

## Illegal Migration And Its Relation To National Belonging Among Algerian Youth: A Field Study In Boumerdès Province

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### Abstract:

*The current research aims to determine whether there is a relationship between attitudes toward illegal migration and national belonging among youth. To achieve this objective, we conducted a field study on a sample of 250 young men and women from the Dellys area, Boumerdès Province. We adopted the descriptive approach suitable for this study and utilized two standardized scales: the Attitudes toward Illegal Migration Scale and the National Belonging Scale, both adapted to the Algerian context.*

*The research results revealed no correlation between attitudes toward illegal migration and national belonging among the study sample. This indicates that attitudes toward illegal migration are influenced by other factors rather than the degree of an individual's or youth's sense of belonging to their country.*

**Keywords:** Attitudes toward illegal migration, national belonging, youth, Algerian context.

### Introduction:

The era we belong to is characterized by transformation and progress in various fields of life. One of the most prominent traits of human beings is their constant inclination toward change. Some of these changes pass by without leaving a mark, while others have profound and clear impacts on individuals' thoughts, beliefs, or relationships. This is particularly true for youth, who cannot remain isolated from the events and developments around them. They are in a constant state of influence and interaction with the various factors and changes brought about by the dynamics of the era we live in.

These changes have significantly affected Algerian youth, shaping their thinking, defining their interests, and influencing their behaviors. At times, these behaviors manifest as deviant actions with potentially serious consequences for both individuals and society, as seen in the growing allure of illegal migration.

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Illegal migration is one of the most pressing issues faced by modern and developing societies. According to the International Labour Organization, the number of undocumented migrants accounts for 10% to 15% of the total estimated global migrant population, which the United Nations reported to be 180 million in recent estimates (Raed, 2013, p. 187). By 2015, the number of migrants worldwide had reached approximately 244 million, representing 33% of the global population (Organisation internationale pour les migrations, 2018).

The International Organization for Migration reported that by 2017, more than 100,000 refugees and migrants had reached Europe by sea, with over eight out of ten heading to Italy. The same organization noted that by that year, approximately 2,250 individuals had died attempting to reach Europe by boat (UN News, 2017).

Recently, discourse in Algeria regarding illegal or clandestine migration—commonly referred to as “harga”—has become increasingly prevalent. The alarming statistics and figures reported by various media outlets and official bodies call for urgent attention, as this phenomenon primarily affects a sensitive demographic: youth. This group is particularly vulnerable to various social ills and harsh conditions stemming from unemployment, marginalization, and social alienation (Hamami, 2019, p. 31).

Researcher Siouani Lotfi (2019) notes that this phenomenon has significantly worsened in Algeria in recent years, with a noticeable increase in the number of individuals attempting illegal migration. Statistics from the Coast Guard Command of the Naval Forces indicate that 1,500 attempts were thwarted between January and December 2018 (Siouani Lotfi, 2019, p. 2).

Similarly, the Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights published a report revealing that 1,206 attempts at illegal migration were prevented in 2016, with the number exceeding 3,000 in 2017 (Siouani Lotfi, 2019, p. 3).

Studying the phenomenon of illegal migration through the lens of youth attitudes toward it highlights the importance of predicting potential future behaviors. These attitudes, even if implicit and not immediately observable, serve as indicators of future actions. This approach mirrors studies on youth attitudes toward drug use, where such attitudes have been shown to provide insights into likely future behaviors (Mubarak, 2006, p. 120).

It is crucial to explore youth attitudes, including their thoughts and beliefs, toward the phenomenon of illegal migration. These attitudes determine whether their orientation is negative—characterized by indifference and disregard for the societal consequences of this phenomenon—or positive, particularly in actively opposing it. Each individual plays a role in shaping this dynamic (Mubarak, 2006, p. 122).

Youth attitudes form the foundation for understanding and interpreting contemporary social and political events and issues. They are pivotal in predicting future behaviors and are central to psychological studies. Anderson (1997) emphasized that youth is the stage where these attitudes are deeply ingrained, as young people are more focused on themselves and the issues affecting their society.

In the context of "illegal migration," its roots can be traced to several factors. Suleiman Mazhar, in his 2008 study, argued that the reasons behind Algerian youth engaging in clandestine migration are primarily psychological. These include personal despair, familial challenges, and a sense of hopelessness and frustration stemming from local circumstances. Such feelings are often accompanied by self-deprecation and a sense of failure (Mazhar, 2008, p. 130).

Obeid (2006) identified several factors driving illegal migration, including human vulnerability, which manifests as frustration, cultural influences, unmet needs, weak national belonging, and a pervasive sense of alienation (Obeid, 2004, p. 30).

The formation of attitudes toward illegal migration among youth is influenced by numerous and interrelated factors. These include economic and social conditions such as unemployment and low living standards, psychological factors like feelings of alienation and despair, and political factors, particularly in cases of internal conflicts and wars. Additionally, the role of Western media cannot be overlooked, as it often portrays life in Western countries as a paradise on earth.

Some literature suggests that the development of attitudes toward illegal migration among youth may also stem from a diminished sense of patriotism or national belonging, in addition to the previously mentioned factors. Therefore, studying this variable within the Algerian context is of great importance, given the critical role that "a sense of national belonging" plays in building and strengthening nations.

National belonging is one of the pillars of individual and societal development. It must be nurtured to help individuals overcome feelings of isolation, alienation, and loneliness. A sense of belonging plays a significant role in shaping individuals' relationships with their country or community. It stands in contrast to feelings of psychological alienation, isolation, and loneliness.

This sense of belonging reflects an individual's perception of being an integral part of their society, feeling accepted within it, and being valued among its members. It evokes pride and security, motivating individuals to work for the betterment and protection of their country and to take pride in their loyalty to it. This sense of belonging manifests in individuals' behaviors through their positive engagement with societal issues, their loyalty to societal values, and their willingness to shoulder responsibilities.

The absence of this sense of belonging among our youth can lead to profound psychological and social consequences, such as isolation, frustration, psychological and social alienation, and ultimately, illegal migration.

The studies conducted by Wafaa Fathi Barakat (1996), Mohamed Khalifa Barakat (2000), and Ali Hassan Wahban (2008) reveal that feelings of helplessness, normlessness, lack of a clear vision for the future, loss of belonging to life, and a strong desire to migrate and leave one's homeland have become prevalent traits among youth. These characteristics have naturally emerged as a result of their interaction with their surrounding environment, which is marked by pressures, tensions, anxiety, internal conflicts, and imposed cultural changes they cannot adapt to. Additionally, shifting values and norms that regulate behavior, difficulties in accessing education, lack of recognition for their competencies and academic qualifications, financial struggles, poverty, high living costs, family and relational problems, lack of social solidarity, and limited opportunities for self-expression have compounded these issues.

Moreover, the presence of high, idealistic ambitions that are difficult to achieve has left youth feeling alienated in a society that does not meet their desires or needs. This has led to an inability to predict their future and a fear of what lies ahead, resulting in estrangement from both themselves and their community (Zahran, 2004, p. 80).

Erich Fromm emphasized that belonging is a fundamental human need, fulfilled when individuals satisfy their desire to exist with others in a specific geographic area, sharing common traits and characteristics such as a shared homeland, religion, and collective destiny. Fromm also highlighted that a positive psychological state is crucial for increasing motivation toward one's country, thereby strengthening the sense of belonging. He viewed belonging as a primary means of overcoming existential crises and argued that human beings are driven by various needs, with the need for belonging at the forefront (Ahmed Mohamed, 1991, p. 173). This idea was similarly addressed by Kerman (1995), as cited by Mahfouz (1998, pp. 63–64).

Belonging, at its various levels, serves as a factor through which individuals identify with their community, feel like an accepted and valued part of it, and hold a distinct place within it (Mahfouz, 1998, pp. 63–64).

In light of the widespread phenomenon of illegal migration, which is considered a serious issue according to the studies and statistics presented earlier, we decided to study this phenomenon among the "youth of Dellys" and link it to the variable of national belonging. This decision was based on the alarming statistics regarding the spread of this phenomenon among Algerian youth, particularly in the Dellys region of Boumerdès Province. Accordingly, the research questions were formulated as follows:

- Does the formation of attitudes toward illegal migration among the youth of Dellys relate to their weak sense of belonging to their homeland?

- Or are these attitudes unrelated to their sense of national belonging, instead stemming from other factors?

These two questions can be summarized into the following main research question:

- Is there a correlation between attitudes toward illegal migration and national belonging among the youth of Dellys?

### **1. Research Hypothesis:**

Based on the main research question, the hypothesis was formulated as follows:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between attitudes toward illegal migration and national belonging among the youth of Dellys.

### **2. Importance of the Research:**

The importance of the research lies in its content and topic, as it sheds light on attitudes toward illegal migration and its relationship with national belonging. The significance of the research is evident in the following areas:

- It highlights the phenomenon of illegal migration, which is one of the most pressing issues of the globalization era and one of its prominent characteristics.

- The research is also significant because it focuses on youth, a group that plays a key role in the development, progress, and prosperity of society. The involvement of youth in illegal migration is a serious issue that should not be overlooked.

- It emphasizes the phenomenon of "national belonging," which is a complex human issue that encompasses biological, psychological, cultural, and economic aspects. These dimensions impact both the mental health of individuals and the well-being of society in all areas of life.

### **3. Objectives of the Research:**

The study aims to uncover the existence and nature of the relationship between attitudes toward illegal migration and national belonging among youth. Understanding this relationship can provide insight into the reality of this phenomenon, particularly when considering the variable of national belonging. If this sense of belonging is shaken among today's youth, it must be taken seriously, and efforts must be made to address it, especially in the context of the globalized world we live in.

### **4. Key Concepts Operationally:**

**4.1 Illegal Migration:** The concept of migration is broad and varied depending on the type of migration discussed in the research. In our current study, illegal migration refers to migration that occurs in an unlawful manner, specifically what is commonly known as "harqa." This involves using any means that allows an individual to cross the Algerian border into another country illegally and secretly. It is measured by the scores obtained from the application of the illegal migration scale in this study.

**4.2 Attitudes:** The concept of attitudes is diverse, as it is explored in various studies within psychology in general and social psychology in particular. In our study, attitudes are understood as the combination of an individual's perspective and opinions formed through life situations regarding the topic of illegal migration. These attitudes are measured using the attitudes toward illegal migration scale employed in the current research.

**4.3 National Belonging:** National belonging is a positive emotional orientation felt by youth toward their homeland. It encompasses feelings of love for the country and its people, belief in national unity, and the desire to preserve the country's achievements and resources. In this study, it is measured by the score an individual receives on the national belonging scale.

**4.4 Youth:** The concept of youth refers to a group characterized by strength, energy, and effectiveness in building societies. Youth form the core of dynamism and renewal in society. This group has a significant influence on the prevailing cultural situation, especially through their impact on traditional culture via modernization. In our study, youth refers to those individuals, aged between 18 and 30, who are interested in illegal migration and reside in the municipality of Dellys, Boumerdès Province.

#### **5. Research Methodology:**

In our current study, we adopted the descriptive method in line with the nature of the research we are conducting. The aim is to understand the attitudes toward illegal migration and their relationship with national belonging among youth. This method is a way of analyzing and interpreting data in a scientifically organized manner to achieve specific goals for a specific situation. Descriptive research focuses on the present state of events and things, regardless of their type or field, with the purpose of understanding the present and guiding its future through updating, correcting, modifying, or suggesting alternative approaches to be tested and evaluated for potential adoption to improve the present (Abdel Nasser, 2006, p. 72).

#### **6. Sample of the Study:**

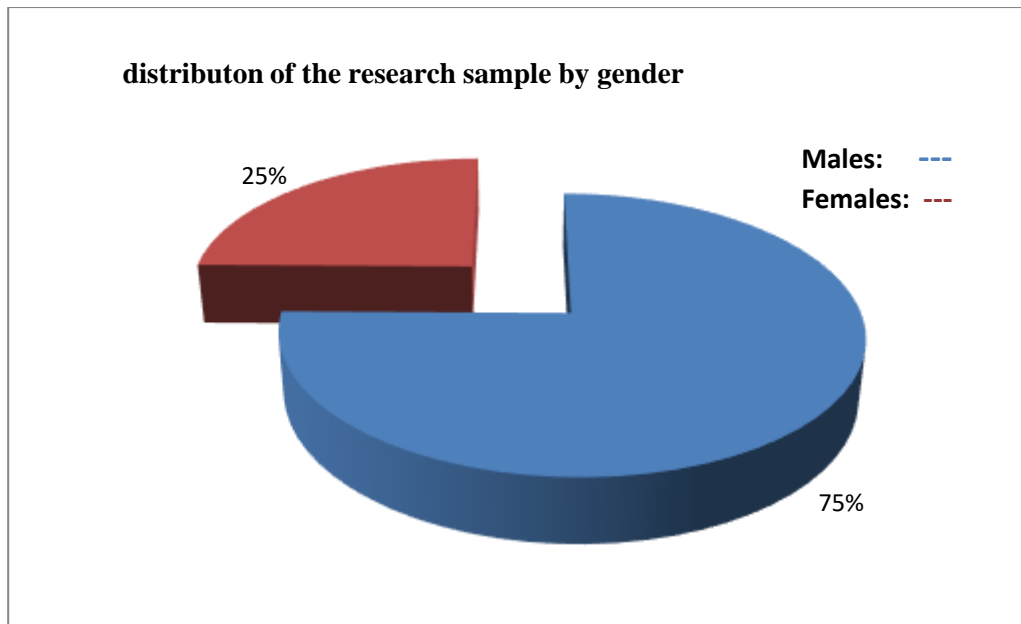
We selected a sample of 250 young men and women from the original community, represented by the youth of the Dellys region, with ages ranging from 18 to 30 years. The sample was chosen using the "purposive" or "deliberate" method. This method was chosen because we only included in our sample youth who have positive attitudes toward illegal migration. In other words, we did not administer the scales to individuals until we first explored their desire for illegal migration by asking them this question and confirming it using the illegal migration scale.

Our study also included a variable that describes the characteristics of the research sample, namely gender (male and female) and age.

#### **A-Gender Variable:**

**Table 1: Distribution of Research Sample Participants by Gender**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Repetitions</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Males	188	%75.2
Females	62	%24.8
Total	250	100%



**Figure 1: Graphical Representation of the Gender Variable Using Pie Charts**

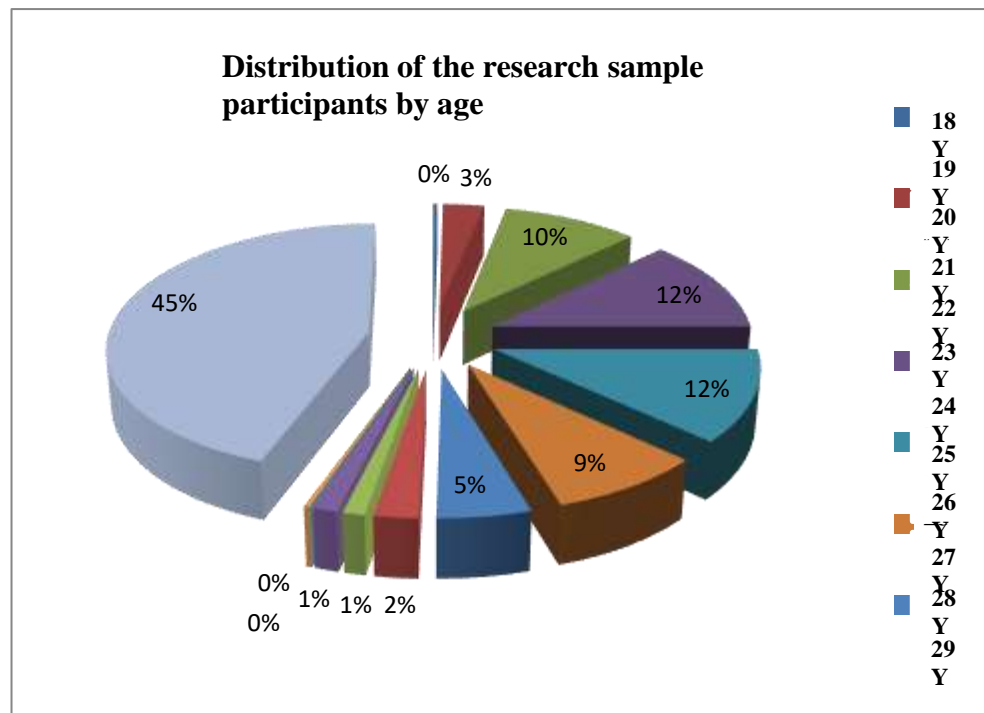
We observe from Table 1 and Figure 1, which show the distribution of the research sample by gender, that the majority of the sample are males. The frequency of males is 62, accounting for 75.2%, while the frequency of females is 188, accounting for 24.8%.

**B- Age Variable:**

**Table 2: Distribution of Research Sample Participants by Age**

Data/ Age	Repetitions	Percentage
18 years old	2	0.66 %
19 years old	25	6.57%
20 years old	65	21.66%
21 years old	82	27.33%
22 years old	80	26.66%
23 years old	57	19%
24 years old	34	11.33%
25 years old	16	5.33%
26 years old	8	2.66%
27 years old	9	3%
28 years old	00	00%
29 years old	02	0.66%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 2: Graphical Representation of the Age Variable Using Pie Charts**



We observe from Table 2 and Figure 2, which show the distribution of the research sample by age, that the majority of the sample members are between the ages of 21 and 24, with percentages ranging from 12% to 45%.

## 7. Research Tools and Methods:

To test the hypothesis of the current study and measure its variables, scales tailored to the Algerian environment were used, specifically the "Attitudes Towards Illegal Immigration" scale and the "National Belonging" scale.

### 7.1. Attitudes Towards Illegal Immigration Scale:

This scale was developed by Algerian researcher Qais Hakim during his study of attitudes towards illegal immigration and its relationship with social-psychological adjustment among youth during the academic year 2008/2009.

The final version of the scale contains 22 items covering various opinions and positions, which are either behavioral, cognitive, or emotional. The respondent selects an answer that aligns with their opinion and what suits them, based on the available choices, which include agreement (with varying degrees) and disagreement. There is also a neutral option for each item, which is expressed as "not sure."

#### - Scoring Method:

The scale is scored using a correction grid specifically designed for this purpose. The researcher created the grid to facilitate the correction process, speed it up, and avoid errors during the correction.

The scoring grid is based on assigning a point value between 1 and 5 for each item, depending on the direction of the response. A score of 1 is given for answers reflecting a negative attitude towards illegal immigration, while a score of 5 is given for items indicating a positive attitude. The remaining points are distributed similarly, based on how the response deviates from the positive or negative side.

It's important to note that the more a response reflects a negative attitude, the closer the score will be to 1. Conversely, a more positive response results in a score closer to 5. The neutral response is always given a score of 3.

The final score on the scale can range from a minimum of 22 to a maximum of 111. Scores between 66 and 110 correspond to a range of interpretations, with scores closer to 22

indicating more negative attitudes and scores closer to 110 indicating more positive attitudes.

**- Psychometric Properties of the Scale:**

To study the validity of the scale, the researcher relied on expert validity, where the scale was presented to a group of specialists in the fields of psychology, social psychology, and sociology, as well as psychological professionals in the field. The scale was modified in terms of phrasing and wording to ensure it could be understood and comprehended by the individuals who would be applying it. The items that were agreed upon by the majority of the experts were retained, while the items that needed modification were revised. This process resulted in the final version of the scale, which includes 22 items measuring attitudes towards illegal immigration.

To study the reliability of the scale, the researcher used the split-half method, which involves dividing the scale into two equal parts. One part contains the odd-numbered items, and the other contains the even-numbered items. The researcher then calculated the correlation coefficient between the two halves. The scale was applied to about 43 individuals after conducting interviews with them regarding the topic of illegal immigration. The researcher estimated their attitudes and calculated the correlation coefficient between the odd-numbered and even-numbered items for each individual. The results are shown in the following table:

**Table 03: Correlation Coefficient Between Odd and Even Items in the Attitudes Towards Illegal Immigration Scale.**

Criteria items	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Correlation coefficient	Significance
Odd items	25.65	8.89	0.86	Function
Even items	23.51	9.94		

It appears from the table above that the correlation between the odd and even items of the scale of attitudes toward illegal immigration is very high, represented by 0.86. This indicates that the correlation between the two variables is positive and statistically significant, which leads us to conclude that the scale has good internal consistency. Therefore, we deduce that the scale of attitudes toward illegal immigration has high reliability and is applicable to the main study.

**7-2- National Belonging Scale:**

This scale was originally developed by the Egyptian researcher Mohamed Bayoumi Khalil (2000), and it was adapted by the Algerian researcher Azirou Souad (2012) during her study on attitudes toward the phenomenon of terrorism and its relationship with religiosity and feelings of belonging among Algerian youth.

**- Description of the Scale and Steps of Its Preparation:**

In this study, the scale was adapted by the Algerian researcher AzirouSouad in her research titled "Attitudes Toward the Phenomenon of Terrorism and Its Relationship with Religiosity and Feelings of Belonging Among Algerian Youth (University Graduates) for the Academic Year (2011-2012)." The name of the scale was changed from "Me and Its Possessions" to "Feeling of Belonging to the Homeland," based on the feedback of the experts who believed this new name was more appropriate and clearer for the Algerian context and the objective of the current study.

The original scale consists of 90 items distributed across the following dimensions:

**- First Dimension: Individualism:** This dimension measures the individual's tendency toward social isolation, selfishness, self-centeredness, and focusing solely on personal



interests at the expense of others, without feeling empathy for others or considering their feelings. This dimension measures the above-mentioned aspects.

- **Second Dimension: Avoidance:** This dimension measures the tendency toward social neutrality, avoiding any positive social initiative in any given situation.

- **Third Dimension: Indifference:** This dimension measures the lack of commitment or interest in any situation related to the individual or society, the disregard for social values and standards, and not taking any situation seriously. This dimension measures the above-mentioned aspects.

**-Method of Scoring the Scale:**

The scale follows a three-point response method as follows:

**Table No. (04): The Three-Point Response Method for the National Belonging Scale**

Exactly	To some extent	Rarely
3	2	2

**Interpretation of Scores:**

The lowest score on the scale is:  $1 \times 58 = 58$  points.

The highest score on the scale is:  $3 \times 58 = 174$  points.

Thus, the scores on the test range from 58 to 174.

The closer the score is to 174, the more it indicates a strong sense of national belonging. Conversely, the closer the score is to 58, the more it indicates a weak sense of national belonging.

**- Purpose of Using the Adapted Scale for the Algerian Context:**

The purpose of this scale is to measure the sense of national belonging, or what we call the level of belonging in the Algerian individual.

**- Psychometric Properties of the Scale:**

The researcher Azirou Souad adapted the scale for the Algerian context, and the scale now consists of 58 items. She relied on expert validation (15 university professors) to calculate the validity. The scale's reliability was calculated, and its coefficient was  $r = 0.87$ , indicating high reliability.

**9 – Statistical Methods Used:**

No researcher can do without statistical methods, regardless of the type of study they are conducting, because statistical techniques help verify hypotheses and process results in a precise quantitative manner, making the study more objective and scientific.

In this study, we used the SPSS statistical software program.

**10 – Presentation of Research Hypothesis Results:**

The research hypothesis states that there is a statistically significant relationship between the attitudes towards illegal immigration and national belonging among youth.

To test the validity of this hypothesis, we used Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the relationship between the sample's scores on the Attitudes Towards Illegal Immigration Scale and the scores obtained on the National Belonging Scale. This was done on a sample of youth from Dellys.

The Pearson correlation coefficient between attitudes towards illegal immigration and national belonging, after subjecting the numerical data to statistical processing, is shown in the following table:

**Table No. (05): Correlation between Attitudes Towards Illegal Immigration and National Belonging**

Sample	Study variables	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Correlation coefficient	Calculated level of significance	Level of significance	Decision
250	Attitudes toward illegal immigration	62.93	15.55	0.4	0.49	0.05	There is no significant relationship
	National belonging	113.75	13.07				

We notice from the table above that the calculated significance level, which is (0.49), is greater than the adopted significance level of (0.05). This means that there is no statistically significant relationship between the study variables, namely between attitudes towards illegal immigration and national belonging among our study sample.

### 11. Interpretation and Discussion of Results in Light of Previous Studies:

The research hypothesis suggests that there is no correlation between the variables of attitudes towards illegal immigration and national belonging among youth.

It is evident from Table No. (22) that the correlation between the variables of attitudes towards illegal immigration and national belonging is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, which means that there is no relationship between attitudes towards illegal immigration and national belonging. This indicates that our research hypothesis was not confirmed.

The result obtained is simply an indicator that national belonging to the country, its people, and society is stronger than the obstacles and problems our society faces today. The characteristics of awareness and belonging prevalent among youth have not been significantly affected by the various social, political, and economic events they experience. This also indicates that the Algerian youth carry within them deep meanings that reflect the high national spirit they possess towards their country.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of this is the widespread national spirit among the Algerian diaspora, especially among the youth, which is evident during the national football team's matches. For example, after the Algerian national team won the Africa Cup of Nations, there was a massive celebration by Algerian immigrants in the streets, waving the national flag in several countries worldwide. This national spirit reached a point that alarmed the countries of the diaspora, such as France, where there was a political uproar, particularly from the far-right party, due to the national flag filling the streets of Paris and other French cities.

This national spirit is also reflected in the diaspora's efforts to preserve national customs and traditions, and in their commitment to celebrating national holidays. The phenomenon of airports and ports being crowded during holidays and vacations is another clear indication that the Algerian citizen, despite everything, remains attached to their homeland. Although national belonging among Algerian youth may be somewhat weakened due to political, economic, and social conditions, reality shows that this sense of belonging emerges strongly whenever there is an opportunity for political freedom and the expression of opinions.

Researcher Zakari Murtaji (2012) reached the same conclusion in his study on the reasons for graduates' tendency to migrate and its relationship to their attitudes towards migration and national belonging in Gaza Governorates. His sample consisted of 445 unemployed graduates, and he found no correlation between the youth's attitudes towards migration and their national belonging (Murtaji, 2012, p. 120).

Similarly, researcher Abu Kamil's (2015) study, conducted on a sample of 352 university students, confirmed the results of our hypothesis. He applied the national belonging scale and the attitudes towards migration scale, and the results showed no relationship between

the level of national belonging and the level of attitudes towards migration among university students (Abu Kamil, 2015, p. 130)

The concept of belonging indicates that a human being is a living, evolving, rational, emotional, and active being. From the moment they are born, they belong to something: first to their mother, then to their father, then to their family, and later to their street and school, where they belong to their friends. This process develops gradually until they belong to their city, then to their country, and ultimately to their nation.

This means that a person who belongs is connected and in harmony with what they belong to. This creates an individualistic tendency that pushes the individual to enter a specific social and intellectual framework, which they then commit to by supporting and defending it against other frameworks.

The instinct of belonging is innate in humans; they cannot easily abandon it, even when facing difficult circumstances and emotions. An individual is in constant need to belong to their homeland more than anything else. National belonging is one of the pillars of building the individual, society, and nation. Without it, an individual cannot defend their country and community or contribute sincerely to their development. It is not just a shining slogan but a practice and application of principles and values that have been inherited from past generations. It can manifest in love for the homeland, loyalty to it, longing and yearning for it, the difficulty of being away from it, preserving its secrets, and defending it (Hoidi, 2016, p. 11).

Based on the result we previously reached, we conclude that illegal immigration is not caused by a weak sense of national belonging. Rather, it may stem from other factors related to psychological, social, economic, and cultural life.

Unemployment, for example, according to Ibrahim (2011), is one of the main factors leading to the phenomenon of illegal immigration due to the lack of policies to address it. Young people who are unemployed suffer from various psychological, social, and economic effects, particularly in a society with clear class disparities that affect them. At the same time, the economic situation of youth worsens, making these factors some of the most significant motivators for illegal immigration, especially to Europe, where there is the allure of quick wealth (Ibrahim, 2011, p. 1112).

The spread of poverty and the lack of developmental dynamism that meets the needs of individuals, especially in many countries that are sources of illegal immigration, are among the primary reasons for this phenomenon (Nebush, 2019, p. 15).

Researcher Hamami Farid (2019) concluded in his study that illegal immigration is a form of surrender to the reality and submission to the social and economic conditions that, in the eyes of youth, do not guarantee their future. There are other factors with administrative, psychological, cultural, and educational roots that interact and integrate with varying degrees of influence, ultimately leading to the idea of venturing into the sea, hoping to reach the other shore where they envision a red carpet and a promising future, or what some call the "promised land," where a happy life awaits (Hamami, 2019, p. 40).

The fundamental reading that can be offered is that the causes and factors leading to illegal immigration are, in fact, numerous, diverse, and intertwined to some extent. If illegal immigration initially affected specific groups or certain economic levels, it might have been somewhat acceptable. However, today, when illegal immigration has become synonymous with "death boats," we must pause and reflect on this rapidly expanding phenomenon, especially concerning the groups involved. It is no longer limited to young people; it has reached children, and it is no longer restricted to individuals but extends to families. When we record entire families and children boarding death boats without concern for what is happening, we must ask a very important question regarding the issue of illegal immigration (Bahri & Toban, 2019, p. 52).

### **Conclusion:**

Through the results obtained during the field study on our research topic, which focuses on the attitudes towards illegal immigration and its relationship with national belonging among youth, we concluded that there is no significant relationship between attitudes towards

illegal immigration and national belonging among youth at the significance level of (0.05). We explained this lack of relationship by the fact that the prevailing national belonging among individuals and communities remains resilient despite the various social, political, economic, and cultural events they experience. National belonging is stronger than the hardships and problems they face. Furthermore, it indicates that the Algerian citizen remains attached to their land, their values, and their country (Lallem, 2021).

Therefore, illegal immigration is not caused by a weak sense of national belonging, but is instead influenced by many economic, social, cultural, and psychological factors, including: psychological alienation, lack of social connections, marginalization, limited job opportunities, low economic status, low income levels, disparities in living standards, and poverty.

Referring to the results of previous studies, we find that studies such as those by Zekri Murtaji (2012) and Abu Kamil (2015) align with our current findings, as they also showed no relationship between youth attitudes towards illegal immigration and national belonging.

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