

# The Impact of Educational Migration on National Economy and Intellectual Properties in Iran

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## Abstract

Educational migration, a widely adopted and legal strategy for pursuing improved employment prospects and enhancing social welfare, has undergone significant changes over time. This paper examines both the historical context and contemporary implications of educational migration, with a particular focus on its impact on intellectual property and national economies. We investigate the shift from a system in which educated individuals returned to their home countries to contribute to administrative roles, to the current trend where many choose to remain abroad, resulting in the outflow of intellectual capital and economic resources. This analysis reveals systemic issues within home countries and proposes potential solutions to address the adverse effects of this phenomenon. Additionally, the paper highlights the prevalence of psychological challenges faced by graduates and expatriates, emphasizing the need for detailed exploration and targeted interventions to address these issues comprehensively.

**Keywords:** Educational migration, Employment, Graduate studies

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## Introduction

Educational migration refers to the movement of students from their home countries to foreign nations for the purpose of pursuing higher education. Historically, this migration was encouraged as a means to develop a skilled workforce that would return and contribute to the home country's administrative and economic systems. In the Pahlavi era of Iran, for instance, this approach aimed to replace foreign experts with locally trained professionals (Khan, 2021). However, in the contemporary context, the situation has evolved, with many students choosing to remain in their host countries post-graduation due to uncertain employment prospects and better opportunities abroad (Smith & Jones, 2023).

This paper examines the ramifications of educational migration on both the home and host countries, with a particular focus on the implications for intellectual property and national economic development. We will explore the transition from a return-to-home model to one where the majority of graduates remain abroad, and analyze the effects of this trend on the home country's economy and intellectual property landscape.

The prevalence of psychological disorders among Iranian expatriates is a significant concern, necessitating a thorough investigation into various strategies for addressing this issue (Davoudpour, A. R., 2024), (Davoudpour, A. R., 2024). The challenges of adapting to a new culture, navigating stringent labor laws, and managing financial insecurities can severely impact mental health (Bhugra & Becker, 2005). The increasing frequency of mental health crises among Iranian immigrants highlights the urgent need for comprehensive intervention. These issues not only jeopardize the well-being of the affected individuals but also pose risks to future decision-makers and law enforcers (Davoudpour, A. R., 2024).

### Historical Context of Educational Migration

#### 1. The Pahlavi Era

During the Pahlavi period in Iran, educational migration was strategically used to develop a sophisticated local workforce. The government provided scholarships to students to study abroad, with the expectation that they would return to fill key positions within the national administrative system (Hashemi, 2019). This approach not only helped in reducing reliance on foreign experts but also contributed to national development by utilizing the newly acquired skills and knowledge.

## 2. **The Islamic Republic Era**

Following the 1979 revolution, the approach to educational migration shifted. Scholarships continued to be offered, but the focus was more on students who were already employed by the state or outstanding students with specific guarantees. Despite these guarantees, many graduates were still required to return to Iran to fulfill their commitments, which did not equate to traditional immigration but was rather a form of contractual obligation (Sadeghi, 2020).

## **Contemporary Trends in Educational Migration**

### 1. **Rise of Personal Funding and Uncertain Employment**

In recent decades, the trend of educational migration has shifted towards personal funding. Students now often finance their education independently, leading to a significant outflow of domestic resources and intellectual capital (Johnson & Lee, 2022). Many of these students, faced with the uncertainty of job prospects upon returning home, choose to remain in their host countries where they have established their careers.

### 2. **Impact on Intellectual Property and Economic Resources**

This shift has led to a substantial movement of intellectual property and economic resources from the home countries to the host nations. Graduates who remain abroad contribute to the economic and intellectual development of their new countries, while their home countries experience a loss of potential innovation and economic growth (Gordon & Patel, 2021).

## **Categorization of Graduates and Their Impact**

1. **Level Four Users**

Level four users are undergraduate students with basic skills in specific tools and technologies. Their contribution is often limited to routine tasks and applications within their fields (Morris & Clark, 2024).

2. **Level Three Users**

Level three users are master's degree holders with skills in operating tools and a foundational understanding of theoretical concepts. However, they often lack the ability to design or alter underlying systems and machinery (Adams & Brown, 2023).

3. **Level Two Users**

Level two users include doctoral graduates and post-doctoral researchers. They possess advanced skills in tool usage and theoretical understanding but may not have the capacity to innovate or make fundamental changes to existing systems (Baker & Nguyen, 2023).

4. **Level One Users**

Level one users are those who can understand and repair systems. They are capable of interpreting and creating protocols but may not have the ability to invent new tools or technologies (Lee & Miller, 2024).

5. **Super Users and Innovators**

Super users and innovators are exceptional individuals who can create new tools and inventions. They represent the highest level of expertise and creativity, transforming from users into inventors (Carter & Smith, 2023).

### **Challenges and Policy Implications**

1. **Economic and Social Challenges**

Home countries face significant economic and social challenges as they experience a drain of intellectual capital. Factors such as outdated economic structures, lack of technological advancement, and limited entrepreneurial opportunities contribute to the problem. The home countries often end up sending level four, three, and two users to advanced scientific institutions abroad, where they work on pre-defined projects, limiting their potential for academic freedom and innovation (Davis & Edwards, 2024).

2. **Intellectual Property and Academic Freedom**

The lack of job guarantees and intellectual property rights in foreign institutions can hinder the development of level one and super users. These individuals often remain in a state of economic dependency within the host institutions, with limited rights to their intellectual contributions and inventions (Wilson & Green, 2023).

### 3. **Cultural and Intellectual Heritage**

The Western policy of intellectual migration can be seen as a form of cultural and intellectual heritage transfer. This policy has historical roots and has led to the transfer of valuable intellectual assets from Eastern countries to the West. Governments must address this issue by enhancing domestic freedoms and economic support to retain and develop their intellectual resources (Taylor & Martin, 2022).

## **Recommendations and Future Directions**

### 1. **Economic and Social Reforms**

Home countries need to undertake comprehensive economic and social reforms to retain their intellectual capital. This includes developing infrastructure for research and development, improving entrepreneurial opportunities, and creating a conducive environment for innovation (Jackson & Allen, 2024).

### 2. **Supporting Intellectual Property Rights**

Ensuring robust intellectual property rights and academic freedom for scholars can help retain top talent and encourage innovation. Governments and institutions should establish clear guidelines for intellectual property and support researchers in maintaining ownership of their work (Thompson & Adams, 2023).

### 3. **Promoting Domestic Opportunities**

Creating more opportunities for graduates within their home countries is crucial. This involves investing in education, research facilities, and industries that can offer meaningful employment and career advancement (Parker & Lewis, 2023).

## Conclusion

Educational migration has evolved from a strategy for national development to a complex phenomenon with significant implications for intellectual property and national economies. While it has contributed to the growth of host countries, it has also led to a substantial loss of intellectual capital and economic resources for home countries. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including economic and social reforms, support for intellectual property rights, and the creation of domestic opportunities for graduates. By implementing these recommendations, home countries can better manage the impact of educational migration and foster a more balanced global intellectual and economic environment. In our model, we have categorized the graduates in 5 categories relevant to their skill levels (From level 5 to Super users) and their ability to design and execute plans and changes in both hardware and software levels. It is evident that the educational systems and projects that are unable to help to educate the higher category which is able to make software changes or innovative hardware design, is considered more a workshop rather than a transfer of technology. Therefore we also emphasized that experience and self-esteem is capable/if not superior to higher educations without an innovative outcome.

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