

# Push and Pull Factors of Migration

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## ABSTRACT

Peoples of the Caribbean in general, and Jamaicans in particular, have always been a migratory people. However, over the last 30 years, the emigration rates have increased substantially, with alarming rates in particular, of highly skilled individuals. There are four major factors which emerged in this study and influence this phenomenon: 1. Crime, violence, lawlessness and general societal indiscipline, 2. Occupation and skill mismatch, 3. Lack of economic opportunities, and 4. Lack of social opportunities. This study suggests that both the direct and indirect effects of crime in general and violent crimes in particular, combined with suitable employment for the migrant's skill set, have forced some members of Jamaica's professional class to gravitate towards First World countries, taking their skill set which their home country has financed. This places their host country in an advantageous position as these skills contribute to that country's development and growth. In return, such countries offer migrants secure economic (e.g., skill-career match and ability to afford their desired lifestyle) and social opportunities (e.g., desired health care) currently unavailable in the country of origin.

**JEL Codes:** J61; Z13

**Key Words:** Migration; Economic opportunities; brain drain

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore the main reasons why Jamaican professionals leave or intend to leave Jamaica. It is exploratory in nature and seeks to provide reasons why persons of the skilled labor force feel migration is the best option for them. The peoples of the Caribbean region in general, and Jamaicans in particular, have been migratory. However, Jamaica is losing its professional class to the developed world at increasing rates, which has implications for fulfilling its goal of achieving "First World" status by 2030, as given in Jamaica's National Development Plan titled "Vision 2030."

## THE PROBLEM

Jamaica has the twelfth highest emigration rate in the world—but is ranked among the twentieth least attractive countries in the world for immigrants (United Nations

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Development Program, 2009). It is therefore not surprising that many persons, including the writer of this research, are concerned about brain drain in Jamaica. Sriskandarajah (2005, p. 1) posits that the preoccupation with migration issues is not a new one and everyone, whether it is the “most distinguished academic or the proverbial man on the bus...” is concerned about it. He claims that while there is a plethora of literature on all aspects of migration, there are particular questions which still remain unanswered, such as “What drives international migration? What determines its impact on poor sending countries? What can be done to manage these impacts? And what interventions will actually be feasible politically?” In addition, Sriskandarajah purports that the impact of migration is difficult to assess due to the lack of empirical data. These sentiments are echoed by Skeldon (2005, p. 8) who believes that the measurement of skilled migration is fuzzy in the sense that data collection is problematic. To begin with “origin countries of international migration rarely keep records of those who leave in a systematic way and data usually have to be compiled from countries of destination and mostly from population censuses, to provide stock estimates.” In essence, data collection is a costly feat and therefore it can be assumed that this may be a part of the reason why origin countries, such as Jamaica, may not keep proper records. Nonetheless, there are enough data to allow us to examine the problem.

The Caribbean region has the highest small-state brain drain, with a rate of approximately seventy five per cent (74.9%) (Beine, Docquier and Schiff, 2008, p. 4). According to them, “as far as small states are concerned, three out of every four skilled Caribbean live outside their country of origin.” Docquier and Marfouk (2005) list Jamaica as the third highest source country of skilled emigrants with a rate of about eighty-five percent (85.1%).

According to Skeldon (2005, p. 5) “Human capital is considered to be of central importance to development and the ultimate reduction, even eradication of poverty. Thus, any loss of the skilled through migration may be prejudicial to the achievement of development goals and any discussion of the movement of the skilled is inextricably bound up with what is generally referred to as the ‘brain drain’, a debate that has been ongoing for over four decades.” Schmid (2006) claims while some countries prefer the remittances over human capital, they are still unable to provide the necessary social

services for their populations. Professionals are needed for sustainable development and therefore the constant depletion of same will only harm the origin countries further.

There are two levels of examination of the problem: the professional migrant as an actor and the policy maker that can act to manage or constrain the actor. Due to the constraint of time, the primary focus of the study is the professional actor and his or her decision to migrate. It is hoped that the findings might be useful to policy makers.

### **WHY IS THIS PROBLEM SIGNIFICANT TO JAMAICA?**

It is important to keep a larger proportion of critical professional personnel in Jamaica to increase its chances of achieving developed country status, certainly by 2030. However policies must be guided by objective migration studies.

The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ, 2005, p. 12) gives a synopsis of Jamaica's migration trends. According to the PIOJ, between 1970 and 2003, almost three quarters of a million (745,289) persons immigrated to the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. On average, this is twenty one thousand, nine hundred and twenty persons (21,920) per annum. "The largest number of migrants was recorded in 1980-1989 (252,659 persons), followed by 1990-1999 with 220,498 persons."

According to PIOJ (2005, p. 12), from 1970 to 2003, the United States was the leading migrant receiving country for Jamaica with a total of over half million (588,066) persons. Canada received one hundred and thirty four thousand, six hundred and seventy six (134,676) immigrants while the United Kingdom received twenty two thousand, five hundred and forty seven (22,547) persons (see Table 1).

**Table 1**  
**Total Number of Jamaican Emigrant Stock, 1970-2003**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Total Number of Migrants</b>
United States of America	588,066
Canada	134,676
United Kingdom	22,547
<b>Grand Total of Migrants</b>	<b>745,289</b>

*Source:* The Labour Market Information Newsletter of Jamaica, 2005. Jamaica: Pear Tree Press.

Data from PIOJ (2005, p. 14), suggest that eighteen percent (18%), of this group can be described as skilled, that is professional, technical, administrative and management. It is important to note however, that this rate escalated to thirty one percent (31%) for the period 2000-2003. Another concern obvious in the data is the fact that it is the most productive age group that is migrating: 30-39, followed by 20-29.

There are no indications that the situation is stabilizing. The most staggering statistics were obtained from the PIOJ's (January 2007, p. 4) issue of The Labour Market Information Newsletter of Jamaica. The data outline that the total stock of Jamaican tertiary graduates is three hundred and eighty thousand, two hundred and twenty six (380, 226) for the period 2001-2005. Of this total, almost sixty percent (59.5%) were trained in Jamaica, implying tremendous national subsidy. Even more critical is the fact that less than a quarter (23.4%) of Jamaica's tertiary educated stock remains in Jamaica (see Table 2).

**Table 2**  
**Stock of Jamaican Tertiary Graduates, 2001-2005**

<b>Total Amount of Tertiary Graduates</b>	<b>Tertiary Graduates trained in Jamaica</b>	<b>Tertiary Graduates Trained Abroad</b>	<b>Tertiary Graduates Overseas at Time of Study</b>	<b>Tertiary Graduates in Jamaica at Time of Study</b>
380, 226	226,147	154,079	291,166	89,060
<b>100%</b>	<b>59.5%</b>	<b>40.5%</b>	<b>76.6%</b>	<b>23.4%</b>

*Source:* PIOJ, An Assessment of the Emigration of Highly Skilled Workers from Jamaica, 2007. The Labour Market Information Newsletter of Jamaica, No. 54, PIOJ.

There does not seem to be urgency in managing migration of trained professionals. What is even more alarming is the outlook of the Economic and Social Surveys of Jamaica for 2007 and 2008 do not project opportunities for tertiary graduates. Instead, the 2007 report suggests greater emphasis on strengthening relations with the ever expanding Jamaican Diaspora. The 2008 issue claims, however, the PIOJ will be addressing the population plan as a part of their 2030 development strategy.

In essence, Jamaica is training workers for the global market without serious consideration of ways to retain a significant proportion of critical professional and technical persons. Degazon-Johnson (2007, pp. 4-5) states in her presentation that over the last few years she has not been convinced enough attention has been dedicated to the migration of the highly skilled from the region. The burden on middle class households covers only about a fifth of the cost of secondary and tertiary education. Thus, “the Jamaican taxpayer is not only subsidizing the education of people from higher than average income families and who will have higher than average incomes once they graduate, but who will not even pay taxes on those incomes, nor provide any benefits to the community in terms of teaching/nursing.” Nevertheless, migration can be a rewarding experience for a developing country like Jamaica, once it is managed.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Marshall (1987, p. 15), “the history of the Caribbean can be seen as a succession of waves of migration.” This is buttressed by Nurse (2004, p. 107), who claims migration is “one of the defining features of the history of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)” and Thomas-Hope (2002, p. 1.2.1) who posits “migration has become deeply embedded in the psyche of Caribbean peoples over the past century and a half.” Also in agreement with this are Potter et al. (2004, p. 48), who state “international migration is one of the Caribbean’s most fundamental demographic processes contributing substantially to the population diversity that characterizes the small insular societies of this oceanic region.” For Marshall, Caribbean populations were formed almost wholly as a result of migration. Marshall states in the post-Emancipation period, there were four waves or phases of migration. The first wave occurred from 1835 to 1885 and was mainly inter-territorial movement. Potter et al. (2004, p. 57) attribute the second wave from 1885 to 1920 to the calamitous declines in international commodity prices which led to the bankruptcy of many West Indian planters and brought about several structural changes in several small islands. During this period, migration was used as a “safety valve.” The third period was from 1920-1940, where there was very

little out-migration and movements mainly comprised forced repatriation and voluntary return migration. This was also a period of hard times and a time of limited opportunities for the region. Potter et al. (2004) claim that there was a crash in the world sugar prices in 1921 which led to harsh economic realities for many Caribbean people. According to Marshall (1987, p. 16) “the present phase, which begun in 1940, is dominated by movement to the metropolitan countries of the United Kingdom and North America.”

The International Organization for Migration’s World Migration Report (2008, p. 52) claims the definition of a skilled migrant is unclear, however typically, occupational or educational status is used. For the purpose of this paper, both occupational status and educational attainment will be used to define the Jamaican skilled migrant, with the exception that the individual is an adult who has completed at least a formal three-year college education. A three-year college education is the criterion used to define the highly skilled Jamaican migrant, because generally, it takes no less than thirty-six (36) months to complete a ninety (90) credit degree program at most accredited universities in Jamaica.

Martin and Zurcher (2008) argue that the decision to relocate to another country can be grouped loosely into two categories, economic and non-economic. However, for the purpose of analysis, the factors which actually propel a migrant to make that final move might best be divided into three categories: Demand-pull, Supply-push, networks/other (See Table 3).

**Table 3**  
**Factors Which Affect Migration**

<b>Type of Migrant</b>	<b>Demand-Pull</b>	<b>Supply-Push</b>	<b>Network/Other</b>
<b>Economic</b>	Labour Recruitment	Unemployment or Underemployment issues such as low wages	Jobs and wage information flow
<b>Non-Economic</b>	Family Unification (husbands and wives join spouses, children join parents)	Fleeing war and/or civil unrest	Communications; transportation; assistance organizations; desire for new experience

*Source:* Martin, P. & G. Zurcher (2008). *Managing Migration: The Global Challenge.*

Lowell and Findlay (2001, p. 3) purport not only has the demand for skilled labor in developed countries increased, but pull factors such as “better wages and employment conditions, better information, recruitment and cheaper transportation,” encourage skilled migrants to seek jobs and opportunities in developed countries. With limited social and economic opportunities available to most persons in Jamaica, the lure of the lifestyle in developed countries is difficult to stave off. Nurse (2004, p. 108) claims that “economic decline, widening inequality, increasing poverty social displacement, crime and political crisis have been the main drivers of emigration.”

The major push factors influencing migration include, but are not limited to general crime and violence, an unstable economy which in turn affects an individual’s social and economic opportunities and career advancement. In the case of Jamaica, The World Bank’s study, “The Road to Sustained Growth in Jamaica” (2004, p. 2) suggests that poor unemployment opportunities and sluggish economic growth have contributed to Jamaican emigration. This coupled with the ease and availability of information about opportunities outside of Jamaica play a vital role in the migration decision-making process. Thomas-Hope (2002) provides supportive evidence through her analysis on various advertisements published in the *Jamaica Gleaner* between 2000 and 2001. She claims that during this period, recruiters from various agencies in the United Kingdom, United States and Canada advertised various recruitment fairs, which offer better working conditions and salary scales than what obtains in Jamaica. In Thomas-Hope’s (2002) study, crime and violence factored highly into making the ultimate migration decision. These persons believed that if nothing was done to curb the crime and violence their lives would not be harmonious in Jamaica.

Another factor which serves as a supply-push factor for emigration is the mismatch between an individual’s skill set and suitable occupation. Quinn and Rubb (2005) posit migration occurs when the individual cannot find the appropriate job which matches with their skill. They argue the “education-occupation” factor plays an important role in the individual’s decision to immigrate to another country. Quinn and Rubb (2005, p. 164) posit this and other findings have implications for governmental policy on education. They claim policy makers should focus on increasing educational levels and

employment opportunities simultaneously as this could lead to mass migration of persons with higher levels of education compared to the rest of the population. The reality is that the crime situation/education-occupation combination has serious implications for the migrant's and potential migrant's economic and social opportunities and by extension, quality of life. Therefore, one must take these factors into consideration in order to arrive at the decision to migrate, or not to migrate.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Most early migration theories were centered on economic factors. One such popular theory examined is neoclassical economic theory, which Massey et al. (1993, p. 433) claim is "probably the oldest and best-known theory of international migration." These theories suggest that people migrate based on whether or not there is available work in their immediate space. Other macro theories include Wallenstein's (1974) *World Systems Theory*, which posit that migration is mainly as a means of mobilizing cheap labor for capital which perpetuates uneven development and the exploitation of poor peoples in order to make rich countries richer and Piore's (1979) "dual labor market theory" which posits that international migration is caused by a permanent demand for immigrant labor that is inherent to the economic structure of developed nations. Micro-theories suggest that "individual rational actors decide to migrate because a cost-benefit calculation leads them to expect a positive net return, usually monetary, from movement" (Massey et al., 1993, p. 434). These theories suggest that people move to geographical spaces where they can be most productive, based on their skills. From the micro-economic lens, it is evident that there is consensus that persons weigh personal factors to arrive at the migration decision. Micro-theories include Lee (1966) who posited "there are four major factors which affect the decision to migrate, namely, factors associated with the area of origin, factors associated with the area of destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors."

*Migration Systems Theory* was employed as this theory gives a holistic view on the individual's decision to migrate or not. This theory emerged based on the critiques of preceding theories which did not adequately explain why migrants move from one



country to another, but instead gave snippets of a myriad of reasons. Migration Systems Theory, purported by Kritz and Zlotnik (1992) and expounded by others such as Castles and Miller (1998), is increasingly used in comparative research. According to Castles and Miller (1998, p. 23), the theory “emphasises international relations, political economy, collective action, and institutional factors.” They posit that a migration system comprises two or more countries exchanging migrants with each other. The tendency is to analyze regional migration.

This theory concerns itself with examining all the linkages between migration territories. Fawcett and Arnold (1987, p. 24) are cited as defining these linkages as the “state-to-state relations and comparisons, mass culture connections and family and social networks.” Castles and Miller (1998) further discuss that this theory suggests that migratory movements occur “from the existence of prior links between sending and receiving countries based on colonisation, political influence, trade, investment and cultural ties.” They claim that this theory posits that any migratory movements is as a result of macro structures such as the political economy of the world market, interstate relationships and laws interacting with micro structures such as beliefs and networks.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study is a comparative snapshot study assessing the migration decision-making process of professional Jamaicans. It is comparative in nature as there are four groups (persons who are not migrating, persons who are thinking of migrating, persons who are in the process of migrating and persons who have already migrated) being assessed and compared with each other. This study was taken within a specific period and so provides a snapshot of feelings, expressions and thoughts within a particular time frame (15<sup>th</sup> May-14<sup>th</sup> July, 2009). Interviews were conducted only once and no follow up arrangements were made. The research employed a mixed instrument to achieve standardization (quantitative) and depth (qualitative) concurrently. The instrument comprised two parts. The first part was quantitative in nature as it sought to ascertain particular demographic details about each respondent. These details include but are not

limited to the respondent's age, sex, education level, area of training, current occupation, work experience, parents' and grandparents' academic achievement and childhood neighborhoods. The second part had standardized open-ended questions, designed to allow respondents to provide rich data, described by Geertz (1973) as thick description. This is necessary given the fact that the study is inevitably exploratory.

## **SAMPLING**

Non-probability sampling was employed in this study, as there are no known registries of persons who have indicated their emigration or immigration status, therefore the full population is not known. In addition, one's emigration/immigration status is a personal and private matter and so in order to solicit this kind of data, non-probability sampling techniques were most appropriate. Three non-probability sampling methods were employed in collecting data: snowballing, purposive and convenience. Snowballing was used when trying to canvas hard to find respondents as well as likeminded persons as the respondents already located. Purposive sampling was used as this researcher sought to acquire respondents with particular attributes. Such respondents were persons who were readily available to engage in the interview process and convenient to locate. This study comprised thirty two (32) females and eight (8) males making a total of forty. Two (5%) of these persons fell in the age group 18-25 years; eight persons (20%) fell in the age group 26-35 years, twenty eight persons (70%) fell into the age group 36-45 years and two persons (5%) fell in the age group 46-60 years. The tables below summarize the respondents' age as well as their highest level of education and that of their parents and grandparents.

**Table 4**  
**Age of Respondents**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>(R)</b>	<b>Sample%</b>
18-25	2	5
26-35	8	20
36-45	28	70
46-60	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 5

## Respondents' and Respondents' Parents' and Grandparents' Highest Level of Education

Level of Education	Respondent	Mother	Father	Grandmother	Grandfather
Primary	-	3	3	3	3
Secondary	-	15	17	9	9
Finalising First Degree	1	-	-	-	-
First Degree	17	13	14	1	-
Masters Degree	19	9	6	-	-
PhD/Medical	3	-	-	-	-
Don't know	-	-	-	27	28

The data clearly shows that over a half of the respondents (data highlighted in green) are from a background where they have achieved more education than their parents and grandparents (data highlighted in red). The respondents can therefore be described as 'straddlers' from working class origins seeking upward social mobility.

## KEY FINDINGS

This study's main purpose was to unearth the various reasons why some Jamaican professionals are emigrating from Jamaica. During the interview process, four distinct themes emerged: Crime and Violence/Societal Indiscipline, the issue of occupation-skill matching, lack of economic opportunities and the lack of social opportunities.

Crime and violence were the most discussed issues as they were a major concern. The literature has shown that there is a domino effect which stems from both crime and violence, which in turn has implications for available economic and social opportunities. Most respondents recognized if crime and violence were not contained, Jamaica would find itself in a seriously bad situation, being unable to create or provide opportunities for the general population.

The issue of occupational matching and professional development were burning issues. For persons who have already migrated, the lack of the ideal job opportunities heavily influenced the decision to migrate. For those who are in the process or thinking of migrating, the feelings are similar. Some of the respondents said that they did not feel as if their job was helping them to develop personally and/or professionally. On the other hand, those who have chosen not to migrate indicated that they were happy in their careers in Jamaica. Interestingly, all respondents in this category, with the exception of one person, stated that they were employed in their area of training and expertise. This would suggest that it is the combination of two push factors: crime and violence and skill and occupation matching which influences most potential migrants' decision making process.

The lack of economic opportunities was another major issue which surfaced across the board. For those who have already migrated, are in the process of migrating and are thinking about migrating, the lack of social or economic opportunities in Jamaica heavily influenced their position in emigration. Some of the respondents expressed frustration about not being able to acquire certain basic assets. Respondents who indicated they were not migrating claimed despite the global recession, they believed that economically, they were better off in Jamaica than they would be abroad. These respondents reported their income was sufficient and allowed them to access to what they deemed important. Most respondents indicated they did not lead or desire an extravagant lifestyle.

Generally speaking, those who are thinking of, or are in the process of migration believe that since their finances are not healthy, it is unlikely that they will be able to afford services such as good health and education opportunities. Overseas respondents shared similar views while persons who have no intentions to migrate reported that they are satisfied with social life in Jamaica. Table 6 below illustrates the main reasons on which each group has based its decision, to migrate or not to migrate, and Table 7 provides the reader with a synopsis of the sentiments shared by interviewees.

**Table 6**  
**Snapshot of Key Findings**

	<b>Primary Factor</b>	<b>Secondary Factor</b>	<b>Tertiary Factor</b>
<b>Already Migrated</b>	Crime and violence. 100% not returning due to the current trends	Occupation/Skill Mismatch	Perception of better Economic and Social Opportunities Overseas
<b>Thinking of migrating</b>	Crime and Violence. Has caused 70% of the respondents to begin the thinking process	Occupation/Skill Mismatch	Perception of better Economic and Social Opportunities Overseas
<b>In the process of migrating</b>	Crime and violence has played a major role in the decision making process with 70% not willing to return on a permanent basis	Occupation/Skill Mismatch	Perception of better Economic and Social Opportunities Overseas
<b>Not migrating</b>	Skill is compatible with current occupation status. 90% said to be employed in their field of study	Economic Stability	Happy with overall lifestyle and value current family and social life in Jamaica

**Table 7**  
**Synopses of Responses**

	<b>Already Migrated</b>	<b>Thinking of Migrating</b>	<b>In the process of Migrating</b>	<b>Not Migrating</b>
<b>Crime and Violence, Lawlessness</b>	Crime rate is too high and the society is too lawless. Just too close for comfort	While crime is everywhere Jamaica seems to be getting worst, or should I say that I feel as if it's closing in on me.	It can be scary living alone because of the crime situation. You don't know who's watching you and your movements	Crime is everywhere and sometimes when you watch cable television and you see all like Miami news you have to wonder if it's [incidents of violence] worse in Florida than here
<b>Education-Occupation/Skill Mismatch</b>	I am now working with the Province of Ontario and I am finally getting to do what I want to do with the exception that I now get some recognition from my employers for the work I put in.	Jobs are so hard to come by in Jamaica. After finishing my masters in International Relations I cannot get a suitable job.	My husband and I applied for Canada and within 6 months we heard from them to begin the process. Two friends of mine with my qualifications are now in Calgary doing well so were are going to try our luck there	I have been working here [with his current employer] for 15 years. I have been promoted twice and now I am doing my masters I am sure I will be moving up. When I think of that and that the salary is better than most companies in Jamaica, it is hard for me to think to migrate
<b>Economic Opportunities</b>	Life overseas has been bliss for me. I can afford a house [instead of an apartment] and I can pay my bills and still live.	I don't make enough money to rent a place or even buy one so for now I am chilling by the family home which has implications for your adulthood.	My husband and I are a bit de-motivated in our current jobs here because we cannot see what we are working for. We don't own a house and rent is escalating out there	I feel comfortable here. I have always had the opportunity to work in the field of my choice and have been able to afford a comfortable lifestyle. I have the ability to travel overseas whenever I wish, and have access to most things
<b>Social Opportunities</b>	What I enjoy about living here in Canada is that if we get sick we are guaranteed free quality health care. I hear people complain sometimes but I am sure that we wouldn't get this treatment in Jamaica.	I think I need a change of environment. I can't even buy a house and when I contacted NHT I don't even qualify for a loan. When I think how long I have been working for I am disappointed.	I like the fact that Canada is pro-family. I want to be able to do things like buy a house, enjoy my life without fretting about expenses like dem killing mi.	When you have a family you can't take a gamble like that. I want to be near to my parents and family and my wife feels the same way

## **MIGRATION TRENDS**

This researcher identified several prominent trends during the course of this study. Among them is the fact Canada is the country of migration choice mainly because of its current immigration policies, which welcome highly skilled migrants. Individuals with children are most likely to migrate as they want a better life for their children and individuals are willing to go into new environments to get away. It was found males are least likely to migrate. The face of the Jamaican migrant in this study is one from the “straddler” class with more education than his or her parents and grandparents. Of great concern is the current crime situation can drive those in the “not migrating” category easily into any of the other three categories. The majority of respondents who are thinking of, are in the process of, or have already migrated have no intention of sending remittances and the majority of respondents who are thinking of, are in the process of, or have already migrated have no intention of returning to Jamaica in the near future.

## **MIGRATION IMPLICATIONS FOR JAMAICA**

For many Jamaicans, emigration is considered to be a blessing because this means increased chances of better economic and social opportunities. However, the various implications for Jamaica must be considered.

Highly skilled persons are the bedrock of most developed societies. This is why there appears to be a global hunt on for talent. Kapur and McHale (2005, p. 1) argue that outflows of highly skilled migrants help trap countries in poverty. Apart from the skill set that the migrant takes with them, there are costs associated with acquiring same. While some persons may have benefited from private preparatory education, most, if not all, have consumed secondary education in Jamaica. The cost of this is financed by the taxpayers of Jamaica. In addition, tertiary education is heavily subsidized by taxpayers up to eighty percent. This means the migrant or potential migrant has benefited from at least six to twelve years of education at the expense of the public purse, only to be using it to the benefit of more advanced or developed countries without any bonded

repayment to Jamaica. In addition to the loss of the positive externalities generated by highly skilled workers in a developing economy, skilled migration can reduce the capacity to deliver key services that are important for economic and social development.

The flight of highly educated individuals also has implications for future investment, which in turn has serious implications for social and economic opportunities for the general populace. If it is suggested there is a high correlation between high levels of education and low levels of crime, then it could be implied with the migration of highly skilled professionals, the threat of escalating violence is imminent. This has severe implications for foreign and local investment as the costs associated with crime and violence, in some cases, outweighs the benefits of doing business in Jamaica. With the decline of industries, the economy risks the chance of becoming sluggish or stagnant which in turn affects the volume of basic goods and services available to the general population. In essence, high levels of emigration can help to create a vicious cycle of violence and poverty and creates a 'lose-lose' scenario for Jamaica. Migration also has implications for family structures and as Ritchie Dawson (2007, p. 3) has stated that one of the drawbacks of migration is the "costs to family and society including family break-up and loss of particular social groups such as university graduates." This has been elaborated on earlier in this paper by Crawford-Brown (1999).

While migration has some negative implications for Jamaica, there are some positive outcomes. Remittances have rivaled bauxite and tourism as a major income earner for the Jamaican economy. The Human Development Index (2009) states in 2007, remittances to Jamaica amounted to US\$2,144 million. The report further states that average remittances per person was US\$790 compared to the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean, whose average remittances per person was US\$114. In fact migration is often associated with remittances and perhaps this is why there has been a deafening silence on the matter. However, one must be cautious when praising the notion of remittances. The core question is whether or not remittances are worth all the negatives associated with such heavy emigration as is experienced in Jamaica.

Lowell (2001, p. 19) argues "highly skilled or not, most international migrants send money home to their family. There is a sizable literature on the impact of remittances but some ambiguity about whether or not remittances boost economic development."



He goes on to elaborate “there is a long-standing tendency to dismiss the value of remittances because the bulk of research demonstrates that they tend not to be spent on productive investments. Most remittances are spent either on basics like food or medicine, or on consumption goods such as televisions or clothing. While basic expenditures may help poor households, the purchase of consumption goods, it has been argued, stimulates imports and not domestic manufacturing. Critics charge that the manner in which remittances are spent does little to boost domestic production, employment, or exports” (Lowell, 2001, p. 19).

Schmid (2006, p. 3) highlights that “whereas some governments seem to favor the exodus of their skilled in exchange for desired remittances to boost their economies, many countries suffer tremendous constraints in their capacities to provide equal, qualitative and affordable social services to their populations.” She goes on to explain that more studies need to be conducted on the pattern of remittances. “Regardless of the efforts already undertaken, more research is needed to gain insight into the flow of resources to better understand the flow of remittances. It cannot be assumed that all migrants remit to the same extent. While male migrants with dependants back home generally remit more and more regularly, young professional women with neither children nor spouse most probably will remit much less” (Schmid, 2006, p. 6).

Another positive implication of migration is that of ‘brain gain’ or return migration. This involves the migrant gaining experience and knowledge from First World countries to be later used in the country of origin. According to Hunger (2002, p. 1), “The basic idea of the “brain gain” hypothesis is, that intellectual and technical elites from the Third World who emigrated to an industrialized country represent a potential resource for the socioeconomic development of their home country.”

## **CONCLUSION**

There are a multitude of factors which must be further penetrated to extract empirical evidence of the losses and gains of migration. However, one cannot deny the implications for Jamaica are highly dependent on how migration is managed overall.

Caribbean migration in general and Jamaican migration in particular requires more in-depth research and analysis to gain insight into the dynamics and dimensions of migration. The potential for further research exists in areas such as taking a closer look at the ethnic and social backgrounds of migratory Jamaican professionals as well as their remittance patterns. Other areas which require further research are their social relationships and the ease or difficulty in adjusting to life in the host country. There is great need to explore the lifestyles of these migrants in their host country as not enough empirical evidence exists about their life in their host country.

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People migrate due to environmental reasons, pulled towards physically attractive areas and pushed from hazardous zones. In the process of immigrants trying to migrate they may face intervening obstacles: environmental or cultural features that hinder migration. An environmental pull factor is when people are driven to leave their current place due to more natural resources, better climates, and in some cases, popular landmarks. An environmental push factor is when people have to leave to survive. Things like natural disasters, droughts, flooding, and, lack of resources are just some push fact...