

**Nexus of Economic Freedom, Migration and Trade Enhancement:  
Role of Cultural Similarities**

**Migration and Wealth of Nations**

Session: "Commerce, agriculture and industry as positive drivers of migration".

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**I: Economic Growth and Migration: Empirical Evidences from World Economy**

Global economic growth, reducing economic disparities, bridging the gap between the nations and achieving world peace are considered complementariness of the free trade and liberalization policies. Theory of free trade cannot be isolated from the free movement of the factors of production. Free trade dream cannot get success unless it is associated with the free movement of capital and labor. Free movement of capital and labor provide an environment to achieve the desirable outcomes of free trade regime.

One of the common and desirable objectives of globalization and free trade regime is the reducing global disparities in human welfare and development by interaction of the peoples in a free world. The quantum of merchandize trade does not reflect the relations between the peoples of partner countries. However, higher trade in services including health, education, tourism, and transportation, and the cross boarder mobilization of labor and capital lead the interactions among the peoples of partner countries. Power, communication, electricity, transportation, financial services, travel and tourism, science and technology, higher education and information technology are included in those tradable services, which have close association with the interaction among the peoples. It was hypothesized in this study that cross boarder mobilization of labor can lead the enhancement in trade of merchandizing goods among the partner countries.

**Table: 1  
Patterns of Changing in Global Economy**

Description/ Variable	1995	2008	Annualized Growth (%)
World Gross Product (Sum of GDPs) (\$ Million)	29,604,170	60,521,123	5.7
Merchandize Exports (\$ Million)	5,172,492	16,129,607	9.1
Services Exports (\$ Million)	1,211,384	3,799,197	9.2
Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (\$ Million)	328,496	1,823,282	14.1
Workers Remittances & Compensation Received (\$ M)	101,963	443,392	12.0
Workers Remittances & Compensation Paid (\$M)	100,821	288,361	8.4
Population (Million)	5,448	6,697	1.6
Labor Force (Million)	2,623	3,103	1.3
International Migrant Stock (Million)	166	195	1.3

It was observed over the last decade that the rates of growth in GDP, merchandizing trade, trade in services and mobilization of capital have no consistency with the growth in international migration stock. Fourteen percent growth in foreign direct investment (FDI), about six percent growth in GDP and nine percent growth in trade do not reflect the impact of free trade and globalization regime on the mobility of labor. The more astonishing fact is that annualized growth in the workers' remittances and compensation received in the labor exporting countries are much higher than annualized growth in the workers' remittances and compensation paid by the host countries. It is an indicator that immigrant workers are now in the process of returning to their countries of origin, because they are transferring their savings to their homelands.

It is another notable observation from the world economy that though number of tourists has increased by 52 percent from 1995 to 2008; the per capita tourist expenditures have declined steeply. More important observation is that the expenditures on tourism as percentage of spending on imports have significantly declined over the last decade. It reflects the changing in the households' expenditures patterns. Though, it was expected that globalization will lead the higher spending on international travel and tourism activities, but the growth in households' spending on such activities is lesser than growth in other economic activities, which is against the common perception.

It is a common intuitive that spending on international traveling may lead the higher earnings and households' economic development. The reduction in the share of this expenditure may deteriorate the growth in the households' incomes. At the same time it was also noted that the share of developed countries in income from tourism has declined over this period. The share of high income economies in international receipts from tourism was 81 percent in 1995; it has reached at 72 percent in 2008.

**Table: 2**  
**Declining Trends in Tourism Expenditures**

Region	No. of outbound Tourists (000)		Outbound Tourism Expenditures (\$ million)		Outbound Tourism Expenditures (% of Import)	
	1995	2008	1995	2008	1995	2008
East Asia and Pacific	36,055	--	14,769	70,557	3.5	3.7
Europe and Central Asia	86,619	149,215	22,399	68,075	9.5	4.9
Latin America and Caribbean	21,780	41,578	18,751	44,731	6.5	4.5
Middle East and North Africa	13,407	25,325	4,844	19,782	5.7	5.7
South Asia	5,151	15,005	2,393	16,660	3.0	3.5
Sub Sahara Africa	--	--	6,761	22,119	6.7	5.9
High Income Economies	337,054	531,446	388,810	790,377	7.8	5.7

**Table: 3**  
**International Receipts from Tourism**

Region	% Share in Receipts from International Tourism	
	1995	2008
East Asia and Pacific	6	9
Europe and Central Asia	4	7
Latin America and Caribbean	5	5
Middle East and North Africa	2	4
South Asia	1	1
Sub Sahara Africa	1	2
High Income Economies	81	72
<b>Global Receipts (\$ Billion)</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>1139</b>

**II: Restrictive Migration Policies:**

What are the causes of reduction in the share of high income economies in receipts from tourism, lower per capita spending on tourism and travelling activities, and declining ratio of outbound tourism expenditures as percentage of imports? It is obvious that sustainable causes of migration are economic, but determinants of migrants are not the only factors of migration; determinants of migration policies adopted by the host countries are also important. The host countries' visa policies is one of the major determinants of migration, and the hosts' policy depend on their own requirements. These requirements can be classified into four broad categories:

1. Inflow of Investment with the Immigrants
2. Inflow of required (Skilled or Unskilled) labor with immigrants
3. Creating gender equality
4. Maintaining required ratio of younger in the population

Now, it has been realized in the economic literature that higher population is not always a source of deterioration in economy. The higher population by maintaining a required capital-labor ratio in the economy can accelerate the economic growth. The major issue in the developed countries is not higher growth of population; it is the skewed distribution and growth in terms of unequal gender ratio or decreasing ratio of young peoples in the population. There were 6 percent old aged persons in the world population in 1980, while at present, the ratio of old age persons is 8 percent in developing countries and 18 percent in developed countries. It is estimated that in 2025 this rate will reach at 18 percent.

No doubt, the priorities of immigrants by host countries on the basis of their capital adequacy and skills will enhance the rich-poor gap in global economy, but this is not the darkest side of the picture. The darkest side of the picture is the prioritization of labor on the basis of their origin. Expected deterioration in the law and order situation, cultural clashes and the 'vote bank politics' play an important role in determining the host countries' policies for migration. Such policies create severe bias in the visa and migration policies.

The desirable goals of free trade regime cannot be achieved without allowing free movement of the factors of production. It will create an uneven playing field, where competitiveness will be a meaningless concept. Free trade is associated with competitiveness, economies of scales, and comparative advantages. Every sector in every country will determine its competitiveness on the basis of cost and availability of the factors of production. The free movement of the factors of productions should be ensured for the survival of free trade regime.

Several economies are developing their policies to ensure mobilization of capital and these policies have been reflected in the growth of inflows and outflows of investment over the last decade. Multi National Corporations, International donors and funding agencies and fund managers are representatives of the mobility of entrepreneurships. The mobility of land though is not possible; corporate farming, involvement of the transnational corporations in the exploration and marketing of mineral resources, international builders, developers and construction companies are serving to achieve the utilization of land resources on equal footing. The most problematic area belongs to the mobilization of labor. The growing issues of the law and order situations, cultural clashes, human trafficking, and terrorism are the obstacles in the way of free mobility of labor, which are being mentioned by the policy makers. These issues led the restrictions on migration and visit visas.

The great variations in the freedom of traveling among the peoples of various countries can be analyzed on the bases of visa restrictions by other countries. No, doubt, visa restrictions play an important role in controlling the movement of foreign nationals across borders. The Henley Visa Restrictions Index is a global ranking of countries according to travel freedom their citizens enjoy. It shows the international travel freedom of the citizens of the various countries as well as the international relations and status of individual countries relative to others. In this index 'Scores' indicate the number of countries and territories which can be entered without a visa by a citizen of the respective country. There is no need to mention that peoples of the under developed nations are losers of visa restriction policies. It creates an unequal playing field for the mobility of labor.

It is a common justification in favor of restrictive visa and tight work permits policies that higher number of immigrant stocks may lead to cultural clashes and unrest in the societies of host countries. Empirical observations clearly reject this hypothesis. It was noted that countries which have higher ratio of immigrant stocks in their population do not have internal clashes; while ratio of immigrant stock is negligible or much lower in the countries which are facing severe law and order situations, social unrest and ethnic, sectarian or cultural clashes.

It is quite obvious that benefits of globalization cannot be achieved without free mobilization of people and migration of labor. The protection of the domestic labor in the host countries has also become an important issue after WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle. The labor protection policies may create unnecessary tightening in the work permit policies, which may lead to the higher cost of labor in the developed countries. The outflow of capital from the developed countries and investment in the developing world are the natural consequences of restrictive visa and work permit policies. This may also lead to the improvement in the trade balance of developing

world. However, it will not be a sustainable policy; ultimately free mobilization of labor will have to be allowed.

**Table: 4**  
**Economic Freedom in term of Visa Free Movement**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Score</b>
1	United Kingdom	166	13	Malaysia	151
2	Denmark	164	14	Liechtenstein	147
3	Sweden	163	15	Malta	146
4	Finland	162	19	Hong Kong	140
4	Luxembourg	162	25	Israel	133
5	France	161	28	Brazil	130
5	Germany	161	31	St. Kitts and Nevis	121
5	Italy	161	47	South Africa	88
5	Netherlands	161	48	Montenegro	86
6	Belgium	160	49	Russian Federation	83
6	Japan	160	51	Dominica	80
6	Spain	160	65	United Arab Emirates	64
7	Ireland	159	69	Thailand	60
7	Norway	159	71	Indonesia	57
7	United States	159	74	Bosnia and Herzegovina	53
8	Austria	158	77	India	50
8	Portugal	158	84	Egypt	43
9	Australia	157	84	Vietnam	43
9	Canada	157	88	Nepal	38
9	New Zealand	157	88	China	38
10	Switzerland	156	90	Pakistan	36
11	Singapore	155	92	Iran	34
12	Greece	153	94	Lebanon	32
13	Iceland	151	98	Afghanistan	26
13	South Korea	151			

**Table: 5**  
**Internal Clashes and Migration Stocks:**  
**Are they Dependent?**

Country	International Migration Stock as % of total Population
World	3.0
High Income	11.4
Europe	9.9
<b>Countries with Highest Migration Stocks</b>	
Qatar	80.5
Kuwait	73.7
UAE	70.0
West Bank & Gaza	46.5
Jordon	43.3
Hong Kong	39.9
Israel	38.4
Singapore	35.0
Saudi Arabia	27.4
Oman	25.5
Switzerland	22.3
New Zealand	20.7
<b>Countries with Internal Clashes</b>	
Pakistan	2.3
Sri Lanka	1.9
Sudan	1.7
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.9
Nigeria	0.7
Iraq	0.4
Afghanistan	0.3

### **III: Causality between Trade and Immigrants**

Another notable aspect of the migration stock is its effects on the trade between labor exporting and host countries. Recent economic studies suggest that migration and trade integration affecting development are closely linked to one another. In a case study based on Pakistan economy, it was observed that Pakistan imports more than 60 percent of its required goods from those 23 countries where its 70 percent migrants are settled. Migrants promote the host countries products in their native countries. Though, migration improves the trade relation also at the export front; the empirical results show that role of migration stock is more significant in promoting the exports from host country to the country of origin of the migrants. The regression results in table: 7 are based on 238 destinations of Pakistan trade.

The inducement of cultural relations and interaction among the peoples of the partner countries is the most important aspect of the trade enhancement. The interaction between the people promotes the trade, while reduction among the disparities between the nations, accelerated development of the institutions and growth of economic activities are the ultimate outputs of trade enhancement.

**Table: 6**  
**Correlation of Immigrant Workers and Merchandize Exports and Imports:**  
**A Case Study of Pakistan: 2008-09**

Host Country	Number of Pakistani Immigrants	Share in Pakistani Immigrants Population (%)	Exports from Pakistan (\$ 000)	Share in Exports from Pakistan (%)	Imports to Pakistan (\$000)	Share in Imports to Pakistan (%)
United Kingdom	1200000	17.14	874,588	4.94	916,109	2.63
Saudi Arabia	1100000	15.71	455,634	2.58	4,272,031	12.27
UAE	880000	12.57	1,469,990	8.31	3,159,742	9.07
USA	700000	10.00	3,339,453	18.88	1,869,296	5.37
Canada	300000	4.29	173,632	0.98	478,421	1.37
Kuwait	100000	1.43	104,220	0.59	2,313,493	6.64
Italy	100000	1.43	579,749	3.28	848,165	2.44
Oman	85000	1.21	187,545	1.06	144,416	0.41
Greece	80000	1.14	73,807	0.42	52,390	0.15
France	60000	0.86	313,587	1.77	388,962	1.12
Qatar	52000	0.74	172,112	0.97	433,300	1.24
Spain	47000	0.67	404,496	2.29	126,733	0.36
Bahrain	45500	0.65	76,293	0.43	88,179	0.25
Netherland	40000	0.57	464,755	2.63	353,923	1.02
Germany	35000	0.50	737,988	4.17	1,310,946	3.76
Denmark	31000	0.44	80,762	0.46	78,705	0.23
Norway	30000	0.43	50,319	0.28	77,655	0.22
Libya	30000	0.43	8,966	0.05	361	0.00
Australia	20000	0.29	128,926	0.73	499,125	1.43
Ireland	12500	0.18	39,222	0.22	44,578	0.13
Japan	12000	0.17	110,967	0.63	1,259,997	3.62
Hong Kong	11000	0.16	378,658	2.14	121,061	0.35
Iran	11500	0.16	399,619	2.26	921,971	2.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>7000000</b>	<b>71.18</b>	<b>17,688,007</b>	<b>60.07</b>	<b>34,822,045</b>	<b>56.74</b>

**Table: 7**  
**Relation between the Immigrant Workers and Merchandize Exports and Imports:**  
**A Case Study of Pakistan: 2008-09**

<b>Independent Variable: Share in Pakistani Immigrants Population (%)</b>				
<b>Dependent Variable/ Parameter</b>	<b>Share in imports</b>		<b>Share in exports</b>	
	<b>Beta</b>	<b>T- statistics</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>T- Statistics</b>
Constant	1.162	2.055	1.322	1.5665
Intercept	0.420	4.471	0.411	2.9639
R-Square	0.4878		0.2949	

**IV: Culture Similarities as a Catalyst of Migration**

After exploring the role of migration in trade development, now the question is to determine the causes of migration. Wealth creation is one of the important determinants of migration; it is closely associated with the host countries' policies and households' characteristics of the immigrants. The culture similarities, adoptability and family compositions are the catalysts of migrating environment. From the sixty years data of Pakistan economy, it was identified that 'marital and family movement' is the most important reason of migration. This reason is closely associated with the culture similarities and adoptability. However, it is a catalyst, which induces the migration but it is not a determinant of migration. If it is accepted that cultural similarities and uniformities are the major cause of migration then why migration among the Muslim countries or among the South Asian countries are not visible with a greater magnitude. It shows that the root cause of migration is different. The basic question is the direction of causality.

Cultural similarity is not a cause of migration; migration creates cultural similarities and uniformities by adoption. Factors are economic and the intended immigrants will make their decisions on the basis of a cost and benefit analysis of migration. Creation of wealth is an obvious reason of migration. Here, it must be taken into consideration that wealth is a stock concept. This stock is build through life time retained earnings of the households. Additional retained earnings after migration are the source of inflow in the stock of households' wealth. This is the reason that migration decision is based on the net retained earnings of the individual members of a household. It is obvious that this additional retained earning is the residual of those gross earning which can be earned after migration excluding personal living expenditure at abroad and the expenditures which would be spent on the adoption of new status for earning at abroad. These spending cover expenditures on getting formal and informal training, learning languages, travelling, building new relationships, getting permits and licenses to work and stay abroad. In estimating gross earnings individual may adjust or discount the risk and uncertainties involved in achieving the benefits of migration. Cultural clashes, disturbances in family life and many other factors are included in these risk factors. Obviously, the neighboring countries and the countries with similar cultures have lower risk for the immigrants.

Cross boarder movement in North American, European and Australian peoples between their continents is much greater than others, because of cultural similarities. The surprising exception



belongs to Muslim countries and the countries in South Asia. However, reasons are obvious; the attractive gross earnings options are not available in South Asian countries. In search of good earnings' opportunities, peoples move from Pakistan and Bangladesh to Middle East countries, but they do not adopt the Middle East culture. Their culture in term of languages, dresses and foods is closer to Indo-Iranian peoples. In fact, Muslim world does not have a similar culture; it is not a regional bloc.

**Table: 8**  
**Causes of Internal Migration**  
**(Over the Sixty Years)**

Reason of Migration	%
Marital and Family Movement	63.5
Economic	18.1
Independence/ Division of India	8.4
Others	5.7
Return Home	3.1
Education	1.1
Health	0.3

From the cultural similarities and geographical point of view, Muslim world can be categorized in four different blocs:

- (1) Arab world which covers Middle East and North Africa including Sudan, and Somalia and excluding Iran. Many countries in this block categorized themselves as Arab Republic;
- (2) Central Asian countries including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan; these ten neighboring (ECO) countries are closer in their cultures and have common historical trade routes. All these countries are the parts of historical Mughal Empire and have similar roots in their histories;
- (3) Countries belong to 'Western Africa Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)': Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia; Uganda; Burkina Faso, and Nigeria are included in this bloc.
- (4) Far Eastern Muslim countries including Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam

It is astonishing side of the migration policies that they lead more concentration of wealth because of several factors. On determinants of migrant' side, the initial cost and risks involved in migration discourage the low income groups to migrate. On host countries' side, the requirement of investable funds and assessing economic status of the intended migrants discourage the lower income classes. Consequently, the benefits of migration will be gone to the privileged and affluent peoples of a country. It will lead further disparities in wealth distribution.

Unfortunately, in the present inclination of globalization, the world is being divided into two parts: Riches are becoming more riches, and poor are becoming poorer, because of the uneven distribution of the benefits of globalization, cultural transformation and free trade. At present we

do not have a single world, we have two worlds: one belong to the affluent peoples who have achieved the ability of culture adoptability because of their education, frequent travelling, trainings, investing their monetary resources, and developing their cross boarder contacts. The other part belongs to the peoples who do not have ability to get the benefits of globalization and they will have to live in isolation without knowing the contemporary world. The creation of two worlds from the present one is more dangerous as compared to the cold war era, when world was divided geographically. The upcoming distribution is not geographical. Every region is silently being divided into masters and slavers, and unfortunately this type of 'slavery' is not being recognized; taking the measures for its rectification is out of question.

The situation can be improved by promoting migration of the peoples within the countries of same cultures. It can reduce the apprehensions about cultural clashes from the host countries' point of view and may reduce the cost of migration for the immigrants. The cost of cultural adoption and risk can be minimized by adopting favorable policies for migration of the peoples among the blocs but not outside the block.

### **V: Recommendations**

1. Though, acceleration in the movement of capital was observed in the last decade, the targeted goal of the movement of labor does not show a brilliant picture. Unfortunately, it is coincidence that several unpredictable hindrances have been observed in the migration of people at the time of free trade regime. Protectionist's policies, growing terrorism, clashes between the cultural and ethnic groups, and uneven living standards are included in those hindrances. To avoid such politico-cultural hindrances, the policies should be focused on the free movements of peoples within the countries of similar cultures at the initial stage. This policy may reduce the apprehensions of cultural clashes and the cost of migration will also be reduced.
2. The restrictions on visas should not be used to stop mobility of peoples. It should be for record keeping purposes only. The monitoring of mobility and tracking should be allowed for security purposes but movement of peoples should not be restricted.
3. Though, trade enhancement is closely associated with the migration. This study concludes that commerce departments and their associated institutions are not only responsible for the trade promotional activities, because trade promotion is highly correlated with the interactions among the peoples and the mobility of the labor. These aspects of trade promotional activities should be incorporated in the trade policies. For all kinds of trade in general and for trade in services particular, the role of interior and foreign ministries are also important. Free Trade Agreements, Bilateral Treaties and Monetary Union cannot achieve the targeted goals unless the interiors and foreign affairs ministries participate in these agreements. The roles of transportation and communication departments are also important in trade promotion among the nations. It was recommended that at the time of agreements of the mutual economic relations, the interiors and foreign affairs ministries and the concerned departments of the transportation and communication must be shared their views and their recommendations must be incorporated.

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