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Introduction

Migration can be defined as a condition where people move from one place to another for the purpose of taking a permanent or a temporary residence which usually happens across political boundaries. Migration can therefore be permanent or semi permanent. It is process, a movement and an observable phenomenon.

Season migration can be termed as seasonal reallocation of people from one area to another which usually happens due to a reason. For example there can be seasonal movement of labourers from one region to another which usually happens due to constraints in labour in their present location and therefore many would opt to move to areas where they can find labour. On the other hand permanent migration involves a permanent relocation to other areas which may be due to acquisition of new land or other factors. In this case one moves away from their areas of residence with all their belongings and have no intention of coming back to that area again.

People migrate for a reason. As we have said migration is a phenomenon and there must be a cause that is actually leading to the happening of that phenomenon. People cannot just wake up one day and decide to migrate. In many instance people usually migrate to escape a calamity or they migrate in order to find fertile grounds than where they are currently living.

People can move voluntarily or they can be forced to move out. Voluntary migration happens when individuals chose to move from their area of residence based on their own reason. On the other hand, forced migration happens when individual is forced to move from their current area of residence due to some reasons like wars or due other natural calamity.

On the scales of migration, there can be intercontinental migration which happens between continents, intercontinental migration which happens between different countries in the same continent, and there can be interregional migration which happens within a country. In this regard rural to urban migration has been one of the highly practiced forms of rural to urban migration.

Internal migration involves moving to a new home in a state a country or a continent. External migration involves moving to a new home in a different state, country or continent. Emigration refers to leaving one country and moving to another. Immigration is moving to a new country and therefore those people will be highly referred to as immigrants.

There are various reasons which have been advanced to explain why people migrate. These reasons are varied and as we expounded before many people can migrate as a result of their own will or due to the reason that they have been forced to migrate. Therefore based on the reason why people we can say that most of those who migrate voluntarily are those who see better life in the places where they are migrating to as compared to the current life that they are living. Under this example we can have those people who secure employment in other countries and move to those countries permanent or semi permanent. However most of those people who migrate out of being compelled do so not due to their will but to bad conditions that are prevailing in their present location. Therefore they are trying to escape some calamities of sort.

Therefore the factors at work on the issue of migration are the push factor and pull factor. Push factor can be explained by compelled or forced migration where individuals are forced out of their homes due to certain calamities. For example due to war, most people migrate from their homes to other areas where they feel more safe and secure. On the other hand the pull factor happens when individuals are where they are attracted by something to a place and

therefore they decide to migrate to those areas in order to enjoy those attractive factors. In the two factors most people will migrate due to factors that are associated with the environment, political, economic and cultural issue.

History of immigrants in the US

One of the countries in the world that has a rich history of immigrants is the United States of America. Since it was discovered the US has been receiving external immigrants and today they make a big proportion of the US population. Even though the foreign immigrants have always been making about 16% of the US population, there is a considerable number of foreigners living in the United States. There has been increased migration in the states since 1675 when there was a highlight of the prospect of new economic and agricultural activities in the New Land as it is referred to. Immigrants in the country have been a major source of population growth and change of the cultural of the people of America. America today is a world of no culture but a mixture of cultures. There have been many controversies in the state regarding the economic, political and social life of the immigrants as regards factor of ethnicity, religion, economic benefits, settlement patterns; social class mobility, levels of involvement in crimes and other factors which continue to surround the immigrant population. According to the 2006 figure, the United States has more number of immigrants in the world as compared to other countries with a total number of 37.5 million immigrants. Let us look at how the immigrants have been making their way to the states since the new land was discovered. (Ernest, 1999)

The first wave of immigration to the United States came in 1600s and peaked before the revolution war in 1775. This wave brought the colonialist mainly from European countries. There were many settlers from England, France, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal, and other

countries. There were many reasons why all the people from different European nations were migrating to the United States. Some came voluntarily but majority of them came due to many negative events that were happening in Europe at that time. There was a great agrarian problem at the time which made most of the people to move to the new land in search of foods and other opportunities. Others were fleeing from the religious persecution at the time. By then the Roman Catholic was growing strong and there were strict codes of living according to the doctrines of the church. Therefore many people sought to flee to the new land where they would find much freedom of worship and economic opportunities. It has also been shown that many of the immigrants were also convicts who were being transported from the England jail. While colonialist came for adventure in the new land, there was also a wave of migration of slaves who came as indentured servants. They worked for four to seven years for their master in order to repay the ticket fare. At the time there was also increased immigration of blacks from West Africans who came involuntarily and were mainly recruited to do forced labour in the farms. The first Africans were brought to America as indentured servants but were later turned to slaves. West African blacks captured slaves in war and traded them to Europeans for goods. During this period there was low immigrant of the Europeans but there was increased migration of immigrants from Germany, Ireland and Scotland. Most of these immigrants at the first wave arrived through Philadelphia which served as the main port of immigration. (Brant, 1999)

The civil war in Europe and America in the 1700s and 1800s slowed the immigration to America. However there were a small number of immigrants who were fleeing from Ireland due to English rule and others from France due to French Revolution. The congress had already made it illegal to bring in slaves by 1808 but by then there were about 375,000 black Africans imported as slaves.

The second wave of immigration began 1820 and continued till 1870. During the second immigration, there were more than 7 million people who entered America. Nearly all the new immigrants came from northern and western Europe. A third of them were Irish who were escaping from a potato famine that occurred in Ireland in 1840s. About a third of the immigrants were Germans who had enough money and they made their journey straight to the Midwest looking for farmland. Therefore most the immigrants from Ireland who came at this time stayed with their relatives since they did not have money to start up economic activities. During this time also the United States had started to realise the economic benefits of the settlers and it sent a delegation to European countries to attract more settlers. There was improvement in the infrastructures as railway companies improved their services. The discovery of Gold in California reached China at there was inflow of Chinese immigrant across the Pacific to the new land. However they were sojourners who were temporary immigrants and intended to make money and return back to their own countries. At this time the native Americans were starting to feel the economic pinch of the increased flow of immigrant and the American party began to make calls to have laws which were aimed at reducing the flow of immigrants to the nation. The party also demanded for law that made it difficult for the immigrants to become citizens of the land. In 1875, the United States passed its first immigration restrictive law which prevented convicts and prostitutes from entering into its soil but California demanded to be allowed to keep most of the Chinese immigrants.

The third wave of immigrants into the country took place between 1821 and 1920. During this wave there were about 23 millions new immigrants who made their way to the United States. This time the immigrants came from all over the world. There were new immigrants from the southern and eastern Europe.

This brought concern among the American natives who saw that the flooding of people in their soil was a threat to the unity of the nation. Hostility that had been advanced against the Chinese immigrants now boiled over the Jew, Roman Catholics, Japanese, and to all the new immigrants in the country. In 1882 the conger passed a Chinese Exclusion Act which prohibited al the Chinese labourers from entering into the United States. There was also expansion of the list of immigrants who could not be allowed to the country. Apart from convicts and prostitutes, people like beggars, contract labours, mental ill people and the unaccompanied minors were not allowed to enter into the country. In 1917 a law was passed with required all the adult immigrants to the country to show that they could read and write. The congress in 1921 came up with a law which limited the number of people who could enter into the untied states. The quota limited immigrants from any country made up to 3 percent of the foreign born people. The immigration act was put into force in 1927 and it limited the number of immigrants who could entre the country from outside to 153,700 every year. There was also lifting o f the ban on the number of the Chinese immigrants who could be allowed to enter into the country.

The fourth wave of immigrants took place in from 1965. There was the fourth wave amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act which ended the quotas of those who could be allowed in the United States based on the nationality. The amendment put the ceiling on the number of those who could be allowed at 170,000 from the Eastern Hemispheres and 120,000 from the western hemispheres. The act came up with the preference system based on Visas which favoured allies of the US and those with special skills. In 1978 the two western and eastern hemispheres were replaced with a single quota of 290,000 immigrants. From this amendment there was a change in the pattern of immigrants as immigrants from Europe, Canada, and Central America dropped sharply. There were increased immigrants from Asia and West

Indies. Since then there has been increased immigrants from other countries like china, Haiti, South Korea, Cuba, and other which were originally barred from entering the US. (US Census Bureau, 2008)

There has also been the establishment of border patrol which are aimed at restring illegal immigrants in the county. One of the repercussions of the legislations that were enacted is that there has been increased flow of illegal immigration in the United States especially from the neighbouring countries like Mexico and other Southern American nations. By 1988 there were more than 3 million illegal immigrants and the number has continued to rise.

Contributions that immigrants have made to the U.S. ranging from economic; agricultural; culture; entertainment; food - and why it is important to the U.S.

Since they started arriving in the US, the immigrants have made a lot of positive and negative contribution to the country. It has been said the America is what it is today due to the contributions of the immigrants since they started arriving to the new land. However the Native Americans have not been in agreement with the notion that immigrants have been an integral part of making a rich America both in culture and in other aspects. In 1891, Walker Francis who was a well known statistician in the land asserted the “immigrants to the US have not added to the population but instead they have merely driven down the birth rate of the Native American and they have thus replaced a superior with an inferior racial stock.” According to Walker, the new comer had made a lot of negative contribution to the social and economical life of the native America. He postulated that the poor living condition of the immigrant especially those who had settled to work as slave shocked the native born American and there they were discouraged from producing offspring that would end up living the same kind of life as others. Apparently they assumed that the native thought that the immigrants had come to American due to population

pressure in their land. Though we can say that there was reduced population growth of the natives, this can be attributed to industrial competition with the immigrant had provided which was the real cause of the checked population in case in the native born American people. However in 1940 the postulation of Walker was challenged by Walker Wilcox who was a known demographer by asserting that “the apparent uniformity in the rate of growth before 1850, upon which Walker rested his theory, disappears as soon as the different parts of the country are studied separately”. This means that Walker has assumed that the rate of population growth was apparently uniform in all the areas. However it was evident that there was different rate of population growth in different parts of the country.

In 1953, President Harry Truman who is one of the presidents who is credited with having taken step to study the issue of immigrants set up a commission which revealed that there were several positive contributions of the immigrants in the country. This commission apparently focused on the impact of the negative impacts which were due to the restrictions of the immigrants in the country. The Truman commission suggested that the restrictive immigration legislation which had been put in place in 1920s was one of the factors that had contributed to Great Depression. There was a widespread belief from many economists who asserted that the legislation was one of the factors which had contributed to the problem of the Great depression despite the difference in time of 10 years between the two occurrences.

Since the implementation of the legislation it was observed that there was decreased birth rate of the native and the growth of economy had slowed down. Therefore the report from the commission suggested that lifting the restriction on the immigrants would come with positive economic benefits as opposed to the state of restriction

Economic contribution

One of the greatest contributions that the immigrants have made to the history of America has been economic contribution to the welfare of the land. Since they started coming to the land, they have contributed in special way to the economic development of different states and in a different way.

There earliest European settlers in the land started farming activities which apparently became the turning point of the American economic system. European settlers settled in the land and stabled large scale farms where they grew sugarcane and other agricultural production. As a result there was rise of agrarian economy which was the base for the current economic system that the united states are enjoying.

Most of the immigrants who came at that time were coming to exploit economic opportunities in the land. As a result there were increased entrepreneurial activities wherever the immigrants settled. For example the earliest Jewish immigrants in the US were responsible for the establishment of different business. They were able to create economic systems and well positioned supply of raw material in the industry and other businesses. The earliest reports that had been written on the contribution of the immigrants like the Truman Report showed that the Great Depression could be directly attributed to the restrictions that had been placed on all immigrants. Apparently the immigrants like those from Germany and other nation were coming with a lot of money which they invested in American making it richer and boosting the growth of the economy. (Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, 2003)

Like the modern china which has an economy built on the investment by the foreigner, American has undergone through the same process in its history. Though there were neo-economists who could have referred it as Foreign Direct Investment or the FDIs which are the

drivers of the modern economy like in china, the immigrants were coming with a lot of money which as invested in the country and which enabled the growth of the American economy.

Even up to date there has still been increased flow of immigrants in the country who come to invest in the land. The economic contribution of the immigrant cannot be ignored as it has been one of the most factor that has contributed to the development of the modern American economic system.

According to research that was done at University of California at Berkeley in 2006, it showed that 25% of all the engineering and science companies in America were founded by at least one or many immigrants. The same reports showed that immigrants found venture backed companies are all connection in cutting edge sector in the high technology manufacture information technology and in life sciences. The same report also showed that 40% of all the companies in the USA with are publicly traded venture backed companies which operates in manufacturing technology have been started by immigrants. Most of the immigrants have been found to have been entrepreneurs. A research by Susan Pearce found out that 8% of all immigrant women were business owner compared to 6% of the native women. There have been tremendous increase in their business since 1980 with more emphasis on the service industry where most of their operations in private household, day care centres, restaurants, and in several other services. (Illinois Coalition for immigrant and refugees rights, 2003)

Contribution to labour

It is to be found out that many of the immigrants assisted America not only with their labour but in several other ways. The rate at which the America economy was growing was so fast such that it was difficult for the American natives to handle it alone. Therefore they needed to have an input of the outsiders in order to provide labour for the economic system. It is to be

understood that the economic system of the time was labour intensive rather than technological intensive. There're the immigrants were need in order to provide the much needed labour. In its early days of development, America was marked by large sugar plantation which apparently used human labour. Slaves from West Africa and other areas of the world were taken in as slave to provide labour in these sugar plantations. Apparently Native American alone could not have provided enough labour to meet the labour demand of these plantations.

Therefore one of the greatest contributions that the immigrant made to America was in provision of labour. This was not only in the labour in the farms but there was also contribution in the areas of special skills. When the legislation was passed to show that one could read and write were allowed to migrate to the land, there was decreased flow of inexperience labour and at the same time there was increased flow of skilled labour. As a result there was movement of more skilled labour in the United States who contributed positive to the development of the economy.

Even up to date the country has been able to tap in skilled labour into the country. In this regard the country has been able to attracted most skilled labour using the green card. This skilled labour has been of great use to the country since it has been able to cut an upper hand in technological development as compared to others.

Political Contribution

However there were other areas that the immigrants contributed to the life of the American people and to the country in general. If we take the example of Germans who were among the first wave of immigrants, we will find they are credited with the election of Lincoln to his firs term in office. This means that they made a lot of contribution to the political life of American. The Germans are also credit with having helped to keep Missouri in the Union despite

the many secession leanings at the time. The Germans are also credit with having helped to mature the democracy of the land.

Immigrants have continued to play a crucial role in the American history. There has been development of great immigrant politician who have made positive impact to the development of the political systems of the country. People like Martin Luther King are known to have been hard working civil activist who strived to ensure that there was growth of justice and democracy in the land. In the current political set up, the political arena has Barack Obama who is a son of immigrants in the battle for American presidency. Therefore the immigrants have been contributing positively to the economic system of the world and therefore they continue to make a more positive contribution to the political system of the land.

Social contribution

Since the immigrants arrived in the land, they have been making more positive contribution to the growth of the land. As such the immigrants have been influencing the social life of the people and it will continue to influence it. One of the most common characteristics of the social influence of immigrants in America has been the changes that they have made in the neutralisation of culture of the people.

Once the immigrants arrived they came with their own culture and social practices. In this regard, their culture had also of influence on the life of the people. There have been also of influence on the culture of the people and the social practices. The integration of the immigrant culture and the culture of the native brought about a hybrid culture which was more superior and acceptable to others.

The impact of this social influence is even felt date. There has been increased spread of American culture in the world. The American culture has spread and has become acceptable in all

part of the world this has been due to the fact that American culture has been spread through globalisation to all parts of the world. In a way it has acted as the standard guiding culture in the world.

The immigrants have also contributed a lot to the social security fund. There have been increased contributions to the social security fund in the country on mostly for those who are in formal employment. The government has recorded that legal immigration has been making a valued contribution to the nation.

Contribution to education

There have been a lot of contributions that has been made in the education by the immigrants. As they settled in their new farms, immigrants made roads and other modes of transport for the agricultural products. But these roads did not only contribute to the development of the economic systems but it also saw entry of new education system in the land. In the 1800s, there was increased flow of immigrant to the land and they came with a lot of contributions to the education welfare of the country.

Immigration today

Today United States is one of the places in the world that continue to attract a lot of immigrants. The green card program has been successfully used by the government to bring in more immigrants but this time it is very selective and only the immigrants who can contribute to the welfare of American are allowed to enter. The government has been issuing green cards to the respective workers who it feels it needs. In this regard it has been invited in the import of key skill relevant to the development of its economy.

People still holds the “American dream” that was popular in the 1800s when most of the people flocked to the states. It is claimed that “America is the only land where you can enter

without anything and go home rich". This has been influenced by the model of the economy which is driven by skilled and competent workforce made up of a mixture of different people. The economic fortunes and a highly living standard are some of the things that continue to attract more people to the United States. The practice of principles of democracy where one feels free in a foreign land has also been another attractive factor to the United States. American has been offering home and refuge to most of the people who have been displaced from other war torn and oppressive regime region. Apparently the end of the cold war and the rise of America in the early 90s as the only superpower in the world brought about the new world order. As such America got an opportunity to intervene in most of the matters in the world and therefore it assumed the role of a superpower. Every one wants to go to the country and experience the power that defines its superpower status. The power is defined in its economy and in its people. You will find people who love their country and works hard to achieve the American dream.

These are but some of the reasons that have continued pulling people to the United States. The pull migrant has been happening since the land was discovered and it still continues. It has been shown that despite the terror attack in American in 2001 which tainted the ability of America to be the world superpower, there has been increasing applicant of green cards to the continent of dream. This means the pull factors for immigrants to the United States may continue for along time despite the negative effects of its political class. One of the negative effects that have been advanced against the United States has been the kind of interventions that it has been making in the world. Since 1750s America has intervened in most of the situation in the world where some has helped it while others have had negative impacts on its image. It has been claimed that the United States has been playing the role of a superpower as a bad boy and has been making all manners of intervention which are not necessary. In this history the United

States has been involve in bombing other countries and also in forcefully removal of people elected governments. One of it most criticized intervention has been on Iraq and Afghanistan the war against terror. Eventually the dream of installing a democratic regime in Iraq has failed and the war is far from over. In Afghanistan in has not achieved its dream and the war is still on. This shows that America has in its history made a lot of unjustified intervention leading to massive loss of life and property. (Hanson, 2005)

But why does America need the immigrants for its development?

As we have seen, immigrants are not a bunch of people who come waster our resources and to occupy our lands. They may be bringing in competition with the natives which is actually health for a growing economy but one of the most important things to understand here is that they bring in a lot of resources and entrepreneurial skills that have contributed to the development of the United States. Most of the immigrants who come to America are led by genuine reasons to come and prospered in this land. They come with a dream to perform and excel. They have been responsible for most of the technological industries that are driving the American economy. They learn the American dream on hard work. Apparently the pull migration factor has been so much leaned on entrepreneurial skill and job opportunities. From the earliest Greek and Jews immigrant who started chain supply and the rich Germans who came with a lot of money to invest, immigrants have been highly entrepreneurs. Their contribution to the labour force in the land cannot be disputed and they have been making some of the most important contribution to the need for specialized skills in this land. (Hamilton and Abraham, 2006)

It is still argued that there is need to mould a better America in the world is yet to be achieved. This has been due to the fact that there are still constrain that have been experience in

making a better free America where all people can integrate and live as one. Our economy has not been able to achieve the dreams. The social service sector has not been able to attain the dreams of free and united America. The health care system has not achieved the required dream. We still have more miles to go and we need the immigrant to achieve this. We still need their contribution to achieve this economy.

It has been shown the over the next 75 years, new legal immigrant will contribute more than \$611 billion in the economy through the charge on the social security system. It has been showed that the improvement or even maintaining the current level of legal immigrants in the united states would aid the country to achieve some of the dreams that it has not achieve like in the social security system. This is because legal immigrant contributes a large proportion of the charges which can be distributed to the natives who are not heavily charged as the immigrants. However there have to be reforms in the immigration to ensure the United States attracts highly skilled workers who would not lead to an increase in the level of low skilled workers in the job market which has been one of the factors that have been constraining the labour market. But this would only be achieved if there are working laws on the illegal immigrants in the country. The United States should realize that it is the hands of the immigrant who made it and therefore should be maintained. (Anderson, 2005)

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