

Global migration: analysis of stephen castles (2004)



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Do you agree with Stephen Castles(2004)that migration policies fail? If so, why? If not, why not?

Introduction

Migration is one of the most important issues in international politics in 21st century. In 2013, there were about 232 million people-3. 2 percent of migrants in the world and it has been increasing since 1990 with 154million to 175million until 2000.[1]People cross borders to have better opportunities, to escape poverty and have a better life for their families. Other reasons might be civil wars, conflicts or geographical problems caused by environmental degradation.[2]However, historically, the characteristic of migration began to change since sixteenth century when the European countries started to expand. Moreover form nineteenth century until the First World War, there was a massive movement from European countries to North America.[3]In addition, the number of migrants has been dramatically increasing after 1945. Meanwhile, in Britain, Western Europe, Australia and in North America the political concern about unwanted migrants and migration control issue have become parts of as ' high politics' because migration problems were affecting relations between states in 1960s and 1970s.[4]Especially, in 1980s and 1990s there were intensive efforts in controlling migration in many developed countries and they were trying to establish multilateral or supranational regulation system on migration. [5]However, despite these efforts to control migration, due to the increasing number of asylum seekers especially in Western Europe and Australia have built a public perception that migration policies have tendencies to fail. [6]Moreover, in the United States, the number of illegal migrants has been

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continuously increasing since 1960s and there are about 11million who are illegally living in the US today.[7]Then it would be important to question how migration policies work in the international politics today.

Stephen Castles argues it is important to examine the elements that drive such migration processes. According to Castles there are about three main reasons that drive migration policy failure; factors arising from the social dynamics of the migratory process, globalization, and North-South relationships and factors within political systems.[8]

The purpose of this essay is to evaluate Castles arguments on why migration policies fail. It will first start with explaining Castles key arguments on why migration policies fail, and evaluating his view on policy “ failure”. It will then criticise Castles argument by using Gary Freeman’s argument on immigration politics in liberal democratic countries. Even though Freeman’s argument of migration polices in liberal democratic states is more applicable than Castles argument it will conclude by criticising both Castles and Freemans’ conceptual frameworks on migration policies.

Factors Unmake Migration Policy

One of the dominant approaches in forming migration policies until these days is neoclassical theory. It has had played important role in forming migration policies and it is indeed important role in migration studies.[9]This theory is focuses on why individuals migrate from one country to another by using comparison of the relative costs and benefits of remaining home or moving.[10]The key assumptions of neoclassical theory is that potential migrants have good knowledge of wage level and job opportunities in

destination countries and that economic factor are the most important reasons for potential migrants.[11]It is also often defined as push-pull factors. Push-factors are economic, political hardships in most poor states and developing countries, and pull-factors include comparative benefits in developed countries such as political freedoms, better economic and employment opportunities.[12]The theory sees migrants as market-players “ who have all information for their options and freedom to make rational choices.”[13]Such assumption of the theory however have been criticised that it does not provide proper evidence to explain or prove actual migration movements today and also predicting migration movement for the future.

Stephen Castles argues that neoclassical approach to migration enables to achieve appropriate migration policies because it ignores historical experience of migration movements.[14]According to Castles, there are mainly three reasons that fail migration policies today. Castles argues that it is important to understand historical experiences when setting immigration policies because it gives a better understanding to analyse the migration issues.[15]Castles provides a good example how guest workers policy failed in Germany in 1970s. At that time, policy makers recruited guest workers based on temporary residence principles that were formed when they were setting policies for guest workers. Even though employment opportunity declined, those unwanted guest workers never returned to their countries, but rather, brought in their families and eventually ended up staying for the long period and became as minority in Germany.[16]

Castles insight is that once migration processes start they will continue and expand as an ongoing social process. He argues that families and their

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networks play crucial role in affecting potential migration to make a decision to migrate to destination countries. He argues that all migrants are not just individuals who react to market but social beings who are trying to seek for better outcomes for their lives by actively and continuously building migration processes. Moreover, Castles argues that there are structural dependencies in both sending and receiving states. In many developing countries there are tendencies to support encourage people to move to other states in order to reduce unemployment and in receiving countries there are structural tendencies that they need low-skilled labours in order to fulfil jobs that many local not willing to do.[17]Other factor that unmakes migration policy in Castles words is globalization and the division of North and South. Especially, Castles emphases that globalization and recent North-South relations play important role in understanding international migration flow today. The number of migrants in North has been increasing and it is mainly Castles says because of the huge gap of inequality between North and South. Migration policies will always fail if they properly address reasons and patterns of economic and force migration movement of global inequality. [18]Moreover, Castles insight is that globalization has an inherent structure that widens the gap between and North and South and cultural and technological mean of overcoming this gap. Moreover, because of national logic inherence especially in European Countries, transnational networks would undermine migration control.[19]The last factor that causes policy failure according to Castles is political system. Migration policy process and transnational networks should be related to an analysis how migration policies formed in states and supranational bodies including examining interests, how they are articulated and how political system functions

because this is where most policy failure or as he terms “unintended consequences of policy” could be explained.[20] In addition, Castles says that most migration policies have tendencies to form for short-term for electoral periods and that it should be changed into long-term as migration is a long-term process. In addition, a huge gap of wealth and power in the emerging global order mean that not all citizens are equal and this might be the basis of a new system of global economic stratification.[21] In Castles argues that “migration is all about regulating North-south relationships and maintaining inequality.” He argues that migration control will be successful when the gap of inequality will be reduced in the future.[22]

Given the Castles three main perspectives on migration failure above, it shows that he focuses on more structural change of social process and on inevitable circumstances caused by those social changes and globalization that produces gap and inequality of North-South. It could be said that Castles argument is broad and general, and as he defined it as a normative sense. His definition “failure” of migration policies seems to be more “unintended failure” that caused by those factors noted above. His view on inequality of North-South that driven by globalization seems to have quite sceptical view on liberal ideology and on those receiving liberal states (North) which he believes is one of the main factors to make people to migrate to other countries today. In this sense, Castles argument on inequality of North-South does not give much answer to a question why migration policies fail. His argument is too vague, broad and general that it fails in terms of giving specific and persuasive explanation on migration failure. What he argues about policy failure is rather inherent and natural phenomena caused by

inequality than more realistic. It is true that the number of migrants from South moving to North is the fastest growing looking at migration trends today as Castles argued.[23] Then it leads to an important question how immigration politics and policies might function in liberal democratic countries.

Gap Hypothesis of Migration Policy

The term gap hypothesis is when implementations of immigration control policies have different outcomes as they were made in the first place and such gap between stated policies and their results are growing wider. [24] One of the most notable arguments of gap hypothesis is Gary Freeman arguments on how migration policies work in liberal democratic states. Freeman's perspective is focused on more domestic structure of migration countries.[25] According to Freeman in liberal democratic countries the number of migrants has been continuously growing despite of public negative opinion on migrants. He says that it is because in most liberal democracies immigration policies are never reflected by general public they are ignored and information on migration is quite poorly articulated.[26] It leads to an interesting question who, then distributes and influences in forming migration policy in those countries.[27] According to Freeman there are three factors that affect policy making procedure in liberal democratic countries-individual voters, organized group and state actors. He suggests that in order to have a better understanding on what forces migration policies it is important to understand how public officials interact with organized groups during elections because in democratic states as he says, organized groups have power to control politics of immigration.[28] Organized opinion is <https://assignbuster.com/global-migration-analysis-of-stephen-castles-2004/>

more applicable because it reflects the distribution on costs and benefits of immigration and they have much more impact than general public because in politics vote-maximizers find it in their electoral interest to fulfil it.

[29]Freeman defines it as “ client-politics”. In client politics, particular or well organized groups have strong interests in working with officials who have responsibilities in making migration policies. Most active and influential actors and beneficiaries are employers who are dependent on unskilled workforce, businesses and ethnic groups are a constituency with important resources that can advocate their interest.[30]Others, who have to bear their costs, do not have such position to influence policy makers and general public who have to compete with jobs, housing, school and government services have difficulties to solve such problems, and face difficulties in influencing immigration policies.[31]Such environment of policy making process in liberal democratic countries leads to a structure where migration clients can actually influence migration policy making process and where immigration policies are influenced by groups who actually benefit from them.

Freeman’s argument on how client politics works in liberal democratic is certainly more applicable than Castles view, because it focuses on how migration policies actually function in liberal democratic states. Freeman argues that migration policy making process is influenced by migration politics which involves particular actors distribute in making. Such client politics model in liberal democratic countries shows why immigration policies tendencies of different outcomes.

Even though Freeman's model of client politics more acceptable, still there is a lack of providing clearer framework in order to explain on migration issues today. It is more bias of those classical migrant societies such as United States, Canada and Australia. This also leaves quite sceptical view whether Freeman's conceptual framework will always work for other emerging migrant countries in the future. Freeman's insight is that new emerging migration states will follow those liberal democratic states when forming migration policies because migration policy making process and structure of liberal democratic countries. However, Freeman does not pay much attention to asylum seeker and its policies in those liberal democratic states.

According to James Hampshire, in order to explain asylum seekers and why states receive them is more a complicated issue because there will be other actors and organizations who are going to be involved.[32]It is then, hard to apply Freeman's argument of migrant politics. According to United Nations High Commission for Refugees asylum trends report 2012, the United States, France, United Kingdom, Germany and Sweden were the top five receiving states, together accounting for more than 57% of all new asylum claims submitted in 44 industrialized countries.[33]The overall numbers of asylum seekers were about 274, 200 in 2012. It clearly shows that Freeman's framework of does not provide clear explanation of asylum seekers and its policies in migration politics either.

Conclusion

Stephen Castles argument on why migration policies fail gives a good explanation on how migration is processed and how has been historically changing. He argues that migration should be perceived as a social process

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that has inherence of changing continuously once migration process starts. Castles argues how globalization and division of North-South affects contemporary migration process, and how the gap of inequality between North-South continuously widens. Migration policy failure might be unintended but because of political system within receiving countries. The problem with Castles argument is that it could be too broad and general to analyse migration policy failure in receiving countries.

Freeman's client politics seems to be more applicable in terms of explaining migration politics, policy failure in liberal democratic states and also in terms of how organized groups are influential and involved in policy making process in those countries. However, Freeman's argument framework of immigration politics is also problematic because he fails explaining asylum seeker policies which are quite controversial issues these days. Moreover, as noted above, there is quite huge number of asylum seekers and liberal democratic countries are the top five receiving states in the world. Both Castles and Freeman's argument provide some perusable explanation of migration policies, however, both of them fail in terms of providing clear explanation of complex issues of migration policies today. There are other scholars who have different perspective on how migration politics, however, due to the limits of this essay it was heavily focused on Castles and Freeman view on how migration politics work and why immigration policies fail.

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