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THE BLUE CARD SCHEME: A VIEW FROM TWO REGIONS

By
Jennifer Obado Joel

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Supervisor: Andrew Cartwright

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Abstract

The world Cities are experiencing an exponential growth in their populations, in particular cities in third world countries. Accompanying the emergence of megacities and concentration of population in particular cities is the challenge of providing adequate infrastructure, housing, employment and social amenities. A corollary to this challenge is the internationalisation of the economy in which the megacity deals not only with its internal challenges but is mandated to adjudicate between its internal social and economic environment as well as staying relevant in the global economy. The urbanisation of economies of megacities has occasioned strategies that seek to confront and leverage on perhaps the highest motivators of population in megacities-influx of rural migrants. Thus, policy makers have to design policies sufficient to attract necessary high skilled workers and investors, while in the same period keeping out a mass of rural workforce seeking opportunities in large cities.

Pursuing a cross-regional context, the agenda of this paper is to evaluate contradictions in the Hukou Blue Card Scheme in East Asia and the European Union (EU) Blue Card Scheme. The contrast space being evaluated herein is the challenges of public policies that seek to act as double-edged swords; act as mediums of control and recruitment agendas. Rather than providing recommendations of plausible alternatives to each of these schemes, this paper directed at the academic community, seeks to open new frontiers of engagement on megacities issues, beyond current focus as reflected in dominant literature on the subject. By exploring challenges, nuances, unintended consequences and future effects of the two Blue card schemes, the agenda is to stimulate new studies on megacities, its opportunities and constraints in different contexts.

Dedication

In Your memory
Mum and Dad.....Yetunde and Bayode
I done did it!

..And Life Beckons...

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Executive Summary

The EU Blue Card scheme is designed as a single procedure to address labour migration and sundry immigration issues for third country high-skilled workers in European Union member states. A scheme, first put forward by the council of Europe in 1999, but met with limited success, the proposal for the EU Blue card scheme was later modified by the Belgian Think tank-Bruegel. In its first proposal, the Directive sought to institutionalize the Blue Card scheme as a uniform policy regulating free movement of high skilled third country nationals across the region for a minimum for about 5 years before accruing long term residence status.

By the Directive 2013/109, this group of migrants acquires the right to live anywhere within the region for economic and employment purposes, Guild (2007). In its initial proposal, it excluded individual requiring international protection such as political asylum seekers and political refugees. The initial proposal, which is not much different from the Bruegel proposal, stipulates certain conditions for accreditation with an EU Blue Card. Article 5 of the proposal sets out the criteria including; a contract/ job offer for at least a year and a salary level three times the national minimum wage (this is referred as the External Minimum wage). In the event of lay-off from jobs, holders of the Blue Card scheme have a grace period of three months to secure new employment. However, they enjoy the same access and rights in terms of wage, working condition, social services and social service as nationals of EU states.

Conversely, the Hukou system is a Chinese tradition that possibly dates back several millennia. This form of household registration system controls mobility of the

population. Implemented as a national policy in 1955, the Hukou became a scheme that requires every Chinese to be registered to a specific Hukou, which could be agricultural, non-agricultural; a rural or urban Hukou. The categorization of Hukou as rural or urban stipulates citizenship rights accruable to nationals living in different regions. Access to employment, housing subsidies, and social security is fixed to the Hukou. The Hukou accreditation can only be altered through specific government legislation or public administration approval. While there have been several reforms to the Hukou system from 1955 to present, the reform of interest in this paper is the Blue-stamp Hukou or Blue Card Hukou. The Hukou blue card provides its holders with legal rights to live as residents in urban areas based on payment of a one-time fee, employment in a highly skilled job or college level education. The Blue card Hukou, which must be renewed yearly, must be sponsored by a large firm or corporation, making it the purview of only highly skilled workers or investors. Non high-skilled migrant workers must be employed under the temporary residence permit (*Zanjuzheng*) for three years before being eligible for a blue card Hukou. Holders of the blue-card enjoy the same rights as holders of regular urban Hukou.

This paper reviews confronts for migrant workers in cities of destination. Analyzed in both national and International contexts, this paper seeks to explore challenges faced in large cities across the world in terms of population control and global economic competition. The EU blue Card was designed to compete with migrant talent schemes such as the US Green Card and Canadian SuperVisa. The EU requires about 20 million highly skilled workers to situate itself in a prime position in the global economy (EC 2009). This population of highly skilled workers certainly cannot be gotten from within the region. Hence the Blue card scheme seeks to give access to these talents to work

within the EU. This rationale is similar in the Chinese context, in which the Blue card gives access to urban regions to highly skilled workers and investors with rural Hukou. There has been several challenges with the Chinese Blue Card Hukou, in terms of access to social services, high entry criteria, labour protection for migrant workers and other citizenship concerns (Chan, 2009; Lee, 2012; Wang, 1995). Conversely, for the EU Blue Card scheme, there have been several criticisms; for Collet (2010), the blue card scheme is being implemented as a parallel to migration policies of individual EU member states. Thus, the degree of transposition of EU directive into domestic legal system decides the efficiency of the EU Blue card scheme in that country, Gumus (2010) further criticizes the ‘one-size-fit all’ design of the policy, especially given the diversity of labor needs, educational systems and economic status of different EU member states. Kancs and Ciaian(2010) in their study argues that the Blue card will have malignant unintended consequences for sending third world countries particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. This concern was also reiterated by Kukka(2012), on the impacts of the Blue Card scheme on the Malawian health sector. Moreover, they assert that dependence on migrant high skilled workers will not improve knowledge capital in EU, with likely negative impact of high unemployment for skilled nationals of the EU in the long run.

The central policy question to be explored in this paper can be summarized as following; what are the consequences for migrant workers under the Blue card schemes in both regions? Given the pressure of global economic competition, are migration policies such as the Blue Card schemes, the answer to talent paucity in industrializing regions? How does globalization act as both as a centrifugal and centripetal pressure on global cities? Discussions in this paper is situated within the theoretical framework of the Core-periphery concept of Burgess Concentric model to analyze current trends on migration

flows across different regions of the world. Leveraging on this model, concepts and theories on labour migration and global cities by Sassen shall be utilized in situating the discussion within the overarching theoretical framework.

The methodological focus of this paper, utilized the Cost Benefit Analysis framework, focusing particularly on the Pareto efficiency and Hicks-Kaldor principles. Triangulating data on migration flows, economic models and policy based arguments; this paper concludes that while both Blue Card schemes shall have considerable benefits for countries or regions in the core/developed/urban regions. Periphery/Rural/Developing regions will not only be cost bearers but beneficiaries of these policies. In conclusion; this paper discusses its agenda of contributing to current discussion on concentration of population in large cities, migration policies and citizenship issues.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Population increases in megacities especially around the world have become a global concern (UNHabitat 2008, Davis 2008). Increasing population in cities rather than being a recent concern have been a challenge confronted in different regions of the world at different points in time. For instance, in Southeast Asia, the Vietnamese and Chinese government have consistently sought to address growth in urban areas through a form of household registration (Agergaard and Thao, 2012). The homestead accreditation system, which is referred to as the Hukou system in China is focused on limiting rural to urban migration across different regions of the country. The accreditation system is both a population control mechanism and control of labour competition in urban areas.

Several studies (Chan2005, Wang 2006 and Liu 2009) described the Hukou Household registration system as promoting urban inequality in terms of access to employment, housing, pension and social welfare. The operation of both registration systems stipulates social, political and economic rights based on locale of homestead registration. Hence, in respect to access to social benefits and employment, there are disparities across regional borders. Moreover, the Hukou system in China presents an interesting case for life-cycle mobility, especially as the Hukou is passed from the maternal lineage in a largely patriarchal society (Meng,1998; Zhang and Luo,2013).The linkage to life-cycle mobility is further referenced by recent reforms in the Hukou and household registration system in China and Vietnam (ibid). In these reforms, certain cadre of the rural population can have their Hukou changed from that for a rural area to an urban area. The category of people with this privilege includes

individuals who have university education, decorated military personnel, business investors, etc. (Chan and Zhang, 1999).

The Hukou system has become a symbol of inequality between rural and urban areas. While reforms have been on-going, it has not achieved much. According to Liu (2004), the Hukou system in China was initially implemented as a system of household registration to maintain peace and social order. However, the policy transmuted to a migration control policy in 1955 (Wang, 2005). The rationale behind the Hukou system evinces normative dictates of a centrally planned economy which seeks to allocate human resources equally across sectoral and geographical boundaries. The success of the Hukou system was previously tied to the food ration system in which access to subsidized grains and other staples depends on Hukou registration (Ibid). Moreover, urban employment is tied to individual Hukou. From the 1980s, there has been a slight change in the Hukou system, in which temporary residence is allowed rural dwellers in cities (ibid). This temporary residence permit or the Blue-card Hukou system guarantees temporary rights in cities to high skilled rural migrant workers.

A similar Blue-card system is also being implemented in another region; Europe. The European Blue-card scheme is also a form of temporary permit for non-EU citizens to live and work within the region. The scheme operationalised in 2007 is designed to attract highly skilled workers from third world countries. While there have been heavy criticisms of the scheme, it points to present concerns by governments to regulate migration as well as accrue as much benefits from skilled migrant workers (Wang, 2005b). The comparison between the Hukou Blue card scheme and the EU Blue card scheme is established in a cross-cultural context in which migration and access to skilled workers seeks to be regulated. In respect to megacity governance, this lies within the purview of globalising influence on

movement of persons across national and cross-cultural boundaries and the need for regulations. In both the East Asian and European contexts, the Blue card systems seek to regulate movement, population and labour competition.

This cross-regional comparison of megacity explosion and growth seeks to explore instigators of these schemes, challenges and implementation of the Hukou and Blue-card system in East Asia and Europe. While, the Asian Blue card system has operated for over half of a century, the EU Blue card system is barely about half a decade old. In the implementation of the Hukou system, literature (Chan, 2009; Lee, 2010; Wang, 2010;) is replete with studies of its consequences of inequality, rights of migrant workers, citizenships, impacts at individual levels and group social mobility. This paper contributes to literature by reviewing each of these policies in the light of current challenges for population and migration control between core and periphery regions of the world. Evaluation of the Hukou system in East Asia shall be retrospective, given the long history of its operation. Prospective analysis of the consequence of the EU Blue card system shall be explored, with specific focus on immigration from the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

1.1 Purpose of Study

This study extends present literature on Migration control of rural to urban workers within the discourse on megacity governance, through the globalisation lens. Comparison of this phenomena in two regions, seek to explore how policies are designed to have both a restrictive and social mobility function. By loosely comparing operation of the Hukou Blue card in EastAsia and the EU Blue card, this study aspire to evaluate impacts of these policies on population control and Labour competition in both sending and receiving locales. While the Blue-card policy is operated as an intra-national policy in Southeast Asia, it is more of an immigration policy in the European Union. However, in the pursuit of a

cross-regional context, this study shall evince evaluation of policies aimed at keeping some people out of a region as well as to sift out the most promising individuals for acceptance into the locale. Using the core and periphery model of the Chicago school of urban studies as espoused by Balakrishnan and Jarvis (1979), this study focuses on the interactions of rural and urban areas in East Asia as well as the EU and Sub-Saharan Africa as the periphery.

1.2 Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to explore similarities between the Hukou Blue Card Scheme in South East Asia and the European Blue card schemes as policies of migration control and mediating labour competition.

1.3 Research Questions

1. Using the South-Asian example as comparison; what are possible impacts of the EU Blue Card policy on periphery countries?
2. How does the blue-card system function as a population and labour competition control policy.
3. Given projected urbanization explosion in developing economies; what expected effect would the EU Blue card policy could have?

1.4 Justification

While the EU Blue card is still in its nascent stages, there is little academic or policy engagement of likely impacts of the policy. There exists much literature on its agenda and goals (Chan et al 2008, Knight and Song 2003, Barboza and Kahn 2007), but there are few studies that explores its policy consequences in a comparative perspective. However, the Hukou system in East Asia is extensively studied with particular focus on its consequences of inequality between rural and urban workers, access to social services and impacts of life

chances of rural migrants in cities. There is a literature gap in the analysis of recent reforms in the Hukou system in terms of the pressures of globalisation, especially as production platforms of many multinational corporations in western economies are gradually moving to the region. Thus, requiring much more low skilled workers to work in factories located in major regions such as Guangzong and Shenzhen.

1.5 Analytic Model

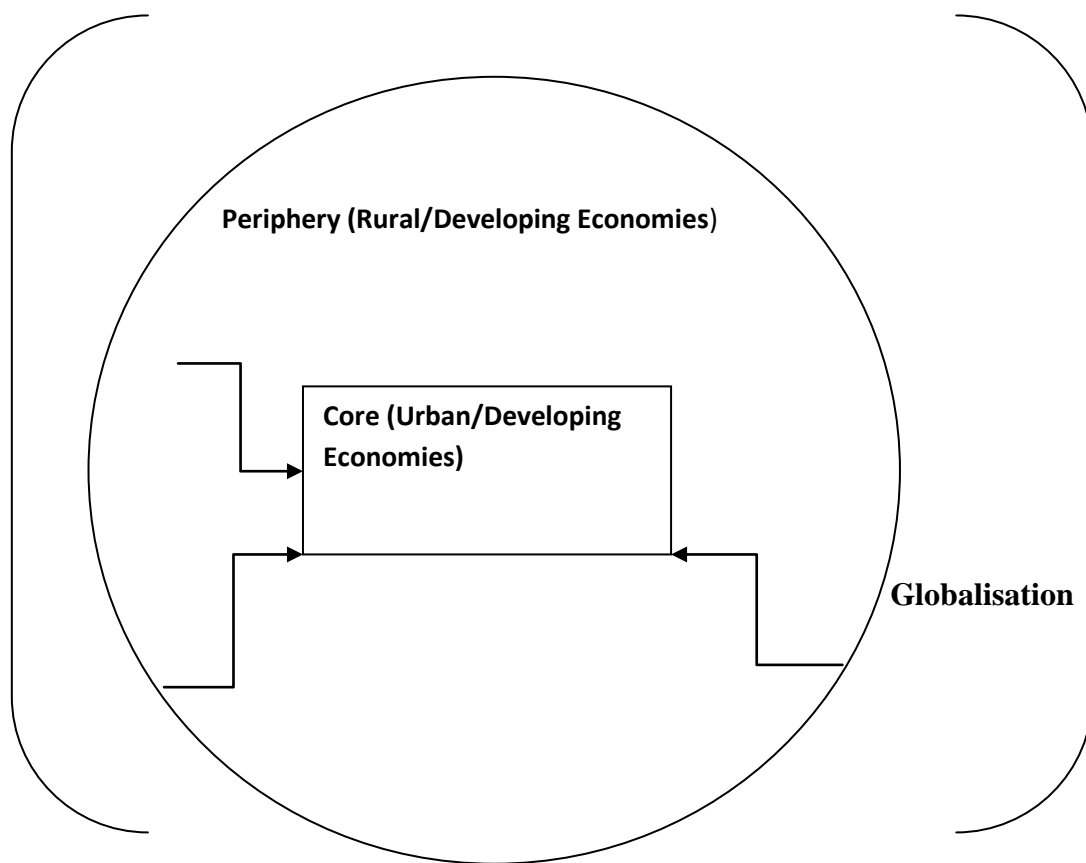


Fig 1: Analytic Model of the study

Arrows in the model points to population and labour migration pressures from the periphery to the core, which all exists within the larger context of globalisation. Arrows in this model also reflects the centripetal forces acting upon megacities from within the national context and the global context. Within national boundaries, rural-urban migration is a major confront; while in respect to globalisation, global market competition and for skilled labour are the major confronts. This model, which is also a reflection of the theoretical framework and analysis of this study, hinges on the concentric model of the Chicago School of urban studies and concepts of competition and control in Global cities by Saskia Sassen.

1.6 Similarities between the EU Blue Card and the Hukou Blue Card scheme

Both blue card schemes in East Asia and the European Union are both migration and population policies, targeted at keeping out a mass of population from the periphery while providing access to highly skilled workers. Both schemes imbued holders of the Blue Card schemes with access to social and economic rights accruable to native residents of core areas (CEC 2007, Dong and Bowles 2002). In both regions, applicants for the Blue cards must meet a certain economic/ social requirement that stipulate a standard of living higher than the average resident of core areas (ibid). In the East Asian region, requirements include having achieved some military success, university education or have the capability to be an investor (ibid). Conversely in the EU, the Blue Card is designed to attract masters' degree graduates from European universities and other top universities across the world (Weizsäcker, 2006). For the EU, it is required that applicants to the Blue Card scheme must meet an 'external minimum earning capacity', which is usually 300% of the national average (Weizsäcker

2006). In terms of earning capacity in Central European states such as Hungary, it means that Blue Card applicants would be required to earn at least 1000 Euros monthly to qualify.¹

In both regional frameworks, the Blue card system acts as a buffer against talent paucity. In the East Asia context, reforms in the Hukou system were required based on the need for more highly skilled workers. A factor which is also a major confront in the EU context. In terms of control of migration, Bruegel, the European think tank that designed the framework for the scheme made an argument for an economic based rationale for immigration (ibid). Citing cases like in Germany and France in which immigration status are based on moral suasion for people under political threats or family reconciliation (ibid). The Blue card scheme becomes an EU competitor to the US Green Card scheme and the recently launched Canadian Super visa scheme (ibid).

An important factor of immigration, particularly labour migration control, in both regions is Globalisation. In its impacts; the world boundaries is becoming smaller, bringing economic competition to markets that were previously purviews of local populations (Enright 2000). Given the diverse nature of skills needed for present global economy and increasing importance of emerging economies in Southeast Asia and the EU, there is a need to promote economic growth, while attempting equilibrium in the social sphere. Thus, governing the megacity in both of these regional contexts is about migration control and labour competition: Two factors required for growth and sustainability of its economies.

¹ The Hungarian monthly minimum wage is 100,000 forints, which is equivalent to 340 Euros (Jan 2013 figures). http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Minimum_wage_statistics

Chapter 2: Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

This study proceeds from literature on research findings and projections for growth in cities in developing countries which has become a topical issue in recent discourse in policy circles. Projected impacts of continual growth of megacities have been subjects of several studies UNHabitat (2008); Davis(2004, 2006); Koolhas (2002). Consequences of which are expected to have large scale economic, environmental and political effects. Increasing congregation of population in urban areas has been described by Kaplan (1994) as the emerging locales for future wars of the 21st century.

The challenge of extensive and uncontrolled population in core economic areas has been projected to have extensive impacts. Abramistky and Braggion (2006) explores the Malthusian projection of consequences of extensive population growth, in terms of present concern for burgeoning population in developing economies with high current population doubling rates. While dangers of uncontrolled population has been thoroughly analysed by Fukuyama (1992), Huntington (1969), Kaplan (1994), Roy (2009) and Davis (2004, 2006), Neuwirth (2006); it is imperative that population tensions in urban areas be analysed within the globalisation discourse. Within this context, tensions between urban and rural areas in the national context can be analysed in regard to competition between core and periphery region in the global context. In terms of issues, consequences and impacts, concerns are generally the same; however it might become much more nuanced when in the international perspective.

2.1. Growth of Cities in Developing Economies

Historically, growth of cities has been largely attributable to three factors: economic growth, natural factors and rural-urban migration (UN Habitat, 1996)². Conversely, the world's population have grown increasingly from 2.5 billion in 1955 to 6.5 Billion in 2005 and is expected to increase to 9 billion in 2050 (ibid). Much more recently, rural and urban migration has grown across the world, particularly in developing countries, where a mass of rural population are attracted to large cities by employment opportunities and better social services. Large scale migration to cities has been motivated by what Lipton (1976) refers to as an 'Urban Bias' in policy making. This position reinforces the assertion that policies, development strategies and global economic conditions favour cities. Urban bias has been identified as a major factor for increase in the manufacturing industry of developing countries, to the detriment of the agricultural sector. The corollary of these phenomena is a rapid growth of cities and emptying of rural areas in these regions.

Projections of population growth rates in cities of developing countries have been overestimated in recent years. Brocherhoff (1999) argues that estimation by UNHabitat and the World Bank in the 1980s on growth of cities in developing economies, China inclusive, are quite ambitious. He asserts that tracking variables for growth of cities using demographic data from UN Demographic Year 1980, no adequate data was provided for projected population growth rates. However, analysis of variables driving population growth rates from inter-census from 1960- 1970s data from developing countries by Preston (1979) and UN Population Division (1980) reveals a correlation between national population growth rates

²<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/habitat/units/un04pg01.asp>

and rise in urban populations. For Brockerhoff, this analysis reveals a correlation of 1.002% increase in urban growth rates for every 1% increase in national population growth rate. This analysis of census data from 1, 211 cities across the developing world was further described by Brockerhoff as the most comprehensive study on motivators of urban growth rates. Instigators of high population increases identified in the Preston-UN study include natural rates of increase, levels of economic development and performance. Furthermore, the study discovers that high natural rates of increases in rural areas do not lead to higher rural –urban migration. Rather other factors that have much stronger economic underpinnings have much weight in promoting drivers of urban in-migration.

Friedman (2005), in his seminal work ‘The World is flat’ argues that survival in the present global economy depends on openness of the economy to insourcing and outsourcing to stay relevant. The world, especially in developing economies is no longer flat; cities are springing up bringing a concave structure in population among different regions. Hence, megacities have become locales in which global competition is orchestrated. To this end, Birdsall (2007), further argues that there exists unequal opportunities at household levels in different countries and across national regional boundaries. According to her, globalization exacerbates these inequalities between regions and across nations. From a development economics perspective, agglomeration of population in cities is a factor of lopsided situation of manufacturing and service industries in big cities. These become pull factors for in-migrants attracting specialized workforce as well as low-skilled workers. Learner (2007) further theorize on the role of technology in the convergence of technology production in cities in Southeast Asia (India and China specifically), in which cities of developing countries becomes subsumed in the global supply chain. By these inclusion, there is a built up of the middle class and wealth. Much more, these cities become peripheries which supply economic production in core countries in the Western hemisphere.

The role of globalization in producing specialization across countries in terms of supply of labour and new markets is a major dynamic in growth of megacities in the developing world. Cities of China and India have become the global hub for outsourcing companies for Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) and IT back office services. Conversely, major cities in Sub-Sahara Africa and new acceding states to the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region are becoming new frontiers of markets for multinational firms. More and more countries and cities now have stronger links to other markets across the world, with the corollary effect of duality of pressures. First from the global markets in terms of availability of requisite high-skilled workforce to achieve the competitive edge, as well as high influx of rural low and medium skilled labour force. The role of policy makers in these megacities becomes that of a mediator between competition in the global market and addressing contest between migrant workers and resident low and middle skilled workers in cities.

In the context of this study, Davis and Henderson (2003) theorises a U-Shape relationship between the level of development in a country and concentration of population in a single city. Instigators of this mono-centric urbanisation includes unequal development between regions, suffice to say this argument is also tenable in the context of immigration from periphery countries in the Southern Hemisphere to Developed Core countries.

2.2. The Hukou Blue Card Policy and Rural Migrant Workers

Internal migration across regions and locales are usually unregulated in most locales. However in the Chinese system, the Hukou policy is a household registration system that regulates movement of people from one geographical region to the other. This policy instituted in 1955 requires that individuals must register their Hukou in their places of residence, whether rural or urban. Moreover, there is a requirement that for there to be a

change in the Hukou status, there must be approval from public security and municipal administration agencies. Bao et al (2011) states that Hukou registration imposes indirect and direct costs on migration, costs involved includes loss of rights to village farmlands once a Hukou is transferred from one locale to the other. Bao et al, describes the Hukou system as an ‘internal passport system’ (2011, p.564). Impositions due to the Hukou system is much more observable in rural to urban migration, especially as possession of an urban Hukou correlates to access to employment in public agencies, subsidized housing, health care and education.

Three periods of reforms of the Hukou system is detailed in literature (Chan 1995, Bao et al 2011). During the 1980’s, travel from one region or locale to another requires a letter from approval from local administrators. This letter was replaced by identification cards in 1990s as well as a revocation of the food rationing stamps tied to locales of Hukou registration. The disaggregation of the food rationing stamp from the Hukou registration was epochal in reducing restriction in internal migration. From 2001, migrant workers from rural areas were allowed to work in small townships and cities, by providing them with temporary Hukou status in cities and towns in which they had legal jobs and residences. As the Chinese economy became more open, large cities such as Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou relaxed the conditions attached to Hukou status attainment in these urban areas. The direct correlation between increasing dismantling of the Hukou and liberalisation of the Chinese economy was established in the study by Poncet (2006), in which she made an inference between deregulation of the economy and responsiveness of migration constraints to China’s economic reality. Bao et al. (2011) leveraged on the study by Poncet in detailing a methodology that explored a nuanced conceptualisation of migration given huge changes in the Chinese economic realities. Variables considered in the analytic model include infusion

of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), growth in the export markets as well as improvement in communication and transport infrastructure.

The central issue with the Hukou system is that of Access and Exclusion. Possession of an urban Hukou is equal to access to quality healthcare, retirement benefits, unemployment benefits etc. Conversely, non-holders of Urban Hukou are largely excluded from these social welfare provisions (Chan and Buckingham, 2008; Wang 2005). Zhang and Treiman (2013) posits that the Hukou system is still an important factor in social mobility and life chances in the Chinese society. They further argue that the Hukou system have changed the dynamics of the rural –urban divide in China. This has occasioned what Zhang and Treiman described as a three-class society, which consists of different permutations; Rural Hukou and Rural residence population; Rural Hukou but Urban Residence Population and the Urban Hukou and Urban residence Population (2013:72). These three groups are differentiated in their social origins and relationship with governance institutions. The difference between relationships with the city governance structures thus occasion different social economic outcomes for each of these populations. This argument by Zhang and Treiman evince one of the major themes on current discourse on megacity governance and inequality.

It is established in literature that the Hukou system and its reforms is gradually reshaping migration in China, particularly for highly skilled rural Hukou holders. Possession of superior academic qualification and investment capacity has been the basis for accreditation for a transfer of rural to Urban Hukou. Thus, the Hukou system becomes a form of institutional barrier of access to social benefits. While conversion from rural to Urban Hukou at the individual level is due to possession of academic or financial credentials (Chan 2010), at the community level, whole villages could be transmuted from rural to Urban Hukou status, as a result of urban sprawl (Wu and Treiman, 2004). In an upcoming paper Zheng (2013) analyses consequences of individual and collective Hukou conversions on

earnings of rural migrant workers. The thesis of Zheng study is summarised in the concern on wage differentials of Hukou conversions at the individual and collective levels. Lee (2012);reflecting on the study by Arrow (1973) on wage differential in individuals with similar productive capacities, asserts that migrant workers as labour minorities in China faces extensive discrimination, This discrimination was analysed by Zhang and Luo (2012) as a default in citizenship rights for rural and urban rural migrants.

Literature on the Hukou system and its impact on rural migrants in China has been largely been subsumed under three foci of discourse; Exclusion, Inequality and Discrimination. While extensive studies have been undertaken on the economic and labour impacts of the Hukou registration system; as well as its consequences for citizenship rights of rural migrant workers in cities. Extrapolation of the discourse in light of the globalisation experience of megacity growth is not yet a mainstream discourse in urban policy literature. The reason could be that it is a recent phenomenon, which is heavily referenced in discourse on urban development. In the context of this research, the discourse on the Hukou system will be reviewed in the light of population control and global labour competition in China and the EU in emerging economies in the third world

Extrapolating literature explored above in terms of megacity governance and exclusion occasioned by the Hukou system largely derives from its role as a form of population and competition control. The dual variables of ‘Population and Competition control’ are the chief mechanisms for analysis of this research paper. In terms of the relationship with globalisation, this paper compares the similarities of the Hukou Blue card, which is the accreditation document for migrant workers with the new EU Blue card scheme. Using the two variables of population and competition control, this study analysis how the Blue card schemes across the Asian and European domains has been expressions of centrifugal and centripetal forces acting on growing cities within the larger globalisation context.

2.3 The EU Blue Card Scheme and Migrant Workers

Literature on the EU Blue Card scheme specifically is still in its nascent stages, however proceeding from conclusion reached in the Beaverstock and Hall's (2012) study on international competition in global cities, an attempt is made to review the two variables of Population and Labour completion controls as mechanisms of study. To begin, Beaverstock and Hall argues that as the world become more globalised, required skill-sets in corporations in global cities requires diverse pool of skills, which are quite narrow in focus. To this end, despite diversity of talents available within the domestic labour market, availability of requisite skilled workers to fill these positions is scarce. While there is considerable scarcity of talents in global cities (megacities) of developed nations, cities in the third world is saturated with talent, largely due to high population rates and high unemployment rates. From countries such as Brazil, China, and India, the main exports seems to be talents to megacities in the developing world

The European Union Blue card scheme was an idea floated in 2007, to institute a Migrant workers visa for the EU. The objective of the scheme was to attract highly skilled workers from third world countries in a scheme comparative to the US, Canada and Australia immigration policies on attracting highly skilled workers. For Gumus (2010), this is the attempt by the EU to enter into a 'Global War on Talent', in which the aforementioned countries are chief participants. The scheme adopted on May 25 2009, provides a timeline of 2 years for domestication into national level policies by member states. According to Gumus, the agenda was to create a framework directory of migrant workers to the EU, especially to counteract the talent deficit occasioned by the EU aging population.

Eligibility criteria for the Blue Card scheme are open to graduating students with masters' degree or its equivalent from European Universities and major universities abroad. The Blue Card proposed by the Belgian think tank- Bruegel stipulates an external minimum wage for

higher skilled migrant workers. This is quite similar to the requirement for rural migrant workers in the Hukou Blue Card scheme in China. By stipulating higher entry criteria for migrant workers, public administrators seek to protect the domestic labour force. The threshold for this review hinges on the present global competition for high-skilled workers; otherwise referred to as talents. Locales of this competition are usually in global cities across the world. From London to New York to Shanghai, financial institutions, specialised government agencies and corporations are constantly on the lookout for specialised skills at the best cost.

In the proposal by Bruegel, immigration policies of Germany and France were indicated as one of the more open in the EU. However, a further argument on the limits of such policies in terms of social rights and access to social benefits by migrant workers was proffered. The EU Blue Card scheme works on a point system, reminiscent of international migration policies. However, it departs from traditional immigration policies and schemes by proposing no limit to the number of migrant workers that can be absorbed by a member states. This was the main thrust of the Bruegel proposal which is hinged on the notion of market liberalisation, in which interaction of forces of demand and supply even out any excess. The Blue Card scheme is designed to open up access to domestic labour markets across EU member states to migrant workers, as well as to provide them with some measure of socio-economic rights and benefits. The Blue card is awarded for a period between one and four years with opportunities for renewal. Holders of the Blue card are also awarded equal treatment in terms of Housing, education, pensions and other social benefits as nationals of the European Union. Blumus criticized the notion of creating a single labour migration policy scheme for EU nations. He further argues that the success of the US green card and Canada SuperVisa schemes was due to the fact of these territories being a single country, unlike the EU which is a regional arrangement. Differences in demographic

structure, labour needs and economic growth levels are some critical factors that will impact on the success of the scheme in different EU member states.

The scheme has been highly criticised within and outside the EU, especially by academics and policy makers in developing countries. Described as an agenda to further fuel massive brain drain in third world nations, the EU Blue card scheme has also met with limited aplomb within the union itself. Its chief supports being France, Italy and Netherlands. For dissenting countries, concerns raised about the scheme includes its consequences for training and improvement of skilled workers native to the EU, as well as its future impact on competition with the EU labour market. Using the United Kingdom (UK) Skilled migrant talent program to augment the shortfall in medical services in the late 1990s as an example, Blumus states that the scheme is responsible for the low rate of employment of skilled medical works in the UK presently. He argues that while the blue card scheme might solve the skills deficit in the short run, it is likely to have less benign than malignant consequences in the long run. Blumus further argues that pressures of demand and supply as derivatives of globalisation have largely shifted the focus from domestic labour markets to cheap labour from the third world. The jury is still out on the success of the program which began only about 4 years ago. Although, going by the slow rate of domestication of the scheme across the EU, it is safe to assume that it has not gained much currency in discussions in national level labour migration discourse.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This paper is hinged on the two variables of population and labour competition control as mechanisms for studying status of migrant workers in a regional comparative context, with China and the EU as case-studies. An overarching concept in this study is globalisation, which is the domain in which centripetal and centrifugal forces act on global cities.

Centripetal forces push segments of the population out of the city and centrifugal forces that concentrate population within the city boundaries. Proceeding from the definition of globalisation by Kearney (1995) as 'social and economic (sic) processes that takes place within nations but which also transcends them'. (1995:548). Further breaking down indices for the framework. Kearney postulates that globalisation describes the intensification of economic and social relations linking different locales globally. Embedded in the linkages between globalisation and migration across different regions is the theory of transnationalism, For Kearney, Globalisation evince a shift from the two dimensional spatial focus on centres (core) and periphery to a multidimensional global space, with interlinking sub-spaces. The multi-dimensionalism of globalisation in respect to migration is the framework from which this review of extant theory hinges

Proceeding from the classical theory by Burgess, which postulates of 4 zones of interactions within the urban environment, this study shall describe Burgess classical framework and extrapolate central concepts within the model to make them applicable to the study. Within this extrapolation and appreciation of concepts to this study; the dependency theory applies to analyse relationships between core and periphery regions. Within the national regional context (China) and in international regional context (EU Blue card scheme), the dependency theory is applies to analyse relationships between core and periphery regions. While, the world system theory by Wallenstein (1969) has heavily criticised the basis of the dependency theory, it provides a good basis for analysis of variables of study using social differentiation theory. This study acknowledges that there are several economic theories and models that could sufficiently explain variables of interest in this study. However, the intension herein is to explore a multi-disciplinary theoretical discourse hinged on social anthropology, transnationalism and international competition. The aim of this study is to triangulate

concepts embedded in each of these theories to explore the sometimes symbiotic and otherwise parasitic relationships that exist with cores and peripheries.

2.4.1. Extrapolations from the Burgess Concentric Model of the Urban Space

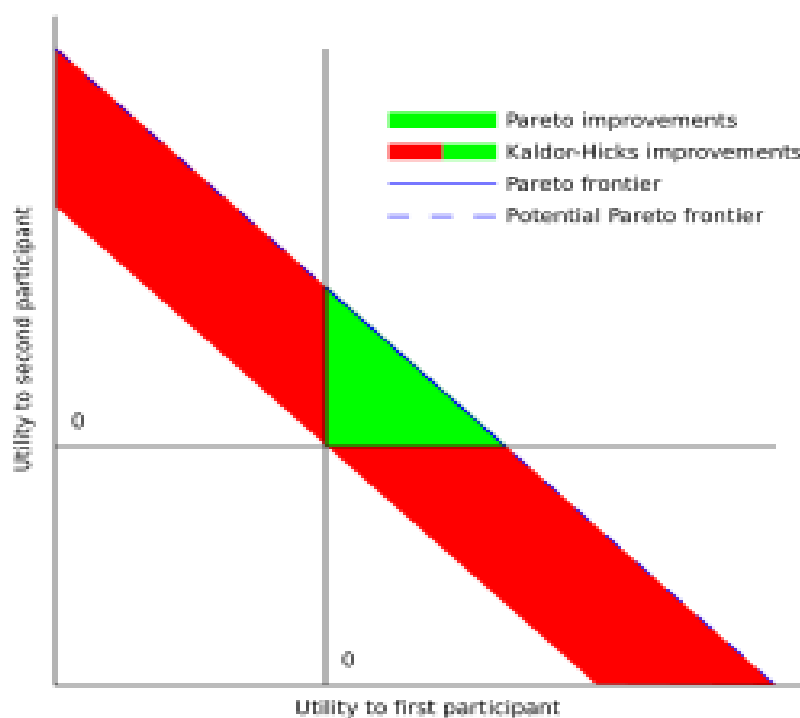
The concentric model is one of the triad classical theories of urban studies, the others being the Hoyt Sector model and the Harris and Ullman Multi-Nuclei model. Burgess postulates that the Central Business District is the core of the city, where businesses are located and economic relations largely occur. It is the domain of industry, innovation and entrepreneurship. The model which is based on the spatial analysis of the Greater Chicago region postulates the city as being spatially differentiated in terms of concentric rings shifting outwards from the core CBD Muggah (2012). Each subsequent zone can be largely categorised into two zones; Transition zones and Commuting zones. The concepts for extrapolation in this model are Succession and Invasion, two theories that describes the interaction between the core and other zones. These interactions evince the pressure the core has on outlying zones, in which concentration of population. Activities in the CBD occasion an outward pressure that resonates by changing the size and dynamics of operation of other zones. While the other two model's (Sectoral and multiple nuclei) have sufficiently challenged the core basis of the Concentric model, its relevance is still evidenced by influence on recent studies such as McLafferty 1982 and Portney 2003.

These two concepts aptly describe the relationship between megacities, and outlying regions. Suffice to note that the term 'megacities' used herein evince both the national and international character of the city. As a locale of invasion, the city is susceptible to influx of rural populations, especially migrant workers, who comes to the city for economic purposes, attracted by the promise of employment and opportunities. In respect to succession, the city in its growth and influences reverberates beyond its territoriality. Under this model, the core

/megacity is seen as the actor which impacts and is impacted upon. However, the current experience in megacities around the world described by Davis and Kaplan can be imagined as the inverse of the core-prominence model. Rather, what occurs is that rather than being the purveyor of succession and invasion; it is becoming a space in which economic and social forces are congregating, with reciprocatory challenge of intensely bounded spaces. Sassen (2009) posits a shift from the Keynesian routinized city in which there exists equilibrium among the different segments of the city. With agglomeration of population into large cities, Sassen theorises of the strategic city, which became more prominent from the 1980s. The advent of what Sassen referred to as strategic cities is influenced by the constant and continuous globalisation and digitalisation of different sectors, in which available local knowledge become insufficient. This occasions the need for more skills, which serves as pull factors for rural/international migrants. This phenomena leads to what Sassen referred to as Urban Centrality. The concept of urban centrality resonates with the core-primacy concept of the Burgess concentric model. For Sassen, this is not only provoked by urbanisation of the built and social environment but the urbanisation of economic sectors and acceleration of spatial dispersal of economic activities at the national and international levels.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Analysis of the EU and Hukou Blue Card Schemes

In undertaking a theoretical evaluation of the Blue Card schemes across two regions, this paper pursues a qualitative methodology hinged on the Pareto Efficiency and the Kaldor Hicks efficiency principle (1939). Evaluation of policies under the Pareto Efficiency principle review allocation of goods or resources is such a manner as to ensure that benefits (utility) accrue to a party, without excessive costs to another party (Nicholas, 2012). In the review of the concept of Pareto Efficiency, the aim is to seek an optimal state in which there is equilibrium of costs and benefits across participants. Proceeding from Pareto Efficiency is the Kaldor Hicks Efficiency criterion which demands that a Pareto optimal outcome can be derived by providing sufficient compensation for parties bearing high costs on a policy decision in such a manner as to ensure they are not worse off than they were prior to the policy decision. Thus, the Kaldor Hicks Efficiency principle is a subset of Pareto



Efficiency;

Figure 2: Pareto improvements as subset of Kaldor-Hicks improvements

1. In utilizing these frameworks to evaluate the Hukou and EU Blue card schemes, this principle shall be the theoretical constructs of the methodology. In pursuance of this methodology, the flowing analytic process shall be adopted; List alternative projects/programs.
2. List stakeholders.
3. Select measurement(s) and measure all cost/benefit elements.
4. Predict outcome of cost and benefits over relevant time period.

(Boardman 2006)

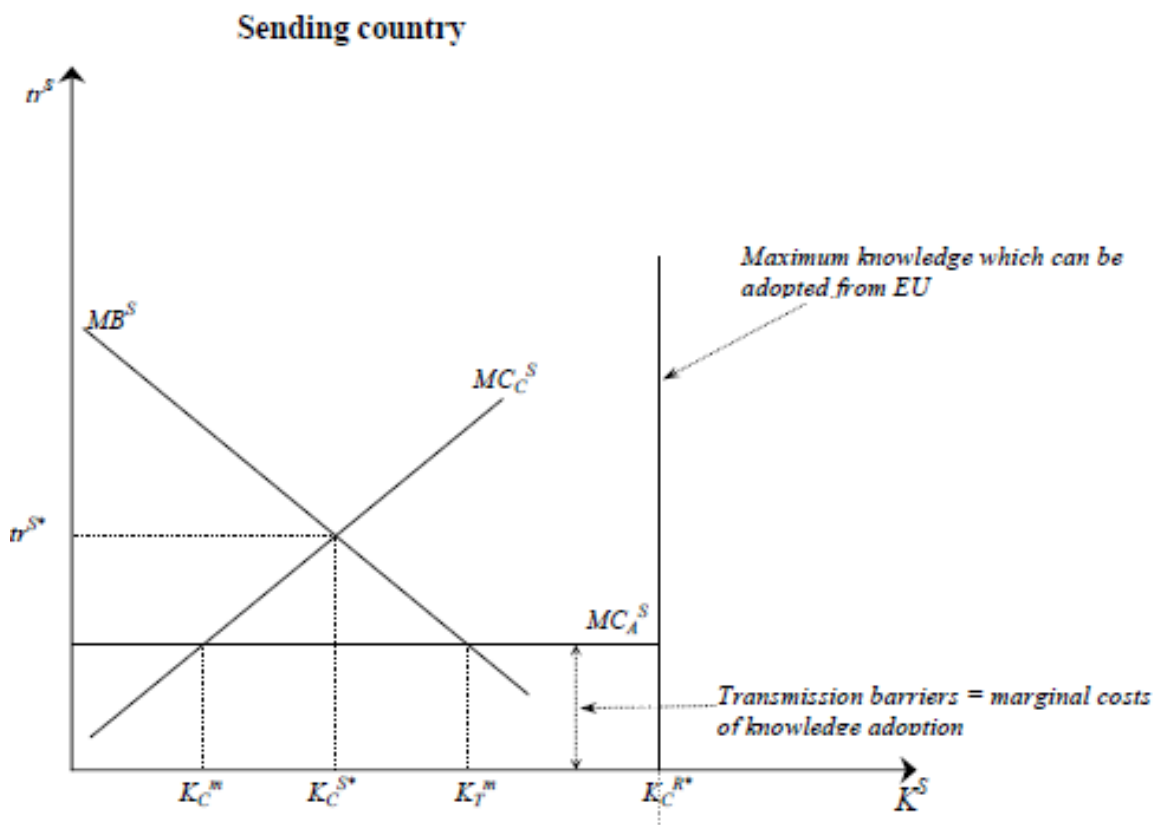
3.1 Other Programs for Migrant Workers

S/N	Countries	Schemes
1	United States of America	The US Green Card guarantees a permanent residence to migrants or third country nationals in the USA. Officially referred to as the United States Permanent Residence Card (USCIS 1-551), it confirms on the holder immigration status and the right to live and work in the US. Valid for only 10 years, it is perhaps the most popular immigration visa schemes. However, holders can become US citizens after 5 years. (USCIS 2011).
2	Canada	Software Pilot Program for foreign software specialists This project implemented as a pilot in 1997 was designed to fill critical shortfalls in talents in the Information Technology sector. This was designed based on demand from employers
3	Australia	Skilled Independent Migration Under this scheme, third country nationals are selected based on their education, skills and work experience, with capacity to contribute to the Australian Economy. McLaughlan and Salt(2002)

3.2 Stakeholders

Stakeholders in these Blue Card Schemes can be extrapolated from the analytic framework in Figure 1. At the global level, there are global economic actors and institutions and multinationals. At the regional and national level of the EU and China, there are four main stakeholders; Rural Migrant workers, Employers and Public Administrators. Interactions amongst different stakeholder influence the direction of the policy under study. The analysis of this relationship has been detailed in earlier chapters.

3.3 Cost and Benefit measurements



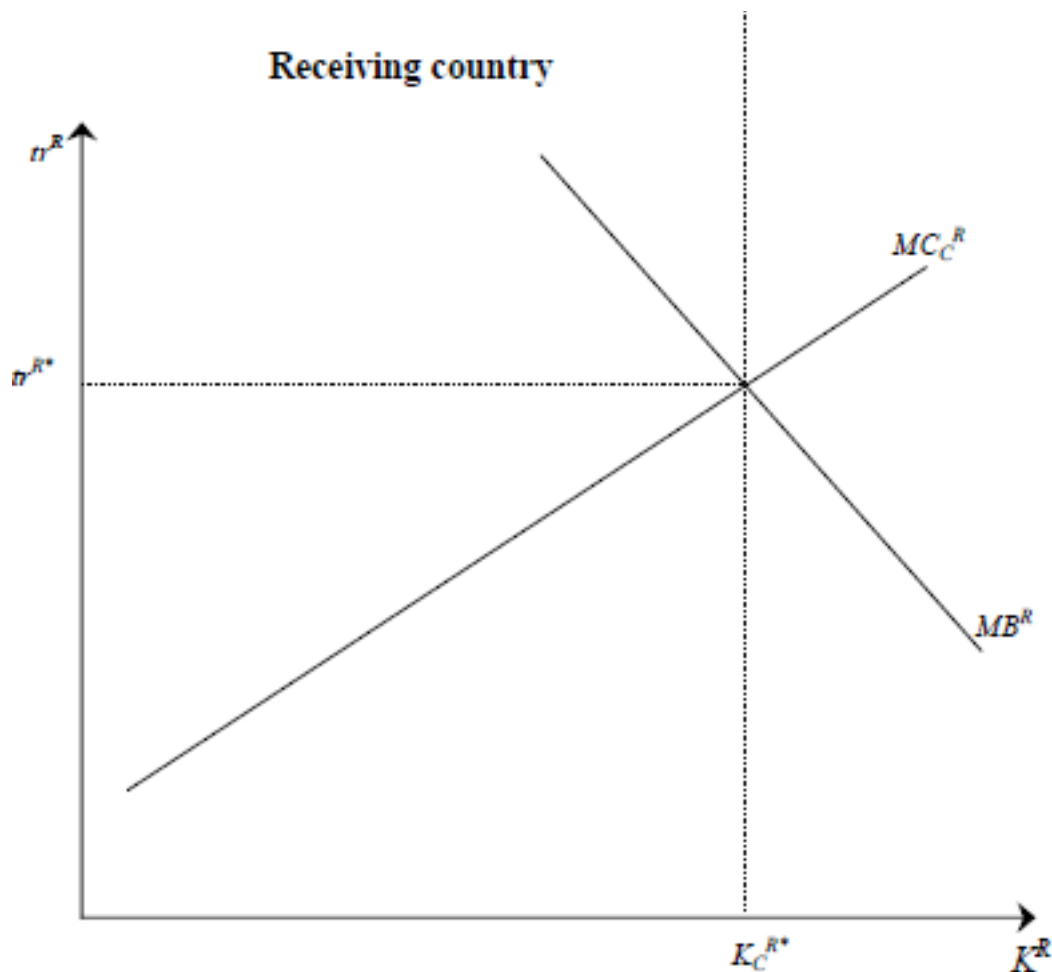


Figure3 Knowledge Model – Kiancs and Cians (2007)

3.4 Knowledge Model

The Knowledge model developed by Kiancs and Cians (2007) KC above shows the skewness in benefits of technological development in core/developed/urban regions(R) than sending/rural/periphery countries(S). From this model, it is obvious that knowledge spillovers are skewed in costs to developing/rural/periphery regions. Evidence provided in this model has been confirmed in a Malawian case-study by Kukka(2011), in which he identified impacts on the EU Blue card schemes on Malawian health care professionals. In his study, Kukka found that the allure of the Blue Card scheme and challenges in the Malawian health industry act as pull and push factors respectively. This position coincides

with the literature that he refers to as ‘pessimists of migration’. Analysing the unintended consequences Of the EU Blue Card scheme in the light of the Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) principle, in which EU Policies must taking into cognizance of its impacts on developing countries. He reviews benefits of circular migration in which migrant health workers return to Malawi, thus contributing to the development of the medical sector. His position differs from pessimists of circular migration as proposed by schemes such as the Hukou and EU Blue Card by outlining benefits of the scheme. However, he resonates KC’s; model on skewness of benefits and costs.

3.5 Human Capital Model

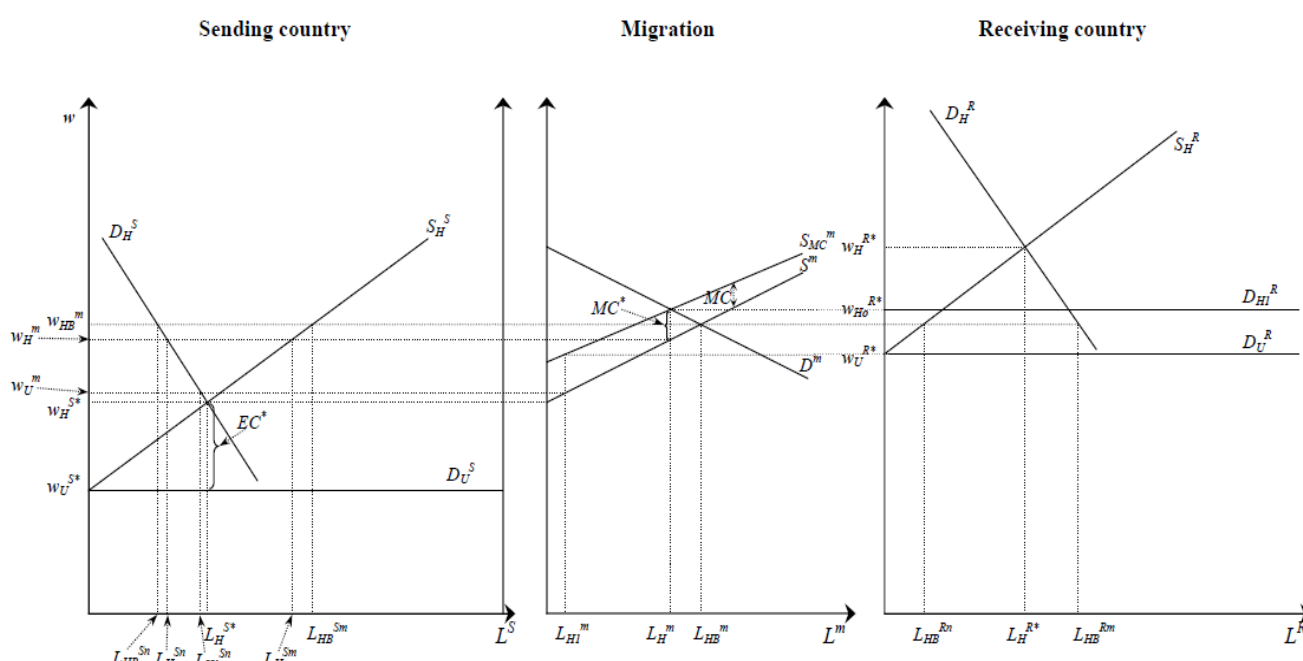


Figure 4: Human Capital - Kiancs and Ciancs (2007)

The economic model above from KC (2007) simulates how expected costs and expected benefits influences decisions in rural/periphery/developing countries for migrant workers. Given expected easier access to employment opportunities in more developed regions, the human capital stock in the sending country (periphery) is depleted, while the receiving countries gains in the long run. However, according to Kukkah, benefits accruing to receiving

locales are mainly in the short term. In the long term, as receiving regions and economic sector becomes saturated, there will be high rate of unemployment in affected economic sectors. An example of this was the consequence of high number of healthcare workers to the UK in the 1990s and the subsequent experience of unemployment thereon.

However, while the model by Kiancs and Ciancs shows that costs is skewed towards sending countries, what costs accrue to receiving locales? In exploring this question, the discussion of governance of core/urban regions and the challenge of managing an urbanising economy is explored.

3.6 Costs and Benefits of the EU and Hukou Blue Card Schemes

Thus, analysis the costs and benefits of the EU Blue card system will require a layered evaluation,, focusing on the sending country, receiving country and individual migrant worker. Both the Hukou and EU Blue card are both expressions of policy makers responding to the challenge of what Saskia Sassen refer to as ‘urbanising economy’. Pressure points of these urbanising economies is aptly reflected in the analytic framework in Chapter one of this research paper. Pursuant to this analytic framework, the Blue Card policies are both tools for control and agenda for global economic labour competition. Within the dialectics of the dual-pronged focus of these policies, to address the first question, it is possible to retroactively explore possible impacts of the EU Blue card scheme on periphery countries, from extrapolations of the Asian experiment. While the political and socio-cultural context might differ, both regions of the world are at a point in their history, where issues of migration are gaining salience as well as being active participants in the global economy. Consequences of the EU Blue Card Scheme on sending countries have been explored in several studies. However, do these countries bear only costs? What are the benefits? One of the chief benefits of a large foreign migrant population has been in

repatriation of funds back home by these migrant workers. Examples can be made of the nations of Kosovo and Kenya in the Balkans and East Africa respectively. In Kosovo, remittances from nationals working in foreign countries have been the highest source of external contributions to the GDP (World Bank, 2011). For other developing countries, including those in the Sub-Saharan region, the World Bank (2013) asserts that remittances have increased by 5.3% from 2011 figures, with likely increases from immigration reforms in Europe and the US. Hence, the Blue Card might become an accessory not just for technological transfer to periphery nations but also as a vehicle for economic development. This argument is also tenable from the Chinese experience in which rural areas have become much more urbanised and economically progressive from changes in its Hukou Status.

Arguments have been made on the utility of the EU Blue card scheme for knowledge transfer and economic growth in sending –periphery countries, as a result of circular migration. However, there are issues that will likely arise in implementation of the Blue Card scheme, which are yet to gain salience at the present period. Extrapolating from the Chinese experience, issues of citizens' rights, access to social services and increased competition for jobs were some of the challenges experienced. There has been several debates on caveats in the Blue Card scheme which does not make it at par with provisions of international labour conventions. These challenges which are still in its infancy will become more pronounced as the scheme becomes widely operationalised. Moreover, there is a possibility of there being extensive cases of inequality between high skilled migrant workers who gain permanent residences under the scheme and nationals having the same or lesser years of experience, education and expertise. Much more, while cases of abuse of citizenship rights and inequality among urban and holders of the Hukou Blue card scheme in China, issues pertaining to racial differences will likely add further tensions between high skilled nationals and migrants.

Using the principle of optimal benefits for all parties and compensation for loss, the question on the Blue Card scheme now extends to what are the likely consequences of these sorts of schemes for rapidly urbanising regions particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa? There are costs and benefits in this regards. By rapid population growths, these locales are saturated with talents and minimal employment opportunities. Already, unemployment rate in countries like Nigeria, which has the largest population in Sub-Saharan Africa, is up to 23%³. Thus, the Blue Card scheme might provide new markers for these talents which otherwise might not have access to employment in the home countries. Beyond exporting surplus talents, these locales also benefits from remittances and technology transfers. Pushing the discussion further, the EU Blue card scheme might further the agenda of equilibrating populations across the world, especially by attracting highly skilled surpluses. Hence, by conservative assumption, there are sufficient costs and benefits on both sides of the domain for both developed core and peripheral developing economies.

³ <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/unemployment-rate>

Chapter 4 Conclusion

The challenge of population growth, growing cities, economic competition has been a phenomenon whose experience has spanned millennia's. However, in its current expression, it is being transformed by the competing pressures of globalisation and regional needs. The agenda to carve a niche in the global market and militate between urban desires and rural agitations is the primary motivation for the design of policies such as the blue card scheme. From East Asia to the EU, the Blue card scheme seeks to adjudicate between these pressures. Given recent development in the EU and nascent implementation of the blue card scheme, the Chinese example provides a veritable learning for probable challenges that shall be confronted in the near future.

This study, which have been a theoretical exploration and literature review of both the EU and Hukou Blue card schemes draws parallels in the experiences of both locales, similarities of challenges and policy solutions implemented. There appears to be a push by urban policy-makers, not just to keep migrants from flooding the cities but also to ensure the very best of talents from these regions have easy access. Thus, there is a dialectical relationship, which appears almost as a winnowing of potentials of migrants. While several studies and papers have concentrated on the lopsided benefits accruing to develop/ urban areas and depletion of human and material resources in rural/peripheral areas. This study extends the discussion by asserting that there usually surpluses of talents in rural/peripheral regions, accompanied by high rate of unemployment and paucity of social infrastructure. Thus, schemes such as the EU and Hukou blue card schemes aids in maintaining certain equilibrium in the global population and talents distribution.

Furthermore, this study contributes to literature by pursuing a cross-regional and contextual experience of the same phenomena and policy choices. By this comparison, it became possible to undertake an ex-ante evaluation of the EU Blue card scheme from experiences of the Chinese Hukou Blue card schemes. Hence, by these new learning, the EU can project and plan ahead for several conflicts that would arise as the Blue card scheme gains more salience. In conclusion, this paper reiterates its position that rural/developing regions are not always at the losing ends in cost and benefit distribution of migration policies. Rather, the position of this paper hinges on the hypothesis which asserts that as the world population increases and pressures on certain locales become heightened there is a need to pursue equilibrium. This agenda can be promoted at the local, national or supranational levels; however, the position of this paper is that as the world population increases and concentrates in certain regions, there is a need for a holistic engagement of arising challenges of this new global experience.

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