

TITLE: WHY CANADA?

TARGET AUDIENCE: Immigration Hopefuls [Students and professionals wanting to immigrate to Canada from Nigeria for work or study purposes]

WHAT: Evaluating one's chances of getting a study permit approved by the Canadian Immigration authorities, in the face of perceived bias and stereotype among Canadian immigration officers.

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, Canada has remained one of the choicest destination countries for international students. Every year, Canada welcomes thousands of students from all corners of the earth, who have come to live and study in the country.

Perhaps, this could be attributed to the renowned quality of life and high standard of living enjoyed by residents (citizens and visitors alike). In the 2022 report by the U.S News and World Report, [Canada ranks in third place for the best quality of life](#).

Canada has also maintained a very high educational standard, and this of course, is another obvious reason.

For lovers of nature, wildlife and adventures, Canada is richly blessed with beautiful scenes, parks, eye-catching landscapes and expansive wilderness to the north. Canada covers about two-fifth of the North American continent, making it the second largest country in the world. To cap it all, Canada has a high reputation for welcoming immigrants, so who would not love to live in Canada?

The rush for Canada has cut across the length and breadth of the globe, and of course, Nigerians and other third-world countries are not left out. Of course you should not be surprised when I said Nigerians aren't left out in this rush. The incessant industrial actions by the Academic staff union of universities (ASUU), epileptic academic standard, inadequate research facilities, and a host of other challenges have continued to push many Nigerians into looking elsewhere, in search of a better educational experience.

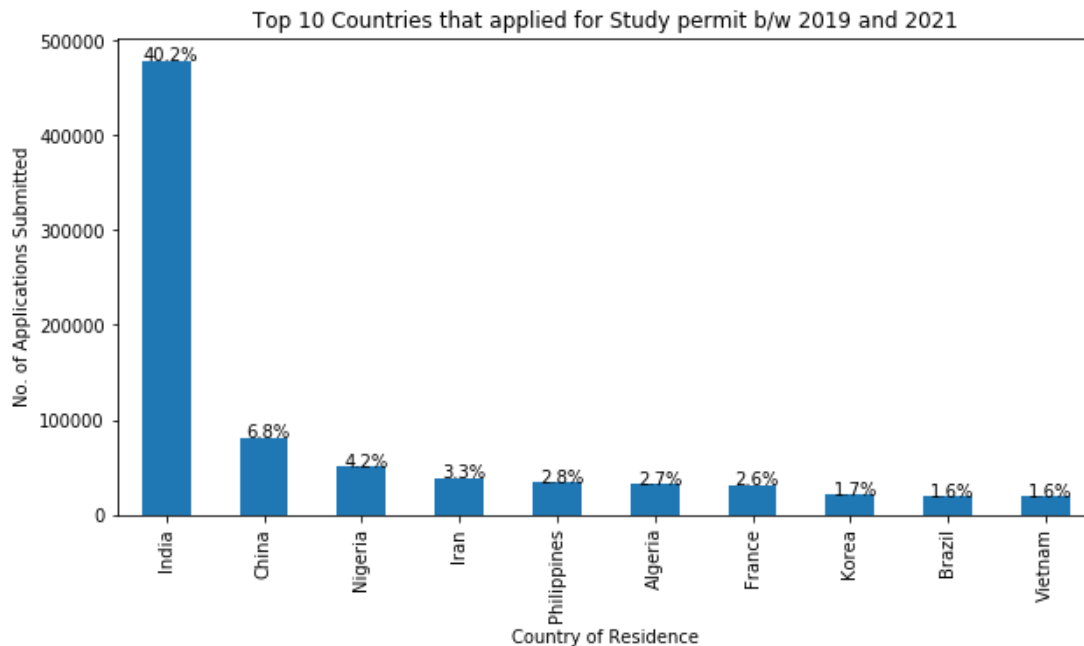
However, there is this hard bone every Immigration hopeful must crack as far as studying in Canada as an international student is concerned. The fact that one needs to obtain a study permit from the Canadian immigration authorities.

Even though Canada has a good reputation for welcoming immigrants, this kind gesture doesn't seem to be favorable to many Nigerians.

We have studied the annual study permit approval rate by country of residence, for three consecutive years, as provided by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the government parastatal responsible for approving study permits for international students who want to study in Canada.

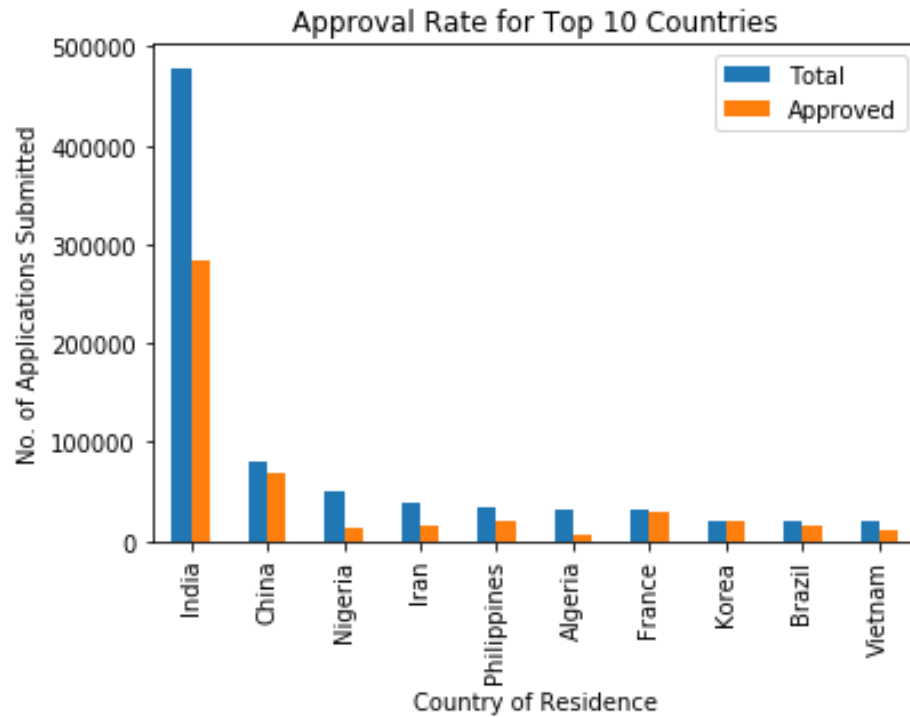
Here are the things we discovered:

1. Nigeria is one of the top 10 countries that submitted applications for study permit during the period (Jan 1, 2019 – Dec. 31, 2021).



67.5% of applications for study permit came from these 10 countries alone. Nigeria came third place after India and China.

It is worrisome to know that despite the huge number of persons that apply each year from Nigeria, the study permit approval rate for Nigeria was the third lowest, when compared with those of the other top countries.



	Total	Approved
India	478540	283641
China	81173	67980
Nigeria	50475	12220
Iran	38815	16380
Philippines	33607	20697
Algeria	31947	6090
France	31372	29324
Korea	20745	19844
Brazil	19357	15383
Vietnam	19278	10940

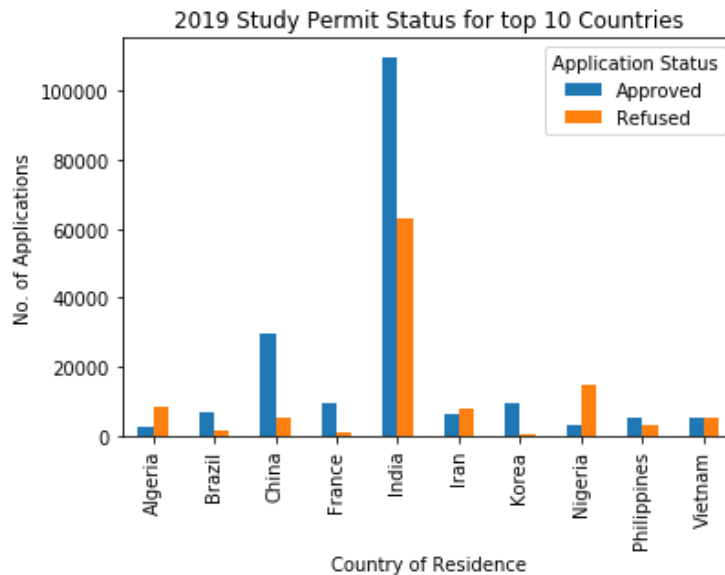
We decided to narrow down further to see if some trends will emerge.

We took a look at specific tables for each of the years under study, and observed some trends.

- For instance, for the three consecutive years, Nigeria consistently ranked among the top 10 countries with the highest applications.
For the year 2019, Nigeria ranked 7th.

For the same year, Nigeria recorded the highest application rejection rate than any other country. Nigeria is closely followed by Algeria, then Iran.

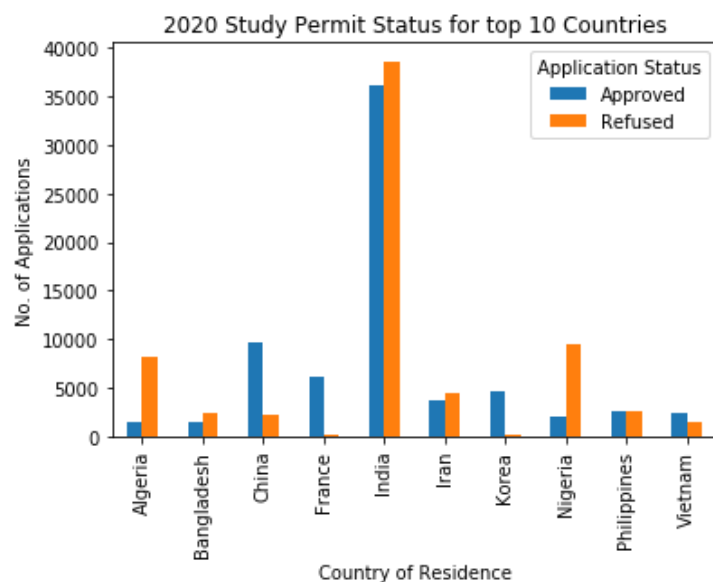
On the contrary, India recorded more approved applications than rejected ones for the same year.



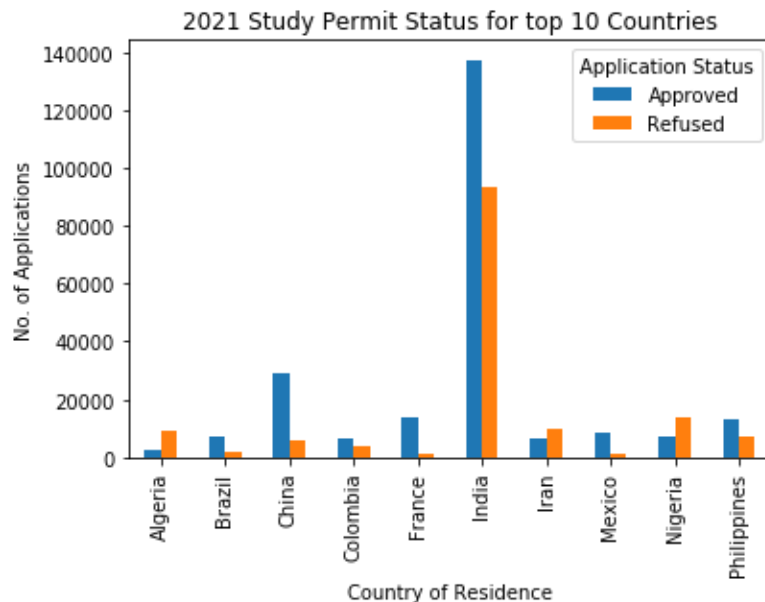
But did this change in 2020?

2020 was the year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most global trends changed as a result of this. However, this was not the case with the Canadian immigration data.

Nigeria still recorded the highest rejection rate among the top 10 countries, followed by Algeria and Iran and Bangladesh. India and China still continued to record the highest approval rates.



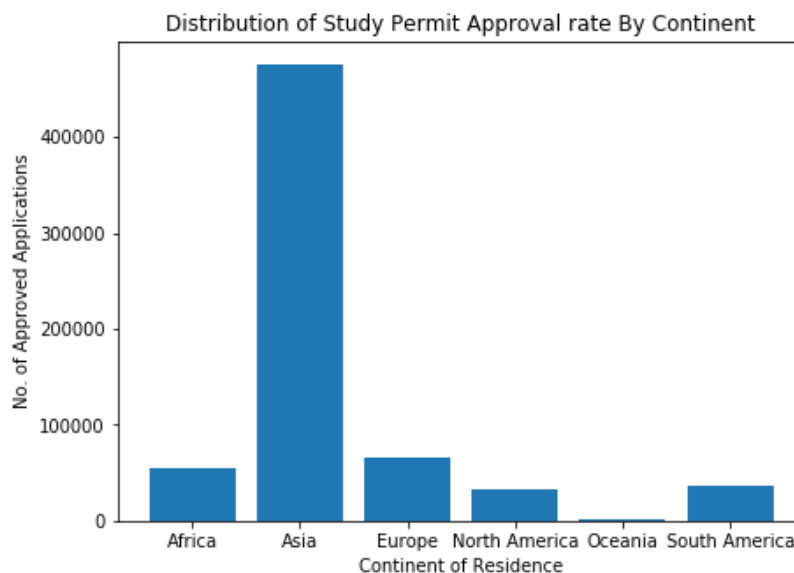
Let us look at the year 2021. Perhaps, this trend might change!



Well, this seems to have become a pattern. The trend did not change still. Countries like China and India still topped the list, while Nigeria, Algeria and Iran continued to record the highest rejection rate

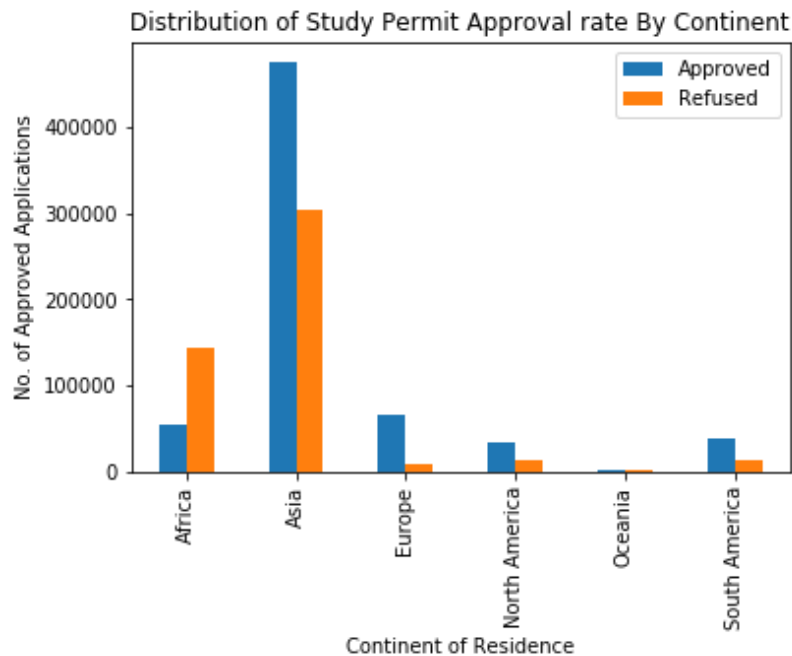
A wider outlook on this trend revealed something even more interesting!

When we looked at the distribution at continental levels, we realized that the Canada study permit approval rate seems to favour Asians more than any other continent.



Considering the fact that India constitutes 42% of all applications, we can reframe the last statement to mean that **Canadian study permit applications favour Asians, particularly, Indians, more than any other continent of the world.**

But when we compared the application approval and refusal rates, we discovered that Africa was the only continent that recorded more rejected applications than approved ones



Of course, the Canadian Immigration authorities have received a fair share of criticisms from concerned individuals and organizations on what seems like a bias against applications from certain regions of the world, particularly African countries. There is even a rumor of a stereotype circulating among the immigration officers, labeling certain African countries as the **'dirty 30'**.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTENDING APPLICANTS FROM NIGERIA

While we do not have enough data to investigate if actually the immigration officers are biased against certain countries, we can for sure, make a lemonade out of this lemon that has been served us.

1. Even in the face of seeming bias and intense competition, the underlying fact remains that exceptional applications still make it through each year. Applicants are therefore, encouraged to be very meticulous with their applications. Your goal here is to ensure that you submit a stellar application, one so good that even the immigration officers cannot deny.
2. It begins with the applicant taking an inward examination of motive:
What is really the motivation behind your application?
Have you gotten all required documents ready?
Are you going to Canada because you are convinced that you have some values to add or you are just applying because you want to join the trends of the moment (the 'japa' mantra)?

Doing all these will help save you money, time and eventually, help you succeed with your application.