

Chapter 33. Skilled Migration to USA: Diaspora Networks and Contribution to Home Country

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Introduction

Skilled labor migration is a major concern for developed and developing countries. Some sending countries has achieved significant successes in dealing with this problem. Some countries are using diaspora channels effectively. Through diaspora networks contributions, they are able to compensate some of the loss caused by the skilled outmigration.

Firstly, in this study, the terms are described and the literature on skilled migration, diaspora and diaspora networks are visited. Then, diaspora networks have been categorized based on their characteristics. Findings of a research on Turkish diaspora and their contribution to Turkey are presented before conclusion with some remarks on Turkey.

Skilled Migration

Skilled migration is one form of brain drain, a movement of professionals that has become an essential part of immigrant flows (Brandi, 2001, p.101). It has an important place in international flows. Skilled migration has become increasingly diverse since 1930s involving skilled permanent and skilled temporary migrations, and business transfers (Iredale, 1999, p.89).

Skilled migrants can contribute to their home countries in various ways including return migration, sending remittances and via diaspora networks. With these, they can effect the economy and policies in their countries of origin positively despite being away (Docquier and Rapoport, 2007, p.3). According to a web based survey conducted with 153 Chinese academics living in the US and Canada, these mainland Chinese migrants contributed to China. These contributions were in; coordination of various research projects, running seminars and courses, presenting academic papers, training mainland Chinese students overseas, editing a book with a mainland scholar, and consulting with companies in the mainland China (Zweig, Fung and Han, 2008, p.23).

Diaspora and Diaspora Networks

Diaspora as a term today is separated from a country or national origin, but used in various meanings such as cross-country groups with world wide networks including social, economic and political networks (Vertovec, 1999, p.1).

The history of relations with diaspora networks dates back to Polish people who were living in Europe and US. This form of organization with the mobility of qualified people have continued with the growing variety of applications in the contemporary. Diaspora networks-also called immigrant networks- aim to ensure

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continuity relatives, friends of immigrants or citizens of countries'. Through the agency of the networks countries can be gain know-how transfer of skilled migrants and financial support their incomes. Also countries like China, Columbia, some Africa regions, skilled migrants be in relations in their source countries without need to returning. Thus they can contribute for source countries (Sahay, 2009, p.33).

Many countries benefit from the networks to connect their immigrants. In this context diaspora networks are the communities which is enabling immigrants to establish connection with their countries. Especially the networks include students and labor organizations has been effective transfer of know how for sending countries. The networks form spontaneously and play an active role in development sending countries on the based cooperation (Kuznetsov and Sabel, 2006, p. 4-5).

Diaspora networks are categorized in below. (Meyer and Brown, 1999):

“Student/Scholarly networks offer assistance to students studying abroad and encourage the sharing of information and dialogue between scholars. They often facilitate studies abroad and/or reintegration into the highly qualified labour market afterwards. They have a limited scope in terms of activities and contributions to the country of origin. Also, this category of networks is the only one which includes highly industrialised countries initiatives.

Local associations of skilled expatriates are groups of highly skilled professionals who meet regularly on both a professional and social level. The aim is to promote the professional interests of members as well as to socialise on a more personal level. CESASC (China) for example organises various technical and professional meetings such as an Annual Technical Conference and provides employment listings in various professional fields which might interest members. The SIPA (India) however goes a step further: it aims to develop co-operation and exchange not only between highly skilled expatriate Indians, but also between the U.S.A. and India in high technology areas. Sometimes, these local associations constitute a nucleus on which global and more systematic networks may develop, as is the case of the Colombian Red Caldas network, the South African Network of Skills Abroad and the Philippines Brain Gain Network (BGN).

The Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) uses the expertise of highly skilled expatriates by assisting them to return to their home country for short visits. These visits usually last between three weeks and three months during which the expatriates engage in various development projects or undertake teaching assignments at local universities. Dozens of countries have successfully used this programme occasionally, during the last two decades. However, recently some of them such as Palestine, Pakistan and Lebanon have started to set up more permanent structures to tap their expatriate human resources through the TOKTEN programme more systematically. The list of databases of people, organised by area for example, constitute embryos of real networks.

Developing intellectual/scientific diaspora networks are classified as such because they share certain characteristics with intellectual/scientific diaspora networks, but due to certain constraints have not fully developed into this type

of network. Their aim is to make use of the highly skilled expatriate pool of their countries to contribute to the development process of the home country. The RBD project of Thailand initially only aimed at bringing highly skilled Thai expatriates back to their country for short visits to assist there in the development of science and technology. It has since turned its focus to setting up projects between Thai scientists at home and their counterparts abroad, without necessarily bringing the expatriate scientists back to Thailand”

Intellectual/scientific diasporas have emerged spontaneously and independently. The main aim is to connect to their fellow nationals abroad. For example, SANSAs (South Africa) and CALDAS are one of the common networks in this category. But there is no restriction on citizens of other nations joining the intellectual/scientific diaspora (Brown, 2000).

Methods

Participants

The research sample consisted of 110 Turkish skilled migrants living USA. 35 (31,8%) of participants were female and 75 (68,2%) were male. 46 (41,8%) of participants were in 25-30, 31 (28,2%) were 31-35, 7 (6,4%) were 36-40, 15 (13,6%) were 41-45, 3 (2,7%), were 46-50, 8 (7,3%) were 51 years and over. 24 (21,8%) of participants were graduate and 86 (78,2%) were post graduate. 29 (26,4%) of participants had academic degrees while 81 (73,6%) were without one.

Measurement Instruments

In this study it was aimed to explore the perception of Turkish migrants and their diaspora networks' contribution to Turkey. E-survey was selected as the method. For the main purpose, basic descriptive information, ANOVA tests and regression analysis were used. Also, it consisted two scales for measuring the contribution to home country. One of the scales “contribution to development of diaspora networks” had consisted 17 likert-type items. The second scale was, “contribution to development of the state policies” had 26 items. The likert items consisted five level respondents' answer levels. These levels were 5 scale points from disagreement to agreement. In the tables in scale questions it was used analysis of variance, post-hoc tests and regression analysis.

The Membership of Diaspora Network and Collaboration with Turkey

The sample consisted three types of networks. 49 (44,5%) of participants were members of academic/scientific network, 49 (44,5%) were members of business network and 12 (10,9%) were members of other networks. Firstly, we asked participants that: “How many years have you been member of the network?”. 4 (3,6%) of participants were less than 1 year, 64 (58,2%) were 1-5 years, 24 (21,8%) were 6-10 years, 5 (4,5%) were 11-15 years, 6 (5,5%) were 16 years and over. 7 (6,4%) of participants didn't answer the question.

Also we asked participants, have they ever took part in studies executed in Turkey. 14 (12,7%) of the participants took part in studies conducted in Turkey while 96 (87,3%) didnot. Then we asked those 110 participants that question “Do you continue your work executed in Turkey?”. 5 (35,71%) participants over fourteen those who took part in studies conducted in Turkey have continued their

studies, but 8 (57,14%) of them did not. One participant did not respond to this question.

On the collaborations with Turkey; 3 (12.5%) of the participants worked Turkish public universities, 3 (12.5%) worked private universities, 6 (25%) worked state owned research centers, 3 (12.5%) worked private owned research centers, 4 (16.7%) worked private companies, 5 (20.8%) worked non-profit organizations in Turkey.

According to the types of the studies in Turkey; 7 (31.8%) of participants specified “taking part R&D projects”. 7 (31.8%) specified “participating seminars, courses leadership programs and etc.”, 4 (18.2%) specified “editing a book or writing an article”, 4 (18.2%) stated “providing consultancy services for individuals and organizations”.²

Another question we asked was; “Do you think Turkey benefit from Turkish diaspora networks abroad efficiency?” Only 7 (6.4%) of participants saying yes while 81 (73.6%) saying no. 22 (20%) of participants had no idea.

ANOVA and Regression Analysis

Table 1. Contribution to development of diaspora networks ANOVA test

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Connection with the source country	Between Groups	3.263	2	1.632	1.444	.240
	Within Groups	120.860	107	1.130		
	Total	124.123	109			
Professional Cooperation	Between Groups	3.630	2	1.815	1.859	.161
	Within Groups	104.464	107	.976		
	Total	108.094	109			
Acting efforts of the network management with the source country	Between Groups	.548	2	.274	.261	.771
	Within Groups	112.160	107	1.048		
	Total	112.708	109			
Diaspora Volunteerism	Between Groups	3.014	2	1.507	1.059	.350
	Within Groups	152.259	107	1.423		
	Total	155.273	109			

According to One-Way ANOVA test result that there was no statistically significant difference between groups. ($p>0,05$). It was seen the group means of factors that “connection with the source country” was 0.240, “professional cooperation” was 0.161, “acting efforts of the network management with the source country” was 0.771 and “diaspora volunteerism” was 0.350.

² In the questions about "collaborations with Turkey" and "types of the studies in Turkey" the participants were granted multiple choices. So the participants seemed to be more than exact participants number who took part in studies in Turkey.

Also descriptive statistics showed that in terms of scales of the “contribution to development of diaspora networks” members of the diaspora networks had a negative perception. For each factor scores from the lowest to highest were; “acting efforts of the network management with the source country” (2.2818), “professional cooperation” (2.3750), “connection with the source country” (2.4955) and “diaspora volunteerism (2.8788)”.

Table 2. Contribution to development of the state policies ANOVA Test

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Inter-agency coordination and encouraging the transfer of information and ability	Between Groups	1.472	2	.736	.965	.384
	Within Groups	80.836	106	.763		
	Total	82.309	108			
“Information flow and Access” and “Continuity of Relationships”	Between Groups	1.304	2	.652	1.029	.361
	Within Groups	67.796	107	.634		
	Total	69.100	109			
Participation to transnational activities	Between Groups	.399	2	.200	.242	.786
	Within Groups	88.288	107	.825		
	Total	88.687	109			
Transnational mobility	Between Groups	1.039	2	.519	.641	.529
	Within Groups	86.644	107	.810		
	Total	87.682	109			

In light of the findings of table 2; there was no statistically significant difference between groups ($p>0.05$)

Table 3. Contribution to development of the state policies* Connection with the source country

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized t Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.690	.253		6.667	.000
Inter-agency coordination and encouraging the transfer of information and ability	-.083	.189	-.070	-.440	.661
“Information flow and Access” and “Continuity of Relationships”	.549	.231	.419	2.375	.019
Participation to transnational activities	.011	.179	.010	.062	.951
Transnational mobility	-.011	.161	-.010	-.070	.944

Dependent Variable: Connection with the source country

Considering the descriptive statistics associated with factors of scale “contribution to development of the state policies” a relatively low average of the

scores given by each networks. According to the scores of means; “inter-agency coordination and encouraging the transfer of information and ability” was 1,7560, “information flow and access and continuity of relationships” was 1,7000 “participation to transnational activities” was 1,9523 and “transnational mobility” was 1,9932. In light of findings of descriptive statistics; academic/scientific network members, business network members and other network members had a negative perception regarding to contribute to development of the state policies.

It is shown that “inter-agency coordination and encouraging the transfer of information and ability” was a determining factor on “professional cooperation” ($p<0,05$) (Table 4). It has been found that there was also a positive relationship between the factors as seen from beta coefficient (0,327).

Table 4. Contribution to development of the state policies* Professional Cooperation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.227	.227		5.405	.000
Inter-agency coordination and encouraging the transfer of information and ability	.373	.169	.327	2.204	.030
“Information flow and Access” and “Continuity of Relationships”	.032	.207	.026	.156	.877
Participation to transnational activities	.101	.160	.092	.632	.529
Transnational mobility	.117	.144	.106	.808	.421

Dependent Variable: Professional Cooperation

Table 5. Contribution to development of the state policies* Acting efforts of the network management with the source country

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.211	.231		5.249	.000
Inter-agency coordination and encouraging the transfer of information and ability	.356	.172	.308	2.069	.041
“Information flow and Access” and “Continuity of Relationships”	-.275	.210	-.218	-1.307	.194
Participation to transnational activities	.411	.163	.368	2.531	.013
Transnational mobility	.048	.147	.043	.329	.743

Dependent Variable: Acting efforts of the network management with the source country

“Information flow and Access and Continuity of Relationships” was a determining factor on Connection with the source country ($p<0.05$). Also there was a positive correlation between two factors (Beta=0.419).

According to table 5, “inter-agency coordination and encouraging the transfer of information and ability” and “participation to transnational activities” were determining on “acting efforts of the network management with the source country”.

Conclusions

Despite that diaspora networks and their role about home countries is widespread phenomenon, it is relatively a new concept in Turkey. Diaspora networks link many activities to contribute to their origin countries. Also home countries use state policies successfully to contribute for themselves through diaspora networks.

In light of the findings it is seen that skilled Turkish migrants contribute their host country rather than home country. As given place to in ANOVA tests it was presented that there was no differentiation between diaspora networks. Also considering the scores about contribution to development of diaspora networks, Turkish migrants had a negative perception. So migrants thought that the networks they are members of did not contribute to Turkey.

Also it is seen that perception of Turkish migrants about their contribution to development of Turkish state policies was negative. Especially considering the scores about contribution to development of state policies, migrants’ perception was negative. This shows that respondents accepted that Turkish state policies did not turn migration to development. Finally, the other key finding in the research was that state policies were determining the Turkish diaspora networks’ contribution to Turkey. The findings indicate that the state policies should be improved to encourage diaspora networks’ contribution to development in Turkey.

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