

# Brain Drain and Family Strain: The Impact of Immigration on Pakistani Families

## Outline

- 1 **Introduction:** Despite having some positive impacts on families' economic conditions, brain drain has a severe deteriorating impact on Pakistani families due to immigration of individuals or entire families.
- 2 **Antithesis: Positive Impacts on Pakistani Families**
  - a) Improved economic conditions
  - b) Access to opportunities
  - c) Global exposure
- 3 **Thesis: Negative Impacts on Pakistani Families**
  - a) Alteration in family dynamics
    - i) Fragmented family structure
    - ii) Isolation
    - iii) Individualistic tendencies

b) Effect on children

- i) Raised without parents
- ii) Identity crisis
- iii) Lack of bonding with parent

c) Impact on marriages

- i) Cross-cultural marriages
- ii) Miscommunication between separated spouses
- iii) ~~Imbalance~~ Increased chances of cheating

d) Impact on parents

- i) Psychological impact
- ii) Physical weakness
- iii) Burden of responsibilities
- iv) Resistance to move abroad

e) Polarization of gender roles

- i) Men assume breadwinner role
- ii) Women confined to caregiving roles

f) Harsh living conditions

- i) Confined living
- ii) No room for personalization

g) Cultural assimilation

- i) Loss of values
- ii) Festivities (religion and national)



b) Vulnerability to patriarchal society

i) Struggle of wife living alone

ii) Society judgements

iii) Harassment

4 Conclusion:

Pakistan is the fifth largest country in terms of population, with 68 percent of its population consisting of youth. However, recent trends show that a vast majority of young people aspire to leave the country. In 2024, approximately 7 lac Pakistanis left the country. This rapid brain drain is exacerbated by declining economic conditions, ongoing political turmoil, and rising extremist tendencies in Pakistani society. This phenomenon of brain drain makes Pakistan vulnerable at both national and social ends. Despite having some positive impacts on families' economic conditions, brain drain has severely deteriorating effects on Pakistani families due to immigration of individuals or entire families. Firstly, immigration of individuals alters family dynamics leading to fragmentation and isolation. Secondly, it impacts bond and relationships among children, parents, and spouses causing severe mental strain. Thirdly, it leads to polarization of gender roles, causing inequalities. Fourthly, it alters living conditions and cultural values and finally it makes fragmented family vulnerable to threats. This essay comprehensively discusses the impacts of



immigration on Pakistani families.

One of the positive impact of brain drain on family is economic improvement in economic conditions. Individuals living abroad send remittances to their families living in Pakistan. Due to rupee devaluation, the exchange rate is high, which means families living in Pakistan can spend money on more commodities as compared to their family members living abroad. This exacerbate youth's desire to leave the country and support their families living in home country with foreign currencies. Economic independence and access to commodities promote a healthy and thriving family. It prevents interfamily tensions due to poverty and economic constraints. Moreover, family living in Pakistan enjoys an elevated social status among in community which makes it less vulnerable to external threats or humiliations. Thus, brain drain aids in economic well-being of Pakistani families.

Moreover, brain drain give access to opportunities to both, people living leaving the country and their families living in home country. Family members studying abroad guide their family



members living in home country. Individuals having their family member abroad enhances their chance of visa acceptance. Moreover, overseas students can increase the chance of university admission by aiding ~~through~~ in references. This increases the chance of receiving study abroad opportunities.

Similarly, individuals working in companies abroad ~~prefer~~ can refer their family members from home country. This increases the chance of overseas employment and can multiple the economic benefits for the family. Furthermore, people living abroad have access to better healthcare conditions and resources to have their family members treated from top medical facilities.

Brain drain also enhances the global exposure of individuals. Individuals living abroad are exposed to various cultures and situations which make them resilient. This leads to ~~also~~ adoption of good values from different cultures and implement them in their family life. Individuals exposed to liberal lifestyle are more flexible in their family life. This tendency leads to a more tolerant ~~and~~ environment in family. Moreover, they are more aware of ~~for~~



mental health and its impact of on family life. They are more equipped with global ~~and~~ values to raise their children.

This tolerant environment give freedom of expression to family members and diminish patriarchal mindsets. In this way global exposure of individuals of leads a more peaceful and tolerant family.

With all these positive impacts, the brain drain has a negative side, asserting severe strain on Pakistan families. First and the foremost is the alteration of family dynamics. Brain drain and immigration have led to a fragmented family structure. Historically, when the industrial revolution emerged, it shifted the dynamic towards nuclear family. ~~with~~ People moved to bigger cities with more industries and work opportunities. Similarly, globalization is shifting the dynamics in favour of fragmented families. In general, one member, particularly male, immigrate to the developed country to earn livelihood and support family living in home country. This causes ~~separation~~ ~~and~~ ~~long~~ lack of attachments among family members. The family members living abroad prefer isolation when they come back to their home countries. Furthermore,



spouses living far away develop individualistic tendencies and prefer their own comfort instead of whole family. In fragmented family structure cause a deep rooted imbalance in attachments and bonds.

One of the significant impact of immigration is on children. Separation of one parent put a severe strain on mental health of children. Children in their early stages learn from their parents. Both spouses play a crucial role in children raising. Mother provide nurturing and care to the children and father teaches them resilience and responsibilities. In absence of any one parent, their mental growth is impacted. Children growing without parent lack role model to immitate. Furthermore, this lead to detachment with their parents and make them attracted towards alternative coping mechanisms. In absence of father, children are more vulnerable to immoral activities, as father in Pakistani society is considered a guiding and surveillant figure. Similarly, children living abroad in case of entire family immigration, struggle with identity crisis. They are unable to connect with to Pakistani traditions and family values and lack national pride.



Similarly, marriages have been badly impacted due to brain drain. On one hand it brings economic prosperity, while on the other it leads to marital issues. Firstly, young people living abroad tend to marry women from other cultures, religions and ethnicity to gain nationalities. Most of the time this act is disapproved by their parents and peers in home country. This leads to disagreements among families leading to psychological strain on both parents and the couple. Furthermore, brain drain causes long distances between existing couples leading to miscommunication and trust issues. Conversations between the couples over texts messages and calls with the proper contexts leads to trust issues and tensions. Moreover, spouses living in different countries are more prone to cheating on each other due to lack of attachment and surveillance. This often leads to separation between the couple impacting the whole family especially children.

In the similar fashion, parents are also vulnerable to psychological strain and physical threats due to brain drain of their young children. Parents in their old



age are more prone to mental strain and separation of their children make them ~~vulnerable~~ depressed. In Pakistani society parents are a vital component of family unlike in western societies where parents does not hold much autonomy of their children after their children get adult. ~~In~~ This makes them more attached to their children. Moreover, parents left behind in their old age are prone to physical threats as well due to their weak health conditions. In absence of their children they don't have any support to function properly and do their day to day tasks. Furthermore, their resistance to move abroad and attachment to their culture causes disagreements and tensions further ~~straining~~ straining family bond.

Another impact of brain drain on family structure in Pakistan is polarization of gender roles. When individuals leave the country to earn for their ~~family~~ families, they adopt ~~to~~ the breadwinner role strictly and freeing themselves from child raising and household responsibilities. This makes them dominant in their family. Similarly, on the other hand their wives living in their home country adapt strictly to the nurturing role



limiting their access to financial independence. This often causes imbalance in family responsibilities and ~~also~~ cement the patriarchal values and traditional family ~~and~~ values. This perpetuates in the children and they immitate the roles of their parents leading to the vicious cycle of strengthening polarized gender roles.

Another impact on Pakistani families is their living condition abroad. Individuals or entire families living abroad struggle with expensive living. They are often confined to small apartments with limited space. Unlike their homes in Pakistan, which are spacious and fulfill family needs. Moreover, their accomodations in foreign countries are often rented making no room for personalization and self expression through living. These accomodations are often expensive putting an additional strain on families financial conditions. In this way living conditions also impact the family's mental health and well-being.

Similarly, people living abroad find it hard to assimilate into the cultures. ~~of~~ However, if the entire family immigrate to the foreign country, their children are more prone to adoption of



western values. This lead to loss of cultural values of the home country and make children struggle with identity crisis. Moreover, People living abroad cannot celebrate religious and cultural festivals with their families and this absense from festivities make them used to an isolated approach in festivities. Moreover, ~~they~~ ~~become~~ they are unable to participate and connect with the festivities of their country of stay making them alienated during festivities.

One of the significant impact of immigration of individuals leaving behind their wives alone in their home country is that their wives are prone to threats posed by patriarchal society. Living alone makes life miserable for women due to prevailing patriarchal norms and tribal traditions. Women often faces judgement of the society and extended family often leading to trust issues between spouses. Furthermore, ~~spouse~~ women living alone is taken advantage by the male dominated society. They often get harassed ~~and~~ in public places and work places in absense of their husbands.

In conclusion, brain drain of young people lead to improved economic condition of the families, but it also leaves a profound



deteriorating impact on family structure, values, spouses relationship, children growth, parents mental health and loss of culture due to ~~global~~ assimilation. Thus, brain drain has more harmful impact on traditional family values of Pakistani families, than benefits it provides.