

# Economic Insecurity as a Push Factor of Migration in Afghanistan

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**Abstract:** The main objective of this research study is to explore the insecurity as a push factor of migration from Afghanistan. Besides, other key determinants that really push emigrants to migrate are also focused in this study. The assigned method in this research focus is qualitative analysis which means that it is not a numerical study that would need a regression analysis. The inference of this research discovered that emigration is a remarkable global economic and social concern that many countries of the world face it both as a damage and as an advantage. The result also provides that economic insecurity that is consisted of trade, production, investment, government expenditure, exports and imports, output, skilled labor, and unemployment is one of the leading push factor of emigration in Afghanistan. Besides, insecurity and instability, and poverty are other remarkable factors of emigration in Afghanistan. Overall, the study focused on unemployment, insecurity, and poverty as they are thought to be the push factors of emigration from Afghanistan. Since emigration is a problem for Afghanistan that is why it should be reduced through several policies and mechanisms. First, the government should provide employment opportunities for emigrants because people who migrate are all unemployed residents of Afghanistan and through employment, emigration will be reduced in the country. Second, the security is a big concern in Afghanistan because numerous people who leave the country are scared from threads and instability such that they do not want to put their lives in risks, so security will also help to reduce emigration. The last important policy is reducing poverty by creating jobs and providing free or low price social protection facilities which will help them to stay in the country and this way the emigration from Afghanistan will be reduced.

**Key Words:** Emigration, Instability, Poverty, Trade Openness, Production, Investment, Government expenditure, and Output.

## 1. Introduction

Recently, migration is a remarkable global economic and social issue that many countries of the world face it both as a damage and as advantage. The term has got two different understandings which the first one is international emigration which people leave the country of origin for another foreign country but the second one is international immigration which people enter to the country to settle his/her usual place of residence (Perrin 2001). Besides that, Migration has got various types based on geographical classification and based on perceptive. For example, migration based on geographical classification has two types such as internal migration which people travel to a different household place inside a state, country, or continent but the second type is exterior migration which people move to a new home in another state, country, or continent (Marcopolo 2005). Due to some push factors, there are types of migration, for example, forced migration which people are forced by government to emigrate based on a reason, impelled migration which there is not force but due to some push factors people emigrate such as war and hunger, seasonal migration or when people emigrate due to some specific seasons like agriculture and climate changes. Furthermore, return migration when people migrated return back to their home country voluntarily and finally, long and short term migration which depends on people decisions and the factors that already forced them to leave the country (Migration 2018).

Migration is not a single country problem or advantage such as Afghanistan but even many countries of the world face emigration and immigration both as problem and advantage which depends on the countries' economic situation. Most importantly, less developing and developing countries have emigration at large compared to developed countries, on the other hand, developed countries receive migrants from developing countries which all countries such as less developing, developing and developed countries face migration. For instance, according to figure 1.1 and 1.2 prepared from the International Migration Report of 2017 arranged by United Nations stated that the overall number of worldwide migrants internationally has sustained to raise quickly in latest years which ranges to 258 million in 2017, up from 220 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000. Most importantly, above 60 percent of all global refugees living

in Asia which equals to 80 million, Europe equals to 78 million, Northern America accommodated the third major number of worldwide migrants equals 58 million, tracked by Africa equals to 25 million, Latin America and the Caribbean equal to 10 million and Oceania equals to 8 million (Nations 2017).

**World Migration Based on Years: Figure 1**

Year	Migration in Millions
2000	173 million
2010	220 million
2017	258 million

**Source:**[http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017\\_Highlights.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf)

**World Migration Living Based on Continents: Figure: 2**

No	Continents/Regions	Migration in Millions
1	Asia	80 million
2	Europe	78 million
3	Northern America	58 million
4	Africa	25 million
5	Latin America and the Caribbean	10 million
6	Oceania	8 million

**Source:**[http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017\\_Highlights.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf)

Migration leaves both countries of origins and host countries with some specific consequences such that some of them are become advantages and some of them become problems for both countries. The general effects of migration of the sending countries are the increase aggregate income because of labor scarcity, losing high skilled labor through brain drain, health risks, population reduction, and remittance. Besides, reduction in unemployment and demographic effect such as losing young male and female population are the key impacts of emigration on sending countries (Rosenzweig 2005). Not only those, migration has also significant effects on host countries such as the effects on labor market which increases the unskilled supply of labor, increase unemployment and distract the local labor market because less demand but over supply of labors exists. Also, migration affects the income of labor which labor migrants work for less salary and it also affects human capital in the host countries because it is not for sure that how migrant labors are perfect substitute of home born labors (OreÖce 2010).

**Afghanistan Migration Profile:**

Afghanistan has got a very different and a long history of migration in different eras and from different reasons. The first large emigration era was in 1979 which caused by Soviet invasion in Afghanistan which took almost 10 years. During this invasion, about 2.6 million Afghans migrated to Iran based on similarities of language, culture, and religion. Another large amount of Afghans which totaled 1.5 million migrated to Pakistan during the same invasion and besides many more left to other Europe and worldwide countries as emigrants. Furthermore, after the Soviet withdraw, Afghan Mujahidin started civil war which almost 6 million Afghans were forced to migrate worldwide. The new Taliban regime started with serious war inside the country with different tribal and language groups which almost 300000 Afghans left to only Pakistan from 1991 to 2000 and many more left to other countries (IOM 2014). According figure 1.3 prepared by Country, Economy Website states that there are 30 destinations for Afghanistan migrants and the figures includes the number of current migrants who live in the same countries who previously migrated from Afghanistan (economy 2017).

**Afghan Migrants Destinations Worldwide: Figure 3:**

Countries	Emigration Stock
Iran	2,348,369
Pakistan	1,618,687
Saudi Arabia	364,304
Germany	99,638
United Kingdom	68,256
United States	63,255
Canada	45,733
Australia	37,482
Netherlands	33,852
Sweden	29,085
Turkey	13,601
Norway	13,238
Denmark	12,260
Belgium	10,638
Austria	8,620
India	8,086
United Arab Emirates	7,590
Tajikistan	7,587
Italy	6,568
Greece	6,331
Russia	5,095
Finland	4,810
France	4,761
Switzerland	4,613
Kuwait	2,669
New Zealand	2,540
Israel	2,539
Ukraine	2,112
Syria	1,791
Qatar	1,571

Source: <https://countryeconomy.com/demography/migration/emigration/afghanistan>

According to the Asia Foundation Survey of 2016, reports that there is a stable growth in the number of Afghans said that they will leave Afghanistan and agreed to live somewhere else if the opportunity is given. For example, the survey provided the percentage of Afghans stating a desire to emigrate which 36.1% Afghans living in the Central/Kabul region, the 37.1% living in North East region, 17.8% living in the South West region, 58.6% living in Baghlan, 11.7% living in Nuristan, 12.0% living in Helmand and 14.9% living in Zabul. According to figure 1.5, states migration base on ethnicity which the Hazaras are most likely to express a desire to emigrate are 38.6%, Tajiks are 32.0%, Uzbeks are 28.8% and Pashtuns (24.3%) which desire to emigrate from Afghanistan (Foundation 2016). Besides, the emigration rate in 2015 was 448000 in Afghanistan which is still very high (knoema 2018).

**Afghans Desire to Live Base on Ethnicity: Figure 4**

No	Ethnicity	Percentage
1	Hazaras	38.6%,
2	Tajiks	32.0%
3	Uzbeks	28.8%
4	Pashtuns	24.3%

Source: Asia Foundation

**Problem Statement:**

In general, migration is both a problem and an advantage for a country but for Afghanistan mostly, it is a serious economic and social problem. Many Afghans who emigrated from Afghanistan includes high expert such as doctors, engineers, and teachers which is a huge lost for relevant sectors such as education, health and constructions and in general economy. Ali Hassani conducted a survey in five major provinces of Afghanistan such as Kabul, Kandahar, Jalal Abad, Herat and Mazar based on the perspective of educated and skilled Afghan citizens migration. The finding of the survey resulted that people who migrate due to different reasons are 44.1%

illiterate, 24.4% primary educated, 18.3 % are 14<sup>th</sup> grade students and 24% are masters and doctoral degrees (HASSANI 2017). In fact, the number of skilled Afghan migrants is not clear but this survey conducted from those who are interested to leave Afghanistan. So Afghanistan is facing a brain drain problem because people who were trained and skilled in the country, leave the country and remain the relevant sectors weak which is why emigration is a problem for Afghanistan.

Economic growth and productivity decline due to emigration of high skilled people leaving the country because these people are able to teach students with high quality, they can work in production companies and they are able to work in different economic positions relevant to their expertise which all of them are factors of economic growth and productivity progress. In Afghanistan, inclusive and sustainable growth assessment stated that Afghanistan lost its significance due to the emigration of educated and high skilled population aging 15-39 which results in brain draining and as result, it will hurt economic growth, investment and the ability to increase the chain in value added economic activities (Strategy 2017). So it should be argued that emigration hinders the economic growth and productivity of Afghanistan which is a serious problem for Afghanistan.

Besides, emigration affects the income tax revenue for Afghanistan because people who live in other countries pay their taxes there which Afghanistan face net loss in income tax revenue. This is an economical problem for Afghanistan because it will reduce its budget collected from labor tax income. It is a fact, that people who leave the countries of origin do not pay tax because they do not work there which the best example is Afghanistan. Children whose parents migrate to other countries remain from parents training or in other words, they lack from family education which is another problem of emigration in Afghanistan. Not only those, women who are married are supposed to be abused, discriminated and also being divorced because their husband, when left the country, are not returned back to Afghanistan. So there are still many women remained without husbands or even divorced which created big family and social problems.

Overall, emigration is a key economic and social problem in Afghanistan because educated and skilled people leave the country which create brain drain problem, the government face with lack of income tax revenues, the economic growth and productivity become slow down and many other social problems take place such as women abuse, discrimination, women divorce, and children with family education. So as a matter of fact, this problem should be solved.

The purpose of this paper is to understand the relationship of emigration with Push factors including unemployment, insecurity, and poverty.

- a) To discover various factors that causes emigration in Afghanistan
- b) To determine the relationship between emigration and unemployment in Afghanistan.
- c) To determine the relationship between emigration and insecurity and poverty

#### **Research Questions:**

1. What factors mainly force Afghans to emigrate?
2. How unemployment, insecurity, poverty influence emigration in Afghanistan?

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In 2008, Arjan de Haan and Shahin Yaqub conducted a researched the migration and poverty through linkages, knowledge gaps and policy implications in developing countries by using the qualitative analysis method which the author discovered very plausible inferences. For example, the paper result shows that poorest people migration is due to survival approaches but not all poor people migrate to other countries because the cost of migration is so high or they may not have such opportunities. Further, there is also the tendency of migration due to seasonal agriculture and less rewarding work in the same areas. However, it is argued that poverty is not only the push factor of migration because there are numerous factors of migration in these countries. On the other hand, the research also added that migrants return with money and investment in their countries of origin. So one can conclude, that poverty forces people to migrate but it could not be the only factor of migration in every country (De Haan 2008).

In 2001, John O. Oucho explored the issue of the relationship between migration and poverty in Southern Africa through theoretical analysis method. The researcher found out a general fact that poor countries, societies, and families are the first produced generations of emigration, especially to rich countries. Besides, demographic, economic, cultural, political systems and environmental conditions

are the additional motivation and force factors of emigration in different countries. However, poverty is focused as the foremost factor of emigration in Southern African countries. So it must be argued that poverty as a push factor influences emigration in different countries (Oucho 2001).

In 2007, Guita G Hourani researched the issue of Insecurity, Migration, and Return in a case study of Lebanon Following 2006 Summer War through both a quantitative and qualitative research method. One of the remarkable discoveries of this research paper is that insecurity especially, foreign interventions and internal violence forced Lebanese to migrate to other countries for seeking safe live opportunities. It is also a belief that such threads will increase dramatically the out flows of population in the near future. This research provided that still, some migrants from Lebanese do not intend to return back to the country of origin (Hourani 2007).

In 2017, FAO provided a short summary report on the issue of reducing the adverse impacts of migration: Encouraging sustainable agriculture and increasing job opportunities through a qualitative analysis method. This report provided that conflict, climate change, and economic instability pushed millions of people to migrate to other countries such that it left negative impacts on the countries of origins (FAO 2017).

In 2002, Sarri Pekkala and Hannu Tervo studied the title of Unemployment and Migration through answering to the question of whether Moving Helps? This research is conducted through a theoretical analysis in Finland in 2002. The inference of this research paper provides that people escape mostly from unemployment compared to stayers in Finland and this migration rate is increased especially in high unemployment rate areas. So it is argued that unemployment is also a push factor of emigration in Finland (Tervo 2002).

Cristina Cattaneo conducted a research on the determinants of actual migration and the role of wages and unemployment through using an empirical analysis using probit model in 2006 in Albania. The purpose of the study was to determine whether low wages and unemployment encourage emigration from Albania. The result showed that low wage is significant at 5% and found out that low wage strongly push people to migrate because with low salary Albanian could not meet their livings needs. Besides, the results also showed that unemployment is significant at 5% and clarifies that unemployment is a push factor of emigration both internally and externally. So the paper results showed that low wages and unemployment are both push factors of emigration in Albania and that is why people migrate both internally and externally (Cattaneo 2006).

Mirela Stoian researched on the issue of unemployment and migration of the Romanian labor force through finding causes and effects in August 2017, using multiple linear regression model. The purpose of the paper is to discover the unemployment as a cause of migration in Romania. Using empirical study analysis, she found out that unemployment is a key factor of encouraging people to migrate and besides that, the result also showed that unemployment together with poverty could be strong push factors of labor migration in Romania (Stoian 2017).

Dr. Gursharan Singh Kainth studies the push and pull factors of migration through a case study of Brick Kiln Migrant workers in Punjab in January 2010. The study was conducted through a qualitative method and though using data from reports, official websites and experts' opinions in written articles. The paper collected general economic push and pull factors which the main factor that push people to migrate from Punjab was poverty. It was argued that people inside Punjab are able to receive enough income to meet their daily life needs so that is why poverty exists and they are obliged to migrate. These people migrate in order to find a new place that have better economic circumstances, job opportunities and higher income (Kainth 2010).

Nicholas Van Hear, Oliver Bakewell and Katy Long researched on the issue of drivers of outmigration in Gulf countries in 2012 using qualitative method. The purpose of this working paper was to discover the real drivers of outmigration. The result showed many different drivers but the most important drivers are poverty, domestic unemployment, and underemployment (Nicholas Van Hear 2012).

Fei Guo and Robyn Iredale conducted a research on the issue of unemployment among the Migrant Population in Chinese Cities: Case Study of Beijing through a survey in Beijing using qualitative method in 2000. The purpose of this research study was to discover why people migrated to Beijing internally from other parts of the region. The result showed that 90% people who migrated to Beijing during three months were because of unemployment in their existing areas which became 1.43 million and they were between 15- 39 years

old. The other 10% were due to different reasons such as environment changes and season's changes. So finally, unemployment was the main driver of Beijing migration (Iredale 2000).

Samuel Antwi Darkwah researched the determinants of international migration through the Nigerian experience from 1991 to 2011. The research is conducted by using an empirical model including ordinary least square regression method. The purpose of this paper is to discover the factors of Nigerian migration which the results indicated that the level of high unemployment, migrant remittances, and the population growths are the key factors that encourage emigration from Nigeria and mean while they are all strongly significant at 0.01 level. The rationales behind this migration is to reduce poverty, unemployment and remove pressure on the labor market. The paper added that Nigerian government is agree on emigration as long as skilled labor do not emigrate (Darkwah 2014).

The United Nation prepared a World Youth Report on the issue of Youth and Migration in 2013 using simple qualitative method. The purpose of this report is to provide a general information including causes and effects. The report provided many meaningful reasons that push people to migrate around the globe which varies country to country. For example, migration is leaded through a combination of several reasons such as personal considerations, socio-economic circumstances, and the political situation in the country of origin might be important causal factors but the main force drive of international migration is alleged inequalities in labor market opportunities, income, human rights and living standards between the countries of origin and destination. Besides those, some young people travel to escape conflict, persecution, or environmental pressures (Nations 2013).

Christopher A. Pissarides and Ian McMaster conducted a research based on the regional migration, wages, and unemployment: empirical evidence and implications for policy in 1990 which was publish at Oxford Economic paper website. The purpose of this working paper was to discover if wages and unemployment really affect migration from a country. The paper had a very different result which showed that if the wages inside a country rises, then people do not move outside and instead other people attempt to come in to the country and the same is true for unemployment, if the rate of unemployment increases many people tend to leave the country but if it reduces, people do not leave and instead many outsiders come in to the country to find jobs there. So the paper highlights that wages and unemployment are the key factors of migration such that push migration out and in (McMASTER 1990).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This research study follows the "secondary" data to support and test the hypothesis of emigration in Afghanistan through Qualitative Research Method. The "secondary" data is collected from books, scholarly journals, and online search engines to support the presence of the problem and find the solution to the problem. Particularly, these data sources are from World Bank, United Nations, research institutions and other government websites. This is a conceptual method which theoretical assessments are used to investigate the problem and find solution through texts and behavioral views of experts written in documents and online research engines.

### Findings

#### Unemployment:

Unemployment is one of the biggest and leading pushing factors of Afghanistan migration. Due to government and economic weaknesses, there are very less number of jobs that meet the demand of labor. The government is also unable to provide job opportunities for Afghans because Afghan government has a very limited budget which is granted by the world rich countries such as the United States and with the small budget, the government cannot increase employment through government expenditures and other investments. According to the figure 1.6, the statistical portal world website provides unemployment rate for Afghanistan which the unemployment rate is among 7 to 8 percent from 2010 to 2017 (Portal 2017). Still, this data is not reliable because data which is collected from survey and other sources is not trustable because many Afghans are unemployed which may increase the rate of unemployment when the survey is conducted properly. But this unemployment rate is still high regarding to the population of Afghanistan which is around 34 million.

#### Unemployment Rate: 5 Figure

No	Year	Unemployment Rate
1	2010	7.82%

2	2011	8.23%
3	2012	7.94%
4	2013	8.45%
5	2014	8.71%
6	2015	8.86%
7	2016	8.84%
8	2017	8.84%

Source: Self-made from the Statistical Portal

Since unemployment is very high and that is why people migrate to other countries to find job and receive income. Hayatullah Jawad (AHRRAO), Jan Koehler (ARC) and Kristóf Gosztonyi conducted a survey based on the reason of unemployment that pushed people to migrate. They discovered that people in Afghanistan suffer from serious unemployment which is due to insecurity and they asked people why they migrate to the countries, their answer was that unemployment is very serious problem that why they migrate. The respondents added that without job and income how they can live in Afghanistan (Gosztonyi 2016). According to the International labor Organization report, stated that among all Afghan migrant groups such as refugees, returnees, IDPs or labor are migrated due to less access of employment and they main migrate because they could not live with high unemployment and that is why they migrated and unemployment was called the central driver of mobility (Baruah 2013). The ILO insisted that unemployment plays a key role in pushing people to migrate from Afghanistan.

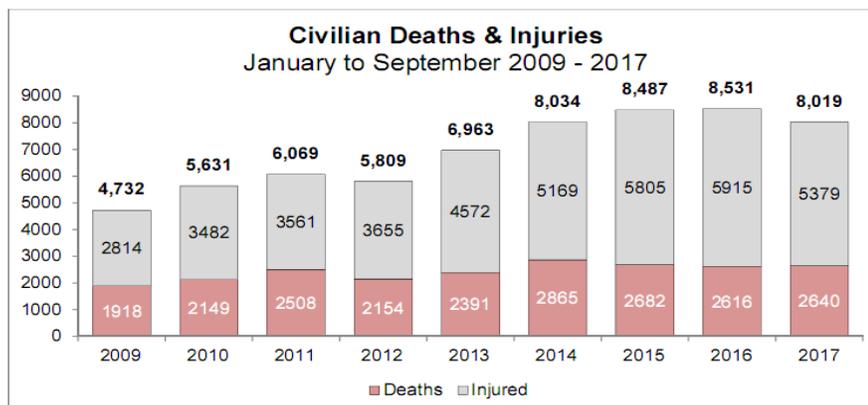
More to the point, Qais Alemi, ID, Susanne Montgomery, and Carl Stempel researched the issue of A Qualitative Study Exploring the Psychosocial Needs of Male Undocumented Afghan Migrants in Istanbul, Turkey in 2018. In this research paper, they discovered that Afghans emigrate due to high unemployment level in Afghanistan because there are no jobs with good income and that is why they try to migrate to Turkey because, in Turkey, jobs are available with good income such that they can meet their living needs (Qais Alemi 2018). So the unemployment is a serious push factor of migration from Afghanistan and this unemployment is the first determinant of migrating from Afghanistan.

So one can argue that based on the existence of high level of unemployment and the survey conducted based on unemployment as a push factor for migration from Afghanistan, unemployment is the first determinant that plays a key role in forcing Afghans to migrate from Afghanistan.

**Security:**

The next remarkable aspect forces Afghans to emigrate since decade and current is insecurity in Afghanistan. Insecurity is a big concern of Afghan people which created many problems along with emigration. The threats from Taliban, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and other internal anti-state opposition groups challenged both the government and public that harmed almost every life living opportunities such that made people to migrate to other countries. Economic slowdown, unemployment, poverty, and any other developing programs are the key results of insecurity in Afghanistan and at the meantime, these are the sub-factors of current emigration. According to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) report, stated that thousands of Afghan lives are in danger each year that some of them are dead and injured. For example, the report stated more than 24000 Afghans were dead and injure during deadly bomb explosion and attacks such that 5805 were dead and 2682 were injured in 2015, 5915 were dead and 2616 were injured in 2016 and 5379 were dead and 2640 were injured in 2016. Figure 1.7 (UNAMA 2017).

**Dead & Injured Report: Figure 6**



**Source: UNAMA 2017 Insecurity Conflict Report**

Most importantly, many international migration organizations showed that insecurity is a big concern toward Afghanistan emigration. For example, Norwegian Refugee Council pointed that insecurity along with natural disasters, low economic situation and poverty are the key factors of internal and external displacement in Afghanistan. Besides that, European Asylum Support Office (EASO 2016) Report stated that due to ongoing war and insecurity, Afghans suited as one of the most moveable nations of the world (NRC 2012). Due to more than 35 years of conflict caused a prolonged refugee crisis which at least 10 million Afghans escaped the country such that 75 percent of the population living in the rural areas who are spoiled by armed battles, land disputes and natural tragedies which also caused problems to the labor and housing markets and rising crime. During 2014, Afghan asylum seekers were the third major group which is estimated 59,500 claims. In 2015, almost 190,000 Afghans applied for refuge in EU states which is nearly five times as many as 2014. Many People are still looking for asylum in neighboring countries due to insecurity situation in Afghanistan (EASO 2016).

Furthermore, it is not only the current insecurity conflicts that threaten people lives to emigrate but political instability has been continuing since long before that demolished almost all government structures and put the government in a weak condition. For example, Elca Stigter and Alessandro Monsutti came up with a different argument which stated that more than 20 years fighting distressed Afghanistan's substructures, deteriorated government establishments and caused in deficiency of rule of law in many portions of the country. Besides difficulties in socioeconomic conditions, Afghans residents of all national groups carry on to experience insecurity due to political variability from long before. The factor that underlined as the main driver of migration is conflict and insecurity (Monsutti 2005). More civilian casualties, the moveable flora of the battle, the over-all worsening of security, pressure, and annoyance by government and anti-government elements are all direct reasons of movement. In challenged areas with rebellious between the international and national forces and non-state actors, people frequently flee inside and continually outside of the country. Numerous people move out of fear of being killed for "retaliation" from the Taliban or the government (Lopez-Lucia 2015). However, there are still counter argument that security is a very big factor of pushing people to emigrate from the country. It is significant to reminder from the onset that the association between peace and security on the one hand, and migration results on the other, is not always 'linear' or straight. To put it in another way, increasing insecurity in Afghanistan might not essentially cause in more migration, while the same way, increased security might not encourage significant returns either locally or internationally (Koser 2014).

Overall, insecurity is a big factor of pushing Afghan residents to emigrate and many scholars and international migration organizations provided that among other factors of migration, insecurity is a big concern of emigration in Afghanistan. However, it is just believed that insecurity is not going to push people to emigrate and the way, security will not encourage to return back who migrated already due to other factors. So based on finding, it should be strongly argued that insecurity is the main push factor of emigration only in Afghanistan besides other sub-factors. However, there are always different arguments regarding every issue because every coin has its two sides.

**Poverty:**

The next important factor forcing people to emigrate is poverty which is generally true in each country of the world that faces poverty. People who cannot afford to meet their physiologically needs are poor and thus live in poor condition. Poverty always is caused by high unemployment in country or in other words when a country resides low economy, so there have to be unemployment which inspires poverty in a country. As a result, the poor have to leave country and thus migrate to other countries which provide them job opportunities for finding life facilitates such as food, shelter and health care. Afghanistan not today but facing this problem for long time which forces people to migrate. The current poverty rate is very high but some international websites and other reports show low poverty rate which is not 100% true because the survey that data is collected is not correctly conducted. According to the Asian Development bank, Afghanistan poverty rate was 39.1% in 2013 which was very high compared to Central Asian and other South Asian countries' poverty rates (ADB 2018) Figure 1.8. Logically, the poverty line is very high and thus one can argue that poverty is a push factor of emigration in Afghanistan.

**Poverty National Lines: Figure 7**

Share of Population Below the National Poverty Line %		
No	Country	Percentage of Poverty Line
1	Afghanistan	39.1
2	Tajikistan	31.3
3	Pakistan	29.5
4	Armenia	29.4
5	Kyrgyz Republic	21.3
6	Georgia	21.3
7	Uzbekistan	12.3
8	Azerbaijan	5.9
9	Kazakhstan	2.6

**Source:**  
**Asian Development Bank**

Aryana AID world program reported that

which is a Charity agency recently 42%

of Afghan people live under poverty line which is very high and only 20% Afghans live above poverty rate which is very less (Aid 2018). According to Figure 1. 9 prepared by Center for Strategic and Regional Studies (CSRS) stated that Kabul which is the capital of Afghanistan, contains more than one million of poor people who live under poverty and other poverty focused provinces are Nangerhar, Herat, and Takhar which 663455, 660397 and 660028 people live in poverty respectively (CSRS 2016). Besides that, Afghanistan is ranked as 169<sup>th</sup> out of 187 poorest countries in the world that is because 1/3 of the population lives under 100 USD income and the annual average income of a person is 670 USD. If we compare Afghanistan with Pakistan in terms up of annual average income, Pakistan had 1410 USD which twice bigger than Afghanistan (SCA 2018). So based on the collective data, it should be argued that high poverty rate creates high rate of migration and this could be one possible reason that many Afghans leave the country because of high worst poverty line.

Poverty Rate in the Provinces of Afghanistan				
No	Province	No of Poor	Percentage of Poor Population	Poverty Headcount
1	Kabul	1033730	11.37	24.4
2	Nangerhar	663455	7.3	38.2
3	Herat	660397	7.26	35.3
4	Takhar	610028	6.71	65.4
5	Badkshshan	588060	6.47	62.7
6	Ghazni	582792	6.41	45.8
7	Kunduz	398534	4.38	40.2
8	Ghor	378067	4.16	53
9	Laghman	310730	4.42	63.8
10	Sari-e-Pol	308048	3.39	59.1

**Pover ty in the**

**Rate**

**Provinces of Afghanistan: Figure 8**

**Source: World Bank and Ministry of economy Survey 2011**

Numerous expert scholars also expressed their claims and arguments in their academic work that poverty is the main rationale behind emigration in Afghanistan. According to Human Development Unit South Asia Region report of 2005, migrating -Families who have moved nationally are supposed to be poorer, but those who have come back from overseas are comparatively better off because remittances play an significant role in lessening poverty (Allison 2005). This clearly means that people who migrated abroad were

poor because they could not find enough income to provide living facilities and that is why it is claimed that only poor people migrate the most comparing to others. More to the point, Dr. Alessandro Monsutti argued in his academic work that poverty along with insecurity is a big challenge for Afghans to live in better conditions. It is added that many Afghan left and leave the country because of poverty in the country because these Afghan send remittances to their family in Afghanistan to combat with poverty and at the main time, people tend to migrate because they want to spread the risk related with the families (A. Monsutti 2008). So based on these arguments, one can argue that poverty is a strong push factor of emigration in Afghanistan.

In addition, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) conducted a survey based on the determinants of emigration in five major Afghanistan provinces in 2014 which found that migration was increased in urban compare to rural areas because large number of poor people live there and these people showed extreme poverty status comparing to others. People who left the country had better chance to alleviate poverty comparing to those who remained in the country (Hall 2014). Furthermore, Nicholas Van Hear, Oliver Bakewell and Katy Long argued through their findings from academic work that poverty was counted as the first determinant of emigration in Afghanistan but differently added that those people who are very poor cannot emigrate because they have less resources to migrate and addressed that poor who are able to pay the expense of migration leave the country to emigrate (Nicholas Van Hear 2012). Based on their opinion, people who are financially strong are able to migrate and based on these different sources of collected data and arguments, poverty is the main push factor of emigration in Afghanistan.

Overall, poverty along with insecurity and unemployment is counted as the strong push factor of emigration in Afghanistan. Numerous experts and collected data showed that the rationale behind emigration in Afghanistan is the high rate poverty which is more than 39% poverty rate. So as result of the existed poverty, many Afghans have left and tend to leave now too because poverty challenged their lives badly.

## 1. Policy Recommendations

### **Unemployment:**

One of the important channel of providing job opportunities is to increase investments in the country. Increasing investment through governmental expenditure such as investing in education, health, military, and security will increase employment in the country and thus it will help to reduce unemployment. As a result, people who are unemployed will be employed and decide to stay in the country instead of migrating to other countries.

Establishing public work programs to create job opportunities together with skill development training will help to reduce the unemployment rate in Afghanistan. For example, opening public infrastructures projects such as constructing bridges, highways, schools, roads and other public projects which could be funded either by government or local, will help to reduce unemployment rate. Unemployed people will be employed and those who migrate will definitely remain in the country.

Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation as a way of creating new products and market demand which will generate new employment opportunities. Providing expert programs about entrepreneurship and innovation to train local traders and businessmen to start their own businesses. When these trained entrepreneurs start their own investing and create new products, they will create job opportunities for people and thus people will be hired and decide not migrate but it helps only those migrant who leave the country because of unemployment.

Improving skills / human capital to make people more flexible in the workplace will encourage employer to hire people with skills and expertise. The existed international organizations such as all UNs and other donor supported NGOs should provide training people in terms up of related field works and jobs such that they will be flexible to work almost in many job positions. The employers will be encouraged to hire trained people and thus this will increase job vacancies and many unemployed Afghans will be hired and the rate of unemployment will be reduced. Unemployed migrants will stay in the country because they will be employed.

Finally, the government is supposed to provide stronger incentives for employees to look for and accept work. Adopting policies for all organizations in terms up increasing salaries, fixing working hours, adding health insurance, lowering labor income tax, bonuses and other incentives that encourage employees to accept the work because numerous number of employees do not heart to work

because they are not agree with salaries and other privileges provided by the employers' companies and thus they are unemployed and leave the country. So providing better incentives will help to reduce the unemployment and people will not migrate.

### **Strengthening Country Security:**

Strengthen intelligence force will help to secure the country in a better way. The current intelligence administration is so weak and unable to spy all the terrorists' attacks in the country. First, it is important to train the intelligence force by high standard and by high international experts that will help those to detect all the incidents. The Afghan government should increase the number of intelligence spies because only the intelligence force can better detect all incidents rather than Afghan National Army and police.

Increasing Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Police and border police will help to tighten the security of Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a huge country in terms of geography and population, for example, the population of Afghanistan is 36401875 which is more than 36 million (Worldmeters 2018) and the number of all security force is 334000 that is very less number of number of forces to secure the country (Tolo 2018). There should be an increase in security forces which they will be able to tighten the security.

Training all security forces and providing modern weapons will also help to bring security in Afghanistan. The current police and Afghan national army are uneducated and untrained and thus they do not know how to secure the country. Providing modern weapons and training them with these weapons will also help them to strengthen the security because Afghan security forces do not have these modern weapons to defeat their enemies.

Keeping good relations with neighbor countries will also improve the situation in the country in terms up security. Afghanistan neighbors do not have good political relations with Afghanistan and that is why the security is destroyed by these neighbors, so the Afghan government should strengthen its relations nicely and this ways, security will be tightened.

All these strategies will help to bring security to Afghanistan and thus people will not scare because of insecurity in the country. People who migrated or tend to migrate will stay in the country and this way migration will be reduced once the country is secured. Strengthening security of Afghanistan through increasing security forces, training Afghan security forces and modernizing them with modern weapons will help to reduce the rate of migration from Afghanistan. It is because many people who emigrate from Afghanistan are threatened from the current insecurity in the country. So keeping the security will help to reduce the emigration from Afghanistan.

### **Reduce the poverty rate by effective programs**

Investing and implementing agricultural programs will help to reduce poverty in the country. As it is clear that Afghanistan is an agriculture country and most of its economy is based on agriculture but the agriculture sector is weak and needs investment. If the government, international organization and local investors invest in agriculture, thus it will create job opportunities and people will generate income which will reduce the poverty in Afghanistan.

Encouraging traders to engage in trade as a path out of poverty such that it will create employment and people will receive income from their jobs. It is important to increase trade in the country because it will not only create jobs but it will also generate income and this way people will be busy and getting income.

Providing all people with access to basic social services including education. The government should provide social services such as health, education, access to water, electricity and other services with low prices that would help to meet their first needs with their less income. Some international organization should also help them by providing financial assistance to pay these social services. It is also important to mention that the Afghan government and international organization should also progressively develop social protection systems to support those who cannot support themselves.

Providing access to technology and innovation which these poor will be trained and able to find job by this training. This will help them receive income from jobs and meet their needs that suffer them as poverty.

Reducing poverty through different mechanism such as providing employment, training people about innovation and education and investing in agriculture will help to reduce emigration from Afghanistan because many people who emigrate from the country are poor and live under poverty. So reducing poverty will reduce the emigration from Afghanistan.

### **Providing Opportunities to Returned Migrants**

First, the government should provide better access to land for returned refugee. Most of the refugee are poor that they do not have lands and shelters and even they cannot pay for the physiological needs. So providing lands will help them to be encourage to stay in the country and dwell here.

Providing national legal and regulatory framework for return emigrants. Many international organizations and the government work for emigration in Afghanistan but it is important that emigration should have one specific organization that will work for emigration. Besides, the government should strengthen its capacity to plan, manage and assist the reintegration of returning Afghans. The government should have a plan for returnees for their jobs, social needs, and other facilities.

The government should provide legal aid and vocational training for Afghan refugees and prepare them to find jobs and be their own the future. Returnees need to work, generate income and also they start their own business which all of them are done by training.

The government and international organizations should conduct information campaigns on the risks of migration/trafficking to educate potential victims of trafficking.

When all the opportunities provided to returnees and meeting their daily life needs will encourage Afghans to stay in the country and they will not emigrate back from Afghanistan. People who are already living in Afghanistan will also stay because they will be informed about the risks of migration.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, emigration from Afghanistan is both economic and social problem in Afghanistan. Emigration harms the economy of Afghanistan by losing people that they are professional and experts such as doctors, engineers, and teachers which weaken health, educational and infrastructure sectors in Afghanistan. Besides, the production sectors will also be weaken in case people emigrate from Afghanistan. Emigration also creates social problems such as divorce, children remaining from family education and also mental health problems both to the person who migrate and his family. The only benefit that comes from emigration to Afghanistan is remittance which does not worth migration because it only helps their family to alleviate poverty and meet their economic needs but it does not help the economy of Afghanistan. Since emigration is a problem for Afghanistan that is why it should be reduced through several policies and mechanisms. First, the government should provide employment opportunities for emigrants because people who migrate are all unemployed residents of Afghanistan and through employment, emigration will be reduced in the country. Second, the security is a big concern in Afghanistan because numerous people who leave the country are scared from insecurity and they do not want to put their lives in risks, so security will also help reduce emigration. The last important policy is to reduce poverty by creating jobs and providing free or low price social protection facilities which will help them to stay in the country and this way the emigration will be reduced.

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