

## Migration in Islam and Contemporary Approaches of International Migration

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### Abstract

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Crossing of state boundaries for specific reasons is called international migration. People leave home countries to look for better opportunities in other countries and some to be with family members who earlier have migrated or because of political situations. Acquiring education is also a reason for this migration. These migrants can also be divided into two large groups, permanent and temporary. Permanent migrants intend to establish their permanent residence in a new country and possibly obtain that country's citizenship. Temporary migrants intend only to stay for a limited periods of time; perhaps until the end of a particular program of study or for the duration of their work contract or a certain work season. Both types of migrants have a significant effect on the economies and societies of the chosen destination country and the country of origin.

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**Keywords:** International migration, development, remittances, investment, inequality, urbanization

### Islamic Context

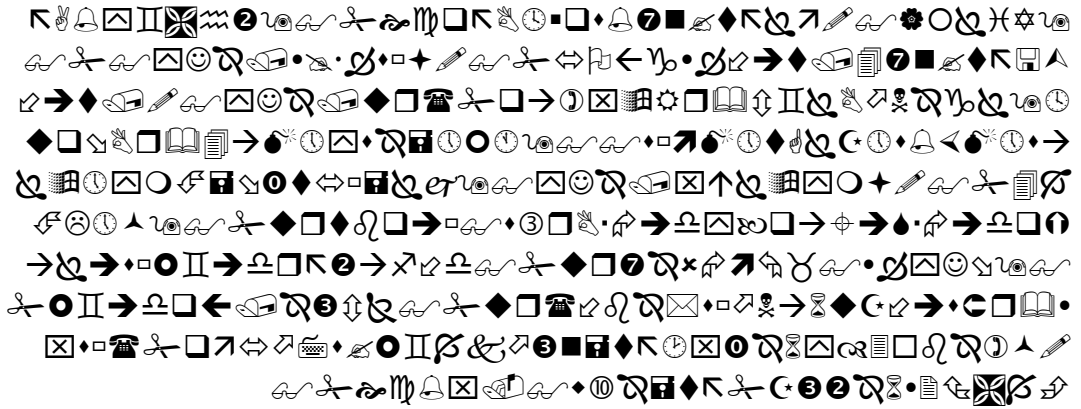
Holy Quran has used term Hijra in 27 different verses along with its different interpretations, as in the meaning "to abandon".

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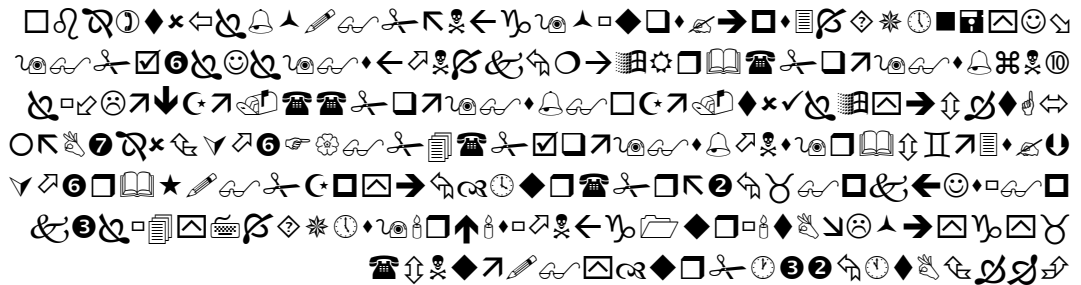
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As in (4:34) and

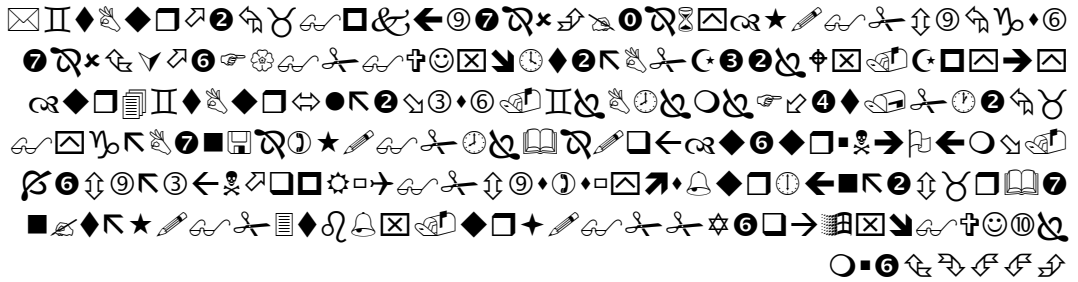


Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because They support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard In (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly); but if They return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance): for Allah is Most High, great (above you all). (4:34)

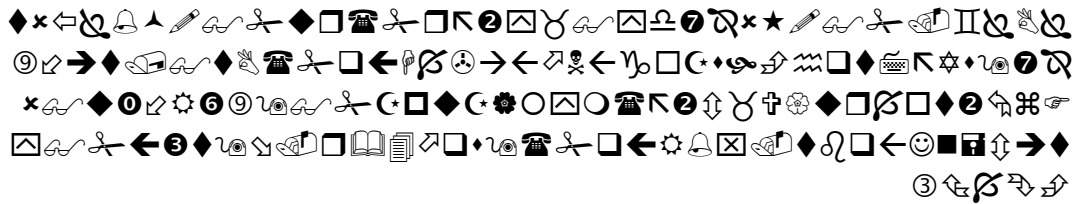
However, this same term has been used to determine the fact of going off from a country of the infidels or Kafirs and to join the Muslim community. There are various researchers who have explained why people migrate from one to another area. If we take some of Quranic verses with reference to migration, we come to have a basic conclusion of for the noble cause and for the Will of Allah; following are some examples from the Holy Verses of Quran.



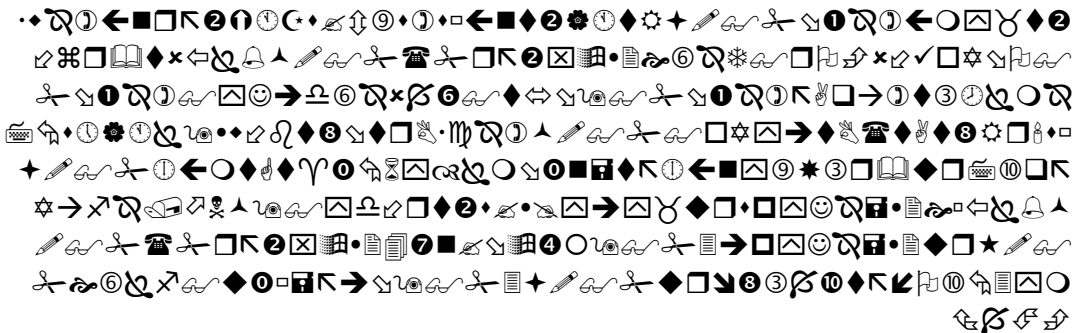
When angels take the souls of those who die In sin against their souls, They say: "In what (plight) were ye?" They reply: "Weak and oppressed were we In the earth." They say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious Enough for you to move yourselves away (from evil)?" such men will find their abode In Hell,- what an evil refuge! – (4:97).



He who forsakes His home In the cause of Allah, finds In the earth many a refuge, wide and spacious: should He die As a refugee from home for Allah and His Messenger, His reward becomes due and sure with Allah. and Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. (4:100)



To those who leave their homes In the cause of Allah, after suffering oppression,- we will Assuredly give a goodly home In This world; but truly the reward of the Hereafter will be greater. if They only realised (this)! (16:41).



40. if ye help not (your leader), (it is no matter): for Allah did indeed help him, when the unbelievers drove Him out: He had no more than one companion; They two were In the cave, and He said to His companion, "Have no fear, for Allah is with us": then Allah sent down His peace upon him, and strengthened Him with forces which ye saw not, and humbled to the depths the word of the Unbelievers. but the word of Allah is Exalted to the heights: for Allah is Exalted In Might, wise. (9:40)

This same fact of Immigration has been truly marked in the Muslim History and from the very inception as well. Historians wrote on different aspects, that how and why Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) sent His followers to Ethiopia for protection by the inhabitants of the city of Mecca. In doing so Holy Prophet (PBUH) wrote a letter to the King of Ethiopia to recognize Him as a Messenger of God and also to embrace Islam as well. Similarly, a migration or Hijrat was also done by Muhammad (PBUH) along with some of his followers (R.A.), left native city (Mecca) in September, 622 A.D. and went to Yasrub (Medina), city of His Mother. Which marks beginning of a new Islamic era, era of Hijra. The immigrants for Medina were called Muhagirin and those who gave them good reception were called Ansar (the supporters). It is also a fact that some Muslims, however, remained in Mecca and practiced their faith secretly (Abu Salieh, 1996.)

## **Introduction**

Migration is called when people living in a part of world for different reasons moved to other part for livelihood and other specific needs like, war and order situation of home country (wikipedia).

According to a system for the categorization of international migrants, there are nine groups: (1) irregular, (2) illegal or undocumented, (3) highly skilled and business class, (4) refugees; (5) in quest of asylum, (6) forced migration; (7) family members, (8) return migrants and (9) low-skilled migrants, then they can be divided into two main groups, (A) permanent and (B) temporary.

But in the context of contemporary studies there are many theories with reference to international migration among them one of the most important factor is economic conditions which is drawing people for higher income through migration. Some other important affects that become the factors for decision to be an immigrant are family and friendship relations. One of the most important patterns (Massey *et al.*, 1994; Bauer *et al.*, 1998) attempted to explain why international immigration occurs.

## Macro Theory

Perhaps one of the oldest and best-known theories of international migration that first was made to explain migration of laborers for economic development. According to the theory international migration, is caused by geographic differences in the supply and demand for labor. Areas with a large number of labors relative to capital have a low market wage, while areas with limited labors relative to capital ultimately are a high market wage. This prime difference in wages causes migration of labors from a relatively low-wage country to move to a comparatively high-wage destination. The result of this movement will be sometimes decreases of labor and rise in wages in poor country, while increases of labor and fall in wages in richer country.

According to Massey *et al.*, (1993) following are different propositions and assumptions:

1. International migration of workers is the result of wage rate differences among countries.
2. Elimination of these differences will end the movement of labor, and migration will be minimized in the absence of such differentials.
3. International flows of highly skilled workers respond to differences in the rate of return to human capital, which may be different from the overall wage rate, yielding a distinct pattern of migration that may be opposite that of unskilled workers.
4. Labor market is the cause root by which international migration of labor stimulate and other reasons do not have important effects on international migration.
5. To check this flow and also to regular migration governments ways also are the cause of increase or decrease of this migration of both sending and/or receiving countries.

## **Micro Theory**

Microeconomic model of individual choice is quite corresponding to the macroeconomic model (Sjaastad, 1962). This theory explains that an individual first of all calculates costs and benefits of the migration and only after a positive result, mainly financial is the motive behind his/her migration. In the modern times people become a commodity, and for the more financial gain they move from one area to another, according to their skills. All this higher financial benefits are the result of the cost of travelling, search of work, effort to acquire new language, new culture, difficulties in new and more competitive market and also areas related to psychological costs like, old friends, parents, language and culture as well.

All these likely migrants keep in mind these costs and benefits before going to any foreign location and always move for the positive returns and greater benefits. These future estimates are likely high, corresponding to skills, destination and also probability of the future job and also having expected destination earning.

According to Massey et al., (1993) this outlook has the following points

1. International migration stems from differences in earnings and employment rates, whose product determines expected earnings (in contrast, assumed full employment).
2. Likely or probability in the increase of wages or remuneration as compare to the sending country (e.g., education, experience, training, language skills) will increase the possibility of international migration.
3. Increase in the ration of migration is the result of lower cost benefits of characteristics and social conditions as well as technologies, hence raise international migration probability.
4. Migration does not happen in the absence of differences in wage rates between countries, rather it happens until expected earnings becomes more than net costs of movement, and this movement does not stop until both these factors been equalized.
5. The size of difference in expected returns determines the size of the migrants between countries.

6. Decisions related to migration only initiate when there is unbalance between labor and markets (wages); other factors do not directly influence this decision.
7. If conditions in receiving countries are attractive to migrants, migration costs will be negative and in that case, to stop migration a negative earnings derivative would be necessary.

### **Push and Pull Theory**

Migration Push and Pull theory can be said as the economic factors of migration in the sending as well as in receiving country. Migration cannot only be said as the main factor including population, unemployment or low standards of living in the home country and these factors are called push factors. On the other hand, demand of labor, more financial opportunities and freedom in the receiving country and these factors are called pull factors. And according to Dutta (2002) migration of any type, forced or by own will, can be explained in these terms of push and pull factors. Push factors indicate negative characteristics whereas pull factors identify as positive characteristics. According to social scientists of this group it is the permanent demand by the developed nations which is the main factor rather the low wages or unemployment issues, so pull factor dominates the push factor.

### **World Systems Theory**

According to the followers of this theory (Petras, 1981 and Morawska, 1990) international migration is not the result of division of labor market within a country, but the main driving force to this is the structure of world market that has developed since the sixteenth century. According to this theory, the penetration of capitalist economic relations into non-capitalist societies creates a movable population that is also inclined to international migration.

As the main target behind the capitalist firms and owners is higher profit and greater wealth, so they penetrate into the poor countries to find out raw material, low wage labor, land and new markets as well. Earlier it was done by colonial regimes but now it the era of MNC's or MNE's on acceptable terms and conditions. And now this expansion outward which started from Western Europe and North America has now transferred its weight to the large human population into the world's most growing market economy for acquiring land, raw materials, and labor to the regions come under their influence and control as markets. This generates migration flows inevitably, some of which have always moved abroad (Massey, 1989).

## **Merits of Migration**

### Financial Stability

As we discussed that prime reason for migrating is the financial benefit and after the calculation of the higher costs one may leave his/her country as there one is not having adequate pay for the concerned skills. In calculating these cost benefits likely emigrant see better chances and increase in pay rates with better living standards. To have better job in a foreign country is also intensified to send back foreign reserves or money to support families and relatives.

### Educational Opportunities

As we know that every country has a different education system in which some countries excel at large while some are lagging behind. Education nowadays is the main driving force for the better financial gains or in other words for better future as well, which is among the main causes of the migration in the contemporary era. So, students at all levels from college level to university may migrate to achieve better education from education institutions of the developed nations which ultimately means better work opportunity and more skillful individual.

### Religious Freedom

As far as the religious freedom is concerned it was declared as universal human right by United Nation Organization in 1948. As we know that some countries do not allow practice of some concerned religious beliefs within their jurisdiction. Hence, in these circumstances migration to an area of secular thoughts will be fruitful for those religious beliefs which are suppressed in some countries. By migration they may practice the religion of the choice of their own.

### Health Benefits

Every individual wants that he may live in an environment which is very suitable for his better health with better housing and better medicine to stay fit for a long time scale. As we know that there are some countries which have better health and medical facilities and the result of these inputs is the better and fit population of that concerned country, and with a longer life expectancies. This trend is also works as a motive behind migration to one place to another.



## **Demerits of Migration**

### **Brain Drain**

This is the world known phenomenon as financially strong countries accept large number of skilled and professional immigrants as per their needs, to fill the gap among their own citizens by offering bright future and fringe benefits. In doing so, they create a vacuum in the sender counties of the skills and talented manpower. Poor counties suffer by this emptiness of manpower and remained under direct control of the developed nations. It may be termed as negative trend on behalf of the developed nations as they attract the best and brightest from other countries, which causes a brain drain from within, rather to improve the quality of its own skilled oriented programs, it compensates by importing workers from abroad hence neglected lack of uneducated and unskilled populace.

### **Demographics**

Migrants tend to be disproportionately young and productive. By leaving their home countries, they may cause a demographic crisis in which a shrinking population of young people must support a growing population of retired people. The crisis can feed upon itself, causing even more young people to migrate and worsening the situation for all who remain.

### **Racism**

The idea of a "melting pot" society is a rich, harmonious multicultural fabric of many peoples from many lands. Unfortunately, discrimination can result from a large influx of foreign people.

No matter how ethical or intelligent an immigrant may be, native inhabitants may accuse him of "stealing their jobs." On the contrary, the migrant may face higher hurdles in finding employment due to discrimination and the difficulties of adjusting in a foreign culture and environment. And if a migrant becomes downtrodden, then the native invokes the other typical complaint: The immigrant must be a criminal.

## Familiarity

Leaving home may be necessary but sad. You may no longer visit certain friends and family. Holidays and other traditions may not be observed in a new land. Inhabitants may speak a different language. Even certain features of everyday life such as cuisine and entertainment will not be the same. While some may embrace the novelty of a new culture, others will find certain aspects to be alienating.

## **Building of Partnership**

### Capacity Building

In spite of the developments in the contemporary world, some countries have made policies and guidelines for the migration with concerned code of conduct. It is pertinent to mention here that it requires multidimensional aspects in it, and people and governments are required to have cemented efforts including financial assistance to properly manage this.

### Inter-State Consultation and Cooperation

In the past we can witness that states have tried unilateral efforts to deal with migration, which include a number of bilateral agreements also but they only work no good.

And now all the states have recognized that they cannot effectively cope with migration on a unilateral or bilateral level, rather they are required to have a multilateral approach.

However in some instances bilateral measures are very fruitful (like exchange of labor and addressing border issues of migration) but to deal with international migration on such a large scale multidimensional area of concern should be more effective.

Developing Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Migration Issues

Migration is not only a concern for governments but other stakeholder should also be included to address this issue. So, there is a need to take on board the non-government stakeholder, which includes, civil society and private sector, and their voice should be heard to address the migration issues.

### Inter-agency Consultation and Cooperation

At both the state and international levels, there should be increased consultation and cooperation among the agencies to see what their expertise are, for an effective and rational way to address different areas related to international migration.

### **Conclusion**

Migration and development goes hand to hand in the contemporary world, and there is dire need to highlight the active efforts by all the stakeholders for making this phenomenon happen for all the concerned. For coming this dream true, not only political will including resources is needed but also this requires true commitment to manage migration is needed by doing following steps:

First, step towards this is much wider and deeper cooperation is needed among the states, both by the host and guest countries. This should be achieved by making national policies and organizations to guide and trained the likely immigrants (more functional organizations like overseas employment corporation etc.).

Secondly, there should be policy planning for every country for the reduction of poverty in the community, which is the basic reason for the migration. There should be policy dialogue and seminars for closer cooperation and policies should be "development-friendly" with main target of stronger development.

Lastly there should be innovation to best utilization of the immigrants for the contribution of development, for this formatting of stock of ideas which worked and which did not, by this data analysis new approaches must be developed.

But this is not all, more developed and advanced countries should constitute pilot projects for the international community as a whole, for a better world for all, and this can be achieved through mutual good will and by the proper implementations of the policies and guidelines by the international organizations and government levels as well.

### Some Facts and Figures Regarding International Migration

According to United Nations Organization fact sheet:

- Approximately there were 191 million migrants at the global level in 2005.
- In this estimation around one third of immigrants are from one developing to another developing country, so much so other one third are from developed to a developing country, that makes "South-to-South" migrants equal to "South-to-North" migrants.
- In the same study total distribution of all hosting of migrants are, Europe 34%, North America 23%, Asia 28%, Africa 3% and Latin America and others 3% only.
- Nearly every six out of ten (about 112 million migrants), reside in high income countries, which are surprisingly 22 developing countries, like, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Korea, Brunei and Singapore etc.
- Approximately 50% of the migrants are females, but in the case of developed countries they are more than 50%.
- In the same study it was revealed that in 72 countries international migration decreased between 1990 and 2005. While 17 nations showed increase of about 75% including USA (15 million), Germany, and Spain (4 million each) etc.
- In the same term of fifteen years, both developed and developing countries offered about 35 programs to streamline the status of illegal migrants and by these efforts at least 5.3 million immigrants were regularized.

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