

Role of resources as driving force of migration: A study of pull and push factors

Harpreet Singh

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla, Pune.

E-mail: harry161980@gmail.com

Abstract

Keywords

Role of resources ,
Migration,
social and cultural
factors,
health and education
factors,

The present paper focuses on the role of resources as driving force to the migration. It highlights the unequal distribution of resources and the resulting issues of availability and sustainability in a diverse country like India. The concept of migration arises as a consequence of resource scarcity and unequal development, leading people to search for better opportunities. The paper aims to understand the significance of push and pull factors in influencing migration patterns. The literature review explores existing studies on rural-urban migration, focusing on push and pull factors and the role of family considerations in migration decisions. The connection between resources and migration is explored, emphasizing the impact of resource depletion, poverty, and environmental changes on population displacement. The paper also delves into the pull factors, such as economic opportunities, education, political stability, healthcare services, social and cultural factors, family reunification, and better infrastructure and services that attract individuals to migrate. Additionally, the push factors, including economic, social, environmental, political, and health and education factors, that compel individuals to move are examined.

Introduction

Resources are required not only for the development of any nation but also for the development of every individual. In fact, the individual itself is a precious resource for any nation or country. There is a strong linkage between the resources of a nation, the individuals of that nation and their requirements. The distribution of the resources is unequal over the space. The distribution of resources is also a critical issue in term of its availability and sustainability. India is rich in many natural resources with unequally distribution over the space. The unequal distribution of the resources and unequal development over the space, results into migration of people from one area to another. The availability and unequal development either push the people from resource scarce area or pull the people towards resources rich area. Migration is a natural

outcome of inequality in the distribution of resources. The settlement/resettlement, integration/reintegration of migrants is a part of the migration process and critical to studying sustainability of the resources. People migrate for a number of reasons. Broadly it can be classified into “push” or “pull” factors. The most important reason of migration is the economic factor which is a factor of rationality of resources, availability of the resources. In general, under development, unavailability of resources, poverty and low wages in any area pushes the people to migrate to any developed areas. This paper tries to understand the push and pull factors that contributes significantly in the movement of the people.

Literature Review

Most of the literature on rural-urban migration builds on work of the Todaro model(1969) and the Harris-Todaro model (1970)5 and tests its validity in various countries, contexts and using its assumptions, hence focus mostly on pull factors, with few studies focusing on push factors. Being focused on push factors, the importance of family considerations in mobility decisions of rural to urban migrants in India was investigated by Banerjee (1981) analyzing evidence on urban rural ties. The empirical basis was a survey of migrant heads of households in Delhi conducted from October 1975 to April 1976. Banerjee and Kanbur (1981) used a probabilistic migration model to examine internal migration in India and presented evidence that migration tends first to rise and then falls as rural in comeses. Rhoda (1983) focuses on push factors, its purpose being to examine the hypothesis that rural development projects and programs reduce rural-urban migration. The study concludes that the common belief that rural interventions reduce urban migration is not justified. Rural-urban migration may be reduced by interventions which increase cultivatable land, equalize land or income distribution, or decrease fertility. On the other hand, migration is stimulated by interventions which increase access to cities, commercialize agriculture, strengthen rural-urban integration, raise education and skill levels, or increase rural inequalities. Rhoda (1983)is a general review, however, and does not offer rigorous empirical evidence to support the claims made. Probabilistic migration models assume that search for urban jobs is entirely an urban-based activity and that employment in free-entry activities is a transitional phase during which migrants are actively searching for formal sector employment. A paper by Banerjee (1984) tests the empirical validity of these assumptions using data collected by the author in a sample survey in Delhi, India, in 1975-76, on 1,400 migrants from rural areas. Evidence is presented that the migration process postulated in probabilistic models is not realistic in the case of Delhi.

Objective:

To understand the linkages of resources and migration with references of pull and push factors

Data and methodology:

This study is based on secondary data obtained from various available resources. The data sources include

existing literature, research papers, reports, and studies related to resources and migration in India and other countries. The researcher conducted a comprehensive review and analysis of the relevant literature to gather insights and information on the role of resources as a driving force for migration and the factors influencing migration patterns. The data analysis involved identifying key themes, concepts, and findings from the literature. The researcher examined studies that focused push and pull factors for migration. The methodology employed in this study is primarily qualitative and exploratory in nature. The researcher synthesized information from the literature to present a comprehensive overview of the topic. The aim was to understand the linkages between resources and migration, with a particular focus on push and pull factors. The data analysis involved organizing and categorizing the information based on different types of push and pull factors identified in the literature.

Linking resources and migration: The resources and migration are connected in various ways. Generally, it is observed that people moved from deprived area to the prosperous and resources rich areas. The unequal distribution of the resources generates the process of thinking of migration in the minds of the people. The depletion of resources, generate poverty and resulted into displacement of population from one place to another. There is a broad agreement that internal migration is often intensifies following major droughts or famines which affects the two basic resources of water and food (see Leighton Chapter 6 in this volume; Shipton, 1990; Findley, 1994; Pederson, 1995; Ezra, 2001; Perch-Nielsen, 2004).Not only developing but developed countries are also affected and experience migration due to failure of crops which is a basic resource for life. The shortage or depletion of resources, generate poverty and often incite conflicts, political crises and, in turn, resulted into population displacement. Changes in the climate also results into scarcity of the resources and intensify the migration of people. The more frequent droughts and floods affects the agriculture and water resources that resulted into movement of population from one place to another. It is a general perception that the area of out-migration (push) and the area of in-migration (pull) changes a lot because of the movement of people. If people move because of scarcity of resources (push factor) from one area to the resource rich area (pull factor) then the migrants may create further more pressure on the limited resources available in the resource rich area.

Pull and push factors of migration: Lee's (1966) push-pull theory shows possible migration between a place of origin and a place of destination, with positive and negative signs signify pull and push factors, respectively. Flow of population takes place between two places, but there are intervening obstacles to these spatial movements. Although these obstacles are represented by "mountain" shapes, keep in mind that the obstacles need not be limited to physical barriers. Restrictive immigration laws, for example, can present a formidable barrier to prospective migrants. Note that both the origin and destination have pushes and pulls, reflecting the reality that any migrant must consider both the positives of staying and the negatives of moving, as well as their converses. The logic of the push-pull theory is that if the plusses(pulls) at the destination outweigh the plusses of staying at the origin, then migration is likely to occur.

Pull factors of migration: There are many pull factors which attracts the individual or families and finally they decide to move. The "pull factors", are more promising in term of economic opportunities and availability of resources. In fact, pull factors are those factors in the destination area (resources rich area) that attract the individual or group to leave their home. Those factors are known as place utility, which is the desirability of a place that attracts people.

Better economic opportunities, more jobs, and the promise of a better life which is possible by the availability of resources, often pull people into new locations. Very often, people consider and prefer opportunities closer to their location than similar opportunities farther away. In the same vein, people often like to move to places with better cultural, political, climatic and general terrain in closer locations than locations farther away.

Economic Opportunities: Economic pull factors are often significant drivers of migration. Individuals are attracted to regions or countries that offer better job prospects, higher wages, and improved economic opportunities. The promise of a higher standard of living, increased income, and improved career prospects can lure individuals to migrate to areas with a thriving economy and robust job market.

Education and Training: Pull factors related to education and training attract individuals seeking quality education, advanced skills, and opportunities for personal and professional development. Countries or regions with renowned educational institutions, research

facilities, and vocational training programs are appealing to students, scholars, and individuals looking to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Political Stability and Security: Pull factors associated with political stability and security attract migrants seeking safety, peace, and protection. Regions or countries that offer stable political environments, respect for human rights, and strong rule of law are seen as desirable destinations for those fleeing political unrest, conflicts, or persecution in their home countries.

Healthcare Services: Quality healthcare services and access to advanced medical facilities can act as significant pull factors for migrants. Countries with well-developed healthcare systems and comprehensive medical services are attractive to individuals seeking better healthcare options, specialized treatments, and improved health outcomes for themselves and their families.

Social and Cultural Factors: Pull factors related to social and cultural aspects can entice individuals to migrate. The allure of vibrant multicultural societies, diverse communities, and inclusive social environments can be appealing to those seeking a sense of belonging, cultural exchange, and opportunities for social integration.

Family Reunification: The desire to reunite with family members who have already migrated or settled in a particular region can be a powerful pull factor. The prospect of being close to loved ones and the emotional ties associated with family reunification can strongly influence migration decisions.

Better Infrastructure and Services: Pull factors encompassing infrastructure and services refer to the availability of well-developed transportation systems, modern amenities, reliable utilities, and other essential services. Access to efficient public transportation, reliable communication networks, adequate housing, and other infrastructure facilities can make a location more appealing to potential migrants.

It is important to note that pull factors can vary depending on individual preferences, circumstances, and aspirations. Different individuals may be drawn to different aspects of a destination based on their unique needs and priorities.

Push factors of migration: Not only pull factors but also equally important push factors contribute to the

decision of an individual or group to move. When resources are scarce or the availability of resources and the sustainability is under a big question, then the deprived people of an area decide to move. In other words, they are pushed to another area which is resource rich and prosperous. Push factors are those factors which force the individual to move voluntarily, and in many cases, they are forced because the individual risks something if they stay. Push factors may include conflict, drought, famine, or extreme religious activity. Poor economic activity and lack of job opportunities are also strong push factors for migration. Among push factors the overpopulated settlements, security issues, overuse of natural resources, deforestation, economic structures and production techniques etc. are very important in shaping the decision to move.

Economic Factors: Economic push factors play a significant role in migration decisions. Individuals may be pushed to migrate due to limited job opportunities, low wages, poverty, and economic instability in their home regions. Persistent underdevelopment, lack of industries, and limited access to resources can create a bleak economic outlook, compelling individuals to seek better prospects elsewhere.

Social Factors: Social push factors encompass various aspects of social life that influence migration decisions. Factors such as political unrest, social discrimination, ethnic conflicts, human rights violations, and religious persecution can push individuals or groups to flee their home regions in search of safety, security, and social harmony.

Environmental Factors: Environmental push factors relate to the impact of natural disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation on migration patterns. Rising sea levels, droughts, floods, deforestation, and desertification can disrupt livelihoods, destroy agricultural lands, and deplete natural resources. These environmental challenges can force people to migrate in search of more habitable and sustainable environments.

Political Factors: Political push factors arise from political instability, governance issues, and conflicts within a country. Political repression, civil wars, ethnic tensions, and human rights abuses can create an environment of fear and insecurity. In such circumstances, individuals may choose to migrate in pursuit of political stability, freedom, and the protection of their basic rights.

Health and Education Factors: Push factors related to health and education include limited access to quality healthcare and education facilities in certain regions. Inadequate healthcare infrastructure, lack of medical resources, and limited educational opportunities can push individuals or families to migrate in search of better healthcare services and educational prospects for themselves and their children.

It is important to note that push factors are often interconnected, and multiple factors can simultaneously influence migration decisions. Individuals or groups assess the combination of these push factors and weigh them against the potential benefits of migration.

Conclusion

The present study highlights the significant role of resources as a driving force for migration. It emphasizes the unequal distribution of resources and its impact on availability and sustainability, particularly in the context of India. The paper explores the concept of migration as a consequence of resource scarcity and unequal development, leading individuals to search for better opportunities. It examines the importance of push and pull factors in influencing migration patterns. The connection between resources and migration is established. The paper also delves into the pull factors, such as economic opportunities, education, political stability, healthcare services, social and cultural factors, family reunification, and improved infrastructure, which attract individuals to migrate. Additionally, it examines the push factors, including economic, social, environmental, political, and health and education factors, which compel individuals to move. By shedding light on the interplay between resources and migration, this paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the factors shaping migration decisions and their implications for sustainable resource management.

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Access this Article in Online	
	Website: www.ijarm.com
	Subject: Resource management
Quick Response Code	
DOI:10.22192/ijamr.2017.04.01.008	

How to cite this article:

Harpreet Singh. (2017). Role of resources as driving force of migration: A study of pull and push factors. Int. J. Adv. Multidiscip. Res. 4(1): 59-63
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22192/ijamr.2017.04.01.008>