

South Asian Student Migration to Nordic Countries: Changing Initial Motivations

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Introduction

The primary focus of this paper is to look into how the South Asian student migrants eventually changed their primary motivations. Migration motivations are notoriously difficult to explain by any theory primarily because of the fact that conditions of migration change as the global politics and economy keep changing. Apparently, income prospects, proximity, and networks work as primary drivers of migration from the global south to the global north. Motivations, however, for south-south migration include seasonal patterns and flight from ecological factors or civil conflict (Ratha and Shaw, 2007).

Migration has occupied an important area in the field of social science with the advent of globalization. The international movement and accumulation of capital, and production of knowledge play a prominent role in explaining regional growth (Bijwaard and Wang, 2013). Among the growing number of global migrants, the number of international students has increased most rapidly. With internationalization of educations, students began to seek educational opportunities beyond their countries of origin. Attracting foreign students has become a major policy issue in recent years to many countries (Bertoli et al., 2009; OECD, 2008) as a result many developed countries have modified their migration policies (Dustmann et al., 2009).

Mobility for the acquisition of skills is considered as a human capital investment, and understanding its motivating forces as well as the characteristics of those students who choose to enroll beyond their own country may help the growth potential of a given country. Students are considered future supplies for human resources, their mobility is as well seen as an indirect channel for the migration of labour. Of course, international students are potential skilled workers who will contribute to the human capital stock of the country where they choose to work.

In the face of fertility decline in Europe over the last few decades, migrant populations in part have contributed to keeping their population size steady. Today, foreign population constitutes a huge percentage of total population in Europe. The number of foreign population living in European countries in 2004 stood at around 25.2 million constituting some 4.5 percent of the aggregate population (Salt and Almeida, 2006). The size however stood 34.3 million by January 1, 2015. In 2014, 88.91 million people acquired citizenship of EU member state, corresponding to a 9 percent decrease with respect to 2013 (Eurostat, 2016).

As compared to other European countries in terms of size of migrants, Nordic countries are not known as significant destinations for migrant population. However, the Nordic countries – Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark – have long been playing important roles in international migration (Honoré, 2003; Ullah, 2014).

The number of foreign tertiary students in OECD countries in 2009 was 3.7 million (OECD, 2011). The proportion of foreign students among all tertiary students in OECD countries has grown 7 percent annually from 2000 to 2009. In 2009 the 21 European OECD members had 2.6 foreign students for each European citizen enrolled abroad (OECD, 2011). More than 25 percent of the foreign students that enter the Netherlands remain in the country. The majority, more than 80 percent, of the changes in the socio-economic status of students in the Netherlands are work related (OECD, 2011).

The share of foreign population has been increasing in the Nordic Countries since the last three decades. As we take a look at the international migration in Nordic countries, on average 25 percent of all international migration in Norden occurs within the Nordic countries. On the international level, total migration flows are the highest to and from Denmark and Sweden, but compared to other international migration flows, people in Sweden move mostly to and from other Nordic Countries (Klaus, Rasmus and Roto, 2011). In Nordic countries, the stock of the foreign-born population as a percentage of the total population grew from two percent in 1970 to seven percent in 2002 (Cooper, 2005).

Table 1
South Asians Living Outside of Their Country of Birth by Year

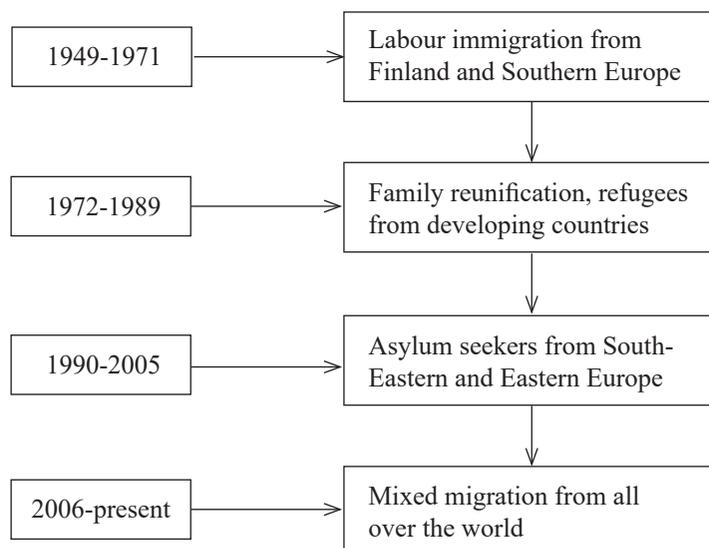
Countries	1990	2000	2010	2015
Afghanistan	6,720,000	4,540,000	5,000,000	4,840,000
Bangladesh	5,450,000	5,430,000	6,750,000	7,210,000
India	6,720,000	7,950,000	13,290,000	15,580,000
Pakistan	3,340,000	3,390,000	5,020,000	5,940,000
Nepal	750,000	970,000	1,380,000	1,630,000
Maldives	<10,000	<10,000	<10,000	<10,000

Source: Pew Research Center (PRC), 2016.

In the 1950s and 1960s, most immigrants in Sweden were from neighboring Nordic countries, with the largest numbers coming from Finland. Since the early 1970s, immigration has consisted mainly of refugee migration and family reunification from non-European countries (Westin, 2006; Chantavanich Ullah and Min-ma, 2015; Ullah, 2015b). Of course, most irregular flows may be assumed to escape the statistical record (Salt, Singleton and Hogarth, 1994; Baldassarini, 2001; Poulain, 1998; Piguet and Losa, 2002; Salt and Almeida, 2006; Ullah, 2010, 2013). In Nordic region, Norway has experienced the largest wave of immigration followed by Sweden and Denmark. Finland still has a relatively small immigrant population, but inflows have been steadily rising since the early 2000s.

Migration flows reversed briefly during the global financial crisis, but have since picked up again (Ho and Shirono, 2015). Nearly 850,000 Norwegians emigrated to foreign countries during 1825-1945, putting Norway second only to Ireland in terms of emigrants as a percentage of the population and immigration to Norway, which today has a population of 4.6 million, has increased gradually since the late 1960s (Cooper, 2005).

South Asians students in Nordic countries: Migration has taken place in European countries specially in the Nordic countries in four phases (Figure 1). Though migration has never stopped from Asia. Migration to Nordic countries from Asian countries has never been very prominent. Nordic countries are not generally popular destinations for South Asians and specially student migrants to pursue higher study. However, some students from Asian countries particularly from South Asia (i.e., Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Pakistan) moved over for that purpose. During the 1980s, universities in these countries were not particularly strict to the requirements of IELTS or TOEFL scores as admission prerequisites. As a result, some potential students from South Asia preferred Universities in Europe to North American countries. Tuition waiver policy in Universities played an important role as well.



Source: Westin, 2006

Figure 1. Four Stages of Migration

The major student flows were categorized into two streams: one stream used to choose then USSR and the remainder to Europe and Nordic countries. While no data is available, quite a good number of students from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal were noted to have resided in those countries as students in the 1980s and 1990s. In order for students to obtain scholarships in the USSR, political links (especially, those were in support of socialist system) were an important factor. Thus other groups were to go to Europe and Nordic countries.

All the subjects of the study married to Nordic women and at some point of time they got separated or divorced and remarried to brides of the choice of their parents in their countries of origin. On varied occasions (mostly to pursue study), they moved to those countries (Behtoui 2010; Horst, Carling and Ezzati, 2010). The fact is that this has by far not been explored with academic rigor in past endeavors as a result very little is known about this perspective. This research therefore is going to fill in an important gap in the scholarship.

Objectives and Methodology

The primary focus of this paper is to look into how the South Asian student migrants changed their motivation over time. The study intends to add to the theoretical perspective of human motivational determinants to the context of South Asian student mobility on the international level. The paper delves into the issues of student mobility from the standpoint of a sending country which has been scarcely discussed on the international agenda. The intent of this paper is to better understand the research problem by analyzing empirical data and underlying theoretical explanations (Creswell, 2003: 101). At the same time, the conditions of motivation change of migration over time has been explored using in-depth interviews with the student migrants.

The study is based on primary information collected through a survey of 23 respondents (8 from Finland, 7 from Sweden, 8 from Norway) who moved to the Nordic countries initially to pursue their studies (Table 2). We selected only those who came to these countries as students and ended up obtaining roots. All the respondents moved to Nordic countries to pursue higher education and at some point of time, their intention changed. We interviewed six left-behind wives. They were interviewed between 2014 and 2016 by using a checklist. In selecting the participants, we resorted to snow-balling technique due to the fact that it was difficult to apply random sampling because no sample frame was available.

Table 2
Sample Distribution

Countries of destinations	f	%
Finland	8	35
Sweden	7	30
Norway	8	35
Total	23	100

Source: Field data, 2012

Student Migration in Perspective

For the last four decades, globalization of higher education, through student migration, has grown considerably (Beine et al., 2013). The number of students studying abroad has been steadily rising since the 1970s. Today, international students are the ones who have experienced the most rapid increase in relative terms (Beine et al., 2013). Developed countries attract foreign students for a number of reasons. Primarily, foreign students are one of the sources of income for universities (COU, 2014). By attracting foreign students, for instance from populous countries, they relax the demographic binding constraints related to the domestic market. Secondly, colonial powers have always favoured the students from former colonies as part of the foreign aid. Higher education provided to foreign students is one important channel allowing host countries to diffuse cultural, economic and political norms abroad (Spilimbergo, 2009; Beine et al., 2013).

In recent years, attempts are made to provide empirical ground to understand international student mobility (ISM). Most theories explaining student migration have been formulated by British scholars, therefore, the focus of their researches generally remained on the United Kingdom. There are extremely limited research that examines the empirical validity of theories beyond the UK that may lead to a more robust understanding of ISM. There are some major recent theoretical advances that explain ISM: supply and demand-side theories explaining student mobility as a complex interplay between the financial interests of higher education institutions and the motivations and actions of international students and their families (Findlay, 2010); class reproduction approaches arguing that student mobility should be understood as part of a broader process of transnational class reproduction (Findlay, 2010; Findlay et al., 2012); global knowledge theory contends that international students are not simply as individuals moving between physical locations, but as key agents in transforming and constituting new global spaces of academic knowledge (Raghura, 2013; King and Raghura, 2013; Magde et al., 2014); and international students be understood as a new migratory elite (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002). The two models to explain the ISM to developed countries proposed by Rosenzweig (2006) contend that student migration takes place because of a lack of educational facilities in the home country regardless of the level of education returns which is termed as school-constrained model. The other model proposed by Rosenzweig (2006) holds that student migration is used as a means to enter and stay in a foreign country to escape low returns in education in the origin country.

Along with labour migration, student migration has been a significant contributor to the global population mobility. Students migration has been considered from origin perspective as brain drain, and brain gain from destination perspective. Today, however, students are seen as agents of brain circulation. Therefore, many countries today offer scholarships for attracting international students. In the current era of knowledge-based economies, skilled labour is critical to stay competitive. While worldwide, the pool of skilled labour is shrinking, ISM has been instrumental in beefing up the pool of skilled labour. In 2000, 1.6 million students studied outside of their country at the tertiary level. By 2012, this number had grown to 4.5 million (OECD, 2012). And only in 2010, the OECD countries received between 2 to 2.5 million international students from around the world (OECD, 2012). Only in 2015, 523,700 Chinese students went abroad to study (The Chinese Ministry of Education, 2016). In 2005, non-European students made up more than 36 percent of the total number of international students pursuing full-degrees in Denmark. A sustained increase in international enrolments since 2000 in Nordic region is pushing the region towards 100,000 international students (OECD, 2009).

Student Migration and Factual Construction

Student migration is an important phenomenon for sending countries as well. Their emigration is explicitly for the purpose of acquiring skills and human capital, thus it is related to the brain drain and brain gain phenomenon (Docquier and Rapoport, 2011; Beine et al., 2008). The literature investigating students' intention to study abroad and their intention to return demonstrates subjective outcome, i.e., who the students are and where do they come from and which country they end up in. Pakistani students abroad, for instance, 14 percent intended to return to Pakistan immediately after graduation, 10 percent never intended to return and 37 percent intended to

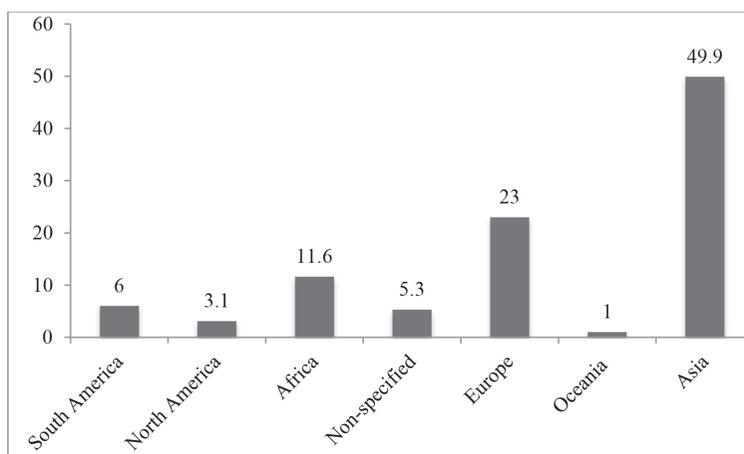
Table 3
Rates of Foreign Doctorate Recipients in the US Who Stayed Put

Origin	Foreign doctorate recipients in 1994/1995	Estimated stay rates in 1999	% of non-US Doctorate recipients intending to stay in US (average 1999-2001)
Taiwan, China	2,268	42.4	57.3
India	1,995	87.5	88.2
South Korea	1,943	15.1	59.0
China	1,649	91.1	90.8
Brazil	255	21.1	36.0
Mexico	223	30.8	39.8
Chile	57	26.1	54.5
Turkey	252	43.7	55.3
Indonesia	119	16.4	–
Italy	106	37.1	62.0
Greece	276	49.1	70.0
Spain	87	34.0	62.0
Canada	430	55.1	64.2
Argentina	67	44.7	62.5
Colombia	66	28.5	57.5
Total, all countries	14,189	53.5	69.1
Total, all countries excluding China and India	10,545	39.0	60.0

Source: Spilimbergo, 2009.

stay abroad temporarily (Imran et al., 2011). For the decision to stay in Pakistan to further their training, only family ties in Pakistan demonstrated significant effect.

The share of foreign students in total enrollment in OECD receiving countries is also of interest. More than 3.3 million students migrated to another country to study in 2008 and out of which 2.7 million migrated to OECD countries (OECD, 2010). This number has multiplied by 4 between 1975 and 2008 (OECD, 2009). This growth accelerated, between 2000 and 2008, with a rise of 70 percent. In 2008, Asian students constituted the largest group, accounting for nearly half of the total (49.9 percent) followed by the Europeans with 23 percent and by students from Africa (11.6 percent) (OECD, 2010).

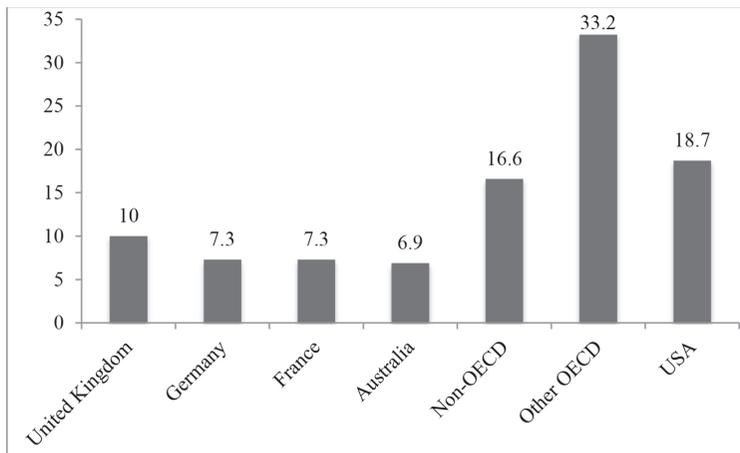


Source: OECD, 2010

Figure 2. Distribution of Foreign Students by Geographic Region of Origin, 2008

According to OECD (2010 and 2011), since 2005, students moving to non-OECD countries have been on further increase compared to those going to an OECD country (20.8 percent of total flows in 2008 against 16.8 percent in 2005). There is a high concentration of foreign students in terms of destinations on only five countries – United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Australia – (50 percent) (Figure 3). More than 83.4 percent of the total of foreign students enrolled worldwide are concentrated in OECD countries.

Although the United States was the first destination for 595,900 international students, the share of these students in total enrolment (3.4 percent) is twice below the OECD average (7.1 percent) in 2007. New Zealand and Switzerland received fewer international students (about 30,000) in absolute terms but quite a lot in relative terms, i.e., respectively 13.6 percent and 14 percent (OECD, 2010).



Source: OECD, 2010

Figure 3. Distribution of Foreign Students by Geographic Region of Destination, 2008

Naturalizing the “Unnatural”

Why do some students at some point of time change their primary motivations of completing studies and going back home? Why do people prefer some citizenships over another? Does citizenship determine their level of entitlement? Yes. Citizenship is something that determines the status of a citizen in a global order. In immigration posts, treatment by immigration officers depends on which countries’ passport one holds. A passport determines if the holder can travel visa free and hassle free or not. What does obtaining a passport from a developed country mean? Why are people from least developed countries chasing after this? The power of a passport is determined by the number of countries that can be visited without a visa. In a 2015 ranking, the most powerful passports in the world were from the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Finland. The second most powerful passports in the world were from the USA, Germany, Denmark and Luxembourg and the third most powerful passports in the world were from Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands (*Independent*, 2015). In 2017, Singapore passport was rated as the most powerful one. There are many reasons why people choose to marry to foreign nationals in general, and especially some particular nationalities (Ullah, 2013, 2016; KNSO, 2005).

Obtaining citizenship of a Nordic country remains a dream for many South Asians. Many in fact deliberately move to those countries as they know that gaining root there might be possible. Three countries are known widely as peaceful ones, which work as very strong pull factor for them. Gaining a passport is of course not an easy path. Regulations regarding legality, years of physical presence, etc., are important criteria. By the time, they come to know through some precedence that marrying to a local woman can lead them to acquire citizenship more easily and faster too.

One of the most influential conceptualizations of citizenship is Linda Bosniak’s (2000) theorization of its four dimensions: legal status, rights, political activity and identity/solidarity. Humanity is dependent upon membership in a community which is just one of many interpretations of belonging relevant to debates on the highly contested notion of citizenship. Although citizenship is a contested term, it describes the relationship between the citizen. The state and the

need for citizens to understand the political and economic processes, institutions, laws, rights and responsibilities of democratic system; increasingly, it describes relationships between citizens, communities (global to local) and our multiple identities (Irvin and Stansbury, 2004; Bridget and Anderson, 2011:4; Bosniak, 2000; Bloemraad et al., 2008).

How marrying to a local women help acquiring citizenship faster? If a spouse is a Finnish citizen who resides in Finland or will move to Finland, may apply for a residence permit on the basis of family ties. If one is married to a Finnish citizen, then requirement for residence is less than usual. In Norway, if one has lived in Norway for four years with residence permits that were valid for at least one year each, and has been married to and lived with a Norwegian citizen for three of these years, the residence period and marriage period will total seven years. This means he fulfils the residence requirement. However, the marriage must not have been entered into solely for the purpose of obtaining a residence permit for anyone.

The position of Nordic countries regarding modes of acquisition and loss of citizenship do not follow the patterns of other European countries (Bernitz, 2012; Fagerlund and Brander, 2013). However, the conditions for the acquisition of citizenship have become stricter in the last ten years. In Denmark only *jus sanguinis* principle is recognized at birth and only if the father is a Danish citizen (Ersbøll, 2010). Swedish Nationality Law requires 5 years of residency in Sweden in order to naturalize as a Swedish citizen. There is no concession made for those who are married to a Swedish citizen. So, one will only get a Swedish passport after living approximately six years in Sweden. In Norway, citizenship law welcomes naturalization of immigrants, an average of 67 percent of immigrants obtain Norwegian citizenship, and the majority of them are from Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. In the past 10 years almost 90 percent of second-generation immigrants obtained Norwegian citizenship by naturalization (Horst, Carling and Ezzati, 2010).

Since citizenship is based on the *jus sanguinis* principle, children born in Sweden to non-Swedish parents are not automatically entitled to Swedish citizenship. However, immigrants and their children are encouraged to naturalize and the requirements are not restrictive. Requirements for naturalization are five years of permanent residence in Sweden; refugees need four years while Nordic citizens need just two years. However, there are indications that the traditional *jus sanguinis* principle (the conferral of citizenship to persons with a citizen parent or parents, or blood) may be complemented with the *jus soli* principle (the conferral of citizenship to persons born in the state's territory, or soil) so that children born in the country will have the option of Swedish citizenship (Salt and Almeida, 2006).

Changing Migration Intention and Outcome

Here we focus on how the initial migration motives of South Asian students in Nordic countries changed over time and how, after they married to Nordic women, obtained roots. So far there is no evidence that Nordic countries have debated about marriage as a mode of acquiring citizenship. Sweden, Finland and Norway are particularly flexible in the procedure of acquiring citizenship through naturalization or notification. Finland pays particular attention to this issue in order to avoid any type of behavior that leads to fraud (Brochmann, 2010; Brochmann and Hagelund, 2011).

The fact of the matter is that the perception is that degrees from Nordic countries are not as valuable as those from North American countries in the Asian job market plays a role in demoralizing them. As they come to realize that fact, they attempt to overcome their "perceived loss." At some point of time, they realize that gaining citizenship could be one way to get roots which will in the long run compensate their perceived losses. About 25 percent of them after completing their masters degree started pursuing Ph.D. education. A small portion of the Ph.D.

graduates landed in post-doctoral research fellowship positions while some managed to get jobs and some immediately returned to their countries of origin. Others remained for an extended period of time while many also desired to obtain root in those countries. This led them to strategize ways to remain in those countries.

International marriages are one aspect that is on the rise because of advent of globalization. The broadening of marriage fields, liberalization and opening of countries are important in this regard. As a result people are becoming more adventurous, and interested in other cultures than ever before. The percentage of cross-border relations and international marriages are constantly rising (Ullah, 2013, 2014; Wojtenko, 2012). For example, international marriages in Japan accounted less than one percent in 1980, in South Korea 3.5 percent in 2000, in Spain and Italy 5 percent in 1995. Later in 2009 they recorded 5 percent in Japan, 10 percent in Korea, 14 percent in Italy and 22 percent in Spain (2011) (Wojtenko, 2012). Transnational brides are just one segment of the 100 million female migrants of today. Most of what is known about the economic factors fueling bride migration is in accordance with findings on female labour migration (Momsen, 1999). Sinke's study of migrant German women reveals parallels and connections of the contemporary international marriage market with the international male labour market of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As the labour market serves to advance capitalism, the marriage market promotes certain social, political and economic aspects of patriarchy (Sinke, 1992). There are various reasons why people choose to marry foreign nationals in general, and certain nationals in particular. Factors that contribute to this phenomenon of increasing international marriages within East and Southeast Asia vary (Ullah, 2013, 2015, 2015a).

Most Nordic countries had no official policy of incorporating migrants into mainstream society during the 1950s and 1960s. It was taken for granted that migrants from other European countries, who were considered culturally similar, would assimilate. However, in 1975, Swedish Parliament endorsed an integration policy based on the need to deal with labour migrants from southern Europe. By the time, this policy came into effect, labour immigration from non-Nordic countries had ceased and the majority of migrants were refugees from developing countries. Consequently, integration programs faced difficult organizational problems, such as recruiting qualified language teachers (Westin, 2006).

A question resonates throughout the aforesaid sections: why do they change their primary motivations and engage in a relationship? Apparently, this case might sound like it is a marriage migration. It is, in fact, a shift from student migration to marriage migration. The migration for the purpose of marriage, forming a family, and assuming concomitant care responsibilities – in short, marriage migration – has been occupying significant space in the current migration debate. Along with mail order bride, marriage migration is becoming a prominent feature in the body of migration literature. Thousands of women every year pack up their belongings and travel hundreds of miles to marry a man they have never met. These women represent a growing migration trend transforming the social and cultural fabric of many societies in Asia (Ullah, 2014).

The past decade have witnessed a rapid increase in the intra-Asia flow of cross-border marriage migration which share characteristics of (a) gender imbalance, in that the majority are between men of wealthier countries marrying women from less developed countries; and (b) mediated marriages, in that the majority of the couples are introduced, either by marriage brokers or via social networks, with a prior intention of marriage and involving either no or a comparatively short period of courtship (Yang and Lu, 2010). Today, however, marriage migration has been subject to scholarly inquiry from a number of perspectives, “ranging from cross-racial/inter-religious dynamics in the context of immigration and settlement migration, to the migration of spouses as part of family unification, with women studied in the role of ‘trailing wives,’ to marriage migration’s link to labour migration, to the feminization of migration in general and the

predominance of temporary legal migration in Asia in particular” (Chung, Kim and Piper, 2016: 465). Some students from developing countries in general after their graduation try to stay back in the country of destination should their policy allow (except some scholarships require students to go back to their country of origin after graduation). Only PR China has a record number of returnees (about 90 percent).

Bhargava and Tripathi (1989) well argued how South Asians adopt to all Western styles when they are abroad such as they drink in bars, date Western women, etc. However, except for one thing: they want a wife – a woman in a salwar kameez and bangles, who will massage their feet, wake them in the morning with a cup of tea. She should be fair but not white. Beautiful but not sexy; outgoing but home loving; professional but pure. They depend on their parents at home to find wives for them (Bhargava and Tripathi, 1989). The extraordinary picture Bhargava and Tripathi (1989) painted about the dream of South Asian men endorse the fact that these South Asian students deliberately engage in a relationship with local women in order to obtain roots.

Over the years, stories has flown back to many South Asian countries from unhappy spouses who found that the seemingly perfect partner was already married, had a mistress, lied about his job, and often, indulged in physical abuse (Bhargava and Tripathi, 1989). Today however, it seems that cross-country matrimony is deceptive. Parents are getting suspicious that the prospective groom may have a wife abroad to be discovered at some point of time. The upper middle class is becoming wary of these matches but for the lower middle class, ambition still overcomes their common sense. According to many South Asians, foreign girls are not quite in tune with their concept of a spouse. They want a girl who will work and also give them home-cooked food, not from McDonalds. Therefore, foreign wives are no more of any use.

Interestingly, most of them did not get divorced before they entered into a new marriage. Their first marriage in foreign countries are in general kept secret. A few of them came out of the country and lived for a couple of years before ending ties with their wives and went back to those countries with their new wives and children. Some of the respondents were waiting to get divorced by their wives’ side in Nordic countries. They mentioned that divorce request that comes from the other side is easier to settle than it is from themselves.

For most of the cases, after 2-3 years of their married life, family relations began to deteriorate and took a new direction. Many (34 percent) left the country without giving any notice to their wives and children. About 14 percent were candor about the fact that their parents back home cannot accept foreign wives. About 8 percent left for other countries under the pretext that they were offered a job elsewhere. They could not bring along their families initially. Family can follow them at a later stage. This, however, never happened.

Marriage – according to some respondents – brought them citizenship faster. A few of them had children (Table 4). These children became kind of orphan and the burden (emotional and financial) on the single mothers have become a concern for the policy makers. About 45 percent of the respondents had children. Some left behind wives said that they trusted them and as a result married to them. They had to compromise cultural and religious differences. It was to them a kind of risk getting into wedlock with someone they did not know very well. But they said the grooms pretended that they loved them so much. However, many of these left behind wives complained that they were used as a vehicle to obtain a faster and easier citizenship. The implication is far reaching. Their children as well came to know this. Today, family and friends perceive international couples stereotypically and negatively. Such incidences left wives and children to feel a lack of support and understanding, as well as pressure, both at home and abroad, which challenges them and their happiness. These marriages have become stigmatized and negatively stereotyped.

Children in Nordic countries against six different dimensions: material well-being, health and safety, education, peer and family relationships, behaviours and risks, and young people’s own

subjective sense of well-being are in one of the best positions in the world (Unicef, 2007). These countries are caring states (Leira, 2006). Family policy constitutes an important component of the welfare state policies. These countries are known for their extensive support for families with children. Excellent social services and cash benefits are developed according to the principle of universalism today so often associated with the Nordic welfare model (Anttonen et al., 2013). However, according to the respondents, the psychological burden that the wives and the children carry could not be compensated by anything.

Table 4
Profile of Left Behind Children

Age group	f	% (of n=11)
>5	3	27.2
5-10	2	18.2
10-15	4	36.4
15-20	2	18.2
Total	11	100.00

Source: Field data 2014-16

Conclusions

ISM has become one of the largest migration channels after labour migration, family reunification and refugee mobility. Young people choose to study abroad in higher education institutions, either for a short-term period or for their whole academic career. There is no harm to look for partner in the expanding partner markets globally. Some countries of course encourage foreigners/migrants to settle in. This study, however, meant to seek an answer why South Asian students leaving their primary intention to study aside, they engage in a relationship. At some point of time, they leave their family in Nordic countries and go back to their on country to marry a girl of the choice of their parents.

Nordic countries need engineers, IT specialists, and very few other types of professionals. Other professionals than those need a fluent knowledge of the language, which obviously, most people do not have. Hence the best option is to enter as a student to search for master programmes. Rigid citizenship policies often induce potential incumbents to formally marry people in the receiving countries to more easily obtain citizenship.

Given the fact that these countries are small in terms of land and population size, they are particularly concerned about the flow of migrants and refugees in the recent years (Doyle and Johnson, 2016). Mainstream parties in the Nordic countries are now proposing measures against immigration that were only the ground of the far right a few years ago. The concerns are related to security, high fiscal cost of newcomers and the sense that civic trust that underpins a culture of high taxes is being eroded. Norway, Sweden and Denmark share a long tradition of cooperation with regard to citizenship acquisition. Ever since the countries adopted their first nationality legislations in the late 19th century, they sought to achieve parity in their legislative regulations (Nordhaug, 2000). As late as 1945, there was an explicit desire to establish the region as a common citizenship unit, with identical rules and free movement across the borders for citizens.

The study however shows that most of the students who moved to Nordic countries to pursue their higher studies ended up marrying local women. Many of them had children. These students became citizens of those countries and eventually, they left their families behind. Leaving behind children and wives are seen as a negligence of responsibility in Nordic countries. This may have implications on the new and potential South Asians migrants willing to settle down or pursue studies in Nordic countries.

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