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## Smart Minds Brain Drain from Developing Nations Case Study of Pakistan

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**Keywords:** *employee engagement, employee productivity, banks, human capital practices.*

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# Smart Minds Brain Drain from Developing Nations Case Study of Pakistan

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**Design/methodology/approach:** Conceptual discussion is used.

**Findings:** The authors identified push and pull factors, such as personal security, immigration programs, decrease in agriculture income, law and order situation of the country, unemployment, decrease compensation incentives. These mentioned factors are considered as an important push factors which motivates skilled labor for a decision to migrate. This paper also discusses the Maslow theory of needs, which also supports the process of migration when individuals fail to acquire their basic needs in their home country.

**Originality/Value:** This paper mainly focuses on push and pulls factors which motivate skill labor to migrate. It also discusses the Maslow need theory which also augments the process of migration.

**Keywords:** immigration; unemployment; migrants; skilled labor.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The movement of a skilled human resource from home country is called Brain drain (Anekwe, 2003). Brain drain is defined as the migration of professionals to another country which provides better living standard and quality of life, higher salaries, access to advanced technology and more stable political conditions in different places worldwide (Dodani & LaPorte, 2005).

The war for smart brain begins with the globalization (Ghania & Jauhar, n.d.). Every company wants to hire smart brains in order to expand their business. The drive of skilled workers internationally

represents brain gain for the countries that reap their skills and experience and the brain drain for their countries of origin (Migration Policy Institute, n.d.). Sometimes individual migrates by their own wishes whereas at certain times external forces like family, society and friends put pressure to migrate (Jauhar, 2016). Underdeveloped countries are the main affected region in this drive. There have been contradictory opinions about the cost and benefits of migration (Bhagwati, 1973). When a skilled worker moves to other countries for working opportunities it causes the shortage of skilled labor and affects negatively on the economic condition of their countries (Afridi, 2014).

People for their survival move from one part to another part of the world (Ahmad, Hussain, Hussain, & Akram, 2008). Other reasons like war and lawlessness also motivate people to leave their homeland and shift to another country (Ahmad et al., 2008). Brain drain is the natural phenomena because, in order to learn the skills and gain more professional expertise, professionals move to that country which is the benchmark of that field. Researchers take a keen interest in order to find the reasons for migrations.

International migration is explained by different theories. The most dominant models by Stark, (1991); Massey et al. (2010); Bauer, Morrison, and Callister, (1998) and other researchers explain the basic reasons for international migration. In the last ten years, international migration has rapidly increased which raise the number of migrants from 75 million in 1960 to approximately 215.8 million in 2010 as compared to 75 million in 1960 (Ngoma & Ismai, 2013).

Estimated 27,000 skilled Africans shift to developed countries between 1960 and 1975 according to the UN Economic Organization for migration. This figure rose to 40,000 in the period 1975 -1984. During 1985-1990 Africa lost 60,000 professionals. After that every year that continent is losing 20,000 qualified people (UNESCO, 2007). Approximately 30 % labor force in the USA belong from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua (Özden, Ç., & Schiff, 2006). Asia has been bearing a huge brain drain of professionals, and skilled persons to the developed countries in the last 30 years. More than two-thirds adult Pakistani population has strong desire work abroad according to Gallup- Pakistan.

UNESCO spout out from 1992 to 2000 the migration rate of skilled brains from Pakistan exceed 60

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%, which is an indicator of the alarming magnitude of the brain drain in the country. In the last few years, Pakistan has observed a rise in the migration of smart brains eventually leading to a brain drain (Afridi, 2014). In the last five years around 2.765 million citizens out of which 31607 from Baluchistan have shifted abroad due to jobs opportunities according to the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development. According to Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resources Development, almost seven million Pakistanis are living in 140 different countries among which 48 pc of overseas are working the Middle East, 28pc in Europe and 19pc in the US (Khalid & Kamal, 2015). Pakistan is suffering from this blitzkrieg on several fronts. In the last 5 years, professional migrated from the county soaring to 2.7 million. Though, a large number of the students showed confidence to come to Pakistan if the economic conditions improve (Naqvi et al., 2017).

As per the International Organization for Migration (International Organization for Migration ud), in 2010 there were 214 million international migrants in the world. Stated differently, one in every 33 persons in the world is a migrant. Asia and Africa have experienced high levels of brain drain among students and professionals to developed economies such as the US, Canada, the UK and Australia (Sabharwal, 2013).

## II. PAKISTANI YOUTH BEHAVIOR

Youth plays a significant role for nation's economic development than technology and investment. It is considered as the engine the economy. Young Pakistani medical graduates in their final year of their studies tie up their bags with the books to clear, United States Medical License Examination (USMLE), The Present Level of Education Performance (PLEP), Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL), Graduate Record Examination (GRE), The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and many others. After graduation, a hefty strength of graduated students prefers to knock the door of different intuitions of USA or UK for the higher studies. A rare number of graduates which start their careers in Pakistan become not satisfied with their jobs and they keep their heads up in the documents of immigration for different countries in which Canada and Australia are the preferred destinations. These smart brains are warmly welcomed by the government of all different countries. A large number of Pakistani pay their services in the Gulf, Europe, and America This is not only the pertinent to Pakistan it also prevails in all South Asian and underdeveloped countries. This study elucidates the push and pull factor which significantly contribute to the migration of talent from Pakistan to other countries.

Most of the new generation of Pakistan either it's educated or uneducated they want to go abroad

because they are mentally disturbed by the country current situation and they are of the view that they will find better opportunities abroad for further education and a bright career. As it's hard to find a job in Pakistan. Secondly, the currency difference between Pakistan and other countries makes people more thoughtful to move abroad. As there is a huge gap in it for instance: when we convert \$ into Pakistani rupees it becomes more than double, their families spend their lives in comfort and luxuries. Mostly it happens that one person of a family lives abroad and earns money for the family, as it is not easy to earn here.

## III. MIGRATION: THEORIES AND TRENDS

Ravenstein's "laws of migration" gives based on development to several theories of migration which discuss internal and external factors of migration (Ravenstein, 1885). The neo-classical theory which is considered The more powerful approach "neo-classical theory" narrates that in order to maximize the gain from the market individuals migrate. This needs confirmation by empirical studies, which verify that migrants mostly come from middle social status (Castles, de Haas, & Miller, 2005). The new economics of labor migration (NELM) debates that the individual decision to migrate along with difference of income between countries depends upon employment security and capital investment availability (Taylor, 1999). "push-pull" theories are another approach to traditional migration. These consider migration as a block of multiple factors that push people to move from their places (e.g. poverty, overpopulation, war, etc.) and Fascinating factors for people which attract them (e.g. a high standard of life, income opportunity, political freedom).

The Economic factors of migration in sending and receiving country are the areas covered by the Push-Pull theory of migration. The push factors include demographic pressure, high unemployment and low living standards in the home state. Job opportunities, auspicious economic opportunities, and political freedom are the pull factors which attract people for migration. Migration either in the record or not is due to push and pull factors (Datta, 1998). Push factors cover the negative features of the place of origin whereas pull factors identify the attractive factors of the destination place (Datta, 2002). The hope of a higher income abroad is the main factor of migration according to the economics of migration (Taylor, 1999). There was also another factor that put an important influence and force to take decisions to migrate, including non-economic reasons, such as war, ethnic discrimination and political persecution at home. A network of family and friends who have migrated to specific country helps to choose the destination (Solimano, 2002). The opposite of the above individual approach is the historical-structural approach, using Marxist political economics and Immanuel Wallerstein's "world system theory". Migration

is here seen as shifting of cheap labor from third world countries to the developed countries for economic growth (Castles et al., 2005). According to Castles et al., (2005), this style focuses on one side and misses some valuable processes, like policies for the permanent residence of the migrants.

Transnational migration theory developed by Sassen in 1998 can contribute to the development of a critical population geography (Margaret, 2004). The universal trends of current migrations are globalization, acceleration, diversity, feminization, and politicization (Castles et al., 2005). By globalization, it means numbers of countries affected by migrations has been escalating. Acceleration spectacles that the international flows of people are rising (Czaika & De Haas, 2014). Diversity shows that there exist multiple types of migration between particular countries like political, economic, temporary and permanent (Czaika & De Haas, 2014). Feminization shows the rising of women migration in all regions and politicization narrates that there is the effect on domestic and international politics by the international migration (Castles et al., 2005). Political, ecological and demographic pressures are the main causes of migration (Castles et al., 2005). The growing difference between the rich and poor, conflict between the countries and globalization are also the players of international migration.

The core outcomes of migration growth are transnationalism (whatever happens affects more than one state), a cultural and societal difference which bring the difference, raise conflicts, and upward part of remittances in the economies of the transfer countries (Castles et al., 2005). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory consist of physiological needs, Safety needs, social needs, Esteem needs and self-actualization, our research shows that in order to satisfy basic needs people need to migrate.

#### IV. PUSH FACTORS

##### a) *Unemployment*

Todaro, (1969) and Harris, S. JR and Todaro (1970) did an analysis of migration flows in a context of underemployment, with the occurrence of inflexibilities of real wages. Berry and Soligo settle that local residents got benefits from an influx of immigrants their production increase which results in the increase in income. The relationship between unemployment and immigration is studied by (Withers & Pope, 1985) in Australia from 1948 to 1982. Mayda (2008) figure out the reasons for migration into fourteen OECD countries by country of origin, from 1980 and 1995. The effect of average income and income dispersion in destination and origin countries on migration was evaluated.

The influence of geographical, cultural, and demographic factors, as well as the role played by changes in destination countries' migration policies, was

captured in the study. Walsh (1974) estimated the determinants of migration in Ireland. The outcomes showed that Irish net migration was reactive to relative labor market situations in Ireland and Britain. The wage variances and unemployment differentials were found significant determinants of the net migration from Ireland. The immigration rate decrease if unemployment increases (Docquier & Rapoport, 2012).

Unemployment is an acute problem of Pakistan. Almost every youngster in Pakistan endorses the fact that the country is presently beleaguered by sheer unemployment. According to IPR unemployment rate in 2016 is 8.5%. The federal government and provincial governments launch a different internship program for the youth which is unable to overcome this issue (Altaf, Atoofa, & Ali, 2015).

In all around the globe, Pakistani workers' pay their services and show their skills. The movement of migrant workers from Pakistan was 12300 in 1973, 16328 in 1974 and 23077 in 1975. This movement of migration touches the figure of 143329 in 2005 (Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, GOP, 2006). High food inflation rate (10%) increase of poverty (GOP, 2006) force workers to move abroad. In the decade of 1980s, Middle East was the main destination of economic workers.

#### V. WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Organizational politics is considered as an essential element of the organization. Some researchers believe that for organizational growth politics play a vital role, But the majority of researchers have a conflict on that point and they believe politics has a harmful effect on the staff and the function of the organization (Abbas & Raja, 2014).

In Pakistan Politian's have influence in the Government and private sector which affect the working environment. In Government Organizations mostly recruitment is done through the political reference whereas for promotions employees speed up their cars behind the politicians to grab the top seats.

Individuals who are highly involved in organizational politics, they face problems in achieving their goals and achievements which effects on their motivation and they suffer from job stress. (Abbas & Raja, 2014).

#### VI. JOB SECURITY/CAREER GROWTH

In Pakistan Young doctors seen on the roads to fight for their rights because they don't have a career path. Which motivates mostly professionals to go abroad and enjoy their professional there? Similarly, the same case happens with the Chartered Accountants, Bankers, and Engineer which capture the Market of Gulf because they don't have a job security in Pakistan. Mostly private organizations in Pakistan don't have a

proper HR Department they are just performing the one-man show.

## VII. PERSONAL SECURITY

The whole scenario of the world is totally changing due to suicidal attacks and now Security got the attention which was neglected before (Khalid & Kamal, 2015).

As per United Nations, security is a condition in which states enjoy the economic progress and have no threat of military attack or any political pressure. Pakistan's face security problems and threats due to its geopolitics, location, political instability which is a major hurdle for its economic growth (Khalid & Kamal, 2015).

After the 9/11 around the globe, a threat to personal security raise and wars in different countries groom up e.g Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. This security threat also influences Pakistan economy and Pakistanis due to its geographical location and sharing boundaries with China, Iran and Afghanistan made it more important. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which brings economic growth in Pakistan, China, and central Asian countries is the big threat to India and USA. So India try to destabilize the security of Pakistan. According to (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics) the population of Pakistan as of August 25, 2017, was 207.77 million people which take its position to 5 largest countries in the globe by population.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks bring all nations on one point and they believe terrorism as a common challenge to global security. It brings an overall change in the foreign policy of America and Nato countries, it also brings change in the global power and security structure (Afzal, Iqbal, & Inayat, 2012).

Pakistan paid a heavy price because of its alliance with the US after 9/11 incident and come under the wave of terrorist attacks (Khalid & Kamal, 2015). Terrorism in Pakistan has become a major and highly destructive phenomenon. Sajjad (2012) found many causes of intellectual migration by using questionnaire method. Study of Sajjad (2012) determined that 33% respondents wanted to leave their homeland due to political instability and life securities issues. In 2014 from 32, 685 worlds 1764 fatalities belong to Pakistan (Liang, Khalid, Amy E, & Anne, 2015). General Public in Pakistan feel insecure and this insecurity leads many Pakistanis to apply for immigration in developed countries and many Pakistani enjoy their flights to developing countries.

"In Pakistan the culture of terrorism promoted by Talibanization that includes attack on armed forces by Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), target killing of religious, political and civil society figures, scholars and doctors, blowing up and suicidal attacks were faced by schools, offices of NGO's, mosques and other security sensitive places (Khalid & Kamal, 2015). Up till now, near about 35000 Pakistani have lost their lives due to

attacks by a terrorist in which Pakistan loss 5000-armed men" (Afzal et al., 2012).

## VIII. LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCE TRAINING

For the UK Pakistan is the second largest exporter of medical (General Medical Council, 2012). Many Pakistani medical graduates go abroad for advanced training like RCPS and different diplomas, specialization and then they settled in the host country. Although after 9/11 state department of USA adopts a strict policy for Pakistanis for the visa but still Pakistan hold the third position of J1 visas which is an issue to nonimmigrant for work or exchange study programs issued for the year 2010-11 (American Medical Association, n.d.).

## IX. RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

96.28 % of Population is Muslim. Islam is the "state religion" of Pakistan. Article 20 of the constitution says everyone is free to practice and propagate according to his/her Religion. According to the constitution of Pakistan, a person belonging to the Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Parsi or Qadiani/Lahori Group is non muslim.

In Pakistan, during the last couple of years, different religious clashes come on the camera. 15-20% of the Muslim population in Pakistan is Shia. After Iran, Pakistan has the largest Shia population. The majority of Pakistanis Shia observes the Twelve school of thought; other sub-sects are the Ismail's, Khojas, and Bohras. In a suicide attack on the bus in January 2014. 38 instances of target killing occurred in 2015 in which 251 Shias were killed and 316 injured (Rizvi, 2016). In 2013 on religious dispute 7 Sunnis were killed and 32 were wounded in Rawalpindi by Shias (Naveed, 2013). 45 Ismaili Shia were killed by the terrorists by firing on their bus (I. M. Khan, 2015).

In 2014, 144 incidents of sectarian violence took place across Pakistan in which 11 temples and churches were attacked (Junaidi, 2015). In the last 30 years, 260 Ahmadiyyas were killed in Pakistan (TRT World, n.d.). These religious disputes bring discrimination in the society and most persons try to prefer peoples from their own sect during hiring. Like Shia community try to promote their community and prefer to hire Shias.

## X. SOCIAL PRESSURES

Pakistan has a strong social system. In which people take care of each other and inquire about each other. Whereas when an individual from any town or village go abroad and when he returned back and wear gold chains and other expensive items. His lifestyle totally changes which work as a catalyst for his town fellows and friends they also start thinking to go abroad.

Migration to foreign countries has become a question of identity for Punjabis. It has become a status symbol. So much of peoples want to move abroad because they know that then they get high status in the society and they are warmly welcomed everywhere especially by their relatives so individuals which are not good in studies move abroad and start working as a workers in stores, taxi driver and other low-level jobs and they think that if they settle abroad than they future generation.

## XI. AGRICULTURAL CRISIS

60% of Pakistani population is directly or indirectly related to agriculture field. whereas from the last few years agriculture sector is unable to get the attention of policymakers (Safdar, 2014). It is the largest employer sector accounting 45% of the workforce (Safdar, 2014). 15 %to 20 % increase in the prices of fertilizer and 20% to 25 % increase in the tariff of electricity put a financial burden on the framers and their income decrease to 25 % (Bokhari, 2016). These factors motivate the young hard working farmers to go abroad by the legal or illegal way and earn handsome amount to raise the standard of living of their families.

## XII. PULLING FACTORS

### a) *Salary Structure*

The most important factor of migration abroad is the employment opportunities and handsome salaries. In the last 5 years, 2.7m Pakistanis have departed from the country (Associated Press of Pakistan, n.d.).

The main problem is that majority of workers don't get even the minimum wage declared by the government. Wage differentials between source and destination country are the significant factor in the cause of brain drain migrants (Dodani & LaPorte, 2005). High-skilled individuals get more salaries than their home countries (John Gibson & David McKenzie, 2010).

## XIII. HIGHER EDUCATION

Students always prefer to look for quality education in top rating a rating universities that are concentrated in developed countries (Zhatkanbaevaa et al., 2012). The Trend of getting a higher education is increasing and most students prefer to go foreign countries to get higher education because in Pakistan preference is given to that candidate which have a foreign degree. Studying abroad means learning about the new theories, innovation in the particular field and grab a knowledge which can be applied to make the real world better. Local institutes fail to give education like that which cause a brain drain and after getting degree most of the students settle there (Hassan Ayub, 2012). Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan was established by the Government of Pakistan in 2002 with the aim to provide quality education and promote

higher studies. In order promote higher education HEC send 8537 scholars in various countries for attaining higher education (MS/MPhil/Ph.D. and Post-Doctoral level). Only 65% of the student back to Pakistan and still some are unable to find a job in Pakistan (RiazulHaq, 2015). In the era of globalization, professional wants to be super-specialized of their area. The craze for getting more expertise and to become a super-specialize in their fields encourage physicians to move to the USA and remove their thrust of research and expertise (Majeed, Ali, & Saeed, 2017).

## XIV. BETTER OPPORTUNITIES

Due to globalization the demand for scientific personnel increase which causes the problem the problem of "brain drain" in developing countries (Zhatkanbaevaa, Zhatkanbaevab, & C, 2012). Highly qualified and smart professionals always look for better opportunities in order to utilize their skills and gain more knowledge. They work day and night to get top rank positions and look for the high salary in giant corporations. But in Pakistan due to political influence, non-competent persons enjoy the great positions. These factors bring disappointments and demotivation which push them to settle abroad.

The study found out the basic reasons for brain drain was the unavailability of funding, technical support, and infrastructure in their home countries. Political and community pressure was also the leading factors (Anastasia, 2015).

Professionals from developing countries across the globe crossing geopolitical boundaries to find better professional, financial, and social conditions. India, Pakistan, Iran, and China are on the top from which these smart brains are coming (Majeed et al., 2017). Mostly medical professionals move from under developing countries to developing countries.

A study result showed that scientists who migrated produce 4.5 times more publications than their colleagues in their home countries. Unavailability of funding, technical support, and poor infrastructure in home countries is the basic reason for brain drain. Political and community pressure also play a significant role to migrate

Obtaining a residency training position in the United States remains the dream of countless professionals because of the exceptional educational and research opportunities available for career development (Shafqat & Zaidi, 2007). Better living standard, Implementation of labor laws attract professional to move.

## XV. LABOUR LAWS

Income inequalities and high poverty at home countries are the major force behind international migration around the globe. Pakistani workers are

showing their expertise in every country. From the year 1973 to the year 2005, nearly 500,000 workers were migrated. Better living standard and friendly Government policies are the pulling force. The government labor-friendly policies of the host countries push more workers to work there. In industrial countries, labor laws are a very strict violation of laws and grip of government in setting the basic salary and hourly wages gives satisfaction to the migration worker. Where as in underdeveloped countries labor law exist only in the books. Most factories are not registered and worker here not get social security and Employees Old-age Benefits Institution (EOBI) cards, they do not offer any kind of benefits to the workers from the Workers Welfare Fund, i.e., free medical treatment, death, marriage, education grants, etc. Most of the employers in Pakistan hesitate to register their workers with the EOBI. So that they not come under the law and will not pay any pension or unemployment benefits (Bari, 2014).

The success of the industrial countries depends upon the qualified migrant's workers; under static conditions. The migration of skilled workers tries to fill up the gap in those areas in which host country is lacking and plays a significant role in the growth of economies. That's a reason developed countries give a certain score to skilled labor in their immigration programs like USA, Canada, Australia (Korner, 1997). The migration has a positive relationship with the remittances received in the country. Wage rate in Pakistan affects the migration of workers.

## XVI. IMMIGRATION POLICIES

Developed countries in order to attract smart brains from all over the world launch immigration programs. Where as Canada and Australia are the preferred destinations for the immigration (Taing, Granger, Groff, Jackson, & Johnson, 2011). In the year 2001 15501 Pakistani get a Canadian passport. All of them are well educated, young and experienced. According to the Austrian Statics Bureau, Pakistani students studying in Australia in 2007 is 5000. Whereas 61913 Pakistanis getting the permanent residency in Australia up till 2016. The major attraction of these countries is there living standard and their high-level education system (Inam, 2013).

## XVII. REMITTANCES

The inflow of remittance was the pull factor for out-migration. The increased volume of remittances gives the spark to other people to migrate. The decision to migrate abroad depends upon the economic condition of the host country.

In 2014-2015 Pakistan received remittances of \$ 18.4 billion according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Which narrates that every year it is increasing at a rate of 16.5 percent, as per information released by the

State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). For the year 2017 fiscal year remittances amounted to \$ 15.8. Every year remittances from the US and the UK has been increasing by 4.8% and 4.9%, respectively. Remittances from Kuwait in 2014-15 equaled \$748.1 million while those from Oman, Bahrain, and Qatar were \$666.8 million, \$389 million and \$347.5 million, respectively (Amraiz Khan, 2016).

In 2015-2016 remittances record the figure of \$19.9 billion according to State Bank of Pakistan. High-skilled migrants remit more, but this result not included in all surveys, suggesting that the link varies between education and remittances and varies also on host/home-country pairs (Dodani&LaPorte, 2005).

## XVIII. CONCLUSION

When person basic needs are not satisfied then he plans to migrate. Safety, religious discrimination and earning are the most important pushing factors for the migration. For underdeveloped countries brain drain is the important player in running the economy. However, Government think tanks make such policies which promote the sharp brain to come back to their home country after getting experience and knowledge about the latest innovation from the developed nations.

The migrated worker sends remittances to their families in Pakistan which help in long-term economic growth. Pakistan population is increasing at very high rate due to which problem of unemployment was grown. In order to overcome that issue there is dire need to search niche markets for labor through proactive labor policies and in order to promote higher education and technical education, Government should launch such programs to induct the highly qualified Pakistanis for research purpose from all around the globe and gain from their experience and knowledge and Government focus on the Agriculture sector and provide young farmers the modern and scientific techniques by which they increase their productivity.

## XIX. LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

This research is conducted within the context of Pakistan. Every country has its own economic and political scenarios and factors vary from country to country. In other nations factors of brain drain are different.

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