

SESSION 5: MIGRATION IN POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

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Session 5: Migration in Post-Independence Period

Outline

- Objectives
- Introduction
- Overseas Migration: Trends and Patterns
- Migration in Post Independence Period
- Government Policy
- Type of Migration Flows
- Processes and Patterns of Socio-Cultural Adaptation
- The Phenomenon of Brain Drain
- Conclusion

■ Objectives

- This session will provide an understanding about the patterns of overseas migration which emerged in post-independence India.
- To deliberate on the diversity in the migration flows in the contemporary era.
- To discuss the processes and patterns of socio-cultural adaptation of the overseas migrants.

■ Introduction

- Migration is an integral and regular part of livelihood strategies and production systems.
- People of the Indian sub-continent have migrated to different countries for various reasons at various periods of its history.
- Among the immigrants of diverse nationalities, overseas Indians constitute a sizeable segment.
- Given their significant presence, unique socio-cultural histories and being subject to different economic and political milieu in the host countries, Indian communities abroad have evolved as distinct diasporic communities and have been under academic focus.

- Though international migration has existed since the dawn of time, the driving force behind this was the search for sources of food and arable land.
- As civilisation grew this became a search for better economic, social, political and other factors of prosperity.
- Throughout history the socio-economic and political epicenters of power and prosperity have shifted from one region to another—from Asia to Europe and America.
- The contemporary period of overseas migration began early this century, but accelerated especially after the Second World War.
- Despite a dearth of information and academic scholarship on Indian communities migrating to industrially developed countries like Britain, U.S.A. and Canada, the significance of this form of migration has gained over that of the 19th century immigrants on account of their socio-economic implications.

▪ **Overseas Migration: Trends and Patterns**

- During the past few decades international migration has taken new strides.
- What we see is a trend of global migration where movement of human resources is induced by International demand along with specific regional demand.
- As national boundaries dissipate and the world economy becomes more integrated by forces of globalization, labour from all skill levels moves to meet demand with relative ease.
- Unlike migration in colonial times the main types of migration in contemporary period have been more sequential.

Migration in Post-Independence Period

A new and significant phase of emigration began after India became Independent in 1947. Broadly, three patterns can be identified in the post-independence emigration:

- a. The emigration of Anglo-Indians to Australia and England
- b. The emigration of professionals to the industrially advanced countries like the USA, England and Canada
- c. The emigration of skilled and unskilled labourers to West Asia.

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The emigration of Anglo-Indians to Australia and England

- The emigration of the Anglo-Indians is one of the least studied facets of the Indian diaspora.
- Feeling marginalized in the aftermath of India's Independence, many of these descendants of intermarriage between Indians and the English left India for England in the first instance.
- Finding that they were not racially and ethnically acceptable to the English, several of them emigrated to Australia, which has become a second home-land to a significant section of Anglo-Indians.

The emigration of professionals to the industrially advanced countries like the USA, England and Canada

- The large-scale and steady emigration of doctors,engineers, scientists and teachers to the industrially advanced countries of the West is essentially a post-independence phenomenon., and particularly so of the late 1960s and the 1970s.
- It somewhat declined with the adoption of stringent immigration regulation by the recipient countries.
- This patterns of emigration often described as 'brain drain', is essentially voluntary and mostly individual in nature.
- With the second and subsequent generations having emerged, and the emigrant population enjoying economic prosperity and socio-cultural rights, this stream of emigration has resulted in vibrant Indian communities abroad.

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The emigration of skilled and unskilled labourers to West Asia.

- To be contrasted with the above is the emigration of skilled and unskilled labourers to the West Asia in the wake of 'oil boom' there.
- This emigration is voluntary in nature, but its trends and conditions are determined by labour market vagaries.
- It is a predominantly male migration, characterized by uninterrupted ties with the families and communities back in India.

Immigration patterns to Britain, the U.S.A., Canada and West Asia

Britain

- A major influx of Indians to Britain did not take place until the 1950s and early 1960s when an expanding economy called for more labour in Britain. During this period, individual male 'pioneers' came and found work, lived together in shared houses, gradually brought over their family members and eventually re-established their families and accumulated material assets in the new context.
- Chain migration was the key feature of transplantation of Indian communities to Britain during this period.
- A comparatively new kind of overseas Indian community arose, that of 'twice migrant' towards the end of the 1960s and the early 1970s. The bulk of these twice migrants were Indians who had lived for decades or generations in East Africa but who were induced or forced to leave in large numbers due to radical Africanisation Programmes introduced by the Kenyan and Ugandan governments.

U.S.A

- From 1820 onwards there has been a constant trickle of Indians to the United States.
- Large scale migration of Indians to the United States of America started only after the repeal of the immigration and nationality Act in 1965.
- The American 'pull' factors and the Indian 'push' factors were the reasons for the Asian Indian emigration of the post-1965.
- The class of Engineers, scientists and college teachers as well as accountants and businessmen, who migrated to the USA.
- It is somewhat accepted that U.S. students in general lag behind compared to their Asian counterparts when it comes to mathematical or analytical skills. Asians, or mostly South Asians, are more eager to learn technical skills-hence their proficiencies in those areas. This means highly educated Asian workers possessed educational and technological advantages over local workers and were able to fill the void very quickly.

Canada

- Indians are the largest component of people of South Asian origin in Canada.
- The majority of the Indians in Canada emigrated during the post-1947 period as the Canadian racial immigration barriers were systematically dismantled. Whereas early immigrants had been almost all Sikhs, the people arriving in the 1950s and 1960s came from an increasingly diverse range of ethnic and religious backgrounds.
- Sikhs remain by far the largest Indian group, numbering around 130,000 or over one half of all Indians in Canada today.
- Nevertheless many new communities were formed by comparatively new immigrant groups such as Hindi-speaking (25,000) and Punjabi-speaking (6,000) north Indians, Gujaratis (2000, etc).
- As a consequence of the 1969 immigration policy of Canada, the flow of Indian immigrants has been highly selective. About three-fourths of the recent immigrants are educated and highly skilled.

West Asia

- Since migration of Indians to the West Asian countries is basically oriented to labour and servicing occupations on a contract basis, most of the socio-economic researches on this expatriate community have addressed themselves to the issues of recruitment, migration and job opportunities in the labour market.
- Following the oil boom of the mid-1970s, the Middle East has witnessed a massive injection of South Asian workers.
- At the end of the 1970s growing social unrest among the south Asian immigrants which resulted in hostility and riots, changed the employment prospect of the South Asian immigrant worker.
- East Asia became the new source of expertise labour. In view of the increasing competition from the East Asian countries, South Asian immigrant are increasingly playing the role of 'replacement migrant', i.e, as immigrants who come into the country to fill a vacancy created by the departure of a national for employment abroad.

Government Policy

- Political elites in the pre-independence period had shown great concern for its 'nationals' abroad.
- The British imperial system had made the immigration possible and the Indian government had supported that development.
- The emotional attachment of the Indian who had their kisman abroad. This was reflected in the Indian constitution where part 11 Article 8 provided that any person being abroad whose parents and grandparents were born in India could be granted Indian citizenship by registration. However, it is useful to point out that dual citizenship was not allowed at nay point as Indian believed that one cannot be loyal to two masters. Yet Indian who had taken on new nationality could, if they wished to return to India, revert to Indian citizenship, although this process was not without complication.

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- India was pushing the settlers to identify with their host country and acknowledged the legal justification of the foreign states and their settlers, yet they were not Indian problems, but that there was a certain interest in their welfare.
- Throughout its economics development in the 1970s and 1980s India tried to make room for the remittance coming from the gulf, but failed to open up the economy for any serious NRI investment which went beyond the family state border.
- There is hardly any evidence of reaching the majority of the people of Indian Origin, the old diaspora, till the announcement of the new scheme of PIO card was announced during early 1999.
- Indian`s policy of foreign non-involvement slowly changed over the years to allow the expatriate Asian to take a certain part in its economic development, but the barrier remained so high as to keep them at bay quite effectively.

Distinct Between Indian Origin (PIO) and Non-Resident Indians (NRI)

- **PIO (People of Indian origin)**

A person is deemed to be of Indian origin if he at any time held an Indian passport or he or either of his parents or any of his grand-parents was an Indian and a permanent resident in undivided India at any time.

- **NRI (Non-resident Indians)**

These are people who hold an Indian passport and stay abroad for study, employment, business, deputation, etc., indicating an indefinite period of stay outside India.

Types of Migration Flow

- **Permanent High-Skilled Migration:** Over recent decades, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States have selectively granted permanent residence to a limited number of high-skilled foreigners who are likely to offer these countries positive economic benefits. Whereas, Australia, Canada and New Zealand operate a “points” system to rate the desirability of potential immigrants, the United States primarily relies on nominations of potential immigrants by local companies who wish to hire them. Among source countries, India and China lead the way
- **Temporary High-skilled Migration:** In many developed countries, programs that grants permanent residence to foreigners who do not have historical or ethnic ties to the destination country are politically difficult. In such cases, government may seek to fill occupational shortage through the recruitment of high- skilled migrant on a temporary basis. Historically, these flow have been concentrated in education and health-related services. During the 1960s, however, booms in information and communication technology (ICT) led to a shortage of related skills in many high Income countries, resulting in a jump in flow of technology professional, most from India.

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- **Temporary Low-Skilled Migration:** Despite the fast growth of temporary high-skilled migration, these flows are dwarfed by temporary low-skilled migration, in which countries admit migrant workers to provide low-cost services on a strictly temporary basis. Countries typically implement these programs when rapid economic growth has improved the wages and work conditions of the local workforce and left them correspondingly unwilling to work at low-wage jobs. India and Pakistan are major sources of manual laborers and construction workers.
- **Family Migration:** Family migration is among the largest official channels of migration and represent a large share of flow low-and middle-income Countries to high-income countries. This mode of migration enables foreign spouses of citizen, children born abroad and even foreign-born parents and sibling of citizens to gain permanent residency.
- **Visa-free Migration and Students:** Visa-free migration exists (with some exceptions) within the European Union, as well as between New Zealand and Australia. This channel grants citizens the right to work for an unlimited time in any of the countries that are party to the agreement. Finally, students who travel to foreign countries for educational purposes have emerged as a major avenue by which young people from developing countries can, having satisfied a number of conditions, obtain the right to work and permanently reside in developed countries.

Process and Pattern of Socio-Cultural Adaptation

- Historically the emigrants from India have been a heterogeneous lot and they are varied in terms of their regional, religious, caste, occupational, linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- The plight of Indians as a diasporic community abroad is to a considerable extent determined by ethnic, religious and socio-economic composition of the 'host' country
- The economic and political changes taking place there have an impact on the Indians as a diasporic community
- Marriage arrangements, kinship networks, property and religious affiliations keep many migrants well-linked to their places of origin in the sub-continent
- The most Asian Indian are among ethnic groups in the USA and largely professionals engaged in medicine, engineering and natural science, which is similar occupational pattern follow by the recent south Asian migrant to Australia and Canada.
- Apart from the culture, lifestyles, migrants bring with them distinct skill or business contact that can generate changes in technology, productivity and trade pattern that can affect an economy in way unforeseen without their presence.

The Phenomenon of “Brain Drain”

- Migration has given rise to considerable debates on costs and benefits of emigration of certain categories of highly skilled workers through ‘brain drain’. "Brain drain" is the phenomenon whereby nations lose skilled labor because there are better paid jobs elsewhere.
- In recent years, this has affected the poorer countries more, as some rich countries tempt workers away, and workers look to escape bleak situations in their poor home countries.
- The main flow of brain drain as a change of domicile starts from the underdeveloped countries towards the developed ones, due to social, cultural and psychological factors.
- In a report of UNESCO (1969) has defined “Brain Drain” as an abnormal form of scientific exchange between countries, characterized by a one-way flow in favor of the most highly developed countries.

Characteristics of “Brain Drain”

- There are numerous flows of skilled and trained persons from developing to developed countries.
- They are characterized by large flows from a comparatively small number of developed countries and by small flows from a larger number of developing countries.
- In these flows engineers, medical personnel and scientists usually tend to predominate.
- The above flows have grown with increasing rapidity in recent years.
- The higher the level of skill/training, the greater the susceptibility to migration tends to be.
- The flows respond increasingly to the changed economic complexity of world societies and to legislation which reflects the demands of a new era.

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- The migratory trends are stimulated both by the character of national educational systems as by lack and inadequate planning for the training of students from developing countries, in developed states as well as the proper utilization of their-skills in their home country.
- Except possibly for South America, there are no signs that the migration of talents is decreasing and there are fairly definite signs that its increase will, under present conditions, continue to accelerate.

Conclusion

- Global international migration is increasing exponentially not only in scale but also in the types of mobility and the cultural diversity of groups involved in that movement.
- Figures undoubtedly underestimate the amount of movement since data collection systems are poor and much mobility which occurs is clandestine.
- In addition, since much of the movement is circular, the actual numbers of persons who have ever lived in a foreign nation is larger than those currently abroad because of the revolving door pattern of much global migration.
- Replacement of more or less permanent migration by circulation as the dominant paradigm of global migration is a striking feature. This circulation is now occurring on an unprecedented scale and has been facilitated by developments such as the revolution in transport, which has seen the real costs of international travel plummet and their speed increase.

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- Thus the phenomenon of migration is becoming More complex, and its pattern is undergoing change. No longer a one-time move by an individual, it comprise multiple moves, often involving other family members.
- It remains one of the most challenging issues of contemporary times and there are serious economic and social implication emerging from migration flow.

▪ Quiz Question

1. **'Brain Drain' is a consequences of ?**

- a. Political instability
- b. Poor quality of life
- c. Limited access to health care
- d. Shortage of economic opportunity
- e. All of the above

2. **Which pattern of emigration can be identified in the post-independence?**

- a. The emigration of Anglo-Indians to Australia and England
- b. The emigration of professionals to the industrially advanced countries like the USA, England and Canada
- c. The emigration of skilled and unskilled labourers to West Asia
- d. All of the above
- e. Non of them

3. **Opponents of current U.S. immigration policy argue that**

- a. Immigrants reduce wages of American unskilled workers.
- b. Immigrants use social services that could be reserved for non-immigrants
- c. The taxes that immigrants pay in the U.S. are smaller than the benefits they get.
- d. Immigrants should be restricted to those with high skills and high wealth
- e. All of the above.

Readings

- Ravindra K Jain, 1993. *Indian Communities abroad: Themes and literature*. New Delhi: Mnohar.
- Jayaram, N. Ed. 2004. *The Indian Diaspora: Dynamics of migration*. New Delhi: sage
- Colin Clarke, Ceri peach & Steven Vertovec (Ed.). 1990 *South Asian Oversea: Migration and Ethnicity*. Cambridge University Press.

- With this I come to an end of the session on “Migration In Post-independence Period” and leave you with few questions which you will find easy.

Thanks for watching the video.



Thank you