Globalization, Migration, and Ethnicity: Opportunities and Challenges

by

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Approximately 258 million people (United Nations, 2017), a mere 3.4% of the world's population, is outside its country of birth. Nevertheless, in the 21st Century, amid economic fears and rising nationalism, perceptions of the effects of human migration are major drivers of country attitudes, policies, and programs. While human beings have migrated since time immemorial, increasingly complex global interconnectedness has altered relationships among sending, receiving, and transit countries.

This presentation provides an overview of global migration and provides a framework for understanding the migration experience. While recognizing the significance of several extant theories and perspectives on immigration, it underscores the efficacy of Lee's 1966, relatively fundamental, push-and-pull theory of migration. Generally, people move to better their lives and are either drawn to improved opportunities or to leave challenging environments, or both.

 Two salient dimensions undergird our study of migration:

1. The phenomenon of migration itself – who migrates and why, and the size and direction of migration flows, and
2. The impact of migration – how migration changes the receiving country, the countries of transit, and even the sending country.

Receiving/transit nations are particularly apprehensive about how immigrants fill their needs and impact their resources. They speculate about immigrant preparedness to enter the workforce and the ability to integrate into the region and the culture. Immigrants also experience these worries. Furthermore, migrants often alter the racial/phenotypic profile of a nation by their entry and through intermarriage.

 It is ethnicity, however, which is associated with common ancestry and culture, including language, religion, traditions, and behavioral norms that can contribute to, and challenge, a receiving nation's *Weltanschauung*. This can have implications for several segments of its society, including the health profession, which could find that in the delivery of services it must grapple with the complex relationship between migrant, health, and health services utilization.

References

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