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DIASPORA AND THEIR HOME COUNTRIES:  
EXPLORING THE SECOND GENERATION OF  
DIASPORA RETURNEES IN TANZANIA

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## **DIASPORA AND THEIR HOME COUNTRIES: EXPLORING THE SECOND GENERATION OF DIASPORA RETURNEES IN TANZANIA**

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### **Abstract**

**Purpose:** This study endeavors to focus on the concept of second generation of diaspora returnees through a detailed explanation of the links that exist between the diaspora and their home countries. This study also sought to understand the differences in the social environment of the second generation of diaspora returnees between the host country and the country of origin.

**Methodology:** The study reviewed relevant literature and took an approach of first conceptualizing and explaining the meaning of second generation of diaspora returnees. Later on, this study through comparative analysis identified the differences between social environments in host countries and countries of origin.

**Findings:** Generally, this study found out in the recent past the connection between Tanzania as a country and its diaspora is progressively improving but to a large extent the second generation of the diasporas feel out of touch with the country.

**Unique Contribution to Practice and Policy:** Recommendations from this study challenge the Tanzanian government to set up policies that will enable the diasporas to be involved in their home country activities. Secondly, to equally facilitate the return of the second generation of diaspora, the Tanzanian government should create a direct connection between the government and the diaspora and recognize their existence as part of the larger Tanzania community. Findings from this study also provide a basis for other scholars to conduct more studies along this field of knowledge.

**Keywords:** *Migration return, diaspora home country, second generation diaspora*

## Introduction

The concept of second generation of diaspora returnees is still fresh and unexplored in many scholarly works of migration scholars as well as sociologists (King & Christou, 2010). There is no agreed definition of the second generation of the diaspora since most scholars have interpreted it from different perspectives. However, on a basic understanding, the second generation of diaspora is regarded as the children of immigrants that are born while the immigrants are still living in their host countries (Christou & King, 2010).

Migration has become a global phenomenon with an increasing number of people moving from one country or region to another (Leblang, 2017). This has become an era of diversified mobility, and as a result we have interactions of different cultures creating multicultural communities especially in migrant receiver countries (Ionescu, 2006). Migration scholars and sociologists have explored the concepts of migration in a bid to understand trends that surround migration in regard to both home and host countries. However, certain aspects of this discipline have escaped their research scope only to be known by a few through other unscholarly means.

The effects of second generation of diaspora returnees in their parental homeland is immense and worthy of consideration in a scholarly investigation (Hess & Korf, 2014). This is because, there exist both social and structural differences between these second generation returnees and their parental homeland which need to be harmonized in order to keep that link (Huang, Ramshaw & Norman, 2016). Most governments, more especially the Tanzanian government has put a lot of efforts in developing connections with the diaspora but only to a limited end. This means that their touch only stretches to the immediate emigrants that leave this particular country and forgets those who were born of the emigrants and still yearn for a connection with their parental homeland (Graf, 2017).

To the second generation of the diaspora, there is often a generalized confusion usually on the country to consider as home (King & Christou, 2011). Having been born in the host countries, they become citizens of that country, adopt the culture of that country and even learn the education system of the host country. Therefore, in this sense, returning to their parental homeland becomes an arduous task since they do not know where to fall. The scarce existing literature that has considered this topic describes the process as “as getting back to my roots” (Baser, 2014). It is often considered one of the most ignored topics since most scholars have associated the second generation of diasporas with their parents, assuming a situation whereby everything is to be measured from the perspective of the first generation of diasporas who are the parents to the second generation (Christou & King, 2010). It is no doubt a person becomes a native of the place where he or she is born. This brings the second dilemma of the second generation of the diaspora since they are to be considered natives of their parental host countries. Returning back to their parental home countries is more of going “home from home” process which on a relatively well explained view seems not to exert any effect on parental home countries (McAuliffe, 2007).

Such a view often gets misconstrued and this explains why there exists little literature covering the topic (Mason, 2007). In Tanzania, the second generation of the diasporas who have returned to Tanzania are often considered as foreigners by Tanzanians, even in the case where they hold

Tanzanian citizenship. This has been contributed by the notion that has been widely applied in Tanzania that if your cultural background is different then you cannot be taken as one of the typical Tanzanian. There are many reasons why this perspective is wrong and needs to be changed. First, it makes people to think of themselves and forget about others which can create social alienation of people who seem different from given societal standards. Secondly, it does not create room for social integration because people are only wired to accept what aligns to their cultural views and set standards.

In this study, the concept of second generation of the diaspora is explored and as well as detailed significance of this category is considered. This study is drawn to give explanations of why there are existing social and structural differences when second generation of the diaspora returns to their parental homeland. Secondly, this study reflects on the Tanzanian government preparedness to accept this category of the diaspora independent of their parental involvement. Similarly, the Tanzanian social sphere is also evaluated to check if it can provide an ample environment for social integration.

### **The concept of Second generation of diaspora returnees**

The concept of the second generation of diaspora returnees is new into the migration studies (Christou & King, 2010). Its understanding will depend from the perspective it is considered. Generally, it is agreed that the second generation of the diaspora are children born to immigrants while they are living in their host countries (King & Christou, 2011). On the other hand, when these category of the diaspora returns to the countries of their parental origin, there comes a confusion of whether to consider them as part of their parental home country community or be termed as merely foreigners (Baser, 2014). This concept of second generation of diaspora returnees is as a product of genealogical time and geographical locations (McAuliffe, 2007). For it to exist, both theoretically and physically, there must be a first genealogy, which is the parent and similarly there must be an origin and a destination. The first genealogy is a generation of parents who migrated out of their home countries and settled in different countries. In this host countries they gave birth and brought forth the second generation of the diaspora. The second generation of the diaspora become natives by virtue of the fact that they are born there (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2006). Upon going to their parental homes, independently or together with their parents, they are termed as returnees.

This concept poses a danger of ambiguity if not well understood. The common case surrounds the notion “home” (McAuliffe, 2007). It becomes quite hard to establish satisfactorily on the suitable geographical location for the second generation of the diaspora returnees to call home. As mentioned earlier in this study, by virtue of being born in their parental host countries, they become natives of that country. On the other hand, by ancestral connection through their parents they are linked to their parental home countries by blood and that brings in a second home. So this, in a sense, means that the returning of the second generation of the diaspora to their parental homeland is a relocation from home to home (King & Christou, 2014). In this case, their parental homeland becomes a second home. Speaking in a strict sense, the second home becomes effective only on their return and that applies if this second generation were born and brought up in the first home which is their parental host countries. Such a return also brings confusion into the demographics of a given society. Some statisticians may opt to consider it as a return in a

sense that assumes their earlier presence in their parental homeland (Christou, 2006). On the other hand, some scholars have opted to consider it as an ontological return to their parental homeland (Kelly, 2015).

Such ambiguities are huddles that are often faced when exploring the concept of this term “second generation of diaspora returnees” (King & Christou, 2014). It is often important to note the difficulties at every stage and try to break it down for a better understanding. Perhaps this explains why most migration scholars have given this topic a wide birth (Délano Alonso & Mylonas, 2019). It is often confusing to explore the concept in its entirety because of the conflicting parts that involves its scope. In some cases, scholars have used the term in a perspective that is more ideal for given particular contexts.

Far down, another problem arises immediately when the term “second generation of the diaspora returnees” is broken down into two parts (Mason, 2007). The first part, which is “second generation of the diaspora” throws in a state of momentary confusion on a superficial comprehension. A brief check brings up a good number of definitions of the term and some of them complicates matters to a worse ending. The term “second generation of the diaspora” on a superficial understanding means someone born to immigrant parents (Just, Sandovic & Listhaug, 2014). To that point, everything seems clear and to the point. The complication comes in when one is supposed to evaluate the nature of the parental relationship. For instance, if parents married while staying in host countries as immigrants then undoubtedly their children will be considered as second generation of the diaspora. This is arrived at by virtue that the children are born in their parental host countries.

The most disturbing part is the case of parents that were married and had children before emigration and as well had another child(ren) as immigrants after settling in their host countries (Christou, 2011). In such a case, there are difficulties and scholars have expressed differences in the classification of these children (Alinejad, 2011). In most European countries, definitions of second generation of the diaspora have been extended to include children born in their parental home countries but immigrated with their parents to the host country at an early age, usually below six years of age (Thomson & Curl, 2007).

Studies by other scholars like Portes and Rumbaut (2001) gives another perspective to the understanding of the term. Their explanations accommodate children born in parental home countries but brought along with parents to host countries while below 12 years of age. They further elaborate that in order for one to be considered second as generation of the diaspora both of the parents don't need to be natives of the home country.

Further questions have arisen from this kind of understanding. First, in the case where parents are immigrants of two different national origins it becomes difficult to know which origin can the second generation of the diasporas bear allegiance to (Hall, 2006). This has been a major problem that is unexplored for a long time now and needs more researching to fill the knowledge gap.

The second and remaining part of this concept that ought to be looked into is “return.” Existing literature about the return of the diasporas substantially covers the return of the first generation of the diasporas back to their home countries (Hall, 2006). When it comes to the second generation, it is often not given much attention because the usage of the word return almost loses sense given that it is meant to explain a relocation of people to a place where they have never lived before excluding the fact that they might have visited it previously (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2006). However, most scholars have defended the use of the term “return” in a sense that when the second generation of the diaspora relocate to the country of their parental origin they are making an ontological return to a point of origin, their parental homeland (Christou, 2006; Christou & King, 2010; King & Christou, 2014).

### **Foreign born returnees to Tanzania**

Tanzania, like many other African countries has not been subject for major migration studies (Beegle, de Weerd & Dercon, 2011). The reason being is that African countries experience emigration in high rates as compared to immigration. As much as emigration does not seem to affect cultural diversity of a given society, it provides a good case of a diverse diaspora (Baser, 2014). Tanzania being a country that has had more people leaving than they come in, it has a diverse diaspora that is spread across the globe (Ocello, Petrucci, Testa & Vignoli, 2015). Through this diaspora, we have had second generation of the diaspora which are offsprings of the first generation Tanzanian diaspora. As illustrated earlier in this study, the second generation of the diaspora are born outside their parental home countries and have never lived there before.

Until recently, most of the conducted studies about return migration reflected on the first generation of the diaspora (Mason, 2007). These studies show that return migration is a process that is quite involving and calls into play a lot of factors. On the surface it is often taken as a unified process that involves relocation of the diaspora from their host countries back to home countries. However, even with the first generation of diaspora the process of returning becomes a complex process that requires readjustment of certain social settings and giving up a life that one is accustomed to so as to pick new norms in order to fit back in the home community (Délano Alonso & Mylonas, 2019). The return of the diasporas can therefore result in a positive experience or cause psychological trauma to the diaspora especially if time spent away has been a lot and consequently changes have taken place within the home country.

In most cases, as majorly put by many scholars, the return of the diaspora has been a socially conservative act which happens at the later stage of the diaspora lives usually as a result of retirement or old age (Christou, 2006; Christou & King, 2010; Mason, 2007). In Tanzania, the statistics are pretty much similar since most of the diasporas that return to Tanzania do so as a result of retirement or old age (Beegle et al., 2011). In between, the diasporas prefer to stay and work in their host countries until they feel that they have exhausted their abilities and potential.

Given that long stay, these returnees come back to Tanzania after they have accrued enough resources to support them through (Beegle et al., 2011). Upon arrival back in Tanzania, they are highly regarded in society because of their advanced social status and financial strength that they have developed while abroad (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015). There seems to be a clear cut between them and the Tanzanian locals. With the respect the returnees are accorded, they behave as elites

in the community and in some cases they tend to look down on the locals for thinking that the culture of the locals is backward and primitive to associate with (Evans, 2005). Usually the experience of migration does not end with their return as they maintain links with their host countries and still contribute to other social activities that they were involved in back in their host countries.

On a general observation, diaspora return to Tanzania has not been such a problem to the first generation diasporas since they have experiences about living there that was obtained before they emigrated (Beegle et al., 2011). However, it becomes difficult for the second generation of the diaspora since they have never lived there before and even more difficult when this second generation returns back to their parental homes independently (Pérez-Armendáriz & Crow, 2010).

The differences in the two societies of residence, especially for the Tanzanian diaspora coming from countries in Europe are vast both culturally and economically. However, despite the high economic status and social class associated with staying abroad, most returnees to Tanzania describe the experience of settling back as peaceful and comfortable (Ocello et al., 2015). This is partly because of the respect they get accorded in Tanzania as compared to the marginalization and sometimes incidents of racism they experience while away in foreign countries.

Studies conducted on the returnee of second generation of the diaspora have shown that this category of the diaspora seem comfortable at home because they set new standards and act as agents of change in the society (Fouon & Glick-Schiller, 2006; Kent, 2006; Pérez-Armendáriz & Crow, 2010). This is possible because, second generation of the diaspora seem to be a well-educated and informed category of the diaspora that possess skills and expertise in their field of practice. Besides, even at young age their exposure seems to bring new changes into the social sphere of the local communities eliminating some cultural practices that might seem backward and primitive (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015).

In Tanzania, the second generation returnees have brought upon changes in the society especially in the education sector where the aspect of technology has not been fully explored (Hansen, 2012). The application of technology in education has been an influence by the diasporas and currently there are reportedly a good number of academic institutions that are embracing the changes. Similarly students and other scholars are taking a similar turn (Bertz, 2015).

As a result of the second generation return, plenty of opportunities are created and there is general improvement of the economy (Constant & Zimmermann, 2016). Due to their financial power, the returnees are able to set private businesses that have created employment for them and the Tanzanian locals as well. This has impacted positively on the economy of the country and has created diversity in other sectors because of the different approaches employed by the returnees (Ramamurti, 2004).

As much as the returnees have a generally comfortable life in Tanzania, things have been different in some rural areas where their integration often becomes difficult because of vast cultural differences (Beegle et al., 2011). In these rural areas, Tanzanians still hold on to cultural values and any cases against the cultural values is taken seriously. Since most second generation returnees especially those of younger ages do not take cultural practices serious, the Tanzanian

rural communities seems to alienate them (Bertz, 2015). They are considered as a source of bad morals, more especially in the aspect of dressing where the acceptable styles and fashion is quite different between Tanzania and European societies where most of the Tanzanian diasporas live (Reitz et al., 2009).

The second difficulty that seems to face the second generation returnees to Tanzania has been employment opportunities (Hansen, 2012). In some cases, these returnees are middle-class who are either college or university graduates that have just completed their education and are now returning back home. The generally perceived high educational competence that these returnees possess makes them to be seen as competitors by their local counterparts (Christou, 2011). This creates unnecessary rivalry that might end up creating barriers between the returnees and the locals.

Central to the process of returning, the intentions of the returnees is to be able to blend with the locals in Tanzania but more often it does not end so (Maliapaard & Phalet, 2012). This study found out that in Tanzania there is still social stratification and Tanzanians still embody the “white dominance” whereby whites and black rarely meet in a social setting. In such a situation, the returnees find themselves thrown in between because they become a misfit in either category (Christou, 2006). This is because they are a product of a white society, speaking even in their languages and accents but they are of black origin.

### **Tanzanian government’s address on the return of second generation of diaspora**

The Tanzanian government, as illustrated earlier in this study has generally improved in drafting policies that have led to an increase in diaspora participation in home country activities (Beegle et al., 2011). Existing literature reveals that due to increased rate of international migration, a follow up on the diaspora has become necessary because of the immense contributions that the diaspora have made towards the economy of their home countries (Alinejad, 2011; Brinkerhoff, 2015; Whitaker, 2011). However, much of this tracing and policies are geared towards accommodating the first generation diaspora and so far little has been to consider the second generation of the diaspora.

In a way, the Tanzanian government seems to presume that through having a connection with the first generation of the diaspora everything to do with the diaspora is that way sorted (Bertz, 2015). This notion seems far from the truth because of many reasons. First most second generation are independent and make decisions on their own without the influence of the adults. This means that if there is no direct connection to them a lot is lost in terms of the diaspora interaction with their ancestral homeland. Secondly, setting legal structures to accommodate second generation of the diasporas will improve home countries economic contributions since the government will benefit from both the first and second generation of the diaspora separately.

The most pressing issue has been the debate about the Tanzanian citizenship whereby citizens of Tanzania are not allowed to acquire foreign citizenship in addition to the Tanzanian citizenship (Beegle et al., 2011). This makes it difficult for the second generation of the diaspora whom by virtue of being born in their parental host countries have become citizens of those countries. These second generation of the diasporas might want to associate themselves with their parental home countries but as far as the law is concerned they will be classified as foreigners in Tanzania



and would even require a visa to enter the country. Not getting an opportunity to connect directly to their parental home countries makes the second generation of the diasporas lose interest in trying to become a part of the community of their ancestral origin (Fouron & Glick-Schiller, 2006).

Despite a lot of push from the Tanzanian private sector, the government has not still come to agreement into considering the issue of dual citizenship (Bertz, 2015). Similarly, foreign trained professionals get it rough in obtaining employment in Tanzania (Hansen, 2012). The government has done less to address these issues through reducing some unnecessary requirements put in place for foreign trained professionals. Once such obstacles have been removed, second generation of the diasporas may opt to come back to their parental home countries for employment both in the public and private sector (Martin, 2019). Doing so will boost the Tanzania government overall level of education and professional competency.

On a general observation, this study established that second generation of the diaspora is still an alien concept in the ears of the Tanzanians. The current existing governmental policies and structures have overlooked that area without any justifiable reason. Some of the reasons may be due to the notion that the second generation of the diaspora is more foreign than they are Tanzanian. Once this notion is corrected there definitely will be more policies set up to accommodate the return of the second generation of the diaspora.

### **Conclusion**

This study focused majorly on the case of second generation of the diaspora return to their parental home country with Tanzania serving as a case study. For many years, studies on migration have focused on the process of migration, with substantial literature existing about first generation of diasporas. Most governments, especially in African countries where emigration is high than immigration have had the effect of losing their citizens to other countries. The contributions of the diasporas to their home countries have been seen to be immense in countries where policies have been drafted and implemented to ensure there is a connection between the diaspora and their home countries. So far, there seems to be a progressive improvement to that direction. However, this success seems to be limited to a part of the diasporas identified as first generation diasporas.

The importance of the second generation of the diasporas has not been known to many home governments because of two main reasons. First, second generation diasporas data does not reflect in their parental home countries' databases. This leaves them out and unaccounted for. Secondly, authorities in home countries seem to make an assumption that once they connect with the first generation of the diaspora the second generation is reached indirectly. Hardly do they realize that the case is different because the second generation of the diaspora tend to exist independently in every aspect that in fact they require a different and separate approach.

This study established that the Tanzanian government has no mechanisms in place through which they can get into contact with their second generation of the diaspora. The study also found out that by leaving out this category of the diaspora, a lot of resources are locked out that would have contributed to the economy. There is high chances that if the government provides a

comfortable environment more and more second generation of the Tanzanian diaspora will be willing to invest in their parental home country.

### Recommendations

Despite the globalization of migration and the apparently increasing rates of migration, African countries are still being affected by migration. This is because the countries send out a lot of their skilled professionals affecting the labor market. The only way to benefit from the inevitable process of migration, home countries need to set up policies that will favor diaspora involvement in their home countries. Once the connection between the diaspora and their home countries is established the home countries stand to benefit from the diaspora economic contributions.

Such a process has not been successful in Tanzania. There is a gap in addressing the second generation of the Tanzanian diaspora. This study poses a challenge for the government to identify the necessary mechanisms that are necessary to facilitate the return of this category of the diasporas back to Tanzania. A suggestion is also made for more studies to be done so as to create awareness of the second generation of the diaspora. This will push home countries to account for them and help them integrate into their parental home countries.

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