



INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION TO AND FROM UNITED KINGDOM AND THE CASE OF BRITISH INDIAN POPULATION: A CLOSER LOOK

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Abstract

There has been a marked increase in the immigration to the United Kingdom (UK) during the post-2000 period, sizeable share of the immigrants being from India. Despite the current recession it is noted that there is as high as 1,50,000 net migrants from India to UK. The paper makes a closer look into the pattern of international migration to and from the UK during the period 2004 to 2013 and its implications, with a focus on the current scenario regarding the British Indian population, and makes suitable policy suggestions.

Key Words: International Migration, British Indian Population.

1. INTRODUCTION

There has been constant rise in the immigration to the United Kingdom (UK) since 1945 and this trend has been quite prominent in the post-2000 period. Other immigrants have come as asylum seekers, seeking protection as refugees under the United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention, or from member states of the European Union, exercising one of the European Union's Four Freedoms. In fact, about 70 percent of the population increase between 2001 and 2011 censuses was due to foreign-born immigration. 7.5 million people (11.9 percent of the population) were born abroad. The migration from India to UK is sought to be studied in detail in this paper.

2. RELEVANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Since the early 2000s the size, trend and pattern of immigration to the UK from India have changed significantly. Immigrants are more numerous, more mobile and more diverse than ever before. The experience of immigration is different; immigrants are coming from a broader array of countries, staying for shorter period of time, enjoying significant engagements with communities outside of the UK and are no longer settling solely in cities. In parallel, UK immigration policy has undergone radical changes. Public opinion and other forces have prompted policy makers to focus their efforts on combating illegality and on flows of asylum seekers. At the same time, economic pressures have dictated the need to have selection systems so that the country can attract desirable economic immigrants. Despite the current recession, immigration to the UK is expected to remain at approximately 150,000 net migrants per year. Sizeable share of the total immigrants in the UK corresponds to India. The case of the large-sized and growing British Indian population needs to be studied in detail from a broader perspective, in the above context because studies in this area are scarce. This paper is an effort in this direction.

3. EARLIER STUDIES

There are many studies on inter-state migration in India and its impact, like, the recent study by Dr. Manoj P K and Neeraja James (2014) [9] on unorganized migrant housing construction workers in Ernakulam (Kerala) and their human rights issue, and another study by Irudaya Rajan (2015) [6] which explores the linkage between migration and gender. But studies involving migration from India to other countries particularly to the UK are very scarce. The exceptions being two recent research reports viz. Leonard Williams (2013) [7] and another by Anne Unterreiner (2015) [17] which deals with a comparative perspective of migrants from India and China. In view of the lack of studies that focus on the migration from India to UK with a focus on the British Indian population in the UK, this study seeks to bridge this research gap.

4. MAJOR CAUSES FOR MIGRATION TO THE UK AND THE RECENT TREND IN MIGRATION

The UK presents one of the toughest immigration regimes around the globe. In spite of all hurdles and barriers erected to plug inflow of excess Migrants charisma of Great Britain refuses to fade away. Especially from Asia and primarily India more and aspirants have been lining up to grab opportunities to shift to U.K. The most important cause for migration has been work and is followed by study. The major causes for migration to UK are as shown in Table I.



Table I: Causes of Migration to UK

- | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 214,000 for work○ 177,000 to study○ 71,000 for family reasons○ 24,000 seeking asylum○ 19,000 returning home○ 21,000 No reason stated |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Source: Estimated figures based on ONS Survey data.

Broadly, immigrants are classified into tier system viz. Tier-1 and Tier-2. Tier-1 eligibilities are assessed on basis of point based evaluation of migrant profiles. Tier – 2 includes trained workers under various categories.

❖ **Tier 1:**

Highly esteemed emigrants who can really contribute to U.K.'s economy. These include:

- Top notch professionals: There is an annual sealing of 1000 outstanding individuals in their respective premise. They must be nominated by specified bodies in their areas
 - Royal Society
 - Arts Council England
 - British Academy
 - Royal Academy of Engineering
- Business owners: Financial and procedural stipulations are attached (minimum investment ready funds). Point evaluation is carried out before first grant and renewal. Initial assessment evaluates migrant's financial profile, background and linguistic abilities (95 marks are regarded as qualifying mark), while in renewal evaluation performance of migrant who was granted entry is evaluated as per specified parameters
 - Investment in real terms,
 - Jobs created
 - Linguistic abilities
 - Activity record of migrant while being in UK on visa to ascertain involvement in management of business established by migrant etc.
- Investors: Atleast 75 marks in point assessment are mandatory. These marks are obtainable if a migrant has
 - Requisite stipulated investment ready funds, or
 - Qualifying financial profile and credit facility from a designated U.K. financial institution
- General classes: For migrants already in country on basis of permit to reside in U.K. under any of these classes
 - Highly skilled migrant
 - Writers, composers or artists
 - Self-employed Advocates
 - Highly trained immigrant scheme (HSMP), if you are eligible to switch into Tier 1 (General).

It is mandatory to secure 95 marks in point assessment and 100 marks if migrant filing is under another qualified visa class.

- Graduated business owners: Annual sealing of 1000 applications and only those migrants can file under this class who are already residing in U.K. and have been identified by U.K. academic establishment as having potential in business ownership or innovation and ability to apply innovative ideas. 95 marks are compulsory in point assessment.

❖ **Tier 2: Trained Workers under various classes:** These include the following:

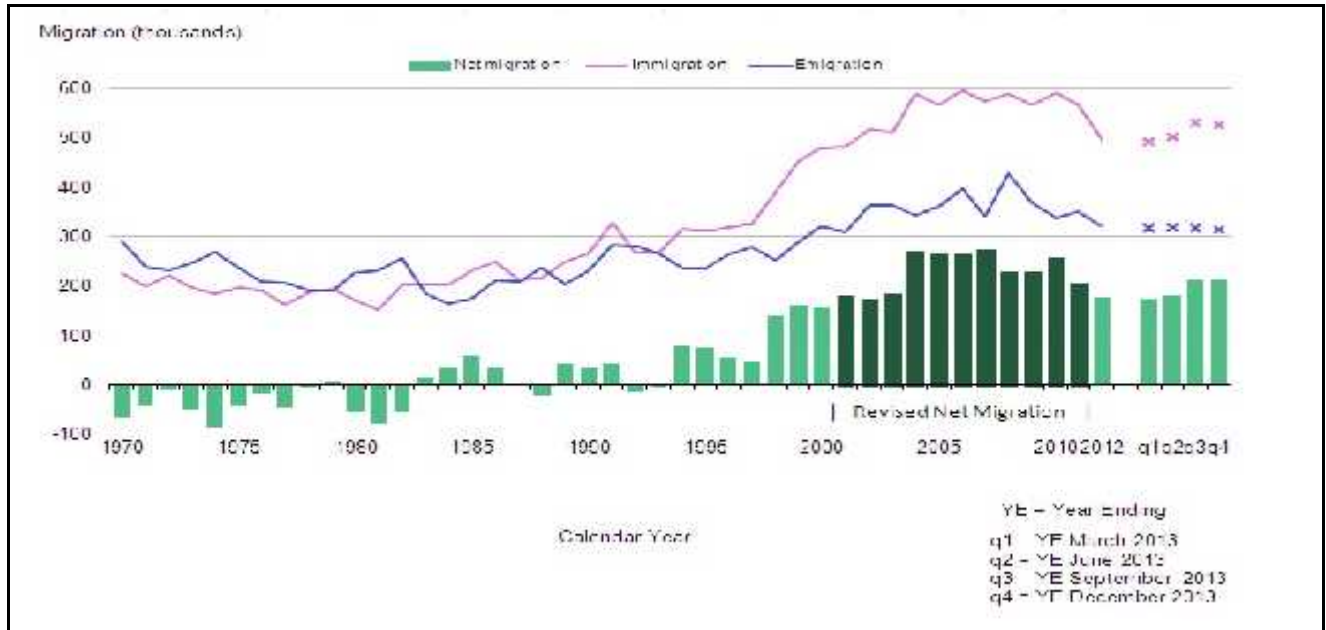
- General: there is a sealing for year 2012-13 of 20700 applications for migrants will salaries under £150,000 while there is no such sealing for migrants with salaries above £150,000
- Priests: For ministers and priests of different faiths and communities
- Sportsmen: For internationally acclaimed sportsmen and coaches with significant achievements in their respective fields

Intra company transfer: applicable for short or long tenure postings of staff trainees and training staff of a multinational organization having office in country.



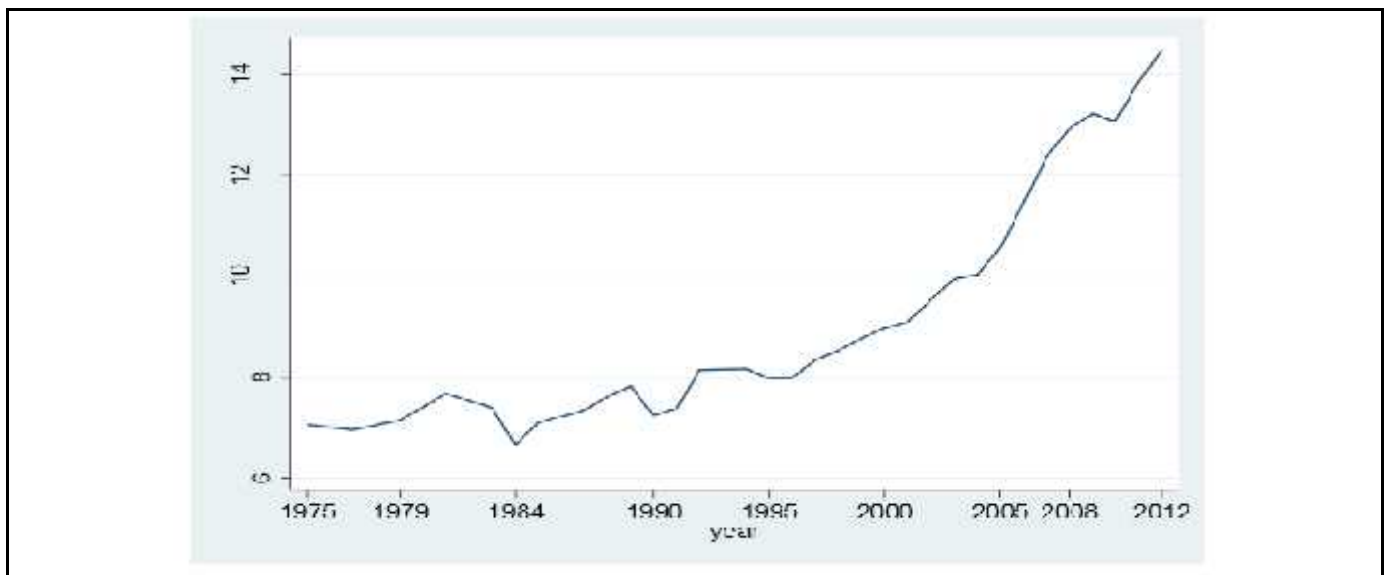
- ❖ **Recent Trend in Migration to the UK:** The official figures show that in the year ended Dec. 2013, some 201,000 EU citizens came into the UK as long-term immigrants, something officials said was a statistically significant increase of 43,000 over the previous year.

Figure I: International migration to and from the UK: 2004-2013 - Rolling annual figures



Provisional figures show that in 2013, 526,000 people arrived to live in the UK whilst 314,000 left, meaning that net inward migration was 212,000. The number of people immigrating to the UK increased between 2012 and 2013 by 28,000, whereas the number emigrating fell by 7,000. From April 2013 to April 2014, a total of 560,000 immigrants were estimated to have arrived in the UK, including 81,000 British citizens and 214,000 from other parts of the EU. An estimated 317,000 people left, including 131,000 British citizens and 83,000 other EU citizens. The top countries represented in terms of arrivals were: China, India, Poland, the United States, and Australia.

Figure II: Share of immigrants in the UK working population (Per cent)

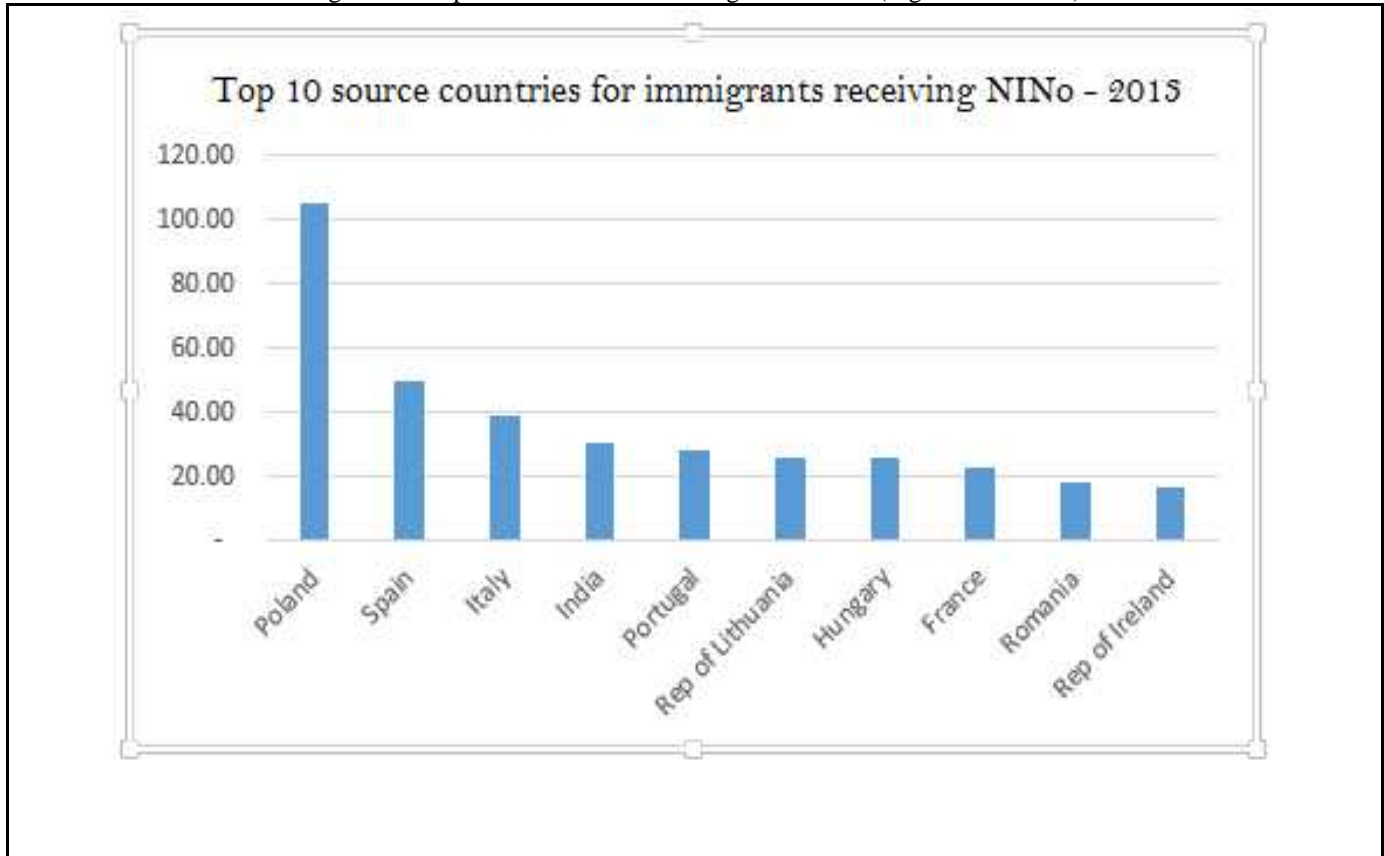


(Source: Center for Economic Performance, London School of Economics)



It is noted that there has been a tremendous growth in the share of immigrants in the UK over the years, particularly since 2005s. There has been almost three times growth in the share as of 2012 compared with that of 1975. (Figure II). Among the countries that contribute to such a huge flow of immigrants the share of India is fourth after Poland, Spain and Italy in that order. (Figure III). Such large-scale migrations have implications on the UK as well as the respective countries from people migrated, like India.

Figure III: Top Ten Countries for Immigrants to UK (Figures in 1000's)



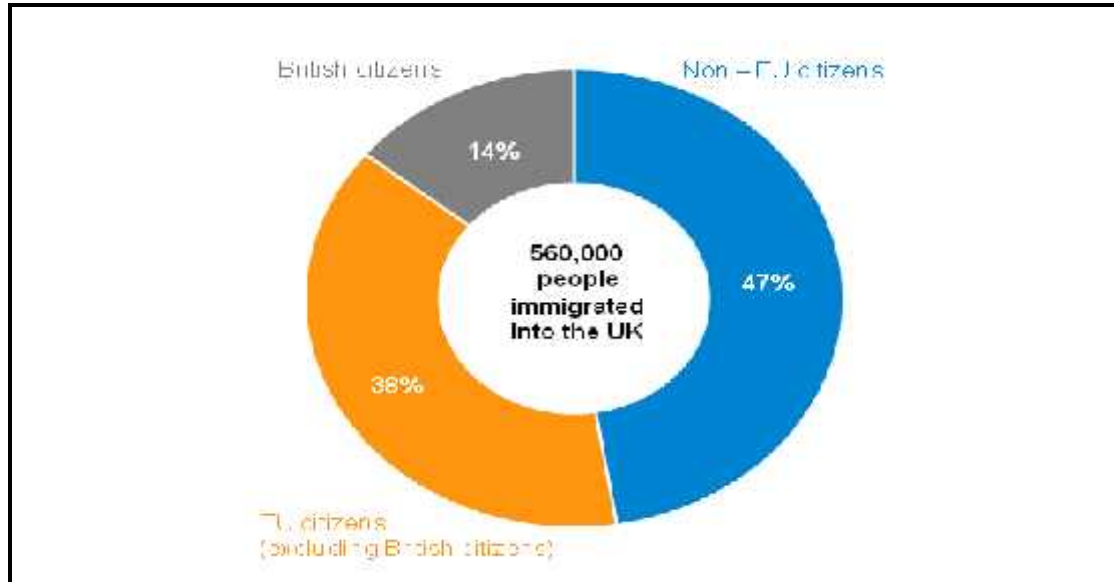
(Source: Govt. of UK - Department for Work and Pensions statistics)

5. DIFFERENT PATTERNS OF MIGRATION TO THE UK

Immigration of EU citizens to the UK in the year ending March 2014 was 214,000, a statistically significant increase from 170,000 in the previous year. Emigration of EU citizens from the UK remained broadly similar over the same period, meaning that net migration of EU citizens saw a statistically significant increase to 131,000 from 95,000 in the previous year. Immigration of non-EU citizens has been declining over the last three years. The latest estimates show that this decline has ended with 265,000 non-EU citizens immigrating to the UK in the year ending March 2014 compared to 246,000 in the previous year. Net migration of non-EU citizens was 162,000 in the year ending March 2014 compared to 145,000 in the previous year. (Figure IV).



Figure IV: Immigration into the UK for the year ending March 2014



6. BRITISH INDIAN (INDIAN BRITISH) POPULATION IN THE UK – A PROFILE

The term British Indian (also Indian British) refers to citizens of the UK whose ancestral roots lie in India. This includes people born in the UK who are of Indian descent, and Indian-born people who have migrated to the UK. As of 2015, Indians comprise about 1.4 million people in the UK, making them the single largest visible ethnic minority population in the UK. They make up the largest subgroup of British Asians, and are one of the largest Indian communities in the Indian diaspora, mainly due to the Indian-British relations. The British Indian community is the seventh largest in the Indian diaspora, behind the Indian communities in Nepal, the United States, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Canada and Burma. British Indians are socio-economically affluent and are primarily members of the middle class. A study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2011 found British Indians have among the lowest poverty rates among all ethnic groups in Britain, second only to White British. People from India settled in Great Britain since the East India Company (EIC) recruited lascars to replace vacancies in their crews on East Indiamen whilst on voyages in India. Initially these were men from the Indo-Portuguese or Luso-Asian communities of the subcontinent, including men from Bombay, Goa, Cochin, Madras and the Hugli River in Bengal. Later Muslim Bengalis and men from Ratnagiri were hired. Many were then refused passage back and had no alternative than to settle in London. There were also domestic servants of wealthy British families, who accompanied their employers back to Britain when their stay in South Asia came to an end.

Table II: British Indian Population in the UK

Year	British Indian Population
1850	40,000 (Estimate)
1900	70,000 (Estimate)
1951 (Census)	31,000
1961 (Census)	81,000
1971 (Census)	275,000
1981 (Census)	676,000
1991 (Census)	840,000
2001 (Census)	1,053,411
2015	1,400,000 (Estimate)

(Source: Census Reports and Estimates based on available data)



During the 19th Century, the East India Company (EIC) brought over thousands of Indian *lascars*, scholars and workers (who were largely Bengali and/or Muslim) to Britain, most of whom settled down and took local British wives, due to a lack of Indian women in Britain at the time. Due to the majority of early Asian immigrants being *lascar* seamen, the earliest Indian communities were found in port towns. Naval cooks also came, many of them from the Sylhet Division of what is now Bangladesh. One of the most famous early Bengali immigrants to Britain was Sake Dean Mahomet, a captain of the British East India Company. In 1810, he founded London's first Indian restaurant, the Hindoostane Coffee House. He is also reputed for introducing shampoo and therapeutic massage to the United Kingdom. By the mid-19th century, there were more than 40,000 Indian seamen, diplomats, scholars, soldiers, officials, tourists, businessmen and students in Britain.

By the early 20th century, there were around 70,000 Indians in Britain, 51,616 of whom were *lascar* seamen (when World War I began). Following the Second World War and the breakup of the British Empire, Indian migration to the UK increased through the 1950s and 1960s. The Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962 and Immigration Act 1971 largely restricted any further primary immigration, although family members of already-settled migrants were still allowed. In addition, much of the subsequent growth in the British Indian community has come from the births of second- and third-generation Indian Britons.

By the early 21st century, the British Indian community had grown to number over one million. According to the 2001 UK Census, 1,053,411 Britons had full Indian ethnicity (representing 1.8 per cent of the UK's population). An overwhelming majority of 99.3 per cent resided in England (in 2008 the figure is thought to be around 97.0 per cent). In the nine-year period between 2001 and 2010, the number of Indian-born people in the UK has increased in size by 43 per cent from 467,634 to around 669,000 (an increase of over 200,000).

6. POLICY SUGGESTIONS

The analysis of current immigration patterns and policies and public attitudes towards them combined with our future scenarios has a range of implications for how the United Kingdom could approach the issue of immigration. Many studies find little or no effect on the wages or employment prospects of natives, certainly not an aggregate level – even if there is a large, rapid influx of migrants into a particular location.

The effect of immigration may be more pronounced for specific sections of the economy and population. Much clearly depends on the economic and social environment; the speed, scale, and concentration of migration; the particular characteristics of the migrant and native populations; and the extent to which migrant complement, or are in competition with natives.

Failure to integrate migrants into UK society and to allow them access to public services can lead to their being socially excluded in other respects, which can in turn, cause personal and social problems. In part, social exclusion can be the result of entry and settlement controls designed to deter entry. Access to employment, health, housing, and welfare services is determined by immigration status, as most of those subject to immigration restrictions are required to live without recourse to public funds. Lack of English is a further determinant of exclusion, disadvantaging migrants in the labour market and in accessing health and other services. Migrants' lack of recognized qualifications can also cause difficulties in obtaining employment. Lack of documentation clarifying entitlement similarly leads to denial services – including access to child benefit, housing benefit and NHS treatment.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

To conclude, the social and economic outcomes partly reflect the way in which present and past policies have operated and have been generally positive –both for many individual migrants and for the UK as a whole. Post-entry migration policy has a potentially powerful role in influencing migrants economic and social outcomes and their economic and social impacts on natives. Thus there appears considerable scope for more subtractive and coordinated post-entry policies designed to ensure that migration does indeed achieve the government's economic and social objectives. Implementation of meaningful and far-sighted policies would result in better welfare for the migrant population and faster and sustainable economic development for the economy as a whole. Let us hope that the future policies would be framed in the above manner.

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