

BETWEEN WORK IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

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Abstract: *Over the past decades, there have been many global changes, which have led to a massive growth in immigration, mainly from developing countries to developed countries. This phenomenon is caused mainly because of the lack of job opportunities in the developing countries, along with other factors. As a result, many people who strive to improve the conditions for them and their families choose to leave their homes and travel to other countries, where they hope to start a better life. This leads to a growing number of work immigrants in many countries around the world. In Israel, the number of work immigrants is growing every year, causing social and political disturbances, and making the Israeli population develop hate towards these immigrants. By exploring the history of this phenomenon and its reach throughout the world, I hope to set the background which will help me understand the phenomenon as it is evident in Israel today. The present article wishes to address the subject of work immigrants in Israel, to develop a new framework for thought regarding the foreign and domestic policy about work immigrants and asylum seekers and to explore the way these immigrants are treated in Israel.*

Keywords: *immigrants; refugees; globalization; work immigrants*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the issue of working immigrants has extensively preoccupied the world population in general and the population in Israel in particular. In our present age, we are experiencing symptoms of globalization that are frequently manifested in the State of Israel as well as in many European countries. This involves massive numbers of working immigrants who are coming from third world countries, due to frequent threats of an “economic sword”. In most cases, it is a real sword that endangers the safety of the immigrants and their families in countries such as: Syria, Sudan, Eritrea and others. The globalization age is mainly characterized today by accessible information, large part of which is available through the internet. Moreover, this information is moving at the speed of light, as the experiences of the first immigration pioneers are transmitted to those left behind, raising questions as to whether they can come, what will happen to them, how will they live and other questions.

I have chosen to explore this issue due to several reasons. The first is my position in the national imprisonment organization of the State of Israel (National Correctional Services). My current position is operational control officer, entrusted with making operational inspections related to the security of imprisonment facilities as well as of

facilities for illegal infiltrators. Some of these infiltrators are refuge seekers from countries which pose a clear and immediate danger to their life. However, the majority of them are working immigrants, who are threatened by an existential danger from an economic point of view but not by an obvious danger of death.

The second reason is my interest in the far-from-simple demographic situation of the State of Israel. The country has a considerable number of minority groups living in it and endangering its Jewish identity. Moreover, Israel is surrounded by Muslim countries on all its sides and these countries have groups of extreme Islamists. I have no intention of harming any religion. I only express my worldview about a radical religion, i.e. referring with dismissal and condemnation to the use of religion in order to harm others.

The third reason that I see as the focus of attraction to engage in the present study, is the economic aspect. The State of Israel is a country under development, and the large number of working immigrants might pose a threat to its economy, development, welfare policy, employment for its citizens, health services, community services and so on.

I deem it right to emphasize that Israel is a multi-cultural country. Most of its citizens have come from various countries. Some of these countries are developed but the majority are

countries, whereby the culture has not yet developed and their economy is not prosperous. At present, we are witnessing the disappearance of the culture prevalent in the countries, in which lived the Jews who immigrated to Israel during the 1960s, 1970s and the beginning of the 1990s.

The main goals of my study are: (1) To develop a new framework for thought regarding the foreign and domestic policy about work immigrant/ asylum seekers; (2) To explore the constitutional aspects of the way work immigrants in Israel are being treated; (3) To explore the human right issues related to the work immigrants phenomenon in Israel; (4) To explore the cultural issues involved in this phenomenon. The main research question is: which factors could construct the framework for thought about Israel's policy regarding work immigrants' phenomenon?

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Aspects within multicultural communities.

The world today is a changing world. Boundaries are becoming more open and the lines between cultures are beginning to fade gradually. This can be seen more prominently in counties around the world, which are becoming multicultural and multilinguistic, as a result of the mixture of different cultures in the same country. For example, in Serbia, the population has changed over the years due to immigrants from different countries, traveling to Serbia and moving there. According to the 2011 census, the population in Serbia was comprised out of Roma, Hungarian and Bosniaks, all living together and sharing the rights and responsibilities of the country (Basic & Markovic, 2018).

The meaning of multiculturalism in a changing global climate mainly means, that different countries, especially developed countries, are accepting people from different countries and embracing them into their country and into their culture, allowing them to become a part of it, while incorporating parts of their (the immigrants) own culture in to their "new" culture. That creates a new atmosphere, which includes parts of different traditions and cultures. Another result is the fact that different people from different countries bring with them different languages, which causes a multilinguistic surrounding, which forces the countries to foster strategies that incorporate these languages into their everyday life (Ravazzani, 2015).

However, that is not necessarily the case in most developed countries. In these countries, as mentioned before, the number of immigrants from developing countries is growing all the time, and

as a result, developed countries are becoming more multicultural. However, one prominent outcome of this phenomenon is a growing social rage and frustration against these immigrants. Local population in the developed countries are blaming immigrants for social problems and mistreating them, treating them as threats to the local population and even depriving these immigrants of basic human rights. Over the past few years and even decades, many countries in America, Europe and the Middle East, which has welcomed many immigrants, have begun to take steps against this immigration wave, such as building walls across the country's boundary, in order to keep immigrants out (Marsella, 2009).

2.2 Immigration Theories. As mentioned earlier, the current world is a global one, where the boundaries are open and subject to constant change. As a result of these changes, over the past few decades, the concept of immigration has grown dramatically and nowadays, people are more frequently leaving their homes, in order to explore other, sometimes more lucrative and safer, options for living their lives. This sometimes result in some countries becoming a home for a large number of immigrants, especially developed and wealthy countries. However, this phenomenon can cause a disturbance in the hosting state, especially when this country is a welfare state, which is fixated on supplying its citizens with social benefits and political and financial stability. But, when the population is increasing by large amounts of immigrants, it can cause a social, political and financial problem for the country and its limited resources (Freeman, 2011).

When talking about reforms and policies which countries need to do in order to deal with the growing phenomenon of immigration, the focus is on two main issues: immigration control policy or immigration regulation; and immigration policy, which refers to the conditions which the state provides in order to resident immigrants. These issues are determined by each state and its specific elements which comprise the states' rules and regulations. For example, the national identity of each state can be a determining factor for its immigration policy. The national identity focuses on historical and political sociology, and uses it in order to determine the states' views regarding, among other things, immigration and immigration policy (Meyers, 2000).

After we've discussed the problems and concerns that can be caused by immigration, especially large-scale immigration, it is important

to understand why, in the face of such adversities, do people still choose to immigrate and leave the life they know behind, only to move to a place where they might not be accepted. We would like now to examine the incentives which cause people to migrate. The main incentives are money and jobs. A person will be more willing to change his entire life, if he knows that he has a better job, with better financial rewards waiting for him. Also, employment status plays a part in the decision to migrate. A job which may offer the same money, but a better position, or a better social stand, might cause a person to choose it, even if it means that in order to take it, he would have to leave his life and start over in a new place (Rodriguez-Pose, Ketterer & Castells-Quintana, 2015).

The biggest question regarding immigration theory in the multicultural world we live in today is- if a country enables immigrants to enter it, live, work and integrate within it, how should it treat them? what are the rights that immigrants should get from their new country? The answer to this question is not clear and decisive, nor is it a simple one, and it depends on a number of factors. For example, if the immigrants arrive to a certain country during a time of financial and social flourish, then they are likely to receive many benefits, be treated like citizens and will be able to find employment easily. But, if the immigrants arrive to a country during a depression and financial struggle, where work is hard to find for the local population and the struggle to survive is evident for everyone, that it is likely to assume that the immigrants will be encountered by hostility by the local population and also by hardship by the government, in a desire to keep the available jobs and resources for the citizens (Parvin, 2019).

2.3 Work Immigrants- Legal Aspects. As we have seen thus far, the number of immigrants which are traveling around the world each year is rapidly growing, while a large number of those immigrants are work immigrants, meaning that they leave their homes in order to find a better paying job in another country, which will hopefully will improve their lives and the life of their families, which are often left behind. Most of these work immigrants come from third world countries, mainly in Africa, which is due to the fact that despite the birth rate is growing all the time, the labor market is weak and the job opportunities are scarce, so that people have no chance but to try to find work in another country, preferably a developed one, which has a larger chance of finding a good paying job (Coleman, 1992).

Another point of consideration when discussing the case of work immigrants is the fact, that because they come to a certain country in order to work, this group is one of the biggest in terms of percentages in the labor market. As a result, this can cause a serious problem between the immigrants and the local population, which might discriminate against them due to the fact that most of them are working, and in jobs that are not filled by members of the local population. In Finland, for example, that is the case in regard to the Russian and Estonian speaking immigrants, which are part of the Finnish labor market, but not part of the Finnish society, due in part to resentment by the natives (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind & Perhoniemi, 2007).

As mentioned, work immigrants come to a certain country out of one reason: they want to work and earn money, most times in order to send to their family, which was left behind. As a result, they take on whatever job they can find, even of this job is dangerous and unsafe. As a result, the chances for a work immigrant to get hurt and injured during work are especially high. Other factors which influence the degree in which the work immigrants are at risk during their work could be linguistic barriers and cultural factors. So that begs the question- why do the authorities allow work immigrants to keep entering the country and risk themselves? In Italy, for example, despite a big economic recession which has affected the country's economy since 2008, the authorities have continued to increase the number of work permits until 2010, mainly due to the entry of eastern European countries in to the European union and because of a growing need for foreign, cheaper, manpower (Girauda et al., 2019).

The importance of immigration policy in developed countries, especially those who are receiving large numbers of work immigrants, lies in the very fact that these immigrants are essentially taking the jobs of the local population, most times for less the money, which makes it more profitable for the employers. In Malaysia, for example, which is slowly becoming one of the largest Asian countries to receive work immigrants in it, the number of undocumented and illegal work immigrants, along with legal ones, is growing every year, which makes it hard for the government to change the existing immigration policy and the existing labor laws, in order to benefit the legal working citizens and immigrants in the country. As a result, the country and the government are trying to establish a legislation and a social, economic and political reform, which will reduce the country's

dependence on the immigrants and foreign workers, and limit the distribution of work permits to these workers (Del Carpio *et al.*, 2015).

3. CONCLUSION

This article has focused on the concept of immigration in the global era and the outcomes of this phenomenon for the hosting countries, as well as for the immigrants themselves. The review of the literature has shown that around the world, as people travel more and more from country to country and create new cultures, which are mostly made out of immigrants, the world is constantly changing and we, as a society need to change with it, in order to keep up. However, that is not necessarily the case when dealing with work immigrants. For this group, the local society should form and create rules which will help them find a place and a job, in order to better their lives on the one hand, but in a way that will not damage the local population and its possibility to get a job, on the other hand. This is a tricky situation, because the government and the people which are responsible for the decision-making need to consider the best interest of both sides, and establish a framework which will aid them both, which is not an easy thing to accomplish.

When writing this article, I have learned that the Israeli government is dealing with a growing number of work immigrants, which some arrive in the country as refugees and remain in it over time. As a result, the country is forced to find solutions so that they will be able to get work and support themselves, in order to not become a financial burden on the country and its social services, all without harming the job possibilities available to the local population of the country. This is a difficult task, and one that the country and the decision-makers struggle with on a daily basis. I believe that in order to better handle the situation, the Israeli government needs to establish clearer immigration laws and close its borders, so that the local population will not be damaged and harmed by the lack of jobs. Also, I believe that the government should establish tougher punishment against illegal immigrants, who come into the country to find work in an illegal way, and send them back to their countries, or maybe even imprison them for a period of several months, in order to allow the financial system of the country to heal and recover.

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