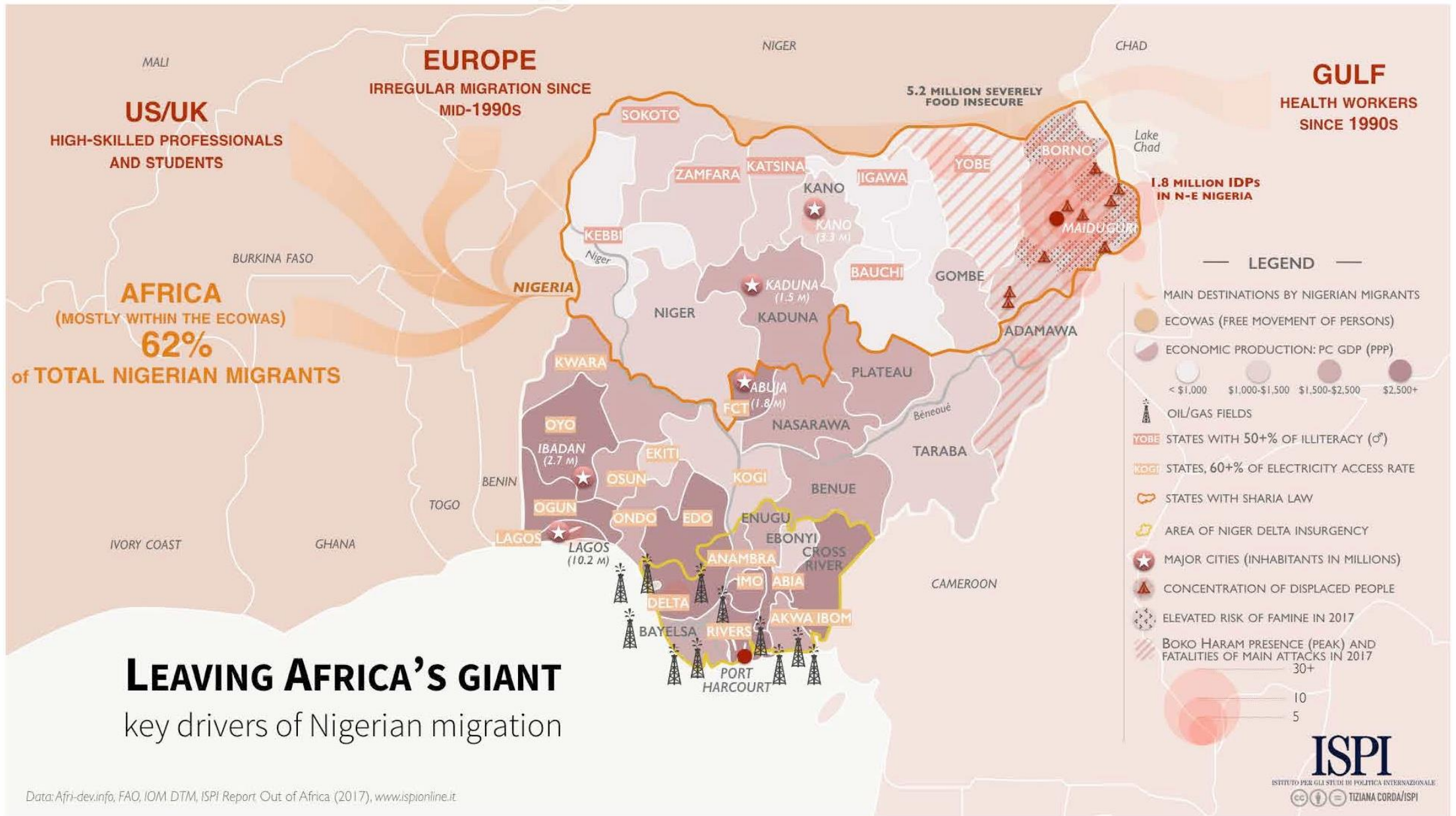
Indicator	Most recent value	Trend
Life expectancy at birth, total (years) ⓘ	<b>55</b> (2020)	
Risk of catastrophic expenditure for surgical care (% of people at risk) ⓘ	<b>50</b> (2020)	

## Jobs & Development

Indicator	Most recent value	Trend
Labor force participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15+) (modeled ILO estimate) ⓘ	<b>54</b> (2021)	

## Education

Indicator	Most recent value	Trend
Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above) ⓘ	<b>62</b> (2018)	
Government expenditure on education, total (% of government expenditure) ⓘ	<b>5.1</b> (2021)	



Drivers and routes on Nigerian migration (Adepoju, 2017)



***Japa***

Nigeria's "new migration dispensation"?

# Flee!

“*Japa* does not mean to walk away. It is to flee from danger or a compromising situation. It means fleeing an abusive relationship, an extremely demanding situation, and life-threatening issues. And the king of the meanings: Flee from Nigeria” (Falola, 2022).



OluwaSeyi 🤔 @Omofebruary · Sep 28, 2021

I fantasied about this day  
I dreamt about this day  
I prayed for this day to happen  
I worked & saved hard for this day  
Finally God made it happen!!!  
Welcome a **new dispensation**.  
God bless Nigeria & thank u 4d opportunity.  
[#Japa](#)



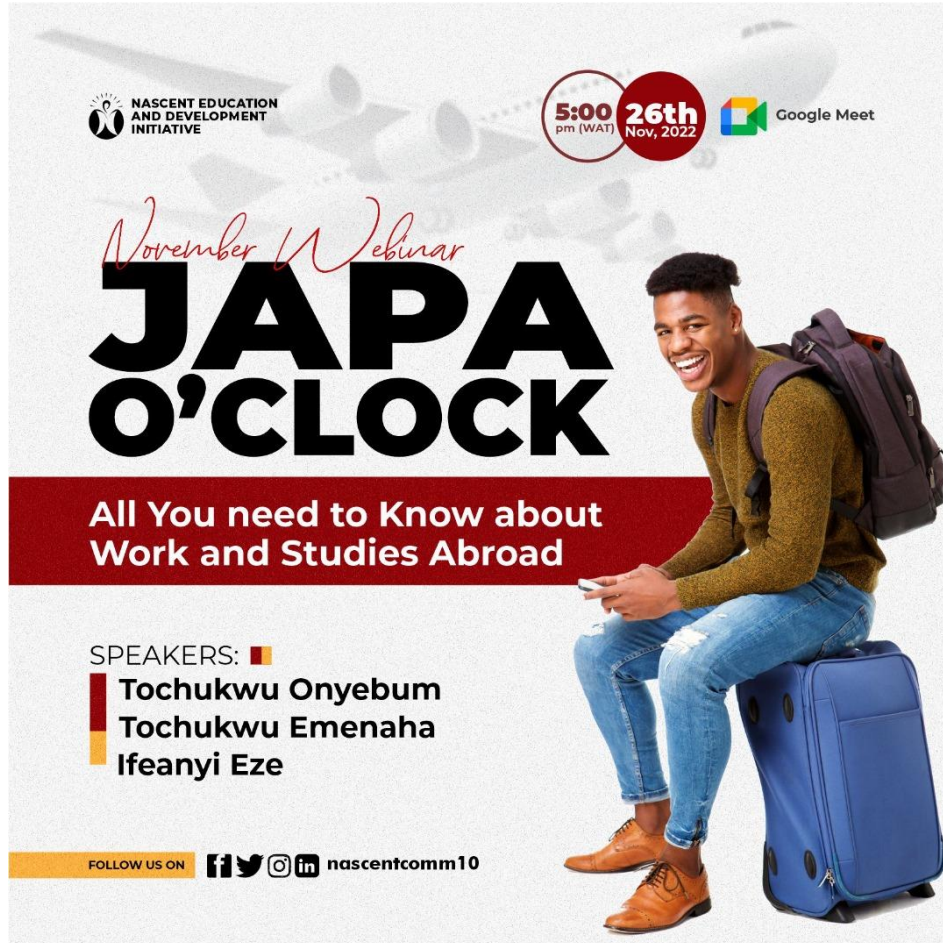
90

233

1,041



# Japa + movement!



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- Tochukwu Emenaha
- Ifeanyi Eze

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**Dr. Ope Banwo** @opebanwo · Sep 16

Join me live on LAWFM 103.9 now as I introduce my show **JAPA WITHOUT TEARS** where we talk about Visa Issues to USA UK AUSTRALIA AND CANADA. Tune in now

**JAPA!**  
WITHOUT TEARS

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**TONIGHT** **TIME**  
16TH SEPT. 2022 7PM-8PM

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2 23 97

**Dr. El Bravo** @dr\_elbravo · Feb 17  
Japa Called and i Answered 🤔. Cheers to a new dispensation 🍷



348 994 10.8K

**Duke of Huddersfield** @Lanrey\_42 · Oct 6  
Starting the new month in a new dispensation..

Japa SZN



15 29 97

Markets

# Bankers Are Fleeing Nigeria’s Stagnating Economy as “Japa” Beckons

- Soaring inflation, low salaries send employees abroad
- Bankers’ union recommends remote work, better work conditions

By [Emele Onu](#)

22 September 2022 at 05:00 GMT+1

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Francis Eze spent nearly a decade at one of Nigeria’s biggest banks working for a salary far lower than the one he’d negotiated in his interview. As a bachelor and then as a newlywed, he found a way to manage on a tighter budget.

# Health workers exodus and government’s indifference

The Editorial Board — Nov 28, 2022



# **The Nigerian University System (NUS)**

# The NUS

- In the last five years, 38% more private universities were established, followed by state unis (22%), then federally owned (18%) ones.
- In 2017, 2,159,461 students enrolled at both undergrad and postgrad levels.

Universities Ownership Type by Year, 2017 to 2022

Ownership	2017	2018	2019	2022
Federal	41	43	43	49
State	46	47	48	59
Private	74	75	79	111
<b>Total</b>				<b>219</b>

- “Nigeria now offers a disturbing confirmation of Afro-pessimism, the violations of academic freedom and the collapse of the universities throughout the continent.”
  - (Arowosegbe, 2021, p. 277)



- “Surely, we cannot expect our less fortunate brothers who have not had the benefits of formal education as we did to perform miracles. For, **as long as we stay away, less qualified citizens on the spot will occupy the responsible positions** and carry out the development of that country to the best of their ability. No doubt some mistakes have been made in the past either in planning or execution of projects and policies. This is sometimes attributable to inexperience on the part of planners and lack of executive capacity. **Running a government is a very complex art. Why, then, do we want to leave our government in the hands of anyone but the best the country can produce?”**

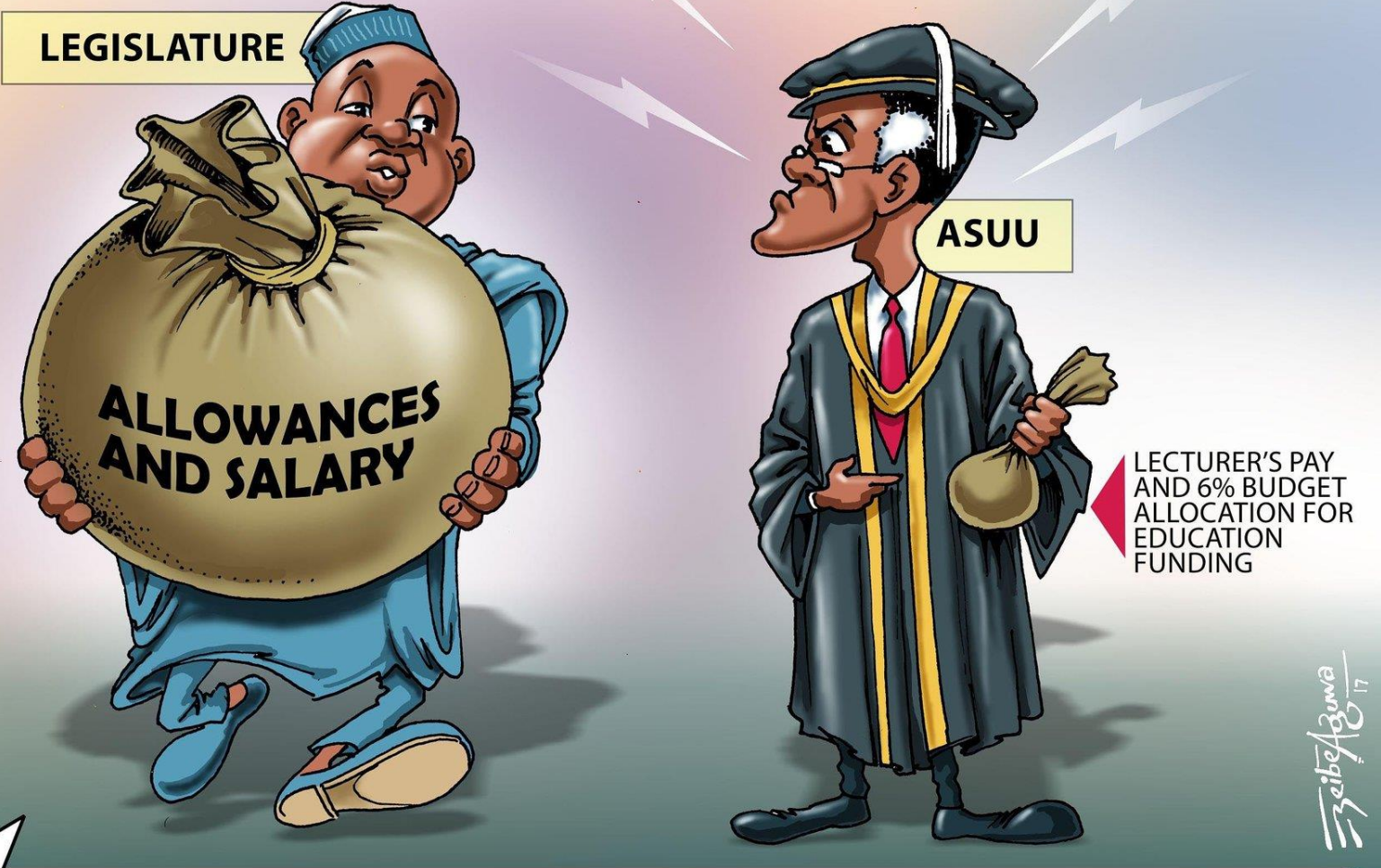
• **Nwaochei (1979, p. 55)**

# Precarised academia

Battle to the bottom?

Lawmakers urge ASUU to call off strike.- News

Source: Meggo Comics Company on Twitter



**YOU SEE, WE REALLY DON'T THINK YOUR SITUATION IS SO SERIOUS AS TO WARRANT A STRIKE ACTION SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST CALM DOWN AND GET BACK TO WORK?**

# ASUU: Labour Union struggles with the state and dispossession

- Emergence of politicised universities
- 1978: founding of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) to replace the Nigerian Association of University Teachers kick-started the battle to the bottom (?)
  - anti-establishment stance and challenging contradictions in capital and labour relations (Arowosegbe, 2021)

# Strikes in Nigerian public universities, 1999-2022

Year	Strike days
1999	150
2001	90
2002	14
2003	180
2005	3
2006	7
2007	90
2008	7
2009	120
2010	157

Year	Strike days
2011	190
2013	150
2016	7
2017	35
2018–2019	115
2020	274 (appx.)
2022	246 (appx.)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,835 (5)</b>
<b>strike days (in Years)</b>	

- *“My boss is a comedian; the wage he pays is a joke.”*
- *“My take-home pay cannot take me home.”*

- “The professors spend more time off campus trying to survive the harsh economic conditions and less time in the classrooms under a dark cloud of penury, terror and despair” (Eribo, 1996)

OVER FOUR MONTHS OF  
ASUU STRIKE...



Source: Vanguard News  
Online

"ANY ATTEMPT!"



## COVID-19: ASUU strike and the danger of weapon of hunger



April 17 23:51  
2020

by Contributor  
1 Comment

Print This Article

### POLITICS

## ASUU accuses Nigerian govt of using hunger as bargaining tool



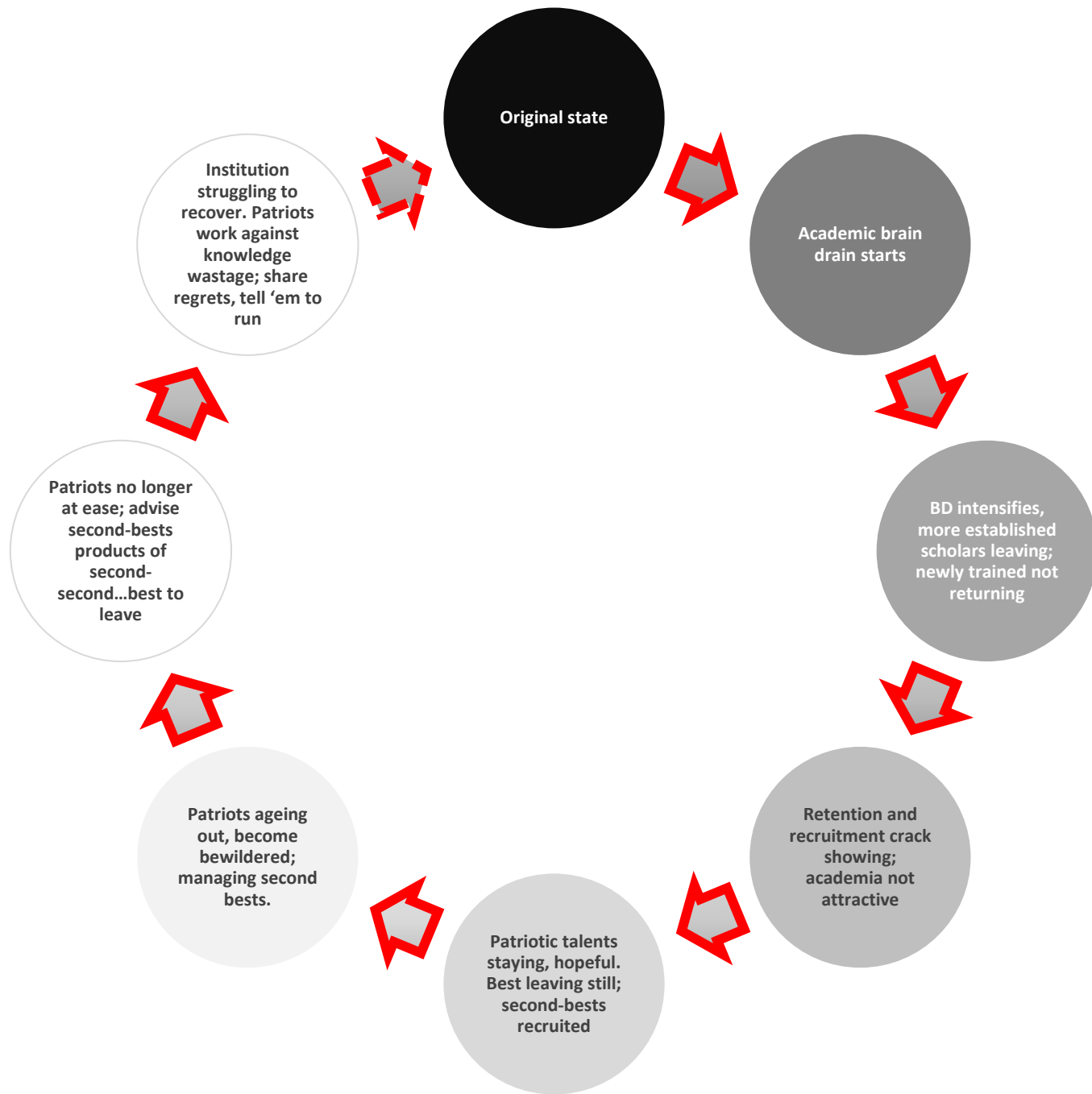
Published 4 months ago on August 2, 2022

By **Mayowa Oladeji**



# A look at the Bottom

Academic *japa* and the “cycle of copies of copies” in Nigeria



# Academic *japa* and the “cycle of copies of copies” in Nigeria

# **“Why are you still in Nigeria?”**

An autoethnographic closing reflection

# “Why are you still in Nigeria?”: An autoethnographic closing reflection

- The lived condition of Nigerian academic service is of a curious elasticity, one that keeps giving way to uncomfortable, degrading and choking adjustments.
- Most of *us* are mostly products of “copies of copies” and there is *japa* pressure that has become difficult to ignore.
- So, when people ask young Nigerian academics the question, “why are you still in Nigeria?” What kind of response should they provide besides *waiting to japa*?

**Thank you for listening!**