

Push-Pull Factors of Migration Today in Albania

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Abstract

Migration is a phenomenon that has significantly impacted Albanian society. In recent years, migration has increased noticeably in Albania. The majority of departures consists of students and university educated persons. This study will research the factors influencing the perceptions and decision-making of migrating students. The objective of this research paper corresponds with the study of the correlation between push-pull factors of student perceptions on migration and of making the decision to migrate. This study will employ quantitative research. The study sample comprises 163 Mediterranean University of Albania students. Research hypotheses are tested with a 95% confidence interval. Push factors influence student perceptions to migrate, just as economic standing, conflict, unemployment and discrimination influence the students' decision to migrate. Whereas, personal safety is not significantly correlated to migratory decision-making. Pull factors do not influence the perceptions of migration of students. Whereas, career opportunities, improving the quality of life and the quality of education influence in student decisions to migrate.

Keywords: migration, push factors, pull factors, students

1. Introduction

People migrate to other countries in search of better opportunities. Different people have different reasons to migrate, however everyone is in search of a better life in the host country. The migration phenomenon can also have a negative impact on society, such as the flight of human capital in large numbers. According to some researchers (Semiv & Semiv, 2010; Kumpikaite & Zickute, 2012) migration can have a negative impact on the social and economic development of a country, as well as on other aspects. Simultaneously, as a result of research (Gibson & David, 2011; Hawthorne,

2010) it is confirmed that it can also manifest certain benefits, such as: promoting the country abroad, learning and training, research exchange and networking, cultural exchange, professional development, information exchange, etc. The admission of highly qualified and expert persons can be beneficial to the host country. Most countries in the world give close and thoughtful attention to their migration policies. They continuously seek to attract professionals, specialists, researchers and students, particularly high performing ones. This paper focuses on students. The objective of this scientific paper relates to the study of the link which exists between push-pull factors in the perception of students regarding migration and migration decision-making.

2. Literature Review

A field of interest for researchers (Ferriss, 1965; McGill, 2013; Ramirez & Kumpikaite, 2013) is student migration. This being closely connected to the fact that students are the hope and future of a nation, therefore the effects of their migration not only have an impact on the present but also the future of a country. Different countries have well-developed migration policies for recruiting and retaining doctoral students. Some of the methods applied are: supplying funding, paying for their studies on condition that they return to work for a given period of time in their country, etc (Saxenian, 2005). The return of students in their country of origin has a positive impact on society. Several researchers have concluded that their contribution in their country of origin is high. (Hawthorne, 2010; Saxenian, 2005). The knowledge, information, and skills that they have obtained in the host countries can be applied in the country of origin. Thus, once having returned they begin implementing their knowledge. It is important to understand the number of migrating students and the number of returning students. If the number of returning students is higher than the number of departing students, it shows that a country has the capability of retaining students and attracting them from other countries. However, if the opposite phenomenon takes place, it is necessary for such country to focus on its migration policies and the development of pertinent policies in order to reclaim the students who are away.

According to Kerri (1976) the factors influencing the decision-making to migrate are separated in push and pull factors. The push factors are the factors that cause people to leave a country. Whereas, pull factors are defined as the factors which cause people to move to a certain area. From the research (Hazen & C. Alberts, 2006) it has been concluded that social and personal factors have influenced students' decision-making to return to their country of origin. However, some students remain in the country where they have migrated. Their decision to stay is influenced by economic and professional factors. (Hazen & C. Alberts, 2006).

The factors which influence the decision to migrate are different. According to Czaika (2015) economic status plays a primary role in the decision to migrate. Persons

living in unfavourable economic conditions tend to migrate, while those in a prosperous economic state prefer to stay in their country. Therefore, people tend to migrate to improve their economic condition (Žičkutė & Kumpikaite, 2015). At the same time, there are individuals who migrate in search of better job opportunities and career advancement (Czaika & Vothknecht, 2014). According to studies (Tupa & Strunz, 2013) social, psychological and biological factors influence migration decision-making. Polgreen and Simpson (2011) concluded that happiness is an influencing factor in migration. Based on its U-shaped distribution, researchers assert that people coming from “happy” and “unhappy” countries are most prone to migrate compared to people from countries of average happiness. Meanwhile, the data from Albania show that the reasons for migration are unemployment and better employment opportunities. Whereas, the reasons for returning are losing one’s job and the family (Filipi, Galanxhi, Nesturi, & Grazhdani, 2013).

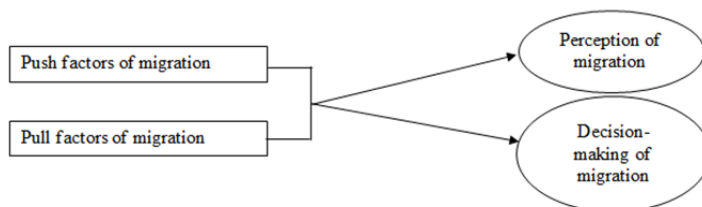
The research questions of this study are:

1. What are the attitudes of students toward migration?
2. What is biggest challenge for students if they would migrate in the future?

The research hypotheses of this study are:

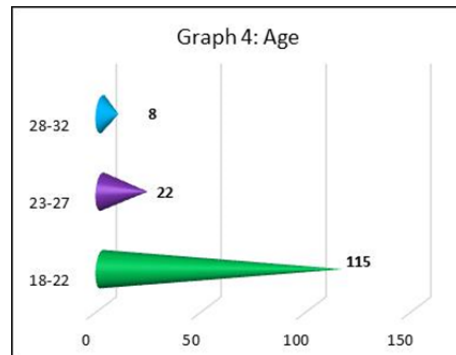
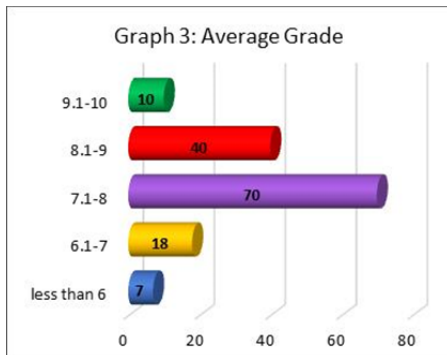
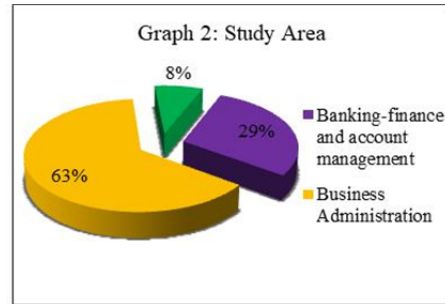
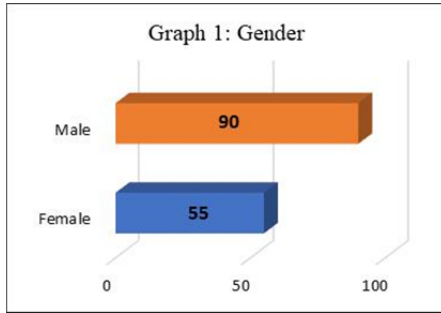
- H1a: Push factors influence student decision-making in migrating ($\alpha=0.05$).
- H1b: Push factors influence student perception in migrating ($\alpha=0.05$).
- H2a: Pull factors influence student decision-making in migrating ($\alpha=0.05$).
- H2b: Pull factors influence student perception in migrating ($\alpha=0.05$).

The literature review leads to this conceptual model:



3. Methodology

This study utilizes qualitative research. The research instrument is the questionnaire, which has been adapted to the particulars of this study (Hazen & C. Alberts, 2006). The questionnaire was distributed online, during the academic year 2017-2018. The questionnaire consists of 27 questions. The first and last parts consist of alternative questions, while for the questions of the second part a 5-point Likert scale is used, ranging from “Not at all important” to “Extremely important”. 163 students from the Mediterranean University of Albania participated in this study. There are 145 valid questionnaires. The response rate of return is approximately 89%. The characteristics of the study sample are shown in the following graphs:



Data analysis was conducted with SPSS 20 and JASP-0.8.5.1. The reliability coefficient Cronbach's α in this questionnaire is 0.952 (Table 1). A value larger than 0.7 shows that the data are valid and reliable for the purposes of this study.

Table 1: Reliability coefficient

	Cronbach's α
scale	0.952

Note. Of the observations, 145 were used, 0 were excluded listwise, and 145 were provided.

4. Empirical Analysis

4.1 What are the attitudes of student toward migration?

The largest part of students think that people ought to migrate to other countries. Only 24 students assert that people must remain in the country of origin (Table 2). If students were in charge of migration policy-making, 56 students would create policies for reducing the phenomenon of migration, 61 would create encouraging policies in favour of migration and 28 are undecided (Table 3).

Table 2: Migration toward other countries

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	121	83.4	83.4	83.4
No	24	16.6	16.6	100.0
Missing	0	0.0		
Total	145	100.0		

Table 3: Migration policy

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Would reduce migration	56	38.6	38.6	38.6
Would encourage migration	61	42.1	42.1	80.7
Does not know	28	19.3	19.3	100.0
Missing	0	0.0		
Total	145	100.0		

4.2 *What is the biggest challenge for students if they would migrate in the future?*

Students rank first the job interview as their biggest challenge. In second place they rank their visa interview. After those, they evaluate moving away from home, job-hunting, communication, not knowing anyone in their destination country, food, knowledge of laws and regulations, discrimination and last learning a new language (Table 4).

Table 4: Migration challenges

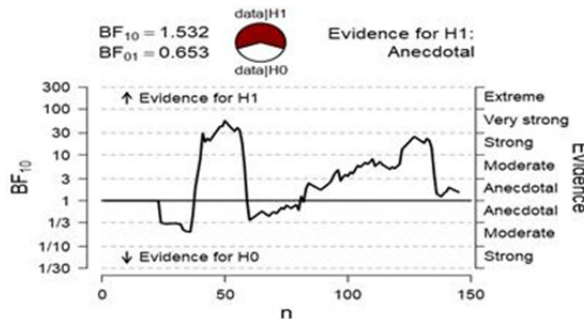
	N	Mean	SD	SE
Knowledge of laws and regulations in the destination country	145.0	3.614	1.259	0.105
Learning a new language	145.0	3.434	1.418	0.118
Food	145.0	3.731	1.192	0.099
Communication	145.0	3.890	1.113	0.092
Moving away from home	145.0	4.000	1.155	0.096
Finding a job	145.0	3.945	1.212	0.101
Discrimination	145.0	3.552	1.476	0.123
Visa interview	145.0	4.103	1.039	0.086
Job interview	145.0	4.145	1.027	0.085
Not knowing anyone in the destination country	145.0	3.738	1.328	0.110

4.3 H1a: Push factors influencing student decision-making to migrate ($\alpha=0.05$).

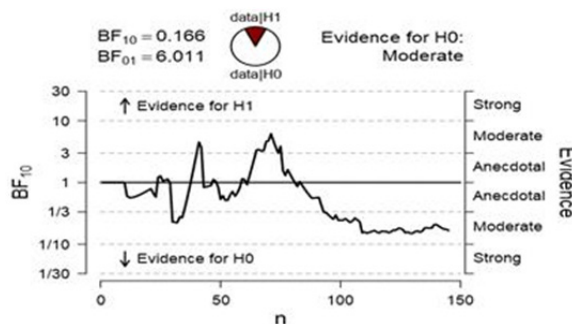
Push factors such as economic conditions, conflict, unemployment and discrimination influence student decision-making for migrating. Whereas personal safety does not have an important statistical correlation to decision-making for migrating. Table 5 values demonstrate that the correlation between conflict and decision-making to migrate has the largest coefficient, thus is more significant statistically. Analysis shows that four push factors influence decision-making to migrate and one factor does not, which brings to the rejection of the hypothesis. Graphs 5-9 provide a schematic representation.

Table 5: Bayesian Pearson Correlation

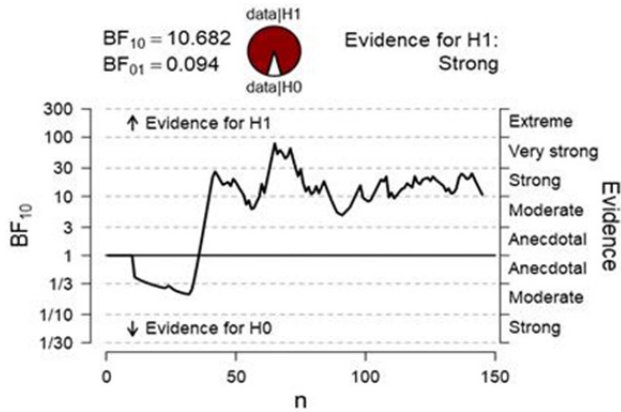
		r	BF ₁₀
Economic condition	- Decision-making to migrate	0.193	1.532
Personal safety	- Decision-making to migrate	0.082	0.166
Conflict (feuds)	- Decision-making to migrate	0.252	10.682
Unemployment	- Decision-making to migrate	0.227	4.317
Discrimination	- Decision-making to migrate	0.245	8.152



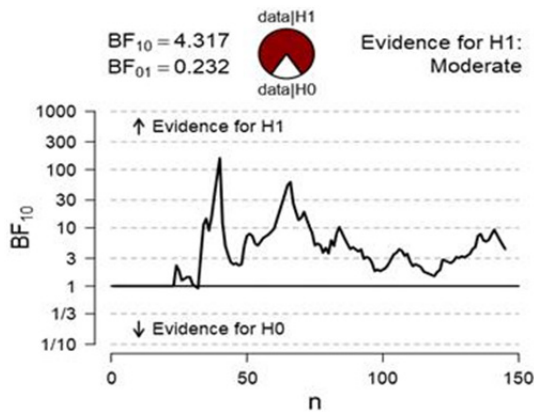
Graph 5: Economic conditions and decision-making to migrate



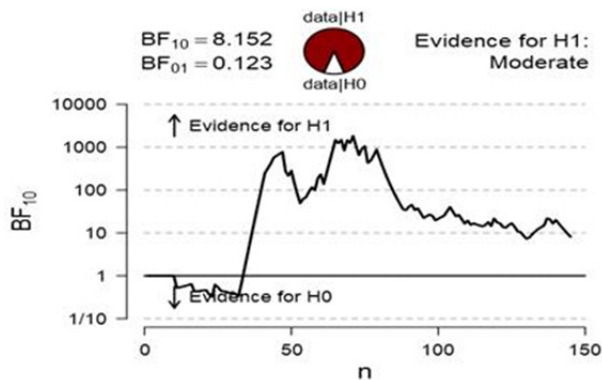
Graph 6: Personal safety and decision-making to migrate



Graph 7: Conflict and decision-making to migrate



Graph 8: Unemployment and decision-making to migrate



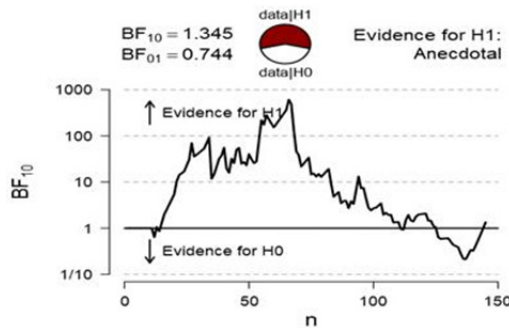
Graph 9: Discrimination and decision-making to migrate

4.4 H1b: Push factors influencing student perception in migrating ($\alpha=0.05$).

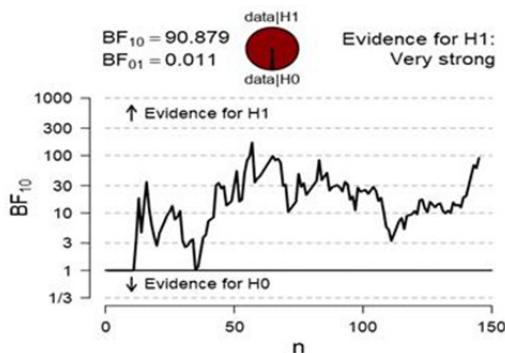
Push factors influence student perception to migrate (Table 6). Between push factors and student perception to migrate there exist a significant statistical correlation. All the correlations between the variables are positive. The strongest correlation exists between personal safety and migration perception. Hypothesis H1b is supported with a confidence interval 95%. Graphs 10-14 show the results of the data analysis.

Table 6: Bayesian Pearson Correlation

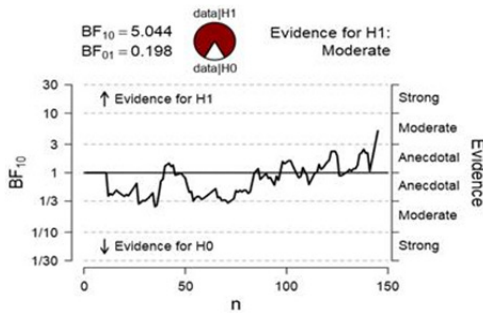
		r	BF ₁₀
Economic condition	- Perception of migration	0.189	1.345
Personal safety	- Perception of migration	0.303	90.879
Conflict (feuds)	- Perception of migration	0.231	5.044
Unemployment	- Perception of migration	0.188	1.305
Discrimination	- Perception of migration	0.230	4.804



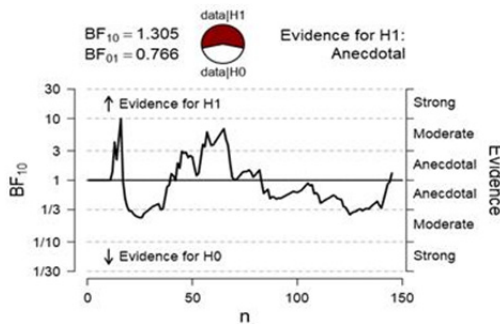
Graph 10: Economic condition and perception of migration



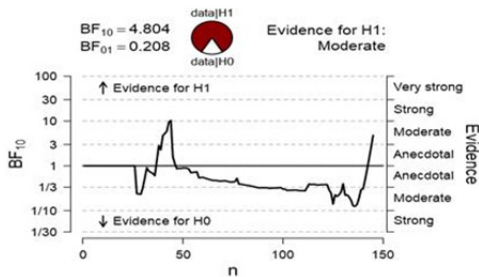
Graph 11: Personal safety and perception of migration



Graph 12: Conflict and perception of migration



Graph 13: Unemployment and perception of migration



Graph 14: Discrimination and perception of migration

4.5 H2a: Pull factors influencing student decision-making in migrating ($\alpha=0.05$).

The pull factors in a country, such as the opportunities to advance one’s career, improving one’s quality of life, the quality of the educational system and marriage influence positively in student decision-making to migrate (Table 7). Moreover, between these factors and the decision-making to migrate there exist significant statistical positive correlations. Other pull factors do not influence student decision-making to migrate. Hypothesis H2a is refuted.

Table 7: Bayesian Pearson Correlation

		r	BF ₁₀
Career advancement opportunities	- Decision-making to migrate	0.240	6.791
Professional development opportunities	- Decision-making to migrate	0.112	0.252
High salary	- Decision-making to migrate	0.030	0.110
Exciting work	- Decision-making to migrate	-0.035	0.113
More job opportunities	- Decision-making to migrate	0.152	0.544
Finding a job in one's study area	- Decision-making to migrate	0.051	0.125
Improving the quality of life	- Decision-making to migrate	0.218	3.247
Educational system quality	- Decision-making to migrate	0.269	20.385
Culture	- Decision-making to migrate	0.121	0.294
Desire to learn about other countries	- Decision-making to migrate	-0.045	0.120
Desire to travel	- Decision-making to migrate	-0.109	0.241
Family	- Decision-making to migrate	0.073	0.151
Learning a new language	- Decision-making to migrate	0.018	0.106
Marriage	- Decision-making to migrate	0.223	3.782

4.6 H2b: Pull factors influencing student perception in migrating ($\alpha=0.05$).

Table 8 values show that pull factors do not influence student perception toward migration. Between pull factors and perception of migration there exist insignificant statistical correlations. Hypothesis H2b is also refuted.

Table 8: Bayesian Pearson Correlation

		r	BF ₁₀
Career advancement opportunities	- Perception of migration	0.043	0.118
Professional development opportunities	- Perception of migration	0.061	0.135
High salary	- Perception of migration	0.041	0.117
Exciting work	- Perception of migration	0.041	0.117
More job opportunities	- Perception of migration	0.098	0.207
Finding a job in one's study area	- Perception of migration	0.079	0.162
Improving the quality of life	- Perception of migration	0.166	0.750
Educational system quality	- Perception of migration	0.145	0.468
Culture	- Perception of migration	0.076	0.156
Desire to learn about other countries	- Perception of migration	0.100	0.211
Desire to travel	- Perception of migration	-0.011	0.105
Family	- Perception of migration	0.078	0.161
Learning a new language	- Perception of migration	0.146	0.477
Marriage	- Perception of migration	0.037	0.114

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Generally, student attitudes are pro-migration. Migration is viewed by most student respondents as an opportunity. The job and visa interviews are two of the biggest challenges encountered by students.

Push factors influence the perception of students to migrate, at the same time, economic conditions, conflict, unemployment and discrimination influence in student decision-making to migrate. Whereas personal safety does not have a significant statistical correlation with decision-making to migrate.

Pull factors do not influence student perception in migrating. While, career advancement, improvement of the quality of life, and the quality of the educational system influence student decision-making to migrate.

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