



Fast National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences

Pakistan Studies

Final Project

Psychological impacts of Brain Drain

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Abstract

Leaving your land to seek employment can be quite challenging. For individuals, from Pakistan this migration, known as brain drain comes with stress and anxieties. Just picture bidding farewell to your family, friends and all that is familiar. This is the reality when people relocate. It can evoke feelings of isolation and sorrow potentially leading to a sense of melancholy. The work aspect can also pose difficulties. Issues such as language barriers or struggling to adapt to a job environment can make individuals feel like outsiders. Moreover varying countries have regulations and traditions. For instance driving on the side of the road in some places while its on the left in others can be perplexing! Beyond work and regulations moving to a different location entails encountering a culture. Everything from preferences to communication styles may differ significantly. This transition can leave you feeling disoriented and lacking in self assurance. Separation from family presents another challenge. The longing, for loved ones can trigger sadness and guilt especially when one is supporting them financially from afar. Managing finances, in a land with a currency can be quite overwhelming. The challenge extends beyond struggles. When a significant number of individuals depart from a nation, such as Pakistan it adversely impacts the country. Pakistan faces a loss of skills. Encounters obstacles in its development. Moreover due, to the scarcity of promising opportunities the trend of people migrating persists.

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1. Introduction:

In an increasingly interconnected world the migration of highly skilled professionals, known as brain drain, has emerged as a significant global phenomenon. This trend driven by a combination of social, economic and political factors, sees individuals seeking better opportunities beyond their home countries. As highlighted in "Eight Questions about Brain Drain" by Gibson and McKenzie (2011), the quest for improved possibilities, coupled with factors like unstable political environments and limited professional opportunities prompts talent to migrate across national boundaries.

Brain drain has wide-ranging effects on both the countries of origin and the countries to which skilled migrants migrate. In Pakistan, for instance, as discussed in the overview of brain drain trends, political instability and a lack of economic opportunities contribute to the departure of highly trained laborers (Vega-Muñoz et al., 2021). Similar patterns are observed globally with developed countries attracting skilled workers from developing nations through incentives and scholarships (Young, 2023).

This report addresses the psychological effects of brain drain, and it looks at the experiences of those who are leaving as well as the wider implications for families, communities and societies. We seek to provide light on the complicated nature of this phenomena and its consequences for global labor dynamics, utilizing knowledge gained from studies on brain drain and its aftereffects. By understanding the psychological factors that contribute to brain drain and its effects will help us find fair solutions that maximize the potential of talent migration around the world for the good of society as a whole and sustainable development.

Brain drain is considered to migrate from one country to another in which highly skilled and educated individuals are informed. It doesn't affect only countries' economic and social popularity but it has also impacts on our psychological well-being, influencing behavior, cognition and behavior. Moreover, when entering new society where people are different with respect to cultural identity, individuals may experience challenges related to adaptation, communication and understanding people in that environment. It is important for us to understand psychological effects related to brain drain which individuals face in other countries. Types of psychological effects related to brain drain are stated above:

1.1. Significance of study:

By Studying this we will be able to understand that what is Brain Drain? What is the causes of Brain Drain and what are the Psychological impact of brain drain in Pakistani Society. The phrase "brain drain" which refers to the significant migration of highly qualified professionals from one nation to another and captures the core concept of a larger worldwide phenomena influenced by social, political and economic variables (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011). Apart from the basic quest for improved possibilities, people frequently migrate as a result of variables such as unstable political environments, restricted professional opportunities or a need for increased autonomy. Talent is migrating across national boundaries, impacting businesses and institutions everywhere. The migration of highly trained professionals, such as engineers, scientists, doctors and academics, affects the distribution of talent worldwide in addition to depriving their home countries of essential knowledge.

Consequently, brain drain creates both opportunities and problems, forcing nations to devise plans for retaining talent while simultaneously encouraging international cooperation and knowledge sharing. In order to effectively combat brain drain, extensive strategies that include not only financial rewards but also laws that support inclusive growth, innovation and education are needed (Young, 2023). Through comprehending the complex nature of brain drain and its consequences, communities should strive to take advantage of the possibilities of worldwide talent migration for equal advantages and lasting growth.

1.2. Research Questions:

1. What cultural and familial effects, such as altered family dynamics, values, and aspirations, may brain drain have from the viewpoint of Pakistani society To what extent do US primacy and China's growing assertiveness contribute to the complexities in the region, and what role does Pakistan play in the emerging geostrategic power-bloc politics between the two major powers?
2. Given the current state of Pakistan, what strategies could be implemented to mitigate brain drain, encouraging individuals to pursue their ambitions within the country rather than seeking opportunities abroad?
3. What are the ethical considerations surrounding brain drain, particularly concerning the loss of talent from developing countries?

2. Literature Review:

2.1. Overview of brain drain trends in Pakistan:

The phenomenon of globalization has always existed in the world and it is deeply rooted since the time of the Silk Road. While it has brought benefits to people and countries, the extensive migration of highly valuable individuals has led to detrimental problems. In modern times, there is an increasing migration of technical labor from developing countries to developed countries. Intellectuals from developing countries leave their homes in search of quality employment, better living standards and improved health and education facilities (Vega-Muñoz et al., 2021). While remittances, trade and technology transfers all increase in the nations of origin, thus, they also result in losses of human capital and subsequent brain drain.

According to a recent study, there are 59 million migrants in OECD countries alone, with 20 million of them being highly skilled. Many of these OECD countries attract individuals from South Asian nations that includes Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Developed countries offer incentives and scholarships to attract skilled workers from developing countries. Pakistan being a growing nation experiences a significant loss of highly trained laborers to more lucrative job opportunities abroad. In response to this, the government provides generous incentives to retain a critical mass of engineers, scientists, and other professionals within Pakistan. According to a recent World Bank research, our poor industrial growth and development are mostly caused by a lack of qualified workers in our nation (Gilani & Malik, 2007). Therefore, it is quite important to look at the reasons for the movement of skilled individuals out of Pakistan.

3. Causes:

3.1. Economic Opportunities:

Firstly, a major driving force is the dearth of possibilities for highly skilled labor in their native nations. Because of governmental measures meant to preserve equitable income distributions, the unemployment rate among competent workers is frequently shockingly high, while the earnings of trained professionals continue to be disproportionately low. A review of the statistics for 2022 revealed that 832,339 highly qualified workers left the country. Furthermore, the problem is made worse by the widespread disrespect that exists in their own nations for professionals.

Competent people frequently have to answer to superiors who are not very knowledgeable about their subjects, which can be frustrating and make them feel underappreciated (Raheem, 2009). Because competent workers are drawn to places where their abilities are valued and rewarded, these circumstances foster brain drain that eventually results in the loss of human capital in the countries where they are originally from. Lastly, In Pakistan the majority of graduates complain their low pay while having high standards of accountability and working long hours (Nadir et al., 2023).

3.2. Stress and anxiety:

When people visit other countries, they may experience stress due to cultural differences and language barriers, which can make it difficult for them to adapt to the new environment. Some individuals find communicating with others challenging because they are not familiar with the lifestyle and customs of the people in that country. Understanding human nature is crucial before engaging in communication, but this process takes time and can cause anxiety for some individuals due to fear and intrusive thoughts. Due to it, individuals may feel uncertain about how to navigate social interactions.

3.3. Absence of Community:

When highly skilled and educated individuals leave their home country to relocate to another, they often experience a sense of longing for their familiar society, family, and friends. This may cause a sense of loneliness in their mind and individuals might miss their society for a long time. Because people living in other countries might be different with respect to nature as compared to his community so adapting oneself in other society can take time. For some days, people feel that they are not happy with their life and it can be longer with time which can lead to depression.

3.4. Professional Challenges:

People working in offices might face some problems like language barriers and communication with people. They feel independent and doesn't enjoy themselves at work. Due to language barrier, they can't discuss problems with others which often create problems if they did mistake in their work tasks which can lead to higher problems. Moreover, they can also lose jobs for that but that is really rare. Adjusting yourselves in new work places may take time especially in different countries where people's lifestyle and culture are different as compared to your country.

3.5. Political Instability:

A major contributing element to the skilled labor outflow from Pakistan is political instability that serves as a center around which other variables revolve. The political system's fundamental instability hinders the nation's growth and worsens problems like unemployment and economic unrest. This underdevelopment loop not only worsens already-existing problems but also generates new ones, which contributes to the brain drain a predicament (Ahmed, 2022). The ensuing shortage of qualified workers affects the sustainability of institutions and hinders economic advancement.

The loss of talent essential to the country's development continues along with political instability. Social factors are the main cause of Pakistan's labor migration of highly educated and talented workers. People migrate to prosperous nations in search of better socioeconomic circumstances, fair access to justice, advanced technology and political stability (Feroz & Yasmin, 2021). Negative economic conditions, social vulnerabilities, an unfair legal system and an uncertain state of peace and order are major push factors that drive people to emigrate from developing nations like Pakistan.

3.6. Lack of opportunity and low wages:

Brain drain gets worse by Pakistan's lack of opportunities for professional growth. Skilled workers put in long hours and receive little pay for their labor, which drives them to look for better opportunities overseas. About 31% of the 445,000 graduates who leaves Pakistani institutions each year particularly those with professional degrees face unemployment. Even though Pakistan is known for having highly skilled workers the lack of chances drives professionals to look for work elsewhere, which adds to the country's brain drain (Sakina, 2023).

3.7. Quality of Life:

Pakistan is frequently ranked among the nations with the lowest quality of living. This impression is influenced by a number of things such as a lack of opportunity, poor infrastructure, poor healthcare and a failing educational system. International and domestic impressions of Pakistan have been greatly impacted by the global media that has also shaped the attitudes of its people. As a result many youth are discouraged from serving their country. Approximately 95% of students in a recent Agha Khan University study stated that they would like to immigrate and settle elsewhere.

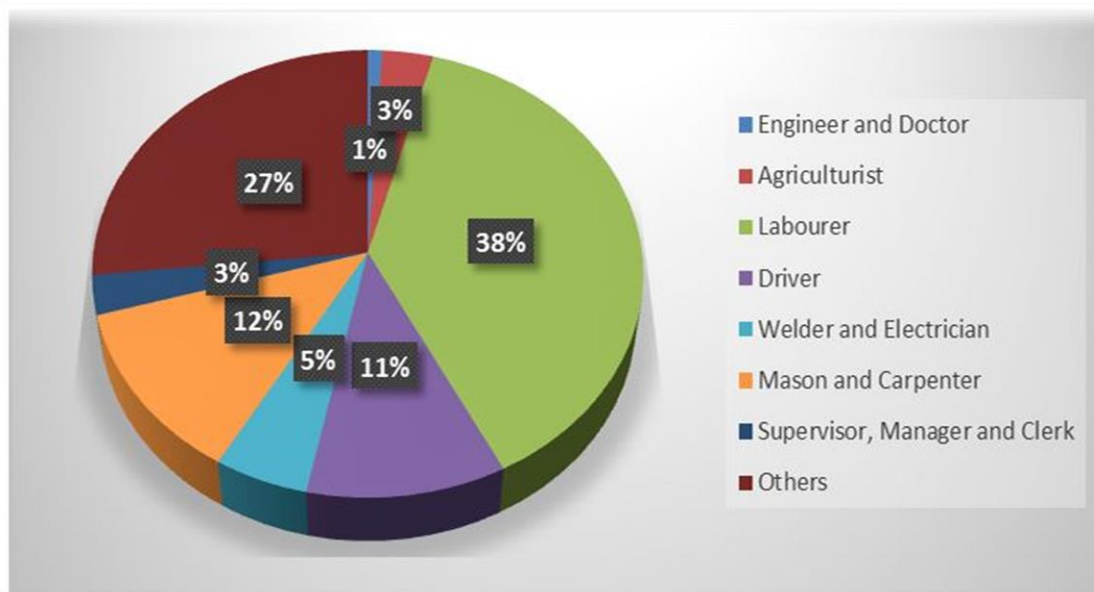


Figure-6. Catagory wise overseas employment during 1970-2018.

Figure 1 Occupational Group-wise Emigrations from 2001 to March 2023



Sources: Authors, using data from Pakistan's BEOE (2023)

Region	Migration Number
Middle East	10,734,905
Europe	46,638
North America	5,709
Asia	133,425
Africa	94, 375

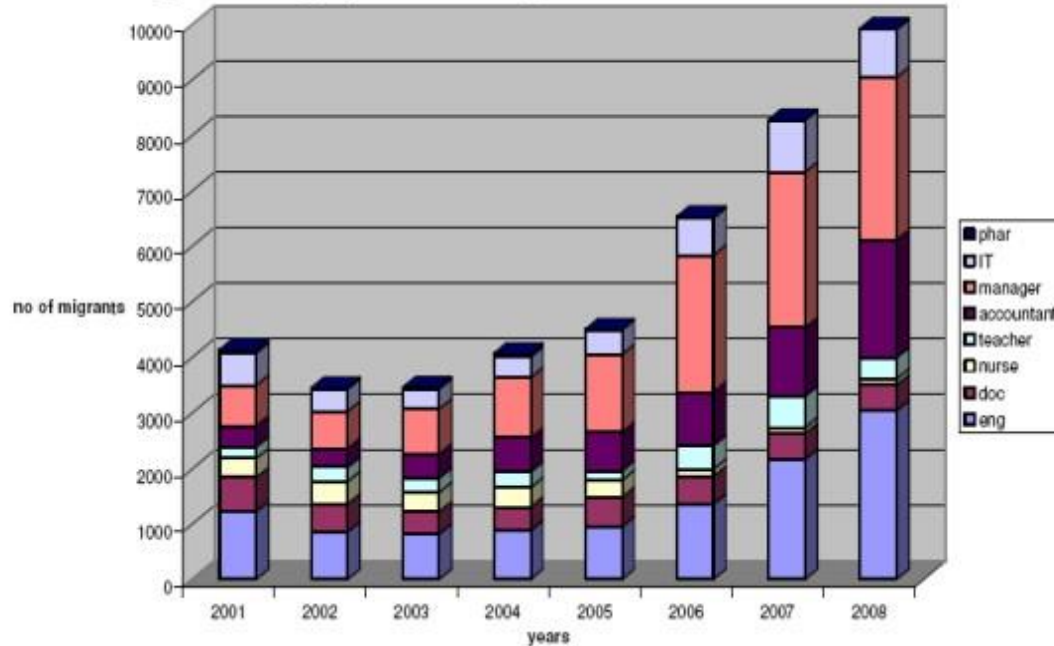
Table 1.2: Region-wise division of migration by individuals

Source: Open Data Pakistan

4. Statics:

The following statistics were garnered by analyzing the given table, graphs and a myriad of additional figures. Firstly, a record 800,000 Pakistanis left the country in the first half of 2023 with about 100,000 of them being classified as highly skilled professionals during the height of political unrest and economic inequality in May and June of that year, according to the Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) annual immigration report (Staff Report, 2024). Moreover, Pakistanis have applied for jobs in more than 50 countries globally as of December 2023. With 426,951 travelers (50%), Saudi Arabia tops the list. The United Arab Emirates is second with 229,894 (27%), Oman is seventh with 60,046 (7%), Qatar is sixth with 55,112 (6%), and Malaysia is fifth with 20,905 (2.5%) (Munawer, 2024). However, According to the Web of Science 2022 report, there was a decrease in research productivity in 2022 despite this trend. Political unrest and Pakistan's brain drain are probably to blame for this decline in research productivity (Web of Science, n.d.).

Figure-1 Highly Skilled Migrants from Pakistan



5. Social-Cultural Effects:

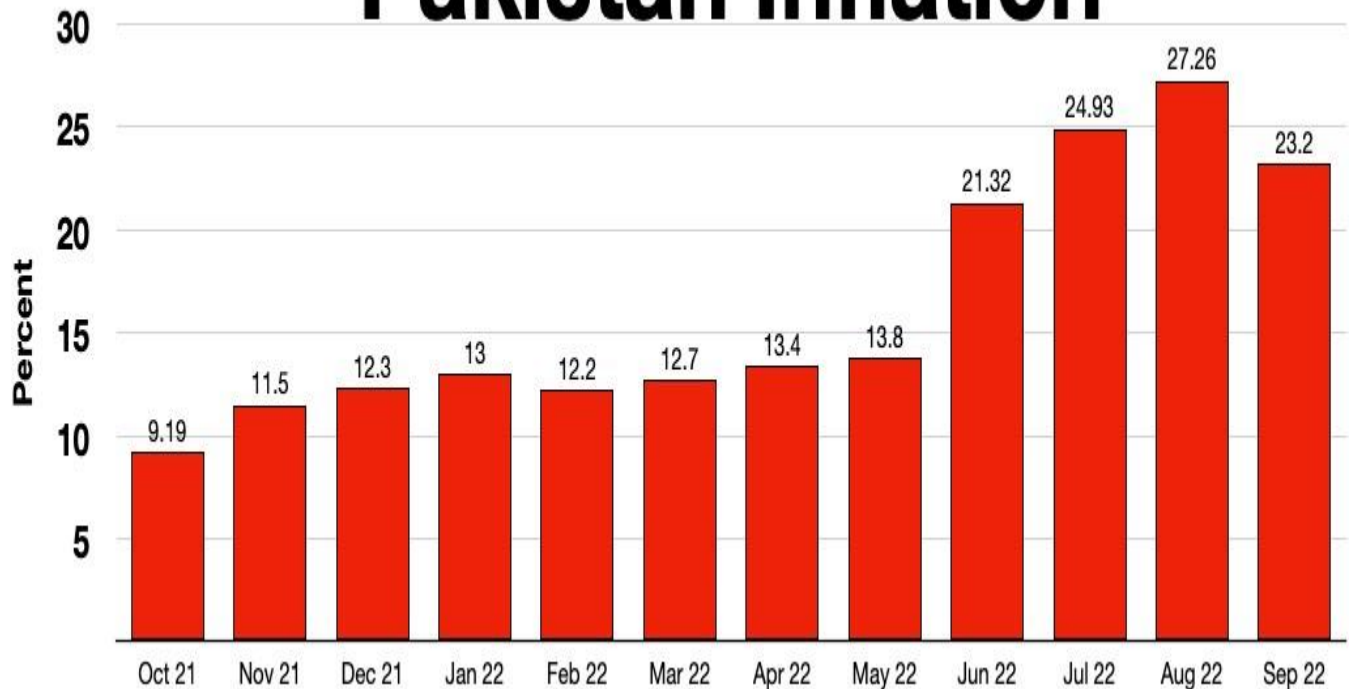
5.1. Altered Family Dynamics

Because of family members being separated by geography and cultural differences, brain drain may lead to changes in family dynamics (Pedersen, 1988). For those left behind this separation may cause a sense of dislocation and hinder family ties. A family member leaving for a foreign nation may affect the obligations and functions that members of the family play as well as the family's financial stability.

5.2. Economic Support:

In UNESCO 127th Executive Conference, there was about more than 50% increase in migrants to other countries from 6.1 in 1990 to 9.2 in 2000. When these people work in other countries they benefit those countries by giving them economic support by this means they can't support economically their own country. According to **Dawn Newspaper**, in 2023 over 0.7 million mostly youngster migrated from Pakistan to various Gulf and European countries

Pakistan Inflation



5.3. Aspirations and Identity:

Brain drain has an opportunity to fundamentally alter the aspirations and identities of migrants. By seeking improved prospects overseas frequently causes people to reevaluate their personal objectives and ideals, placing more importance on personal growth and professional achievement than on traditional cultural or familial responsibilities (Pedersen, 1990). As people struggle to strike a balance between their cultural background and the opportunities presented by their new surroundings, this transition might cause an identity crisis.

5.4. Shift of Values:

For both the individuals who migrate and the communities they leave behind the brain drain process can lead to a change in values. Loss of cultural knowledge and customs, as well as a decline in the respect given to particular abilities and customs might result from the departure of talented persons (Sriskandarajah, 2005). On the other hand, the communities that remain behind could adopt new goals and values because of the changes brought about by their members' movement.

6. Familial Impacts:

6.1. Education and Parenting:

The relocation of parents or other family members from any country may influence the childhood and schooling of children left behind. Likewise, Parental absence can have a detrimental impact on a child's results. Even though remittances paid from overseas can ease household budget limitations and enhance health and education for children (Cox-Edwards & Ureta, 2003). Furthermore, Research indicates that a father's relocation may cause a child to miss school less often, and that a child's lack of a caregiver spouse may cause behavioral, emotional, and/or academic issues (Lahaie et al., 2009). Moreover, Gender matters; children's education is frequently negatively impacted more by mother absence than by paternal absence (Cortes, 2010). Thus, the impact of parental migration on the child's education is complex and a number of factors such as gender, household dynamics, and community norms influences it.

6.2. Emotional Impact on Family:

The body of research emphasizes the emotional impact that migration takes on family members who are left behind especially non-migrant parents and spouses. The absence of the migrating partner can cause emotional tension, anxiety and loneliness in spouses (Amuedo-Dorantes & Pozo, 2006). Similar to migrant parents' non-migrant parents may go through mental anguish as a result of being apart from their children and worrying about their safety abroad. Support networks and coping strategies become essential for handling these emotional difficulties. In the absence of their loved ones families frequently turn to social media, neighborhood associations and places of worship for emotional support and company (Grigorian & Melkonyan, 2011). A professional counselor or therapist can also assist family members in navigating the emotional challenges brought on by migration.

7. Psychological affects the Emigrating individual

7.1. Loss of belonging and identity:

The loss of identification and belonging that emigrants endure is worsen by the brain drain. Skilled professionals frequently experience a break in their social networks and cultural relationships when they relocate overseas in quest of better prospects. This disruption may cause a person to feel terribly cut off from their origins and find it difficult to preserve their cultural identity in a foreign setting (Khatkhate, n.d.). This loss is worsen by the requirement to adjust to strange cultural norms and deal with the challenges of integrating into a new group. This encounter may cause people to feel disoriented and alone,

upsetting their sense of coherence (THBT intellectual migration, 2022). Therefore, the brain drain causes psychological harm to the emigrants as they struggle with the loss of their sense of identity and belonging in addition to depriving countries of trained labor.

7.2. Emotional Stress and mental Health Challenges:

Emigration is a process that is unavoidably full of emotional strain and mental health issues. Psychological discomfort may get out of control when someone leaves familiar surroundings, embarks on an uncertain future and adjusts to a new setting (Oladeji & Gureje, 2016). Anxiety, sadness, and even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are common ways that this stress shows up. People's mental health may suffer because of the emigration process's ongoing instability and uncertainty (Cancelliere & Mohammed, 2019). These difficulties are worsen by the stress emigrants experience as they negotiate the requirements of migration and work to establish themselves in new countries. Appropriate support and coping strategies are necessary for minimizing these negative consequences.

7.3. Lack of Experience:

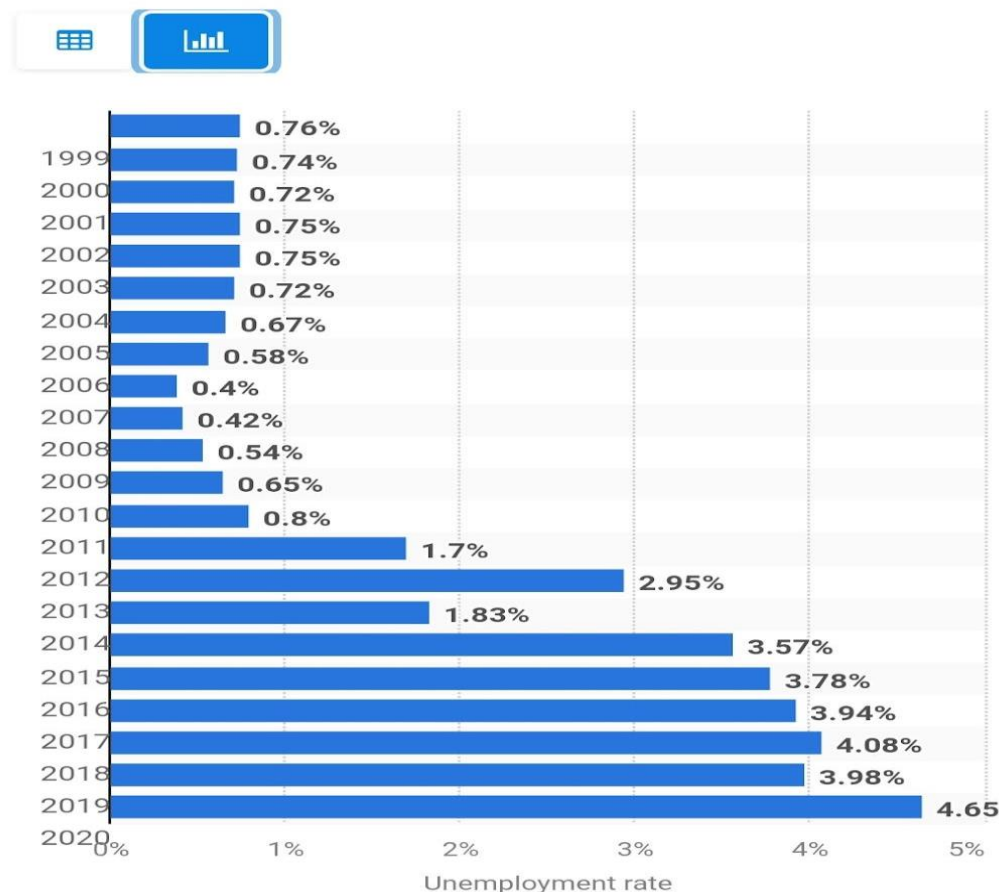
Experience and Education is a major contribution to educational philosophy (**John Dewey**). Whenever you visit a workplace for job they ask you your experience level and give you job according to that. According to **Jennifer Herrity (Texas A&M University B.A, Communication and media studies)**, relevant work experience can prepare you for fulfilling your career in the desired field. In Pakistan, due to lack of jobs many newly experienced people are leaving Pakistan for jobs and old employees are working in job sectors which has low skills and experience as compared to them because in every era with the innovation in technology new things are taught. For example, in **healthcare sector**, it is severely affected by emigration of experienced doctors and nurses which leads to the shortage of qualified medical personals. In Pakistan, limited job opportunities can lead to underemployment or unemployment in fields unrelated to one's expertise.

7.4. Brain Gain Challenges:

Pakistan faces problems in attracting skilled individuals to bring them back home which is often referred to as 'brain gain challenges'. Pakistan may struggle to offer job opportunities and competitive salaries as compared to developed countries by which they can't attract skilled individuals to bring them home. Due to lack of infrastructures and low resources in healthcare sectors and education can make it difficult for individuals to come back home. According to **Madiha Afzal**, political instability is the main problem in

Pakistan and it has increased more after no-confidence vote in 2022. Political instability had also lead to brain drain

Pakistan: Unemployment rate from 1999 to 2020



8. Copying mechanism and resilience:

Even with the extreme difficulties that come with migrating, people can use resilience and coping strategies to manage the psychological effects. It becomes clear that resilience is essential to reducing the negative impacts of emigration. Strong coping mechanisms, social support systems, and a feeling of belonging help people weather the mental storms that come with migration (Nwaogu & Chan, 2022). Furthermore, the act of migrating itself can promote resilience by encouraging people to adjust to and

prosper in new surroundings (Wood & Bhatnagar, 2015). Policymakers and communities may encourage emigrants to tackle the psychological obstacles of brain drain and emerge stronger in the face of hardship by developing a culture of resilience and providing adequate support systems.

8.1.1. A. Economic incentives: increasing salaries, offering competitive benefit:

Offering competitive benefits and raising salary are only two examples of the financial incentives that are essential for preventing brain drain and supporting talent retention. According to a Harvard University research, for every \$1 rise in pay per hour, warehouse workers' retention increased by 2.8%, whereas for every \$1 decrease in pay, turnover rates increased by 28% 4 (Maervoet, 2022). This emphasizes how crucial competitive pay is to keeping staff on board. Furthermore, in order to make sure that your company's benefits package stays competitive, a thorough competition analysis is necessary for understanding the kinds of benefits and compensation that other employers in the same industry are offering (Maervoet, 2022).

8.1.2. B. Investment in education and research infrastructure

One of the most important strategies for combating brain drain as well as promoting talent retention involves investing in research and education facilities. Workforce organizations have pointed out that gathering fresh talent and keeping existing employees are major problems for employers due to demographic trends and the aging infrastructure workforce (Ross, 2024). Furthermore, in order to meet a state or region's labor market needs, infrastructure programs have to involve efficient hiring, training and recruitment techniques (Hall, 2023). Leaders in the workforce may assist infrastructure firms in adopting a more creative and strategic approach to hiring, training and keeping employees by using their current connections, resources, and knowledge.

8.1.3. D. Addressing political instability and insecurity

To reduce brain drain and increase talent retention Pakistan must address its political instability and insecurity. A significant brain drain has taken place from political instability, corruption, and economic difficulties; in 2022 alone, over 765,000 Pakistanis left the nation, including 92,000 highly educated professionals (Moti, 2023). Stabilizing the political environment, upholding the rule of law and combating corruption are essential starting points in reversing this trend. To restore public trust in the government, this entails addressing constitutional challenges, strengthening governance, and advancing the democratic process. Furthermore, making investments in economic development, health care and education can open

doors for professional growth and innovation, which will draw and keep talent in the country (Younus, 2023).

8.1.4. E. Enhancing social and cultural freedom

Improving social and cultural freedom is critical to avoiding brain drain and encouraging the retention of talent. Understanding and influencing company culture becomes essential for companies looking to retain top personnel in a multicultural setting (Employee retention, n.d.). This involves creating an environment at work where company goals and employee pleasure are balanced. It is also essential to include inclusion, diversity and a sense of belonging into retention plans; this shifts the focus from intention to impact and acknowledges diversity as an essential component of the retention strategy (Younus, 2023). This strategy makes sure that the organization is a place where individuals want to spend their time, skill and influence in addition to attending to the needs of underrepresented groups.

8.1.5. F. Providing psychological support and counseling services:

Retaining talent and decreasing brain drain need offering counseling and psychological support. These programs offer a safe environment for workers to communicate their emotions and acquire coping skills both of which are essential for their mental health and output (HCM Works, 2021). Counseling is an excellent investment for organizations since it can also lower medical costs by addressing mental health issues and increase general resilience.

9. Case study:

China's proactive approach to mitigating brain drain within its regions serves as a compelling example for nations worldwide. By examining China's initiatives, we can glean valuable insights into effective strategies for retaining talent and fostering local development.

Government-Led Initiatives: The Thousand Talents Plan This program aims to bring highly talented workers from around the world to China by providing alluring incentives like funding support, tax benefits, and competitive compensation (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). It concentrates on strategic areas where the government hopes to concentrate resources and expertise for greatest effect, like as Guangdong, Tianjin and Shanghai.

10. Professional Incentives

10.1. Competitive Salary:

Professionals taking part in initiatives like the Thousand Talents Plan in China receive competitive compensation, which incentivizes them to stay and support the nation's growth (Matthys, 2023). Moreover, to lessen financial pressures on foreign experts and increase the allure of working in China, tax incentives are provided in addition to salary.

10.2. Focus on Investment and Economic growth:

Motivating Innovation: China promotes a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship by drawing top talent from a wide range of sectors, which propels breakthroughs in science, technology, and industry (Clay & Atkinson, 2023). Furthermore, China's rise as a major global economic force is fueled by the inflow of highly qualified individuals, which helps to expand regional sectors and the nation's economy as a whole.

10.3. Opportunities for Advancement and Improvement:

Career Advancement Possibilities: China's programs offer plenty of chances for development and advancement in addition to drawing in talent. It is recommended that professionals engage in research, innovation, and entrepreneurship as means of advancing their personal and professional growth.

11. Conclusion:

In conclusion, There are many ideological and psychological effects of brain drain on every person of the country. . Pakistan is an Asian country with largest population all over the world and almost majority of the people are moving to different countries in today's era. So the culture of Pakistani people is much different from other countries so adapting themselves in different countries can take time. So, in this part we will discuss in detail about the problems which they face in different countries and how it creates barrier for them.

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