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UACE S101 General Paper section A: Brain drain in Uganda (causes, effects and solutions)

Definition

Brain drain is the loss/migration of highly skilled manpower to other countries in search for better pay, equipment or better conditions of living and terms of service e.g. doctors, teachers, engineers etc. Usually skilled labour migrate from low developed countries to developed countries.

Causes of brain drain

- The absence of employment options in the country of origin is the main factor. Many highly qualified professionals, such as doctors, engineers, and IT experts, are compelled to look for opportunities abroad because they cannot locate domestic jobs that match their skill sets.
- Due to poor salaries and working conditions a struggling professional may opt to look for greener pastures hence brain drain.
- Persecution based on political affiliation, religion, gender, or sexuality has forced some professionals to abandon their country for safety.
- Some professionals have migrated to developed countries where there is advanced technology for professional growth or for better education opportunities.
- Political instability in some parts of the country or some countries, professionals emigrated from such countries to politically stable countries.
- Peer influence and state of mind that migrating to developed countries lead to success. Many emigrants are convinced by their friends, spouses to work in developed countries. While others take it as status to work abroad.
- Structural adjustment programs and privatization of government parastatals left many people jobless and thus opted to leave the country for better opportunities.
- Population explosion resulting in unmatched increase in the number of people and the number of jobs created.

Positive impacts

- It has enabled the country to reduce on the unemployment levels experienced among the youth leading to income earnings and improved standards of living

- The country obtains the remittances through the money sent by the migrants to the home country (Uganda), hence helping stimulate the economy.
- New skills and expertise needed to be utilized to the advantage of the home economy at one point returns, leading to development of the country. Always, “east or west, home is the best”.
- It reduces on the rate at which crime may occur since those who would put the societies on tension are abroad; fugitives run away for the fear of being punished, thus a sigh of relief.
- International relations are improved leading to better image of the country internationally and friendship.
- It promotes globalization, which widens markets for the local products world-wide due to wider demand created, for example matooke are highly demanded in United Kingdom because there many Ugandans who have demand for it
- Stimulate education
- Brain drain can lead to transfer of technology when emigrants after acquiring new skills and expertise return to their country.
- Improved education and training: Brain drain can lead to an increased demand for education and training in the country of origin. This can help to improve the quality of education and training available, which can lead to a more skilled workforce.

Negative impact

- Brain drain leads to a shortage of highly skilled professionals, making it challenging to develop critical sectors such as healthcare, education, and technology. The emigration of engineers or health professionals in disproportionately large numbers, undermines a country’s ability to adopt new technologies or deal with health crises.
- Governments invest a lot of money in professional development and education, and when these people leave the workforce to other countries, that investment is lost.
- Brain drain worsens economic inequality because most highly skilled and educated individuals can afford to emigrate.
- The government lose revenue because the high-skilled emigrants do not pay taxes in their home country once they have left.
- The domestic workers have been conscripted into the state of servitude especially those who are trafficked, girls have been sexually abused and some have lost body organs, leading to loss of lives.
- The brain drain increases the technological gap between leading and developing nations because the concentration of human capital in the most advanced economies contributes to their technological progress.
- The process of getting visas is sometimes very stressful and costly. Many people lose their money to conmen.
- Brain drain causes separation of families leading to distress, loneliness and development of social vices such as theft, prostitution, school drop outs etc.
- Some of the workers who go abroad fail to be paid for their labour.

- Overcrowding in the destination country putting stress on the resources
- Loss of market because the professionals have higher purchasing power

Measures to Reduce Brain Drain

While there isn't an easy fix for brain drain, there are some things that business and government leaders can do to reduce or minimize it. These include:

- In-country wage increases and better working conditions are two potential solutions. This may attract highly qualified professionals and persuade them to remain and support the growth of their nation.
- Government should entice professionals to stay in the country is by providing incentives like tax breaks, housing subsidies and cheap credit facilities such as salary loans.
- The government should offer incentives to foreign investors to set up their businesses in Uganda, which will create more job opportunities for the local workforce. To create a stable and conducive environment for businesses to operate, the government should prioritize investments in vital sectors like infrastructure, healthcare, and education.
- The government should endeavor to maintain political stability to ensure the safety of its professionals and their businesses.
- Revision of the education curriculum to put emphasis on job creators rather than jobseekers
- Government can entice returning emigrant expertise with the same salary scale for their former job
- Government should promote population control measures

Past Question

1. Examine the impact of brain drain on the Uganda society
 Mark allocation
 Definition 5marks
 Sp – upto 5marks
 GE- upto 10 marks
 Content-(positive) any 5 points Each upto 3marks = 15marks
 (negative) any 5 points Each upto 3marks = 15marks
 Total = 50marks

Note that when writing a point

- State the point in full sentence (1mark)
 - Explain/discuss the relevance of the point (1mark)
 - Give a relevant example (1mark)
- Total of = 3 marks per point.

Thank you
Dr. Bbosa Science