

**EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED RISK AND
ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT ON THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOSTILE
ENVIRONMENT AND EXPATRIATE
ADAPTATION IN NIGERIA**

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ENVIRONMENT AND EXPATRIATE
ADAPTATION IN NIGERIA**

by

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DEDICATION

To my late dad

Sheikh Alhaji Umaru Ndagi

He was an embodiment of excellence in knowledge, worship, and character.

He lived and died in the services of Islam, knowledge sharing and community service.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiii
LIST OF APPENDICES	xv
ABSTRAK	xvi
ABSTRACT	xviii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	14
1.3 Research Questions	19
1.4 Research Objectives.....	20
1.5 Scope of the Study	21
1.5.1 Brief Description of Study Area (Nigeria).....	23
1.6 Significance of the Study	24
1.6.1 Theoretical Significance.....	25
1.6.2 Practical Significance.....	26
1.7 Definition of Operational Terms.....	27
1.7.1 Hostile Environment	28
1.7.2 Terrorism.....	28
1.7.3 Kidnapping.....	28
1.7.4 Workplace Bullying	28
1.7.5 Culture Shock.....	29
1.7.6 Organisational Support.....	29

1.7.7	Perceived Risk.....	29
1.7.8	Expatriate	30
1.7.9	Expatriate Adaptation.....	30
1.7.9(a)	Expatriate Work Domain Adaptation.....	30
1.7.9(b)	Expatriate Non-Work Domain Adaptation.....	31
1.8	Organisation of the study and chapter summary.....	31
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW		33
2.1	Introduction.....	33
2.2	Conceptual Clarification	33
2.2.1	Hostile Environment	34
2.2.2	Terrorism.....	36
2.2.3	Kidnapping.....	39
2.2.4	Workplace Bullying	40
2.2.5	Culture Shock.....	42
2.2.6	Expatriate Adaptation.....	45
2.2.6(a)	Work and Non-work Domains of expatriates.....	47
2.2.7	Organisational Support.....	48
2.3	Theoretical Framework	51
2.3.1	Review of Theories	52
2.3.1(a)	Anxiety-Uncertainty Management Theory	52
2.3.1(b)	Theory of Organisational Support.....	54
2.3.1(c)	Person – Environment Fit Theory	56
2.3.2	Adoption of Appropriate Underpinning Theory	57
2.4	Research Gap	59
2.5	Research Model	61
2.6	Hypotheses Development	64

2.6.1	Relationship between hostile environment (terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying and culture shock) and expatriate adaptation in Nigeria	64
2.6.1(a)	Terrorism and Expatriate Adaptation.....	66
2.6.1(b)	Kidnapping and Expatriate Adaptation.....	69
2.6.1(c)	Workplace Bullying and Expatriate Adaptation	70
2.6.1(d)	Culture Shock and Expatriate Adaptation.....	73
2.6.1(e)	Perceived risk and expatriate adaptation.....	75
2.6.2	Relationship between hostile environment and perceived risk of expatriates in Nigeria	75
2.6.3	Mediating role of perceived risk on the relationship between hostile environment (terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying, culture shock) and expatriate adaptation	76
2.6.4	Moderating role of organisational support on the relationship between hostile environment (terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying and culture shock) and expatriate adaptation	78
2.7	Summary of the chapter	83
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		84
3.1	Introduction.....	84
3.2	Research Philosophy	84
3.3	Research Approach	86
3.4	Research Design/Strategy	86
3.5	Time Horizon	87
3.6	Population of the Study.....	88
3.7	Unit of Analysis	89
3.8	Sample Size and Sampling Technique.....	90
3.9	Data Collection Method	93
3.9.1	Procedure for Data Collection.....	95
3.9.2	Data Collection Instruments (Questionnaire Design)	97
3.10	Procedure for Data Analysis	97

3.10.1	Data screening.....	98
3.10.2	Test of Missing Values.....	98
3.10.3	Test of Outliers.....	99
3.10.4	Test of Normality	100
3.10.5	Multicollinearity.....	100
3.10.6	Response Bias Test	101
3.10.7	Common Method Variance	102
3.10.8	Data Analysis	103
3.10.9	Measurement Model.....	104
3.10.10	Structural Model.....	104
3.10.11	Coefficient of determination (R^2).....	104
3.10.12	Predictive Relevance (Q^2).....	105
3.10.13	Significance of Path Coefficients.....	105
3.10.14	Effect Size (f^2).....	106
3.11	Justifications for Using PLS-SEM.....	106
3.12	Variables Measurement.....	107
3.12.1	Measurement of Terrorism.....	108
3.12.2	Measurement of Kidnapping.....	109
3.12.3	Measurement of Workplace Bullying	110
3.12.4	Measurement of Culture Shock.....	112
3.12.5	Measurement of Organisational Support	113
3.12.6	Measurement of Expatriate Adaptation	114
3.12.7	Measurement of Expatriate Perceived Risk	116
3.13	Common Method Variance.....	116
3.13.1	Inclusion of Marker Variable	119
3.14	Questionnaire Pre-Test.....	121
3.15	Justification of the Methods.....	122

3.16	Summary of the chapter	123
CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS		124
4.1	Introduction.....	124
4.2	Response Rate.....	124
4.3	Preliminary Analysis.....	126
4.3.1	Coding of Measurement Items and Screening	126
4.3.2	Assessment of Missing Values.....	127
4.3.3	Detection of Outliers	127
4.3.4	Test for Data Normality	128
4.3.5	Multicollinearity Analysis.....	130
4.3.6	Test of Response Bias	132
4.3.7	Common Method Bias	134
4.3.8	Descriptive Analysis of Respondents' Profile	136
4.3.9	Descriptive Statistics of Latent Constructs	141
4.4	PLS-SEM Path Modelling	143
4.4.1	Assessment of the Measurement Model	144
4.4.1(a)	Individual Item Reliability of Measurement Models.....	146
4.4.1(b)	Internal Consistency Reliability of Models	150
4.4.1(c)	Convergent Validity of Models	151
4.4.1(d)	Discriminant Validity of Models.....	152
4.4.2	Assessment of the Structural Model	154
4.4.3	Testing of Hypotheses for the Relationships	155
4.4.3(a)	Hypotheses Testing for Direct Relationships.....	158
4.4.3(b)	Testing of Hypotheses for Mediation Relationships.....	158
4.4.3(c)	Testing of Hypotheses for Moderation Relationships.....	168
4.4.4	Simple Plot Analysis.....	169

4.4.5	Coefficient of Determination for the Relationships	170
4.4.6	Assessment of the Effect Size for the Moderation Relationships	171
4.4.7	Predictive Relevance for the Moderation Relationships	173
4.4.8	Importance-Performance Map Analysis	174
4.5	Summary of hypotheses and decisions	180
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION		181
5.1	Introduction.....	181
5.2	Recapitulations of the Study	181
5.3	Discussion of findings on Direct Relationships.....	183
5.3.1	Terrorism and Expatriate Domain Adaptation (H ₁)	183
5.3.2	Kidnapping and Expatriate Adaptation (H ₂)	184
5.3.3	Workplace Bullying and Expatriate Adaptation (H ₃)	185
5.3.4	Culture Shock and Expatriate Adaptation (H ₄).....	186
5.3.5	Perceived Risk and Expatriate Adaptation (H ₅).....	187
5.4	Discussion of Findings on Mediation Effects	187
5.4.1	Mediating Effect of Perceived Risk on Terrorism and Expatriate Adaptation (H ₆).....	188
5.4.2	Mediating Effect of Perceived Risk on Kidnapping and Expatriate Adaptation (H ₇).....	189
5.4.3	Mediating Effect of Perceived Risk on Workplace Bullying and Expatriate Domain Adaptation (H ₈)	189
5.4.4	Mediating Effect of Perceived Risk on Culture Shock and Expatriate Adaptation (H ₉).....	190
5.5	Discussion of Findings on the Moderation Effects.....	190
5.5.1	Moderating Effect of Organisational Support on Perceived Risk and Expatriate Adaptation (H ₁₀)	191
5.6	Contributions of the Study	192
5.6.1	Theoretical Contributions.....	193
5.6.2	Practical Contributions.....	195

5.7	Limitations of the Study.....	197
5.8	Suggestions for Future Research	200
5.9	Conclusions.....	201
	REFERENCES.....	202
	APPENDICES	

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 3.1	Summary of Variables Measurements used in the Study	108
Table 3.2	Measurement Items for Terrorism	109
Table 3.3	Measurement Items for Kidnapping	110
Table 3.4	Measurement Items for Workplace Bullying	111
Table 3.5	Measurement Items for Culture Shock	112
Table 3.6	Measurement Items for Organisational Support.....	113
Table 3.7	Measurement Items for Expatriate Adaptation.....	115
Table 3.8	Measurement Items for Expatriate Perceived Risk	116
Table 3.9	Measurement Items for Marker Variable – Attitude to Colour Blue (ATCB)	121
Table 4.1	Questionnaire Distribution and Response Rate	125
Table 4.2	Normality Test: Skewness and Kurtosis Statistics (n=188)	129
Table 4.3	Multicollinearity Test: Correlation Matrix (n=188)	130
Table 4.4	Collinearity Statistics.....	131
Table 4.5	Test of Time-Response Bias: Independent Sample T-test.....	133
Table 4.6	Comparison of Path coefficient (β) between the baseline model and marker included the model	136
Table 4.7	Comparison of R^2 value between baseline model and marker included the model.....	136
Table 4.8	Demographic profile of the respondents: Frequency Distribution (188)	137
Table 4.9	Descriptive Statistics of Construct: Mean and Standard Deviation	141
Table 4.10	Item Loadings, Internal Consistency, and Average Variance Extracted for Constructs	148
Table 4.11	Measurement Model: Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)	153

Table 4.12	Measurement Model: Discriminant Validity Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).....	153
Table 4.13	Measure for the assessment of the structural model.....	154
Table 4.14	Hypotheses test.....	157
Table 4.15	Structural Model: Bootstrapping Result for Indirect Effect (n=188).....	159
Table 4.16	Hypotheses test for mediation.....	161
Table 4.17	Structural Model: Confidence Interval for Mediating Relationships.....	165
Table 4.18	Hypotheses test for Moderation.....	168
Table 4.19	Coefficient of Determination for the Relationship: R-Squared.....	170
Table 4.20	Assessment of Effect Size for Moderating Relationship.....	172
Table 4.21	Predictive relevance on endogenous variables: Q-square.....	173
Table 4.22	Importance of the Constructs: Unstandardized Total Effect.....	176
Table 4.23	Importance of the Constructs: unstandardized.....	179
Table 4.24	Summary of hypothesis and decisions.....	180

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1.1	Expenditure on Security as a Percentage of National Budget (1999 - 2020) 14
Figure 1.2	20-year statistics of expatriates that entered Nigeria..... 18
Figure 1.3	Map of Nigeria Showing States and Capitals..... 23
Figure 2.1	“U” Curve Model of Expatriate Cultural Adaptation..... 47
Figure 2.2	Model of Cross-Cultural Adaptation Using Anxiety/ Uncertainty Theory..... 53
Figure 2.3	Framework of the Study 62
Figure 3.1	Research Onion by Saunders <i>et al.</i> (2007) 85
Figure 3.2	Minimum Sample Size Using G*Power..... 92
Figure 3.3	Algorithm of Data Collection 95
Figure 4.1	Study Model 145
Figure 4.2	Measurement Model..... 147
Figure 4.3	Bootstrapping for the Relationship..... 156
Figure 4.4	Simple plot for OS*PR (Expatriate Work Adaptation)..... 169
Figure 4.5	Importance Performance Matrix Analysis..... 175
Figure 4.6	Importance- Performance Map (Perceived Risk) 177
Figure 4.7	Importance- Performance Map (Expatriate Adaptation) 178

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEs	Assigned Expatriates
ATCB	Attitude to Colour Blue
AUM	Anxiety/Uncertainty Management
AUMT	Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory
AUT	Anxiety and Uncertainty Theory
CERPAC	Combined Expatriate Residence Permit and Alien Card
CMV	Common Method Variance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resource
HRM	Human Resource Management
HTMT	Heterotrait–Monotrait
IPMA	Importance-Performance Map Analysis
IPS-USM	Institute of Postgraduate Studies - Universiti Sains Malaysia
K4R	Kidnapping for Ransom
MASSOB	Movement for the Actualisation of Sovereign State of Biafra
MWBI	Malaysian Workplace Bullying Index
NCDMB	Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIS	Nigeria Immigration Service
NOGICD ACT	Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act 2010
OPC	Oduduwa Peoples' Congress
OST	Organizational support theory
PLS	Partial Least Squares
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SEV	Single-Entry Visa

SIEs	Self-Initiated Expatriates
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STR	Subject-to-Regularization Visa
TWP	Temporary Work Permit
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Questionnaire
Appendix B	Summary of expatriates reported kidnapped cases in Nigeria
Appendix C	Summary of Literatures Indicating the Factors that Influence Expatriate Adaptation
Appendix D	Global Terrorists Attacks (1972 – 2008) Excluding Nigeria
Appendix E	Marker variable
Appendix F	Descriptive Statistics
Appendix G	Correlations
Appendix H	Multi Collinearity
Appendix I	Group Statistics
Appendix J	Independent Samples Test
Appendix K	Total Variance Explained
Appendix L	Cover Letter for Data Collection
Appendix M	Nigeria Immigration Cover Letter
Appendix N	Survey Items And Their Codes

**KESAN RISIKO YANG DIRASAKAN DAN SOKONGAN ORGANISASI
TERHADAP HUBUNGAN ANTARA PERSEKITARAN MEMABAR DAN
ADAPTASI EKSPATRIAT DI NIGERIA**

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini mengkaji kerumitan persekitaran mencabar di Nigeria dan bagaimana persepsi risiko sebagai perantara menyumbang kepada adaptasi ekspatriat di sana. Kerangka penyelidikan ini mengintegrasikan bagaimana sokongan organisasi memoderasi hubungan ini sepanjang penyesuaian ekspatriat. Laporan Pelaburan Dunia baru-baru ini menunjukkan bahawa ketidak-bolehan ekspatriat untuk beradaptasi telah mengakibatkan kelewatan dan pembatalan projek infrastruktur di negara membangun. Ini adalah disebabkan kerana ekspatriat tidak dapat menyesuaikan diri dan mengenali budaya yang berbeza sewaktu berada di negara asing. Tambahan pula, keadaan yang tidak stabil telah menyumbang kepada kerugian besar kepada beberapa organisasi antarabangsa dan juga para pelanggan. Berdasarkan prinsip teori kebimbangan pengurusan ketidakpastian, kajian ini menyelidik bagaimana keganasan, penculikan, buli di tempat kerja dan kejutan budaya sebagai punca persekitaran bermusuhan di Nigeria yang mungkin akan mempengaruhi penyesuaian ekspatriat korporat. Dengan sampel 192 ekspatriat yang telah menginap di Nigeria selama lebih daripada enam bulan, kajian ini menggunakan teknik persampelan bertujuan dan telah mengumpulkan data dengan menggunakan borang tinjauan elektronik dalam talian Google. Analisis PLS-SEM untuk hubungan langsung telah menunjukkan bahawa keganasan tidak mempengaruhi penyesuaian ekspatriat dalam kedua-dua domain kerja dan bukan kerja. Sebaliknya, buli di tempat kerja, kejutan budaya dan persepsi risiko menunjukkan hubungan negatif yang kuat dengan penyesuaian ekspatriat dalam

kedua-dua domain kerja dan bukan kerja. Untuk pengantaraan, keputusan PLS-SEM menunjukkan risiko yang dirasakan telah menjadi pengantara hubungan di antara keganasan dan penyesuaian dalam kedua-dua domain kerja dan bukan kerja. Walau bagaimanapun, tiada kesan pengantara berlaku antara penculikan dan penyesuaian ekspatriat untuk kedua-dua domain kerja dan bukan kerja. Untuk buli di tempat kerja dan kejutan budaya, wujud kesan pengantara yang ketara yang disebabkan oleh risiko yang dirasakan sepanjang penyesuaian ekspatriat untuk kedua-dua domain kerja dan bukan kerja. Keputusan bercampur didapati untuk interaksi penyederhanaan. Oleh itu, sokongan organisasi menyederhanakan interaksi antara risiko yang dirasakan dan penyesuaian ekspatriat dalam domain kerja supaya sokongan organisasi yang lebih tinggi akan membawa kepada penyesuaian yang lebih berkesan dan sebaliknya. Tafsiran keputusan adalah berdasarkan pekali (Beta) perhubungan laluan, ralat piawai (SE), dan nilai-t (Statistik T). Kajian ini menyumbang secara teori dengan menetapkan bahawa tidak semua aktiviti bermusuhan mempengaruhi penyesuaian ekspatriat di Nigeria. Untuk implikasi praktikal, pihak berkepentingan akan mengambil perhatian bahawa sokongan organisasi yang berkesan akan mengurangkan kesan risiko yang dirasakan di kalangan ekspatriat. Pengenalan pembolehubah pengantara dan penyederhana ke dalam kajian ini menawarkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam mengenai pengalaman ekspatriat dalam persekitaran yang bermusuhan di Nigeria.

**EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED RISK AND ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT ON
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT AND
EXPATRIATE ADAPTATION IN NIGERIA**

ABSTRACT

This research examined the intricacies of Nigeria's hostile environment and how perceived risk as a mediator trigger expatriates' adaptation. The research framework integrates how organisational support moderates these relationships along expatriate adaptation. Recent World investment report indicates that maladaptation of expatriates has resulted in delays and cancellations of infrastructure projects in developing countries. This is as a result of expatriates not being able to adapt and acquaint with distant cultures in the foreign country. In addition, unstable country's conditions may constitute monumental losses to multinational organisations as well as clients. Drawing on the anxiety uncertainty management theory, this study examined how terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying and culture shock as the antecedents of Nigeria's hostile environment influences adaptation of corporate expatriates. With a sample of 192 expatriates who have lived in Nigeria for more than six months, the study employed purposive sampling technique and collected data using electronic survey of online google forms. PLS-SEM analyses for direct relationships showed that terrorism does not influence expatriates' adaptation in both work and non-work domains. Conversely, workplace bullying, culture shock and perceived risk indicated strong negative relationships with expatriate adaptation in both work and non-work domains. For the mediation, the PLS-SEM results showed perceived risk mediates the relationship terrorism and adaptation in both work and non-work domains. However, no mediating effect occurred between kidnapping and expatriate adaptation for both

work and non-work domains. For workplace bullying and culture shock, there exists a significant mediating effect caused by perceived risk along expatriate adaptation for both work and non-work domains. Mixed result emerged for the moderation interaction. Hence, organisational support moderates the interaction between perceived risk and expatriate adaptation in work domain such that higher organisational support would lead to more effective adaptation and versa. Results interpretations were based on the coefficients (Beta) of the path relationship, the standard error (SE), and t-value (T Statistics). This research contributes theoretically by establishing that not all hostile activities influence expatriate adaptation. For practical implications, the stakeholders will note with concern that effective organizational support will cushion the effects of perceived risk among expatriates. The introduction of mediating and moderating variables into this study offers a deeper understanding of expatriate experiences within the context of hostile environment such as Nigeria.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, firms are obliged to select designated expatriate managers to send on assignment overseas to handle their foreign operations (Faeth & Kittler, 2020). This stems from factors such as global competition, the swift growth of international markets, shifts in the business landscape, or increased accessibility to global mobility. (Polón, 2017). However, the long-standing issues of expatriate failure which is a consequence of expatriate adaptation is still a raging phenomenon. Lee (2007) described the inability of the expatriate to adapt to the foreign environment as expatriate failure. Extant literatures demonstrated that expatriate failure is traceable to the inability of the expatriates to adapt to their host environment (Andreason, 2003; Ndagi & Ali, 2022).

Notably in expatriation research, the terms adaptation, adjustment, and acculturation are used interchangeably (Aycan, 1997; Lazarova, 2006; Dimitrova *et al.*, 2023; Baneviciene 2024). Although, several dynamics account for why expatriate adaptation is still a nightmare, some of the factors responsible include terrorism; which is a global factor, failure of internal security in some countries evidenced by insurgency, banditry, and kidnapping, ill-treatment in the workplace, and sudden loss of home culture. In Nigeria, despite security measures being put in place by the Federal Government, it is reported by Beacon Consulting that between January and March 2023, 792 persons including expatriates and locals were kidnapped. Alas, about 1.7 million USD equivalent to about 700 million naira was paid as ransom over the period. These situations are tantamount to making adaptation difficult for expatriates.

Considerably, safety and security of expatriates within and outside their work environment while abroad is of serious concern to their employers. Given that expatriates are not only assigned to countries that have secure environmental conditions, they are also being deployed to locations that are increasingly characterized by violent and unstable country conditions (Hounta & Lehmann, 2015; Schulz & Camp, 2018). Rising spate of security challenges and various reported cases of maltreatment of expatriates in many countries including Nigeria is a notion to be empirically investigated. Incidentally, the attention of Human Resource (HR) practitioners and researchers is shifting from domestic human resource management (HRM) practices to global HRM practices while also trying to investigate those factors that affect employee's adaptation within the hostile environment during international assignment.

Conceptually, an expatriate (often abbreviated as expat) refers to an individual who resides and works outside of their home country, typically for an extended period, but without necessarily seeking permanent residency or citizenship in the host country. Expatriates are often professionals or skilled workers who are temporarily assigned or have chosen to work abroad, either by their employer or on their own initiative. Unlike immigrants, expatriates are often viewed as temporary residents, though the distinction between the two can sometimes blur depending on their mission. Their stay can be for various reasons, including employment, career advancement, cultural exchange, or business opportunities. Hence, they are strangers and usually faces uncertainties due to difficulty of interaction, acclimatisation, absorption, acculturation, and integration. The unabated and rising security concerns in Nigeria poses setback to the actualization of expatriate adaptation (Epron, 2019; Achumba *et al.*, 2013). In establishing a general perspective to the impediments of expatriate adaptation, Faeth and Kittler (2017)

construed hostile environment as any location in which individuals are exposed to an above-average presence of human-made threats in the form of intentional violence such as acts of terror, banditry, insurgency, kidnapping or other criminal activities. It also includes absence of basic resource infrastructures which, potentially and consequently nurtures criminal activities. This extended description corroborates the popular realities based on year 2020 annual records published by the Global Terror Index (GTI), the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), the United Nations Homicide Rate (UNHR), and the United Nations Human Development Index (UNHDI) about Nigeria. Conversely, despite rising hostilities in Nigeria, preliminary empirical investigations such as (Adeosun, 2019) showed that inflow of expatriates into Nigeria has been on the increase. Perhaps, as a result of concerted efforts being made by the federal government of Nigeria to curb aggressions.

Gnizy (2019) indicated widespread recognition that management of a globally dispersed workforce particularly with respect to adaptation is a crucial strategic component in the management of multinational enterprises. In Nigeria, expatriates remain one of the most valuable assets used by foreign firms in developing the competencies of local employees, coordinating the establishment of new ventures, transferring technical and general knowledge and skills, stimulating the standardization of products and promoting boundaryless career (Wang *et al.*, 2009; Ravu & Parker, 2015; Samuel & Adeniyi, 2015; Oleškevičiūtė *et al.*, 2022).

However, many of these expatriates deployed to Nigeria were reported to have failed occasioned by difficulties to adjust (Okpara, 2016; Heirsmac *et al.*, 2015). Specifically, Eze and Awolusi (2018) indicated that expatriates on international assignment to Nigeria faced difficulties in early communication and cultural dissimilarities. This is further supported by the Global Relocation Services (2016)

report on expatriation which indicated that about 40% to 70% of expatriates deployed to foreign locations across the globe usually experience maladjustment to the foreign assignment destination every year.

Comparatively, expatriate adaptation is partitioned into work and non-work domains where skills, expertise and efforts juggles along these partitions. Citing Conservation of Resources Theory (COR), Biswas *et al.* (2022) distinguished between work-related and non-work-related antecedents (resources) and depicted their relationship with expatriates' work well-being and general well-being. They stated that individuals' well-being (adaptation) in an environment is related to the different kinds of resources available to them which could be specific (work place resources) or general (non-work resources) (Das & Baruah, 2016). In another dimension, Duxbury *et al* (2002) built the notion that when organizations fail to understand what embodies the life domain of expatriates, they may fail in rendering the right support for them to strike a balance between work and non-work exigencies.

It is pertinent for organizations to be aware of the issue of the dichotomy regarding adaptation of expatriates as it significantly shapes their reactions to varying circumstances. Nobrega and Felix (2021) suggested how expatriates can actively interact with people from work and home domains in such a way that they can build and maintain better work and home relationships during the period they are living in other country. Additionally, they recommended that organisations should develop work-home policies that consider the preferences that an expatriate and his family have for integrating or segmenting work and home domains.

The lack of success encountered by expatriates on overseas assignments does not only hurt organisations' overseas expansion strategies but also significantly depletes corporate resources and constitute huge loss for the company (Harzing, 2001; Furusawa & Brewster, 2018). The inability of expatriates to adjust to the host country is considered to be the primary obstacle that they have to overwhelm, in order to thrive with their assignment (Winkelman, 1994; Naeem *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, seamless adaptation of expatriates is a crucial issue that organisations must address to ensure the success of overseas assignments. (Feitosa *et al.*, 2014; Aburge & Debrah, 2019).

Nevertheless, despite the well-documented high failure rates and accompanying expenses, many companies still fail to adequately prioritise facilitating smooth adaptation for their employees in overseas operations. (Reiche *et al.*, 2019). But to be able to undertake the assignment for which they are engaged, they need to adjust by connecting seamlessly with both work and non-work domains of their host country. Though not generic, there are certain strategical conventions being prescribed to curb the influences of these uncertainties due to hostile environment across expatriate community. Uncertainty is the extent to which probable future occurrence can be predicted with reasonable level of confidence (Bar-Anan, 2009). Thus, uncertainty arises as a result of lack of confidence which heightens the level of unpredictability (Bader *et al.*, 2019). Contemporary organisations must stay vigilant and prepare grounds to wade off those hostilities that causes ambiguity, insecurity and uncertainty which constitute intimidations to their performance and sustainability (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

Essentially, effective management of expatriates is a global concern (Faeth & Kittler, 2020; Collings & Scullion, 2006; Lazarova, 2006; Stahl & Björkman, 2006). Note that exposure to hostilities such as terrorism and other forms of violence has

become a “new reality” for many organizations (Fee & McGrath-Champ, 2017) which portends threat to quick and easy adaptation. For example, in Nigeria, threats and fears arising from terrorism, banditry, kidnappings, workplace bullying, and culture shock are some of the identified hostile scenarios confronting expatriates. International companies and their staff have become targets of attacks, creating challenges for personal safety and wellbeing and a barrier to corporate success (Czinkota *et al.*, 2010; AXA’s World of Work Report, 2017). Evidence that internationally mobile employees seem to show reservation towards assignments in countries they perceive as hostile (Wagner & Westaby, 2009; Wang & Bu, 2004) renders the above development an issue of high practical relevance. Expat Arrivals’ current update reports indicate that western authorities, including the US and the UK, have advised their citizens to refrain from non-essential travel to specific areas of Nigeria due to safety concerns. These concerns primarily stem from sectarian violence in the northern states and activities of rebel groups in the southern oil producing states. Various scholars have built adaptation frameworks to propose variables that affect expatriates’ adaptation (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991; Strubler, *et al.*, 2011). One of such variables is terrorism which have the potential of creating severe physical threats (Reade & Froese, 2016; Faeth & Kittler, 2017). Terror environment is any atmosphere perceived to be vulnerable to events or circumstances that present a threat to expatriates’ safety and security (McPhail & McNulty, 2015). According to the Global Terrorism Index (2020), Nigeria holds the third position out of 163 countries in the assessment of crucial global security trends and terrorism patterns. Nigeria has consistently maintained this ranking since 2015, indicating that endeavours aimed at addressing security challenges have not yielded optimal outcomes. Hence, this enduring position

projects it as an environment marked by hostility, potentially making it challenging for expatriates to adapt to its commercial climate.

Similarly, rural banditry could be another bane behind poor expatriate adjustment in Nigeria especially in the North-Central and North-Western States of Niger, Kaduna, and Zamfara where banditry has reached alarming heights in recent years where serious mining and construction works by expatriates are ongoing. The Guardian Newspaper of September 2, 2022 reported that the Governor of Kaduna State, Nasir El-Rufai in a leaked memo dispatched to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria alerted that terrorists have overran some parts of Kaduna State and are currently consolidating their grips by establishing a “parallel” government and “permanent operational base” near Nigeria’s capital, Abuja.

Furthermore, there are reports indicating that from 2016 to 2017, a significant number of individuals including expatriates working and living in Southern Kaduna were brutally killed in multiple instances of repeated genocidal assaults perpetrated by terrorists. A single genocidal assault took place in December 2016, resulting in the death of 808 individuals throughout 53 communities within the state. Besides, in the year 2021, a total of 1,192 individuals tragically perished as a result of banditry, terrorism, violent assaults, and retaliatory actions inside the state. During the initial half of 2022, a total of approximately 645 individuals have lost their lives under various conditions throughout the state (Editorial, 2022).

In the Northwest region, specifically in Zamfara and certain areas of Katsina state, there are marauding gangs of armed bandits who have been involved in acts of violence. These criminals carry out attacks, abductions, killings, and robberies targeting workers of multinational corporations, locals, travellers, and also indulge in

the theft of cattle. Despite occasional exaggeration or underestimation by certain political entities, the casualty statistics are quite concerning. According to reports, Abdulaziz Yari, the previous Governor of Zamfara state, indicated that around five hundred communities and thirteen thousand hectares of land were severely damaged, and two thousand eight hundred and thirty-five individuals lost their lives over the period from 2011 to 2018. Furthermore, it has been approximated that there exist a minimum of ten thousand armed bandits and cattle rustlers that are actively operating from eight primary encampments in Zamfara state. Furthermore, several estimates estimate that the number of children who have been left without parents due to these attacks is approximately forty-four thousand since 2010.

Another issue of concern regarding hostile environment, spreading across Nigeria like wildfire is kidnapping. Onuoha and Okolie-Osemene (2019) indicated that the menace of kidnapping for ransom (K4R) has become a serious threat to human security in Nigeria. When it began in the creeks of the Niger Delta region some years ago, nobody thought it would become so outlandish (Ekhoimu, 2013). Gradually, it has even become a money-spinning occupation (Campbell, 2020; Ajaja, 2016; Cocks, 2013) for many of Nigeria's jobless and criminally minded youths especially in the South-East, South-South, North-West, and North-Central parts of the country.

The kidnapping of expatriates was predominant in the South-Southern Nigeria but today, the perpetrators have scattered to other parts of the country. Government officials are not spared in the kidnapping menace, as their family members, relatives and friends have also become worthy targets. In the whole, an average of 13 persons were abducted daily (both expatriates and nationals) in Nigeria in the first half of 2021, as reported by SBM Intelligence, bringing to 2,371 the number of persons kidnapped in the country within the first six months of the year. Sadly, these kidnapping

incidences are inimical to expatriates' adaptation making them to live in constant fear (CBS, 2018) and turning the environment hostile for them.

Within the expatriates' organisational sphere too, lies another constraint which is workplace bullying that could have effect on adaptation. Workplace bullying is the persistent verbal, nonverbal, psychological, or physical abuse meted on a person in the workplace that leads to either physical or emotional harm. Park and Ono (2016) found that workplace bullying decreased work engagement and increased health problems among employees. Glambek *et al.* (2014) stated that workplace bullying affects up to 15 per cent of employees and its detrimental effects include turnover and exclusion from working life. Expatriate are individuals that can be exposed to workplace bullying due to their race or religion. Considering the survey of 684 respondents in a Saudi-Arabian multi-regional hospital which reported that workers were exposed to various forms bullying including verbal abuse (98.1%), physical harassment (11.8%), and sexual connotation 5.8% (Al-Surimi, Al Omar, Alahmary, & Salam, 2020). The study concluded that nationality was significantly related to workplace bullying. Although many victims seldom speak up on their predicaments, these evidences show the extent to which employees suffers and endure. There is no doubt, research efforts such as this would expose and recommend the ways out.

In a related development, regardless of the nature and characteristics of an expatriate environment; whether hostile or non-hostile, there is obvious tendency that differences in the culture of the home and host countries would give rise to culture shock among expatriates which could have debilitating influence on their adaptation. Culture shock is described as the feelings of uncertainty, confusion, or anxiety that people experience when they themselves in a new country. According to Solomon (2022) it doesn't matter any kind of international assignment, once an individual is in

a foreign country, there is a predictable cycle of physical, emotional, and psychological ups and downs that they tend to go through. It arises from differences in social norms, values, ethics, and culture.

The central tendency which assumes that culture influences individuals in a uniform, predictable, and generalizable way, and allowing for relatively straightforward cross-country comparisons no longer hold water. Culture shock is associated with psychological and physical strains with varying severances, ranging from homesickness to depression and sometimes serious illnesses (Manz, 2003). Akarowhe (2018) reported that culture shock resulted into communication defectiveness, latent and apparent conflict, emotional imbalance, deviance, aloofness and withdrawal from peers.

GradeFixer (2020) reports that statistics from the US Census indicate that the most significant groups of expatriates in the past decade consistently experience culture shock. This condition manifests in various physical symptoms, including headaches, fatigue, sleeplessness, reduced appetite, and digestive issues. Additionally, expatriates also exhibit psychological symptoms such as irritability, anger towards minor setbacks, moral and value confusion, moodiness, feelings of isolation, and insecurity. Crucially, companies bear the need to adequately train and assist expatriates prior to, during, and after their assignment, as prolonged labour in any hostile setting might impact the employees' physical and psychological welfare. The likelihood of adapting to the host country is frequently enhanced when the expatriate has the belief that their organisation has allocated resources to guarantee the accomplishment of the assignment (Malek *et al.*, 2015).

In addition, companies that offer extensive organizational support have greater influence over the extent and pace of an expatriate's adaptation. (Lee & Kartika, 2014). Malek *et al.* (2015) states that expatriate perceived organizational support directly affects expatriate adjustment. Also, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) showed that individuals who receive a significant amount of organisational support from the management are more likely to exhibit strong commitment to their workplace, higher job satisfaction, and increased adaptability in challenging circumstances. Such employees are less likely to be tardy, absent, or resign (e.g., Allen *et al.*, 2003; Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986).

Though, many researchers examined the direct effects of organizational support and its consequences. only a few studies have examined the mechanisms that perform moderating role in these relationships. A rationale is found in Sokro, Pillay, and Bednall (2021) where they found that organizational support positively influences expatriate adjustment, assignment completion, and job satisfaction in sub-Saharan African multinationals.

Another issue of concern in the expatriate adaptation literature is the perceived risk of the expatriate. Perceived risk has always been an important content for academic research associated with human psychology with respect to safety and security. Substantial empirical evidence indicates that potential expatriates hold reservations about accepting assignments in countries perceived as high-risk (Wagner & Westaby, 2009). Empirical research indicate that different types of risks have different effects on expatriate adaptation. For example, Chew and Jahari (2014) found that Fukushima nuclear disaster of Japan posed significant negative social and psychological impact on the expatriate tourists, indirectly affecting their mental image

about the country. In the whole, physical risks directly affected their willingness to visit the country.

For Nigeria, perceived and deliberate battered image is a long recurring issue in academic research. Carter (1998) reported that tourists' social construction about Africa generally is that it is a risky region. This misconception poses inherent negative tendency ascribing entire Africa as dangerous and chaotic. Sahoo *et al.* (2022) indicate that perceived risk moderated the relationship between organisational support and expatriate performance and recommended that organizations should be prepared to intercede for expatriates in terms of risk induced scenarios. In combination, these variables will effectively "neutralize" the direct effect of perceived risk, weakening or fully mitigating the direct effect of hostile environment on expatriate adaptation. Block and Kremen (1996) mentioned that employees with high level of risk perception are more likely to manage and deal with adversity and are therefore more flexible to adapt. This is further supported by Posthuma *et al.* (2017) who argued that perceived risk positively influences the expatriate ability to adjust.

Despite obvious prevalence of these issues that are expected to trigger inquiries into the intricacies of hostile environment and expatriate adaptation in Nigeria, no study hitherto found has investigated the roles of organizational support and perceived risk on explaining the effects of hostile environment on expatriate adaptation in the Nigerian context. Even though there is general abysmal absence of studies on expatriate adaption in the country, the limited ones accessible failed to give desired attention to hostile environment (e.g. Udoh, 2015, Ifeoma *et al.*, 2015, Adegami, 2013) and the role of organizational support and perceived risk as moderator and mediator respectively.

Hence, the present study examined the factors that triggers perceived risk among expatriates which could hamper eventual adaptation. This will be achieved by focusing on the effect of hostile environment (terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying, and culture shock) while appreciating the mediating role of perceived risk. The study will also look at the significance of organizational support in hostile environment in order to strengthen expatriate adaptation. It's worth noting that when expatriates are happy with their jobs and are adjusting well, they are more likely to engage in innovative work practises. As a result, work and organisational performance will improve (Lee & Kartika, 2014). Furthermore, greater expatriate performance as a result of successful adjustment encourages multinational firms in performing more successfully, which leads to economic advantages in both the host and home countries. The successes attained in foreign operations, leads to satisfactory expatriate performance and motivates other domestic firms to grow abroad as well. Although insecurity relating to terrorism and insurgency are very difficult to curtail (Kiras, 2007), it is on record that in Nigeria, security experts, individuals, corporate organizations, ministries and agencies have demonstrated collaborative engagement in combating Nigeria's rising insecurity (Faminu, 2021).

Over the years, Nigerian government have committed huge budgetary sums to tackle general insecurity. Figure 1.1 shows the proportion of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) allocated to security over a span of 22 years, from 1999 to 2020 ranging from 0 to 2.5% in increments of 0.5%.

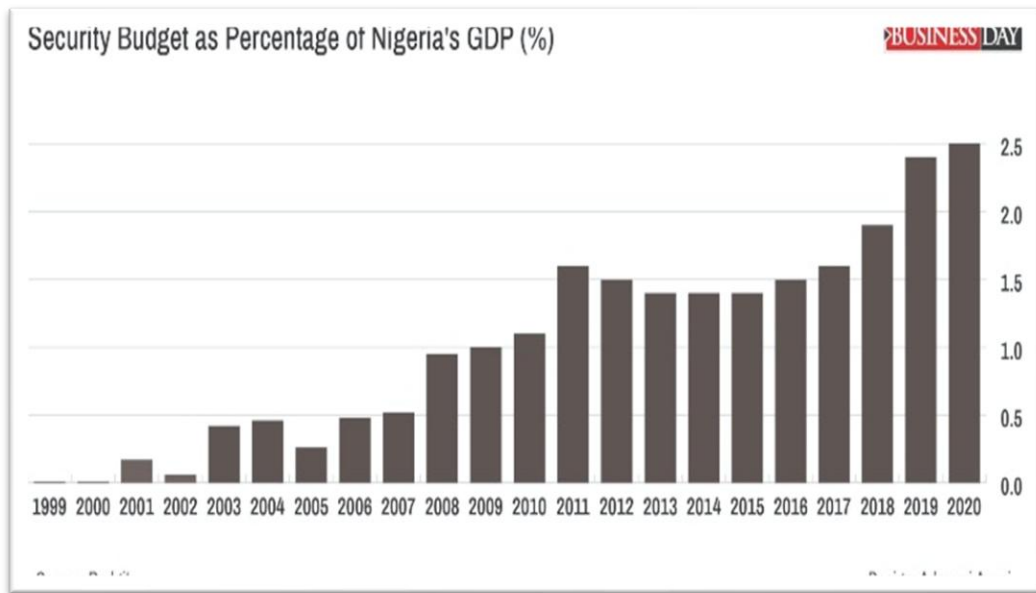


Figure 1.1 Expenditure on Security as a Percentage of National Budget (1999 - 2020)

From the chart, we can observe a general upward trend in the percentage of Nigeria's GDP allocated to security. In the early years, from 1999 to around 2007, the security budget as a percentage of GDP was below 1%. There is a noticeable increase starting from around 2008, and by 2020, the percentage reaches approximately 2.5%, indicating a significant increase in the budget allocation for security relative to the GDP.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Expatriate adaptation in Nigeria remains a critical challenge due to the country's complex socio-cultural and security environments. Despite Nigeria's position as a key destination for expatriates, particularly in the oil and gas, telecommunications, and infrastructure sectors, many expatriates struggle to adapt to local conditions (Okpara, 2016). Evidence shows that high levels of insecurity, such as terrorism and kidnappings, along with bureaucratic hurdles and cultural diversity, contribute to

adaptation difficulties. Additionally, expatriates often face tensions due to localization policies and job competition, which can lead to isolation or reduced job satisfaction. Despite the increasing urge for FDI and development of critical infrastructure (Punnett *et al.*, 2024) necessitating influx of expatriates into Nigeria's diverse cultural settings, the challenges posed by hostile environments significantly hinders successful integration and adaptation of expatriates. Understanding the interplay between perceived risk, organizational support, and the impact of a hostile environment on expatriate adaptation is essential for both academic discourse, managerial and practical corollaries. Terrible effects of Nigeria's Niger Delta Militants, the Movement for the Actualisation of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Oduduwa Peoples' Congress (OPC) in southern part of Nigeria, and the emergence of insurgent "Islamist" group (Boko Haram) in North Eastern Nigeria, the Fulani bandits and kidnappers in the North Central and North West put together has tendered Nigeria on a negative slate of maladaptation. Incidentally, each premature return costs MNCs an average of US\$198,000 (Tungli & Peiperl, 2009). The increasing growth of kidnapping in Nigeria has become a strong threat to national peace and security covering every part of the country. Country image which is one of the proxies that determines expatriates' prearrival consciousness is battered.

Today, there is hardly a day that passes by without report of cruel hostage-taking of expatriate (Iheanachor, 2021; Kabir, 2021; The Straitstimes, 2021; Singh, 2020; Jamaica Observer, 2013; Expatica, 2021; The Cable, 2021; Anadolu Agency, 2019; NBC News, 2006; Bello, 2021; BBC News, 2016; The New Indian Express, 2020; South China Morning Post, 2021; Ndid, 2021; 2021; BBC News, 2019; Xinhuanet, 2019; Daily Sabah, 2021; James, (2021) in Nigeria. In the whole, an average of 13 persons were abducted daily (both expatriates and nationals) in Nigeria

in the first half of 2021, as reported by SBM Intelligence, bringing to 2,371 the number of persons kidnapped in the country within the first six months of the year. Sadly, these kidnapping incidences are inimical to expatriates' adaptation making them to live in constant fear (CBS, 2018) and turning the environment hostile for them. The summary of expatriates kidnapped cases in Nigeria reported in credible media is attached as Appendix B.

It is reported by Beacon Consulting that between January and March 2023, 792 persons including expatriates and locals were kidnapped. Also, the Brookfield Global Relocation Services (2016) indicate that 18% of the expatriates, who were assigned by their companies revealed that culture, security concerns and work environment issues are the main reasons why adaptation fails for expatriates. Amissine (2017) described Nigeria as a very terrible place for expatriates given fears and frustrations. Again, for more than five (5) consecutive years including year 2020, the global liveability index described Nigeria as one of the worst cities in the world for expatriates given security threats.

The issue of expatriate adaptation in hostile environment particularly in Nigeria is critical given rising terrorism, banditry, and kidnapping especially the ones targeted at expatriates. Although it is a global phenomenon. Hounta and Lehmann (2015) and Schulz and Camp (2018) cited in Faeth and Kittler (2020) declared that destinations of expatriate assignments are increasingly characterised by violent and unstable country conditions as the number of high-risk countries across the world is growing. Exposure of expatriates to phenomena such as terrorism, culture shock, workplace bullying and other forms of violence has become a "new reality" for many organisations in their aspiration for expatriate adaptation (Fee & McGrathChamp, 2017).

Undoubtedly, expatriates face many challenges in the course of adaptation such that many of them fail to complete their assignments and return home early and prematurely. Expatriate adaptation failure has been a major concern for MNCs because the costs of replacing them are extremely high (Li-Yueh & Van Vorst, 2010; Kumarika Perera, Yin, & Nielsen, 2017; Luo, & Gu, 2022). Burgess (2019) estimated that the direct costs of a failed assignment can range from \$250,000 to \$1 million, and the annual cost of failures to all US companies is estimated at \$2 billion.

Citing on the chronology of expatriate hostages in Nigeria (Albert *et al.*, 2020; Oyewole, 2016), the Africamasterweb.com presented a disturbing summary of soaring attacks on expatriates across Nigeria between 2006 and 2014. Up to the 1st quarter of year 2022, there is a security travel guide for expatriates due to fear of target attacks. Of recent too, Nigeria was described as a very dangerous destination for potential tourists and expatriates; such that governments in several countries have even issued warnings against traveling to this country, for reasons such as terrorism, kidnappings, and other types of violent crimes. Conversely, these unprintable descriptions are counterproductive and tantamount to depleting Nigeria's already snail pace growth and development.

This fear is in line with Purity and Anigbuogu (2019) and Lesmore (2022) who drew conclusions from an empirical investigation that hostile activities are pivotal in hindering the growth of industrialization and sustainable development in Nigeria as a result of poor adaptation. The earlier view by Udoh (2015), Ifeoma, Purity, and Anagbogu (2015) and Adegbami (2013) corroborates this reality. The fact that these hitches are trending and yet entry of expatriates into Nigeria keep rising (See figure 1.2) poses interesting suspense that should empirically be examined

It is quite intriguing and yet unclear why expatriates accept to go on international missions in hostile environments. Even though Faeth and Kittler (2020) stated that during expatriation assignment, a non-hostile environment can be rendered hostile, conceivably in the event of a terrorist attack, political upheaval, office bullying, or culture shock.

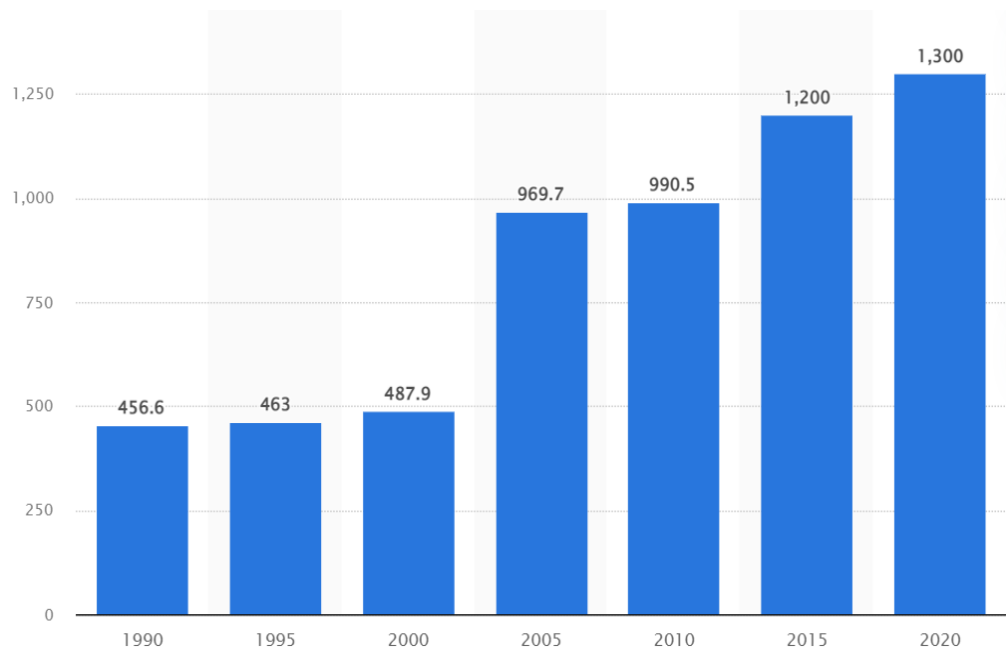


Figure 1.2 20-year statistics of expatriates that entered Nigeria

Ideally, voluntary decision by either assigned expatriates (AEs) or self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) to enter an already hostile work environment must be taken into account and investigated. In doing this, let it be known that expatriate adaptation challenges had been categorised into work and non-work related (Bader *et al.*, 2019; Peltokorpi & Jintae, 2009; Bonache, 2005; Riusala & Suutari, 2000) and each requires research attention.

Convincingly, the context of this study is founded on the gaps and recommendations of the previous studies including Gannon and Paraskevas (2019) and Bader *et al.* (2015). The studies acknowledged that while literature abounds with evidence of environmental and organizational factors affecting expatriate adaptation, there is limited evidence to show how hostile environments are tackled for seamless adaptation especially in Nigeria. Prior to this study, attempts had been made by other scholars to examine how hostile environment affect expatriate adaptation in other countries such as Pakistan, Kenya, Somalia, Iraq, India and Afghanistan. Beutell *et al.* (2017) examined how fear and exposure to terror environment affect expatriate adaptation and recommended using proactive coping, systematic desensitization, problem and emotion focused coping, and organisational support. Although organisational support is recommended to suppress the consequences of exposure to terror environment, it fails to mention specific form of support that would most relevant to the expatriates which this current study would fulfil.

1.3 Research Questions

Having established contentions arising from inconsistencies in research results, this study craves the need to undertake further investigations into if and/or how organisational support moderates and perceived risk mediates the relationship between hostile environment and expatriate adaptation in Nigeria. The study contends that by integrating the constructs of hostile environment, along perceived risk (as a mediator) and organisational support (as moderator), a framework of theoretical prediction on the criterion of expatriate adaptation in Nigeria would be generated. Accordingly, the following key (research) questions have been raised for further investigation:

- i) What is the influence of terrorism towards expatriate adaptation in both work and non-work domains in Nigeria?
- ii) What is the relationship between kidnapping and expatriate adaptation in both work and non-work domains in Nigeria?
- iii) What is the relationship between workplace bullying and expatriate adaptation in both work and non-work domains in Nigeria?
- iv) Does culture shock influence expatriate adaptation in both work and non-work domains in Nigeria?
- v) What is the relationship between hostile environment and perceived risk of expatriates in Nigeria?
- vi) Does perceived risk mediate the relationship between hostile environment (terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying, and culture shock) and expatriate adaptation work and non-work domains in Nigeria?
- vii) Does the relationship between hostile environment (terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying, and culture shock) and expatriate adaptation in Nigeria moderated by organisational support? Such that increase in organisational support increases effective adaptation and vice versa?

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the mediating role of perceived risk and the moderating role of organisational support on the relationship between hostile environment and expatriate adaptation in Nigeria both in the work and non-work domains.

In specific terms, it seeks:

- i) To examine the influence of terrorism towards expatriate adaptation in Nigeria
- ii) To examine the relationship between kidnapping and expatriate adaptation in Nigeria
- iii) To determine the relationship between workplace bullying and expatriates' adaptation in Nigeria
- iv) To examine the influence of culture shock on expatriates' adaptation in Nigeria
- v) To investigate the relationship between hostile environment and perceived risk of expatriates in Nigeria?
- vi) To examine whether the relationship between hostile environment (terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying, and culture shock) and expatriate adaptation in both work and non-work domains is mediated by perceived risk in Nigeria
- vii) To determine whether the relationship hostile environment (terrorism, kidnapping, workplace bullying, and culture shock) and expatriate adaptation is moderated by either increase or decrease in organisational support in Nigeria?

1.5 Scope of the Study

Generally, in research, scope of the study refers to the inclusion and exclusion parameters under which the study would operate (Simon & Goes, 2013). Although expatriates are spread across different vocations and professions in Nigeria, this study is concerned with expatriates that are assigned to corporate organisations otherwise

called corporate expatriates (Andresen *et al.*, 2012) and who have lived in Nigeria under employment for a period not less than six (6) months.

Further, with recourse to the Nigerian local content regulation and the Nigerian Immigration Law, it is established that expatriates are only allowed to work in industries which locals do not have expertise. Based on the prior preliminary investigations, this study focuses on expatriates on managerial and technical cadres deployed in four (4) major sectors and sub-sector of the Nigerian economy including oil and gas, solid minerals, tourism and telecommunication. Expat Arrivals (2021) showed that the mining and oil sectors had always been the largest employers of expatriates in Nigeria. Also, against the backdrop of the perspectives of the research problem and the established research framework, the study examines the mediating effect of perceived risk and the moderating role of organisational support on the relationship between hostile environment and expatriate adaptation in Nigeria. The means that other factors which could affect expatriates' adaptation are not covered in this study.

With regards to the population, InterNations (2019) indicated that there is a record of full registration of about 3.8million individuals listed as expatriates in Nigeria as of April 2019. However, this figure represents a working total or moving average including even those who have left the country. InterNations is a global expatriate community with presence in over 420 cities across 7 continents of the world. Interestingly, of this number, 6,352 are registered with InterNations representing the number working and living in Nigeria as of July 2019. The appropriate official source of the study's population is the Nigeria Immigration Service and the efforts of the researcher to retrieve the numbers was declined by the service. They cited security and diplomatic issues as main reasons for non-disclosure.

Considerably, the study is limited to the identified contexts and circumstances which excludes other expatriates in other sectors other than corporate such as students, military, missionaries, non-governmental organisations, diplomats, sport professionals and athletes. Emphatically, the study equally excludes expatriates who have not spent up to the required six (6) months duration either as employees or residents in Nigeria.

1.5.1 Brief Description of Study Area (Nigeria)

Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa and perhaps the most of all black nations globally with human population hovering around two hundred and thirteen million (213,000,000). It is located on the Gulf of Guinea on Africa's western coast, covering an area of around 924 thousand square kilometres (OPEC, 2021). The country is heavily dependent on crude oil, which as an entity represents 90% of foreign currency earnings and 70% of government income. Nigeria's economy is the largest in Africa (by GDP) at \$514 billion (statista, 2021).

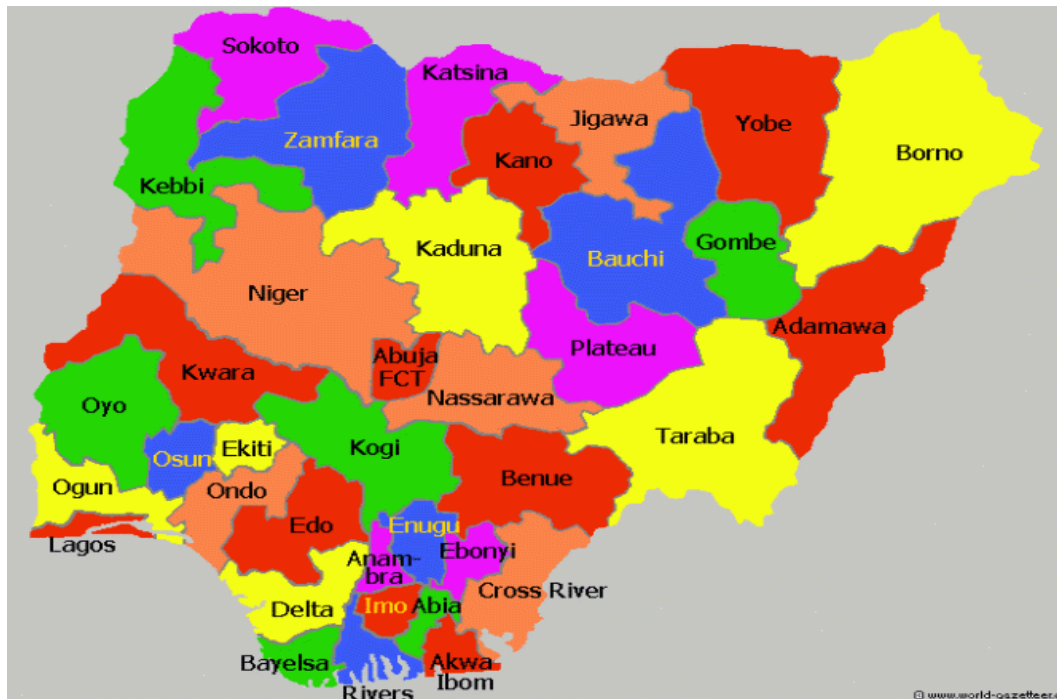


Figure 1.3 Map of Nigeria Showing States and Capitals

The country is exploring foreign direct investment option for the purposes of job creation and general economic growth. It is also faced with critical infrastructure deficit (Ajia, 2020) and relies heavily on foreign experts to revamp them. It is obvious that most of infrastructure contracts are being awarded to foreign companies (Makarfi, 2017, Ugochukwu & Onyekwena, 2014). Whereas these companies move their employees and technical equipment into Nigeria. There are more than two hundred and fifty (250) ethnic groups speaking over five hundred (500) languages in Nigeria with English being the lingua franca (official language). It is formally practicing secular democracy, with constitutional prohibitions on a state religion and on religious discrimination, and provision for individuals' freedom to choose, practice, propagate or change their religion.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The importance of expatriate adaptation to successful international assignment cannot be overemphasised. As a growing field of study, academic investigations are required to uncover grey areas requiring improvements. This study is filling empirical research gap recommended by Gannon and Paraskevas (2019), Bader, Reade, and Froese (2019), Bader, Schuster and Dickmann (2019). As much as all the variables put up for investigation are critical factors, they will provide avenue for examining how adaptation of expatriates can be improved upon. This study will specifically provide theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions to the body of knowledge of expatriate adaptation and hostile environment particularly in Nigeria.