

CROSS-BORDER MIGRATION: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF HUMAN MIGRATION

P. C. Lalthansiami

Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, North Eastern Hill University, Mawkynroh-Umshing, Shillong, Meghalaya, India

Received: 04 Aug 2020

Accepted: 10 Aug 2020

Published: 31 Aug 2020

ABSTRACT

Migration has maintained a close relation with mankind from its earliest stage. Because of the complexity of human life and fast changing socio- economic conditions, human migration is gaining importance day by day and has attracted the scholars of geography, social sciences, demography, economics and other related disciplines. This paper therefore, examines the various theories and laws of migration. In addition, the paper analyzes the various types of migration and shed light on importance of the study of human migration.

KEYWORDS: *Migration, Theories, Concept, Consequences, Push and Pull Factors*

INTRODUCTION

Migration is a universal phenomenon. Throughout history people have migrated from densely populated to sparsely populated areas, from less developed countries to developed countries, and from an insecure place to secure place. In most cases, human migration has occurred owing to natural catastrophes or calamities, upheavals, economic compulsion, political insecurity and torture Jerome D. Fellmann (2003). Today, every country is affected in some way by migration – either as country of origin, transit or destination, or sometimes a combination both. Presently, there are 272 million international migrants around the world; majority migrated in search of better economic and social opportunities. Others are forced to flee by war, conflict, generalised violence and human rights violation United Nation (2019).

Movement of population from one geographic location to another geographic location has significant effect on social, economic and demographic of both the source as well as the destination. There may be variety of reasons for population migration from one geographic setting to other. The whole variety of reasons why people decide to enter a new place and seek permanent or temporary resident may include fleeing from a war-torn place, escaping severe human rights violation and fear for their life and social security, or people may simply feel that they can have a better life and employment opportunities if they migrated to another places.

DEFINITION OF MIGRATION

There is no universal agreement on the definition and conceptualization of migration. While geographers have emphasized on the time and space significance of mobility, sociologists have laid stress on social consequences of mobility whereas importance to economic aspect of migration has been given by the economists. Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines migration as "the act, process, or an instance of moving from one country, place, or locality to another" According to many individuals, the simplest meaning of the word migration can be a simple movement from

one place to another. But it would be interesting to note that meaning of migration is change over time. Now-a-days, both the scope and definition of migration have become more complex i.e. only movement in physical state cannot define the concept of migration.

As mentioned above, there is no universal agreement on the definition and conceptualization of migration. Different scholars have defined migration on different terms. The views of different scholars provide us a clear picture of the concepts and approaches of human migration.

J. I. Clarke (1965) said, "There is no unanimity over the meaning of migration." Therefore, according to him the definition of human migration became inconclusive. G.J. Demko, H.M. Ross, G. A. Schnell (1970) definition of migration and typology is generally based on change of abode, journey of the migrants and natures of boundaries crossed. Everett S. Lee (1966) defined migration as a "permanent or semi-permanent change of residence." His definition does not include the temporary movement of people from one spatial unit to the other. S.N. Eisenstadt (1953) looks at migration as "the physical transition of an individual or a group from one society to another. This transition usually involves abandoning one original place of residence and entering another permanent settlement."

S. K. Mishra (1981) defines migration as an inflow or outflow of population from a defined region to another for permanent or semi-permanent settlement. He also gives prominence over the semi-permanent or permanent relocation of people from one geographical setting to the other. A.A. Weinberg (1961) considered human migration as the change of place permanently or temporarily for a particular duration of time.

B.N. Ghosh (1987) considered "migration as a change of place of settlement for a long and substantial period of time." The definition of human migration here implies giving up one's original place of residence and moving into another area for a substantial period. The temporary movement of people from one geographic area to another is not considered as migration. However the definition failed to state the number of years or stable period of time that can define permanent, semi-permanent or temporary form of human migration. According to Robin R. Baker (1980), "migration is the act of moving from one spatial unit to another." This definition of migration was widely accepted by a large number of branches of naturalists, social scientists, geographers, demographers and others.

The United Nation (1970) recommended the intended duration of stay of more than one year for permanent migration and one year or less for temporary migrants. The International Organization for Migration (2004) also defines migration as, "The movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a state. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification."

After evaluating the definitions of different scholars, migration can be defined as a permanent or semi-permanent relocation of persons or group of persons from one geographical setting to the other. The reasons for the movement may vary from migrant to migrant, the movement maybe due to human rights violations, torture, poverty, unemployment, war, ethnic conflict, natural disaster, environmental or hope for economic betterment but human migration does not include the temporary movement of tourist, religious pilgrim, students and movement for family unification, business meetings etc.

THEORIES OF MIGRATION

Although migration phenomena have been studied by social scientists, thinkers, reformers and others, the theoretical and empirical knowledge of migration has not developed to a considerable extent. Unlike physical laws, migration laws cannot be made rigid. Some hypothesis have been developed by social scientists and scholars, they have formulated a few theories and laws and have also suggested migration models. It was in 19th century that theories concerning migration flow and other processes related appeared.

E.G. Ravenstein(1885 and 1889) propounded the laws of migration on the basis of his analysis of migration flows across Europe and North America during the second half of the 19th Century as a result of the Industrial Revolution. According to Ravenstein, every act of migration involves a driving force. He emphasised that migration is guided by certain law or rules. His basic laws are given below:

- Migrants move mainly over short distances; those going longer distances head for the great centers of industry and commerce.
- Most migration is from agricultural to industrial areas.
- Large towns grow more by migration than by natural increase.
- Migration increases along with the development of industry, commerce and transport.
- Each migration stream produces a counter stream.
- Females are more migratory than males, at least over shorter distances; males are a majority in international migration.
- The major causes of migration are economic.

Many scholars are of the view that Ravenstein's statements are not universally applicable, for example: he emphasized on predominance of short distance migration but now- a- days because of the development of the transportation, communication as well as technology; long distance migration is more prominent than short distance movement. Again, Ravenstein's also failed to acknowledge the forced migrants; the reasons or factors that compelled the movement of forced migrants and voluntary migrants are very different. The Despite of all these criticisms, Ravenstein's laws of migration have proved to be of considerable stimulus because he has given simple statements about migration and migrants, where they come from and go to.

Everett S. Lee (1966) re-examined Ravenstein's laws on migration and proposed a different analytical framework for migration. In his view, the decision to migrate is determined by the following factors:

- Factors associated with the area of origin.
- Factors associated with the place of destination.
- Intervening obstacles such as distance.
- Physical barriers and personal factors.

Although Lee did not apparently invent or use the term 'push-pull' theory, his analytical framework is commonly called the 'push-pull' model. Lee's Push-pull theory divides factors causing migration into two groups of factors: Push and Pull factors are those factors which either forcefully push people into migration or attract them to an area of destination. Firstly, the pull factors include people's place of choice of destination, better employment opportunities, freedom or

security. Secondly, the push factor addresses the causes of migration, in which people are forced to migrate as a result of famine or drought situations, discrimination, poverty, human rights violations and the other. In Lee's model, there is also a set of 'intervening obstacles' which have to be overcome; examples are physical distance, expense of making the journey, cultural barriers such as language and eating habits and different ways of life, and political obstacles such as international borders and immigration policies and restrictions Russell King (2012).

Lee theory provides a clear framework for understanding the various push and pull factors that causes the migration of people into the North-Eastern states of India. For instances, several prominent immigrants in North-East including the Tibetans, Nepali, Bangladeshi, Chakmas, Brus, Chins and the Bengalis are encourage or push to leave their home or country due to several factors such as conflict, tension, widespread violence, massive violation of human rights, few opportunities etc. On the other hand they are pull towards North-Eastern states of India because of better opportunities, better living conditions, better education; better medical care, political and religious freedom and security etc.

Samuel Stouffer (1940) formulated his intervening opportunity model and claimed that there is no necessary relationship between mobility and distance. Stouffer theorizes that the amount of migration over a given distance is directly proportional to the number of opportunities at the place of destination, and inversely proportional to the number of opportunities between the place of departure and the place of destination. These intervening opportunities may persuade a migrant to settle in a place in the route rather than proceeding to the originally planned destination. Stouffer argued that the volume of migration had less to do with distance and population totals than with the opportunities in each location.

Another important theory called System theory was first offered by Alkin L. Mabogunje. This approach is formulated to answers questions such as: why and how does a person become an immigrant or refugee? What changes does he go through in the process of migration? What consequence does this change have on the sender and receiver states? Are there institutions or situations which force people to move from one geographical location to another? What is the overall pattern of these movements and how are they determined?

Alkin L. Mabogunje's (1970) pronounced the basic interacting element of system theory of migration. They are:

- The environmental setting: economic conditions, government policy and regulation, social and community values, and the availability of better transport and communications.
- A variety of information which creates 'propensity to migrate' or what is called 'migration elasticity' being transmitted to a migrant before he/she makes the desire to migrate.
- Within a migration framework, attention is focused not only on the migrants but also on the various institutions such as original and the host states and governments or sub-systems such as rural and urban administration and the political, social, economic and other relationships which is an integral part of human migration process.
- A control system or a sub-control system which supervises the operation of the general system and determines when and how to increase or decrease the amount of flow into the system. A control system may include family, community, collectivity group, national and local administration as well as various organizations within or outside the country.

- A migration system comprises not only matter such as the migrants, institutions and various organization but also energy. In the physical sense, energy particularly ‘potential energy’ is a body’s capacity of doing work by virtue of stresses resulting from its relation within with its environment or with other bodies.
- As soon as a person move from places to places, his role in the system is greatly amplified. Thus it is assumed that migrants soon start to transmit back to his origin information about his reception and status in the new place of resettlement.
- Feedback loops, such as return visits, which calibrate the system either to continue and expand (positive feedback) or to diminish and close down (negative feedback).
- Within a migration system framework, it is assumed that one of the concomitants will be the phenomenon of growth in the system. This phenomenon involves more than a simple growth or increase in the number of people moving from one area to another. It is much more complex, involving not only the individual components of the system but also the interaction between them and the system as a whole.
- The interaction between migrants and the system modifies the character of politics, economy, society, religion and population. The feedback role of migration between origin and destination transform both areas through the information exchange.

Wilbur Zelinsky (1971) the famous expert on population and migration also propounded a theory of migration. According to him migration and mobility patterns were expressed through a five-stage model, based on the historical experience of Europe:

- Pre-modern traditional society: very limited migration, only local movements related, e.g., to marriage or to marketing agricultural product.
- Early transitional society: mass rural-urban migration; emigration to attractive foreign destinations for settlement and colonisation.
- Late transitional society: slackening of both rural-urban migration and emigration; growth in various kinds of circulation, e.g. commuting.
- Advanced society: rural-urban replaced by inter-urban migration, mass immigration of low-skilled workers from less developed countries; international circulation of high-skilled migrants and professionals; intense internal circulation, both economic and pleasure related.
- Future super advanced society: better communication and transportation systems may lead to a decline in some forms of human circulation; internal migration is inter-urban or intra-urban; continued immigration of low-skilled labour from less developed countries; possibility of strict controls over immigration.

According to the world system theory, migration is an integral part of political system created through the expansion of European empire. The leading advocates of this theory are Hannah Arendt and Aristide Zolberg (1966). The theory assessed the fact that migration particularly contemporary refugee flows are rooted in the breakdown of the European colonies across the globe. The process of decolonization and the increasing number of nation states after 1945 contributed to the generation of massive migration flows. Unlike general population migration which is patterned by

economic factors, these refugee flows are patterned by political forces such as ethnic conflict, abrupt changes of regime, arbitrary government decision and international war. These forces are said to be the manifestation of political trends that are much likely to surface in the contemporary world.

The world system theory of migration therefore, provided a relevant concept for analysing the root cause of massive migration flow in India. For instances, the partition of India into India and Pakistan compelled thousands of Hindus of Pakistan and Muslim of India to migrate respectively to India and Pakistan. During and before the liberation of Bangladesh about ten million people migrated to India from the former East Pakistan. After the emergence of Bangladesh the migrants are repatriated, a large number of them stayed back and many sneaked into the Indo-Bangladesh border. The problem of migration persist even today due to the on-going human rights violation, insurgency and various internal disturbances as a result large number of Chakmas from Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh are found in the North-Eastern states of Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

TYPES OF MIGRATION

Migration has often been classified into various types on the basis of direction, space, legality, number, duration and cause. On the criteria of direction, migration can be classified as emigration or out migration, immigration or in migration and return migration. Legal or illegal migrants used legality as the criterion of differentiation. On the basis of number, migration may be individual or group. In terms of duration, migration can be differentiated as temporary, seasonal or periodic, semi-permanent and permanent migration. On the basis of the causes, there are two types which are voluntary and forced migration, and if forced migrants cross an international border they become refugees and if they remain within the borders of their own country they are internally displaced persons B. N Ghosh (1985). On the basis of space, migration can be classified as international and internal migration.

Internal Migration

This refers to a change of residence within national boundaries, such as between states, provinces, cities, or municipalities. Internal migration can be sub-divided into rural to urban, urban to urban, rural to rural and urban to rural

International Migration

Migration of people from one country to another is generally known as international migration. The term *emigration* (people moving out of the country) and *immigration* (people coming into the country for permanent settlement) are used to connote out-migration and in-migration across international borders. Since, international migration refers to the movement of people across national boundaries, it assume greater political and demographic significance and involves more administrative procedures, greater expense, and more difficulties associated with obtaining employment, accessing state services, learning a new language, and the like- the motivations behind international migration are usually stronger than an internal migrants P. K. Debbarma and Sudhir Jacob George (1993).

CONCLUSIONS

After having a detail discussion on the different patterns, types and concepts of migration, it has become clear that there are many factors that leads to migration of people from one location to another. Consequently, it also becomes clear that there are several underlying reasons that encourage people to migrate from their original habitat and settle into a new one. Cross-

border migration of people is not motivated by a single factor rather they people are encourage to move to another area because of the political, economic, social and environmental factor. Moreover, the in-migration and out-migration of people both changes the demography, society, politics, and economics of both the original palace of resident as well as the destination. Cross border migration sometimes create favorable conditions and some other time reverse of it. Above all, the civilization gets enriched due to the contribution of the migrants who integrate the origin and host nation and their in lies the greatest benefit of human migration. Migration, thus, is an important topic of analysis for social scientist.

REFERENCES

1. Debbarma, P. K., and Sudhir Jacob George (1993). *The Chakma Refugees in Tripura*. New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, pp. 4-8.
2. Demko, G.J., Ross, H.M. Schnell, G. A., *Population Geography: A Reader*, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, pp. 7-8.
3. Eisenstadt, S. N, "Analysis of Patterns of Migration and Absorption of Immigrants," *Population Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Nov., 1953), pp. 167-180.
4. Fellmann, Jerome D., AuthurGetis and Judith Getis, *Human Geography*, New York: The McGraw Hill, 2003, p. 84.
5. Ghosh, B.N, *Fundamentals of Population Geography*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1985, pp. 37-38.
6. Ghosh, B.N., *Fundamentals of Population Geography*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishing Pvt. Ltd, 1987, p. 34.
7. *International Organization for Migration, International Migration Law: Glossary on Migration*, Switzerland: International Organization for Migration, 2004, p. 41.
8. Lee, Everett S., "A Theory of Migration," *Demography*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1966, pp. 47-50.
9. Lee, Everett S., "A Theory of Migration," *Demography*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1966, pp. 52-55.
10. Mabogunje, A., "Systems Approach to a Theory of Rural-Urban Migration," *Geographical Analysis*, Vol. 2 (1), 1970, pp. 1-18.
11. Merriam-Webster's dictionary, *Definition of Migration*. Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/migration>, accessed on 23rd January, 2019.
12. Mishra, S.K, *Factors and Process of Migration in Developing Economy*, in Mandal, R.B,(ed.), *Frontiers in Migration Analysis*, New Delhi: Concept Publishing House, 1981.
13. Ravenstein, E. G, "The Laws of Migration," *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 48, No. 2, June, 1885, pp. 167-235.
14. Ravenstein, E. G., "Laws of Migration," *Journals of royal Statistical Society*, June, 1889, pp. 241-305.
15. Robin R. Baker, *A Mystery of Migration*, London: Macdonald Publishers, 1980, p. 3.
16. Russell King, *Theories and Typologies of Migration: An Overview and a Primer*, Sweden:Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare, 2012, pp. 13-15.

17. Stouffer, Samuel, "Intervening Opportunities: A Theory Relating Mobility and Distance," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 5, 1940, pp. 845-867.
18. United Nation, "The number of international migrants reaches 272 million," 17th September, 2019.
19. Available at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/international-migrant-stock-2019.html>, accessed on 14th October, 2019.
20. United Nations, Department of Economics and Social Affairs, *Methods of Measuring Internal Migration, Series-A, Population Studies*, No. 47, New York, 1970.
21. Weinberg, A.A., *Migration and Belonging: A Study of Mental Health and Personal Adjustment in Israel*, Hague: MartinusNihoff, 1961, pp. 265-266.
22. Zelinsky, Wilbur, "The Hypothesis of the Mobility Transition," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 61(2), 1971.
23. Zolberg, Aristide, "Formation of New States as a Refugees-Generating Process," in Robin Cohen (ed.), *Theories of Migration*, Cheltenham: Edward Eigar Publishing Ltd, 1996, pp. 282-296.