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## Reintegration of Returnee Migrants: A Case Study of Neo-Citizenry in Potohar Region of Pakistan

**Abstract** *In the current world scenario, migration and dual nationality are no more uncommon phenomena. Globalization has given optimism and opportunities to the industrious individuals in the borderless world. This study is focused on the issues of those dual nationals who repatriate to their land of origin. The data was gathered qualitatively using descriptive methodology from Potohar; Bewal, Gulyana, and Gujar Khan. Rapport establishment and use of key informants helped to gain entry into the field. Observations and interview methods were gauged in the study. Participant observation and in-depth interviews were used as tools of research. The data collection process took place over a span of six months. Findings suggested that repatriation led to a transformation in post-migration residence, acquisition of a neo citizenry in a socio-cultural context, trans-nationality, role reversals and crisis pertaining to neo-identity, socio-psychological issues and preservation of cultural ties at familial, group, community and national level.*

**Key Words:** Neo-citizenry, Migrants, Re-integration, Returnee migrants, Transnational.

### Introduction

Human history is evident in the phenomenon of migration since time immemorial. Previously, there were fewer cases where people migrated willingly in pursuit of a good fortune. Most of the people get attached to their place of origin and are not interested to detach themselves from their native land unless the circumstance forces them to. UNCHR quotes 70 Million forcibly displayed migrants worldwide on world refugee day in 2019 due to violence and conflict (Open Migration, 2019). On the other hand, migration has helped improve people's lives in both origin and destination countries and has offered opportunities for millions of people worldwide to forge safe and meaningful lives abroad (McAuliffe & Ruhs, 2018). Common dynamics and patterns are involved in recent and past migrations (O'Rourke, 2012). The capitalist labor system of the post-industrial revolution migration never existed this way in the past (Tsuda, 2011). It is believed that the wave of globalization is destructive since it mingles cultural identities, it westernizes people rather than modernizing them, the heterogeneity is taken over by the homogenizing forces, accelerates the enrichment of capitalism and consumerism (Chaudhry & Zeeshan, 2019). The wave of globalization has not only transformed the social and economic life of individuals which is intrinsic to migration but they have altered the international political scenario (Castles et al., 2013). Political, economic, financial, religious, linguistic, sectarian, ethnic and security concerns are the factors leading to migration. Not all nations who had a tradition of welcoming migrants continue to reflect it, such as the US where not only unskilled but also high skilled migrants' future is dubious in terms of their job and stays (Anderson, 2019). Therefore, what makes them return to their land of origin is also a significant part of this study.

In the etymological context, the word migrate has originated from the Latin word, 'migrate' which was coined in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the sense to move from one place to another. Though the concept of political migration dates back to Israelites out of Egypt to their promised land in the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century BC and its record is found in "Exodus", the second book of Bible (Iqbal, 2007). The word 'emigrate' and 'immigrate' have a slight difference in meaning and used as per the sense of the sentence. Both

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refer to migrating from native land to settle in another country. In easier terms, 'emigrate' is to move out of a country which stresses 'leaving' whereas 'immigrate' is to move to a country and stresses 'arriving' (Nordquist, 2017).

Re-integration is used in terms of repatriation which generally refers to 'sending or bringing someone back to their native country'. It could both be voluntary in terms of coming back to your country of origin or forced-repatriation in terms of a refugee, illegal migrants or international human smuggling. However, 're-integration' is essential to return migration. 'The idea is to protect and empower by assisting their return for re-insertion to their land of origin for their sustainable return' (International Organisation for Migration, 2015). When it comes to the challenges encountered by the returnees for sustainable reintegration, it is pertinent to study how many of the returnees are actually returning by their will and do not intend to get back even if they get another opportunity. This study has exposed the flip side of return migration as well; challenges encountered and the intent of return.

The ideal perception for home-nostalgia or 'home-sickness', soil and homogenous group is exacerbated by time and memory distorts (Warner, 1994). It is dependent on how the individual, group, community, and nations conceptualize it. Citizen is known to be the resident of a country in the modern civic sense. The concept of 'Citizenry' deals with defining the resident and non-resident of a country. Citizenship often refers simply to one's nationality that is recognized both by domestic and international law (Gibney, 2008). The term 'Neo' is often used as a prefix to terms that mean 'new' or 'modified'. Here the concept of 'neo-citizenry' is used to define the new status of emigrants when they get back to their country of origin after seeking dual nationality. The identity situation of immigrants is a complex one as it is a combination of three identities as ethnic; national and immigrant. According to the empiricist understandings of John Locke, the human mind is like a blank tablet upon which the enculturation process imprints its learning and also helps to bestow upon its practitioners the 'cultural mind'. These migrant families though attempting to preserve their native cultural belongings but their off-springs are exposed to a social milieu (Chaudhry & Zeeshan, 2019). The children and grandchildren of immigrants continue to carry an immigrant identity, although they are born in the new country and speak the new language but still are not accepted as the bearer of the mainstream identity (Khan, Shafiq, & Qadeer, 2019). Migration has radically exposed the younger generation to this challenge threatening the lingual heritage (Chaudhry & Zeeshan, 2019).

At one level, globalization is the instrument of disintegration and weakening of nations (Mustafa, Murtaza, & Bhatti, 2019). On the other, the wave of globalization has attempted on cultural homogenization and cultural domination of one region to the rest, but in the process, the global appeared as local which in turn result in heterogenization of cultures (Robertson, 2012). This led to the idea of 'glocalization'. This study aims at researching the issues of returnee Immigrants at a microcosmic and glocal scale. Trans-nationalism is the new Conti-national identity these immigrants retain upon their re-migration to their native land which is often partial. The neo-identity is taken in the context of trans-nationality due to fluidity of the concept which is appropriated whichever suits them best at any point in time.

Anthropology has mainly studied the broader field of migration over the past forty years (From 1970-1980s) or so, on the concepts of identity and ethnicity (Vertovec, 2010). Anthropology of migration has witnessed a steady growth of 'transnationalism' as a foremost topic of interest. In the 1990s Anthropology has also seen a significant area of interest .i.e. gender and migration. The new direction in Anthropology of migration needs to be 'outward inward'. It thus emphasizes both structure and agency; macro-social contextual social issues, micro-level strategies, and decision making and meso-level relational structures articulating both people and process.

## **Review of Literature**

UN suggests that international migration has become a complex global phenomenon is mutually leaving an impact on the country of origin and destination (United Nations, 2016). The number of people living other than their native homeland has soared to 124%, i.e. from 95.5 Million in 1970 to 214 Million in

2010 (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2012). On one hand, it can hasten the process of development in the country of origin in lieu of the remittances and foreign exchange while on the other; it may result in an excessive brain drain of the skilled labor (Wickramasinghe & Wimalaratana, 2016).

The question of identity lies at the nucleus of literary theory, as well as socio-political discourse (Hussain, Zeeshan, & Houswitschka, 2019). Many identity markers used in the construction of identities carry prejudices and functions to marginalize people (Rasul, Khan, & Mazhar, 2019). Aristotle for the first time explicitly stated the term 'citizen' in the *Politics*. His theoretical construct emphasized the role and function of the citizen in a judicial and political institution. To him, the parameters of defining a citizen vary across his six-fold classification of the constitution; democracy, kingship, monarchy, oligarchy, aristocracy and *politeia*. e.g. a citizen in democracy may not be a citizen in an oligarchy. To him, the citizen in a universal sense of democracy is the one who shares in the administration of justice and holding of an office (Duploux, 2018). Citizenship is associated with some basic traits whereby maintaining a sense of shared identity and firm loyalty to a state are the most pertinent ones. By becoming the formal member of a country, one secures his protection, status, entitlement to rights, at the time of birth which gives him a sense of identity (Karatani, 2004). Citizenship in a way has become the key to claiming the right to rights or the right of belonging to humanity (Kasby, 2012). It is a challenge for the contemporary scholars of citizenship and migration to reify, unsettle, define or rather re-define the boundaries between exclusion and inclusion of institutional, political and ideological conditions for individuals and political communities around us (Shachar, 2014).

The rules for migration and asylum differ from one country to another. European countries are the major destinations of the world from where the people of Potohar have migrated. Migration is considered intrinsic in the process of development, globalization and social transformation. The traditional dichotomy of migration is involved in terms of forced/voluntary, emigration/immigration, regular/irregular, sending/receiving countries (Kourkoulou, 2008). The basic distinction in theoretical difference is twofold; theories that lay stress on the causes of migration and the ones addressing the impact or consequences on sending and receiving communities of the migrants (Singer & Massey, 1998). Migratory movements not only bring macro-level changes in interstate relationships and world market and economic but also deals with the micro-level changes in terms of beliefs and practices of migrant families. There are certain meso-level theories that address the self-perpetuating mechanism and results in the continuation of migration (Castles et al, 2013).

There are two major theoretical paradigms addressing migration: the functionalist and the historical structuralists'. The Functionalist paradigm takes migration phenomenon positively and believes that it brings equilibrium by aiding the interests of people and bringing equality between and within societies. Analytical frameworks were based on Push and pull models (Passaris, 1989), along with Neo-Classical theory are covered in the functionalist paradigm. The push and pull model gives all the factors leading to migration and the entire causal factor resulting in the movement of a population (Skeldon, 1990). Also, they lack in expatriation explaining emigration and immigration occurring simultaneously.

In theories of political economy hued by Neo-Marxism, it is maintained that migration is a resultant of disequilibria between demand and supply of labor. The only reduction in income inequality and wage differential can stop migration (Prakash, 2009). Local income deterioration can be compensated in this way by the migrant remittances. Extending the view, Cassarino (2004) opines that the migrant's return gets logical to the country of his origin once he achieves his targets such as the acquisition of investment capital, skills, household needs and savings.

Migration network theory gives a modern-day idea linked to the concept of social capital. 'Migration network connects migrants to their friends, fellows or countrymen back home who forward information, backup the finances, enable employment opportunities and housing through interpersonal ties in various helpful ways' (Arango, 2000). This can be clearly seen from cases where the migrants

once settled in their country of destination help their relatives and friends in their native land. Even if they do not, a kind of patron-client relationship is established between the immigrants and his relatives and friends back home who continue to depend on him. The very relationship is often a master serf relationship where prolonged relationship results in extended dependency. Also, 'the transnational citizens/ communities serve as mechanisms reproducing their own sociocultural practices abroad, that may form an extended national market and resultantly penetrate the expansion of migrant businesses in both host and origin countries' (Naerssen, et al., 2008).

Myrdal (1956) developed Cumulative causation theory which was later developed by Douglas Massey and his team (Massey, 1990) (Massey & Durand, 1994) & (Massey, Hugo, Arango, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, & Taylor, 1993). It explains the beginning, flow, and process of migration (Fussell & Massey, 2004). Over time the number of migrants increases as the 1- migrant serves as the social capital of his friends and relatives in the country of his origin that helps them find jobs in a comparatively easier way and reduce risk in the destination country (Jennissen, 2004). This cycle acts as a stimulant that enhances the migration flow as hence termed as system pr network theory and can be summed under cumulative causation theory. In Potohar, this migration flow is maintained by migrants through wedding off their sons and daughters in their families. Marriage serves as a mode of maintaining the migration flow and developing the social capital for these migrants.

## Research Methodology

The descriptive methodology was used to conduct this study from the multi-cited locales of Potohar. Descriptive research 'establishes the existence of an occurrence by clearly relating it not by artificially producing or manipulating it in any way' (Seligar et al., 2001). The idea of representation of the qualitative data through an ethnographic survey served to achieve the goal. Respondents were approached through a key informant and rapport establishment. The primary methods of research were participant observation and in-depth interviews. The tool of research was the observatory checklist and interview guide. The respondents were approached purposively for the study and 78 complete responses were gathered from Bewal, Gujar Khan and Gulyana.

## Results

**Table 1.** Return Patterns of Migrants

Country of Migration	No. Of Return Migrants	Permanently Returned with entire Family	Returned with half family	% of Trans Nationals
England	18	6	12	66
USA	12	6	6	50
UAE	28	20	8	28
Norway	10	2	8	80
Canada	10	4	6	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

A total number of 85 cases were approached for the interviews. 78 cases consented to be interviewed. The results of the study are presented in the table above based on the dominant categories of data derived out of the in-depth interviews with the returnee migrants. The data gathered from these interviews were analysed through NVIVO. It helped in the review of literature, sorting out and marking data from each respondent and identified the main themes in the responses of the interviewees. The data in the above-mentioned table marks the countries of migration in the locale and the number of return migrants. The number of return migrants was again sub-divided into two sections; permanently returned with entire families and returned with half families. Those who returned with half of their families still have to do with the social security barrier or their offspring refused to accompany him

back to Potohar. The most favorite destination for the respondents in terms of citizenship abroad was Norway and the migrants preferred to stay as non-citizens rather than sticking to a single national identity. However, the least favorite destination for a prolonged stay or non-citizenship belongs to that of UAE i.e. 28% only.

## **Discussion**

The socio-cultural anthropologists use detailed ethnographic methods to study migration at micro and meso-level, intensive in nature and tend to limit their focus on community-level which limits the understanding of the impact of migratory flows at a broader structural level (Baker & Takeyuki, 2015). The integration of immigrants is a two-way process that is dealt with by an intergovernmental agency IOM in order to address both the rights and responsibilities of the communities and individuals (International Organisation for Migration, 2006). But even after integration in the immigrant cultures, people tend to repatriate back to their native land whenever it seems fit to them. The assimilation of the very first generation in the immigrant culture is difficult; however, the second generation gets assimilated easily in the mainstream culture of the destination land (Simrad & Jentsch, 2009). However, the choice of repatriation through reintegration in the local culture or choice of the neo-citizens; transnationalism is completely willful. Reintegration is a process that should result in the disappearance of differences in legal rights and duties between returnees and their compatriots and the equal access of returnees to services, productive assets and opportunities (UNHCR, 2004). The process through which a return migrant participates in the social, cultural, economic, and political life in the country of origin (Cassarino, 2008)

Returning after migration over a short or a long period of time is a key decision taken by the migrant due to numerous reasons. Many governments and migration policymakers are primarily interested in assisted voluntary migration programs and also the mechanisms designed for the smooth reintegration of migrants back to their community. Preparation and implementation of effective return migration and reintegration policies are currently very difficult due to unavailability and scarcity of a sound evidence base database. The return migration in Potohar is accompanied by a large number of repercussions that can be broadly classified into physical, social and economic categories. The phenomenon of return migration started in the mid-1980s due to the unforeseen political scenario. It was more of an imposed situation where the migrants' did not return voluntarily but rather as a last option. The conditions back in Pakistan were full of unrest due to a crisis situation that emerged out of the political turmoil and resultantly an economic uncertainty. The returnees had to deal with a system affected by a political transition after a long martial law that had affected the institutions and the local economy was in shambles. The 30 million Afghan refugees had already seeped in taking the space of the migrants' especially in terms of petty jobs and availability of per capita food supply. From a macro level, if we squeeze our results to the micro-level, the social conditions were also affected badly.

Most of the migrants who get back are empty-handed, are barely skilled, not properly educated and have no plans of doing anything upon their return. The only hope that they have is that their native people and land will welcome them warmly. When the remittances sent in the past no more contribute to the national exchequer, the immigrants usually return with an environment of complete helplessness. They are unable to take up the past professions and the new opportunities are often alienated and saturated as well. This brings repercussions on the social life of the return migrants as well. The individual factors for return can be categorized in line with the IOM study on return migrants such as social factors, the conditions in the country of origin and policy interventions (Koser & Kuschminder, 2015). Out of these broader categories, some specified variables in decision making of the returnees were no right to work, inability to find a working opportunity, stay as an undocumented migrant, desire to reunite with the family in the land of origin, on prospects at home or if they feel they can be benefitted from an opportunity in voluntary return assistance by the family.

The primary concern raised by the research was the socio-psychological alleviation which proves devastating for the returnees. They are unable to accept everybody with reference to their past affiliation

or association, kin and ethnic-based relationships, due to the fact they had gained a relatively higher status in the society due to the foreign income and remittances sent back home (Iqbal, 2007). The society, even their own families on the reverse were equally repulsive of their return and do not appreciate their come back. The status of the returnees gets weak due to his inability to extend financial support to his fellow members that he was doing in the past. The family and the community do not tie their hopes with the returnee anymore. The returnees often disregard the affinities of their past and cut down their relationship to a few intimate relationships. Often these returnees face a state of isolation and left with no other choice than to adjust to the hostile environment.

The status of the returnee in his very family gets weak. He faces a kind of new identity issues; he is neither considered as an inmate nor a foreigner anymore. The very identity, however, does not deprive him of his national citizenry but, provides him with a complex new identity; which is termed here as neo-citizenry which is more connected to his identity in his land of origin than his rights as a citizen in the country of origin. However, a safe and secure environment is needed for his sustainable return. The focus of the study was on the individual factors of return based on the familial response upon the return of the migrant. There were cases with re-migration where the return could not be sustainable; the propensity to return is higher. Psycho-social support from the family of the returnee is crucial in his sustainable return and integration in the community.

Most of the cases of migration were male members of the family. Females usually migrated along with their male counterparts. The roles and responsibilities often change with the migration of the male family member. The responsibilities of the left-behind families are left with the females. The cases where men had to spend 15-20 years abroad, led the womenfolk to practice autonomy in familial decision making. Most of the women from the left-behind families were pretty empowered in terms of decision making in terms of finances, socialization, relationship, the decision on the education and marriage of their children etc. so much so, that the children learn to accept the maternal authority back home and they get obsessed with her. It became very difficult for the returning men to take their place within their own family since the gap was either covered by their women or their father or brothers who were made responsible for taking care of the needs of their families behind their backs. The returnees in this manner need a lot of psychosocial support from the entire family to adjust to the new value system that was formulated behind their back for enabling them a sustainable return.

From a critical perspective, what brings these migrants back home need to be addressed? They are being critiqued of a fluid identity that they wish to carry. A Conti-national or rather a transnational identity is what makes them contented. The fluidity of the very identity allows them to take whatever identity that benefits them, either an international citizen or a native citizen of the soil. They serve to be the patrons of their families left behind. The very patron-client relationship is only sustainable with the help of foreign remittances, once the funds are over; the relationships start to lose their meanings. Also, for these migrants or returnee migrants, their offspring are commodities. The commodities which could serve in reciprocal exchange; son for establishing ties with the family back home, the daughter in law could be taken from Pakistan, to serve as housemaid free of cost. The daughters as a commodity of attraction for these migrants, who could marry the men in their extended families and help them bring and settle abroad, several such endogamous marriages have occurred in Potohar especially with the Conti-nationals of UK. Often *watta satta* is also practiced, where at the expenses of one appropriate couple often the other is sacrificed due to inappropriate or unsuitable and unmatched marriages. These marriages are often lacking consent of the children especially from the immigrant families and lack of appropriateness in terms of the age difference between the partners, mental compatibility, educational and psychological compatibility and even the brought up, the standard of living and value system, they are often raised in entirely opposing cultural settings due to which they are en-cultured with a different set of norms and their adjustment with each other becomes very difficult. Who settles back and reintegrates is the often the male head of the family and his wife who are left with no other option than to get back to their native land in order to seek the companionship of each other and their family members since they are no more functional beings in the foreign world. But even then, the ones who

have the European nationalities at least visit these countries once a year for their medical insurance and social security benefits that they could avail of being the nationals of the foreign countries.

## **Conclusion**

The primary reason behind the return is not the land rather guided in its own way whereby people return back once they are not more functional citizens and get to be a burden on their families and the economy. It is the isolation that compels them to return to their land of origin. It is the collective identity of the east that attracts them back contrary to the individualistic identity of the west. The migrants returning from the UAE countries are already aware of their destination since they do not have any hope of new citizenship or permanent settlement abroad. But what brings the migrants back to reintegrate into their soil is the lack of opportunities they are left with. What is coined here is the term; neo-citizenry which is taken as a fluid concept for Conti-nationals and trans-nationals who sustain both their local and international identity to their use and they avail whatever lucrative opportunity comes their way.

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