The Socio-Economic Causes and Impact of Brain Drain on Chitral

(A Case Study of Bonni, Chitral, Pakistan)

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Abstract

Brain drain is an eminent consequence of globalization. It has many positive and adverse consequences for the place of origin and destination. This study aims to explore various causes and consequences of brain drain in Chitral, Pakistan. This study has been conducted in Bonni, Chitral, Pakistan. The research qualitatively studied the issue of brain drain in Chitral and purposive sampling has been used selection of samples from the population of interest. Data has been analyzed using transcription method and various themes have been developed. Findings show that there are various causes of brain drain in Chitral including low standard education, lack of health and communication facilities and lack of economic opportunities whereas the other districts are much better in the mentioned context. Besides, there are numerous consequences of brain drain for Chitral particularly including loss of skilled and intellectual individuals, increasing costs for availing facilities for general public and cultural loss. It suggested that schooling, communication should be improved whereas economic opportunities should be provided at local basis to minimize brain drain from Chitral.

Key words: Migration, Brain Drain, Push factors, pull factors
1.1 Background of the Study

De Haas (2009) defines the term brain drain as the international transfer of human capital resources. The term particularly applies to the movement of intellectuals and skilled from an area which underdeveloped. For example, it includes doctors, engineers, scientists and skilled labor and students who move for better opportunities. The situation worsens when these people do not return to their hometowns. Brain drain is one the key problems of the current globalized world.

The causes of brain drain are well explored by many research studies. For instance, the pre-eminent causes includes availing better and standard education; getting good job; lack of opportunities at hometown; and working in an area with better facilitation (Dzvimbo, 2003). There are positive as well as negative dimensions of brain drain. Research shows that often brain drain yields better results for the place of destination whereas have numerous negative consequences for the place of origin. In this regard, for example, the study of Beine, Docquier and Rapoport (2008) revealed that the brain has a positive effect on the human capital of migrant populations. The intellectuals, highly skilled and hard working individuals play a key role in the economic development of the place of destination. In addition to, these individuals are often source of remittances for the place of origin helping their respective families and as whole the community (see Office International Labour Market, 2011). Thereby, brain drain is many instances is the source of increase in productivity (for destination areas), and the source of economic assistance particular at micro level (e.g. familial level) for the places of origin (Kuptsch, 2012). In case of education, Haque and Kim (1995) argues that brain drain always have positive impact on the place of destination where it provides with more experience in education, addition of highly capable brains, increase in availability of individual to innovate etc.

However, on the contrary the study of Zaikai (2014) revealed that brain drain leads to unemployment for the locals at the place of destination. Ionescu (2014) further added that brain drain have significant adverse consequences for the place of origin. For instance, the loss of human capital, skilled and qualified individuals for certain jobs, losses in terms of investment in education, decrease in income tax, and the overall decrease in socio-economic development (Caritas Internationalis, 2012). More specifically, a survey conducted by Gallup (2007) enumerates that brain drain leads to many problems at the place of origin. For example, if a capable and intellectual student moves abroad to developed country and becomes a doctor and do
not return to the place of origin then it is a significant loss for the place of destination. In a similar context, the place of origin suffers from lack of skilled doctors, and such a situation can be considered for every sphere of life.

Furthermore, population loss at the place of origin and an increase in population at the place of destination is another key dimension of brain drain. Particularly, population loss (when skilled and young) leads to loss of work force at the place of origin. This results in shortage of skills in every sphere of life of and mismatch of skills leading to poor socio-economic conditions at the place of origin of brain drain. For example, the labor market, health sector and educational sector requires specific and specialized skills where brain drain leads to shortage of such individuals at the place of origin (Okólski and Anacka, 2010; Wilfried Martens Center, 2016).

1.2. Problem statement
Brain drain specifically affects developing world. It affects areas which lack facilities (e.g. educational, health and transport etc.), and in turn makes the situation worse as the intellectuals and skilled people do not come back to the place of origin of brain drain (Office International Labour Market, 2011; King, 2002). This means that causes and consequences of brain drain are linked with each other, for example, intellectual and skilled individuals migrate due to poor socio-economic conditions and it further worsens the situation. In this connection, this study aims to identify the causative factors of brain drain and its consequences for Chitral, Pakistan. Chitral is one of the remote and geographically isolated areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Chitral includes in areas of Pakistan with poorest socio-economic conditions whereby by brain drain is a key social dimensions affecting Chitral.

1.3 Objectives of the Study
The objectives of this study are given as:

- To find out various causes of brain drain in relevance to Chitral
- To explore the socio-economic impact of brain drain on Chitral

1.4. Research Questions
- What are the main push factors (e.g. economic, social, cultural and geographic) which forces Chitrals to migrate to other districts?
• What are the pull factors (e.g. economic, social, cultural and geographic) which encourage an individual or family to migrate from Chitral?

• What are the consequences of brain drain on Chitral including social, cultural, religious and economic consequences?

1.5. Methodology

This study is qualitative and cross-sectional. The universe of the study was Bonni, Chitral Pakistan. Purposive sampling technique has been adopted for selecting samples from the population. For example, keeping in view the purpose of the study, educated people having minimum education of Bachelor level were sampled as the educated people are well aware of the situation being researched. Further, an interview guide was designed in relevance to the current study in order collect information from the respondents. The interviews were transcribed and themes were developed in order to bring clarity and uniformity in presenting the information.

1.6. Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-demographic Information</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (in years)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-36</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 and above</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Qualification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profession</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government employ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private employ</td>
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<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows the age wise distribution of the respondents. 01(12.5%) respondent aged between 25-30 years. 4 (50%) respondent aged between 31-36 years whereas 3 (37.5%) were aging 37 and above years. Further, the table contains information about education
of the respondents whereby 2 (25%) of the respondents were educated up to bachelor. 4 (50%) respondents were educated up to master level while 2 (25%) respondents were highly educated e.g. M. Phil and PhD level. Furthermore, the table also contains information about the profession of the respondents. In this context, 5 (62.5%) respondents were government employees, 2 (25%) respondents were private employees whereas 1 (12.5%) were working in other capacity.

1.6.1. Thematic Analysis

1.6.1.1. Push and pull factors of brain drain from Chitral

Krugman and Obstfeld (1991) illustrates that any type of migration (including brain drain) is linked with numerous push and pull factors. Push factors prevail in the area of origin whereas pull factors are present in the area of destination. In this regard, first, push factors are very important. Push factors refers to the negative characteristics (e.g. socio-economic conditions) in the area of origin. With regard to brain drain there are many push factors which drives the intelligent students and skilled individuals to move to other districts of the area from Chitral. For example, majority of students move to other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan for school, college and university level education. Peshawar is the main destination for students of Chitral who want to attain standard and quality schooling and education. Information shows that Chitral lack quality education system. Chitral is geographically isolated area and their lack of schools particularly school which can provide quality and standard education as provided in the other districts of Pakistan. Schools and colleges of Chitral lacks qualified and skilled teachers as people do not prefer to be employed in Chitral. In addition to it, the infrastructure and lack of facilitation in schools and colleges of Chitral is a main push factor which compels intelligent and competent students of Chitral to move to Peshawar. It is also evident from field information that individuals who study from schools and colleges of Chitral are unable to compete with the students of other districts in university tests, tests for admissions in medical and engineering fields.

“….lack of good schools is major issue in Chitral. First, the number of schools is less, and second, the standard of schooling provided is very low....”

“....Schools and colleges in Chitral lag behind the schools and colleges of other districts. This primarily is because of the lack of facilitation and good teachers. Therefore, parents and students who are serious in studies tend to move to Peshawar....”
“….one of the key problems confronted by students of Chitral is competing with students of other districts. They often are unable to compete because of the low standard of education in Chitral. They are not thought by good and skilled teachers. As a result, parents always send their bright children to Peshawar and Islamabad for schooling....”

Job and economic opportunities are key determinants of socio-economic conditions of an area. Field information indicates that there is scarcity of job opportunities in Chitral, Pakistan. There is scarcity of land for agricultural land, no industries and private firms which can attract the inhabitants of Chitral to reside in Chitral. This also affects the perception of students and other skilled individuals as well. Students and skilled individual tends to move to other areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan whereby there are increased chances of employment i.e. employment which will make them earn more money. In this connection, few of extracts from interviews are:

“….the main economic reasons which I think are that there are no such earning opportunities in Chitral as compared to the lower districts or other countries and the other reason is that some people don’t want to work in Chitral may be due to some cultural reason or may be the level of the opportunities in Chitral is much lower in their thoughts....” (Ayub Kamal)

“….lack of economic opportunities and low wages for employed are the main reasons which forces people to migrate from Chitral.....” (Mukhtar Hussain)

Kainth (2010) is of the opinion that better facilitation is preeminent dimension of brain drain. Intellectual and skilled people want to reside in areas with better facilitation in order to use their skills for better living. Same situation has been found from the information collected for the current study. Bright students and skilled people of Chitral do not want to study or work in Chitral due to lack of facilitation poor quality of life. For instance, a respondent elucidated that:

“....look why should a bright student study in Chitral whereby he don’t have better living facilities. Studies require a life whereby one is relaxed and provided with facilities required....”

1.6.1.2 Geographic Reasons
Chitral includes in geographically isolated areas of Pakistan. It is far away from the major cities of Pakistan. In winters it remained cut from rest of the country for about four months leading to scarcity of food, health and other facilities in Chitral. Besides, Chitral is mountainous area and has an isolated geography and in winter the climate is very harsh due to this climate people partially migrates to other districts of Pakistan. Such a situation is very disturbing for the people of Chitral whereas many of the families try to avoid it. Field information indicates that many families particularly who are interested in the schooling and education of their children tend to stay permanently in cities such as Peshawar, Islamabad and Karachi. This leads to brain drain as well because of the fact that bright students stay in the mentioned cities and studies there. However, it is most important to mention that such students do not return to Chitral and prefer to stay in cities and work there. In this regard, few extracts are:

“….Chitral is located at the corner of Pakistan and no such route goes through Chitral which can lead to development. Due to geography we are underdeveloped as compared to other districts of Pakistan. Beside, the weather of Chitral is also responsible for lack of development in Chitral due to the fact that half of the year in Chitral is unproductive due to harsh climate.” (Basharat)

“I think geography significantly affects the rate of migration from Chitral. No intellectual person would like to live in isolated area and waste their time as unproductive so that they migrate from Chitral.” (Fathul Bari)

Due to harsh weather and unfavourable geography of Chitral the infrastructure is far below in quality as compared to other districts of the region. For instance, roads are dangerous, communication facilities are scarce, and the schools and hospitals are located far away from the majority of the population. This leads to lack of interest among teachers, health staff and to work in Chitral. Therefore, they tend to go to down districts (referring to Dir, Peshawar, Islamabad, Karachi etc.), study there and work there. A respondent stated that:

“….Infrastructure I think plays a pivotal role in migration or brain drain. When a student goes down district and be aware of the facilities which the people of the town availing and of which the people of Chitral are deprived the do not want to live in the deprivation they move to down districts....” (Muhammad Hussain)
1.6.2. Impact of brain drain on Chitral

Brain drain as mentioned above is the movement of highly skilled and educated and intellectual people from their home town or country to a more developed or more prosperous area in search of better standard of life or better economic and educational opportunities. Brain drain has negative impact on the area at the same time it has various positive consequences on the receiving area and on the life of the person who is migrating.

Loss of intellectual and skilled people is probably the most eminent impact of brain drain on Chitral. As mentioned in the above portion of analysis the capable and intelligent students and skilled people from Chitral studies or move for employment and work in other districts leading to scarcity of skilled people in Chitral. The impact is quite enormous as the students who move to other districts for studies often do not return to Chitral (due to scarcity of employment opportunities, low standard of life, harsh geography) hindering development of Chitral. For example, a bright student who become a doctor and does not return to Chitral will lead to scarcity of doctors in Chitral, and so is happening. A respondent stated that:

“….we have skilled and capable students but when they go to Peshawar, Islamabad or Karachi and complete their studies they do not return to Chitral. I met with many good doctors in Peshawar who are Chitrali but we don’t have good doctors in Chitral....”

Brain drain has various economic impacts for the place of origin which in this study is Chitral. Brain drain contributes to lack of economic development in Chitral. Educated, skilled and intellectual individuals are pivotal for economic development in any given place, and so in Chitral. However, brain drain results in shortage of such capable and skilled people as the skilled and capable individuals of Chitral do not return to Chitral. This result in scarcity of individuals fit for a particular work. Besides, for the locality and people of Chitral brain drain is quite a problem. For example, there are lack of good doctors and teachers in Chitral. Doctors and teachers other districts do not prefer Chitral whereas the capable and skilled doctors and teachers of Chitral also work in other districts and cities with better facilitation. This further worsens the situation whereby Chitralsi cannot avail better health facilities and schooling resulting in underdevelopment. A respondent stated that:
“...it is dilemma for us (mentioning Chitrali people) that our people work in cities and other districts and do not want to serve us. We have so much talent but we are not the benefited from it....”

This also increases the costs for availing health facilities and availing education for the people of Chitral. For instance, in case non availability of good doctors the people of Chitral has to go to Peshawar, Islamabad and Karachi which is quite costly. And often they consult with Chitrali doctors by going there. Similarly, Chitrali people have to send their children to other districts for availing good schooling which also is costly and which further accelerates the process of brain drain from Chitral. In this regard, an extract from an interview is:

“....we have to go to Timergara, Peshawar and Islamabad for treatment, and sometimes even for minor illnesses. It is quite costly. Besides, good Chitrali teachers work in other districts and there is no other way except sending our children to other districts for schooling and education....”

Cultural loss is another important impact of brain drain on Chitral. Chitral is known of multicultural and unique cultural values. Only in one district (Chitral) 11 languages are spoken. Besides, numerous religious identities prevail in Chitral including Kalash, Sunni and Ismalies. Brain drain affects the cultural identity of Chitral. It is evident that students who study in down districts

1.7. Conclusion and Suggestions

There are numerous push factors of brain drain in Chitral. These factors include in particular lack of quality education, lack of facilities (educational as well as health, communication etc.), lack of economic opportunities, and expecting undesirable future in Chitral.

Push factors of brain drain from Chitral includes extremely low standard of schooling and educational facilities such as lack of schools, lack of skilled teachers in schools, schools far away from homes and having no transport facilities etc. the economic opportunities in Chitral are rare and limited specifically considering opportunities for skilled educated individuals, and thereby parents tend to send their children to other districts to have bright future. The pull factors are multiple. Parents tend to send their children to other districts (referred as down districts in
Chitral) for schooling and further education because of the more advanced and better standard of education. Parents tend to send their children to down districts for availing better facilities while availing education such as infrastructural, health, transport and communication facilities. Besides, parents send to and are happy to send and allow staying their children for work in other districts because of better economic opportunities with better chances of having productive future.

With regard to consequences of brain drain on Chitral it is evident that brain drain from Chitral is leading to loss of skilled and capable individuals. This result in scarcity of individuals fit for a particular work such as provision of better education and health facilities. It further results in increasing the costs for availing health facilities and availing education for the people of Chitral. Cultural loss is another important impact of brain drain on Chitral. Chitral is known of multicultural and unique cultural values whereby brain drain affects the cultural identity of Chitral.

It is suggested that brain drain should be controlled by providing opportunities for people in their own area that they could develop themselves as well as could be helpful in developing their country, district or their home town. The key solution to minimizing brain drain from Chitral includes:

- Improving schooling in Chitral such as by constructing schools near residential areas, providing highly educated and skilled teachers in schools and colleges. This can be done by adding special incentives to salaries to attract highly educated and skilled teachers.
- Improving infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and communication facilities in Chitral.
- Efforts to increase economic productivity in Chitral. Efforts to improve agriculture and developed industries in Chitral in order to provide jobs to skilled and educated people within Chitral.
Bibliography/References


