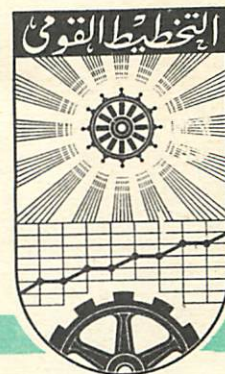


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INTERNATIONAL MARKET OF AFRICAN PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

(A COMPARATIVE STUDY)

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CONTENTS

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	<u>Pages</u>
<u>INTRODUCTION:</u>	1
<u>SECTION 1: International Migration of Professional Skills:</u>	3
1.1. The "Push" and "Pull" factors of International Migration of African Professional Skills.	3
1.2. Trends and Patterns of African Professional Immigrants to Overseas countries.	9
1.3. Trends and Patterns of African Professional Immigrants to Neighbouring oil-producing countries.	18
<u>SECTION 2: International Negotiability of African Professional Qualifications:</u>	26
2.1. The use of Metropolitan Qualifications.	26
2.2. The Role of international and Commonwealth professional associations.	31
2.3. Impact of International Negotiability of Professional Qualification on Public sector Salaries Determination.	38
<u>CONCLUSIONS</u>	42
<u>REFERENCES</u>	48

INTRODUCTION

One noteworthy aspect of international migration in the last two decades has been the systematic transfer of some labour force between different countries. Actual movement of professionals is only one aspect of integration into the international market. In order to move, certainly, a professional must be mobile, that is in possession of internationally negotiable qualifications.

The objective of this study is to investigate the trends, patterns and structural characteristics of the migratory movement from the selected African countries (Egypt, Sudan, Morocco, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria and Ghana) to developed countries and capital surplus (oil producer) developing countries. In this comparative analysis we discuss the influence of international migration movement on the local labour markets and on the determination of salary levels and remuneration in the countries concerned.

In this study other main interest is to identify the most important factors, which have contributed to the international negotiability (acceptability) of the qualifications of professionals in all of the countries concerned. First, the continued use of metropolitan qualifications by sending students abroad, especially to the United Kingdom, United States, Canada and France. Secondly, the maintenance of high level of local professional standards. Thirdly, the -

affiliation of local professional associations with the relevant international professional bodies. Identifying the role of International and Commonwealth professional associations emphasizes that the existence of such bodies has made it relatively easier to obtain reciprocal recognition for professional qualifications awarded by member countries. Here we discuss the impact of international negotiability of professional qualifications on salaries determination in some of the countries concerned.

Here we do not intend to analyse the economic implications of migration movement on employment, balance of payments, wage and price levels, etc. in the selected African countries (the countries of emigration). This is due to the complexity of such analysis, which requires a detailed investigation of the variables unique to each country case, including many socio-political factors.

From our analysis we notice that the migratory movement is mainly on a temporary basis from the african countries concerned to developed and oil-producing countries to satisfy a large term manpower shortage. The effects of exporting labour on the countries of emigration could be beneficial or detrimental to their economic development depending on the effectiveness of government economic policy in organizing and controlling labour and remittance flows.

SECTION 1: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION OF PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

One noteworthy aspect of international migration in the last two decades has been the systematic transfer of some labour force between different countries. This migratory movement has taken place among the countries all over the world in general, and from the less-developed to developed ones in particular.

The purpose of this section is to investigate the "push" and "pull" factors of international migration of African professionals, and to describe trends and patterns of that migration in the African countries covered by this study (Egypt , Sudan, Morocco, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria and Ghana). A brief description of this comparative analysis is given in Fig.1. Moreover we discuss in this section the influence of international migration movement on the local labour markets and on the determination of salary levels and remuneration (Fig.2).

1.1. The "Push" and "pull" factors of International Migration of African Professional Skills

The "Push" factors, commonly mentioned by the less-developed countries are:¹

- 1) High rate of unemployment and under-employment among skilled manpower;

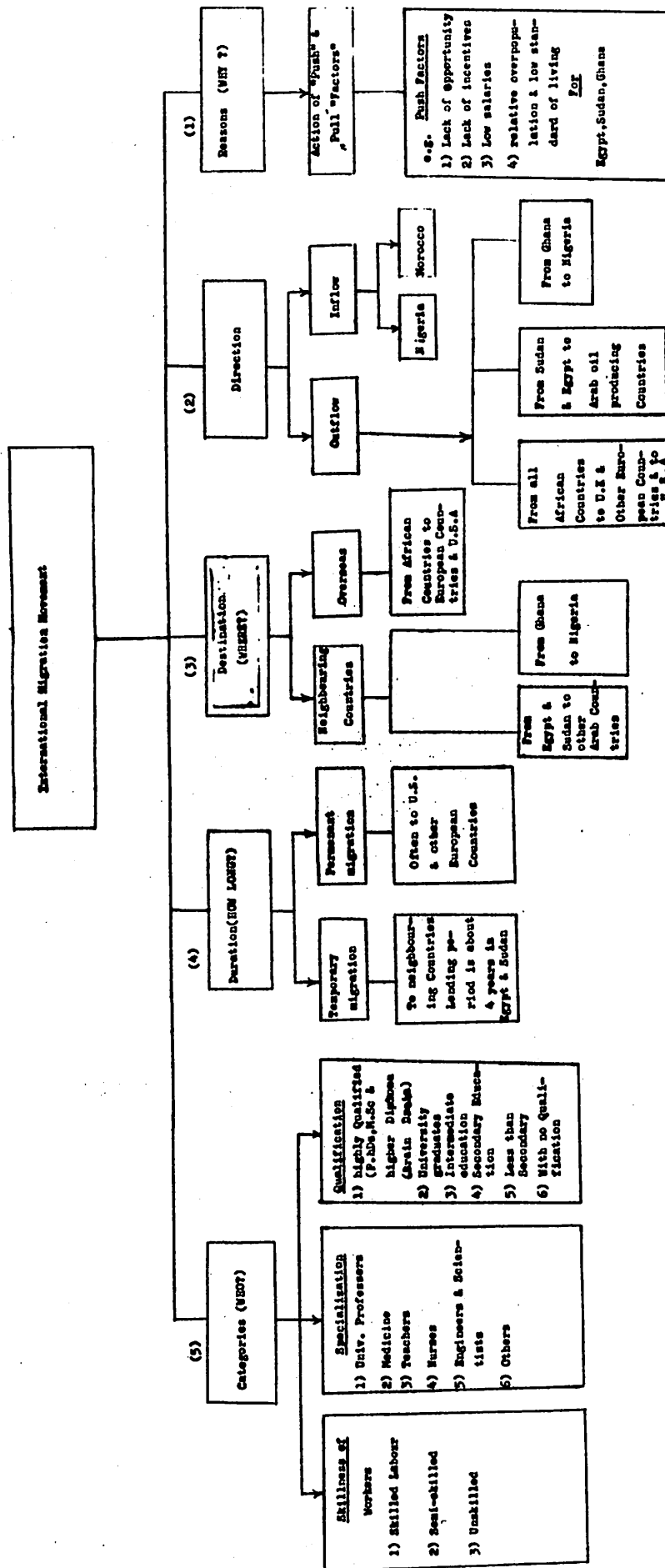


Fig. 1. The nature of International Migration of African Professionals.

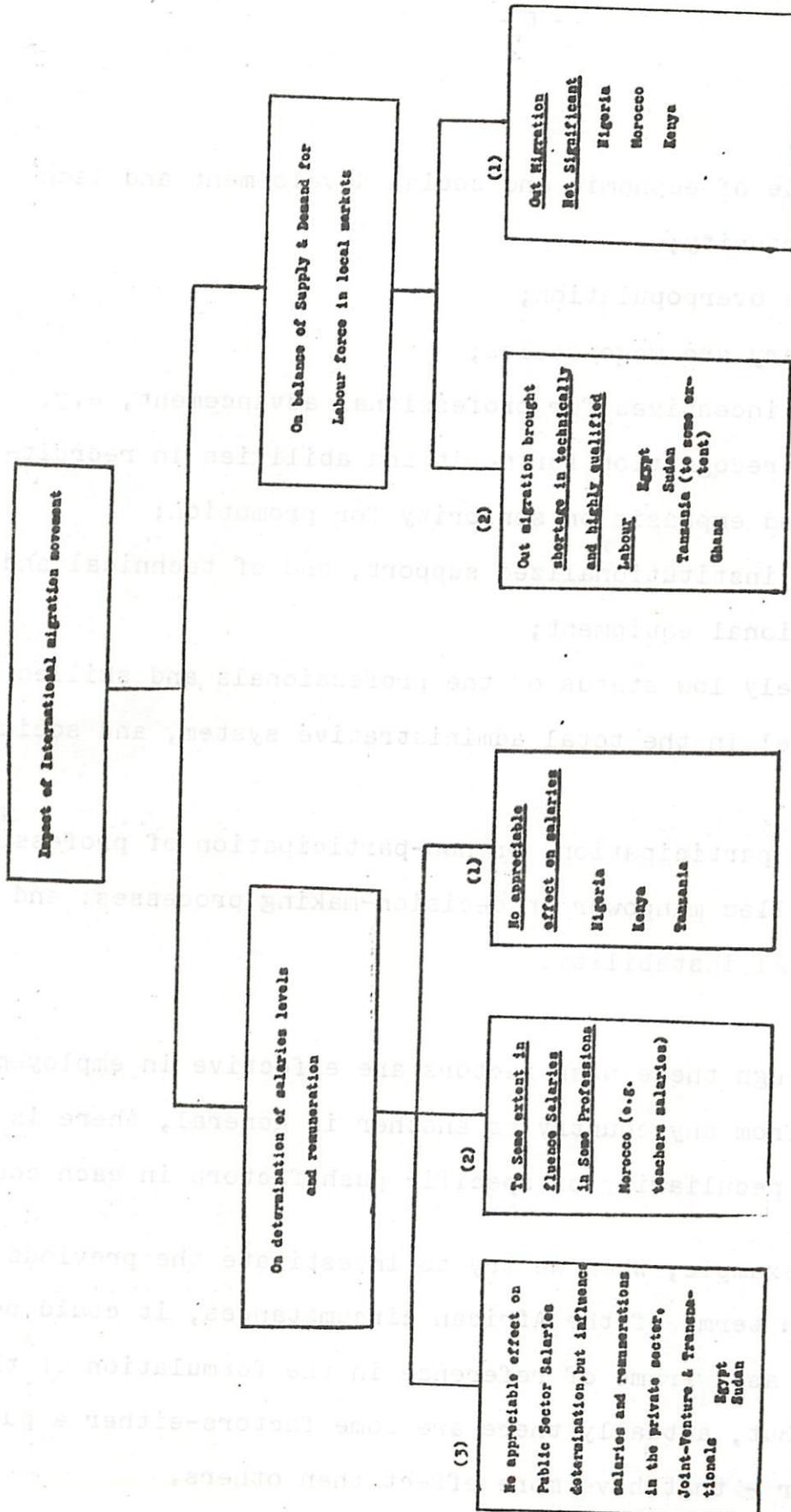


Fig. 2. Impact of International Migration Movement on Local Labour Market

- 2) Slow rate of economic and social development and lack of opportunity;
- 3) Relative overpopulation;
- 4) Low salary and wage scales;
- 5) Lack of incentives for professional advancement, e.g. lack of recognition for merit and abilities in recruitment, and emphasis on seniority for promotion;
- 6) Lack of institutionalized support, and of technical and professional equipment;
- 7) Relatively low status of the professionals and skilled personnel in the total administrative system, and social milieu;
- 8) Limited participation, or non-participation of professional and skilled manpower in decision-making processes; and
- 9) Political instability.

Although these push factors are effective in employment migration from any country to another in general, there is a noticeable peculiarity of specific push factors in each country.

For example, when we try to investigate the previous analysis in terms of the African circumstances, it could be considered as a frame of reference in the formulation of the problem. But, actually there are some factors-either a push, or pull factor - that have more effect than others.

Concerning Egypt and Sudan, it can be said that the fourth and fifth items, "the low salary and wage scale", particularly among highly qualified people, in comparison with similar salaries or wages in the oil-producing Arab countries (the average ratio between them is about 1:10 to 1:15 for Egyptians and about 1:7 for Sudanese civil servants) and "the lack of incentives for professional advancement" have the priorities as push factors of the Egyptian and Sudanese skills to abroad in general, and the highly qualified personnel to the rich Arab countries in particular.

In spite of this importance of the economic push factors, it has not complete sense without taking the pull factors into our consideration.

The main "Pull" factors from developed countries are as follows:

- 1) Shortages of manpower in certain fields in the receiving countries which provide employment opportunities for migrants;
- 2) Higher salaries and standard of living;
- 3) Better opportunities to come into contact with intellectual compass, and the stimulation and appreciation that result therefrom;
- 4) Personal aspirations and career expectations;
- 5) Prestige of foreign training;
- 6) Expectation of use of modern equipment;
- 7) Modern educational system;
- 8) Attraction of the cosmopolitan centres;

- 9) Relative political stability; and
- 10) Cultural and social considerations.

As a matter of fact the countries, as well as the individuals, have very wide disparities in their effect concerning these pull factors according to the internal and external circumstances of each one, and the degree and level of their push factors.

In the African countries concerned (Egypt, Sudan, Morocco, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria), we can deduce that the former push and pull factors are applicable in the sense of the outflow of migrants to Western European countries and the United States. Meanwhile, it is evident that this list of pull factors is not representative - in all items - of the real pull factors concerning the temporary migration of the highly qualified labour to other neighbouring countries (e.g. the temporary migration movement from Egypt and Sudan to rich Arab countries and such migration from Ghana to Nigeria). The pull factors in such cases are mainly the first two items in the latter list - shortage of manpower in certain fields, and higher salaries.

As long as these two groups of "Push" and "Pull" factors are working together, it can be shown that as far as the efficiency of one of them, the effectiveness of the other will be defined.

In reality, Egyptian and Sudanese civil servants suffer from the very low salaries and wage scales in general, and among those

highly skilled labour in particular as a "push factor" so, the employment opportunities are offered by all Arab countries with uncomparable salaries, especially in rich Arab countries (the comparison ranges between 1:10 to 1:15 for Egyptian and about 1:7 for Sudanese) is standing as a "pull factor".

There is also a significant outflow of professionals from Ghana to Nigeria (oil-producing country). The most important "push" factors for Ghanaian professionals are low salaries, lack of incentives, lack of promotion opportunities and relative overpopulation and low standard of living.

1.2 Trends and Patterns of African Professional Immigrants to overseas countries and the impact on public sector salaries determination

The first thing to emphasise apart from the extremely poor² quality of data in this field is that Africa has always been a relatively minor source of migrant professionals to the main receiving countries in North America and Europe. According to UNCTAD calculations (UNCTAD, 1975) only 31 per cent of such immigrants into the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom in 1961-72 came from developing countries; over half of those from developing countries came from Asia and only 7 per cent from Africa. Table 1 gives a rough indication of the pattern of migration from Africa to these three countries in the 'sixties and early 'seventies.

Table 1: Migration of Professional, technical and related workers from Africa to the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom 1962-72.

	US 1962-72 ^a	Canada 1963-72	UK 1964-72	Total
Scientists and engineers	2334	523	1035	3892
Physicians and Surgeons ^c	912	302 ^b	3845	5059
Teachers	<u>n.a.</u>	<u>501</u>	<u>5296</u>	<u>5797</u>
Total	3245	1326	10176	14748

a. Excluding 1970 b. includes dentists, graduate nurses,
medical and dental technicians

c. Doctors, dentists and nurses

Source: ILO (1976)

These estimates are extremely dubious but the picture that they give of the UK as a dominant destination for African professionals is probably accurate. Moreover, they also suggest that, while other parts of the world were more important as sources of migrant professionals the number of migrants may have been large enough at this stage to have made a quite significant difference to the rate of growth of the small stock of professionals in Africa. This point is reinforced by the facts that the loss was unevenly distributed between countries and that aggregated statistics often inadequately represent the impact of the loss of individuals in key positions.

These figures cover the period in which 'brain drain' was at its height and, indeed, tending to rise from year to year. Since -

1973, however, several important changes have occurred which might be expected to have affected the trend and pattern of migration. First, the international capitalist economy has suffered a recession which has reduced the rate of expansion in its demand not only for resource-based professionals such as engineers but also for school and university teachers, physicians and surgeons. Secondly, the medical profession in the main receiving countries has reversed its traditional policy of restricting its own size and is supporting programmes of huge increases in output from medical schools. Thirdly, the oil-producing countries have emerged as new areas of substantial excess demand for professionals.

As an illustration, Table 2 summarizes the unpublished data obtained from the Department of Health and Security on the flows into and out of the U.K. of doctors from four of the concerned countries.

Table 2: Flows of doctors from Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya and Egypt into and out of the U.K., 1970-74

	Stock in UK Sep 1970	1970		1971		1972		1973		1974		Net Change
		In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	
Nigeria	251	23	44	22	44	24	34	12	43	14	28	-98
Ghana	90	8	13	7	8	5	8	6	12	6	8	-17
Ghana	90	8	13	7	8	5	8	6	12	6	8	-17
Kenya	210	31	15	25	24	34	17	40	25	47	21	+75
Kenya	210	31	15	25	24	34	17	40	25	47	21	+75
Egypt	235	4	13	5	21	2	12	40	1	5	21	+74
Egypt	235	4	13	5	21	2	12	40	1	5	21	+74
Total	786	66	85	59	97	65	61	59	87	72	65	-74
Total	786	66	85	59	97	65	61	59	87	72	65	-74
Total	786	66	85	59	97	65	61	59	87	72	65	-74

Source: DHS, London.

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