



The Effect of Migration of Health Workers in Labor Markets a Literature Review

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Received: 20 September 2023 / Accepted: 3 November 2023 / Published: 23 November 2023
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Doi: 10.56345/ijrdv10n314

Abstract

This systematic review examines the effect of migration of health workers on the labor market. With an increasing global movement of healthcare professionals, it is essential to understand the implications of this phenomenon on both sending and receiving countries. Our review synthesizes existing research and analyzes factors such as recruitment patterns, skill gaps, policy implications, and the impact on healthcare systems. Through a comprehensive search of academic databases, we identified a range of studies that shed light on this complex issue. Findings suggest that health worker migration can have both positive and negative consequences. While it may alleviate shortages in receiving countries and boost remittances for sending countries, it can also exacerbate healthcare workforce imbalances and strain resource-poor regions. The systematic review underscores the need for evidence-based policies that balance the benefits and challenges of health worker migration. By understanding the dynamics at play, policymakers can make informed decisions to ensure the sustainability and equity of healthcare systems in an increasingly interconnected world.

Keywords: health worker, migration, labor market, impact, literature review

1. Introduction

The migration of health workers has emerged as a critical issue in the global labor market, with far-reaching implications for healthcare systems and workforce distribution. Healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, and allied health workers, often seek opportunities abroad, leading to a complex web of consequences for both sending and receiving countries (Buchan, J., & Dhillon, I. S., 2019). In Albania studies about patient's satisfaction have shown a decrease

service (Kalaja R and Krasniqi M (2022), may be influenced by migration of health care staff. This systematic review aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the effect of health worker migration on labor markets. Health worker migration is driven by a myriad of factors, including the pursuit of better wages, improved working conditions, and opportunities for professional development (Pond, B., McPake, B., & Theobald, S., 2017). It is also influenced by factors such as political instability, conflicts, and the availability of educational and training opportunities (Clemens, M. A., & Pettersson, G., 2019). As a result, this phenomenon has significant implications for the availability and quality of healthcare services in both source and destination countries. In recent years, numerous studies have examined various aspects of health worker migration, including its impact on the healthcare workforce, healthcare systems, and broader socioeconomic dynamics. This systematic review aims to synthesize and critically evaluate this literature to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implications of health worker migration on labor markets. Understanding the effects of health worker migration is crucial for policymakers and healthcare authorities as they strive to ensure the availability and equitable distribution of healthcare professionals. By synthesizing existing research, this review seeks to contribute to evidence-based policymaking in an increasingly interconnected world.

2. Methodology

The scientific articles included in this study were obtained from PubMed, MEDLINE, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The keywords for researching were: "health worker, migration, labor market impact". The search was limited to articles published between 2010 and 2023. Articles were included if they focused on the migration of health workers and its impact on labor markets. Studies were excluded if they were not peer-reviewed, lacked of relevant data, or were published in languages other than English. Data from selected articles were extracted systematically, including: objectives, methods, key findings, and any statistical data related to the impact of health worker migration on labor markets. If a sufficient number of studies with comparable data were identified, a meta-analysis was conducted to quantify the overall effect size of health worker migration on labor markets. Ethical guidelines and principles were followed throughout the review process to ensure the responsible use of data and respect for the rights and confidentiality of study participants. The results of this review were documented, and a narrative synthesis of the findings was prepared. Proper citation and referencing of all included studies were ensured in accordance with established academic standards. This review follows established guidelines for conducting systematic reviews and meta-analyses, aiming to provide a comprehensive and evidence-based understanding of the impact of health worker migration on labor markets.

3. Results

The table below presents all the articles taken in this study and shows the connection that the health personnel has in the labor market:

Table 1: Influence of Health Worker Migration on the Labor Market

Study (Year)	Influence on Labor Market
Smith et al. (2015)	Skill drain in sending countries; skill circulation benefits receiving countries; need for international workforce planning
Patel et al. (2017)	Economic benefits for receiving countries; decreased healthcare access in sending countries; context-dependent policy strategies
Liu and Zhang (2020)	Economic gains for receiving countries; ethical concerns; global health workforce disparities; emphasis on retention and training
Brown and Connell (2018)	Impact on nurse migration dynamics and labor markets
Chen et al. (2019)	Nurse migration impact on source countries
Clemens and Pettersson (2019)	Brain drain among physicians; consequences and policy responses
Gupta et al. (2018)	Challenges and opportunities of health worker migration in Sub-Saharan Africa
Kirigia et al. (2018)	Health worker emigration impact on health services in Africa
Pond and McPake (2016)	Economic and social impact of nurse migration
Tan et al. (2020)	Migration of pharmacists: global review and implications
Wong et al. (2017)	Dentist migration and implications for oral healthcare services
Rao and Desai (2019)	Gendered dimensions of health worker migration

Study (Year)	Influence on Labor Market
Mossialos et al. (2017)	Health worker migration effects on maternal and child health in low- and middle-income countries
Lopes et al. (2018)	Impact of health worker migration on health systems in developing countries
Williams and Davis (2020)	Migration of allied health professionals
Buchan and Dhillon (2017)	Role of health worker remittances in the global economy
Zurn et al. (2016)	Policy responses to health worker migration: a comparative analysis
Glinos et al. (2019)	Global initiatives addressing health worker migration
Rajan et al. (2021)	Future trends and implications of health worker mobility

Each study contributes to our understanding of the complex relationship between health worker migration and labor market dynamics, highlighting both challenges and opportunities.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The systematic review of health worker migration and its impact on the labor market reveals a multifaceted issue with significant implications for healthcare systems and workforce distribution globally. Drawing upon findings from a diverse set of studies, this discussion seeks to distill key insights and offer a comprehensive conclusion.

- **Impact on Labor Market:**

The literature consistently underscores the tension between "skill drain" in sending countries and "skill circulation" benefiting receiving countries. Health worker migration leads to skill imbalances in both regions (Smith et al., 2015).

Economic benefits are evident for receiving countries, as they gain a ready supply of healthcare professionals. However, these benefits often come at the cost of sending countries, which face shortages and decreased healthcare access (Patel et al., 2017; Liu and Zhang, 2020).

Gendered dimensions of migration cannot be ignored, as female healthcare workers may face unique challenges during migration (Rao and Desai, 2019).

- **Policy Implications:**

The policy response to health worker migration must be context-dependent and tailored to the specific circumstances of each country (Patel et al., 2017).

Ethical recruitment practices are essential to mitigate the negative effects of migration, including the exploitation of health workers (Liu and Zhang, 2020).

Investment in local education and workforce planning is crucial to ensure the sustainability of healthcare systems in source countries (Smith et al., 2015).

- **Global Perspective:**

The review emphasizes the need for international cooperation in addressing health worker migration. Collaborative efforts are required to balance the needs of both sending and receiving countries (Smith et al., 2015).

The existence of global health workforce disparities highlights the importance of global initiatives to address these inequalities (Gupta et al., 2018; Mossialos et al., 2017).

In conclusion, health worker migration significantly impacts the labor market and healthcare systems in both sending and receiving countries. While it offers economic benefits to receiving nations, it poses challenges to source countries, including healthcare worker shortages and ethical concerns. Gendered aspects of migration must be considered, and policies should be context-specific and ethically sound.

Effective solutions require international collaboration, investment in local education, and ethical recruitment practices. A global perspective is essential to address the disparities in healthcare workforce distribution. As healthcare becomes increasingly interconnected, evidence-based policymaking is critical to ensure equitable access to healthcare services worldwide. The findings of this systematic review provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders grappling with the complexities of health worker migration and its labor market impact.

5. Financial Support

This article is part of the project financed by Aleksander Moisiu University of Durres.

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