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C O N T E N T S

Determinants of Students' Global Migration in Select Countries

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Abstract

The study examines global migration with a focus on International Students' Mobility (ISM) in both developed and developing countries. Utilizing data from UNESCO on international student inflow from 2011 to 2020, the research evaluates the influx of foreign students in selected countries through panel regression analysis. The study investigates the determinants of ISM by exploring the perspectives of global student migration and identifying key educational and economic factors within host countries that attract international students. The analysis reveals significant differences in how these factors affect student inflow between developed and developing nations. Findings highlight that developed countries often benefit from robust educational infrastructures and economic stability, making them more attractive to international students seeking high-quality education and better career opportunities. In contrast, developing countries may rely on competitive tuition fees and cultural ties to attract foreign students. The study underscores the complexity and heterogeneity of factors influencing ISM, emphasizing that policies promoting international education should be tailored to the specific characteristics and needs of each host country. This research contributes to the understanding of ISM by providing insights into the motivations behind international student migration and the varying impact of host country attributes. It offers valuable implications for policymakers and educational institutions aiming to enhance their attractiveness to foreign students, thus facilitating a more balanced and mutually beneficial global exchange in higher education. The study's comprehensive analysis of ISM dynamics supports informed decision-making in the development of strategies to optimize international student inflows and foster global academic collaboration.

Keywords: International Student Mobility (ISM), Global Migration, Higher Education Policy, Developed vs Developing Countries, Panel Data Analysis

Introduction

During the colonial era, the imperial government provided opportunities for exclusive nationals to pursue higher education in imperial capitals such as London and Paris for the purpose of adjudicating the colonial administrative cadres. This cross-border mobility for education was allowed with the assumption that graduates return home to serve the administration in their home country; this was the expectation before World War II. Due to post-war effects, developing nations experienced a lack of qualified knowledge community to meet their development needs. During this period, higher education investment and human resource development became essential. Foreign education provides assistance to developing nations around the world in developing their fundamental knowledge communities in their home universities. Foreign education was a determinant in post-colonial development periods due to factors such as a lack of facilities in domestic education (i.e., subject experts), the value of foreign education in encouraging people to pursue higher education, and the experience gained through multi-culturalism. During the colonial period, the colonial powers sponsored overseas education, and during the post-colonial period, funding for overseas education came from a variety of sources, including national governments, scholarships for study abroad offered by the United States, and the World Bank. In fact, there was a competition to attract graduates from developing nations during the cold-war period. The Soviet Union and the USA were in tough competition to attract more students to their higher education institutions.

The end of the Cold War era allowed the public universities to introduce fee collection from the students, which had previously been the case only in private universities. The affiliations with private universities were aided by foreign universities, which led to international pricing of the fees levied by them. With the emergence of the private sector, cross-border institutional linkages, and full pricing of educational services, the role of GATS in foreign education and rendered services takes shape. Further the discussion will be focused on the international student's mobility (ISM) to developed and developing nations across world.

The ISM is influenced by various socioeconomic and political factors in the students' home countries as a result of globalization. It is generally assumed that the flow of student mobility is from developing to developed economies. In the present study, the researcher assumed that the flow of cross-border education is caused by economic factors, educational factors, and migration factors, respectively. Consider a nation that speaks English

(globally speaking). Developed nations like Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom are important suppliers of study abroad options for students from other countries. Neeraj Kaushal (2019); Khaled Qassem Hailat (2020). On the other hand, when choosing developing nations like India, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine, consideration is given to the increasing number of international students in these economies, which enhances their status as an education destination for higher education. Vakulenko, (2016); Botagoz Ibragimova, (2019); Tamara, (2020); and Kriti Dagar, (2021).

Further the paper is organized as following phases. Phase two begins with a literature review, followed by phase three where the conceptual framework and study hypotheses has framed. Phase four discusses the methodology of the paper with source of data and empirical estimations in sixth phase. In phase seven the results are discussed and followed by the conclusion in eighth phase. Suitable recommendations are suggested for policy makers in last phase eight.

Review of Literature

In the purview of globalization, international students' mobility (ISM) attracts more capital and generates revenue under GATS-WTO. The cross-border student flow in this sector attracts a large number of knowledge consumers and service providers in the global arena. In international student mobility (ISM), it indicates a dominant flow of students from developing countries into developed countries. The studies below argue the determinants of cross-border student mobility between developed and developing nations.

A study by N.V. Varghesse (2008) observed the distribution of student flow across the globe and identified the influencing factors of student flow in cross-border higher education, which include ideological affinity, language proficiency, foreign language and culture, employment opportunities, and easy visa formalities. According to Wei, Hao (2012), it is observed that the inflow of students in developing countries is more inclined due to economic factors, and in developed countries, it is due to educational factors. Caruso (2013) argue that students as a rational group prefer richer countries, regardless of the cost of living (an economic factor), where they are provided with adequately funded services and possibly fellowships for higher education. Andrew Abbott (2016) used gravity variables to determine international student migration and discovered that a 10% increase in the net flow of students among high-income countries across the globe raises the 8.6 percent of bilateral flow and the 26.5 percent marked by non-high-income countries.

The Rationale Behind The Selection of Country Groups Is Motivated By The Studies Reviewed Below.

Historically, the top destinations for international students have included Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the USA, and the UK. And existing literature has also identified new emerging economies with accelerating growth in international students in countries such as the central and south Asian parts of Asia as well as eastern Europe. Numerous studies have examined the determinants of international students' mobility across the globe using various concepts and theories such as push-pull factors, migration theory, neoliberalism, and economic perspectives, and have also identified various determinants and influential factors of international students' mobility. Existing literature has identified determinants of international student mobility and studied the effects of various higher education policies on students' inflow. See Martin Kahanec (2011) discussed the key factors such as multiculturalism, safety, weather, the friendliness of people, tuition fees and costs of study, language of instruction, the quality of education, and its reputation, and concluded that programs taught in English act as an important factor to attract international students from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. The role of education agents in admitting students to international destinations connects knowledge consumers and service providers. In the study conducted by Francis Leo Collins (2012), the author investigated how new industry formations have connected with the processes of student mobility through the role of agents in student mobilities by focusing on the development of export education activities since the early 1990s in New Zealand. The quality of higher education is a key determinant of the inflow of tertiary students into countries, especially Europe and United Kingdom-like countries. Linda Van (2013). In contrast, Halyna Mishchuk et al. (2019) claimed that intellectual migration can have a significant negative impact on national competitiveness and intellectual capability in Ukraine. The developing economies are thriving to attract international students through the pull factor; however, the decision to study abroad is influenced by the push factor. Botagoz Ibragimova's (2019) study in Kazakhstan reveals that the decision to study in Kazakhstan is primarily influenced by pull factors. As for universities in Kazakhstan, the international students seem to be attracted not by the quality of education but rather the availability of seats at Kazakhstani universities and the cost of higher education. The antecedents to ISM in developed and developing nations are heterogeneous. Ping Zheng (2014) established an antecedent's heterogeneity among the two home country groups, emphasizing that economic, social, and political factors are all crucial to international students from developing countries. and for the students from developed countries, their home country's economic wealth, population, and trade links are more important than other factors affecting worldwide flows into the UK. In consistent with the above antecedent of the trade link, Byung S. Min (2017) investigated the factors affecting international student flows for higher education and their consequences for

bilateral market integration in Australia, and the results infer that university study is an important determinant of bilateral trade between Australia and the student's home country. The developed and developing nations, to attract the inflow of international students, adopt numerous strategies such as neoliberalism and the migration model, observe various socio-economic and political factors, and analyze the demographic characteristics of international students worldwide. In contrast, there is literature that rejects conventional approaches and invents comparative advantage in accordance with education policy, language, and multiculturalism. See Neeraj Kaushal (2019), who infers that student flow to English-speaking countries fails to validate the migration model, and Kriti Dagar (2021), whose determinants of cross-border mobility to India vary with respect to economic, social, political, and academic factors. In India, international students from South and South-East Asia are attracted, given the advancement of NEP 2020 (the New Education Policy-2020).

This section of the study demonstrates the choice of countries and the determining variables that draw student inflow to developed and developing countries in light of the aforementioned reviews, which establish the convincing and contradicting viewpoints on numerous theories, concepts, and socio-economic factors of ISM.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine international student inflow trends in developed and developing countries (2011–2020).
- To identify key educational and economic factors influencing international student mobility.
- To compare the impact of these factors between developed and developing host countries.

Research Question and Hypotheses of the Study

- What are the key educational and economic determinants influencing international student inflows to developed and developing countries?
- How do the effects of these determinants differ between developed and developing countries in shaping patterns of international student mobility?

Hypotheses

H1: The net flow of internationally mobile students has a positive effect on the total international student inflows in selected countries.

H2: Outbound student migration from middle-income countries positively influences international student inflows in host countries.

H3: Outbound student migration from lower-middle-income countries positively influences international student inflows in host countries.

H4: The gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education has a positive effect on international student inflows in selected countries.

H5: Government expenditure on education (as a percentage of total government expenditure) has a positive effect on international student inflows in selected countries.

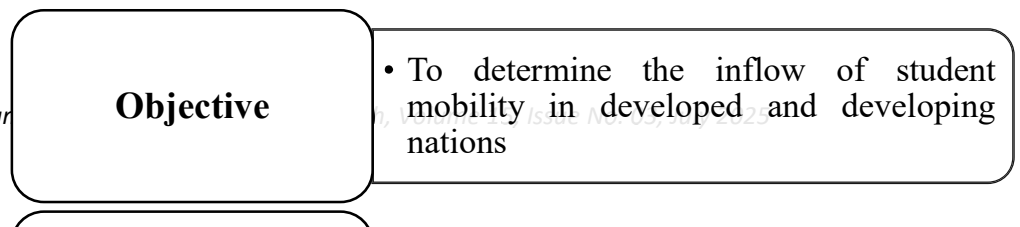
H6: GDP per capita (PPP) has a positive effect on international student inflows in selected countries.

H7: GDP per capita has a positive effect on international student inflows in selected countries.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses of the Study

The previous chapter's literature section includes theoretical underpinnings as well as several methodological constructs used in various investigations. As noted in the previous chapter, there aren't many modern statistical tools and methods that can be used for secondary data analysis. This session defines the approach to accomplishing the objectives, taking into account the research objectives and synthesising the literature. To answer the research questions, the conceptual framework described below is used before moving on to the main methodology:

Fig 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Illustrated by authors

Table No.1: Selection of ISM variables and countries to assess the student's inflow in developed and developing countries.

Variables	Explanation	Hypothesis
Total Students inflows in selected countries ***(Independent Variable)***	International students are those who received their prior education in another country and are not residents of their current country of study. This indicator shows the number of international tertiary students enrolled as a proportion of the total tertiary students enrolled in the destination (host) country.	
Dependent Variable		**Expected**
Net Flow of International Mobile students in selected countries	Number of inbound internationally mobile students minus the corresponding number of outbound internationally mobile students.	Positive effect
Income Group Countries (Outbound Students) Middle-Income countries	Middle-income countries are those with $1,026 to $12,475 in per capita GNI.	Positive effect
Lower-Middle-Income countries	Lower-Middle-income countries those with a GNI per capita between $1,036 and $4,045	Positive effect
Gross enrolment ratio in selected countries (Tertiary)	Gross enrolment ratio is the ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education shown.	Positive effect
Government expenditure on education, total (% of government expenditure)	General government expenditure on education (current, capital, and transfers) is expressed as a percentage of total general government expenditure on all sectors (including health, education, social services, etc.). It includes expenditure funded by transfers from international sources to government. General government usually refers to local, regional and central governments.	Positive effect
GDP per capita, PPP (current international $)	This indicator provides per capita values for gross domestic product (GDP) expressed in current international dollars converted by purchasing power parity (PPP) conversion factor.	Positive effect
GDP Per Capita	GDP per capita is gross domestic product divided by midyear population.	Positive effect

Source: World Bank Development indicators, UNESCO Institute of Statistics

Note: All the data are mapped to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) to ensure the comparability of education programs at the international level

It shall be noted that the selected variables are motivated through the existing theoretical linkages of ISM, and in the particular study, they were considered based on the migration factor, the inflow country's educational factor, and economic factors from an internationalisation perspective, respectively. The expected hypothesis assumes a positive effect of the determinant on students' inflow into selected developed and developing countries.

Table No.2: Countries selected in the study

Developed Nation	Developing Nations
Australia	India
Canada	Kazakhstan
New Zealand	Russia Federation
United Kingdom	Ukraine

Note: Based on the literature review

The countries selected were based on the important insight that international student mobility is widespread throughout all nations and that developing countries also receive a sizeable number of students who are internationally mobile and can be seen in the league.

Research Methodology

To analyse student mobility in selected countries, panel data regression has been adapted with a simple linear equation for developed and developing nations separately. Two empirical models have been synthesised with the pooled panel data sets: one is for international student inflow in developed countries, and the other is for international student inflow in developing countries. For the panel data set's dependent variable, data on international students who mobilised to selected developed and developing countries between the years of 2011 and 2020 (ten years) has been acquired from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). Pooled OLS and a fixed or random effect model are the general approaches to panel data, and the same has been employed in the study to estimate the regression equation. The said estimations were performed using the Stata 15.1 statistical package.

Empirical Model

The model assumes that the international student inflow in the developed and developing countries is more determined by various factors such as the net flow of students internationally mobile across the world, the outflow of students from middle-income country groups (Lower middle-income country groups for developing countries), the inflow country's tertiary level gross student enrolments, government expenditure on education, purchase power parity, and GDP per capita.

The econometric form of the equation for Developed Country model:

$$\text{Total inflow}_{it} = \alpha_{it} + \beta_1 \text{Netflow}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{MIC}_{it} + \beta_3 \text{TerEnroll}_{it} + \beta_4 \text{GovtExp}_{it} + \beta_5 \text{GDPPPP}_{it} + \beta_5 \text{GDPPercap}_{it} + u_{it}$$

For Developing Country model:

$$\text{Total inflow}_{it} = \alpha_{it} + \beta_1 \text{Netflow}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{LMIC}_{it} + \beta_3 \text{TerEnroll}_{it} + \beta_4 \text{GovtExp}_{it} + \beta_5 \text{GDPPPP}_{it} + \beta_5 \text{GDPPercap}_{it} + u_{it}$$

Where, Total inflow is number of international students in selected inflow countries

Net flow is students internationally mobile across the world
MIC is outbound students from middle-income country groups
LMIC is outbound students from lower middle-income country groups
TerEnroll is inflow country's tertiary level gross student enrolments
GovtExp is government expenditure on education (% of Govt exp)
GDPPPP is purchase power parity
GDPPercap is GDP per capita is gross domestic product divided by midyear population
And α, $\beta 1$, $\beta 2$ are the coefficients where, U is the Error term.

Source: Estimated using Stata 15.1
Note: *, **, ***Statistical significance at 10, 5 and 1 per cent, respectively.

To test the above model the following empirical estimations were estimated: Pooled OLS regression model, (FEM) Fixed effect model and (REM) Random effect model on both equation of model separately (i.e., Developed country model and developing country model).

Pooled OLS				Random effect			Fixed effect			Pooled OLS Robust Model	
YINFLOW	Coef.	P>|t|	Std. Err.	Coef.	P>|t|	Std. Err.	Coef.	P>|t|	Std. Err.	Robust Std. Err.	P>|t|
NETFLOW	0.998	***	0.011 6938	0.998	***	0.0116 94	1.003	***	0.01 1	0.011	***
MIC	-0.043	***	0.006 464	-0.043	***	0.0064 64	0.0001	*	0.00 2	0.007	***
ENROLTER	-165.7	***	50.34 003	-165.7	***	50.340 03	-31.584	***	13.4 2	59.16	***
Govt Exp Edu	-631.9	**	297.2 012	-631.9	**	297.20 12	153.9	*	71.9 1	319.7	**
GDPPPP	5.983	***	1.005 394	5.983	***	1.0053 94	0.538	*	0.37 5	0.953	***
GDPPC	-2.394	***	0.385 2746	-2.394	***	0.3852 75	-0.203	*	0.13 1	0.283	***
_cons	18989. 27	0.354	2018 3.55	18989.	.0347	20183. 55	10167. 6	0.267	8980 .1	20765.1	0.367
Observations	40			40			40			40	
F-test/v	1894.46 ***			11366.78 ***			5855.57 ***			2343.54 ***	
within				0.9837			0.9991				
R2 between				0.9991			0.9879				
Overall	0.9971			0.9971			0.9894			0.9971	
BPLM										1.000	
Hausman Test				108.14***							
Autocorrelation	Breusch-Godfrey LM test for autocorrelation						accepted the null hypothesis				
Heterosceda sticity	Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weis test for heteroskedasticity						accepted the null hypothesis				

The determinants of international students' inflow in developed nations are tested using pooled OLS (POLS), FEM, and REM. From Table 3, it can be observed that all the explanatory variables are significant at 1 percent for all three models, while the coefficients are inversely significant to the student inflow in developed countries except net flow and GDP PPP in the POLS and REM, while the FEM shows a positive significance except gross tertiary enrolment and GDP per capita. The model indicates that 99% of the variation in students' inflow in developed countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom is explained by the determinants (chosen independent variables) in the model (R squared =.9971).

However, the result of the Breusch-Pagan LM diagnostic test is consistent with the POLS as the final model. Also, recall when Hausman tests were performed. In other words, it implied that the panel data ignores the state-specific effects of determinants in the regression model for the inflow of students into developed nations. Considering the POLS as the appropriate model, robust standard error estimations are derived to further improve the model in the study.

Table 4. Estimations of Developing Countries Model
Source: Estimated using Stata 15.1
Note: *, **, ***Statistical significance at 10, 5 and 1 per cent, respectively

Table 4 depicts the POLS, REM, and FEM for the determinants of student inflow in developing countries. According to the above three model, all other factors are positively significant determinants of student inflow in developing countries such as India, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine, with the exception of purchase power parity, which is insignificant. The model indicates nearly 62% of the variation in students' inflow in developing countries is explained by the determinants (chosen independent variables) in the model (R squared =.629).

The result of the BPLM test does not reject the null hypothesis, which indicates that pooled OLS is preferable to REM. Unlike the developed country model, the Hausman test accepts the null hypothesis and demonstrates that

FEM is not suitable in this model. But, the Breusch-Pagan LM test does not reject the null hypothesis and indicates pooled OLS is appropriate. The test for heteroscedasticity (Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weisberg test for heteroscedasticity) explains the heterogeneity in the model. As a result, the robust standard error estimations of POLS are finally considered for inferring student inflows into developing countries.

According to the findings of the two models mentioned above (see Tables 3 and 4), the combination of economic, educational, and migration factors impacts the flow of students into developed nations in an inverse manner. The beneficial benefits in developing countries, however, have been determined by the same determinant factors.

Summary of Findings

The migration factor for developed countries shows that the influx of students is inversely correlated to the outflow of students from middle-income country groups (MIC) due to the negative significance of MIC students though net flow has a positive significance. This reverse flow has been elicited by (de Haas, 2011) in the study of the determinants of international migration. The educational factor reveals the opposite effect of both the gross tertiary enrolment and government expenditure variables, and the large difference in coefficients explains that in developed countries' educational institutions, tertiary level enrolments will be considered as quality intakes, (Kahanec et al., 2011) and this result is inconsistent with the (Kritz, 2015). The negative sign of government expenditure will explain the growing number of private educational institutions in developed countries.

Finally, the economic factor in developed countries' student inflow reveals a negative effect on per capita, which contradicts previous findings of (Zheng, 2014) implying that student migration to a developed country for higher education is less oriented toward earnings and more oriented toward knowledge gained in the selected developed country. While the effects of tuition costs, exchange rates, and living expenses are revealed by the host country's positive PPP rates, this effect is positively proportional to the inflow of students to developed countries unlike the findings of (Kaushal & Lanati, 2019).

In the case of developing countries, the migration factor, in addition to the net flow of ISM, includes students from lower-middle-income countries. The statistically significant positive coefficients show that in the case of developing countries, the migration factors are what most attract international students from the rest of the world. The education factor shows a positive coefficient for both variables, the gross tertiary enrolments and government expenditure on education, although, with the insignificance of government expenditure, this education factor reveals that the gross enrolments in educational institutions in developing countries attract international students. This finding is consistent with the case of Kazakhstan; see (Ibragimova, 2019). In economic factors the variable, GDP PPP rates of developing country reverse the student's inflow and GDP per capita attracts. This effect of the education factor is contradictory in nature because developing economies' per capita income is lower than that of developed economies, and PPP rates in developing economies should actually attract students' mobility rather than repel it. This case can be derived from the favourable impact of student immigration into developing countries from lower-middle-income-country groups.

Conclusion and Implication

In conclusion, this study explores the factors influencing international student mobility (ISM) across developed and developing countries. Interestingly, the findings reveal distinct trends for each category. Developed countries see a "reverse flow" phenomenon, where student influx is inversely related to outflow from middle-income countries. Educational quality, measured by gross tertiary enrolment, appears to be a key driver for developed nations, while economic factors show a surprising twist. Per capita income has a negative effect, whereas higher Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) rates correlate with increased student mobility. This suggests students might prioritize educational quality and affordability over post-graduation earnings. Conversely, developing countries experience a net student inflow from all regions, particularly lower-middle-income ones. Here, gross tertiary enrolment acts as a positive attractor, while government spending on education shows a less clear impact. Economically, GDP per capita positively influences student inflow, while higher PPP rates have a negative effect. This requires further investigation but could potentially reflect the appeal of developing economies with lower living costs.

These findings hold valuable implications for policymakers and educational institutions. Developed countries can focus on maintaining educational quality and affordability to attract international students. Developing countries can leverage their expanding educational opportunities and potentially lower living costs to attract students from abroad, while ensuring sufficient funding for quality programs. Further research is needed to fully understand the seemingly contradictory economic factors, particularly the contrasting effects of per capita income and PPP rates on student mobility across development levels.

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