From Brain-Drain to Brain-Gain: The African-Diaspora Community and Development in Africa

by

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Abstract

Post-independence Africa saw many of its talented nationals leaving the continent for greener pastures aboard. Though their exit was a huge loss to the continent, one major contribution of these emigrants to Africa's development is their remittances. In the paper's view, remittances' impact to Africa's development can only be effective depending on their prudent use and management. The paper assessed two categories of remittance recipient countries in Africa wherein remittances constituted a large percentage of GDP and those who receive higher sums of remittances. In each category, the paper evaluates their human development profile against other African countries and concludes that to be effective in implementing the continent's development agenda, human development and prudent management of remittances should be the measure in determining remittances' impact.

Key Words: Brain-drain, brain-gain, development, democracy, governance, remittances, African-diaspora.

Introduction

Africa has witnessed two waves of its citizens leaving the shores of the continent at the time the continent desperately needed them. The first wave was between the 16th and the 19th centuries where millions of able-bodied Africans were forcibly removed and from the continent shipped through the Trans-Atlantic slave-trade to the New World (North/South America and the Caribbean) as enslaved people to build the economies of other nations (Rodney 1972).

The trade in human beings has negatively impacted Africa's development, and thus, it has received extensive scholarly attention, and has been said to be responsible for why Africa did not experience industrial revolution (Bah 2005; Rodney 1972). Scarcely had Africa come out of these hurdles than it found itself in the clutches of brain-drain where many of the few professionals in the health sector especially and other critical human resources the continent needed most joined the exodus of brain-drain to seek greener pastures abroad (Adebayo 2011; Chen and Boufford, 2005; Docquier and Rapoport, 2012; Hanson, 2010). Thus, Africa has had two waves of its citizens leaving the continent first during the slave-trade era and second during the brain-drain era.

These two strands of African people, one forcibly removed and the other "voluntarily" travelled off the continent are referred to as the African diaspora (Adebayo 2011; Amagoh and Rahman 2016; Ogbu 2016). The African Union broadly defines the African diaspora as "peoples of African descent who live outside the African continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union" (African Union 2005). From this definition, the African diaspora has come to be associated with the development of the continent (Gaillard and Gaillard 2003; Ogbu 2016). This study focuses on the second strand of African diaspora (the post-independence emigrants). Unlike the first strand of African emigrants who were taken out of the continent against their consent, the second arguably left willingly and mostly identifies with the continent and often time maintains close ties with relatives on the continent (Gaillard and Gaillard 2003; Ogbu 2016). This category of African diaspora aptly fits the nomenclature – brain-drain which was in vogue in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the concept of brain-drain had dominated the development literature and Africa was once again the focus of attention (Chen and Boufford, 2005; Docquier and Rapoport, 2012; Hanson, 2010) due to the negative impact of the phenomenon on the continent's development. This was captured by Artuc, et.al (2015) who observed instances where more than 50 percent of tertiary educated citizens from over 20 developing countries had left their countries to work abroad while at the same time, these countries were spending huge chunks of their hard earned scarce foreign exchange on expatriates from developed countries. The concept of brain-drain is based on the argument that most of the developing countries had invested in the training of the indigenous professionals who leave their countries (Bhagwati and Hamada, 1974). Thus, brain-drain was a loss of investment on these professionals who had left their countries. In the words of Lee Jong-wook, the former Director General of World Health Organization (WHO), the migration of African health professionals was a loss of hope and years of investment (Lee 2006). Subsequent studies have downplayed the impact of brain-drain. Their argument is that counting the numbers of nationals that are working abroad was misleading because the burden of training these professionals in most cases was not borne by their countries of nationality but by the countries of training (Özden and Phillips 2015).

Other studies have also found that there is brain-gain as professionals from developing countries practicing in advanced countries constitute a platform of expertise and a resource pool for their respective countries' benefit (Adebayo 2011; Clemens 2007; Kangasniemi, et. al. 2007; Ogbu 2016).

In the light of this, many scholars have argued that African professional expatriates in developed countries constitute a vast pool of resources to the continent in many ways (Amagoh and Rahman 2016; Chikezie 2011; Gaillard and Gaillard 2003; Ogbu 2016) for its development agenda. From the contribution to public policy, acting as a pool of scientific community, cross fertilization[1] and cost saving (Gaillard and Gaillard 2003; Zweig et al. 2008), to remittances (Combes, Ebeke, and Maurel 2015) down to areas of financial capital, intellectual and political capital (Chikezie 2011, Ogbu 2016) are what the diaspora community represents. In the light of its significance to the development trajectory of Africa, this study evaluates the role of the diaspora community in the continent's development by analyzing the impact remittances from the community has made on human development in the top ten recipients of remittances in Africa. In fact, the importance of remittances to the development agenda of the continent cannot be over emphasized. Available data and scholarship show that remittances to developing countries in recent years is as thrice the equivalence of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows (Combes, Ebeke, and Maurel 2015; Ratha 2009, 2013). Again, remittances improve the recipient country's credit worthiness and helps it to attract low interest rates from the World Bank and other financial institutions (Ratha 2013; Ratha, Eigen-Zucchi, and Plaza 2016). The figure for remittances is more than twice the value of official aid received by Third World countries (Delgado Wise et al. 2013).

This study evaluates the impact of the diaspora community on the continent's development from the prism of human development which focuses on the richness of human life instead of focusing on the richness of the economy in which human beings live. Human development as the Nobel Laureate, Amartya Sen (1999) argues, is based on human freedom but not just on economic growth. This is the case because literature is replete of nations that had registered huge economic growth but eventually fail due to the unsustainability of such growths. In most cases they are based on human exploitation (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012) which are very repressive at best. The study also compares the GDP per capita, growth rate, economic freedom, political rights, and civil liberties of citizens in the top ten recipients of remittances in Africa. It also examines the status of the top ten African states with high remittances as percentage of GDP in 2015. In this way, the study does not select only the top ten African countries with high remittances in current USD, but also those countries with high remittances as percentage of GDP since the two are not the same, we are able to compare how remittances are impacting human development, the economy and governance of the recipient states. This study is very critical due to its implications for policy and literature on the role of the African diaspora to the continent's socio-economic development and democratic governance.

Thus, the research question of this paper is: What role do African nationals abroad who were previously viewed as brain-drain play in the continent's socio-economic and democratic progress? Specifically, what impact do remittances from the African diaspora make on the top ten recipient countries' human development, economic growth and democratic credentials?

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows; the next section reviews the literature and details out the theoretical basis with which to analyze the impact remittances play on political and economic development of the continent. This will connect to section three which is the discussion segment of the paper by analyzing the progress or otherwise of the selected countries in relation to their human development index. The paper uses life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling and GDP per-capita for the selected countries as a measure of citizens' wellbeing. Section four, the final section summaries the discussions, points out the importance of this study and offers suggestions and recommendations for future research in the area.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

This section reviews the literature on how emigrants and their remittances[2] shape the political and economic development of their home countries. It then constructs a framework to analyze the impact of remittance+ on the top ten African countries with high remittances inflow based on Human development. Human development, as the Nobel Laureate, Amartya Sen (1999) argues, is based on human freedom but not just on economic growth. Thus, the paper hopes to evaluate the impact of remittance+ not only in terms of the political and economic development of these countries but based on their human development status.

Literature Review

The literature on the role of the African diaspora to the continent's development is very rich and diverse. For this study, the paper reviews the literature on the political and economic impact of emigrants in general and remittances in particular from African diaspora and thereby contributes to these two strands of literature. Politically, it has been found that the remittance+ have played a critical role in the building or weakening of political institutions of their home countries (Abdih et al. 2012; Docquier et al, 2016; Beine and Sekkat, 2013). Scholars have found that the quality of political institutions in the home country of many emigrants are developed along the lines of the hosting countries' political institutions (Beine and Sekkat 2013; Docquier et al, 2016). Thus, in many cases, the political characteristics of the hosting country and the level of education of migrants greatly impact the quality of political institutions of the home country. Again, migrants have shaped the political institutions of their home countries through transfer of political norms from their hosting states to their home countries (Bravo, 2009; Goodman and Hiskey, 2008; Pérez 2014; Pfutze, 2014).

Migrants also contribute to institutional building by demanding accountability and good governance from their governments especially given the impact of their remittances to their nations' development (Escriba-Folch, Meseguer, and Wright 2015). At the micro-level, they have also influenced political decisions through vote guidance often through regular interaction with their compatriots through telephone calls and other means of communication (Goodman and Hiskey, 2008; Pérez 2014; Pfutze, 2014). In this way migrants shape voter behavior in their home countries from abroad.

Furthermore, in contributing to the democratization, scholarship on the diaspora and remittances has shown that remittance+ often determine the competitiveness of elections in their home countries (Escriba-Folch, Meseguer, and Wright 2015; O'Mahony 2013). For instance, Pfutze (2012) found that, as a result of remittances from the diaspora, opposition parties are more likely than ever to win municipal elections in Mexico. Again, Escriba-Folch et al. (2017) have found that remittances can undermine the support of incumbent and thereby facilitate regime change. Konte (2016) found that in many African countries, remittances determine the support for democracy. Ebeke and Yogo (2013) also observed that recipients of remittances are more likely to participate in demonstrations and protests and thereby making governments more responsive and accountable to the electorates. Again, remittances often avert the risk of civil war onset especially during challenging times because where the state fails in providing certain vital services that may often lead to rebellion, remittances make resources available (Ratha, Eigen-Zucchi, and S Plaza 2016; Ratha 2013; Regan and Frank 2014). Thus, remittances provide political stability in times of social crises.

These positive impacts notwithstanding, remittances are found to have debilitating effects on democracy and institutional building. First, it has been found that remittances lower voter turnout in the sense that recipients of remittances are less likely to vote (Dionne et al. 2014; Ebeke and Yogo 2013). Ebeke and Yogo (2013) further found that remittances inflow has an inverse relationship with the proclivity of voting in Africa south of the Sahara. Goodman and Hiskey (2008) also found that electorates in high migrated areas of Mexico have low voter turnout rates and participate less in politics. Bravo (2009) found that individuals who are exposed to migrants or want to migrate to the United States for example, are less likely to vote and participate in political protests. Again, Germano (2013) found that remittances lower the probability of recipients to participate in political protest and demand accountability because such citizens are less dependent on the state. Lower political participation and demand for accountability foster political corruption and weakens institutions (Abdih et al., 2012; Berdiev 2013). Pfutze, (2012) also found that remittances have the effect of weakening clientelist relations for the incumbent and strengthens the opposition. As a result, it increases incumbent's likelihood of electoral manipulation and its adverse effects on democracy and representation. Finally, it has been found that remittances have the effect of stabilizing authoritarian regimes (Ahmed 2012) which negatively impacts institutional building, the rule of law and human rights promotion. The consequence of this is high risk of civil war.

In fact, Miller and Ritter (2014) found that remittances inflow increases the risk of civil war by making resources available to rebels especially in repressive regimes. Thus, the body of literature on remittance+ diverge; at one breadth they promote democracy, institutional development and good governance while at the other, they have the effect of undermining same.

Economically, remittance+ have been found to boost economic growth, promote poverty reduction, provide a reliable source of foreign exchange and support for balance of payment and serve as insurance against exogenous shocks. Scholarship on remittances from African diaspora have found that funds from nationals abroad have provided the critical capital for the creation and sustenance of small businesses in the sub-region (Chikezie 2011; Ogbu 2016).

It has also provided financial capital for the agriculture sector which is the backbone of many African economies and to a greater extent has expanded the economy of the continent and thereby help alleviate poverty (Adams and Page, 2005; Acosta et al., 2008; Chikezie 2011; Gupta et al 2009). The World Bank (2013) has also found that remittances have largely contributed to poverty reduction in developing countries. Adams and Cuecuecha (2010) have also found statistically significant relationship between remittance and poverty reduction in Indonesia. The consequence of poverty alleviation is economic growth. In their study, Azam et al. (2016) observed that remittances have contributed to economic growth in 12 countries in Europe and Central Asia between 1993 and 2013. Azam and Khan (2011) also found positive statistical relationship between remittance and economic growth in Azerbaijan and Armenia between 1995 and 2010.

Remittances have become a very reliable source of foreign exchange earnings that many developing countries have come to rely on as financial grants, Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) and other forms of funding from the developed nations have been on a decline (The World Bank 2013). For instance, official report from the World Bank showed that in 2015, Nigeria received over $21 billion USD while in the same year, Liberia's remittance as a percentage to GDP was 31.5%. Lesotho's remittance as a percentage to GDP has been between 20% and 30%. Again, remittances have improved recipient country's credit ratings by helping it to attract low interest rates from the World Bank and other lenders. It thus, leverages recipient state's borrowing and spending capacity (Ratha 2013). Remittances also serve as shock absorbers by mitigating exogenous economic hiccups in the recipient countries (Yang and Choi, 2007; Combes and Ebeke, 2015).

Despite the positive effects of remittances, it has been found that they have their adverse effects on the economies of many developing countries, including those in Africa (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo 2004; Barajas et al. 2011). Remittances are said to compromise the external competitiveness of the recipient countries. First, if not well managed, remittances can reduce export promotion and increase imports as hitherto scarce foreign exchange that often come through exports have now become available through remittances, the incentive to export will be severely affected at the expense of imports (Barajas et al. 2011).

The consequence of this is that it will fuel inflation thereby weakening the real exchanges. This aside, remittances have the tendency of affecting labor productivity as recipients of foreign remittances have the tendency of cutting down on their working hours and increasing leisure hours (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo, 2006). It has also been found that remittances are often used for consumption instead of investment in the productive areas of the economy. Thus, given the contradictory political and economic effects of remittances, how have the recent upsurge in remittance inflows in current USD and remittances as a percentage of GDP in many African countries affected democracy, economic growth and human development of citizens on the continent? Again, in looking at the statistics provided by the World Bank and other institutions, can we see a positive relationship between remittances and these statistics? That is as remittances increase, do they reflect on human development? Stated differently, what is the relationship between remittances and human development?

Theoretical Framework

The theory that this paper espouses is that development is right-based and measured in terms of the overall human wellbeing – human development. According to Amartya Sen (1999), human development is paramount to economic prosperity and if economic prosperity does not trickle down and translate into human wellbeing, then there is no development. The right-based approach to development is concerned about the richness of humans as opposed to the richness of the economy measured in terms of GDP. Thus, the core measurement of human development, in the case of this paper, is appraised using data on human development from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) dataset from 2010 to 2015 which is a combination of statistical variables such as life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling, and per capita income. The justification for choosing 2010 is premised on the fact that it was that year that the human development report introduced an inequality-adjusted human development index that evens out inequalities from the scores to make the data internationally comparable. The human development index is developed by Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq both renowned economists and published by the UNDP. Thus, the study analyzes the link between remittance inflows and human development index of the selected countries. It also considers how these countries did on political freedom, civil liberties, economic rights and on economic growth between 2006 and 2015.

Discussions

From the above literature review, it is clear that the effects of remittance+ on the economic and political circumstances of the recipient countries are mixed. In this section, the paper compares the relationship between remittances of the top ten remittance recipient countries in African and their ratings on human development, political rights, economic freedom, civil liberties and GDP per capita between 2006 and 2015. Data on economic freedom is compiled by the Fraser Institute.

Fraser Institute monitors economic freedom around the world and publishes an index[3] of economic freedom for each country annually. The highest possible rating for economic freedom is 10 and the highest rating means more freedom. Data on political rights and civil liberties are produced by the Freedom House. Freedom House monitors political freedom around the world and rates each country on an annual basis using two criteria—political rights and civil liberties. The range of the ratings for each criterion is from one to seven, and lower ratings mean more freedom. From 2003[4] countries whose combined average ratings range between 1.0 and 2.5 are considered "free," those whose ratings are between 3.0 and 5.0 are considered "partly free" while those between 5.5 and 7.0 are considered "not free".

Table 1. Top 10 African Countries with High Remittance Inflows in Current USD Billion in 2016 & 2015 and 2006 & 2005

	2006	**2016**	**2005**	**2015**
Nigeria	16.93	18.96	14.64	21.06
Egypt, Arab Rep.	5.33	16.58	5.02	18.31
Morocco	5.45	7.09	4.59	6.90
Ghana	0.11	2.04	0.10	4.98
Senegal	0.93	2.01	0.79	1.61
Tunisia	1.51	1.79	1.39	1.97
Kenya	0.57	1.73	0.42	1.56
Uganda	0.41	1.08	0.32	1.05
Mali	0.21	0.80	0.18	0.89
South Africa	0.69	0.76	0.61	0.83
Total	**32.14**	**52.83**	**28.06**	**59.16**

Source: Compilation from the World Bank dataset

Remittances inflow in the top ten African countries have witnessed significant progress. From Table 1 above, the total figures increased by more than 100% between 2005 and 2015 from $28.06 billion to $59.16 billion. Though the total figures dropped in 2016 to $52.83 billion, compared with the 2006 total figure of $32.14 billion, the increase of $20.69 billion or 64.37% in ten years is still significant. Table 2 shows data for the top ten African countries whose remittances constitute greater part of their GDP in 2016. Corresponding values for 2015, 2006, and 2005 are given to see the trend within 10 year-period. Between 2005-2015 and 2006-2016 all the countries apart from South Africa experienced significant expansion in remittance inflows. This is remarkable given that Official Development Assistance (ODA) and FDI, (two critical financial sources to developing countries) have not been very reliable in recent times (Combes, Ebeke, and Maurel 2015; Ratha 2013). Within the same period, the figures for Egypt, Ghana, Kenya and Mali have experienced 300% and above increase in remittances inflow.

Table 2. Countries with High Remittances as % of GDP in (2016 & 2015) and (2006 & 2005)

	2006	**2016**	**2005**	**20015**
Liberia	13.05	30.56	5.79	31.50
Comoros	15.55	21.42	14.21	22.77
Gambia, The	9.74	18.77	9.50	19.25
Lesotho	34.10	15.14	35.63	15.66
Zimbabwe[5]	13.80	13.80	13.80	12.73
Cabo Verde	12.33	13.65	14.06	12.76
Senegal	9.89	13.58	9.06	11.86
Morocco	7.94	6.99	7.36	6.86
Togo	10.54	6.53	9.10	8.89
Sao Tome and Principe	1.19	5.14	1.19	6.29

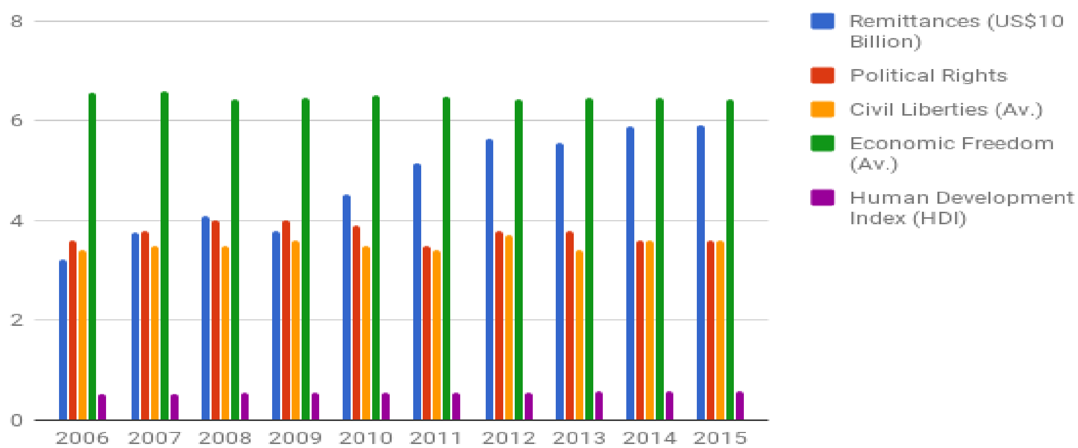
Source: Compilation from the World Bank dataset

Thus, in general, the top ten remittance recipient countries in Africa have had significant appreciation in remittances inflow. Regarding the top ten African countries with remittances constituting greater percentage of their GDP as per Table 2 above, their GDP profile have also changed. For instance, in 2005 and 2006, Sao Tome and Principe maintained its share of 1.19% of GDP while in 2015 and 2016 remittances constituted over 5% of its GDP. The Gambia also saw its remittances rise from below 10% of GDP to close to 20% of GDP. Liberia in 2005 had its remittances to be 5.79% of GDP but its revenue profile changed such that remittances became 13.05%, 31.5% and 30.56% for 2006, 2015 and 2016 respectively. Lesotho on the other hand, saw its remittance percentage to GDP drop from 35.63% in 2005 to 15.14% in 2016. It is significant to note that Lesotho's remittance inflow in 2005, 2006, 2015 and 2016 were $599.35 million, $613.86 million, $365.58 million, and $333.06 million respectively. This means that Lesotho presents a unique case that should attract scholarship attention in the future as it has both dropped in percentage and revenue terms. In revenue terms, the 2015 figure of $365.58 million was about 61% of the 2005 figure while the 2016 figure of $333.06 million was about 54% of the 2006 remittance received in current US dollar.

To assess whether remittances are having their positive impact in the receiving countries, the study compiles figures for remittances from 2006 to 2015. The values are compared with political freedom, civil liberty, economic freedom and human development index from the World Bank, Freedom House, Fraser Institute, and the UNDP dataset respectively. As stated above, economic freedom is measured from 1 to 10 with 10 representing the highest rating while civil liberties and political rights measured from 1 to 7 with 1 representing the highest rating. The human development index ratings range from 0.01 to 1.00 with 1 being the highest rating. Figure 1 below provides a graphical illustration of the relationship between remittances in USD, political freedom, civil liberty, economic freedom and human development. Table 3 shows the figures on which figure 1 is based.

The values for civil liberties and political rights on average fall within the "partly free" category (3.0 – 5.0) for the top ten recipients of remittances in Africa. While the ratings for economic freedom was below 7.0 which though relatively high, is far below expectation given that 10 is the highest rating. In respect of human development ratings, the average ratings for the selected countries are lower than 0.60 for the 10 years (2006-2015). Thus, in relation to political rights, civil liberty, economic freedom and human development, the top ten African countries are not performing well, though, they are receiving huge chunks of remittances from the diaspora. It is interesting to note that though the selected countries have not done well on human development relative to remittances, a cursory look at figure 2 below shows that the countries on average have witnessed moderate improvement on their human development from 0.53 in 2005 to 0.58 in 2015.

Figure 1: Relationship between remittances, political rights, civil liberties, economic freedom and human development in the top 10 African countries with high remittance inflow (2006-2015)



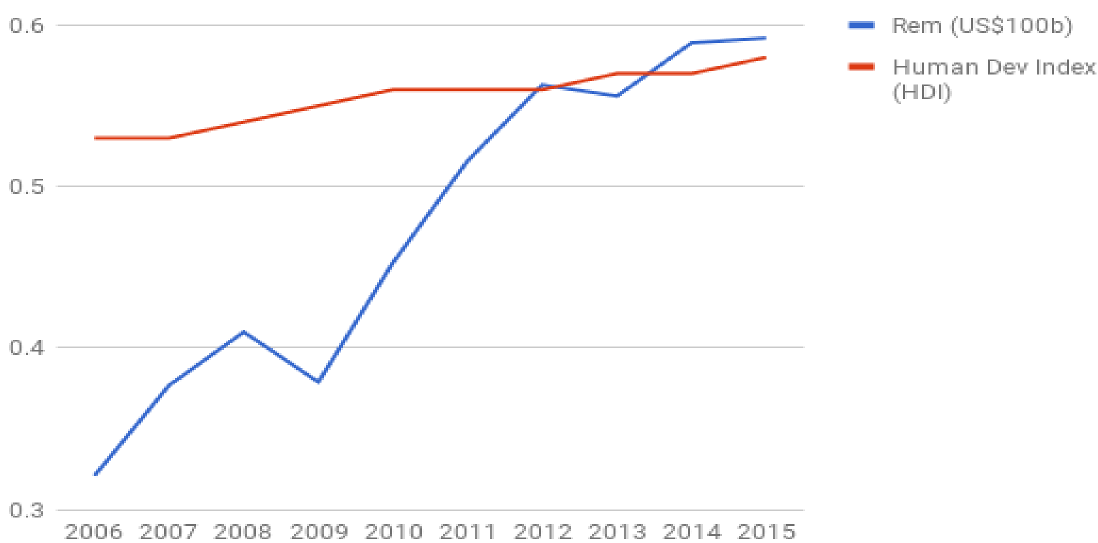
Source: Compilation from the World Bank, Freedom House, Fraser Institute, and the UNDP dataset

Table 3: Relationship between Remittances, Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Economic Freedom and Human Development in the Top 10 African Countries with High Remittances (2006-2015)

Year	Remittances (US$10 Billion)	Political Rights	Civil Liberties (Av.)	Economic Freedom (Av.)	Human Development Index (HDI)
2006	3.21	3.6	3.4	6.56	0.53
2007	3.77	3.8	3.5	6.59	0.53
2008	4.1	4.0	3.5	6.44	0.54
2009	3.79	4.0	3.6	6.46	0.55
2010	4.53	3.9	3.5	6.51	0.56
2011	5.16	3.5	3.4	6.49	0.56
2012	5.63	3.8	3.7	6.44	0.56
2013	5.56	3.8	3.4	6.47	0.57
2014	5.89	3.6	3.6	6.46	0.57
2015	5.92	3.6	3.6	6.43	0.58

Source: Compilation from the World Bank, Freedom House, Fraser Institute, and the UNDP dataset

Figure 2: The relationship between remittances (in $100 billion) and human development in the top 10 African countries with high remittance inflow between 2006 and 2015.



Source: Compilation from the World Bank and the UNDP dataset

Given that the selected countries (top 10 African countries with high remittances in USD and percentage of GDP) have not performed very well on human development, there was a need to do a further check by conducting a regional comparison to better assess the selected countries. As a result, the paper looked at the top 10 African countries with growing economies, top 10 countries with favorable civil liberties ratings, top 10 on political right ratings and top 10 on economic freedom ratings. The results showed that among the top 10 African countries with high growth rates in 2016, only Senegal, Kenya and Mali were countries with high remittances inflow found among the top 10 African countries with growing economies. Here, Senegal came fifth, Kenya eighth and Mali placing tenth as illustrated in Appendix 1 below. Again, comparing countries with remittances constituting high percentage of their GDP, it was only Senegal that was found within the top 10 African states in the intersection of countries with higher growth rate and higher remittance as percentage of GDP. Looking at the top 10 countries with favorable ratings on economic freedom, as shown on Appendix 2, we have Uganda and Kenya within the category of countries with high remittances in current USD placing fifth and seventh respectively. Again, looking at countries with remittances forming high percentage of their GDP, we have Gambia and Liberia placing sixth and ninth respectively.

Furthermore, looking at the top 10 African countries with favorable political rights ratings, it is Ghana, Tunisia and Senegal that fall within the "free" states category of 1.0 – 2.5. Again, looking at countries with remittances constituting high percentage of their GDP, Cape Verde, Senegal and São Tomé and Príncipe are within the intersection of countries with favorable political rights ratings with remittances constituting high percentage of GDP as illustrated in the table in Appendix 3.

In respect of countries with favorable ratings on civil liberties, countries such as Ghana and Senegal are within the intersection of countries with high remittances in USD and rated free on the civil liberties rating while Tunisia is rated "party free" as per Appendix 4. Furthermore, comparing countries with high remittances in percentage of GDP and those with favorable ratings on civil liberties, Cape Verde and Senegal are within that intersection. It is revealing to note that though Morocco and Senegal are the only two countries with high remittances in USD and remittances forming high part of their GDP, Senegal seemed to be doing better than Morocco on indicators such as economic growth. However, when it comes to human development indicators, Morocco does better than Senegal.

Assessing the performance of the top 10 African countries with higher remittances in USD and top 10 countries with remittances constituting higher percentage of GDP on pure human development indicators such as inequality-adjusted HDI Value, life expectancy at birth, gross national income per capita and mean year of schooling as per Appendix 5, the following observations can be made: First, looking at the inequality-adjusted HDI Values, when we take the top 10 African countries with high inequality-adjusted HDI Values and the top 10 African countries with high remittances in USD, only Egypt, Morocco and South Africa fall within this intersection.

Again, when we take the top 10 African countries with high remittances constituting high percentage of their GDP, Cape Verde and Morocco are the only countries that fall within this bracket. Second, when we take the top 10 African countries with the highest values of life expectancy at birth (66 and 75 years), and compare with the top 10 African countries with high remittances in USD, only Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia (often considered as North-Africa and Middle-Eastern countries) and Senegal fall within this intersection. In the same way, when we take the top 10 African countries with the highest values of life expectancy at birth (66 and 75 years), and compare with the top 10 African countries with high remittances constituting high percentage of their GDP, Cape Verde, Morocco and Sao Tome and Principe are the three countries that belong to this segment. Third, when we take the top 10 African countries with the highest gross national income per capita (between \$9,770 and \$23,886 as per Appendix 5) and compare with the top 10 African countries with high remittances in USD, Tunisia, Egypt and South Africa fall in this quadrant. Again, when we take the top 10 African countries with the highest gross national income per capita (between \$9,770 and \$23,886 as per Appendix 5) and compare with the top 10 African countries with remittances forming high percentage of their gross national income per capita, none of the countries with remittances forming high percentage of their GDP falls within the top 10 African countries with high gross national income per capita between \$9,770 and \$23,886. Finally, when we take the top 10 African countries with favorable mean years of schooling (between 6.9 years and 9.4 years) and compare them with the top 10 African countries with high remittances in USD, we have Tunisia, Egypt, South Africa and Ghana in that intersection. Again, when we take the top 10 African countries with favorable mean years of schooling (between 6.9 years and 9.4 years) and compare them with the top 10 African countries with remittances constituting high component of their GDP, just Zimbabwe was found in that intersection.

Why is it not the case that states with high remittances in USD and those with remittances constituting high percentage of their GDP perform well on human development indicators and human right promotion if the diaspora community is critical in politico-economic development of their home countries? Is there the need to also relook at the educational system of African countries given that countries such as Cape Verde, Mauritania, Comoros, Morocco and Equatorial Guinea with mean years of schooling as low as 4.3 to 5.5 year are outperforming countries with higher mean years of schooling? For instance, Cape Verde with lower mean year of schooling of 4.8 years had 73.5 years of life expectancy at birth which is higher than that of Botswana with mean years of schooling being 9.2 years. Again, Cape Verde outperforms Ghana and Zimbabwe with higher mean years of schooling of 6.9 and 7.7 and gross national income per capita of \$3,839 and \$1,588 respectively with Cape Verde having gross national income per capita of \$6,049.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The diaspora community is very critical to the political and economic development of the African continent; however, it is not easy to assess its impact given that most of the things emigrants do are not easy to evaluate. For instance, the diaspora community has become a critical political capital to African countries as it has in many ways contributed a great deal towards the political transformation of the continent. For example, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah who was adjudged the African-man of the millennium by the BBC listeners in Africa in December 1999 spent many years abroad before returning to Ghana to lead his nation into independence. Dr. Nkrumah is just one among the many members of the diaspora community that have governed their countries – many past and present leaders of the African continent have returned home to lead their countries. Ogbu (2016) argued that the resistance of General Sani Abacha's regime and the resistance to President Olusegun Obasanjo to seek another term after his constitutional two-term limit was spearheaded by Nigerians in the diaspora.

On the promotion of good governance, the diaspora community has helped to put the governments on their toes by criticizing unpopular policies that at times their compatriots home are often unable to do (Chikezie 2011; Gupta et al 2009; Ogbu 2016). Diaspora groups have also supported some candidates to win elections and carry out massive reforms (Chikezie 2011; Ogbu 2016). These are a few of the diaspora community's contributions to the political development of the continent. The challenge is how to assess or measure the impact of the diaspora community on the continent. Again, given that remittances sent home can have positive as well as negative economic and political effects, how have the governments and society managed the huge contributions of the diaspora community. The literatures reviewed above have shown that remittances can make recipients less likely to vote, less likely to put their governments on their toes among others, while in some cases, remittances can stabilize authoritarian rule and can spark civil war. Economically, it has been found that remittances can impede the external competitiveness of the receiving countries and also lower productivity of labor where workers switch from production to leisure.

By way of recommendation, first, there is a need to develop tools to assess the significant role the community plays in the political and economic development of the continent. Second, future scholarship on the role of the diaspora community in the political and economic development of the continent should focus on the management of these resources in such a way that their impact can be felt in the human development of the continent. For instance, given that in many cases, the countries that receive the most remittances and those that have remittances constituting a greater percentage of their resources are not those that are doing well when subjected under human development indicators, we need to call attention to the prudent management of remittances. Again, most of the top 10 recipients of remittances in USD and those with high percentage of remittances forming high percentage of their GDP do not do well on civil liberties, economic freedom and political rights.

It is critical to subject recipient countries under serious scrutiny to ensure remittances make positive impacts in the lives of humans as Amartya (1999) puts it, it is the richness of the citizens that is important and not the richness of the economy. It is worrying that remittances recipients whose national priorities are in the economic prosperity of their countries and not in citizens' rights and freedoms are trapped in remittance curse zone (Konte 2016). This is because the remittances do not impact on their human development – thus, remittances need a serious attention. Consequently, in assessing the contributions of the diaspora community, our focus should be on their impacts on human development, freedom and rights. In the light of this, African countries especially high remittances recipients are to invest in the education of their citizens if they want to make impact on their citizens' human development.

Notes

1. The situation where African professional experts who have established in the advanced countries maintain their base in the advance countries and connect with their compatriots on the African continent to imbue them with relevant skills and critical components such as technology, capital and skill.

2. From now onward, the paper uses remittances to refer to cash transfers which the World Bank has data on. Remittance+ is used to refer to both remittances and other roles the emigrants play in the political and economic development of their countries.

3. Countries are ranked based on five areas: size of government, legal structure and security of property rights, access to sound money, freedom to trade internationally, and regulation of credit, labor and business.

4. Between the 1970s and 2003, countries whose combined average ratings for political rights and civil liberties fell between 1.0 and 2.5 were labeled "free," those between 3.0 and 5.5 labeled "partly free," those between 5.5 and 7.0 were labeled "not free."

5. The values of remittances as % of GDP for Zimbabwe for 2005, 2006 and 2016 were not available, therefore I used the average values for 2009-2015

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Appendixes

Appendix 1. Top 10 African Countries with High Growth Rate in 2016

	2016
Cote d'Ivoire	8.76
Ethiopia	7.56
Tanzania	6.96
Senegal	6.65
Sierra Leone	6.07
Rwanda	5.93
Burkina Faso	5.86
Kenya	5.85
Guinea-Bissau	5.57
Mali	5.35

Source: Compilation from the World Bank dataset

Appendix 2. Top 10 African Countries with High Ratings on Economic Freedom in 2015

	2015
Mauritius	8.04
Rwanda	7.57
Seychelles	7.42
Botswana	7.37
Uganda	7.25
Gambia, The	7.24
Kenya	7.11
Tanzania	6.92
Liberia	6.8
Swaziland	6.79

Source: Compilation from the Fraser Institute dataset

Appendix 3. Top 10 African Countries with Favorable Ratings on Political Right in 2016

	2016
Cape Verde	1
Ghana	1
Mauritius	1
Tunisia	1
Benin	2
Namibia	2
Senegal	2
South Africa	2
São Tomé and Príncipe	2
Botswana	3

Source: Compilation from the Freedom House dataset

Appendix 4. Top 10 African Countries with Favorable Ratings on Civil Liberties in 2016

	2016
Cape Verde	1
Benin	2
Ghana	2
Mauritius	2
Namibia	2
Senegal	2
South Africa	2
São Tomé and Príncipe	2
Tunisia	3
Botswana	2

Source: Compilation from the Freedom House dataset

Appendix 5. Top 10 African Countries with High human development ratings in the areas of Inequality -adjusted HDI Value, Life expectancy at birth, Gross national income per capita, and Mean years of schooling 2015

Country	IHDI	Country	LEAB	Country	GNI PC	Country	MYS
Seychelles	0.78	Algeria	75	Seychelles	23,886	South Africa	10.3
Algeria	0.75	Tunisia	75	Equatorial Guinea	21,517	Seychelles	9.4
Libya	0.72	Cabo Verde	74	Gabon	19,044	Botswana	9.2
Tunisia	0.56	Morocco	74	Botswana	14,663	Gabon	8.1
Gabon	0.53	Seychelles	73	Libya	14,303	Ghana	8.1
Cabo Verde	0.52	Libya	72	Algeria	13,533	Algeria	7.8
Egypt	0.49	Egypt	71	South Africa	12,087	Zimbabwe	7.7
Morocco	0.46	Sao Tome & Principe	67	Tunisia	10,249	Libya	7.3
South Africa	0.44	Senegal	67	Egypt	10,064	Egypt	7.1
Botswana	0.43	Tanzania	66	Namibia	9,770	Tunisia	7.1

Key: IHDI=Inequality-adjusted HDI Value, LEAB=Life expectancy at birth, GNI PC=Gross national income (GNI) per capita, MYS=Mean years of schooling, Year 2015.