

Political Deprivations, Political Risk and the Extent of Skilled Labor Migration from Pakistan: Finding of a Time-Series Analysis

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Abstract : Over the last few decades an upward trend has been observed in the case of labor migration from Pakistan. The emigrants are not just economically motivated and in search of a safe living environment towards more developed countries in Europe, North America and Middle East. The opportunity cost of migration comes in the form of brain drain that is the loss of qualified and skilled human capital. Throughout the history of Pakistan, situations of political instability have emerged ranging from violation of political rights, political disappearances to political assassinations. Providing security to the citizens is a major issue faced in Pakistan due to increase in crime and terrorist activities. The aim of the study is to test the impact of political instability, appearing in the form of political terror, violation of political rights and civil liberty on skilled migration of labor. Three proxies are used to measure the political instability; political terror scale (based on a scale of 1-5, the political terror and violence that a country encounters in a particular year), political rights (a rating of 1-7, that describes political rights as the ability for the people to participate without restraint in political process) and civil liberty (a rating of 1-7, civil liberty is defined as the freedom of expression and rights without government intervention). Using time series data from 1980-2011, the distributed lag models were used for estimation because migration is not a onetime process, previous events and migration can lead to more migration. Our research clearly shows that political instability appearing in the form of political terror, political rights and civil liberty all appeared significant in explaining the extent of skilled migration of Pakistan.

Keywords : skilled labor migration, political terror, political rights, civil liberty, distributed lag model

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