

Migration and Environment: A Sociological Appraisal

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Abstract

The two variables mutually affect each other. Since the 1950s, due to a gradual increase of population, especially in Asia, population mobility has started. Increasing population with special reference to Asia has affected internal geography, and to a lesser extent the external geographies. While many rural residents migrate to cities, overpopulating them; affecting urban culture, some have undertaken external migration to other countries. The spread of migration affects the environment in various ways. In addition to its economic consequences, migration has also had environmental consequences in recent decades. Migration density has also led to rising prices for consumer goods, housing, increasing slums and the like. Countries like India is currently facing over 30 million slum-dwellers. Target points being affected by the excessive immigrant population, also face many social security cases. However, urban sociologists and environmentalists need to pay attention to the outcome of this movement. Because of migration, many challenges related to environmental degradation are also observed in rural and urban areas. Advances in communications and transportation of various types have increased migration in an unprecedented manner. However, the environmental impact of migration flows will increase even more in the years to come due to further spread of electronic accessibility and quality of life differences in the country of origin, and the destination.

Key words: Increase of population.
Technological advances. External migration.
Migration density. Environmental degradation.

Introduction

Globally speaking, an estimated 272 million population of the world lived outside their country of birth in 2019; that is about 3.5% of the world's population (IOM, 2020). Most moves are local and occur over short distances from rural to urban areas. Asia-wise, the Chinese population living in urban areas rose from 19% in 1980 to 60% in 2019 due to a rapid increase in rural to urban migration (UN, 2018). Migration usually happens because of a "push and pull process". Mobility is the highest within individuals between their late teens and early 30s as they leave their parents' homes to attend college/university, find jobs, get married etc. (Andrew, 2018). As estimated, net migration rate among high income countries is reported plus 3 (WPDS, 2020).

While migration is a phenomenon with a long history, at the same time its nature has gradually changed in terms of volume and composition. During the last two centuries, and especially since the 1950s; That is, since different societies have gained more access to transportation, the scope of migration, its volume and composition have also changed. This means that more young people have migrated with more goals and expectations. While this trend continues, its composition has also changed. Whereas in the past immigration was usually done by men, today women are doing the same. The spread of migration affects the environment in various ways. In addition to its economic consequences, migration has also had health and environmental consequences in recent decades. Whereas in the past, migration density led to rising prices for consumer goods, housing, and the like, today this consequence is also related to social health and the environment.

The excessive increase of the immigrant population to its "target" points also affects social security in many cases. Therefore, urban sociologists and environmentalists must always pay attention to the consequences of this movement. Following the emergence of the global village and the increase in opportunities for many people around the world, many challenges related to health and environmental degradation are also present. The unification of the world in terms of social relations, facilities and services under the influence of the media, has led to the emergence of a scenario of loss of environmental health. Therefore, urban and environmental sociologists should always look for the necessary solutions in this field; otherwise, human security

is exposed to many dangers. During migration, young people make high-risk trips more than any other group for a variety of reasons, from war to unemployment in their communities; with the hope that they will find their way to the greener pastures of western societies, to better job opportunities, security and the like (GMG, 2011).

Method of Research

The methodology used in the present article is of qualitative type in that, various paradigms have been used to find out about the facts regarding pandemics during history. Qualitative research usually studies people, events or areas in their natural settings. In finding facts for the research, the researcher engaged in careful data collection and thoughtful analysis of what was relevant. In the documentary research applied for the present work, printed and written materials were widely regarded. The research was performed as a qualitative library-type in which the researcher had to refer to the relevant and related sources. In the current research, various documents were thoroughly investigated, and the needful inferences were made. The data fed by the investigator in the present article is hopefully reliable. Though literature on pandemics is very limited, yet the author tried to investigate many different resources in order to elicit the necessary information to build up the text.

Global migration patterns

Technological advances in communications, transportation, speed and frequency have increased migration more than ever before. Many people today also target long distances to migrate. New means of communication have made distances very insignificant. This movement causes the cultural transfer from one region to another to occur in a large and extensive way. This movement ultimately affects the environment as well.

This phenomenon is seen in many developing countries today. It is noteworthy that in the coming years, the environmental impact of migration flows will increase even more. Therefore, sociologists, demographers, and environmental experts must subsequently consider the future of the phenomenon. Today, this situation generally affects less developed countries.

Reducing transportation costs worldwide has led to their further increase and frequency. For example, with an average salary of one month, even for an unskilled worker, his trip will take place within a day or two. The increase in vehicles, the increasing competitiveness of such vehicles, the income situation of many people in the points of origin, and the facilities of such vehicles, have provided the ground for increasing migration; In such a way that very long distances, as mentioned, are done at the cost of about a month for an average worker, more or less within two days or less. Therefore, today the probability and frequency of migration is more than ever in the past. Hence, there is a very close relationship between migration and the environment. According to this hypothesis, environmentalists must always predict the future of their communities as far as migration is concerned; otherwise, they will face more environmental crises in the future. For example, the number of

international migrants has increased from about 75.4 million in 1960 to 190.6 in 2005 and more than 230 million in 2013. That is a phenomenon that has played an effective role in the destruction of the environment. In general, international migration is now seen as a symbol of globalization. It is a sign of growing global dependence (GMG, 2014).

It is not only the flow of migration that is increasing, but also its composition has taken on a different form. Nowadays, in addition to young age groups who migrate, women also migrate far and near in different countries. At the same time, while in the past migration generally took place from less developed countries to industrialized countries, today it is also the destination of many non-industrialized migrants. For example, a significant proportion of young people from East Asian, South Asian, and African societies migrate to oil-rich countries in the Persian Gulf region. In general, in order to earn a living, these conditions have largely exposed the destination countries to various environmental health risks. Population density in urban areas, as well as the collision of different cultures with each other in destination areas creates social and environmental challenges.

Historically, Europe has previously accounted for the flow of international migration. Today, however, the major share of international migration (63%) is allocated to movements in developing countries. Following the cultural and educational changes in developing countries, extensive migrations are taking place within these countries today. On the other hand, the aging of the population and the shortage of manpower in the industrial world have been effective in creating and facilitating such migrations. Changing the age structure of the population will eventually lead many countries to accept foreign immigrants, despite their wishes and desires; simply because they use their skills and abilities as human resources. This situation is clearly seen today in Western Europe and North America. In addition to these countries, Japan, in Asia, due to the aging of its population, today inevitably supplies part of its manpower from other countries. This phenomenon brings many challenges and shortcomings for the host countries.

International migration

According to the International Organization for Migration, about 20 percent of the normal migration, which involves the movements of 20 to 30 million people worldwide, has been outlawed. The increase in the young population, the lack of response to the diverse needs of that population, the lack of the necessary beds in the countries of origin or birthplace, as well as the many obstacles along the way, each play a role in increasing illegal immigration. Today, a significant proportion of young people in Africa, Asia and Latin America are migrating illegally to other countries. These movements, which are generally unregistered, also affect the environment in various ways. At the same time, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2013 called on the GMG, or Global Migration Group, to transform youth migration from challenge to opportunity (UN, 2013).

Illegal immigrants, who generally live unregistered on the outskirts of the city, themselves cause environmental pollution, many social perversions, abnormal (antisocial) behaviors, and the like. This problem is present in most of the target societies (industrialized countries) today. Therefore, countries of origin should take such measures; that is, to provide employment and security for young people, to reduce illegal immigration. Today, in countries like the United States, more than 10 million illegal immigrants have been reported, mostly from developing countries and young people, both men and women.

Such migrations themselves are known to be the cause of the spread of many diseases. Many African migrants who cross into other countries illegally and uncontrollably carry AIDS and other diseases; That is, a situation that certainly affects the target community. Thus, the transmission of diseases by the population of illegal immigrants is widespread today. The gender composition of immigration reflects the fact that today about 50% of all immigration is reserved for women. This index is always increasing, even in countries where it used to happen less. Therefore, countries of origin should always have adequate oversight of their young populations; in this way, it is possible to reduce the flow of migration, especially in its illegal form, as much as possible. This situation or the migration of women themselves poses greater relative risks and challenges. This causes the age of marriage for women to be greatly delayed, and other consequences. In sum, a combination of interrelated environmental, socio-economic, cultural, political, and demographic factors influences migration decisions (Cortina et al. 2014).

The risks to or from migrant women are very serious, and many of them fall victim to discrimination, etc., due to unequal access to essential services. Many migrations take place between women today. Education, skills development, raising social, economic and welfare expectations, and the like, all play a role in the migration process among women. It is noteworthy that migrant women in many "developing" countries are more vulnerable than men and there are more dangers. Therefore, and considering the increasing trend of migration among women, social policy makers should always adopt and introduce appropriate plans and policies in order for migrant women to enjoy more health and security. Working conditions, travel patterns and the like pose risks for immigrant women. Immigrant women are also at high risk for many communicable diseases due to the nature of their work.

Because employers generally pay lower wages for women in many cases, they also provide more working hours for them, which in turn causes many cases of fatigue, contamination with industrial and chemical substances, and the like. This in itself affects their health, the quality of fertility between them and the like. At the same time, given the frequency of migration among women in the present age, the necessary services and facilities must be provided for them; services such as shorter working hours, childcare facilities, insurance and the like.

Women today, in addition to their role of reproduction, also have the role of economic production. Therefore, more supervision and investment should be applied to women so that it also includes immigration time.

Length of stay

Migration flows have changed significantly from past patterns in terms of duration or length of stay. Immigrations today are in some cases permanent or very long; That is, a situation in which extramarital marriages also take place. In such circumstances, migration becomes more or less permanent; as in many migrations by women or men from Latin America to North America. In any case, given the expansion of migration, the globalization of migration and the work and economic attractions of industrialized countries, and mainly urban areas, increased population density in these areas seems inevitable due to the migrant population. That is, the current situation itself has led to the destruction of the environment. Therefore, the phenomenon of migration and the environment should always be on the agenda of sociologists and social policy makers.

In the past, historically, those who chose to emigrate were generally internally displaced. In this way, the displaced population did not return to their homeland. However, today there are more opportunities for people to migrate from their place of birth to another place for a while as a student or as a guest worker, and return to their former homeland. This movement is widespread in many societies today. During this movement, the environment is also positively or negatively affected. Negative in the sense that population density, temporary marginalization, etc. cause environmental degradation, and positive in the way that migrants return to their original land, transfer different patterns and lifestyles, sometimes in which values related to environmental protection are also implicit. As a result, there is now a greater chance of temporary returns to the homeland before permanent return; that is, a movement that provides the means of cultural transfer, transfer of new patterns, and so on. While we live in an age of mobility today, international migration itself is a huge global trend, followed by the current 232 million people living outside their homeland (Migration and Youth, 2014). Various means of communication, more financial facilities, etc. have provided the means for such cases of transfer and relocation; while the initial permit to enter as an immigrant probably includes some form of screening and health control.

Subsequent arrivals with certified documents generally do not require the control of health documents, which in turn raises the possibility of transmitting many diseases. Therefore, in immigrant territories that have already been granted frequent entry permits for migration, they should be more closely monitored for their frequent travel, in order to prevent the possible transmission of certain diseases. This means that for the initial arrival of migrants, the host countries generally exercised strict and comprehensive control, while in the later stages and movements, health and health-related controls are less.

Tourism and health

The health consequences of international mobility are not limited to immigration, but international tourist travel also has its own health risks and threats. Not only does widespread migration endanger the health of the environment, but today, travel in the form of tourism also poses a great threat to personal and environmental health. Many tourists and visitors face local, regional and similar diseases in some cases. Their geographical movements themselves cause the disease to be transmitted from one region to another region of the world without any control or prevention. For example, many African nationals traveling to other lands have reportedly transmitted disease to places of travel; that is, diseases such as AIDS and the like.

Short-term international tourist travel has increased significantly in recent years. For example, one-week group trips have been organized and implemented by many tourism companies in recent years, which in turn has led to the transmission of many diseases from other countries to the country of origin. Therefore, and based on health recommendations, more and more extensive monitoring of such movements should be exercised so that countries can maintain the health of their citizens as much as possible.

The number of international tourists increased to 1.5 billion in 2019. A 4% increase was forecast for 2020 but the global Covid pandemic will have interrupted the flow. The quantitative increase has further increased the likelihood of transmitting many deficiencies and diseases to other lands. Therefore, along with a slight increase in the number of tourists, their quality control and monitoring should be implemented as much as possible, so that individual and social health is less endangered. This has become an important issue with the Covid 19 pandemic. While it has been the primary destination for European tourists, Asia also ranks second. However, such travelers to Africa and the Middle East have more than doubled in recent years. Population growth, rising cost of living, increasing material and economic dependence, and the like, have led many Asian countries in recent years to develop tourism in their communities. While travelers and tourists are not so controlled and screened in their short trips; in some cases, the speed of travel is such that after the end of the journey, the latent disease manifests itself. One of the consequences of travel between countries and even between continents, which is usually done by young people, is the transmission of some diseases from their countries of origin to their destination countries. Similarly, although health checks are largely carried out at destination destinations, in some cases the effects of some diseases become apparent at destination points after the trip. This situation is inevitably happening in many countries today under the influence of extensive communication and transportation facilities.

Migration and disease risk

As health inequality increases worldwide, changes in migration patterns have brought with them the risks of many diseases. Health inequalities are evident and measurable in the form of comparisons in developing and developed parts of the world. Because less developed countries do not have much of the necessary infrastructure, this has led to the quality of health within these societies being somewhat lower than in developed countries. Therefore, given the abundance of migration in recent decades, migrating countries must always improve the health standards of their young populations who are more likely to migrate.

The prevalence and frequency of diseases is often in the places where immigrants come from (where they originate). Infectious diseases, once confined to specific geographical areas, are now spreading rapidly by immigrants and travelers, and have exposed large populations themselves. One of the concerns of the World Health Organization is the growing threat of diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) or tuberculosis that can be transmitted by migrants to other lands. Hence, many of the almost safe and healthy parts of the world (industrialized countries) today are exposed to migratory diseases in various forms; it is a phenomenon that itself needs more global cooperation.

Health screening

In the case of legal immigration to developed countries, including North America, Australia, etc., immigrants must undergo health tests before arriving at their destination. In other words, one of the legal requirements of such immigrants for the intended purpose is to pass health tests. Such tests are usually performed in the country of origin and by a medical team approved by the country of destination. While in the context of legal migration, such tests are performed, in the context of illegal immigration, such screening and health control are not performed, and migration facilitates the acceleration and transmission of diseases such as tuberculosis, AIDS (HIV) and the like. As a result, industrialized countries and the immigration targets of many potential migrants are very strict in accepting illegal immigration. In such a way that in many cases such migrants face wandering in the waters and oceans, being caught in detention centers as well as being returned to their home lands. These controls are for the sole purpose of maintaining the destination territories.

In short, this phenomenon is increasing worldwide. It has led to the transfer of cultural contexts, the transfer of knowledge and scientific capital, the transfer of diseases, population density in some places, the destruction of the environment and the like. Although formerly industrialized countries of Europe and North America were the number one destination for migrants, today Asian countries such as Japan, China, South Korea and other parts of East Asia have a significant position in international immigration. Hence, the burden of migration from industrialized countries has shifted to many newly industrialized countries, which in turn pose risks and threats in terms of health, environmental protection, and the like.

Population restructuring, improving the status of women, with the skill of manpower in developed countries, the desire for greater prosperity, greater socio-economic security and higher quality of life are among the factors that attract migration today. For example, welfare conditions, higher wages in industrial societies, and so on, are among the factors of attraction that attract many skilled workers from developing countries to those lands. For example, according to reports, hourly wages have recently risen to \$ 25 an hour in Switzerland. This increase in wages and its economic attractiveness, as an incentive, attracts many non-European capacities to that land and similar countries. At the same time, the social, cultural, health, environmental and other social consequences of this movement must always be considered in the planning system.

Conclusions

At the same time, while the Industrial Revolution on the one hand led to increased migration to cities, access to new industrial products such as rubber-derived products, and finally access to the first fertility prevention tool in the 1920s, gave families the opportunity to plan and restrict their children, and thereby prevent potential migration (Convensky, 1980; Davis, 1980; Douvan, 1980; Laslett, 1980; Salter, 1980). Access to this tool has largely prevented the crisis of increasing population.

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