

Managing Migration-Inclined workers

Michael Yemoh^{#1}

[#]*Department of Accounting & Economics, Faculty of Business & Entrepreneurship, National University of Samoa, Apia, Samoa*

m.yemoh@nus.edu.ws

Abstract - The latest global migration trends suggest an increase in world migration with associated impact on people and economies. The level of development and poverty have also been found to contribute to the migratory pressures that workers face. However, migration decisions are driven by economic, social, and political context and pressures. These also have subsequent human resource challenges to business operators, supervisors and managers. This report presents from the available literature, some of the issues that migration-inclined workers present to human resource management.

Keywords — development, human resource, poverty, migratory pressures, migration trends, workers.

I. INTRODUCTION

A recent United Nations report suggests that there is an increase in world migration. international migration was estimated at 272 million in 2019 (United Nations 2022). The composition of International migration will generally be made up of all demographics and especially those within the working age. Those who are beyond a certain age and can be classified as elderly, may have factors like health and family connections which may discourage many from emigrating. It may thus be a reasonable expectation that the majority within the composition of migration will be the working age or younger members of the family of those who are within that age. Regionally, Europe received 82 million which was the largest number of international migrants, followed by Northern America and Northern Africa and Western Asia in 2019. Age also appears to play a major part in the ability and decision to migrate. This is further confirmed in a recent report which suggested that changes in demographic composition of the workforce accounted for the change in agricultural workers migrating in the United States (Fan et al 2015). The report also confirms that a majority of those who migrate are workers who may be leaving their places of work from their home Country to facilitate their migration. Migration-inclined workers are thus the workers who, even though may or may not be employed at the moment of applying for the travel permit or undertaking the process of obtaining the necessary particulars to migrate have made up their mind to emigrate for whatever reason. These types of workers are not the same as all other classes of workers who may still be employed in the organisation and may present unique challenges and characteristics for the management.

Many studies have investigated the migration intentions

within the context of the receiving countries (Poppe et al 2014). Others have focused on Skilled workers who migrate as domestic workers (Salami 2014) or the reasons and motivations for migration of health workers (Poppe et al 2014, Salami et al 2014). Others have also focused on Citizenship and differences in the Asia-Pacific region (Castles and Davidson 2020) or the role of abuse and unfavorable working conditions migrant workers face (Naufal and Malit 2018). Some have focused on why the quality of rural-urban migrant workers is lower than the norm (Zhu et al 2012), or on the difference between low skilled workers migration and low skilled workers (Gross and Schmitt 2006), or on the migration recruitment networks and experiences (Pereira 2014) and on how rural-urban migration improves job satisfaction and controls job-related disease leading to improved workers quality of life (Zhu et al 2012).

All the studies have contributed to the area yet, there is very little attention given to the recruiters and employers who employ workers who are attempting to migrate out of the Country they operate in. This area of the workforce on the basis of the international migration figures could be a material portion of any workforce. Their contribution or lack therefore whilst they are employed by any organisation could play a significant role in the productivity of the organisation they work for and thus the economy they are employed in. The number of people who may make up this number could also be an area for further research. They present a unique scenario and option of recruiting, training and re-skilling workers who are inclined to migrate and are merely using their current job as a stop gap for their impending travels. This paper aims to explore the various challenges that managers, supervisors and business owners operating in economies with a higher emigration of workers face especially from the migration-inclined workers. Regard is given for workers who may be in developing countries that may have workers who may not be intending to migrate out of the workforce and the Country.

II. THE NEED AND BASIS FOR MIGRATION

There are various reasons why workers make the choice to move out of their Country and away from their employment from their Country of origin. There is no doubt that workers at various times in their working life choose to leave an organisation. Some of what impels employees to quit have been found to include unhappiness with their supervisors, workers not seeing

opportunities for promotion or growth, or workers being offered a better paying opportunity (Graves 2016). With the intention to attract the best workers even at the expense of other organisations, will mean that the opportunities for workers to switch employers will continue to be there and thus workers will continue to resign from their employment. Other reasons for leaving a job has been suggested to be the need for more challenge when the worker believes they have also learned all that can be learnt in that position. Workers also leave their jobs when they are in search of higher remuneration and the alternatives exist. Some also move when they are looking for inspiration or value as a worker, when they are seeking for a better management relationship, or for job growth or career advancement, or for more work related feedback and structure, or for a different work environment. Sometimes, they leave because they are relocating, or because of workplace conflicts, or due to changes in the nature of the job they initially signed for. They may also be leaving because they are in search for a more financially secured employer, or for independence from micromanaging supervisors or more recognition as an employee (Indeed 2022). In most cases, workers leave a job to take on another national and regional work alternative whilst some are retiring from the workforce through age or injury or migrating out of the Country.

The demography of the workers and the various life events contribute to many of the dynamics of the employment life of workers and especially those who leave their places of work. However, in some cases, the workers may make a decision to not just leave their place of work but emigrate out of the Country. When such a decision is made, the prospective migrant will be working with their current employer as they wait for the decision on their travel permit or until they decide against the move. This is understandably rare as the decision to migrate in the first place is not casually arrived at. If a rational paid worker makes a decision to give up a job, all things being equal, the option they are moving to must of rationality be better than the one they are leaving or they must be moving for a better cause. Generally, the principal reasons identified for international migration are, educational purposes, political instability or insecurity in their Country of origin, and family reunification (Poppe 2014). This need for immigration, more closely thus aligns to normative principles and human rights, such as family formation and reunification and asylum (Kofman 2005). These are known to pull workers away from their own Country or push them towards another economy. The rational assertion is that, if there are enough reasons for the worker to be attracted to another economy, and they

have the means to migrate, they would, especially if it leads to a better economic opportunity or standard of living. In addition to these, other factors including medical reasons although less explicit, and economic factors also aid the decision to migrate.

Global migration on record has increased from 2.6 percent in 1960 to 3.3 percent in 2015 and the increase is faster than the increase in world population, according to United Nations statistics (Dimock 2016). Most workers migrate away from developing and less developed economies into the more advanced economies in search of a better standard of living unless there are barriers to their emigration attempts. Under normal conditions rational workers are motivated and make the decision to work on the basis of the wages that's on offer, aided by their level of wealth and other factors. Workers are known to have a reservation wage at which they will not work below. Any opportunity to work above their reservation wage rate will be something that rational workers will be keen on exploring even if it means an international move. The choice of working, in theory postulates that workers will opt to engage in paid work when the incentive on offer is above their reservation wage and provides utility satisfaction. Some of the barriers to such migration could be family connections, health, visa and travel permit issues. The barriers depending on its impact and the intended emigrants' determination and ability to overcome them could be the deciding factor allowing them to travel. Until all the travel requirements are met and in the absence of a firm refusal of the travel opportunity, the worker will maintain the intention and hope of travelling and be working towards this. Subsequently, the costs that will be incurred for migrating or any potential labour exploitation, tend to be accepted by the migrants as a way to fulfil their social aspirations, an investment, a worthy risk and economic necessities (Pereira 2021).

The fact is that international migration happens and is bound to happen for various plausible reasons. However, the demography of people who migrate may vary and that is what makes the difference. Where a lot of workers are migrating, there may be an impact on the workforce of both countries as the receiving Country will reflect a positive increase in their workforce and labor participation rate. A recent report suggests that low-skilled migrants respond to most push and pull migration factors whilst high-skill migrants however respond only to financial incentives and cultural clustering does not matter (Gross and Schmitt 2006). This implies that although skilled workers are also migrating, a higher number of the migrants are the low skilled. Understandably, it is a lot more difficult for

skilled workers to leave their jobs and to migrate as most skilled workers would have climbed up the career ladder on the basis of their skills, qualification and prior experience. Leaving that job may have negative financial implications to the worker or they may not easily find comparable paying alternatives to move to. Should they also be considering overseas work, the comparative rate of pay may also be much lower than what they may be willing to accept, especially if it's lower than what they are on. For example, emigration from the Philippines is mainly economically driven whereas migration from the Middle East to Canada is primarily motivated by the desire for Canadian citizenship, the comparative perceived social status and lifestyle in Canada (Salami et al 2014). The Country with a lot more workers leaving than coming into the Country will also face an impact on their workforce and productivity levels. Further, it was reported that over fifty percent of the OECD countries showed an increase in permanent migration in addition to the 1.6% overall increase across the OECD countries In 2013 (OECD 2016). The reasonable assertion is that the composition of permanent migration will include largely a portion of workers who are moving for a better standard of living or purposing the maximum utility from the various alternatives for work they are presented with.

Although the World Bank reports that there is population growth in the middle-income economies, the growth rate of emigrants from these nations is rising even more (Dimock 2016). The increase in international migration has happened alongside the reduction in removal of communication and transport barriers (Dimock 2016). Also the adjustment of migration related policy to ease the movement, rewriting visa policies, favourable policies on dual citizenship that favour skilled migrants. Globalisation and expansion of free-trade arrangements between the middle-income and developed nations have also contributed to the increase in migration in addition to a more middle-class population now having the necessary skills, educational qualifications and experience and being able to afford to move. Recognising the need for immigration, goes hand in hand with recognising the impact it will have on the prospective migrants, the businesses they are employed in and other workers in that same business. Subsequently, the migration does not only present the long term effect on the skills list, occupations, quality of the workforce, depletion of the workforce and the inspired motivation for the workforce to pursue other opportunities to migrate but also presents unique recruitment and human resource management challenges to the organisations (Yemoh and Yemoh 2022).

III. MIGRATION INCLINED WORKERS AND THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

The theoretical assumption for goods and services production recognises that there are two broad groups under which all the factors of production are classified. All the factors of production are either labor or capital and is one of the simplest models of production. The essence of these factors of production is that without them, it is nearly impossible for any business, enterprises, organisation or firm to exist or transact any form of productive work. The human element represents the labor factor of production whilst all other factors that can be used towards the profit maximisation of the enterprise will be brought together by the human element and broadly classified as capital. In various scenarios, varying proportions of the labor and capital elements are combined in a cost efficient and combination efficient way for productivity. Thus, both labor and capital are vital for any form of production and any adjustments to their optimum combined efforts will have an impact on the success and profitability of the business. Within the broad classification of the factors of production, the non-human elements are generally brought into the production process by labor. This is because their inanimate nature means they lack the ability to make decisions. The lack of choice or decision making ability means that there is no possibility of capital making a choice on their own to leave the business. However, the situation is very different with the labor element because they have a natural ability to make decisions either to engage in paid work, to engage in leisure, to make decisions to leave paid work, to make decisions to also leave the Country. This means that out of the labor force, there is a group that can be classified as migration-inclined. The migration inclined workers are the workers who, even though may be employed within an organisation, are actively taking steps, or have already begun the process of leaving the employer and ultimately the Country. Workers who are migrating under the same company relocation program will be classified as still being employed by the employer and thus will not be classified as migration-inclined for this purpose.

Various research has been done on the length of time most workers stay with an employer, how the training and education of workers have on their tenure in a job, why workers leave a job and the impact of migration on job tenure (Indeed 2022). What may not be in abundance is research on the recruitment, training and management of workers who are attempting to migrate, its impact on the team they work in, how their impending migration is impacting their approach to work, and ultimately the impact on the profitability of the organisation and enterprise they work for. For example, for 2022-2023 The Australian Government intends to grant 160,000 migration places available for suitable migrants with two-thirds allocated to the Skills workers, professionals and skills shortage filling workers and one-third of the allocation to the Family Stream (Australian Government 2022). Those who

qualify as skilled labor under the skilled migration stream, will be expected to have gained the much needed experience which makes them skilled workers or at least semi-skilled. With the skill already acquired which can be engaged to earn an income, such workers will reasonably be expected to be working with that skill prior to their intended migration. Majority will be working at the time of applying for their travel permit and they will most reasonably be working up till when the decision is made to grant or reject their travel application. During this time, they will be working under managers and supervisors who may not be aware of their impending travel.

The skilled migration stream attracts workers who are estimated to contribute significantly to the receiving economies, and to play an important role in regional development. The stream further encourages investment and promotion of regional area local spending and stimulates economic growth through which their efforts create more jobs in the economy and fill positions where skills shortage in the workforce exist. The amount of skills and workers that are being recruited into Australia every year has an implication on the economies that they are coming from (Fatupaito et al, 2021). The amount of workers leaving their economies and work may also be having an impact on the businesses and organisations they are being recruited out of. Their successes at the successful migrants may also be having an added pressure and incentive to the rest of the other workers. The fact is that many who migrate under these conditions do not do it with a week's notice or application per se. Many of these processes, like Australia's skilled migration process, takes up to 2 years meaning for a period of at least 2 years, all the work places that the migrants have worked at, would have been a stop gap for the impending migration (Australian Government 2022). They most likely would not have made their employers aware and whilst they were working there they would have been working on their application to leave the Country. During this period their work will also reflect their divided effort and attention. A part of their potential productivity is lost in addition to the potential income that would have been generated to their organisation they are working for.

The loss of workers appears to be one of the unique problems of the emerging and developing countries that may have larger informal work sectors, high unemployment and significant poverty, financial hardship and limited opportunities for the citizens that are at a working age. In such cases, opportunities to travel overseas or undertake work projects and engage outside the Country, especially with its added benefits, will be positively received. This is because the main goal of every rational worker is to earn above their reservation wage and to maximise their satisfaction from their wages. Any opportunity to work and especially when it is higher than what they would have earned in their home Country will be more enticing. This is the situation that's created by the temporary and permanent migration of skilled and unskilled workers visa opportunities, RSE, SWP and

PALMS in the Asia-Pacific Region (Bedford 2021). Where skilled and unskilled workers are provided with the opportunity to work overseas with relatively minimal skills requirement to earn a relatively higher wage than they would have earned in their home. Rational workers will choose between leisure and work based on the wages on offer, their wealth levels, skills and training levels, the opportunities available and uniquely their propensity to migrate within some regions. Therefore, workers who may be employed who meet the recruitment criteria will also be considering taking up the opportunity and will take it when the opportunity presents itself. Although some of the examples listed are officially a temporary work route, it also does have its impact on the workforce and a longer time migration will also have a materially longer impact (Yemoh and Yemoh 2022).

There is therefore a significant group of workers who may be in the informal or formal work setting who may be applying for either the long term and short term overseas work opportunities in addition to those who are intent on migrating permanently. The number of workers employed by businesses who may be attempting to leave may not be so easy to ascertain. There is no legal obligation to declare such information. Also, the type of contracts they may be employed in may restrict what could be done with them or to them. Having a desire to migrate overseas as an employed worker may not be illegal or against any company policy in most countries and thus this scenario is bound to continue. Such a group of employed workers will have a significant impact on the workforce whilst they are employed in the economy of origin, whilst they are working on their exit plan and their departure will also be felt.

Organisations that recruit workers who are actively and intent upon leaving their Country will face some unique challenges. The complexity is that it is not easy to be able to decipher from among all the workers which ones will be leaving the company or the Country soon. In some cases, some employers from relatively poorer countries may have an understanding as to why and how and may even provide their support and blessing for their workers to apply for such schemes. However, in other cases, those who have a certain understanding and interest in the effect that working with such workers have on their businesses may not be so keen on recruiting or keeping such workers in their workforce (Yemoh 2022). Of course, various circumstances and the multiplicity of employers and recruiters may have various views and responses to the issue yet there is no ignoring the fact that some workers are and will in most cases be attempting to migrate from poorer regions and economies to a much better economy.

The field of human resource management today, faces various pressures for change. Some of them have been created by the economic pressures, the impacts from globalization, domestic diversity, and technology. The impact of these are already creating new and diverse issues for managers. Broadly, some of the common human resource management

challenges are; engaging the workforce, attracting talent, managing work related-relationships, engaging the most appropriate training and development strategies, talent retention, diversity in the workplace, embrace Inevitable change, employee Health and well-being, attracting top talent, embracing change with grace and ease, developing the leaders of tomorrow, fostering a culture of continuous learning, managing diversity with local in mind, looking after health and safety, and creating a quality employee experience. All of these challenges come about within organisations who are attempting to reach the ultimate goal of profit maximisation, as they attempt to motivate and incentivise their labor factor of production in a way that they provide their maximum possible contribution to the production process. The successes therefore of the organisation in overcoming these challenges will translate into the profitability levels compared to their potential profitability.

Some of the specific challenges presented to managers who are attempting to manage migration-inclined workers include motivating such workers to give their best to their company especially when their attention, focus and efforts will be devoted to their impending migration. Even in the fields that rely on unskilled workers, a certain level of attention and focus is required for maximum productivity. The further issue of health and safety at work also requires a certain level of focus and attention where it is diverted to other things. Also, when the worker is self aware that they are about to leave the company and the Country, why will they be motivated to pick up new skills that they do not believe they will need in their new Country? It is only in cases where they see a connection between their new skills and their new life in the new Country, their motivation and interest can be reasonably expected to be as if they will not leave the Country and company. However, where they have a view that the skills, experience and knowledge that could be taken in their current job may be unrelated to their future careers, they can be expected to be demotivated to pick up new skills and knowledge even if that could assist the current company and team in the short term. Furthermore, How can they be expected to show a certain level of commitment towards the company and the job when they know it is only for a short term? Most workers invest as much as they can to see some benefit for themselves which is why remuneration and benefits are provided to incentivise optimum efforts from the workers. The workers will therefore provide as much effort in accordance with the returns to them. Where a worker sees a long term and compounding returns from their efforts, they will be expected to be committed and devoted to contributing. As soon as they know their returns have an expiry date, their efforts in the organisation will reflect the adjustment to their motivation.

There will be a significant drop in their efforts and motivations to invest their time, money and energy to develop and advance the company they are currently working for as most of the efforts and energy is being invested in the processes that will enable their emigration from the Country.

The employer and supervisor they are working under, will have new challenges to overcome like attitude problems from some that result from unmotivated workers who may have the mindset that the job they are doing now and the pay they are getting now is way too small for them because of what they will potentially be earning soon. On one hand, the argument may be that workers attempting to leave the organisation are just one of the many factors for which a worker may leave, however on the other hand, such a worker leaving does not only impact their place of employment but also the economy and destination economies. The extent of the impact of such a group of workers is far reaching. This makes the challenges they present different from the usual list of issues and challenges posed by workers.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

There is no doubt that workers at various times in their working life choose to leave an organisation. Reasons also exist to explain why some workers make the choice to move out of their Country and away from their employment from their Country of origin. The number of workers employed by businesses who may be attempting to leave may not be so easy to ascertain and even if it is ascertained, the type of contracts they may be employed in may restrict what could be done with them or to them. Having a desire to migrate overseas although a worker may be employed will not be illegal or against any company policy in most countries and thus this scenario is bound to continue. Consequently, whilst some workers are employed and engaged in an organisation, their attention, focus, motivation, interest and productivity may be affected. This will then have an impact on their performance, the work of their immediate managers, and the ultimate profitability of the company they are employed in.

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