

Human Security Is A Measure To Reduce Illegal Immigration

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Abstract:

Illegal immigration is one of the most prominent contemporary phenomena that reflect the fragility of economic and social conditions in many countries, including Algeria. Official reports have shown a worrying rise in the rates of such migration, prompting those concerned to search for new approaches to address it, including the concept of human security.

This study examines the relationship between human security and the exacerbation of irregular migration, through the analysis of the local reality, and proposes a set of preventive and developmental solutions that may contribute to reducing the phenomenon, especially amid the growing security and social challenges in the region

Keywords: Illegal Immigration ;Human Security ; Prevention; Development .

1. INTRODUCTION

Technological advancements in transportation and communication have facilitated the movement of individuals across borders, directly contributing to the emergence of migration, especially that classified as illegal. In Algeria, illegal immigration has become an expression of complex internal issues ranging from poverty and unemployment to the decline in quality of life. It has become a desperate option for a segment of youth seeking to improve their conditions at any cost, even if it means risking their lives through unsafe sea journeys.

Despite the efforts made by the Algerian state in combating this phenomenon by intensifying border control and tightening laws, the results remain below expectations.

This is due to the excessive focus on security measures and the neglect of the human, economic, and social dimensions associated with it. In contrast, the European Union has sought to develop neighborhood policies focusing on addressing the root causes of migration, such as poverty and insecurity, by supporting developmental projects and humanitarian programs in source countries.

In this context, the importance of the current study stems from its attempt to provide an analytical reading of the relationship between human security and illegal immigration in Algeria, highlighting the effectiveness of this approach in reducing the phenomenon and proposing preventive and developmental alternatives based on the

promotion of human rights and social justice, instead of relying solely on deterrent measures.

2. The Reality of Illegal Immigration in Algeria.

Algeria is considered a key country in North Africa due to its strategic geographical location, making it both a transit and settlement country for illegal immigrants, especially those coming from the Sahel countries. Additionally, internal developmental challenges have pushed an increasing number of citizens, especially youth, to consider irregular migration as a means to escape ongoing crises.¹

2.1 The Concept of Illegal Immigration:

Illegal immigration can be understood as the movement of individuals from one country to another in ways that do not comply with the legal regulations governing the movement of people across borders. It includes entering foreign territories without official documents or through unrecognized crossings, or staying beyond the duration of a visa.²

In legal contexts, migration is considered legal if conducted according to the laws of both the country of origin and the host country. When these procedures are violated—through infiltration or use of forged documents—the migration is deemed illegal and subject to punitive laws that vary from one country to another.³

2.2 Routes of Illegal Immigration in Algeria.

2.2.1.Southern Borders:

The Algerian Sahara, due to its vast area and open nature, is one of the most exploited routes by irregular migrants from the Sahel. The weak security coverage and difficulty in monitoring thousands of kilometers of borders contribute to the ease of infiltration.⁴

2.2.2.Eastern Borders with Tunisia:

Security indicators suggest that this area is less pressured due to strong security cooperation and joint coordination between Algeria and Tunisia. The spread of effective border monitoring centers has reduced the phenomenon in this region.

2.2.3.Western Borders with Morocco:

Despite the closure of the land borders between Algeria and Morocco, this area

¹ - Al-Hawout, Ali. *Illegal Immigration to Europe through the Maghreb Countries.*: Maghreb University Publications. Tripoli. Libya, 2001.P123

² - Al-Dahimi El Akhdar Omar, *Arab Experiences in Combating Illegal Immigration:* A Study on Secret Immigration in Algeria, Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2006.P98

³ - Al-Dahimi El Akhdar Omar.OP.CIT.P101

⁴ -idem..p102

remains active in terms of infiltration due to the presence of smuggling networks operating in the border regions, exploiting geographical loopholes to organize illegal migration.⁵

2.2.4.Coastal Strip:

The Mediterranean Sea is the most commonly used route by Algerian youth seeking migration, despite the great dangers involved in illegal sea journeys. This phenomenon is locally known as "Harraga," where traditional boats or primitive means are used to flee toward the northern shore.⁶

2.2.5.Air Routes.

Irregular migration through airports remains very limited due to strict security procedures and tight monitoring systems. The few attempts are usually linked to document forgery, which makes their detection highly likely.

It is clear from this analysis that Algeria faces increasing pressure due to its geographical location and the multiplicity of migration routes, whether by land or sea. Moreover, the lack of development in some interior regions, along with regional and international challenges, makes combating illegal migration a complex issue that requires comprehensive solutions that go beyond traditional security approaches.

3. Human Security as a Mechanism to Combat Illegal Immigration.

The complexity of issues associated with illegal immigration has led to new approaches to address it, moving beyond the traditional security-based response. Among these approaches is the concept of human security, which focuses on enabling individuals to live with dignity and addressing the root causes of migration such as poverty, unemployment, lack of healthcare, and a sense of social exclusion.⁷

3.1 The Concept of Human Security.

Human security is a comprehensive framework that goes beyond military security and aims to protect individuals in their daily lives by ensuring the essentials of survival and dignity. This concept was clearly introduced in the Human Development Report by the UNDP in 1994, which identified its key components as food security, economic security, health security, environmental security, personal security, political security, and cultural security.⁸

⁵ -Ayyoub Medhat, ***Arab National Security in a Changing World***, Mouli Library, Cairo, 1994.P65

⁶ - Hassan Salem Azeddine Saudi, ***Arab Food Security and the Importance of Sudan's Role***, Sudan Currency Printing Company Ltd., Khartoum, 1985.P87

⁷ - Ayyoub Medhat. *op.cit.p*.P69

⁸ -IDEM.P72

Human security is concerned with providing the minimum requirements for a decent life for every individual and ensuring justice in the distribution of opportunities and services, thereby enhancing an individual's sense of stability and belonging, and reducing the desire to migrate.⁹

3.2 The Role of Human Security in Combating Illegal Immigration.

Illegal immigration is not merely the result of individual choices but reflects a failure to ensure decent living conditions within the homeland. When individuals feel insecure economically, socially, or health-wise, they become willing to take risks and seek alternatives, even if they are illegal or dangerous.¹⁰

From this perspective, enhancing human security is an effective tool to address migration at its roots—not just through deterrence or punishment. Reducing unemployment, improving education levels, providing adequate healthcare, and developing marginalized regions are all preventive steps that directly affect migration drivers.

Moreover, providing an open political environment that respects rights and involves youth in decision-making contributes to consolidating the sense of citizenship and belonging, reducing the feeling of marginalization that drives many to escape toward the unknown.¹¹

3.3.Human Security Indicators.

Human security indicators are divided into several interrelated dimensions, with the most important being:

3.3.1.Economic Security:

The ability of individuals to secure a stable income through employment or social protection networks. Unemployment and poverty are among the main causes of irregular migration.

3.3.2.Food Security:

The ability of individuals to have consistent access to sufficient and safe food. In contexts where families suffer from food insecurity, migration becomes one of the possible survival strategies.

3.3.3.Health Security:

⁹ - Fazarf Youssef Amir, ***Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Immigration According to Facts, Conventions, and International Protocols***, Modern Arab Bureau, Alexandria, 2001.P86

¹⁰ - Fazarf Youssef Amir.OP.CIT.P89

¹¹ -IBID.P :91

The provision of equitable and effective healthcare services to all. A weak healthcare system or expensive medication may push individuals to seek external alternatives.

3.3.4.Environmental Security:

Protection from natural disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation. In areas suffering from desertification or drought, migration becomes a way to escape deteriorating living conditions.

3.3.5.Personal Security:

Protection from violence, crime, and exploitation. Conflicts and lack of safety push individuals to leave their homes.

3.3.6.Political and Cultural Security:

The ability of citizens to exercise their rights freely, including freedom of expression and participation in public life, along with respect for cultural diversity and collective identity.¹²

The security approach alone is not sufficient to address the phenomenon of illegal immigration because the real causes lie in structural imbalances that affect the lives of citizens. Human security is a comprehensive framework that tackles these causes through preventive and sustainable methods, rebuilding trust between individuals and the state.¹³

4. Algeria's Strategies to Combat Illegal Immigration.

In response to the continuous rise of illegal immigration, Algeria has adopted a set of measures and plans implemented at both the national and international levels. Despite the diversity of these strategies, their effectiveness remains dependent on their integration and their ability to move beyond the traditional security approach towards a comprehensive treatment that considers economic and social aspects.

4.1. National Strategies;

¹² -Khair Eddine El Aïeb, ***Security in the Mediterranean in Light of New International Changes***, Master's Thesis in International Relations, Institute of Political Science, University of Algiers, 1992.P:87

¹³ -Mohamed Hussein Sadeq Hassan, ***External Migration and Its Effects on Social Structure: A Field Study on the Villages of Khazem and Al-Ayaisha in Qena Governorate***, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, South Valley University, Algeria, 1992.P:215

4.1.1.At the Security Level:

Algerian authorities have intensified their security efforts to limit infiltration across the borders, especially in the southern and maritime regions. This includes the establishment of specialized border monitoring units, modernization of document detection technologies, and pursuit of criminal networks involved in migrant smuggling. Land and air patrols have also been deployed to strengthen security coverage in remote areas.¹⁴

4.1.2.At the Economic Level:

The state has sought to reduce migration incentives by launching employment programs for youth, especially in border and interior regions. These programs include support for small enterprises and projects in agriculture or industry to integrate youth into the economic cycle and stabilize them in their local communities.

4.1.3.At the Social Level:

Policies have been adopted to improve the quality of life in vulnerable neighborhoods through the provision of adequate housing, support for schooling, and enhancement of health and educational infrastructure, focusing on socially fragile groups.

4.1.4.At the Health Level:

Due to the presence of migrants from countries with endemic diseases, special health cells have been established to monitor epidemiological conditions and provide basic healthcare to detained migrants, to prevent public health threats.¹⁵

4.1.5.Awareness and Education:

Security agencies, educational, and cultural institutions conduct awareness campaigns to highlight the risks of illegal immigration, especially among youth, and to expose the legal and human consequences involved.¹⁶

4.2.International Strategies

4.2.1.Cooperation with Neighboring Countries:

Algeria has worked to strengthen security cooperation with neighboring countries, especially Tunisia, Niger, and Mali, to monitor shared borders, exchange information on migrant movements, and jointly combat smuggling networks.

¹⁴ -Khodour Adeeb, *Developing Arab Security Media: Reality and Future Prospects*, Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, Riyadh, 1999:P 132

¹⁵ - Khodour Adeeb.OP.CIT.P :133

¹⁶ -IBID.P :135

4.2.2. Agreements with the European Union:

Algeria has signed cooperation agreements with several European countries in the context of combating irregular migration. These agreements include mechanisms for the readmission of migrants, support for surveillance technologies, and funding for local development projects to reduce migration drivers.

4.2.3. Commitment to International Conventions:

Algeria has joined international protocols and agreements aimed at criminalizing human trafficking and regulating the movement of individuals, with respect for migrant rights and the provision of protection for vulnerable groups.¹⁷

The adopted measures show that Algeria is making significant efforts to control the phenomenon of illegal immigration, both through strengthening security monitoring and through internal development approaches. However, the effectiveness of these strategies remains dependent on their integration and on their transformation from reactive measures to proactive policies focusing on prevention by improving living conditions and ensuring human dignity.¹⁸

4- Conclusion:

Illegal immigration is not merely a legal violation but a reflection of structural imbalances in societies. Therefore, it cannot be reduced through fences and barbed wire but through building just and safe communities where citizens feel they are partners in shaping their future. Human security, with its comprehensive concept and purpose, is a key entry point toward this goal.

In response to the continuous rise of illegal immigration, Algeria has adopted a set of measures and plans implemented at both the national and international levels. Despite the diversity of these strategies, their effectiveness remains dependent on their integration and their ability to move beyond the traditional security approach towards a comprehensive treatment that considers economic and social aspects.

The adopted measures show that Algeria is making significant efforts to control the phenomenon of illegal immigration, both through strengthening security monitoring and through internal development approaches. However, the effectiveness of these strategies remains dependent on their integration and on their transformation from reactive

¹⁷ - Ben Antar Abdel Nour, ***The Evolution of the Concept of Security in International Relations***, International Politics*, Issue 118, Khartoum, 1985.P:95

¹⁸ - Marwa Nazir, ***From Collective Security to Human Security***: The Shift of International Attention from the State to the Individual, Modern Discussion Journal, Issue 4141, Jordan, 2001.P112

measures to proactive policies focusing on prevention by improving living conditions and ensuring human dignity.

Results:

Through analyzing the relationship between human security and the reality of illegal immigration in Algeria, it becomes evident that the absence of decent living conditions is the primary driver behind individuals' pursuit of illegal departure. The study also showed that a security-only approach is insufficient and may sometimes worsen the situation in the absence of realistic economic and social alternatives.

- Weak human security—especially in its economic and social dimensions—is a central driver of migration.
- The security-focused approach has not achieved the desired long-term effect in reducing the phenomenon.
- The importance of involving youth in development projects that ensure stability and strengthen national belonging.
- The presence of regional smuggling networks exploiting vulnerable groups and fueling clandestine migration.
- The importance of international partnerships and exchange of expertise to address the issue comprehensively.

Recommendations:

Based on the above, the study recommends the following:

At the National Level:

- Develop youth-targeted employment programs, particularly in remote and border areas.
- Improve the quality of education and healthcare as pillars of human security.
- Support small and medium enterprises to create local economic opportunities.
- Organize continuous awareness campaigns about the dangers of illegal immigration.
- Enhance border control using modern technologies without compromising human rights.

At the Regional Level:

- Strengthen security cooperation with neighboring countries and exchange information on active smuggling networks.
- Conclude bilateral agreements to regulate legal movement of people in ways that preserve human dignity.

At the International Level:

- Call on European partners to fulfill their commitments to joint development rather than focusing solely on migration deterrence policies.
- Support programs for social integration and vocational training for youth at risk of clandestine migration.

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