

# SESSION 7: THE MIGRATION CYCLE

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# Outline

- Job Search and Recruitment
- Education Search and Enrolment
- Passport
- Visa
- Travel and Foreign Exchange
- Settlement
- Integration and Re-integration

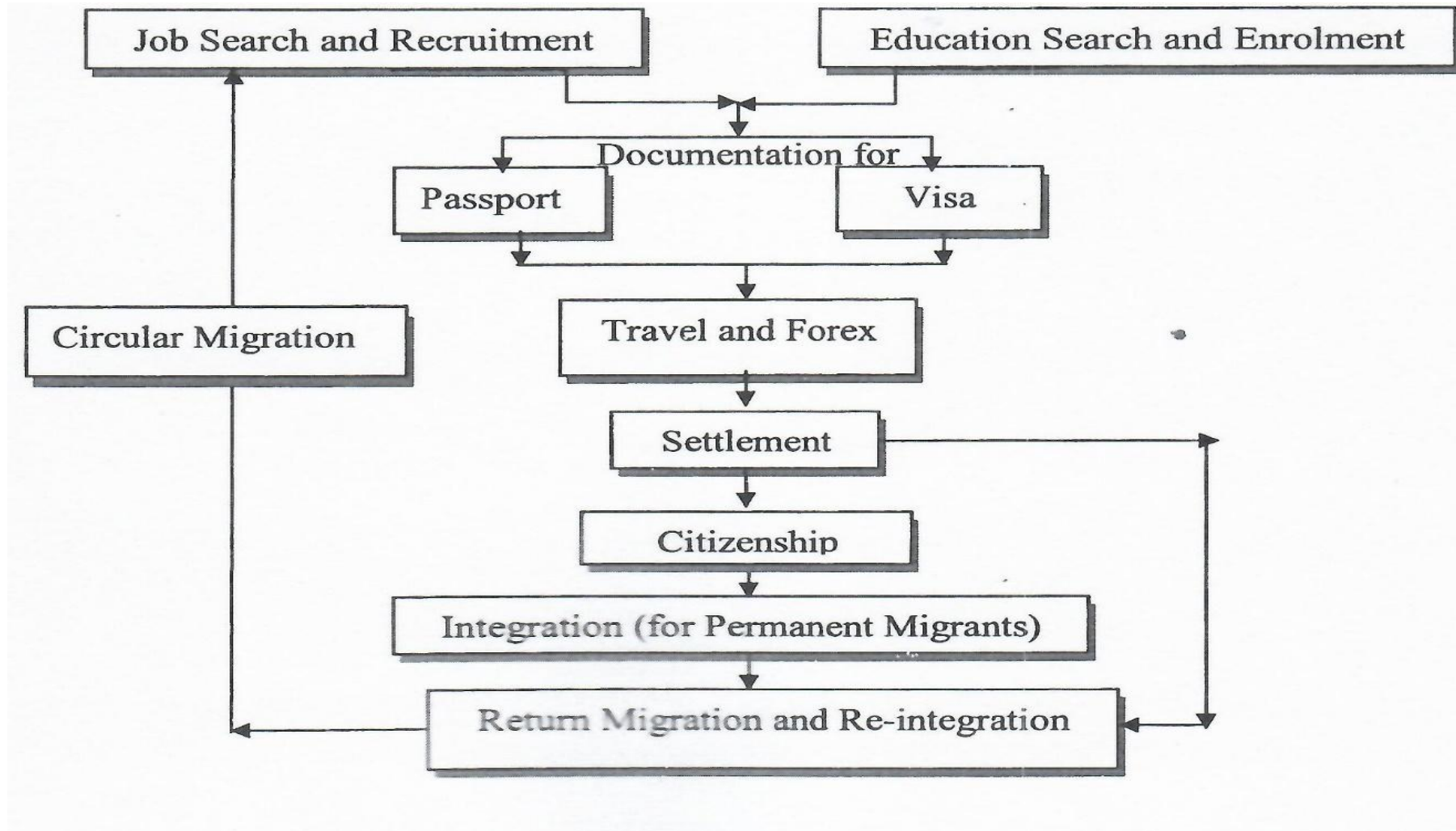
# Objectives

1. To provide an understanding on the migration cycle and introduces the key concepts like settlement, integration and return migration and re-integration.
2. It provides a brief analysis of some important factors that lead to divergence between the policy objectives of countries of origin and destination.
3. It attempts to throw light on some of the stereotypes in migration discourse and suggests a possible win-win framework for all the stakeholders.

## ▪ **The Migration Cycle**

- Migration is a process, which involves a sequence of steps that a migrant is required to go through.
- Broadly, the migration cycle consists of eight steps starting from search for a job or educational programme overseas, application, recruitment or enrolment, documentation for passport and visa, and settlement in the destination country.
- However, sometimes it extends to return migration back to the source country, and re-integration.
- It is important to have a detailed knowledge of the migration cycle in order to promote and assist migrant-centric policy-making and intervention.
- Analysis of various steps of the migration cycle contributes to better understanding of problem areas in the migration process, which helps in formulating and implementing target-specific policies, keeping the optimization of migrants interests and rights as the objective function.

# The Migration Cycle



*Source: Binod Khadria et.al. (2009). India Migration Report 2009 Past, Present and the Future Outlook, Cambridge University Press India Pvt. Ltd. Delhi*

## ▪ Job Search and Recruitment

- The majority of migrants, both permanent and temporary, are often motivated by a search for better employment and career opportunities.
- Thus, gathering information regarding job opportunities in their preferred country's labour market forms a crucial step.
- Today, such information can be accessed from various sources, e.g., news papers and employment news publications, online advertisements, corporate publications, personal networks in the host country, and from recruitment agencies.
- Globalisation has brought the labour markets of various nations closer and made them accessible for foreign nationals, especially for the highly skilled workers.

- Indians started emigrating in large numbers for work, to the industrial nations of Europe and North America, after World War II, especially after the end of the British rule in India in mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century.
- The United Kingdom, the United States and Canada have emerged as the main destination countries for Indian emigrant workers.
- Two major streams of emigration of Indian workers are:
  - (i) the highly-skilled professionals to the industrially developed nations of the West; and
  - (ii) the Semi-skilled and low-skilled labour to the Gulf, South-east Asian and other countries.

- Indians have moved in diverse directions and in significant numbers for work, which makes the size of the Indian diaspora as large as 10% of the world's total migrant stock.
- It is the stream of emigrating workers which brings the highest amount of remittances to India, making it the top remittance recipient country in the world.
- Over 10% of world remittances come to India, ranking first in the world since 2004.
- Migration is not likely to decrease; rather it is expected to rise in the background of the future projections, according to which there would be a shortage of 56.5 million workers in the world by 2020 while India will have a surplus of 47 million workers(Planning Commission 2008).
- Hence, emigration from India for work is likely to rise further and job search and recruitment to shall become pertinent areas for policy.



- Migrants are employed either directly by the employers or through outsourcing agencies, the latter dominated by recruitment agents for employing the low- and semi-skilled workers.
- The task of these Recruiting Agents(RAs) is to facilitate the process of emigration for the low and semi-skilled workers and thus help them coordinate with their overseas employers.
- Under the Emigration Act 1983(Section 10) those who wish to recruit Indian citizens for employment abroad for categories specified in section 2 (o) shall register with the Protector General of Emigrants(PGE).

## ■ Education Search and Enrolment

- In recent years, student migration has grown significantly due to internationalization of higher education leading to large number of students migrating to study abroad.
- India is a major source country for student migration and the number is increasing every year.
- Indian students are migrating to various countries for getting better education but some of the major destinations are the US, the UK and Australia.
- The UK has traditionally been the most sought after destination for Indian students partly due to the colonial links but largely because of the quality of higher education in the UK universities.

- Searching for a university and the programmes of study is a very important step in of student migration as it largely determines the experience of migrating and studying abroad.
- The prospective students undertake detailed search for these when they look for information related to the available options suitable to their career aspirations: the university rankings, the eligibility requirements, scholarships, fee structures, options for financing their education, etc.
- They generally depend on advertisements in the newspaper, websites, contacts with people(nexus with friends and faculty) in the concerned areas of academic interest.
- In recent years, frequently held '*education fairs*' have emerged in a major way to attract and enroll off-shore students due to increasing competition among the Universities and higher education institutions across the world, especially among the developed countries.

- Various marketing techniques are used extensively for attracting a large number of international students who pay extremely high fees as compared to the local students.
- In such a scenario, conducting educational fairs in the source countries is a big opportunity tapped by the destination countries.
- The number of education fairs have increased in India.
- At present in India, there is an absence of systematic mechanism for collecting, compiling and disseminating information about overseas educational avenues.
- There is a need for a specific agency to be instituted which shall not only verify the credentials of a university abroad but also facilitate and support the students in migrating for the purpose of study.
- Instances of students being cheated and duped need to be controlled and looked into.

- It is important to have a regulatory and monitoring body for student migration as increasing commercialization of higher education has led many private institutions into this sector with money making motives and not for the well-being and welfare of the students.
- This leads students to fall in multiple traps arising from misleading publicity and false promise.
- An important issue which goes unnoticed by the authorities is that of the students who migrate to study abroad have to face severe financial crunch once they land in the destination country.
- Commonly, many students migrate with a plan to do part-time work in the destination country in order to support themselves but then they are not able to get a job it becomes difficult for them to fund themselves for study and stay in the country.

- The Universities shall play a proactive role by helping the students in getting opportunities for academic assignments, scholarships, fellowships and safeguarding them against falling into the traps.
- As many times these students have taken loans for their education, the in-ability to return the money in time stops them from coming back home.
- Given the massive outflow of people from India in search of employment and for education, a comprehensive mechanism related to different aspects of migration is imperative.
- This enunciates the need to develop an index of major destination countries, based on variables such as access to labour market, prospects for family reunion, education, transportation, residential rights, political participation, political stability, migration governance, social security, climate and others.

## ■ Passport

- A passport is a document that recognises an individual as a citizen of the country getting it.
- It is a right of every Indian to obtain an Indian passport within the prescribed time-frame after fee payment and fulfilling the legal formalities of submitting proper documents.
- There are various categories of passports based on the designation of the passport holder and the educational qualifications of the applicant.
- The Passport Act 1967 of India provides for three kinds of passports, based on the designation of the person, which are:
  - (i) Ordinary passport-to the citizens of India,
  - (ii) Official passport-to the specified government officials of different categories,
  - (iii) Diplomatic passport-to the officials of the Indian Foreign Services and some other specifically entitled for the same.



- In the Second Classification, aimed at safeguarding the interests of vulnerable Indian workers who emigrate overseas for work, the Emigration Act, 1983 made it mandatory for all the citizens of India(unless exempted) to get a certificate of emigration clearance from the Protector of Emigrants(PoE).
- In accordance with the fulfillment of this rule, there are two types of Indian passports based on the educational qualification of the passport holder *per se* (i) ECR-Emigration Check Required, and (ii) ECNR-Emigration Check not Required.



- All the ECR passport holders, if they intend to travel abroad for non-employment purposes, are required to obtain 'suspension' from the requirement of obtaining emigration clearance.
- However, realizing that the emigration check on Indian passports, which was in vogue since 1922, resulted in corruption in PoE offices and created a nexus between unscrupulous recruiting agents and middlemen.

- The MOIA introduced certain reforms under which now the ECR recruitment is mandatory only for 17 countries and people moving to 175 countries do not require any emigration check.
- The eligibility criterion for procuring ECNR passport is also relaxed and now a person who is 'class 10 pass or above' is entitled to a passport without the ECR stamp and can proceed on overseas employment without any emigration check.
- Rising instances of corruption and forgery in the Protectorate of Emigrants of certain states affect the reliability of the system and call for a close check.

- Mainly three kinds of documents are required for getting the passport:
  - (i) Age related
  - (ii) Residential address related, and
  - (iii) Educational qualification certificates

- At present passports are either delivered by post or can be obtained by the applicant in person from the counter at the passport office.
- In case of emergency, or if an applicant desires to obtain his passport urgently then one can apply under the ‘Tatkaal Scheme’(‘immediate scheme’) and submit the required forms and documents.
- A verification certificate needs to be submitted and the passport authority holds the rights to verify in writing the authenticity of the Verification Certificate from the Official who has issued it.

- After submitting the required fees and police verification, the passport is issued.
- Both the modes of passport delivery (by post and collection in person) are continuing for several years and certain problems have been highlighted regarding the efficacy of these mechanisms from time to time.
- The applicants face enormous problems because of chaos and lack of accountability at the passport offices.

## ■ Visa

- A visa is an endorsement on the passport to visit a country other than the country of citizenship of a person.
- It allows the holder to enter the territory of the issuing country.
- Unlike the passport, getting a visa is not the right of every individual.
- Visas can be broadly categorized into three types:
  - (i) Immigrant or permanent resident visa, issued to the persons who intend to immigrate or settle permanently in destination/receiving country.
  - (ii) Non-immigrant or temporary visa, issued for a temporary period after which the holder of the visa will have to leave the country, for instance, Visitor's visa, tourist visa, student visa, business visa, work visa and
  - (iii) Transit visa, required when somebody passes through a foreign country which comes in the way to reach another foreign country as the destination. For getting transit visa, to and fro tickets are necessary to be produced along with the destination country visa.

- Several other forms of visa have been introduced in the last few years, e.g., airport visa, working holiday makers visa, etc.
- Working holiday makers visa is issued to those who are allowed to work in the country for a limited time to satisfy primarily non-economic objectives.
- Airport visa is issued to those who tend change a flight at the Airport en-route to some other country. Such visas add unjustifiable costs for the migrant's travel expenses because they also pay airport tax at each point of transit.
- In fact, escalation of visa fees and visa types has become an easy, non-transparent and unquestionable method of revenue generation for the consulates.

- Although there is an effort to reduce the time to fill the application form for visas, the number of documents required has increased as in some cases the applicants have to fill additional forms about minute details of their siblings and other members of family, such as their dates of birth.
- All this actually makes the visa application more time consuming and cumbersome.
- Often, the foreign missions with their non-standardized procedures and untrained/unfriendly/hostile personnel make the applicants feel like strangers in their own country.
- There is a stark divide between the stated policy and the arbitrary practices left to the discretion of the staff (at the consulates).
- This has led to a dichotomy, whereby the borders of the destination countries have on the one hand, virtually moved into territories of the source countries, and on the other, into the homes of the applicants through the computer screens via online visa facility.



- As visa issuance is the decisive factor in the migration process, it should be governed by standardised and secure policies, tempered by 'open and friendly' practices.
- There are also cases where unscrupulous elements get involved in corruption and visa frauds.
- Sometimes incidents of irregularities in visa issuance by the government officials gives rise to invalid visas and culminates the problem of illegal migration, drug racket and prostitution.
- Instructions regarding the procedures and practices for issuance of visa therefore need to be spelt out very clearly mentioning every minute detail about the documents required, mode and amount of fee to be paid for each type of visa, method and duration of delivery etc.
- Coordination with foreign missions and consulates would help protect emigrants against being exploited by the touts.

- There are a number of cases where the migrants yearning to settle abroad have adopted illegal ways to migrate.
- For example, people often resort to contractual and fake marriages in order to get a foreign visa.
- Although the consulates aware of such frauds, have devised ways to verify such facts, as per the reports, in the state of Punjab, the aspiring migrants are still willing to part with money, land and home for a chance to live abroad.

- The rise in terrorist activities makes it very crucial that mandatory verifications are done before granting a visa, not only by foreign missions to Indians but by Indian Missions to foreigners.
- The case of the suspects of 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attack planner and other being granted multiple –entry visa by an Indian Mission abroad, violating the existing norms and also without making proper verifications, calls for closer control, and standard, systematic guidelines, leaving little for the discretion and arbitrariness of individual officers.
- Hence, security and identification measures need to be strengthened.
- For example, the EU, after clearing the issue of some biometric passports and visas, has decided to match finger prints of non-EU immigrants at the time of immigration into the region.

## ■ Travel and Foreign Exchange

- Travel involves decisions such as air/sea/land route, the carrier, the cost of ticket, arrangements of foreign exchange, etc.
- Generally migrants look for a reliable and economic travel company and a banker who will take care of the travel and currency needs.
- There are numerous air travel agencies that facilitate travel abroad and handle all the procedures involved in moving from one country to another.
- However, reasonable and necessary services are usually provided by the government through the airport authorities themselves or by contracting out the airport area to the private agencies
- For example, the police-registered cab system at the IGI Airport, New Delhi in order to safeguard the people arriving at the airport from becoming a prey in the hands of fraudulent people.

- Presence of larger number of domestic and international airlines has infused competition among the companies and frequent discounts and offers are provided by these airlines to bring down the costs.
- Also, now the tickets can be booked online easily.
- All this has facilitated foreign travel and migration greatly.
- Remittances from Indian migrants, both temporary and permanent, have significantly contributed to improvement of the balance of payment conditions of India.
- This has stimulated the Indian government to improve facilities and network for foreign currency convertibility, facilitating labour migration.
- Relaxation of regulations on travel and foreign exchange convertibility have led to improvement in the infrastructure base for emigration for overseas work, and remittances have soared along with the number of migrants over time.

- Dealing in foreign currency are regulated by the Foreign Exchange management Act(FEMA), 1999 in India.
- Foreign exchange transactions for the purpose of traveling abroad are covered under current account transactions.
- According to the FEMA Rules 2000, Rule 5- “No person shall draw foreign exchange for a transaction included in the Schedule III without prior approval of the Reserve bank of India’.
- Foreign currency can be obtained from various sources such as the government banks like the RBI, SBI, authorised Commercial Banks(CBs) operating in India and private agencies providing currency convertibility.
- Although the RBI has listed authorised CBs for a larger network of banks providing currency exchanges, these days there are many private organisations which are into the business of foreign exchange of currency like Thomas Cook.

- Thomas Cook outlets are also available at the international airports in India in order to facilitate on the spot currency exchange both for the emigrants and immigrants.
- The banks and agencies charge for their services in two ways:
  - (i) By providing the foreign currency at a higher exchange rate (adding the profit margin to the market rate)
  - (ii) By charging a commission amount fixed for each transaction. In this case there is a disincentive to have frequent transactions, amounting to increase in cost.



- Hence, it is important for smooth migration process that the cost involved in the migration process and the payments to be made in the foreign currency are ascertained which shall help in beforehand to decide the best currency exchange option.
- The other ways through which money can be carried by the migrant in the form of travelers cheques and virtual money in credit card form etc.
- Cross-checking of the prevalent exchange rate safeguards against over-payment.
- Also there is a large black market of foreign currency, for example the '*hawala*', which operates at a large scale and the migrants can get trapped.
- The black marketers provide misleading information regarding exchange rates, or involve the migrant, while using or exchanging foreign currency, in the circulation of black money.



- Banking facilities are spread all through India and with the entry of numerous multi-national banks, the network has increased and banking transactions have become easier and high-tech with online banking facilities.
- Due to the lack of specified and categorical mechanism of providing information on such issues many people have to bank upon the services of middlemen and agents involved in this industry whose credibility is unknown.
- This increases the profitability of migrants being trapped in fraud or misappropriation.
- There is a need to develop some mechanism of collecting up-to date information about various aspects of travel and foreign exchange and then disseminate them among the people who are planning to travel abroad.

## ▪ **Settlement the Host Society**

- Settlement in the destination country involves many decisions such as:
  - The choice of locality for accommodation;
  - Proximity from the site of employment;
  - Means of transportation;
  - Living conditions in the surroundings;
  - The cost of living along with the medical facilities and security.

- There are huge financial and psychological costs involved in settlement in a destination country.
- There is supposed to be a cost-benefit analysis involved in settlement in a locality, especially in case where the migrant has to arrange for his or her own accommodation.
- Many times the recruiting company facilitates or provides for accommodation.
- The growing scale of international migration is a response to the demand for workers in receiving countries.
- Despite greater demand, the opportunities for legal entry and settlement of immigrant population are limited.
- In addition to creating adverse employment conditions, lack of legal status can endanger people's lives.

- Migrants leave their homeland for better opportunities for themselves and their families.
- They have a right to their safety and dignity which the receiving countries should take care of.
- Both the origin and destination countries should recognise the human rights of the migrants and work in tandem to provide for safety and protection.
- However, the incident of violence against Indian students in Australia are a serious cause of concern about the immigrant security.
- Although such incident have occurred in the past, but the scale of attacks on Indian students has brought to the forefront the rampant racist attitudes in the destination country regarding the migrant.
- Hence the immigrant inclusion and integration strategies against the attackers will be a strong step for maintaining the trust of migrants.

- Another important concern exists regarding migrants resorting to fake marriages with the citizens of the destination countries in order to become eligible for citizenship.
- This is a problem that disputes not only creates a burden on their personal life but also a social and political issue of citizenship.
- In recent years, laws have been amended in this concern in countries like the UK.
- However, the resultant impact on the families is to be looked into as this also causes unnecessary stress and trouble for honest migrants.

## ▪ **Integration**

- Integration is a widely debated yet crucial issue in migration debate dealing with the involvement of migrants in the social, economic, political and cultural life of the destination country.
- It focuses on migrants adaptability in a new country, i.e. the process of adapting in the social and community life in the destination country while maintaining one's own identity.
- Integration of migrants in the host country depends on several factors:
  - The social and political conditions at the destination;
  - Diasporic presence of the people from one's own country;
  - Prospects of getting permanent residence in the destination country;
  - Inevitability of return and various other factors.

- Sometimes a clash of values occurs between the migrants and the host communities leading to tension in the society affecting the state policy towards migrants.
- Social cohesion shall provide similar opportunities both to the migrants and citizens, and motivate them to contribute to the destination country.
- Integration is desired for maintaining cohesiveness in the destination country and for reaping the benefits of migration.
- This point was also pointed out by the Global Commission on International Migration, 2005.
- Although the countries have a right to formulate their own policies, it is desirable that integration policies are consistent with international human rights recognizing migrants as members of the destination countries society.

▪ The following issues can be taken into account in order to promote social cohesiveness and cooperation between the migrants and the host society.

(i) Dual citizenship for migrants

(ii) Appropriate mechanisms in order to confirm that migrants are able to get social security benefits such as healthcare, insurance, pensions, etc.

(iii) Receiving countries, which tend to take services of migrants for short durations and send them back when the shortage is over, to re-examine their policy stance

(iv) Help for migrants to learn the new language.



## ▪ **Return Migration and Re-Integration**

- Large scale emigration also gives rise to return migration.
- Many migrants(economic migrants), focus on better opportunities rather than its location, provided that their safety and security concerns are taken care of.
- Increase in job opportunities in the Indian labour market due to economic liberalisation brings back many high skilled Indians who had gone abroad in search of better educational and professional opportunities.
- Source countries like India was earlier worried about 'brain drain'(emigration of educated individuals) including those of educated individuals.
- In post-LPG era, India has witnessed a large number of high skilled individuals returning home after having some foreign exposure.
- Their return is being seen as 'brain gain' for the source country as return migrants come back with improved levels of knowledge and technical skills, i.e., human capital.

- The impact of return migration in the domestic economy depends to a large extent on the kind of migrants, i.e. to what skill category the migrants belong to.
- Return migration of some high-skilled professionals from developed countries may be highly beneficial for the source country for they bring with them the latest knowledge and skill components and may generate more employment at home.
- The return movement of unskilled migrants may not be as beneficial.
- The State should facilitate each and every willing individuals return home with open arms.
- In order to harness the potential benefits of return migration, a comprehensive approach aiming at re-integration of all categories of return migrants in the socio-economic structure is vital.

- During the phase of economic recession, large number of migrants were forced to return to India, due to the crisis in destination countries like the US and the Gulf.
- Govt. of India had announced a rehabilitation fund for helping out the emigrant workers who are were forced to return from the Gulf as a result of the ongoing economic turmoil.
- Such initiatives improves the relationships between migrants and the source country.

## ■ Conclusion

- To sum-up, the steps in the migration cycle may not follow in the necessary sequence, and also all the steps need not be taken in a particular migration cycle.
- In case of circular migration, after completion of a complete migration cycle, the return migrants may start searching for another job opportunity abroad and hence the whole migration cycle may be repeated.
- The intention of elaborating on each of the steps is to understand the various dimensions of international migration in order to help design and formulate target-specific policies aimed at facilitating migrants and other stakeholders.
- This is to centre-stage the migrants and their families in the migration process.

## ▪ Quiz Question

**1. Emigration Act, 1983 made it mandatory for citizens of India to**

- a. Get certificate emigration clearance from the PoE,
- b. Get certificate migration clearance from the PoE
- c. Get certificate for live time emigration certificate fro PoE
- d. Non of them

**2. Which is not true among the given statement-**

- 3. Most migrants move only a short distance.
  - a. Each migration flow produces a compensating counter-flow.
  - b. Economic factors are the main cause of migration.
  - c. Male are more migratory than female.

**3. Who proposed the theory 'law of Migration'-**

- a. Everett Lee
- b. Ravenstein's
- c. Stouffer
- d. Adam smith

# Readings

- Khadria, B. (2009). India Migration Report: Past, Present and the Future Outlook. Cambridge University Press.
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- Sarkar, S. 2008. Migration of Indian Students to Global Cities: A Study with reference to Two Cities in Australia, Unpublished M.Phil Dissertation, New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Universities.

- With this I come to an end of the session on ‘The Migration Cycle’ and leave you with few questions which you will find easy.
- Thanks for watching the video.



**Thank you**