

THE CONCEPT OF LABOR MIGRATION AND MIGRATION POLICY: ESSENCE AND CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION.

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Abstract: The philosophical underpinnings and contemporary interpretations of labor migration and migration policy are examined in this essay. With a focus on the extraordinary importance of migration in the 20th century, it starts by examining the historical relevance of labor mobility as a transformational factor in demographic, economic, and political development. The study then looks at the current causes of labor migration, such as wage disparities, labor market imbalances, and global economic integration. The multiple effects of labor migration on sending and receiving nations are particularly highlighted, along with the ways in which it promotes social transformation, skill transfer, and economic progress.

Keywords: labor migration, migration policy, global labor mobility, economic development, demographic shifts, migration governance, human capital flow.

Introduction

The evolution of human cultures has always been significantly influenced by migration. Population mobility, especially among working-age individuals, has always impacted political relations, technical development, demographic trends, and occasionally even war. One of the most significant forces behind economic change and cross-cultural interaction among these movements has been labor migration. With the size and complexity of human mobility reaching previously unheard-of heights, the twentieth century in particular can properly be referred to as the "century of migration," having profound and enduring effects on economies, social structures, and political systems around the globe.

In the modern globalized world, labor migration has not only intensified but also become more organized and diverse. The voluntary movement of workers across international boundaries is now an inherent characteristic of the world economy, driven by labor shortages, wage differentials, and increasing interdependence of national markets. Migrants are useful to their home and host nations alike: they fill labor gaps, send remittances, transfer technology, and facilitate international contacts. At the same time, this process is also accompanied by enormous integration, social protection, and regulatory issues.

Such dynamics have generated the urgent need for responsive and comprehensive migration policies. Governments across the world must strike a delicate balance between economic needs, national security, and human rights. Effective migration policy now requires coordination across numerous sectors – labor, education, and foreign affairs, among others – and needs to be based on sound data and international cooperation. In this regard, an examination of the conceptual foundations of labor migration and reflection on

modern approaches to migration governance is not only timely but essential to the management of one of the most powerful forces molding our world.

Methods

In order to analyze current theoretical frameworks and definitional notions pertaining to labor migration and migration policy, this study uses a qualitative research approach. Key terms like "labor migration," "migration policy," and "working-age population movement" are thoroughly analyzed using conceptual analysis, the main technique employed. The research uses interdisciplinary sources, such as economics, sociology, political science, and international development studies, to guarantee a thorough understanding.

A comparative analysis of ancient and modern migration theories form the theoretical basis of this work. In order to demonstrate these theories' applicability in understanding contemporary migration patterns, they are critically assessed. In order to find similarities and differences in our understanding of labor migration in the modern world, definitions from international organizations like the United Nations (UN), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are also examined and contrasted.

By looking at important strategic documents, migratory policy papers, and global compacts, the study incorporates policy analysis in addition to the theoretical assessment. Although no primary data was gathered, secondary sources such as scholarly publications, institutional reports, and historical documents enhance the analysis. A systematic investigation of the evolution of the idea of labor migration and the ways in which migration policy has changed to reflect shifting global realities is made possible by this methodological approach.

Results and Discussion

What is migration, what are its causes, what is its essence, how is it classified? In a broad sense, the concept of migration means "the movement of people over a sufficiently long distance for a sufficiently long period of time ¹." In the global economy, the concept of labor migration refers to *the movement of the working-age population from one country to another to work for a period of more than a year*.

To date, we can find a number of definitions of the concept of migration in scientific literature. In particular, the first scientific definition of this concept was given in 1885 by the German geographer E. Ravenstein in his work "Laws of Migration". According to him, migration is "the change of people's place of residence for a permanent or temporary period."²

The UN's multilingual demographic dictionary, published in 1958, defines migration as "the movement of people to change their place of residence." At the same time, we can

¹ International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. (1968). Macmillan.

² Ravenstein, E. (1885). *The Laws of Migration*. Journal of the Statistical Society of London. Vol.48, No.2. pp. 167-235.

see that the terms "migration" and "migratory movement" are used interchangeably in this dictionary.³

B. Breev, on the other hand, puts forward the idea that "migration (territorial migration) is the movement of people within a certain territory or outside it."⁴

According to V. Perevedentsev, "population migration is a form of displacement, in particular, spatial displacement." Or "in a relatively narrow sense, migration is understood as the totality of people's movements across a territory, and this process is associated with their changing their place of residence for a relatively long period of time."⁵

L. Rybakovsky divides population movement into three parts: social, natural and migratory.⁶ The social movement of the population includes all the processes associated with its transition from one social stratum to another. These processes are studied by the science of sociology. The natural movement of the population is a subject of the science of demography, which mainly analyzes the change in the population due to births and deaths. Migration, in turn, is associated with the mechanical movement of the population within a certain administrative-territorial unit, regardless of its duration, permanent or temporary, and purpose.⁷

According to V. Iontsev, "International labor migration is a process associated with the sale of labor capacity, that is, crossing state borders in order to find a job and work in a particular enterprise and receive a salary for it."⁸

Another Russian scholar, O. Vorobyova, population migration is any territorial movement of the population across certain administrative-territorial units, whether internal or external. It is not taken into account whether the purpose of the migrating population is permanent or temporary residence.⁹

S. Eisenstadt considers migration to be "the physical movement of an individual or group from one society to another."¹⁰

In general, migration is a movement associated with a change of residence and is usually permanent (J. Johnson and J. Salt).¹¹

Uzbek scholar E. Abdullaev defines labor migration as "the mechanical movement of labor in order to find new jobs and earn more."¹²

D. Rasulova puts forward the idea that "population migration is the primary manifestation of international economic relations. When migrants set out in search of better living conditions, that is, when they migrate labor resources between countries, it is

³ UN Multilingual Demographic Dictionary. <http://www.Demopaedia.org/tools/spip.php?> Retrieved on 14.05.2019 from [page = generate dictionary & edition = ru - i & format = html](http://www.Demopaedia.org/tools/spip.php?).

⁴ Breev, B. (1977). *Podvizhnost naseleniya i trudovykh resursov*. M.: Statistics.

⁵ Perevedentsev, V. (1975). *Method y izucheniya migration naseleniya*. M.: Nauka.

⁶ Rybakovsky L.L.'s personal blog. Retrieved 09/20/19 from <http://rybakovsky.ru/migracia2b.html>.

⁷ See source above.

⁸ Iontsev, V. (1999). *International migration: theory and history*. International migration: Russia and the modern world. #3

⁹ Vorobyova, O. (2003). *Migratory process of the population: theory of questions and state migration policy*. Problemy pravovogo regulirovaniya migratsionnykh protsesov na territorii Rossiyskoy Federatsii. Analytichesky sbornik Soveta Federatsii FS Rossii. No. 9.

¹⁰ Eisenstadt, S. (1953). *Analysis of Patterns of Immigration and Absorption of Immigrants*. Population Studies. 7(2). pp. 167-180.

¹¹ Johnson, J., & Salt, J. (1980). *Labor migration within organizations: an introductory study*. Journal of economic and social geography. 71(5). pp. 277-284.

¹² Abdullaev, E. (Otv. ed.). (2008). *Labor migration in the Republic of Uzbekistan*. Sat. St. Tashkent.

considered external migration, and if this occurs within one country, it is considered internal migration."¹³

Z. Kadirova, trying to unify all approaches, emphasizes the following: "The factors and causes that cause international labor migration are manifested in two types, namely economic and non-economic. In our opinion, it would be appropriate to include the level of economic development of countries, differences in living standards and incomes among economic factors, and non-economic factors, such as religious, political, family, and ethnic factors.

"It is appropriate to pay special attention to these factors in the theoretical and practical study of international labor migration and, based on the specific characteristics and interests of countries, to strengthen the impact of these factors or prevent these effects."¹⁴

When we looked at the above and other definitions, we were convinced that the aspects of migration that improve the welfare of the population and the centralized regulation of these processes are not comprehensively reflected in any definition.

At this point, it is appropriate to cite the definitions of migration and labor migration provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). According to it, migration is the movement of a person or group of persons across an international border or an internal state border. It is a movement of people regardless of the duration, purpose, or reason; it includes the movement of refugees, the movement of displaced persons (DPs), economic migrants, and those moving for other purposes.¹⁵

This organization defines labor migration as follows: labor migration is the movement of individuals from one country to another or within the territory of the country in which they are resident in order to find employment. Labor migration is regulated by many countries through their migration laws. In addition, some countries are actively engaged in creating opportunities for their residents abroad as part of their control over external migration.¹⁶

It should also be noted that, according to the classification of the International Organization for Migration, there is no concept of "migration policy", but there are concepts that encompass it: "migration management" and "migration governance".

Migration management is the management of all areas of migration-related activities by states through national systems or bilateral and multilateral agreements, as well as the reflection of migration-related issues in state policy. That is, it involves the planned implementation of policies, laws, and administrative systems developed by institutions responsible for migration issues.

Migration management is the integrated system of legal norms, laws and decisions, policies and traditions, as well as organizational structures (subnational, national, regional and international) and related processes that shape the approaches of States to migration.

¹³ Rasulova, D. (2010). *Theoretical foundations of the development of labor migration*. T.

¹⁴ Kadirova, Z. (2016). *Integration of Uzbekistan into the international labor market in the context of globalization*. T.: IKTSODIYOT.

¹⁵ International Organization for Migration (IOM). Retrieved 14.05.2019 from <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms#Migration>.

¹⁶ See source above.

This system supports international cooperation, taking into account the rights and obligations of all participants.

There is a very subtle difference between migration management and migration governance. Migration management is carried out directly by states. In migration governance, other institutions, processes and actors (citizens, migrants, international organizations, the private sector, public associations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, etc.) are also systematically involved. It is also worth noting that while migration management is a top-down (state) process, migration governance is a bottom-up (other actors) process.

Although the concept of migration policy is part of both concepts discussed above, it is closer to migration management in terms of its characteristics. Because the migration policy is carried out directly by the state alone, taking into account the influence of other external actors.

Turning to contemporary studies on migration policy, the work of researcher Michael Todd Smith is particularly noteworthy. In his opinion, modern migration management interprets countries and regional organizations as entities ready to cooperate with international organizations on migration management. In this case, it is not mandatory to give international organizations a separate legal role, and countries and regional organizations can also conduct their own de jure independent migration policies.¹⁷

At this point, an interesting question naturally arises: what is the relationship between migration and global governance? In order to find an answer to this question, S. Castles, M. Miller and G. Ammendola in their 2003 study first tried to link global governance and migration. In their opinion, regional consultative processes on international migration are the most important manifesto of global governance in the modern world.¹⁸ That is, the main object of global governance, globalization, is international migration.

Conclusion

To conclude we can say that labor migration remains a critical socio-economic phenomenon that reflects broader trends in globalization, demographic shifts, and labor market dynamics. As we have seen, the concept of labor migration encompasses both voluntary and forced movements, shaped by push and pull factors such as economic disparities, employment opportunities, political stability, and social networks. Understanding the theoretical foundations of labor migration is essential for framing effective policies that address the needs of both sending and receiving countries.

Migration policy, in its modern interpretation, has evolved to respond to a complex interplay of economic demands, security concerns, and human rights considerations. Today's migration governance requires a multidimensional approach that balances national interests with international norms and migrant welfare. Countries are increasingly adopting

¹⁷Smith, MT (2019). *Migration management, global migration government, and the case of the international organization for migration's assisted voluntary return and reintegration programming* (Publication Number: 13895690). [Doctoral dissertation, University of Delaware]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. pp. 26-27.

¹⁸Castles, S., Miller, M. & Ammendola, G. (2003). *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, American Foreign Policy Interests. New York: The Guilford Press.

evidence-based, data-driven strategies to manage labor flows, protect migrant rights, and optimize the economic benefits of migration for all stakeholders.

Overall, the interplay between labor migration and migration policy highlights the importance of a coherent, adaptive framework that reflects current realities. Effective policy formulation should be grounded in comprehensive analysis and international cooperation, especially in regions like Central Asia where labor migration plays a significant developmental role. Addressing challenges such as irregular migration, brain drain, and labor exploitation requires sustained institutional commitment and a clear understanding of the modern dimensions of labor mobility.

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