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**THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL
MIGRATION ON IMMIGRANT'S HOME
COUNTRY: EXPLORING DIASPORA POWER
AND CONFLICT**

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of this study was to explore the effects caused by international migration to the home countries of immigrants. This study also sought to scrutinize the predicaments that face the diaspora in trying to balance their relationships with both the host and home countries. This study suggests that effects of migration on immigrants' home countries can be both positive and negative.

Methodology: This study undertook a two dimensional approach whereby a focus was first put on the positive effects and later an overview of negative effects was considered. Analysis was based on systematic literature review on relevant studies that have been conducted within this line of idea.

Findings: Developing countries are more negatively affected by migration as compared to developed and industrious countries. Similarly, the study found out that diasporas of third world countries living in developed countries are willing to spend more time in their host countries than returning back home.

Unique Contribution to Practice and Policy: This study recommends that governments of developing countries should draft policies that can enable their diasporas to contribute economically without restrictions. Such policies can be subsidies on taxation of diaspora funded projects to encourage diaspora investments.

Keywords: *International migration, diaspora, economic development*

Introduction

Modern technology has been one of the factors that have favored increased migration rates in this contemporary generation (Levitt, Dewind & Vertovec, 2003). However, as much as there are increased rates of international migration, the trends of migration have been noted to be inconsistent (Abel & Sander, 2014). Previously, people migrated mainly for search of better life opportunities. That meant if people were comfortable with the state of their lives in their home countries there could be no reasons for migration (Clark & Maas, 2015). Lately, migration has been triggered by a mix up of factors that it has become almost impossible to generalize on causes of migration. The reasons for migration are narrowing down to become more and more personal.

As scholars of migration are left to ponder that puzzling trend in migration, on the other hand the effects of migration are evident and can be felt within the migration chain (Kapur, 2014). It can be argued that migration has effects on both the origin and destination of the migrant. Similarly, the rate of migration can be controlled by the two parties (Coleman, 2008). However, the effects of migration have been seen to be more immense on migrants' home countries than host countries. Two main reasons can account for this conclusion. Firstly, home countries get deprived of labor force and to some extent professional skills are lost to another country. This leaves behind a huge void that will take time and resources to fill. On the other hand, host countries are in receivership of such skills and their labor force becomes populated from the benefit of incoming immigrants. Secondly, host countries have direct control on migration for they can limit the number of people coming in while the home countries in a way are limited on issuing restrictions about the number of people leaving that specific country (Palloni et al., 2001).

For a long time, there have been an imbalance on the diaspora community in regard to their duties to serve both the host and home countries (Brinkerhoff, 2015). A major migration trend has been that diasporas from developing countries that have settled in developed countries seem to become loyal to their host countries than their home countries (Samet, 2013). This has had serious ramifications on the state of many host countries especially in Africa resulting in conflicts of interest. To solve such a conflict, diasporas have been on the verge of losing influence on either side depending on where they lean to. In such a dilemma position, the only option that seems appropriate for most diasporas is to be more supportive and conscious to the developmental agendas of the host countries while paying less attention to their home countries (Ionescu, 2006).

Despite the difficulties faced in the process of social integration, either discrimination or isolation from the native community that usually occurs in the host countries and given the scattered settlement patterns; the diasporas have tried as much as possible to maintain contact (Kent, 2006). In association to their homeland, scholars like Karsten Paerregaard (2010) have referred to the diaspora as a people who share common persecution and suffering in trying to retain strong bonds with their origin so as to maintain an authentic identity.

A common theme that was the main focus of this study was the impact created by international migration towards host countries. This study explored the impact from two perspectives: the positive effects that contribute to the development of the host country and the negative ones that keep depriving host countries of the benefits of the diaspora. Similarly, this study narrows down to incorporate the diaspora experiences as they struggle to keep a balance between the host and home countries given their fragmented nature of settlement patterns.

Diaspora's economic contributions towards home countries

The past two decades have seen a significant number of countries drafting policies to include their diasporas in developmental plans (Constant & Zimmermann, 2016). The recognition of the diaspora by their home governments has bridged the gap that previously existed making the diaspora to claim their unique identities as members of a given cultural and political community (Leblang, 2017). This has in turn motivated the diaspora to participate in developmental agendas proposed by their home countries. While previously most countries lost contact with their diasporas immediately they migrated to host countries, a change in migration policies has sensitized the importance of the diaspora and their contributions towards home countries (Morawska, 2011). The most notable contribution of the diasporas towards their home countries lies profoundly within the economic sphere. From sending money home to their kin and friends to supporting private businesses, the diaspora's economic contributions has been enormous in home countries (Paul, 2014). Home governments benefit from such activities and besides the remittance returns also give direct contributions to the host country revenue collection.

This section endeavored to give an overview of the economic contributions of the diaspora towards their home countries and how that is impacting the countries of origin positively. A comparison of various diaspora-initiated economic activities was taken into consideration so as to give a clear understanding. The reactions of various governments towards the position of the diaspora in their economic development agendas were also be reviewed. It should be noted that different governments respond differently towards diaspora economic contributions and that to some extent dictates the smoothness of the relationship that exist between the diaspora and their home countries.

Most migration scholars have captured the state of the relationship between the diasporas and their home countries (Ramamurti, 2004). Thanks to a number of fascinating studies, most governments have taken a positive approach to draft policies that have seen more and more diasporas being involved in economic development in their home countries (Délano, 2014). As much as there has been a lot covered in that line, very limited data exist to show the impact created by migration on home countries. It is only explained halfway, leaving a huge aspect to imagination since most governments do not have programs that record separately the input of the diaspora (Nkongolo-Bakenda & Chrysostome, 2013).

Scholars such as Yoon (2012) notes that recognition of diaspora input will help determine their potential input and hence encourage the diasporas to put more efforts into investing in their home countries. Kent (2006) finds out that successful stories of investment by diasporas can motivate other diaspora to also come up with an economic activity that can generate income and create more economic potential in their home countries. In developing countries, like most of the African countries, their diasporas at large settle in developed countries mainly in Europe and North America (Wahlbeck, 2002). Due to the vast economic differences in the economies of the host and home countries, these diasporas find themselves in a position of economic superiority compared to their compatriots back at their home countries (Pasura, 2012). This explains why African diasporas living in developed countries are generally on an increasing economic growth and once well incorporated to their home countries the potential is transferred to impact some economic changes.

Diaspora organizations like the Tanzanians living in the United Kingdom (Taluk) have contributed towards the Tanzanian government development agendas in numerous ways (Hansen, 2012). The most notable is the creation and support of the already existing small business operations that has created employment and consequently provided opportunities of channels for income generation. This is a direct injection of capital into an economy that spurs economic growth and relieves the government of financial constraints (Bertz, 2015).

In Kenya there are diaspora sponsored programs like the offer by Kenyan nurses working in rehabilitative centers in the United Kingdom to provide free rehabilitative services in Kenya (Kenya Diaspora Conference, 2019). Such a contribution from the skilled diaspora works to the benefit of home governments and releases economic pressures on both the home government and the citizens who could have undergone high costs to get the services (Agrawal, Kapur, McHale & Oettl, 2011). Skilled diasporas have been a source of inventions in many home governments whereby diverse ideas are shared amongst professionals in a certain field (Lin, 2010). The professional input of the diaspora has also been seen to help in improving standards of home countries by accepting a wide scope of reasoning and adopting a different approach to solving problems.

Some diaspora organized trainings like the “Nigerian Diaspora Entrepreneurs Research Seminar” that was held at Keele University in January of the year 2020 gave knowledgeable information on how the diasporas can engage themselves in productive activities that can generate income so as to curb unemployment (Tian, 2020). The seminar mainly explored the concept of business and marketing opportunities available for the diaspora and how they can maximize them so as to benefit financially and contribute to economic development in their home countries. Such a move trains and prepares the minds of the diaspora for engagement in income generating activities that will directly or indirectly benefit the home government through diaspora involvement in home economic activities such as opening of small business operations.

Perhaps the most overstated economic contribution of the diasporas towards their home countries is the remittance returns (Keldon, 2008). Non-financial contributions of the diasporas towards their home countries are not much emphasized as the financial contributions. Up to now, there are governments, especially in African states that have not fully realized the benefits of non-financial contributions of the diaspora towards the economic development of their home countries (Welch & Hao, 2016). Their main focus has been geared towards the remittance returns which are arguably the largest source of government revenue from the diaspora. Due to home governments’ concentration on this financial contributions, there have been set agencies to ensure that diasporas who are still legally citizens of their home countries have submitted their tax returns (Mullings, 2011). In most African countries like Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria etcetera, the number one source of government is tax collection (Fjeldstad & Heggstad, 2012). Therefore, in ensuring that the diasporas are taxed, governments benefit economically through increased revenue collection.

Diaspora and politics

Due to strong connections of the diasporas to their home countries that have developed recently, more scholars have shifted attention to consider the role the diasporas play to shape the quality of political institutions in their home countries (Davenport, 2004; Docquier & Lodigiani, 2010; Yang & Welch, 2010). Scholars like Docquier (2006) have argued that diasporas of developing countries

that have settled in developed countries have contributed greatly towards the shaping of the democratic path in their home countries. In some other countries like Rwanda, the diaspora has been influential even in political changes that happen in their home countries like in the process of election of political leaders (Yoo et al., 2016). Opinions of the diasporas in such situations have been valued and more often they dictate the direction in which such political processes go.

To that end, this section sought to examine the contributions of the diaspora in the shaping of democracy in their home countries. In this overview, the study considers civil liberty and political rights as essential elements of consideration that can be used to gauge a country's overall democracy (Martin, 2019). Civil liberty was viewed under the lens of freedom of expression, respect to the rule of law and respect of individual rights. On the other hand, political rights is cast under the state of functionality of political institutions like transparency of electoral processes, willingness of citizens to participate in political processes, and the functioning of the government.

To most effect, diaspora contribution towards the improvement of democracy in home countries has been seen to work more in African countries where democracy is still growing (Kapur, 2010). These diasporas are usually residing in developed countries that serves as democracy models for most African countries. In an empirical study conducted by Blaise and Anyanwu (2019) to gauge the diaspora contributions towards democracy in African countries, they find out that a significant portion of democracy improvements in African countries have been instigated by the diaspora. This contribution however depends on some factors like the educational levels of the diaspora and the willingness of the home countries to respect human rights and the belief in the rule of law.

Diaspora organizations and movements have been major advocates of democracy for most African countries (Pérez-Armendáriz & Crow, 2010). Their endeavors have been amongst the push to address political injustices that usually happen in African governments due to election process. Involvement of the diaspora in addressing political oppressions gives the problem a global attention that will facilitate a speedy problem-solving technique hence sorting out issues that are contested (Rapoport, 2016). Similarly, due to experiences and learning from working in advanced democracies where most African diaspora stay, implementation of such models in their home countries can work efficiently since the diaspora own a practical experience of what they need to implement (Docquier, Lodigian, Rapoport & Schiff, 2016).

Freedom of expression, although not yet fully expressed in some other African states, has been a fight fought by the diasporas (Whitaker, 2011). In most African countries, the freedom for citizens to express themselves, especially in political opinions has been muzzled for a long time. So far, countries that have succeeded to implement this right to free speech have only achieved it through diaspora support (Patrick & Newland, 2004). In most cases, airing of political grievances that concern an incumbent government has been seen to constitute a crime in some African states (Docquier et al., 2016). It takes people to migrate into other countries where they get the freedom to express themselves. Diasporas, given that they live outside their countries of origin, more often get the opportunity to freely express their dissent opinions against political alignments in their home countries (Sheffer, 2003). Such a wave of pointing out wrongs in political institutions has been seen to spread to home countries whereby citizens stand in numbers to protest against political oppressions.

Involvement of the diaspora in political processes in their home countries such as election of political leaders like presidents has greatly impacted in the overall improvement of political participation of home citizens through setting an example (Kapur, 2010). Similarly, the stretch out by governments to include their diaspora in the home country political processes shows a concern for the value of diaspora inputs towards the improvement of democracy in home countries (Kapur, 2010). Some of the countries like Kenya have set in place mechanisms to allow the diaspora in some specific regions to participate in voting for their home countries' political leaders (Awori et al., 2015).

This analysis agrees with Docquier et al., (2006) whereby they argue that one of the channels through which the diaspora impact the democracy of home countries is through improving of political institutions. Scholars like Blaise and Anyanwu (2019) also agree with this through findings of a study that they conducted on low-income countries in Africa which showed that diaspora input has been one of the major contributors of democracy improvement in home countries. Their conclusion intertwines democracy improvement in home countries with the level of education of the diaspora. They state that "the higher the level of education, the greater the impact of diaspora on democracy." (Blaise & Anyanwu, 2019).

Diaspora and brain drain

The concept of brain drain has been more often associated with migration studies done by most scholars as an impact of migration towards sender countries (Ciumasu, 2010). Current migration statistics and trends show that Africa leads with the highest number of people that migrate from their home countries in search of employment or better educational opportunities elsewhere (Abel & Sander, 2014). Destinations for these migrants become developed economies and other industrious nations mostly in North America, Europe and some parts of Asia (Hansen, 2012). Due to low wage rates, some professional in the developing countries feel underpaid and hence whenever an opportunity for migration comes it gets scrambled on by high level skilled labor force of developing countries.

This trend of losing skilled labor-force and best brains through educational programs to migration has seen most sending countries incurring a gap that requires a lot of time and resources to fill (Commander et al., 2003). The effect of brain drain in diaspora home countries has been controversial amongst migration scholars because there exists two opposing school of thoughts (Docquier et al., 2016). Some scholars strongly believe that brain drain has had adverse effects on the economic development of sending countries because it loses a lot in terms of skilled labor force (Ciumasu, 2010; Commander et al., 2003). This school of thought holds an argument that migration of people with high level of income with professional expertise leads to a reduction in the economic contribution of the country since the efforts of that individual are no more felt.

The second school of thought which has been gaining ground more recently holds an opposite opinion by viewing brain drain as being beneficial to home countries (Meyer, 2001; Docquier et al., 2010). The argument holds that due to immigration of highly educated individuals the remaining citizens are challenged to invest in the education of their children for future emigration. Since not all high skilled people can migrate at the same time it is then left to play advantageous to the sending countries because the stock of human capital increases tremendously. The second perspective from which this school of thought argues from is that once skilled individuals migrate

to other countries they involve themselves in high income generating activities than they were at their home countries. Economic stability of the migrants in their host countries leaves them with surplus resources that they invest in home countries hence boosting the economy of the home countries (Docquier & Lodigiani, 2010).

Given these two existing school of thoughts, it becomes almost speculative to determine with certainty the effects of brain drain on migrant sending countries (Kuznetsov, 2006). Empirical studies conducted have shown results that favor both directions but on a more narrowed perspective the scientific community has convincing reasons to believe that brain drain affects the sender country's academic standing (Drabo & Mbaye, 2015; Samet, 2013). This can be more understood if it is analyzed from the point of seeing a sender country lose a community scientific researchers or even experience talent flow away to another country. All these skills will benefit the receiver countries more than the sender countries given that individuals with the skills will spend most of their active years in the receiver country.

The tremendous influx of talented immigrants in receiver countries have seen the most popular migrant destinations like the United States dominate in the innovative sectors since they accommodate an aggregate of different ideas from the skilled and talented that come in from different parts of the worlds (Samet, 2013). As the countries like the United States and other major migrant destination countries benefit from the brain drain, the individual countries where the immigrants have originated might not benefit like they do.

Brain drain does not only pose the problem of quantity loss to sender countries but also presents the problem of quality loss because highly qualified individuals often qualify through migration criteria (Lin, 2010). Developed countries like the United States and other countries in Europe offer scholarship programs that cater for educational expenses of students from third world countries. These scholarship programs attract a large number of students but the selection process is highly competitive and it goes for the best, which Beuchtemann (2001:5) refers to "crème-de-la-crème effect". When the best categories of a country's skilled labor migrate the country gets affected tremendously, lowering the stock of human capital hence leading to consequential economic drops (Kuznetsov, 2006).

Despite the contributions of the diaspora in terms of remittances, in some cases the diaspora decide to permanently remain in the host countries where they obtain citizenship and become more obliged to the host countries than home countries (Kapur, 2014). Their contributions become huge in the host countries than it would have been if they stayed for some time and then returned back home (Brinkerhoff, 2015). Students who left host countries graduate and in some cases settle and find employment in host countries. This deprives home countries of skilled labor force and other academic contributions from qualified professionals (Lin, 2010).

It is clear that from whichever angle we debate the issue of brain drain from; its impact is detrimental to home countries (Brinkerhoff, 2015). This conclusion is given with cognizance of the positive contributions it might contribute more especially through remittance returns but an overall analysis will inform that brain drain has more adverse effects to home countries.

Conclusion

Movement of people will continue as long as humanity exists. With the advancement of technology the rate of migration has even increased all over the world. Most scholars have written about migration in many aspects and the most available literature talking about the diaspora has concentrated on the diaspora contributions in both home and host countries. As pointed out earlier, few scholars have evaluated the effects of migration on home countries. The process of migration is quite involving but most people tend to focus on life after settlement in the host country hardly remembering the impacts migration causes on the home countries. As this study endeavored to explain, migration has both advantages and disadvantages towards the home country. Stakeholders and relevant authorities that are involved in policy making ought to be aware of these findings so as to be in a position of balancing between the two in order to avoid extremes of either side.

Reflecting on the literature and statistical data available concerning international migration, it can be argued that most of the developing countries, especially African countries benefit a lot from their diasporas more than they lose. A number of factors have been associated with this notion. Firstly, the poor economic status of developing countries does not often times provide room for maximizing the potential of highly skilled individuals. Once they get an opportunity to migrate to a more developed country, they get a good chance to utilize their expertise and explore it to the both personal benefit and also for the benefit of home countries. This is a window for economic growth in home countries.

On the other hand, involvement of the diaspora in economic activities in their home countries like the setting up of business enterprises is one of the factors contributing to the economic growth of home countries. Remittance returns from the diaspora inject direct capital into the home countries hence boosting the government revenue collections. This explains why most sender countries have drafted policies to encourage diaspora involvement in economic activities at their home countries. However, it seems that in order to benefit from the high level of education and talents lost through migration home countries must be willing to provide an environment of democracy and political stability. As outlined in this study, democracy has been the greatest concern of the diaspora and their contributions towards that channel have been immense.

Conversely, migration has had negative effects on home countries. Some of the most affecting issues include brain drain which has led to most sender countries losing skilled labor, intellectuals and talents to another country. This has left behind a void that takes time and resources to fill. In some cases, sender countries lose their citizens permanently once they migrate due to better life opportunities in host countries than at home. The overall effect causes a reduction in human capital stock, consequently affecting government revenue collections in home countries.

Recommendations

This study's main concern was to explore the impact of migration in the migrant's home countries. A systematic literature review revealed that most sender countries are greatly impacted by migration. The impact was found to be both positive and negative. However, in the case of developing countries, the contributions of the diaspora towards the home economies seemed to outweigh the negative effects of migration. This study suggests that sender countries should enact more policies that will trace diaspora activities in their host countries and ensure that they utilize their skills and that the countries benefit from it.

Since there is increasing international migration with the dawn of every year, it is therefore inevitable to deal with migration in our daily lives. Trends in migration keep changing with time also. In order to tap the economic benefits of the diasporas, home countries should draft policies that will enable the diasporas to invest there without barriers. The policies should mainly focus on taxation which should be subsidized so as to encourage diaspora investment. This study also recommends that more studies should be conducted to check on the relationship of the diasporas with their home countries over time. This will help in filling the knowledge gap that is often created with the change in migration trends over time.

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