The route to Brain-Drain —

“Personal accounts of African students in Sweden”

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My profound gratitude to God Almighty for in him I found the strength and courage in fulfilling my goals and most especially in my academic pursuit.

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Abstract

The migration of students from different African countries into Sweden has increased over the years; and the result of this movement is believed to create a brain drain phenomenon in the African continent.

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the prior knowledge on brain drain from Africa. This has been done by focusing on the primary respondents (African students), as a way of getting to know more about the specific reasons why most students choose to remain in Sweden after their studies for either a short or long period of time. The study also gave a brief background into how the brain drain phenomenon began in Africa, as well as the damage which the exit of many students from the continent may cause to future development process.

The conclusion of this paper has shown that, although most African students would like to remain in Sweden after their studies; however majority have attributed their continuous stay to the search of sufficient financial resources before returning to their home countries. Furthermore, a turn-around in the development process of Africa and a stable political environment would encourage many African students to return after their studies.
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1. Introduction

This chapter gives an introduction to the research topic, as well as the general problem discussion that will be treated in the paper. It also looks at the main significance of the research paper.

Migration of people is not a new phenomenon, as people have constantly moved from one country to another due to different reasons. However; the effect this may have on a continent such as Africa may be enormous, and might also as well have a negative impact on the current development process that the region is undergoing.\(^1\) Apart from economic and war driven migrants (refugees); another group of migrants are also students from different parts of the African in search of better education abroad. The migration of Africans into Europe and America can be traced back to the 1960s, when large number of Africans migrated, engaging in an unprecedented expansion of access to education across Europe and America.\(^2\)

The increasing movement of people from Africa into other parts of the world has been attributed to globalization by many researchers. Africa in general has experienced mass migration of people into other parts of the world due to many reasons. A number of these African migrants include students that are seeking education outside their country of origin; and this paper intends to focus on this group of people. Students leaving Africa for other parts of the world are often young adults in their middle age, and this group of people can be useful in the development of the continent as regards to the manpower needed.\(^3\) Majority of these people migrating from Africa often have previous university

\(^1\) ILO, 2009  
\(^2\) Adepoju, 2004  
\(^3\) Tebeje, 2002
studies; and as a result of their migration, the continent loses a large amount of its future labor-force as well its human capital.

The “brain drain” phenomenon is also considered to be a problem for Africa; in the sense that the educational level of individuals that are leaving the continent to other parts of the world is sometimes high; and many of these people subsequently do not return to their home country afterwards. Brain drain has left many African nations short of skills which are needed to meet the challenges of development in the twenty first century.4

The brain drain can be divided into two different categories. On the one hand are those people that have fully completed their education in Africa, and afterwards they migrate to other parts of the world due to various reasons. They consist among others, engineers, health professionals, scientist and entrepreneurs. On the other hand are students who study abroad, afterwards find jobs, establish families, and become permanent residents or citizens of their host country.5 Hence, this paper focuses more on the second category of immigrants (students); it focuses on the migration patterns of African students that are moving outside the continent for educational purposes, as well as highlighting the main effects of their exist on the African continent. The paper also tries to understand why the number of African students moving abroad for their studies have being on the increase over the years, as well as to see how this contributes to the brain drain phenomenon in Africa.

International students make up large part of Linnaeus University’s entire population; and in recent years, the number of students has been on the increase from different parts of the world. African students make up a fraction of these international students at Linnaeus

4 El-Khawas, 2004:37
5 Shinn, 2008
University, and they come from different parts of the African continent. These students mainly consist of young adults with previous education such as high school diploma or university degrees; and with an ambition of furthering their education in Sweden.

The actual data on brain drain in Africa is very scarce and the few are inconsistent; however, statistics that are available shows a continent losing the very people it needs most for economic, social, scientific, and technological progress.6 According to the African Capacity Building Foundation, African countries lose approximately 20,000 skilled and qualified personnel every year to the developed countries. The scale of “brain drain” is massive, as research have shown that “nearly one in 10 tertiary-educated adults that have some university or post secondary schooling and born in developing world now live in the developed world.7

1.1. Problem formulation
Just as the number of Africans heading for Europe and other parts of the world has been on the increase, the vacuum that is being created in their home countries continue to expand, and this problem has to be solved in one way or another. African students in search of a better education abroad contribute to a large extent on the increasing number of people leaving the continent as well; and as the saying goes, “Students of today, Leaders of tomorrow”.

The achievement of foreign education and experience is supposed to be a gain for the sending countries in Africa, but the main problem is that most of the students that often travel abroad in search of better education do not return to their home countries after the completion of their education. According to Professor Emeagwali (a computer scientist

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6 Tebeje, 2002
7 Sriskandarajaah, 2005
based in America), one in three African professionals will like to live outside Africa; and that means African universities are actually training one third of their graduates for export to the developed nations.  

The development of a country requires skilled labor and manpower, but as a result of the constant outward flow of African students and professionals; it might be very difficult in order to achieve any form of development without the presence of skilled personnel that are required to implement development programs such as (education and health care), or promote democratic systems.

### 1.2 Significance of Research

The study of migration and brain drain in Africa is important because this phenomenon can affect its development in any form. Skilled manpower labor is an important asset for any nation in development process; but this manpower is gradually disappearing from the continent into other parts of the world. Although some amount of mobility is obviously necessary if African countries are to integrate into the global economy; however the migration of huge numbers of students and skilled persons pose a treat of a “brain drain” which can affect growth and development. 

There is really a clear need to assess the costs and possible benefits of migration on developing countries as well as the current trends in the brain drain phenomenon; and with a view to finding solutions to mitigate the adverse impact. However, this research is important, first because it tries to contribute to the ongoing research in the brain drain phenomenon; by getting first hand information from these migrating students, in order to

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8 P Emegwali, 2009
9 ILO, 2009
understand the reasons why most of them have chosen to remain in Europe after their education. It also creates a medium for possible solutions to the brain drain phenomenon, by making us understand what can be done in order for many of these immigrants students to return to their country of origin, and contribute to the socio-economic development. And secondly, it tries to see if there might be any possible benefits as a result of the new knowledge that is being achieved by these migrants in their destination countries.
2. Background- path to brain drain

The African continent has experienced mass migration not only to Europe but also other parts of the world, and as previously mentioned; a large number of these migrants include students that are seeking education outside their country of origin. The United Nations estimates that about 3 percent of the world’s population (191 million people) lived in a country other than their country of birth, with 33 percent having moved from a developing country into a developed country.\(^{10}\) As previously mentioned, some of these statistics of migrants include students from Africa in search of education overseas; and this paper is mainly focusing on that category of people.

According to El-khawas, 2004, “the new tools such as internets, cellular phones and multimedia have made people more connected and have extended the search for employment beyond national boundaries.\(^ {11}\) This is also the same for African students who get information easily on possible admission places abroad through the help of internet. This can be said to contribute to the brain drain phenomenon that Africa is currently facing today, as many of these African students got their information through the internet on how and when to apply for different universities in Sweden. The application for visa and residence permit are also possible to obtain through the internet; making it easier for applicants to access.

2.1. Migration and brain drain fact

It may be said that Africa as well as developing countries are “subsidizing” the OECD countries by the movement of graduate students and highly trained personnel such as

\(^{10}\) Journal of sociology and social welfare, 2007

\(^{11}\) El-khawas, 2004:39
doctors, nurses and paramedics; and ironically, most of the money spent on training these people are received as aid from the developed countries. “It costs approximately US$40,000 to train a doctor in Kenya; US$15,000 for a university student”.12 Subsequently, according to the International Development Research center (IDRC), “35% of Africa’s Official Development Assistance is spent on recruiting expatriates; but there are over 300,000 African professionals residing outside the continent”.13

The migration of highly skilled Africans out of the continent has left many of the countries short of skills to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. It is believed that the brain drain phenomenon began in Africa just after the independence of many countries, and has continued over the years.14 According to Wusu 2006, the number of Africans heading out of the continent was initially small during the 1960’s, but this later increased due to the deterioration of social, political and economic conditions. “it is estimated that 27,000 highly educated Africans migrated to developed countries between 1960 and 1975; migration increased to 40,000 annually during the following decade. The number peaked at about 80,000 in 1987, but has leveled to about 20,000 a year since 1990”.15

2.2. Background of African students in Sweden

There are approximately 39 Universities and colleges in Sweden, and there are large numbers of African students currently studying in these universities. Majority of these students come from countries such as Cameroon, Nigeria, Congo DRC, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Mozambique, Senegal, Egypt, e.t.c. Some of these students are enrolled

12 Tebeje, 2002
13 IDRC, 2002
14 Wusu, 2006:91
15 Wusu, 2006:92
in undergraduate studies, while others undertake Masters Studies in various academic areas.

2.2.1. African students at Linnaeus University

The number of students from Africa that are currently studying in Linnaeus University is not so high compared to students from European countries. These students from Africa are divided into two main categories at Linnaeus University; on the one hand are students that are coming from African universities with existing partnership agreements with Linnaeus University (Exchange students); and on the other hand are those students who choose to come to Linnaeus University to study on their own (Free movers). There are approximately 70 African students studying at Linnaeus University; and about 6 exchange students from Africa as at May, 2010. This figure is an approximate and frequently changes because the actual numbers of students that are given admission do not all arrive for their study places due to different reasons, such as visa denial or they may choose to move to other countries when they arrive in Sweden.16

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16 LNU International Office
3. Objectives and research questions

In this chapter, the general and specific objectives of this research paper will be discussed, together with the planned research questions. It will also give a brief introduction to previous studies that have been done on the topic of migration and brain drain in the African continent.

3.1. General objectives
The general objective of this paper is trying to contribute to the prior knowledge of the brain drain phenomenon; how and when it actually begins. This will try to focus on the primary respondents as a way of getting to know more about the specific reasons why students choose to remain in their destination country (Sweden) after their studies for either a short period of time, or for many years after their education. It is also to try to differentiate the potential brain drain students from those whose intentions are to return to their home country after a short period of time (partially brain drain students).

3.2. Specific objectives
- To try to reconstruct the way brain drain comes about by using specific case studies of students at Linnaeus University.
- To try and categorize potential brain drain among students that migrate from Africa with the sole intention of staying, and those that only want to remain for a short period of time before going back.
- To try to understand the specific reasons of various peoples for leaving their countries for education abroad; and to actually know were the brain drain phenomenon begins to manifest.
3.3. Research questions

- What are the main factors which lead to migration and subsequently brain drain?
- What are the specific reasons why most students choose to remain in their destination countries after their education, instead of returning to contribute to the development of their countries?
- Are there any potential factors that might enable more African students to return to their home countries after achieving their education abroad?

3.4. Previous studies

Although there are not so much written documents on brain drain issues in Africa; and it is also difficult to find statistical information on certain areas; such as the exact numbers of immigrants or the actual amount remitted to their home country. However, some previously existing research materials were used in this paper. M A. El-Khawas, 2004. Brain Drain: Putting Africa between a Rock and a Hard Place, and D H Shinn, 2008. African Migration and the Brain Drain; were among some written articles on brain drain which provided an in-depth view of some of the motivational factors behind the reasons for migration of Africans into other parts of the world, including students. These authors concluded that migration and brain drain in Africa is being caused by the complex push and pulls factors; and these factors determine the severity of brain drain in the continent. It outlines the pull factors as various opportunities that attract Africans to migrate; and the push factors as various problems which make people take the decision of migrating out of the continent. D H Shinn, 2008 concludes that, migration and the brain drain problems will continue to have a severe impact on the continent of Africa; as long as
many African countries are still suffering from weak economies, concerns of security, poor governance and a lack of freedom.¹⁷

Wusu O, 2006. Politics and Economics of Africa Vol.6, was also a book that guided me during the process of writing. It gave an introduction into the brain drain phenomenon in Africa, as well as a brief introduction to the period when brain drain began in Africa. It also attributed the increase in number of African migrants into the developed world over the years, to the poor economic situation in the continent.

International organization such as International Labor Organization (ILO) also provided some information that was used in this study. This provided an analysis to the impact of brain drain and the policy issues in both developed and developing countries. The article concluded that although some amount of mobility is actually needed for a country to develop; however the amount of people migrating needs to be checked with various policies. ‘‘while it is obviously not possible to prevent people from moving to developed countries for better prospects in the globalized era; the adverse impact of such movements on the development and poverty in developing countries and the policy options to mitigate such severe impacts needs serious attention’’.¹⁸

¹⁷ Shinn, 2008
¹⁸ ILO, 2009
4- Methodology and Materials

This chapter will discuss the kind of method (qualitative) which will be used in this research study; it will discuss about how information will be provided through interviews and how these respondents will be chosen. It will also discuss about secondary sources which will be used in the research study as well.

4.1. Method

Qualitative research will be used in this research study. This generally is defined as a research that utilizes open-ended interviewing to explore and understand the attitudes, opinions, feelings, of individuals or a group of individuals. Qualitative research can take many forms; typical are focus groups, in-depth interviews, accompanied shops, and workshops.\(^{19}\) In this project, in-depth interviews will be held with different respondents, and also many of them will take the form of conversation in informal places.

Qualitative research is used to reveal motivational aspects on either the behaviour of a group of respondents, or their expectations. Qualitative research has an unstandardized character; its aim is to study a wide range of objects manifestations and do not always track its quantitative regularities but rather are oriented at revealing the causalities. Among so many advantages, this method allows free expression of respondents which helps to reveal their inherent values and feelings, stimulates their creative potential.\(^{20}\)

Qualitative research method which focuses on interview will be used for this research; the mode of interview will be semi-structured. This approach will be much more of an “informal conversational interview” with the respondents, and questions can be built

\(^{19}\) Wolcott, 1990
\(^{20}\) SOCIS, 2008
upon from the respondents answers to certain questions; this will increase the flexibility of relating the interview to particular individuals, based on the answers that they present. And it will also enable the respondents to go deeper into issues, while answering questions freely. But it will also continue to be guided by certain questions that are set aside in order to serve as guidance for the researcher.

4.2. Selection of respondents

The selection of respondents will be based on purpose. This is because the research is mainly focusing on a specific target group (African students), and the respondents will be mainly Africans students studying in Sweden and with the intention to remain after their studies. In order to try to increase the reliability of the result; the respondents will be selected from different countries in Africa, with different religions, as well as academic level and background. Since I am also an African student here at Linnaeus University, I am as well familiar with some of the respondents, which has also made it easier for me to have deep conversational interviews with them; sometimes in their homes or at the university library.

Although, this form of informal interviews with known respondents can have some effect in the results; as the respondents might give out information that will satisfy the researcher. However, I have tried to avoid this during my work by framing the questions in such a way that would produce reliable answers, and also cross-checking my findings with one another, as well as using my own experience as a form of triangulation. The interviewees were also assured that their answers were confidential and only for academic purposes, as well as observing their anonymity throughout the entire paper.

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21 Mikkelsen, 2005:171
4.3. Interviews
The method of interviewing respondents was mainly individually; this was done by trying to get in touch with African students from different countries, cultural background, religious groups, as well as gender. This was also to try as much as possible in obtaining representative information from the different respondents on the research questions. Interviewing a number of people on the same topic will quickly reveal a range of opinions, attitudes and strategies. These range of different opinions, strategies and attitudes were visible in my interviews with the various respondents, because many of their answers provided a range of new questions in my interview question guide, and I had to adjust the question guide several times along the process. The interviews were in form of deep conversations, and sometimes were often diverted into informal discussions, so as to get a critical view of what the respondents feel on the main issues.

The language of interview was mainly English; however I conducted some of the interviews in the respondent’s local languages (Pidgin English); this was mainly done with students from Nigeria and Cameroun because I can speak and understand these languages. This was a way to get much deeper answers from the respondents, and also to make the interview atmosphere much conducive for them to really communicate in an informal way. The interview time ranged from approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour; depending on the location and how many people were present at the point of interview.

Snowball sampling method was also used during my interview process; which means that after interviewing some of my respondents, they led me to other African students that I was not familiar with before, and this process continued during the interview period. While this technique of snowball sampling can dramatically lower the difficulties in getting across to respondents in a research, it also comes at the expense of introducing

22 Mikkelsen, 2005:172
bias because the technique itself reduces the likelihood that the sample will represent a good cross section from the possible respondents that it might produce.\textsuperscript{23}

4.3.1. Interview question guide
As is typical in most in-depth interviews, the interview format was a form of open-ended questions.\textsuperscript{24} An instrument of approximately 24 questions served as a guide during my interview process; and this enabled me to keep track of the main research aim while conducting the interviews. The interview guide consisted of questions that were designed to gather information on various issues relating to migration and the brain drain phenomenon, as well as the motivating factors which made these specific students decide to stay in Sweden after their studies. A total number of 20 students were interviewed during the period of 3 weeks; and these respondents were also assured of the confidentiality of their responses, due to the fact that certain issues were sensitive.

The interview question guide was made in order to suit the research question and the purpose of the research; and follow-up question were available were necessary. After the first two interviews; more questions were included to the question guide in order to get more information from the respondents. The interview began by asking the respondents more general questions, before going into specific and personal questions directed towards them. This was done in order to facilitate the narrative history of the respondents. The method of recording information from the interview sessions were mainly in writing. According to Reis & Judd, 2000, “the method of taking-notes during interview sessions is usually insufficient to permit reliable coding in the interview records”.\textsuperscript{25} However, much effort was made to collect relevant information that was provided by the respondents on different question that was asked, in order to facilitate the coding process.

\textsuperscript{23} StatPac, 2010
\textsuperscript{24} Bailey, 1978
\textsuperscript{25} Reis & Judd, 2000:291
4.4. Materials

4.4.1. Secondary materials
In addition to the interviews which will be made with the primary respondents (African students), additional sources such as secondary materials will also be used in this research. Although there is not so much written on migration issues especially in the African context; however, previously existing materials on migration issues were also used in this research to give an in-depth view of the issue.

The use of secondary materials served as a means of cross examining the information that was received during the interview, and also helps in analyzing the information from the respondents. (M A. El-Khawas, 2004. Brain Drain: Putting Africa between a Rock and a Hard Place, and D H Shinn, 2008. African Migration and the Brain Drain) among other materials were some of the secondary materials used in this research study.

4.4.2. Criticism of sources
When writing an academic thesis and collecting the material; there are certain criteria a researcher has to consider. These criteria’s are validity, reliability, independence and freedom from bias. Validity means that the sources of information that have been used when writing this report are relevant for the work that is being performed. To achieve a high level of validity it is important for the researchers to explain their backgrounds and understanding of the topic, describe how the study was performed, how respondents were selected and also to show how the material was interpreted in the analysis. I have described and explained how the criteria concerning validity have been used in this method chapter.
Considering reliability while carrying out research makes the work more trustworthy and of a higher scientific value. Sources of information are more reliable if there has not been much time between an event and when it is being written about. But that is not the case with this report, because the information that was used came directly from the actual respondents (African students). I only had some problems with getting the statistics of African students that were present in the university, but it was difficult to find. But to solve this problem, I have tried to contact as many African students as possible to be able to get a more reliable response.

I have attained independence in this research by referring to original sources as much as possible rather than summaries of a secondary source; however, the analysis of this primary source was done by a secondary theoretical framework. The fourth criterion which was focused on was bias. I was also alerted to the possibility of sources of information being unreliable because the issue of discussion is quite sensitive, and some respondents would not like their main intention of coming to Sweden to be known. Triangulation is a means of decreasing bias. I have applied triangulation in several respects. Firstly, I have used my one knowledge in these issues to analyse information from my perspective. Secondly, I have tried to contact several respondents to obtain information on the issues that are central to the study. Thirdly the report has been compiled using a combination of primary research and a variety of secondary sources.

4.5. Limitations
There can be a lot of problems in terms of validity and the reliability of the information which are gotten from the primary sources when carrying out a research of this nature. Because of the sensitive nature of the issue being discussed with the respondents; they

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26 Thuren, 1997:11
27 Mikkelsen, 2005:96
can be biased in the answers that they give. This is a kind of limitation to this type of research, because people intend to hide their true intentions when the issue is too sensitive or is considered to be private. The information from secondary sources can also be biased because different authors are influence politically or culturally.

Another limitation to this research was that many of the respondents were African students just like myself, and also studying in the same university; so most of the interviews were informal, and could have had some influence in the answers that they produced.
5. Analytical framework

This chapter will look at the analytical framework of this research paper; it takes a look at the ‘‘push’’ and ‘‘pull’’ factors that are responsible for migration on the African scenario. This chapter will help to give a broader understanding of the reasons to ‘‘why, and how’’ African students as well as other migrants decides to migrate and remain in the host country.

5.1. The push and pull factors

The main causes of the brain drain can be generally understood when looking at the push-pull factors. According to Shinn, 2008, these complex push and pull factors is said to determine the severity of the brain drain and migration for any particular country in Africa.\(^{28}\) The pull factors can be described as the favourable conditions in the receiving countries which attract many migrants from Africa, and make them decide to migrate in the first place. They include, among others, higher salaries, higher standard of living, safety of environment and less bureaucratic control. The push factors on the other hand, can be described as the unfavourable conditions in Africa which motivates these people to migrate into other parts of the world. These include less job opportunities, low wages, crimes, poor educational systems, political repression, and arm conflicts.\(^{29}\) Although the impact of push factors can vary from country to country in Africa; in the sense that the push factors impacts negatively on countries like DRC, Sudan and Somalia because of the conflict and political instability than they are by economic concerns. And other much

\(^{28}\) Shinn, 2008

\(^{29}\) El-Khawas, 2004:39
more stable countries like Ghana, Burkina Faso and Zambia are faced with economic push factors.\textsuperscript{30}

5.1.1. The push factors

- Low wages, crimes
- Less job opportunities
- Poor educational systems
- Political repression
- Arm conflicts
- Lack of psychological satisfaction

The number of economy issues in a country can be linked to the reasons why its citizen (highly skilled people) would like to migrate. In this sense; as the living conditions in a country depreciate, many of these professionals as well as students tend to seek opportunities in other parts of the world. A country that has a weak economy, high rate of corruption, low salary rates, high unemployment rate, and a high of poverty level within its society is prone to the brain drain phenomenon. On the other hand, when the unemployment level is high in the society, the upcoming graduates as well as students tend to look for opportunities elsewhere.

The political situation in many countries also contributes to the emigration of many citizens, as well as contributing to the decisions of many students to leave for studies abroad. “The Red Terror in Ethiopia, genocide in Rwanda, and the civil war in DRC are a few examples within many of the conflicts in Africa that is associated with political and

\textsuperscript{30} Shinn, 2008
security issues in Africa''. The poor human rights practices, absence of academic freedom and illegal regime changes in many of these Africa countries also contributes to the increase in the level of brain drain.

The low wages that professionals often receive are seen as major reasons for brain drain. Example; in Kenya, medical graduates earn an average of about 1,000 USD per month. But in some developed countries, they could receive as much as 14,000 USD monthly. In few other Africa countries apart from Kenya, physicians earn as low as 100 USD per month this difference in salary has a major effect in making professionals abandon their jobs in Africa, and migrate to other parts of the world were they can earn higher wages for the same jobs.

A related concern to the educational environment is the lack of professional opportunities that is lacking in majority of these countries, and this contributes to making students as well as other professionals decide to migrate to other parts of the world. The lack of training and research facilities, morale and job satisfaction, and human resource management policies, is one area that contributes mostly to the brain drain of student from developing continent such as Africa into developed world such as Europe. The relationship between the government and the universities in Africa is also very hostile. The governments are mostly in control of the universities, and their tight control makes the university administration have a minimal involvement in the education policies. According to Chimanikire, 2002, “Most Sub-Saharan Africa do not have particularly friendly working environments, strong budgets, clear policies or generous research funds;
and there is often no national policy for or even little investment in science and technology” 33.

The lack of psychological satisfaction which many professionals in Africa encounter in their working environment often contributes to the migration of skilled personnel from Africa. 34 Many of these skilled professionals get frustrated and relatively deprived when they begin to have the feeling that they cannot accomplish what they were initially trained to do.

5.1.2. The pull factors

- Higher salaries
- Higher standard of living
- High standard of education
- Safety of environment
- Less bureaucratic control
- Immigration policies encouraging migration

The pull attraction which contributes to brain drain is often seen as the opposite of the push factors. The main reasons why students as well as professionals decide to migrate from their countries are basically due to the push factors highlighted in the previous paragraph. When the economy is weak and the wages for professionals are low in the countries were skilled personnel are lost, then the economy of the receiving countries are often stronger and wages higher. Due to the stronger economic situation in Europe, North America and the Gulf, they are the likely destinations for many skilled personnel as well as students from Africa. South Africa and Botswana are exceptions to some extent due to

33 Chimaniikire, 2002:12
34 Shinn, 2002
their stronger economy in Africa; but they also lose a large numbers of professionals and students annually to the developed countries in Europe and North America.35

Apart from the strong economy, higher standard of living and peaceful political atmosphere that attracts many of these skilled personnel as well as students into Europe and America, another important pull factor that contributes to brain drain within the developing countries and Africa in particular is the possibility of improving professionally in these developed countries. The level of career advancement and job mobility is high, and more attention is given to human resource policies, supervision and training. The universities are well equipped with necessary facilities for education, including full access to the internet and books in the library. Research funds and scholarships are available in the developed countries; and there are generally fewer bureaucratic controls in the developed countries unlike the developing world.36

A study which was done in 2003 and supported by the European Commission concluded that the access to scientific equipment and technology is one of the main factors influencing researcher mobility and, as a consequence, this leads to brain drain.37

The immigration policies in many developed countries can be considered as a pull factor which attracts intellectuals from developing countries. ‘‘the United States, France and Germany among others, have put in place visa policies that encourage the brain drain phenomenon’’.38 The United States offers employment-based immigrant visas which is divided into five categories. A special part of this program is focused on attracting persons of extraordinary ability in the field of sciences, arts, education, business and

35 Chimanikire, 2002:13
36 Shinn, 2008
37 Times Higher Education, 2003
38 Shinn, 2008
athletics. In 2007, the United States admitted 162,000 under this program worldwide; and the largest groups came from India, Philippine, and China. About 4,300 African were admitted into the US under this program.

Some highly developed countries have actively turned to the developing countries in recruiting skilled personnel in various categories, such as doctors and nurses. According to Shinn 2008, “Canada, Australia and some members of the European Union have used this method to recruit skilled workers from Sub-Saharan Africa. Senegal and Tanzania have lost high numbers of primary and secondary school teachers to some European countries due to this effort”.39

The United States has a Diversity Immigrant Visa Program, which is intended to encourage the immigration of historically underrepresented nationalities into the United States and become citizens. The program is also known as the green card lottery, and applicants must have a high school education or the equivalent in order to qualify for this program; the annual worldwide D.V quota is 50,000 immigrants.40 During 2007, 42,000 immigrants travelled into the United States under this program, and more than 19,000 Africans were admitted during the 2007 program. Egypt had the highest number, followed by Ethiopia, Nigeria Morocco, Kenya, and Ghana.41

39 Shinn, 2008  
40 US Department of State  
41 Shinn, 2008
6. Findings and analysis

This chapter hopes to analyze the information that was produced from different students that I have interviewed during the two weeks period. In the process, I will also try to crosscheck my findings with the help of the ‘‘push/pull’’ factors, to actually find out the reasons why these students have decided to leave their country; and their intention of staying behind after studies.

6.1. Brief discussion of findings

When discussing with the different students from Africa, it was possible to discover many of the push and pull factors that made them decide to come to Sweden for their studies in the first place. These factors can also go a long way to affect their decision making process, on whether to return to their home countries after completion of their studies, or remain in Sweden and try to start a new life. The push factor plays a big role in this process of decision making; and this is because many African students that are leaving politically unstable countries or low economic countries, are often captured by the opportunities that they hope to achieve here in Sweden, rather than returning to Africa where the hope of having such opportunities are often very low.

The push factor can also be considered as playing a larger role on why these students have decided to leave their country in exchange for a life in Sweden because many of them actually did not know much about Sweden before coming; but they just had the notion that the life in Europe would be far-more better than the one they had back in Africa, and the opportunities they stand to gain here is Sweden would be more than that in Africa.
The majority of African students at Linnaeus University are free movers, but some exchange students that have already decided to stay after their university program were also among some of the interviewed students. The interviewed student 15 and 16 were exchange students from Uganda, but have finally decided to continue living in Sweden as free movers for another extra year. “According to interview student 15, she believes she is part of the brain drain problem in Africa; however the better opportunities that are here in Sweden made her decide to continue living here. But she intends to go back home to Uganda in the future”.42 “interviewed student 16, also highlighted that she decided to continue living in Sweden because of the employment opportunities that are in the country, and she intends to study a new program in public health in order to secure more time of living in Sweden”.43 They also cited other reasons for making their decisions to remain in Sweden, such as the unemployment rate in Uganda, as well as the underdevelopment.

Two of the students that were interviewed agreed that they had initially decided not to return to their home country after their education here in Sweden. According to interviewed student 11 “I had no intention of returning to Nigeria when I got my visa to come to Sweden, and this is because the opportunities back there are very limited”.44 The other student also confirmed that he had no intention of returning to his country when he left; but thinks he might relocate to another European country if he does not secure a job in Sweden after his education.45

42 Interviewed student no. 15
43 Interviewed student no. 16
44 Interviewed student no. 11
45 Interviewed student no. 4
6.2. Push and pull factors of students from Africa to Sweden

Just as students continue to contribute to the increasing number of migrants from African into other parts of the world; there is also a fraction of students that decides to stay in their destination countries after the completion of their education, as previously mentioned. However, it is important to know that the factors behind migration and subsequently permanently residing in Sweden differ from country to country in Africa. The geographical position, state of economic development and cultural settings play an important role in the decision making process of these students, during and after the period of studies here in Sweden. Examples of these are students that are coming from politically unstable countries or with high rate of corruption; these students are more likely to remain in Sweden after their studies due to the situation in their home countries. These push factors for them might be different from the students that are coming from countries which might be partially stable political, but still have some economic push factors.

6.2.1 Highlighting push factors from interviewed students

a) Underdevelopment and poor economic situation

The economic situation in many African countries is seen as one of the main reasons why Africans usually migrate into Europe and other parts of the world. This factor is not different when looking at the situation of students from Africa who are moving abroad for studies. Apart from the high standard of education and improved technology that attracts students from Africa to Sweden, the poor economic situation and underdevelopment is a major reason why they decide to leave Africa and eventually settle down in Sweden after their studies. According to interviewed student 1, “the economic situation in his home country Ethiopia was not good, and the opportunities of getting a
job is almost impossible for many graduates; all these contributed to the reasons why he had to travel to Sweden”.46 The hope of a better life in Sweden is seen because of the better economic situation in Sweden, and they have a higher hope of getting a job when they come to Sweden, compared to when they remain in Africa.

According to interviewed student 11, “he does not intend to return to African after his studies here in Sweden, but hopes to search for jobs not only in Sweden, but also other parts of the world; this is because he believes that the chances of getting a job is low due to the bad economic situation of his country”.47 The economic situation in Africa can be seen as a contributing factor to reasons why many students decide to stay and settle in Sweden after their studies. However, around 20 to 30 percent of the students interviewed had initially decided to remain in Sweden even before the migrated; and this was due to the bad economic conditions of their countries.

b) Unfavorable political system in many African nations
The poor economic situation in African countries is not the only reason why people decide to move to other parts of the world. The political systems in most Africa countries are weak. According to students from Cameroun, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Uganda; the political system in these country’s are full of corrupt leaders and dictators. “A respondent from Cameroun referred to the political system in his country as democratic on paper, but dictatorial in practice”, when asked why he said this; he continued that the president of Cameroun has been in power for over 25 years, and he does not consider that as democratic.48 “Interviewed student 7 described the political system in his country as

46 Interviewed student no. 1
47 Interviewed student no. 11
48 Interviewed student no. 9
corrupt, and that he does not see the future of young Nigerians in the country, because the country is being controlled by the same groups of leaders for over three decades\textsuperscript{49}.

The poor and unfavorable political system in Africa contributes to the reasons why students decide to leave the continent to other parts of the world. According to (Shinn, 2008), \textquote{`many political and security issues contribute to the decision of skilled Africans to move elsewhere`\textsuperscript{50}}. Interviewed student 1, cited the political system in Ethiopia as one of the main reasons why he decided to move to Sweden for his Masters degree. This is because a student can only study up to the bachelor’s level in Ethiopia; and must be a member of the ruling political party before he or she can continue on the master’s level\textsuperscript{51}.

Although the political situation in Africa serves as a major push factor for African students moving into Sweden; however, a comparison between the political situation in many African countries and Sweden can contribute to the reasons why most of these students settle in Sweden after their education. This is because all the students that were interviewed saw the political system in Sweden as more democratic, open and free of corruption unlike their home countries. However, few of them highlighted the fact that they had little knowledge of how the Swedish political system is generally operated.

c) \textit{Low possibility of employment and low salaries}

The employment opportunities in Africa are considered to be low and this is another reason why most immigrant students would prefer to migrate and remain in Sweden after their education. This aspect can be linked to the poor economic situation and underdevelopment in Africa which contributes to lack of jobs for university graduates. Interviewed student 15 highlighted the fact that she would rather remain in Sweden with

\textsuperscript{49} Interviewed student no. 7
\textsuperscript{50} Shinn, 2008
\textsuperscript{51} Interviewed student no. 1
an unskilled job than going back to Uganda after her education; this was because ‘‘she believed that she would earn more money as a cleaner in Sweden than a graduate in Uganda’’. However, she explained that she might eventually return to her home country to practice her profession, after she had earned enough money in Sweden. Interviewed student 13 explained that he intends to remain in Sweden after his education, but might return to Cameroon only when he does not find a job here in Sweden.

All the respondents complained about difficulties in getting a job back in Africa, even when they already have the qualification. However, about 50 percent of the respondents believe that the chances of getting a job might be higher, if they return to their home countries with a Swedish degree. According to interviewed student 2, ‘‘I decided moved to Sweden for my master’s studies when he couldn’t find a job with his undergraduate degree for many years’’.

According to Shinn, 2008; the differences in salary between someone working in a developed country and another person doing the same job in Africa are huge. So many students choose to search for jobs in Sweden, rather than returning to their home country. However, many students end up getting jobs that are not related to their field or even unskilled jobs.

d) The role of Ethnicity and tribalism in Africa

The role of ethnicity and tribalism in Africa is very much important when looking at the push factors of why most African students decide to migrate and remain in other parts of the world. According to many students, ethnicity and tribalism plays a big role when

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52 Interviewed student no. 15
53 Interviewed student no. 13
54 Response from Interviewed students
55 Interviewed student no. 2
56 Shinn, 2008
looking for a job in Africa or any other aspect of the society. The interviewed students from Cameroun, Uganda and Nigeria highlighted this as the most important aspect of securing a job; and not the qualifications that a person has achieved. Interviewed student 3 pointed out that the possibility of securing a good job in Cameroon depends on the ethnic group that you belong to; “most people for the Franco-phone part of the country are favored mostly in job applications, compared to those from the Anglo-phone part of Cameroon”. 58

The role of ethnicity in many African countries can be seen as a contributing factor to the reasons why many students decide to migrate and subsequently remain in Sweden. The ethnicity problem in Africa is not just linked to the job sector, but also associated with political instability and conflict tensions. “Africa today has the highest number of 'tribes' and hence the highest number of conflicts and instability compared to other parts of the world”. 59

e) Conflict and civil wars

The conflicts and civil wars in Africa is one contributing factor which increases the migration of students and also skilled workers. The conflicts in Somalia, Rwanda, DRC, and Sierra Leone have led to the loss of many of its skilled labor as well as students. 60 When there is any civil unrest in a country, it affects the educational system as well, and contributes to the reasons why students would choose to travel abroad for their studies.

The power struggles in Africa which often creates violence is usually deadly. According to El-Khawas, 2004, “its is estimated that around 7 million people lost their lives in

57 Response from Interviewed students from Cameroon, Nigeria and Uganda
58 Interviewed student no. 3
59 Opondo, 2004:1
60 Shinn, 2008
Africa between 1960 and 1990 due to civil war and political violence. The 1990s have seen the number of wars and political violence doubled in Africa and has included countries such as DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ivory Cost, Liberia, Nigeria Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda etc. this armed conflicts often leads to the displacement of people and forced migration. An example of this is Sudan, which has lost many highly educated students because of the long civil war.

6.2.2 Highlighting the major pull factors from interviewed students

a) Information from other students

The information that students receive from friends and even family members that have already traveled to Sweden is an important pull attraction of African students to come to Sweden. This was visible while conducting majority of the interviews; as many of the students confirmed that they were informed about Sweden by either their friends or families that were already living in Sweden. According to interviews, this pull factor from Africans already living overseas also contribute to why many student remain in Sweden after their studies; and this is because of the advice that they receive from fellow migrants that have already taken that path.

b) Free tuition in Swedish University system

The system of free tuition for all University students in Sweden irrespective of nationality has been a major pull attraction for the migration of many African students into Sweden. However, there has been some discussion among the Swedish government to introduce tuition fees for foreign students. In a bill to parliament, the government proposes that students from countries outside the European Union should pay tuition fees from the

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61 El-Khawas, 2004:41
62 El-Khawas, 2004:42
academic year 2011/2012. Until now, Sweden has been one of the few countries in Europe that has not charged any type of fees; all students regardless of country of origin; has been funded by the taxpayers.\textsuperscript{63}

During my interviews session with the respondents, about 80 percent of them said that they were attracted to Sweden because of the free tuition system, and it also reduced their expenses compared to studying in places such as United Kingdom and America. According to one of the respondents, “it is much wiser and cheaper to study here in Sweden than the US because it is free here, and you get almost similar degree certificate”.\textsuperscript{64}

\textbf{c) Easy access to Swedish study permit compare to other European countries}

The process of obtaining a study permit to come to Sweden is less difficult compared to many other European countries; and this is considered to be another reason why many students from Africa choose to come to Sweden. According to many respondents; the system of obtaining a visa to come to Sweden does not demand you to make a deposit or pay some fees before applying for a student permit, so it is easier to apply for a Swedish permit than to apply for many other countries which requires the method of tuition deposits. “however, you have to show the Swedish immigration that you can survive when you are already living in Sweden”.\textsuperscript{65}

\textbf{d) High standard of education in Sweden}

The standard of education in Sweden is higher compared to countries in Africa, and students have more access to technology, such as internet and computers. When discussing with all the respondents about the standard of education in Sweden compared

\textsuperscript{63} Thelocal. Sweden’s news in English. http://www.thelocal.se/19410/20090512/
\textsuperscript{64} Interviewed student no. 4
\textsuperscript{65} Response from Interviewed students
to that of their home countries; they all concluded that the system of education in Sweden was more advanced than that of their home country. Majority of them said that the system of education in Sweden was more practical and with fewer students in the classrooms, compared to the theoretical approach in Africa, and with a high number of students in classrooms. According to one of the respondents “he believes that the standard of education in Sweden would enable students get jobs easily, compared to the education they get in Africa”.66 “Another student from Uganda pointed out that the Swedish system trains people to be job oriented, but the education they receive in Uganda is much more theoretical”.67

6.3 Comparing the push/pull factors from students with the theoretical framework

6.3.1 Push factors

- The low wages in salary was a push factor for the reasons why people move from Africa to other parts of the world, and according to the interviews; this was one of the reasons given by many students on why they have decided to remain in Sweden after their education.

- The lack of job opportunities for graduates in many African countries was also one of the responses from the interviewed students on why they prefer to stay in Sweden after their education.

- The poor educational system in Africa was also used in the theoretical framework as a push factor for the reasons why people migrate out of Africa. And according to the interviews; many of the students identified the underdevelopment of their various countries as a reason for the poor educational system.

66 Interviewed student no. 7
67 Interviewed student no. 14
- The unfavorable political system in Africa was mentioned by majority of the students, as a reason for deciding to remain in Sweden after their education. This point also identifies as one of the theoretical framework for this research study.

6.3.2 Pull factors

- According to the interviews, the information that many students received from other Africans already living in Sweden contributed as a major pull factor which attracted them to migrate and subsequently remain in Sweden. However, this pull factor was not used as one of the analytical framework, but was only discovered during the research study.

- the Free tuition system in Sweden, as well as the easy access to Swedish study permit that was discovered as one of the main pull factors of why student decide to come to Sweden can also be linked to the favorable immigration policies by European countries to attract migration from the African continent. This was also present in the theoretical framework of this research paper.

- The higher standard of education in Sweden served as one of the framework to the reason why African students would decide to move to Sweden in the first place for their education and subsequently remain. During the interviews, the students also gave this as one of the reasons why they decided to migrate to Sweden for their education.

6.4. The possible impact of this phenomenon

Although it is difficult to compute the monetary cost of brain drain on African countries; this phenomenon has resulted in the substantial loss of many university graduates. Many
countries in Africa are often deprived of the potential contributions and development benefits that might come from these people. A large number of university graduates now live outside of Africa; it is estimated that about ‘‘60 percent of Gambia’s university graduates, 25 percent of graduates from Sierra Leone, and 10 percent of Kenya’s graduate are now residents of the United States. Ghana has lost 26 percent and South Africa 8 percent of their highly educated citizens to the OECD countries’’.  

According to different analyst, brain drain tends to pull out the best and brightest from the African continent and these are the people needed to improve the social economic development of Africa. The movement of Africans into developed countries represents a critical loss of human capital, which the governments have invested in through trainings and previous educational studies. The brain drain phenomenon creates a major development burden for African nations in terms of loss of investment as well as other development opportunities.  

6.5. Beyond the push/pull factors of migration

The push and pull factors is often used to understand the main factors behind migration and subsequently brain drain; it shows why people are forced to leave their home countries to a new place, and also the factors which attracts them to migrate to a certain part of the world. This movement of students as well as other immigrants from the African continent into other parts of the world is believed to have a positive effect on the future development of the continent.  

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68 El-Khawas, 2004:43  
69 The African Executive, 2010  
70 El-Khawas, 2004:39
According to Laura Frisch 2010, “the possibility of migration and the examples that is been created by successful Africans abroad, serve as incentives for young students in Africa to work hard and gain skills which will enable them overcome the hurdles of migration.” The new human capital which is created through these incentives is believed to offset the loss of skilled people who do eventually leave the continent to other parts of the world.

6.5.1. The Possible benefits of migration

Just as the migration of skilled personnel and students being on the increase in Africa; so has the possible benefits from migration to the continent increased. African migrants contribute to the development of the continent through a number of ways, and many studies have shown that this will probably increase in the future. The acquisition of skills from Africans in Diasporas has benefited few countries, as well as the increasing role of remittances from migrants in Africa.

According to the World Bank, the estimated remittance to Sub-Saharan Africa in 2007 reached 20 billion dollars; more than the region’s total amount of foreign direct investments and almost equal to the amount of foreign aid it receives; with Nigeria as the highest receiver of remittances amounting to about 2.5 billion dollars annually. The remittances from Africans living abroad and the income which is generated from these remittances have become major resources for the receiving households, as well as for the national development of many countries in Africa.

71 Freschi, 2010  
72 Economic commission of Africa, 2006:2  
73 Shinn, 2002
Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia are heavily dependent of remittances from families living overseas. In 2003, Eritrea’s total remittances constituted approximately 70 percent of its total GDP, and the remittances to Ethiopia almost equalled the country’s export earning of coffee in 2000.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{74} Shinn, 2002
7. Conclusion

The general purpose of the paper has to try and contribute to the prior knowledge and ongoing research on the brain drain phenomenon in Africa; and this has been done by focusing on the primary respondents (African students), as a way of getting to know more about the specific reasons why most students choose to remain in Sweden after their studies for either a short or long period of time. The study also gave a brief background into how the brain drain phenomenon began in Africa, and the damage that the exit of many students from the continent may cause to the future development process.

This paper has shown that there are several factors which lead to migration and subsequently brain drain in the African continent. The push and pull factors were used throughout this paper in order to understand the forces which makes people decide to migrate, and also the reasons why they decide to remain after completing their education. As have been discuss in this paper, the weak economies, poor governance and lack of individual freedom; contributes to the reasons why many students decide to leave their countries for the more developed world. However, the information gathered by this research shows that most Africa students would prefer to stay in Sweden after their studies, and return to their home countries after they have secured enough financial resources from any kind of jobs that they find.

Furthermore, the push and pull factors which were used as a framework for this study was to a large extent similar with the ones provided by the interviewed students; however, this research has also shown that the information which African students receive from people already residing in Europe, contributes to the pull attraction which makes them decide to migrate to other part of the world and subsequently decide to remain.
In conclusion; although students are a part of the large flow of immigrants from the African continent into Europe; however, most of them have attributed their continuous stay in Sweden after their studies to the search of financial resources before leaving to their home countries. Majority have also confirmed their intention of helping in the development of their various countries through the knowledge they have attained from their education in Sweden. Furthermore; although it is quite impossible at this moment to see all African students returning to their home countries after their studies in Sweden; however, a positive change in the development process in Africa and good governance might go a long way to encourage a lot of African students to return to their home countries after achieving their education.
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I. Appendix 1

Interview question guide

Educational aspects: -

1- What subject area are you studying in Sweden and for how long?
2- Is this program or course also offered in your home country?
3- How long have you been studying in Sweden?
4- How can you describe the educational system in Sweden, compared to your home country?
5- What field of study did you undertake before moving to Sweden for your education?
6- What motivated you to move outside your country for your studies; and why did you choose Sweden?
7- What do you intend to do when you finish your current program of studies?

General aspects: -

8- Are you familiar with the brain drain phenomenon in Africa?
9- In what ways do you think you can be of importance to the social economic development of your country?
10- How are employment opportunities for graduates in your country?
11- Do you intend to return to your home country after completing your studies? If no;
12- How often do you get in touch with your families? Don’t you miss your families back in your home country?
13- Do you have any plans to bring your families over to Sweden in the future?
14- How do you finance your stay in Sweden while studying?
15- Do you have any form of employment at the same time while studying in Sweden?
16- Can you identify any opportunities you consider to be here in Sweden?

Social aspects: -
17- What are some of the challenges while living/studying outside your country?
18- How much do you understand in the Swedish language?
19- Are you making any efforts to learn Swedish language while you live here?
20- Can you identify any differences between the social environment in Sweden and your country?

Political aspects: -
21- How can you describe the political situation in your country?
22- Can you compare the political situation there with Sweden?
23- Is there any sort of political impact in the educational system of your country? If yes;
24- What level of support does education receive?
II. Appendix 2

List of Respondents

1- Berhanu Gizaw (Ethiopia) Master student in Information systems (Male)
2- Ekoh Elad (Cameroon) Undergraduate student in Sales and marketing (Male)
3- George Musa (Cameroon) Undergraduate student in Sales and marketing (Male)
4- Gregory Omoruyi (Nigerian) Master student in terotechnology (Male)
5- Lopez Ramond (Cameroon) Undergraduate student in International law (Male)
6- Marie Manyi (Cameroon) Master student in Mathematics (Female)
7- Martin Obamwonyi (Nigeria) Mater student in terotechnology (Male)
8- Masaoso Chirwa (Zambia) Master student in Social works (Male)
9- Ndi Frankline (Cameroon) Master student in Peace and development (Male)
10- Noel Kasime (Uganda) Master student in Peace and development (Male)
11- Oghenefegiro Awaritoma (Nigeria) Master in Supply chain management (Male)
12- Robert Turyamureeba (Uganda) Master student in Peace and development (Male)
13- Sango Djanea (Cameroon) Undergraduate student in sales and marketing (Male)
14- Sharon Kyomugisha (Uganda) Undergraduate student in International law (Female)
15- Prudence Tushabomwe (Uganda) Master student in Psychology (Female)
16- Patience (Uganda) Master student in psychology (Female)
17- Enow Ntui Ayuk (Cameroon) Undergraduate student in Marketing (Male)

18- Nicolas Nkemaouh (Cameroon) Undergraduate student in Marketing (Male)

19- Nwassik Flore (Cameroon) Undergraduate student in Marketing (Female)

20- Ngwentine Tangiri (Cameroon) Undergraduate student in Marketing (Female)