

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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**The Engagement of Highly Skilled Migrants in Knowledge
Transfer to their Home Country: The Case of Palestine**

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

Supervisor:

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Budapest, August 2020

DECLARATION

Hereby I certify that the Ph.D. thesis entitled “Engagement of highly skilled migrants in transferring knowledge to their home country” a Case Study of Palestine is solely my own work. It contains no material that has been previously written or /and published by any other academic degree or diploma. Any previously published materials that have been used in this thesis are for bibliographical reference.

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary governments have begun to pay more attention to the role of their highly skilled migrants in development and knowledge transfer. Circular migration is a key pathway used by the skilled diaspora to provide multiple benefits to their home countries, and it can convert migration's effects from loss to gain. The transfer of knowledge back home is very valuable, regardless of the country of origin, but, in the case of Palestine, it becomes even more important. As a country under occupation which is in the process of building its state institutions, Palestine needs to benefit from all Palestinian experiences, including those from the diaspora.

This thesis aims to determine the underexplored role of the skilled Palestinian diaspora in transferring knowledge to their home country. It also explores the factors that affect their engagement in the development process back home. The process through which diasporic Palestinians engage in transferring knowledge to their home country has several characteristics that distinguish it from similar processes found in other contexts. A number of challenges and obstacles restrict the ability of Palestinian institutions to benefit considerably from the expertise of the Palestinian diaspora. This thesis adopts a transnationalist perspective to address and interpret the flow of people, knowledge, and skills between host and home countries.

The methodology of this dissertation is based on the descriptive-analytic approach. The researcher used empirical methods to collect and analyse data, employing questionnaires, interviews, and an extensive literature review, which was conducted via a mixed-method approach. The results of the questionnaire were processed and analysed using the SPSS statistical package.

Although creating or enforcing relationships between Palestine and its skilled diasporas has been an on-going challenge, the results of this dissertation reveal that it is viable to consider the transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants as a Palestinian development strategy. The engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in development and knowledge transfer is shown to be influenced by multiple factors, some of which reflect patterns found in other countries and societies. However, not all of the push and pull factors common elsewhere can be identified in the case of Palestine. This research study's results show that the most influential factors in Palestinian decisions to engage in transferring knowledge are acquisition of citizenship, the gaining of new skills, knowledge transfer programs, family

interest, and patriotic sentiment. Meanwhile, occupation measures and restrictions remain the main challenges that restrict the mobility of people and undermine the possibility of Palestine benefitting from its skilled diaspora.

This thesis also traces and examines the effects of the knowledge transferred by highly skilled Palestinian migrants on Palestinian institutions, human capital, and immigrants. It reveals differences in the degree of usefulness between these three components, showing that knowledge transfer has had its greatest effect on human capital and the least impact on institutions. The usefulness of knowledge transfer is found in this study to be at their greatest at the individual level rather than at the collective level.

This thesis offers a set of recommendations for consideration by policy-makers in Palestine, based on the views of the interviewees, the survey output, and secondary data. The recommendations address and offer strategies to overcome the weaknesses demonstrated by the results of this thesis. A model for the effective engagement of Palestine's skilled diaspora in knowledge transfer is also proposed, and this proposed framework should enable the institutionalization of the process of engaging the skilled Palestinian diaspora in development and the transfer of knowledge to the homeland.

Absztrakt

A különböző országok kormányai egyre nagyobb figyelmet fordítanak a magasan képzett bevándorlókra, ugyanis azok rendkívül fontos szerepet töltenek be a gazdaság fejlődésében és a tudás átadásában (*knowledge transfer*). A körkörös migráció (*circular migration*) a magasabb képzett munkavállalók esetében is jelentkezhet, és számos előnnyel jár a származási ország számára, így a migráció ilyen olvasatban nem lesz ismét veszteség. A megszerzett tudás átadása a származási országtól függetlenül rendkívül lényeges kérdés, azonban ez Palesztina esetében talán még fontosabb. Jól ismert tény ugyanis, hogy különleges helyzetben lévő országról van szó, amely az állami intézmények építésének fázisában tart. Ez pedig egyértelműen szükségessé teszi a palesztinok által megszerzett szakértelem beépítését, és azokat is, akik diaszpórában élnek.

A disszertáció célja annak meghatározása, hogy a palesztin képzettséggel rendelkező diaszpóra/diaszpórák milyen szerepet tölt(ene)k be a tudásuk otthonra történő átadásában, és hogy milyen tényezők befolyásolják az otthoni fejlesztési folyamatban való részvételüket. A kutatás jelentősége abból fakad, hogy azon kevés disszertáció közé tartozik, amelyik ezt a kulcsfontosságú kérdéskört feszegeti. A palesztin diaszpóra bevonása a Palesztinában történő tudásátadásba meglehetősen sajátos, mivel számos kihívás és akadály korlátozza a palesztin intézmények képességét, hogy a diaszpórák szakértelméből profitáljanak. Ez a disszertáció pedig arra a transznacionalizmusra épül, amely egy olyan perspektíva, amely megcélozza és értelmezi az emberek, a tudás és a készségek áramlását a fogadó ország és a származási ország között.

A disszertáció módszertana leíró-elemző megközelítésen nyugszik, ugyanis az empirikus módszert az adatok gyűjtése és elemzése jelenti kérdőívek, interjúk és kiterjedt irodalmi áttekintés (vegyes módszer) felhasználásával. A kérdőív eredményei az SPSS statisztikai csomag felhasználásával kerültek feldolgozásra és kiértékelésre.

Bár Palesztina és a képzett diaszpórák közötti kapcsolatok kiépítése vagy érvényesítése folyamatos kihívás volt, az eredmények rámutattak arra, hogy a magasan képzett bevándorlók általi ismeretek átadása alkalmazható és életképes palesztin fejlesztési stratégiának tekinthető. Más országokhoz és társadalmakhoz hasonlóan a magas képzettségű palesztin migránsok fejlesztésbe és a tudás átadásába történő bevonását több tényező is befolyásolta. Palesztina esetében azonban nem minden tényező azonosítható. Az eredmények azt mutatták, hogy a

tudásátadás iránti elköteleződés döntését bizonyos tényezők jobban befolyásolták és motiválták, mint mások. A legbefolyásosabb tényezők a következők: az állampolgárság megszerzése, az új készségek megszerzése, a tudástranszfer programjai, a családi érdeklődés és az ország kapcsán megjelenő mentális asszociáció. Másrészt a foglalkozási intézkedések és korlátozások továbbra is a fő kihívásnak tekinthetők, amelyek korlátozzák az emberek mobilitását és megnehezítik a palesztin képzett diaszpórák előnyeinek kihasználását.

A disszertáció felvázolta és megvizsgálta a magasan képzett palesztin bevándorlók által átadott tudás hatásait és azt, hogy ezek milyen mértékben érintik a palesztin intézményeket, a humántőkét és a bevándorlókat. A megállapítások valójában azt mutatták, hogy e három szint között nincs különbség a hatások mértékében. Többek között a humán tőkére gyakorolt hatás volt a legnagyobb, míg az intézményekre gyakorolt a legkisebb. Ezért az egyéni szinten történő megvalósíthatóság hasznosabbnak és könnyebben kivitelezhetőnek bizonyult a kollektív szinten történővel szemben.

A kutatás eredményei alapján olyan ajánlások kerültek megfogalmazásra, melyeket érdemes lehet a palesztin politikai döntéshozóknak is megfontolni. Ezen ajánlások többsége az interjúalanyok véleményén és megállapításain alapul. Ezen kívül egy olyan modell is kidolgozásra került, amely alkalmas lehet a képzett diaszpóra hatékony bevonására és a tudásuk átadására. Ezen ajánlások fő célja az ezzel kapcsolatos gyengeségek kiküszöbölése és leküzdése, valamint a palesztin képzettséggel rendelkező diaszpóráknak a fejlesztésbe és a palesztin intézményépítésbe történő bevonása.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the people of:

My home country...

The country of olive and fig...

The holy and blessed land...

Palestine...

To the souls of my parents who worked very hard to raise me and helped me to be who I am now.

To my lovely wife and kids for their never-ending patience while I was away from them studying and also giving the serene atmosphere to enable concentrate to write my thesis. For this I say Thank you.

To all the men and women who sacrifice to rewrite the history according to their tune.

To every expatriate who wishes of returning to his/her usurped homeland.

To all my brothers, sisters and all relations for their valuable prayers for me while doing the programme.

To all my professors who taught me during my life time as their student.

So to all these people,

I dedicate this dissertation.

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Glossary of Terms & Abbreviations

ARIJ	The Applied Research Institute- Jerusalem
C.V	Curriculum Vitae
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
EU	European Union
GCI	Global Competitiveness Index
GDP	Gross domestic product
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
GMG	Global Migration Group
ICMPD	The International Center for Migration Policy Development
IMET	International Medical Education Trust
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information Technology
MENA	The Middle East and North Africa
MPC	Migration Policy Center
NAAMA	National Arab American Medical Association
MPI	Migration Policy Institute
NGO's	Non-Governmental Organizations
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PALTEL	Palestinian Telecommunication Company
PALESTA	Palestinian Scientists and Technologists Abroad
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PCMA	Palestine Capital Market Authority
PCPSR	Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research
PCRF	Palestine Children Relief funds
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PMA	Palestine Monetary Authority
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
RQA	Return of Qualified Afghans
TOKTEN	Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals Program
TRQN	Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals Program
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nation

UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UNRAW	The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UAE	United Arab Emirates
WHO	World Health organization

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Percentage of International Migrants in Selected Age Groups, by Development Group over a certain period (1990, 2000, 2010 and 2013)

Appendix B: Survey-Questionnaire

Appendix C: Interviews: Interview questions for highly skilled migrants

Appendix D: Interviews: Interview questions for Policy Makers

Appendix E: Consent Letter

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. TOPICALITY AND RELEVANCE OF THE ISSUE

The engagement of the emigrants and skilled Diaspora abroad in the national development of their home countries is considered one of the main concerns of contemporary governments, policymakers, and international organizations. Furthermore, the diaspora's engagement in developing their origin countries has become one of the hot topics for research. After many years of defining brain drain as a real challenge because of its implications on countries and development, “governments of migrant-sending countries have put renewed hopes on transnationally oriented migrants and ‘Diasporas’ as potential investors and actors of development” (Gamlen 2006 cited in De Haas, 2008: 1). Nevertheless, globalization and increased mobility in recent decades have opened new opportunities for skilled Diasporas to contribute to the development of their home country. “Most commonly recognized among these are the remittances they send back to their homelands.” (IOM & MPI, 2012: 13). Although “Skilled migrants tend to earn more than unskilled ones and can thus afford to send more remittances to their families back home“ (Niimi *et al.*, 2008: 3), a more optimistic view emerged in the late 1990s, which proposed that they can enhance development not just through economic remittances but through the knowledge and skills (Siar, 2012: 2) in addition to human rights, good governance, and capacity building” (Kuschminder, 2011: 6) that highly skilled migrants can transfer to their home countries.

To promote the outflow of knowledge and skills by highly skilled migrants to their home countries, a growing number of countries have established government bodies with the responsibility for the diaspora engagement and taking measures to facilitate this engagement (IOM, 2013:15). Meanwhile, several short-term programs have emerged that focused on the diaspora knowledge transfer, such as the Transfer of Knowledge through the Expatriate Nationals Program (TOKTEN) and the Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals Program (TRQN) (Kuschminder, 2011: 6). Utilizing the experiences and skills of highly skilled emigrants through the transfer of knowledge and experience is a key element in their contribution to the development of their home country. “Proponents of this approach argue that skilled diaspora facilitates adoption of foreign technologies in the home country,

therefore contributing to its economic growth” (Lodigiani, 2008: 44–45). Moreover, circular migration is an approach that provides countries with opportunities to benefit from experiences that cannot be brought about locally.

Promoting positive contributions of highly skilled migrants to ensure the transfer of knowledge and best practices have a positive impact on the human capital and economic development in the origin countries. From a development point of view, migration of highly skilled migrants or as it is described in popular discourse brain drain may not necessarily lead to knowledge and skill losses. However, converting brain drain into brain gain is possible through the engagement of skilled diaspora via knowledge transfer, and capacity building. Furthermore, “the diaspora knowledge network has led to the emergence of the brain gain skills circulation by converting the loss of human resources into remote although accessible asset of expanded networks” (Meyer & Wattiaux cited in Kuschminder, 2011: 12). Since the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer and development in their home country is a vital and hot topic, several models of Diaspora engagement were proposed. In general, skilled Diaspora channels back skills and knowledge to their home country through two main models; the first and foremost is through “the return of the expatriates to the country of origin (return option). The second option can be achieved through their remote mobilization and association to its development (diaspora option)”. (Meyer & Brown, 1999: 11).

Historically speaking, the Palestinian diaspora is distributed all over the world. Decades of violence and wars as a result of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict have led to the displacement and migration of millions of Palestinians. The long-term dispersion and restrictions imposed by the occupation have undermined the opportunities of the Palestinians abroad to return to their home country and to take part in developing it. Actually, the link between skilled migration and development is still weak in the case of Palestine. However, after the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), the Palestinian diaspora and the highly skilled migrants have had some contributions to the transfer of knowledge and capacity building in their home country. The peculiarity of the Palestinian case, as a country that is still under occupation hampers the possibility of a permanent return to the Palestinians abroad; the temporary return of the highly skilled migrants seems to be the possible and realistic approach that can be used to benefit from the skilled Palestinian diaspora’s experience and knowledge.

Given the increased topicality of temporary and circular migration all over the world, especially in those countries that suffer more of brain drain, and need to increase the contribution of highly skilled migrants to knowledge transfer, the necessity to study and measure this kind of contribution and its impact is substantial. This topic will be addressed through focusing on the case of Palestine, which is unique in terms of socio-economic factors. This research will explore the ways of engagement and the factors affecting the contribution of the Palestinian highly skilled migrants to knowledge transfer in their home country, additionally, it is going to shed more light on the impacts of this kind of contribution on the host institutions, the Palestinian human capital as well as the immigrants themselves.

1.2. THESIS OUTLINE

The thesis is structured as depicted in Figure 1.1. It consists of eight chapters. The introductory chapter sets out the addressed problem and the main questions of the thesis, the objectives, the importance and contribution of the research, the scope of the research describing the relevant literature and hypotheses related to circular and return migration and the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country. Last but not least, it describes the limits of the research.

The second chapter reviews the existing literature on the contribution of highly skilled migrants to knowledge transfer to their home countries. As a matter of fact, this chapter is divided into five main sections. Section 2.1 provides a chapter overview. Section 2.2 provides a theoretical background and reviews prior migration theories that address migration. Namely the neoclassical theory, the new economics theory of migration, the push-pull model, and the network theory. Likewise, this section reviews the literature on the return and circular migration theories mainly through the neoclassical approach, the structural approach, the transnationalism, and the social network theory. Additionally, Section 2.3 addresses migration, decolonization and international migration, skilled migration, and finally magnitude and drivers of skilled migration. However, section 2.4 deals with the return and circular migration including factors affecting the return migration, the impacts of return and circular migration on development in home countries. Moreover, this chapter briefly addresses the temporary return migration programs such as UNDP's Transfer of Knowledge through the Expatriate Nationals Program (TOKTEN). In a similar vein, section 2.5 presents a review of the literature on knowledge transfer. At the same time, this section presents some

examples of knowledge transfer and also reviews the barriers to knowledge transfer. Furthermore, a conceptual framework will be provided for the engagement of the skilled diaspora in development back home. The last section presents a conclusion and summary of the chapter.

Chapter three of this thesis explains the details about the research methodology, research design and strategy, the justification for the use of a mixed-method approach, and the method of data collection including questionnaires and interviews. It also illustrates the procedures followed to carry out these interviews. Additionally, this chapter discusses the sample of the research and how it was selected. Moreover, it discusses the reliability and validity of the study. It also summarizes the difficulties and limitations of the research.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to addressee migration and knowledge transfer in the Palestinian context. First, it traces the development of the Palestinian migrations over the years since the Ottoman era until the present date. Secondly, it discusses the main drivers of migrations for the Palestinians, and how they affect the mobility of people out of the country. Thirdly and foremost, it aims at reviewing the circular and return migration in the Palestinian context and their impacts on capacity building and development back home. One of the sections of this chapter is devoted to discussing knowledge transfer through circular migration programs such as TOKTEN.

Chapter five provides an exposition on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Furthermore, it examines the data analysis process related to the awareness of the importance of the skilled diaspora in the knowledge transfer back home. In this chapter, the researcher examines how the skilled Palestinian diaspora engages in transnational activities in order to contribute to the transfer of knowledge and to the development of the Palestinian institutions in Palestine. This chapter also highlights incentives provided by the Palestinian government and policy landscape. Finally, one of the purposes of this chapter is to examine the first research hypothesis (H1).

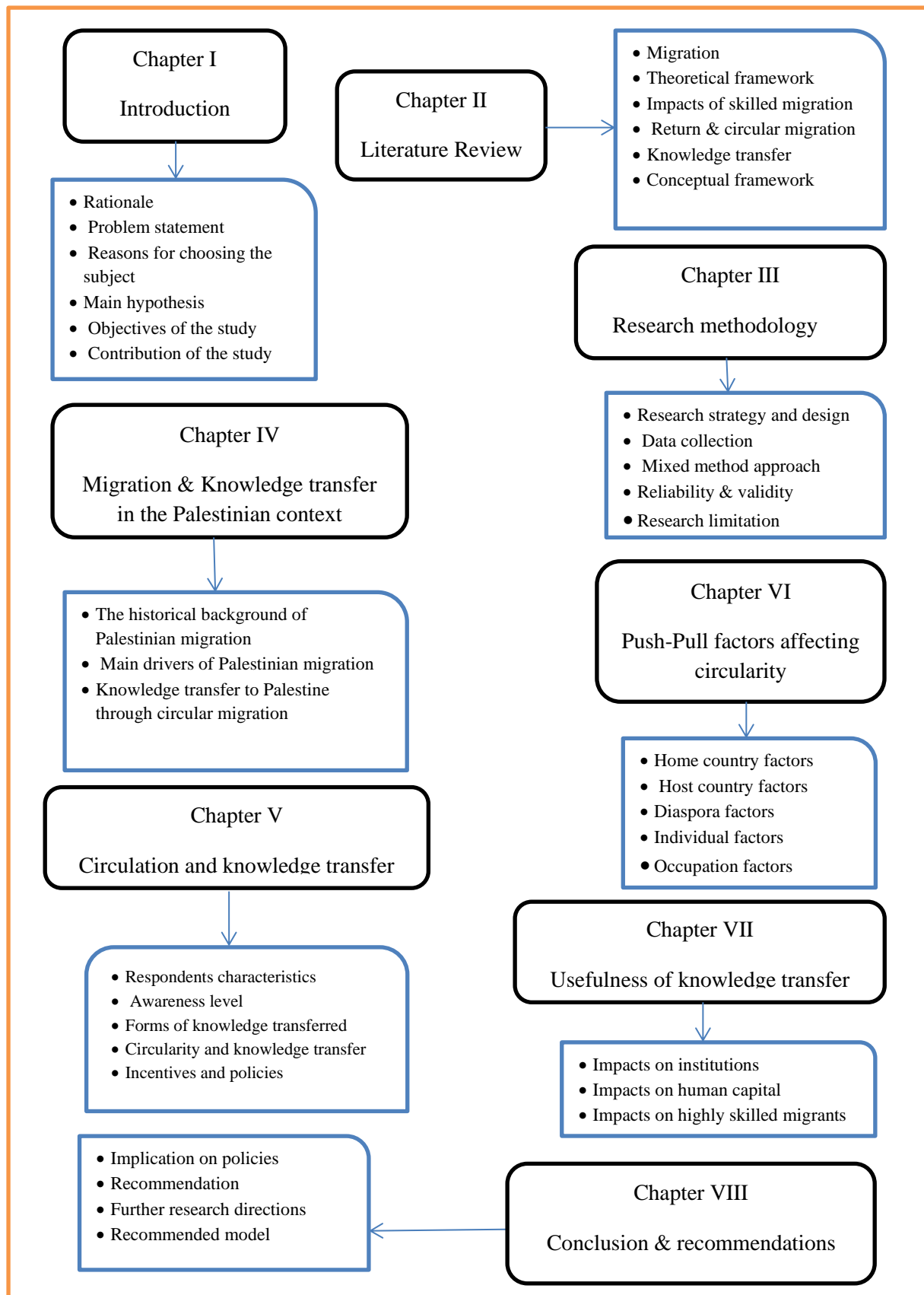
Chapter six of this thesis examines the push-pull factors affecting the circularity and knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants. These factors include the home country factors, the host country factors, the diaspora associations and networks, the individual motivation and family factors, the occupation factors, and other obstacles that restrict the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer back home. Moreover, this chapter examines the effect of each of these factors on the engagement of

highly skilled Palestinian migrants on knowledge transfer and development to their home country. Along the same lines, at the end of this chapter, the second research hypothesis is examined (H2).

Chapter seven is dedicated to the usefulness of knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants and its impact on the Palestinian institutions. In this chapter, the researcher examines how the transferred knowledge by the Palestinian skilled diaspora affects the Palestinian institutions, the Palestinian human capital, and the highly skilled migrants who engaged in circular activities. However, measuring the impacts on these three components is the main goal of this chapter in order to explore whether there is dissimilarity among them. Therefore, gathering evidence and data on how circular migration affects various institutional, academic, business, and social areas is extremely important in this chapter in order to identify the gaps and possible actions to develop the expatriation profile in Palestine. Furthermore, this chapter aims to examine the third research hypothesis (H3).

Chapter eight presents the conclusion and recommendations. This chapter builds on the previous four chapters. It concludes the whole thesis and provides a detailed explanation of the research findings, including the strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities, and threats. It also encompasses the comments on the literature review. However, it is important to mention that section 8.4 of this chapter is assigned to the policy implications and recommendations. Moreover, certain suggestions for future research directions is developed in this chapter. Interestingly, a recommended model on the effective engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country is another objective of this chapter. *Figure 1.1* illustrates the outline of the thesis.

Figure 1.1: Outline of the Thesis



Source: Author's own compilation based on the research methods.

1.3. REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE SUBJECT

Knowledge transfer through skilled diaspora is one of the hot topics at the present. In choosing to address this topic in this doctoral research, the researcher was driven by diverse motives. The following is a summary of the most important motives for choosing the subject:

- From an academic point of view: despite the fact that the topic of knowledge transfer through circular migration and the return of highly skilled migrants is one of the important parts of discussions among governments and international organizations, there is a shortage in the studies that discuss this topic. Actually, most of the studies focused on the financial return of migration remittances, with less attention to social and human capital contributions. The previous Palestinian and Arabic studies discussed why skilled and non-skilled people migrate and the magnitude of these migrations, with less attention to circular migration and its role in the transfer of knowledge and capacity building in their home countries. Even the few studies that addressed return migration, their focus was on quantity-based aspects rather than qualitative. For example, what knowledge do they bring with them when they return? What happens to this knowledge? What are the impacts of this knowledge? True enough; these questions were not addressed in any of the former studies. However, it is also important to mention that the results of this study will be beneficial for researchers in the field of migration and development, specifically the role of the skilled diaspora in developing their countries of origin. On the other hand, this study will contribute to considering the importance and role of circular migration in the institutional building by transferring knowledge and experience back home. Building a truthful relationship between the diaspora and their homeland and ensuring effective engagement in developing one's home is what this thesis is trying to convey. Finally, the results of this thesis will contribute to filling the above-mentioned gaps. Hopefully, these results will be useful for research in the field of migration and development, especially the transfer of knowledge back home through the skilled diaspora.
- From a practical point of view: The peculiarity of the Palestinian situation as a country under occupation, suffering from the absence of certain experiences and certain forms of best practices creates the need to attract highly-skilled Palestinians as they have the capabilities and skills to bridge these gaps. As so far, this study will present a theoretical perception of the different aspects that may affect the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer through circular and return migration. On the other hand,

this study will present to policymakers in Palestine important results regarding the most beneficial policies that must be followed towards the Palestinian communities abroad. Undoubtedly, building an effective and sustainable relationship with the diaspora will maximize the interests of all parties through the following three-dimensional formula: trust, engagement, impact.

- From a personal point of view: As a director of the Expatriates and Foreigners Affairs Department at the Ministry of Interior, the researcher has a personal interest and willingness to address this topic. Moreover, the researcher has associated himself with the Euromed migration III program from 2012 to 2015 and has worked as a Palestinian national focal point for this program. This is where he became aware of migration issues and the role of migrants in the development and capacity building of their home country. Actually, the idea for this thesis was born through his interaction with the activities of this program since 2012. As such, this research comes out as an attempt to shed light on the relation between one's home country (Palestine) and the Palestinian skilled diasporas, and to know more about the contribution of the highly skilled migrants to knowledge transfer to Palestine, and to what extent this contribution can be enhanced and promoted to tap into the benefits of this relationship.

1.4. PROBLEM FORMULATION

Skilled migration considers one of the main challenges not only in Palestine but also in some Arab countries as a significant part of highly skilled people leaving their countries. Noticeably, the seriousness of brain drain is manifested in two forms: the cost of education incurred by the home country to educate the migrant until the time of his/her emigration and the decrease of development in different fields. Actually, the brain drain induces short of manpower in key activities (Docquier, 2014: 5), and causes international inequality and thus losses for those left behind (Bhagwati & Hamada, 1974: 20). Undoubtedly, the impact varies among countries: it is the lowest in countries with the highest population density and the highest in the small developing countries. However, the continued emigration of the highly skilled people and low levels of permanent highly skilled return has contributed to moderate skill gaps not only in Palestine but also in most Arab countries. To fill the shortage in certain professions such as medicine and education, numerous institutions and employers have recruited some highly qualified Palestinian experts from abroad (Abdullah, 2018: 86). Likewise, there were some initiatives and efforts to engage highly skilled Palestinian

migrants in knowledge transfer and development through temporary return migration (circular migration). Unfortunately, with some exemptions, most of the contribution of the diaspora to knowledge transfer to their home countries came out as a result of diaspora and international organizations initiatives rather than by the Arab governments. Moreover, these endeavors have not continued or progressed. However, the diaspora's contribution to development and state building in Palestine remains very weak. No doubt that the difficulty of returning to Palestine, because of the Occupation, restricts the possibilities of skilled diaspora to contribute to knowledge transfer. This raises questions about their ability to contribute to state-building and development in their home country. Therefore, this thesis poses some challenges, especially regarding the difficulty of mobilizing and involving the skilled Palestinian diaspora to contribute to the development and institutional building at home to fill the gaps that emerged due to brain drain.

At an academic level, this topic did not receive adequate attention neither in the Palestinian theoretical studies nor experimental ones. This research aims to fill this gap by offering an empirical investigation of these components. Previous research on migration has focused on three primary topics: The demographic and social characteristics of the returnees (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009; Lubbad, 2007; Matareya *et al.*, 2008). Migration and its impact on the economic and social class formation (Hilal, 2007), and exposition of the achievements and shortcomings of some knowledge transfer programs (Hanafi, 2001). Hence, the former research studies did not address the topic of knowledge transfer except for one which did not discuss it in depth nor did it address all of its dimensions. It also did not consider the different factors affecting the contributions of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer, and measuring the usefulness of these contributions on the level of institutions, or human capital. This triggered the need for more studies to examine the unexplored dimensions of this topic.

Considering the gap this study reveals and the argument about the ability of the Palestinian institutions to achieve better engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country, the researcher can claim that this study meets some of the five ways stated by Creswell (2012) to assess whether one should study a problem or not. According to Creswell (2012: 62–63), a researcher can study the problem if “the study will fill a gap or void in the existing literature; the study replicates a past study but examines different participants and different research sites; the study extends past research or examines the topic

more thoroughly; the study gives voice to people silenced, not heard, or rejected in society; the study informs practice”.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To fill the above-mentioned gap and to prove the stated hypothesis, this research raising one core question which is:

To what extent is knowledge transfer by highly skilled Palestinian migrants through circular and return migration applicable and viable as a development strategy within the Palestinian peculiarity? Furthermore, to answer this core question the study examines the following sub-questions:

- To what extent are the Palestinian policymakers and highly skilled migrants aware of the importance of knowledge transfer by skilled diaspora as a strategy that may contribute to the development of Palestinian institutions?
- Are there any government policies to engage highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer and development in Palestine?
- What factors affect the decision of highly skilled migrants to transfer knowledge and the viability of circulation as a development strategy in Palestine?
- To what extent do Palestinian highly skilled migrants influence development, institutional building, and human capital in Palestine?
- How can knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants be improved and properly institutionalized at the Palestinian institutions?

1.6. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of this thesis is to review and obtain empirical evidence related to the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Hence the transfer of knowledge and best practices by highly skilled migrants to their home country is seen as a process of interaction between the source country and the host country, which is manifested in enhancing the performance of the recipient units. In point of fact, knowledge transfer can be calculated by measuring changes in knowledge or changes in performance (Argote & Ingram, 2000: 151). Therefore, this thesis aims to examine the impacts of the engagement of

highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer on the performance of the Palestinian institutions and human capital from the respondents' point of view. It also aims to achieve the following main goals:

- The research aims to collect information on the factors that influence the decisions of highly skilled migrants to engage in knowledge transfer back home.
- To explore the ways through which highly skilled migrants transferred knowledge to Palestine.
- To examine and assess if there are policies and incentive packages to encourage highly skilled Palestinian migrants to engage in knowledge transfer back home.
- To develop a current understanding of the feasibility of knowledge transferred by highly skilled migrants to their home country.
- To provide context to the rise of interest in diaspora engagement. Furthermore, this thesis aims to establish and develop a model that will allow sustainability and institutionalization of the engagement of highly skilled migrants in transferring knowledge to their homeland.
- Palestine is not only a country that has not benefitted much from circular migration and the setback flows of social remittances and expertise acquired abroad, but it also lacks a comprehensive understanding of the various hindrances and drivers that influence the transfer of skilled Diasporas accumulated knowledge to the home country. So this thesis sought to expand the knowledge-base on skilled diasporas and their role in the development and institutional building. Moreover, it aims to explore policies to leverage the potential of skilled diasporas.

1.7. MAIN HYPOTHESES

In essence, the dissertation strives to address the above research questions by applying three main hypotheses as follows:

Hypothesis #1 (H1): *Engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer is not an on-going and regular process; it occurs often individually or through international organizations without any shared national policy or vision.*

Hypothesis #2 (H2): *There are significant differences in the effect of the push and pull factors in the case of Palestine, and the motivation of the highly skilled Palestinian*

migrants to engage in the development and knowledge transfer processes of their home country is driven by specific factors.

Hypothesis #3 (H3): *The engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants through circular and return migration significantly improves the capacities of Palestinian institutions, mainly as regards their human capital.*

1.8. CONTRIBUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE

Palestinian migration has got international attention. This thesis is a step towards filling the gap in the literature with regards to this topic. Moreover, it offers a general perception of the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in the transfer of knowledge to their home country. According to Conway and Potter (2009: 15) “any additional study on return migration provides usefulness and should serve as a benchmark for others to draw upon”. Indeed, this research study contributes to the existing scholarship in the following ways:

- The contribution of this thesis is to provide awareness and a better understanding of the relationship between circular migration and knowledge transfer. In addition, it elaborates on the factors affecting migration trends and their impacts on capacity building and development in Palestine as well as the immigrants themselves.
- This research study attempts to contribute to the research in the context of Palestinian organizations’ tendency towards further training and learning so that this thesis can provide some insights on the opportunities of these organizations to benefit from the skilled Palestinian Diasporas and how they acquire and utilize knowledge from them.
- Considering and understanding what factors impact knowledge transfer and barriers exist whether they are linked to the institutional concerns and/or other external factors. Furthermore, this thesis provides data and information on the participation of highly skilled migrants in the transfer of knowledge to Palestine, which could help Palestinian institutions to overcome the shortcomings in their performance and improve their capacities to tap into the skilled Palestinian diaspora and benefit from their experiences.
- In practical terms, the findings and recommendations could be of use for decision-makers at the level of the Palestinian government and civil society organizations such that they can be used in the policy-making process to further strengthen the relationship between the highly skilled Palestinian migrants and Palestinian diaspora in general and their home country.

- Theoretically, this thesis contributes to the already existing body of knowledge and present literature in the area of knowledge transfer and circulation. Hopefully, it will aid further academic research in the field in question.

1.9. SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

As the identification of the scope of the research is important and valuable to release any ambiguity about the research goals, the scope of this thesis has been identified since the preliminary stage. Therefore, this thesis covers the occupied Palestinian territories and it deals with the transfer of knowledge by the skilled diaspora to the Palestinian institutions in these territories. The research population was the highly skilled Palestinian migrants who engaged in circular migration and returned to Palestine to transfer their knowledge and expertise to their colleagues in the Palestinian institutions. Those highly skilled migrants have contributed to knowledge transfer basically through hospitals, universities, ministries, NGOs, private sector organizations, and so on.

The exact number of the research study population is difficult to identify due to the fact that individuals are in a continuous circular movement and therefore cannot be precisely identified. To estimate, the research population was around 3000 individuals. The data collected through both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative data were gathered from 250 participants all over the world mainly Palestinian institutions; the collection of the quantitative data depends on hand to hand distribution and an online survey. The qualitative data consists of 26 semi-structured interviews. Moreover, interviewees were highly skilled migrants and policy makers from various backgrounds including ministers, ambassadors, politicians, economists, engineers, doctors, managers, and professors.

1.10. LIMITS OF THE RESEARCH

Normally speaking, the research limits include three main types: Objectivity boundaries, time limits, and spatial boundaries. The researcher must formulate research questions and hypotheses within the limits of the research topic. According to Assaf (2012: 65), the limits of the research are crucial to clarify the extent to which the results of the study could be generalized and applied. The objectivity boundaries determined by the research topic, the objectivity boundaries of this thesis are the highly skilled migrants who engaged in circular

activities to transfer and share their knowledge and experience back home. However, the research is limited to highly skilled expatriates who have participated in the transfer of knowledge to Palestinian institutions since the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority in 1994. To be more specific, the research includes both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, due to political reasons and security risks, the researcher was unable to pursue leads in the Gaza Strip. However, it should be noted that many of the highly skilled physicians and experts who come as volunteers to work in the West Bank hospitals and institutions usually go to the Gaza Strip as well to serve there for a period of time. Furthermore, using an online survey and interviews abroad was an effective way to overcome this hurdle.

The research draws on data collected between the period of August 2018 and January 2019. On the one hand, it examined highly skilled Palestinian migrants who came back to work in Palestinian institutions and transferred their knowledge and experience there. On the other hand, online surveys and social media platforms (Gmail, Yahoo, and Facebook) were used to share the questionnaire with the target group. Finally, it should be noted that in addition to Palestine, the interviews were conducted in some host countries like Austria, Hungary, and Jordan.

1.11. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ONE

To sum up, this introductory chapter provides precise and a brief exposition on the research topic including the topicality of the issue, thesis outline, reasons for choosing the subject, statement of the problem, questions and objective, main hypotheses, the contribution of the study and finally the scope and limits of the study. This introductory chapter deals with the background of the problem, which includes analyzing the circumstances that led to the weak engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home. The research questions delved into the different factors that affect the engagement of skilled diaspora in transferring knowledge and experience back home. Indeed, the approach of engagement of highly skilled migrants in transferring knowledge to their home country views those individuals as a potential and reserve power that can perform certain tasks and assignments which cannot be fulfilled internally. Therefore, this thesis is an attempt to present and investigate the role of the skilled diaspora in reducing the knowledge gap between countries. It is an effort towards an enhanced engagement of skilled diaspora with the issue of

development in the country of origin to fill the shortage of certain professions in vital sectors. This thesis also adopts a policy approach as one of the questions it raises concerning the policies needed to address the issue of transferring knowledge through the circular migration of highly skilled Palestinian migrants. Finally, another component is exploring the factors affecting the mobility of highly skilled migrants to their countries of origin and the expected benefits from their engagement.

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. OVERVIEW

The focus of this chapter is to critically review and examine previous studies and different theories related to the transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants to their home country. Moreover, it aims to capture and analyze the different ideas and views about this topic. It also aims to present various views in an unbiased and comprehensive manner to summarize the achievements and significance of prior studies and identify the gaps and the ways to bridge them. The chapter is divided into five parts; the first part reviews all related theories of migration and circular migration. The second section examines the literature on the concept of migration, the magnitude of skilled migration, its drivers, and impacts. Likewise, the third section reviews circular and return migration, factors that affect this kind of migration, and their implications on development and capacity building in the countries of origin. While the fourth part of this chapter addresses the concept of knowledge transfer, barriers to knowledge transfer, and some examples of knowledge transfer. Finally, the fifth section explains the conceptual framework of the thesis and the main conclusions and comments.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Over the years, researchers have paid increasing attention to migration and people mobility due to its social, economic, political, and cultural dimensions and impacts. Many theories and models have been formulated to address the causes and motives of human migration as well as its patterns and forms. Most of these models were often grown in isolation and separated by disciplinary boundaries (Arango, 2000). However, “modern migration literature contends that although these theoretical approaches offer different hypotheses, they need not be taken as mutually exclusive, but rather as complementary” (Kurekova, 2011: 4). These theories sought to provide answers to certain questions about the causes of international migration and its drivers. According to these theories, “the causes of migration range from those considered

in individual calculations of advantages to those connected to the transformation of local and regional social, political, and economic structure” (Hirschman *et al.*, 1999: 14). The next sub-chapters aim to review the most important theories that deal with the causes and drivers of migration: mainly the neoclassical theory, the new economic theory of migration, the push-pull model, and the network theory. Additionally, this section reviews the literature on return and circular migration theories: the neoclassical approach, the structural approach, transnationalism, and the social network theory.

2.2.1. SUMMARY OF MIGRATION THEORIES

Although migration is as old as human existence, its theories are completely new. The earliest systematic theories on migration emerged in the late nineteenth century from a neoclassical approach (Van Houte, 2017: 18). In the 1950s, migration theories shifted from pure mechanical models to more sophisticated theories. At the international level the *neo-classical theory*, as presented in the work of Lewis (1954), explains migration as a phenomenon “associated with the existence of labor supply and demand disparities between the sending countries and destination countries. The resulting differentials in wages cause workers to move from low-wage, labor-surplus regions to high-wage, labor-scarce regions (De Haas, 2008: 12). Despite the fact that the neoclassical approach concentrates basically on the relative supply and demand for labor, what may be more important is productivity. Higher productivity means higher wages, and this may be attractive for people working in similar areas in other countries. On a micro level, the individual moves from one place to another looking for more opportunities and wellbeing. In order to bridge the gaps of the neoclassical approach, and due to the fact that “migrants are often people of intermediate social status from areas which are undergoing economic and social change” (Castles & Miller, 2009: 21), alternative approaches were proposed to explain migration. The most important of them is the *new economics theory of migration (NELM)*. “Unlike the neoclassical theory which considers migration as an individual decision for income maximization, this theory identifies a broader number of variables involved in the location decision of labor (migrants)” (Gentili, 2011: 23). Thus the main proposition of this theory is that the migration decision is taken collectively rather than individually with the aim of maximizing benefits and reducing risks at the same time (Massey *et al.*, 1993: 436). In the absence or weakness of the private insurance market or unemployment, and the compensated governmental programs in developing economies as is the case in developed countries, the motives of the family to participate in global migration

increased. Notwithstanding, the above theories have been criticized for sending-side bias and for their limited applicability (Kurekova, 2011: 5). Furthermore, they “failed to explain why some people in a certain country or region migrate and others do not” (Reniers, 1999: 680). Therefore, a new analytical framework for migration has been introduced namely the *push-pull framework*.

According to the push–pull factor theory, the decision to migrate is basically linked to two main causes: internal or “push” factors, and external incentives, called “pull” factors. They can be expressed by economic conditions in both the sending and receiving countries. The “recovery of economic conditions considers an attractive factor, while the recession and economic stagnation are considered as a repulsive factor” (Abu Shukr, 1990: 14). This explains the directions of migration over the world, which mostly occur from “specific places at the origin to specific places at the destination, not only because opportunities tend to be highly localized but also because the flow of knowledge back from destination facilitates the passage for later migrants” (de has, 2008:17). In general terms, however, “for those countries that have proved unable to generate jobs and wage growth at home, the migration option offers a critical safety valve” (Lucas, 2004:162).

Despite the ability of the push-pull model to provide a general perception of people’s mobility and of the factors that affect their decision to migrate, it suffers from some shortcomings. It does not allow for assigning relative weights to the different factors affecting migration decisions. Neither do they allow for empirical tests on the role and importance of factors that have been included or excluded. Another fundamental weakness of this model is that push and pull factors generally mirrored in each other (De Haas, 2008: 18). Furthermore, the push-pull factor approach did not take into consideration the heterogeneity in society and individual diversity, causing some people to migrate while others continue to remain in their home country.

According to Lee, “people respond differently to “plus” and “minus” factors at origins and destinations and have different abilities to cope with the intervening variables” (Lee, 1966 cited in Reniers, 1999: 681). Another source shares the same idea; Salt (1987: 243) claims that “despite the crucial role of economic factors as one of the root causes of migration, and the fact that people tend to move to places where the standards of living are better, these motivations alone cannot explain the actual shape of migration patterns”.

The fourth theory that will be discussed in this regard is the *network theory*. Actually, migrant networks work as one of the factors influencing the migration decision by facilitating the flow of information back home. As defined by Massey *et al.*, (1993: 448), migrants' networks are "sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin". It is interesting to note that, networks made migration less costly and less risky, as "the first migrants usually have enough resources to absorb the costs and risks of the trip, family and friends then draw on ties with these migrants to gain access to employment and assistance in migrating" (Docquier & Rapoport, 2007: 20). According to this theory, the size of migration among countries "is not strongly correlated to wage differentials or employment rates, because whatever effects these variables have in promoting or inhibiting migration are progressively overshadowed by the falling costs and risks of movement stemming from the growth of migrant networks over time" (Massey *et al.*, 1993: 450). Although the network theory facilitates the mobility of people and involves them in different ways to remain in contact with their origin societies. Critics, however, say that "labor migration movements do often tend to decrease or cease when the fundamental causes of migration disappear, and legal and physical barriers to migration can have an important influence on the magnitude and nature of migration, although not necessarily in the intended direction" (De Haas, 2008: 30). Moreover, settled migrants are not always willing to act as bridgeheads for prospective migrants. They sometimes act as more like gatekeepers (Böcker, 1994: 103).

Broadly speaking, migration theories attempted to explain people's mobility by focusing on semi-skilled workers from developing countries to developed countries. Meanwhile, less attention has been paid to the migration of highly skilled people. Therefore, there is a need to develop a theoretical effort related to high skilled migration. However, migration theories presented in this chapter show the multiplicity of theories and models that attempt to explain the motives and determinants of migration. This diversity elucidates the extent to which it is difficult to separate migration from its socio-economic context. Actually, these theories lack coherence and evolved in isolation from one another. More specifically, as outlined in this section, migration theories have interpreted human mobility by focusing on the micro/macro levels. The micro-level addresses the factors affecting the individual's decisions, while the overall migration trends are interpreted according to the macro-level causes. This indicates

that understanding and interpreting contemporary migration cannot be achieved by only one discipline, or by focusing on one level of analysis.

2.2.2. SUMMARY OF THE CIRCULAR AND RETURN MIGRATION THEORIES

To understand return migration and its drivers and motivations, a variety of approaches and models were developed. Indeed, recent studies e.g. (Cassarino 2004; Farrell *et al.*, 2012) on return and circular migration cast serious emphasis on the theoretical background of this kind of human mobility. It is substantial to consider the factors that influence the decision of highly skilled migrants to engage in circulation, as well as the impacts and feasibility of this kind of migration. Although these theories agreed on the fact that return and circular migration can contribute to the development and capacity building of their home country, however, they diverged in their interpretations. This section will discuss various theories that address return and circular migration, which could roughly be divided as follows:

2.2.2.1. The Neoclassical Economics and the New Economics of Labour Migration

The neoclassical approach viewed return migration as international mobility that is derived by failure factors rather than success circumstances. To conceptualize return migration, Cassarino (2004: 255) argued that “return migration seems to be viewed as the outcome of a failed migration experience which did not yield the expected benefits. Variation in wages between the home country and the destination country was a matter in determining the direction of labor mobility. According to *the neo-classical theory*, migrants as individuals and rational actors move on the basis of a cost-benefit calculation. Assuming free choice and full access to information, they are expected to go where they can be the most productive (De Haas 2008: 12, Castles & Miller, 2009: 20, Castles *et al.*, 2014: 28). In contrast to the neoclassical approach, the *New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM)* viewed return migration “as the logical outcome of a calculated strategy, defined at the level of the migrant’s household, and resulting from the successful achievement of goals or targets” (Cassarino cited in Tyagi, 2017: 41). The main achievement of NELM theory is that it “shifts the focus of migration theory from individual independence to mutual interdependence” (Stark, 1991: 26). Nevertheless, Dustmann and Weiss (2007: 245) argued that “One simple way to model a return migration is to assume that migrants have a preference for consumption in their home country”. This remarkably indicates that return

migration cannot only be guided by failed experience in the host country, but many migrants also work very hard to maximize their benefits and skills and they were expected to play a positive role in the development and modernization of their home countries (De Haas, 2010). Therefore, many criticisms have been raised against these theories. According to Farrell *et al.*, (2014 :129) both “NELM theory and neoclassical theory were criticized for placing considerable emphasis on the financial aspects rather than social and cultural factors as a determinant of the migrant’s decision to return”. The growing criticisms of these theories have paved the way for the emergence of new theories to explain return and circular migration. The most notable of these theories was *the structural approach*.

2.2.2.2. The *Structural Approach*

This approach claimed that the return migration phenomenon cannot be explained only by the success or failure approach. Indeed, one cannot isolate the decisions of the migrants from socio-economic factors both at home and in the host country. Addressing this shortcoming, the *structural approach* argues that return migration should be analysed not only based on the migrant's own experience, “but also with reference to social and institutional factors in countries of origin. Return appears to be guided by the opportunities that migrants expect to find in their origin countries but also by the opportunities already offered in their respective host countries” (Cassarino, 2004: 257, 258).

However, it is interesting to note that the return to the home country without enough information about the local context may jeopardize this return. It is thus hardly surprising that “returnees often suffer from reverse cultural shock, which can be even more severe than the cultural shock faced during the initial months of expatriation (Nery-Kjerfve & McLean, 2012: 2), one of the main features of the structural theory is that it asserted the readjustment and reintegration of returnees into the home society. “In order to be reaccepted, returnee has to readapt to the changed cultural and behavioral patterns of his community of origin and this is re-socialization” (Dumon, 1986: 122). Furthermore, this theory placed additional weight on the reintegration process, considering it very essential for the success of return migration and for accomplishing significant impacts on the home country.

Actually, the assumptions of the structural theory were contended by many scholars and researchers as structuralists proposed that the information available for immigrants about the local context of their home country is pretty rare, and the possibilities for bilateral exchange between the home country and the host country mostly do not exist. Apparently, Farrell *et*

al., (2014: 129) put it as follows: “fails to consider the difficulties faced by returnees, often related to the length of time spent abroad, in addition to the level of contact maintained with family and friends while away”. Additionally, in shifting the emphasis from an individual level to a structural context, the *structural theory* is not more than the opposite face of the *neoclassical theory* with modest insight.

2.2.2.3. The *Transnational Approach*

To conceptualize and theorize return migration based on Spatio-temporal theoretical perspectives, a *transnational approach* constitutes an attempt to study migration-development interconnections. This approach was developed by Zelinsky (1971) and Skeldon (1997). According to De Haas (2007: 21), there have been various attempts to link the demographic transition theory to changing patterns of population mobility. The transnational hypothesis by Zelinsky’s states that:

“Through the development of scientific knowledge, “modern man” had extended control over his own physiology in the form of death and birth control, resulting in the demographic transition. He preferred to use the term vital transition, by means of which he broadened the concept of demographic transition by linking it to processes of modernization, economic growth, and increasing mobility. In many respects, this vital transition can be equated with what many others would call development” (De Haas, 2007: 22).

According to transnationalism, “return takes place once enough resources, whether financial or informational, have been gathered and when conditions at home are viewed as being favorable enough” (Cassarino, 2004: 264). According to this approach human migration “is not a singular journey but tends to become an integral part of the migrants’ lives” (Faist, 2000:13). One of the main contrasts between transnationalism and structuralism lies in the fact that “according to trans-nationalists, returnees prepare their reintegration at home through mobility, circularity and regular visits to their home countries” (Eriksen, 1995: 312-313). In point of fact, this transnational mobility is crucial in the sense that it “provides a platform and a period of incubation which made way for the current emergence of transnational social spaces” (Pries, 2001:23). Furthermore, other scholars link transnational approach to human capital, and they argued that “migrants with higher levels of capital have more possibilities to engage with or develop transnational practices” (Siar, 2012: 53–54). The *transnational approach* is broadly consistent with the principles of the *social network theory*

in that they place additional emphasis on the role of human capital in the decision of return. This is hardly surprising as *social network theorists* “believe that return migrants need not be dependent on diasporas, but that the process of migration has equipped the returnee with various forms of capital which can be utilized for a successful return to the home country” (Farrell *et al.*, 2014: 130). Despite the fact that both transnationalism and social network theory viewed return migration as a stage of circular migration and pay more weight to the preservation and linkage between diasporas and their home countries in fostering and securing return migration, “cross-border social and economic networks differ from transnational relationships, in terms of organizational patterns, goals and configuration. Networks pertain to a specific type of relation linking a defined set of persons, objects, or events” (Cassarino, 2004: 267).

This sub-chapter reviews the main approaches that address circular and return migration and provide a clear understanding of it. Although it is widely accepted that circular and return migration is not a spontaneous practice and that some factors stimulate it, there’s a difference regarding the nature of these drivers. While neoclassical economics and NELM focused on the individual or household levels as the main motive for the decision to return, the structuralism, transnationalism, and social network theory focus mainly on micro and macro socio-economic dimensions of return migration either in the origin country or the host country. As such, the transitional mobility theory (transnationalism) fits rather well into the theoretical perspective of this thesis, since the main objective of this research is to explore the factors and barriers that affect the contribution of Palestinian skilled diaspora to knowledge transfer to their home country. To achieve this aim I will examine both the host country and the home country factors in addition to the diaspora’s role and individual motivations.

2.3. MIGRATION

Migration plays a significant role in the distribution and redistribution of people all over the world. It is a humanitarian phenomenon that started thousands of years ago when people were moving from one place to another in search of a better life and livelihood. Over the years, “migration became one of the oldest actions against poverty and dates back to early human history” (De Abreu, 2012: 17), but it has taken many and various forms, and became a crucial factor that shaped the world. Historically, migration has contributed to demographic, social, and economic changes and in the formation of minorities and ethnicities in countries all over

the world. According to IOM (2011: 41), migration is “the movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border or within a state. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition, and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, etc.”

In the past, migrations often occurred in the form of human waves or groups. These kinds of migration were traced through their common languages, cultural norms, and religious practice they brought with them. According to anthropologists, the first migration of human beings goes back to Africa, where climate change was the main driving factor. While “migration historians agree that a crucial turning point in the history of migration occurred about 500 years ago with the voyages undertaken by European explorers that led initially to the discovery of new worlds such as the Americas and Asia, and then on the development of colonial endeavors” (IOM, migration and history: 10). In a similar vein, Massey (1999: 34) argued that “over three centuries, nearly ten million Africans were imported into the Americas and together with European colonists; they radically transformed its social and demographic composition”. However, the consequences of the industrial revolution led to the second stage of migration. “It began early in the nineteenth century and stemmed from the economic development of Europe and the spread of industrialization to former colonies in the new world” (Ibid: 34). The resulting accumulation of capital in countries such as North America and Australia became the main driving factor of this kind of migration.

As a result of the world economic crisis and recession 1929–1933, the scale of international migration has reduced dramatically. However, after the World War II, a new stage of migration commenced basically from developing countries to industrial and developed countries. This stage is caused by a scientific and technological revolution; and an increase in demand from modern production on highly-skilled personnel. It is important to note that, this stage experienced growth of intercontinental migration, in particular in Europe and Africa (Kozak & Shengelia, 2014: 95). The main intercontinental migration was that of “black slaves from Africa to the Americas and the Caribbean, where more than 4.5 million slaves had been forcibly transported to Brazil” (Hatton & Williamson, 1994: 4).

Looking at the modern period, most of the developing countries including the Middle East and North Africa experienced significant emigration towards OECD countries during the last decades. Actually, the number of international migrants increased over the years, it “reached 75 million in 1960” (Docquier, 2014: 2). However, as a result of the continuity of the driving factors, this number increased dramatically. As stated by the international migration report

2017, “the number of international migrants worldwide has continued to grow over the past seventeen years, reaching 258 million in 2017, up from 248 million in 2015, 220 million in 2010, 191 million in 2005 and 173 million in 2000” (UN, 2017: 4). Appendix A shows the percentage of international migrants in selected age groups by development group over certain periods (1990, 2000, 2010 and 2013)

According to appendix A, the percentage of international migrants aged 15 to 24 was the highest in the least developed countries (20.9%) in 2013. Also, the same data shows that the percentage of migrants of the same age group is higher in developing countries than in developed countries. In 2013, youth migrants accounted for 12.2% of international migrants in the world, 10.2% of international migrants in developed countries, 29.1% in developing countries, and 20.9% in least-developed countries. The level of risks and difficulties of migration to these countries vary from one group to another. For example, “when young people move to least-developed countries, it may jeopardize their future wellbeing, as labor-market opportunities, are liable to be more constrained than in developing or developed countries, leaving migrants unable to increase their human capital or to find good-paying jobs” (Global Migration Group, 2014: 7)

2.3.1. DE-COLONIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

Postcolonial migration is a migration that came out as a result of the colonial imperialist domination of the First World countries over the so-called Third World countries. Overwhelmingly, the colonial countries and their former colonies remain politically and economically interconnected. Thus, decolonization could be conceived of not as independence but as more equitable interconnection. Insofar, the First and Third Worlds remain bound, for those who are subordinated in this relationship (Achiume, 2019: 1522). Distinctly, the wave of decolonization, which shaped the twentieth century, has changed the face of the planet and contributed to the movement of people from the former colonies to the former colonial states. This explains the attitudes of many former colonial emigrants as migration was characterized by an intense pre-migratory relationship between immigrants and their countries of arrival. It can be said that since the 1940s, millions of people have migrated from Asian countries like India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and some African countries, including Nigeria, Kenya, and Ghana. The main destination for these migrations was the former colonial countries. Indeed, the volume of migration from Africa and Asia to Europe increased considerably during the 20th century due to several reasons including

decolonization, where “millions of Europeans, ex-Europeans, and their local allies from French North Africa, the British colonies in southern Africa and South Asia, the Dutch East Indies, and Portuguese Africa moved to Europe right before, during, and after decolonization” (Emmer & Lucassen, 2012: 3). Strictly speaking, a large number of Palestinians immigrated to the United States of America and the United Kingdom, where immigration to these countries became clearer during the British Mandate and increased during 1948 and beyond in response to the procedures of displacement by Zionism (this topic will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four). Most migrants from Algeria and Tunisia also migrated to France (Hashim, 2018: 31). Along the same lines, and in a study about the relationship between immigration from one side and decolonization and industrialization in Indonesia on the other side, Van Lottum (2014: 247) pointed out that “colonial rule, decolonization, and industrialization, the three phenomena that to a great extent shaped Indonesia in the twentieth century are all factors that have a potentially strong effect on population movement”.

To put it differently, many people migrate to the former colonial countries guided by the influences of historical and cultural relations such as the presence of common language or values. Achiume (2019: 1549) explained how the legacy of colonial-era shapes the relationships between the people of the former colonies and their colonial countries as “particularly strong and special cultural relationship between colonial powers and their former colonies gives them a right to migrate to the specific former colonial nation-state whose national identity they have co-constituted”. Similarly, Ponzanesi & Colpani (2015: 140) argued that “resentment is indeed just one of the many ways in which images, values, and attitudes inherited from the colonial past shape relationships between people today, in the Netherlands and, more generally, in Europe”.

All in all, the issue of postcolonial migration is an interesting phenomenon as it shows a strong relationship between migration from the former colonies and the countries that colonized them, and this is evident from the patterns and trends of migration among countries. Unsurprisingly, people went to these countries to search for opportunities and jobs.

However, these kinds of relationships between “developed and developing countries are quite asymmetric and, the exodus of qualified personnel from the South is often seen as a serious obstacle to development and as a loss for the home countries” (Delicado, 2007: 1). Ultimately, this led to a disparity in knowledge accumulation among countries.

2.3.2. SKILLED MIGRATION “BRAIN DRAIN”

Scholars use the term “brain drain” to describe the out-migration of highly skilled people from developing or less economically-developed countries to countries with better professional, economic, or social structures, and opportunities. Moreover, skilled migration “brain drain” has been a topic of discussion for many years due to its impacts on the economic and social conditions in many countries. According to Gibson & McKenzie (2011: 2), there were 247 articles on brain drain written between 2005 and 2009 about twice as many as over the previous 15 years combined.

2.3.2.1. The Concept and Magnitude of Brain Drain

“The term brain drain designates the international transfer of resources in the form of human capital and mainly applies to the migration of relatively highly educated individuals from developing to developed countries” (Beine *et al.*, 2008: 631). Strictly speaking, the term brain drain has “officially appeared in 1963, a few months before the publication of Gary Becker’s book set the theoretical bases of the human capital approach” (Meyer, 2001: 95). It was first used in the 1960s to describe the migration of scientists, Technologists, and British intellectuals from the UK to the USA and Canada (Gaillard & Gaillard, 1997: 201). Although brain drain is a global phenomenon, its rate varies significantly across countries. Data shows that the threat of brain drain in countries with a small population is usually higher. “On average 7.3% of tertiary-educated people of the developing countries work in higher-income countries, this ratio varies from 5.4% (or below) in developing countries with populations of 40 million or more to 13% in sub-Saharan Africa and to 45% in small developing island nations” (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011: 10).

Despite a shortage of data about brain drain in the Arab world, there were about 18.1 million immigrants from the MENA region in 2010, accounting for about 5.3% of the total population of the region. Over 40.4% of these migrants went to OECD countries, while 23.2% to other developed countries, some 31.5% of them went to other Arab countries (League of Arab States, 2014: 9). Moreover, Ezzat (2008: 6) claims that three rich Western countries, the United States, Canada, and Britain are absorbing 75% of highly skilled Arab immigrants. For example, in the United Kingdom, the percentage of Arab doctors of the total physicians working there is 34%. In a similar vein, “about 74% of Arab origin researchers are working in a scientific field such as physics, and biology. At the French National Centre for Scientific Research, moreover, 70% of the directors of the departments of mathematics,

physics and, technologies are researchers with Arab origins” (League of Arab States, 2008: 88, 90). According to the human development report 2002 issued by the United Nation, “there are more than one million Arab experts and highly skilled people working in Western Europe and North countries” (Palestine International Foundation, 2008: 19–20). Likewise, data shows that the migration of highly educated and qualified people has increased dramatically in the last decade. For example, more than one-third of emigrants (35.7%) hold university and higher degrees, and 35.7% of the total emigrants have secondary education, compared to 1.3% with no qualification (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011:109).

2.3.2.2. Drivers of Skilled Migration

Generally speaking, the decision to migrate is often aimed at achieving economic prosperity and social welfare. However, migration may be driven more by broader job concerns such as the quality of opportunities to conduct research, to work with the best experts of their profession, and to learn from the best, as well as lifestyle and family reasons, than by how much more people could earn abroad (Clemens, 2009: 12). People most often migrate to improve their standard of living. Broadly speaking, skilled migration can be explained by two main approaches: the individual approach, and the international approach. The individual approach states that qualified individuals search for intellect and profession, hoping to secure a comfortable living and good working conditions; as well as ensuring the freedom of thought and creative opportunities that, unfortunately, are not available in their home country. Furthermore, Ferjani (2000: 5) addressed the main driver of skilled migration from developing countries as follows: low-income level and low standard of living, scientific and professional frustration due to the lack of research potential, the absence of freedom of expression, and bad governance of institutions and society. Meanwhile, the second approach deals with skilled migration as an international phenomenon. It focuses on the demand side and tries to find a correlation between skilled migration and the global market for highly qualified people. According to Kozak & Shengelia (2014: 93), “the international labor migration is caused by both factors of internal economic development of each separate country and external factors: a condition of the international economy as whole and economic relations between the countries”. Indeed, the migration of highly skilled people has emerged as a result of the status of “labor market structure within the countries of origin which increase the international labor offer of highly skilled workers” (Bacchi, 2014: 2). The mismatch between the supplies of skilled workers graduating yearly from universities and the needs of the labor market created high rates of unemployment in the countries of origin.

Meanwhile, the prevalent knowledge-based economy of the developed countries is characterized by a shortage of human resources. As such these economies need a great number of highly-skilled migrants to fulfil this gap. For example, the European Council asked the Member States to take the necessary steps to facilitate the mobility of highly skilled migrants and high-quality researchers into the European Union. To do it, “the European Commission President Prodi called for up to 1.7 million immigrants to fill an EU-wide labor shortage through a system similar to the US green card for qualified immigrants” (Giannoccolo, 2005: 5). The regional report about the migration of the Arab Labor (2008), for instance, highlights competition to attract highly skilled persons from a certain part of the world and stats that “the need for this kind of immigrants has grown over time as a result of globalization and open markets” (League of Arab States, 2008:35). By using a lower-cost foreign labor force, global companies can reduce production costs and increase their competitive advantages and profits. In general, the economic factors are considered the most important driving forces of migration, especially among highly skilled people, mainly “due to salary discrepancies, the differences in working conditions, and economic disparity among countries” (IOM, 2003: 218). For those countries that are unable to provide employment opportunities for their citizens, especially for scientific degree holders, the migration remains an inevitable and safety option. Moreover, the level of scientific research and lack of vacancies in some scientific and technological fields may also be a problem. For example in most Arab countries, some scientists suffer from the absence of certain discipline that conforms to their educational qualifications such as atomic science, rocket industries, and space (Jurani, 2011: 4). This is one of the main reasons that enforced them to seek jobs that would suit their qualifications in developed countries.

Corruption may be a driver too. It might affect net migration through two channels: “first, it might favor outflows by pushing highly skilled natives to migrate to other less corrupt countries; and second, it might hamper inflows by discouraging talented foreign workers from immigrating” (Ariu & Squicciarini, 2013:503). While Dimant *et al.*, (2013: 1274) examined the impacts of corruption on migration for a panel of 111 countries between 1985 and 2000. The empirical results indicate that corruption especially drives skilled migration. A study on the relationship between emigration and corruption by Cooray & Schneider (2014: 18) revealed that “if corruption in a country increases, the emigration rates of those with high levels of educational attainment also increase”. According to the UN (2013b: 38), “some youth decide to migrate because of perceived injustices in their countries of origin. There may be a high incidence of corruption, chronic political instability, or serious human rights

violations”. According to the Corruption Perception Index 2017 issued by Transparency International (on a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 refers to the highest level of corruption), the rates of all Arab countries were below 50, except for Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. They traced corruption by using certain indicators including, but not limited to, e-governance practices, human rights, democracy, and freedom of expression.

Political factors play a much larger role as a driving force of skilled people’s migration especially in countries suffering from a political disorder. Most evidently, skilled migration is the highest in countries that have suffered from conflict and instability, and this is evident in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, and Libya. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (July 2015), “those displaced by the Syrian conflict alone had reached 11.6 million. Of these, 7.6 million were internally displaced persons, while the rest were refugees outside their country of nationality” (UNDP, 2016: 141) In contrast, developed countries can often provide better possibilities for work and scientific research. Therefore, one of the reasons for skilled migration is the availability of scientific research in the destination countries, either that related to the prevailing scientific research climate or physical capabilities such as laboratories, funding, research teamwork (Qwaider, 2004: 9). Moreover, scientific progress, political stability, democratic environment, and freedom of expression are motivations for prospective migrants as well, in addition to higher incomes and freedom of professional practices (Albeel, 2012:13).

2.3.2.3 The Impacts of Skilled Migration

Since the emergence of migration as a systematic area of study, the link with development has been an integral part of these studies (Castles *et al.*, 2014, 46–47). Yet, the impacts of skilled migration on the development and welfare of the origin countries are still controversial among researchers. “The international mobility of talent can have important development effects on the source nations, on the receiving countries and on the global economy and society. In source countries, the emigration of talent can reduce their human capital base” (Solimano, 2006: 1). After the Second World War, skilled migration extremely afflicted many developing countries and made them suffer. “They incurred the loss of talent and skilled people, who left their homeland because of the increased need from economies and developed countries for highly skilled people” (Kozak & Shengelia, 2014: 95). De facto, UNESCO considers brain drain as an anomalous kind of knowledge exchange between countries that are characterized by rearward technology transfer because the brain drain is a direct transfer of one of the most important factors of production, which is the human capital

(Jurani, 2011: 2). By reducing human capital in the countries of origin, brain drain may impede development and economic growth. “As all economies become more reliant on knowledge, the loss of the best-trained workers poses serious threats to national productivity and output” (Quaked, 2002: 155). Furthermore, “the brain drain increases the technological gap between leading and developing nations because the concentration of human capital in the most advanced economies contributes to their technological progress and undermining a country’s ability to adopt new technologies or deal with health crises” (Docquier, 2014: 5). Unsurprisingly, the countries of origin lose both the cost of primary education that they incurred to empower highly skilled immigrants as well as potential taxpayers. Consequently, a loss of scarce skills and talents leads to economic decline and a low level of welfare in the country of origin. Moreover, “skilled labor migration may have a substantial negative impact on unskilled workers’ productivity and wages and lead to higher inequality in the home country” (Docquier & Rapoport, 2007: 3). The reason for this is that the income of skilled labor far exceeds the income of unskilled one. The losses become especially clear and influential tracing the financial losses of developing countries because of brain drain. For example, “the losses of the Arab countries as a result of brain drain during the seventies of the last century were 11 billion dollars, while the estimated annual cost of Arab brain drain is 2 billion dollars” (Qwaider, 2004: 14).

In contrast, some scholars argued that “high-skilled immigration can cause net increases in home country human capital stocks at low migration level” (Clemens, 2009: 4). The idea behind this kind of thought is that the “decisions of individuals to invest in education react to the prospect of future migration, which may not actually end up migrating” (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011:12). For example, the high departure rate of college-educated adults has almost certainly motivated additional college attendance within the Philippines and even influenced the choice of discipline for study (Lucas, 2004: 152). Although high-skilled migration is a loss for the home country; there are several forms to involve them in the development process of their origin countries: remittances, academic visits which imply a transfer of knowledge, best practices, and investments. Generally speaking, the participation and involvement of migrants in the development of their home country become easier as a result of globalization and technological progress. It is also important to mention that, “the actions undertaken by scientists, academics and students originally from the countries of the South but living in the North offer new dimensions for cooperation between world countries and regions” (Bolay & Tejada, 2014: 196). Distinctly, there is mounting recognition of highly

skilled migrants as a key driver of development and institutional building in the host country as well as at the country of origin. “Skilled migration improves the intellectual, social, and economic capital of migrants, which then brings benefits to the countries of origin through the transfer of knowledge” (Siar, 2014: 316).

2.4. CIRCULAR AND RETURN MIGRATION

A more effective form of “remittance”, however, is the return of skilled migrants to the home country, which implies a transfer of knowledge and best practices (the main focus of this thesis). Although “scholarly approaches related to return migration can be traced back to the 1960s, there is no question that, with hindsight, it was in the 1980s that stimulating scientific debate among scholars took place on the return phenomenon and its impact on origin countries” (Cassarino, 2004: 254). However, since the early 1990s, interest in issues related to return migration has increased significantly (Farrell *et al.*, 2012; Farrell *et al.*, 2014, Klinthäll, 2006: 1). For Gmelch (1980: 136), a return migration may be understood as the movement of emigrants back to their homelands to resettle. Whereas Dustmann and Weiss (2007: 238) argue that “return migration is often characterized by its temporary status and it describes a situation where migrants return to their country of origin by their own choice, often after a significant period abroad”. Nevertheless, some scholars have considered transnationalism as closely intertwined with circular mobility. According to the UN (2016: 3): “circular migration is viewed as a type of temporary migration, in which the temporary stay in a destination country is repeated. As such circular migration overlaps also with the concept of return migration, as return is part of the circular movement”. It has become familiar that “returning home does not necessarily mean the end of the migration pathway, and it is not always final. If migrants can afford the travel costs and have legal status he will choose circular migration” (OECD, 2008: 184). Furthermore, “return migration extends the linear model of migration to a circular model with an imputed readjustment and assimilation to the country of origin” (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005: 112). The view of circular migration as an organized way of mobility is also identified by the International Organization for Migration, which defined circular migration as the fluid movement of people between countries, including temporary or long-term movement which may be beneficial to all involved if occurring voluntarily and linked to the labor needs of the countries of origin and destination (IOM, 2011).

However, Newland *et al.*, (2008: 2) highlighted the relationship between circular migration and the economic space and they contended as “We have developed a more dynamic notion of circular migration as a continuing, long-term and fluid pattern of human mobility among countries that occupy what is now increasingly recognized as a single economic space” (Triandafyllidou, 2013: 6). However, it is also worth mentioning that people also move between the host country and the country of origin for other purposes such as job opportunities, to keep contact with close relatives, and humanitarian and national missions. “Circular migration has recently attracted special attention as a new approach to the orderly and balanced management of migration between host and home countries” (OECD, 2008: 195). Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, and as circular migration is a two-directional continuous people movement, circular migration refers to a situation where migrants return to their home country after spending a period of time abroad to reside either permanently or temporarily. Regardless of the place of residence, the highly skilled migrants who become part of circular migration often maintain a continuous movement between the host country and the country of origin.

2.4.1. FACTORS AFFECTING CIRCULAR AND RETURN MIGRATION

Migration has always been a normal and inevitable response to the economic, social, political, and environmental challenges that have shaped human history. Yet, peoples' mobility, in general, and circular migration, in particular, are driven by certain considerations. According to Farrell *et al.*, (2014: 138), migration has become more of a circular or return process, with a variety of factors affecting each individual's decision to return. These factors are interconnected and affect knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants. According to Siar (2014: 304), three main factors affect the production of diasporic knowledge transfer: “diaspora factors, host country factors, and home country factors”. Nevertheless, Black *et al.*, identifies three group factors namely: “structural (the situation in the country of origin and the host country), individual (age, sex, and social relations) and political (incentives and disincentives) reasons for migrants to return to their country of origin” (Black *et al.*, cited in Farrell *et al.*, 2014:129). While Bonache *et al.*, (2001) divided it into two main groups; cultural issues and career-related problems. On the other hand, Cassarino (2004: 271) presented resource mobilization and preparedness as two main factors that influence return migration, and he argues: “To be successfully achieved, return preparation requires time, resources and willingness on the part of the migrant”. However,

this thesis proposes five main factors namely; the home country factor, the host country factor, the diaspora & networking factor, the individual factor, and the occupation factor.

2.4.1.1. The Home Country Factors

Creating a conducive environment and enhancing the absorptive capacity in origin countries are two main pre-steps to facilitate the engagement of diaspora and highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country. A good indicator of the absorptive capacity of a home country is its global competitiveness. The Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) released by the World Economic Forum may be used to measure a country's absorptive capacity (Siar, 2014 :311). It consists of variables such as the strength and reliability of the institutions, the policies, the quality of infrastructure, the macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, market efficiency, labor market efficiency, technological readiness, and factors that determine the level of productivity. According to the GCI 2017–2018 rankings, which measure national competitiveness, except for some Arab Gulf States, all Arab countries suffer from low competitiveness. The only Arab countries that were in the top 25 in 2017 were Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (World Economic Forum, 2017: 13).

Evidence from countries found that “highly skilled returnees are attracted by governmental promoting policies and increasing opportunities in the labor markets” (Potter, 2005: 219) and the absorptive capacity of the country. The return option has been effectively realized in several countries such as Singapore, Korea, India, and China due to vigorous programs to recruit their highly skilled labour living abroad. According to Meyer and Brown (1999: 11) “these programs started in 1980. They mainly depend on the networks and technological mobilization as it is the best and smooth way to find a place and be operational”. The same applies to the case of Angola, since 2002, the inclination to return was closely linked to the improvement in the economic and political conditions in Angola compared to the host countries (Oomen, 2013: 9). Meanwhile, some other countries like “Philippines and Mexico faced serious challenges to magnetize their skilled diaspora and to achieve brain gain due to their volatile economic, political climate and low level of attractiveness to investments” (Hunger, 2004: 302). The openness of a home country to foreign technology and the quality of governance are crucial points in engaging and attracting highly skilled migrants to contribute to knowledge transfer. Unsurprisingly, these influence their perception about their home country and ultimately return decision. Along the same lines, Chacko & Price (2009: 5) argued that:

“The capability of immigrants to engage in the development of their home country are influenced by a combination of factors, namely: the group characteristics of those who emigrated, the push factors that led to their leaving the home country, the socio-economic niches that they were able to carve out for themselves abroad, The policies adopted by the countries of origin regarding the engagement of the diaspora in development”.

The presence of encouraging national policies is seen as a cornerstone of diaspora engagement in development and knowledge transfer. For example, between 2002 and 2006, the Ethiopian government actively encouraged its citizens who are living abroad to return home in order for them to be part of the national development agenda. The request to return home has been promoted by offering incentives and facilitating the movement of capital and goods (Chacko & Price, 2009: 12). While, in China, a service center for returnees was set up in 1989, providing allocations for housing, duty-free purchases of computers and automobiles, and offers of return airfare for self-financed students (Keren *et al.*, 2003). On the contrary, it is believed that the absence of such policies and the lack of portability “hinder the migrated labour to contribute efficiently in the development of their country of origin primarily by inhibiting temporary and, especially, permanent return” (Agunias & Newland, 2012: 103). Moreover, “the integration of returnees needs careful planning and greater cooperation between sending countries and receiving countries” (IOM: 9) to grasp the developmental impacts of return migration and to become more effective and influential. The quality of governance also affects the motivation of highly skilled migrants to transfer knowledge or invest in their home country. According to (Siar, 2012: 201), “certain professions particularly those in business and trade are highly sensitive to personal incentives, particularly monetary returns, due to the greater risks involved in these activities, and they are therefore sensitive to adverse home country conditions”. For example, the expatriates have become more reluctant to return to the Philippines to invest or facilitate investments into the country because of corruption and bureaucracy in government institutions, impaired infrastructures, unstable political conditions, and public disorder” (Siar, 2014: 313).

2.4.1.2. The Host Country Factors

Generally speaking, the host country policies affect the contribution of skilled diaspora in contributing to the development of their home countries. The presence of less restrictive

immigration policies such as dual citizenship country can help sustain the links of migrants with their home country and serve as intermediaries that facilitate the transfer of knowledge and remittances to home countries and increases migrants' interest in development projects or in investing in their countries of origin (Wayland, 2006). However, "said policies also have to be complemented with labor policies that promote the utilization of diaspora capital. Non-recognition of foreign credentials hampers the migrants' ease of settlement in the host country and consequently, impedes their involvement in knowledge transfer" (Siar, 2012: 69).

It is unsurprising to note that, gaining knowledge and experience in the host country improve skilled diaspora human capital and induce their engagement in the development in their home country. Accordingly, the migrant who gets the opportunity to work in the same area of his or her educational qualification and training is more likely to involve in knowledge transfer endeavours, than those who experienced employment difficulties (Siar, 2014: 307). The lack of work opportunities and social and psychological instability made migrated labour less capable to engage in knowledge transfer back home. Additionally, IOM has found that "migrants opt to take only short-term assignments overseas for fear of losing residence rights in the host country. Therefore, return programs chiefly attract migrants who have acquired citizenship in the host country" (Agunias & Newland, 2012: 99). In a similar vein, the study of Sveinsson (2015: 151) pointed out that "in England, immigration policies and professional development structures decidedly disincentivize circular migration by making it too risky. This usually reduces the proportion of their careers which they can dedicate to working in or for Nigeria". So far, flexible citizenship policies are one of the factors that facilitate the mobility of highly skilled migrants between the host country and their home country. Meanwhile, the presence of bilateral programs is important to transfer knowledge and best practices from the host country to the origin country.

2.4.1.3. The Diasporas Factors

Modern diasporas are ethnic minority groups of migrant origin residing and acting in the host country but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their country of origin (Sheffer, 1986:3). Chander (2001: 1020) defines diaspora as "that part of a people, dispersed in one or more countries other than its homeland, that maintains a feeling of transnational community among people and their homeland". However, according to Adamson & Demetriou (2007: 497), diaspora is a social gathering of people who live outside their state borders and have over time managed to maintain a collective national, cultural, or religious

identity through a sense of internal cohesion and continued ties with their home country through transnational links. There is growing evidence that expatriates do indeed play remarkable roles in fostering the development of their countries of origin (Newland & Plaza, 2013:2). Generally speaking, diasporas have contributed to institutional development and state-building through diaspora knowledge networks, state-led initiatives, and international organizations (Kuschminder, 2011: 4).

Increased categorizations of diaspora organizations focusing on skills have led to new terms like diaspora scientific network (Lowell and Gerova, 2004:5) and diaspora knowledge networks (Kuschminder, 2011: 7). Meanwhile Brown (2000: 4) classified diaspora knowledge networks into five categories: “student/scholarly networks, local associations of skilled expatriates, expert pool assistance through expatriate nationals (TOKTEN) program of the UNDP’s for, developing intellectual/scientific diaspora networks, and intellectual/scientific diaspora networks”. Although these networks emerged very independently of each other, “the distinction between some of these categories is blurry, and a network may exhibit characteristics of more than one category” (Lowell and Gerova, 2004: 23). Indeed, “successful migrants or members of the diaspora can bring the positive effects of migration to the force; by tapping into their networks they can build bridges and significantly contribute to development” (ICMPD, 2014: 18). Meanwhile, Lucas (2005: 154) places more emphasis on the human capital abroad and the level of skills and experience of diaspora network and its potential outcomes, and he argued that “as transnational networks become established they may also play a role in shaping developments in the home country”. Moreover, Johnson and Sedaca (2004: 55) identify the diaspora factor as rather definitive in “the mobilization of knowledge and skills of these expatriate professionals can play an even more effective role facilitating economic development in their countries of origin”.

Actually, there are two diaspora factors that facilitate diaspora knowledge transfer, namely, diaspora associations and social capital. Meanwhile, there is a large economic and sociological literature emphasizing that the creation of migrants’ networks facilitates exchanges of goods, factors, and ideas between the migrants’ host and home countries (Docquier & Rapoport, 2007: 20). To clarify how diaspora function in terms of the contribution to the development and knowledge transfer to the home country, Docquier & Rapoport (2007: 21) stated that “the role of migrants’ networks is to diffuse information on job availability and provide hospitality and help in job search”. Furthermore, social networks facilitate access to resources, such as financial capital, human capital, and knowledge capital

(Sorenson 2005 cited in Siar, 2014 :306). Meanwhile, Johnson and Sedaca (2004: 65) asserted the role of the diaspora database in providing information that can be used by network members, and they stated: “network members can use these portals for chat room discussions to exchange contacts, technical methods, lessons learned or raise awareness of key issues in their field of expertise”. Additionally, “networks provide a basis for social cohesion because they enable people to communicate and cooperate with each other for mutual advantage even if they do not have a direct relationship” (Field, 2008:14).

2.4.1.4. The Individual Factors

Experience shows that there are personal goals and interests that influence an individual's decision to become part of circular activities and engage in knowledge transfer and development in his/her home country. Unlike some of the other responses to the diaspora link that involve some level of financial benefit to members of the diaspora, knowledge transfer depends mainly on the ability and willingness of the diaspora to provide their ‘knowledge and skill assets’ on a volunteer basis (Johnson and Sedaca 2004: 62). Individual and sentimental links are the main motivating factors for the diaspora to engage in knowledge transfer to the country of origin (Siar, 2014 :305). A study by (Siar, 2011: 86) on skilled migration knowledge transfer and development revealed that “Altruism was exhibited by the majority of the participants and appeared to be the strongest motivation”. Moreover, Gustavsson & Peszkowski (2007: 24) asserted that the factors contributed to the satisfaction and problems of returned migrants are dependent upon their expectations prior to return, but also on other factors such as the repatriates’ personality, age (different generations), family, job offers, function area. Lucas (2005: 154) stressed the role of transnational relation in the international migration and the individuals' decision in development and knowledge transfer to their home country, and he stated: “Family, friends or other contacts overseas ease the process of relocating, serving to sustain and amplify specific migration streams once initiated”. However, learning new things and gaining more experience are driving factors for the temporary return of skilled people. The results of the study of Gustavsson & Peszkowski (2007: 21) showed that “All of the returnees have the feeling that they have gone through personal development, acquired new insights and learned new approaches of working and thinking because of their assignments. Lastly, Sipavičienė *et al.*, (2009) indicate that the achievement of some objectives such as high income, to get a higher level of education, or to gain experience are often sufficient motivations for immigrants to consider returning.

2.4.2. THE IMPACTS OF CIRCULAR AND RETURN MIGRATION ON DEVELOPMENT IN HOME COUNTRIES

It is interesting to note that “the shortage of data and the expected weak effect are some reasons why no macroeconomic assessment of the impact of return migration exists” (OECD, 2008: 197). However, circular migration and temporary return is a seemingly promising approach as it allows the diasporas to engage in the development process in their home country without necessarily settling there. Interestingly enough, many countries have tried to decrease their losses resulting from brain drain via “facilitating and regulating temporary and circular migration in order to tap into its benefits” (Global Forum on Migration and Development, 2008: 3), and to grasp the opportunities that this new pattern of migration can provide. Indeed, “recent migration literature has claimed that return migrants have the potential to supply countries with the type of skills that they cannot generate locally” (Jackson, 2012: 16). In general terms, as a temporary return is easier to implement and less dramatic for the returnees, many recent initiatives have focused on temporary return (Lowell & Gerova, 2004 :8).

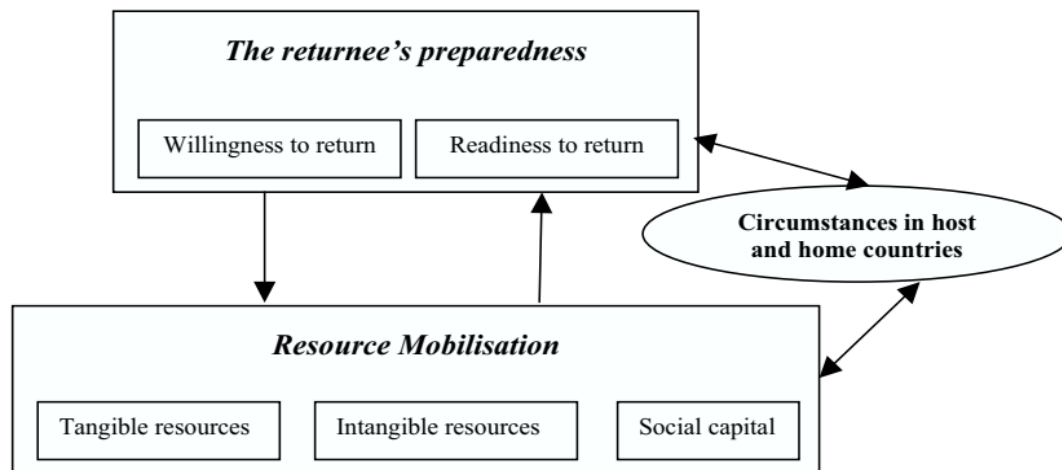
Along these lines, IOM and other members of the Global Migration Group highlighted the benefits of circular migration and they stated: “from a country of origin’s perspective, circular migration can allow for the acquisition of new ideas, technologies or land-use practices that can then be replicated in the community of origin through the transfer of ideas, training and capacity building activities” (GMG cited in Lanzieri & Novkovska, 2016:8). Meanwhile, Lubbad (2008: 6) argued that “while permanent migration decreases the social and economic link between migrant and his home country, circular migration could provide multi-benefits such as social, cultural exchange, and transfer of knowledge for both countries of origin and countries of destination”. Despite the significant impacts of “remittances or various forms of individual or institutional investment, it can be argued that the mobilization of knowledge and skills of these expatriate professionals can play an even more effective role facilitating economic development in their countries of origin”(Johnson and Sedaca, 2004: 55). The extent of benefit from highly skilled returnees depends mainly on the quality and depth of knowledge and the skills he or she gained and experience in the host country. The more the knowledge and technology they experienced the more the benefits. According to a cross-party Parliamentary Committee appointed by the Swedish Government in 2009, “three groups of migrants that have the potential of influencing development in their countries of

origin: labor migrants, international students, and entrepreneurs” (Lanzieri, & Novkovska, 2016: 10). Indian software engineers experience is one of the best role models for temporary migration returns. A survey conducted among 225 Indian software firms revealed strong evidence of brain circulation, with 30–40% of the higher-level employees having relevant work experience in a developed country (Commander *et al.*, 2004 cited in Docquier & Rapoport, 2007: 15). Furthermore, China has supported its students to learn abroad and currently seeks to benefit from their return. Likewise, Taiwan’s leapfrog advancement is in no small degree attributed to returning scientists and highly skilled migrants mainly in the area of technology and engineering (Lowell & Gerova, 2004: 8).

Despite the significant impacts of circular and return migration and examples of success in some countries such as Taiwan, India, and China in tapping the knowledge and skills of expatriate professionals (Saxenian, 2005; Zweig *et al.*, 2008 cited in Siar, 2014: 301), the repatriation process is still under-researched (Bonache & Brewster, 2001; Riusala & Suutari, 2004), and it was “subjected to some criticisms in the last years. Return skilled migration remains relatively limited and is often rather a consequence than a trigger of growth in the home country” (Docquier & Rapoport, 2007:15). Meanwhile, Lazarova & Tarique (2005: 362) stated that “harvesting knowledge transfer benefits through circularity cannot happen automatically, since capturing some kinds of knowledge is not an easy process”. Moreover, some studies (Oomen, 2013: 11) showed that the majority of those repatriated were trapped in the informal market and unable to transfer the skills they acquired as part of their migration experience. From another point of view, Yeaton & Hall (2008: 77) argue that “expatriates are transferred back home with an inadequate understanding of the country and the culture and without much previous exhortation, preparation, and without a clear career path at the organization”. According to the Global Migration Group (2010: 54), “Unplanned return can be ineffectual and mean that migrants suffer themselves and may bring challenges to the communities to which they return”. Return is most sustainable “when coupled with assistance mechanisms that support the creation of socio-economic opportunities and prevent the exclusion and separation of returnees and non-migrant communities” (Oomen, 2013: 18). Generally speaking, for a successful return, there are two fundamental factors that shape return migration: “free will and migrants’ preparedness” (Cassarino, 2008: 101). Indeed, “the higher the level of preparedness, the better the capability of highly skilled returnees to mobilize resources autonomously and the greater their contribution to development at home” (Cassarino, 2004: 275). *Figure 2.1* illustrates how the willingness and readiness interact to

create the readiness and preparedness of the highly skilled migrants to return, either permanently or temporarily.

Figure: 2.1. Return Migration Preparation



Source: Cassarino, J, P, 2004, *Theorising Return Migration: The Conceptual Approach to Return Migrants Revisited* p. 271.

2.5. THE KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND CIRCULATION

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants is crucial in providing the countries with expertise and experiences that cannot be created locally. The engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer and development in their home country is one of the main concerns of contemporary governments. Additionally, the relationship between knowledge transfer and organizational development is well obvious, as knowledge transfer considers one of the main sources of organizational learning (Birkinshaw, 2001: 13). So, it is worth examining the concepts and processes of knowledge transfer.

2.5.1. KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is power and it is very essential for the evolution of contemporary organizations. Moreover, knowledge is considered one of the most important competitive advantages for organizations in many industries (Argote & Ingram, 2000: 155; Watson & Hewett, 2006: 141). Generally speaking, there is a direct relationship between the capability of the organization to share knowledge and its performance. Undoubtedly, knowledge enhances the predictability and capacity of an organization, and it “powers the ability of professionals to be

their best and to deliver valuable service to customers” (Yeh, 2005: 36). Researchers have addressed the concept of knowledge from different points of view. The *economic approach* depicts knowledge as a limited resource that should be utilized. According to this approach, “knowledge has become the key economic resources not individuals, and it can be transformed into intangible assets, which can include employees’ skills, information, intellectual capital and the innovative use of assets” (Drucker, 1995: 55–61). Meanwhile, Jennifer (2000: 11) underscores the social perspective of knowledge and he argues that “knowledge is a social and continuous process that is shaped by learning”. Actually, knowledge is one of the four core issues that the UNDP utilizes to measure capacity development; it represents capacity constraints we see most commonly encountered across a variety of situations (UNDP, 2010:18). According to Turban *et al.* (2007: 581), there are two levels of knowledge: shallow knowledge and deep knowledge. He explains them as follows: “shallow knowledge is the representative of surface-level information that can be used to deal with a very specific situation, while deep knowledge is the internal and causal structure of a system and involves the interactions between the system’s components”.

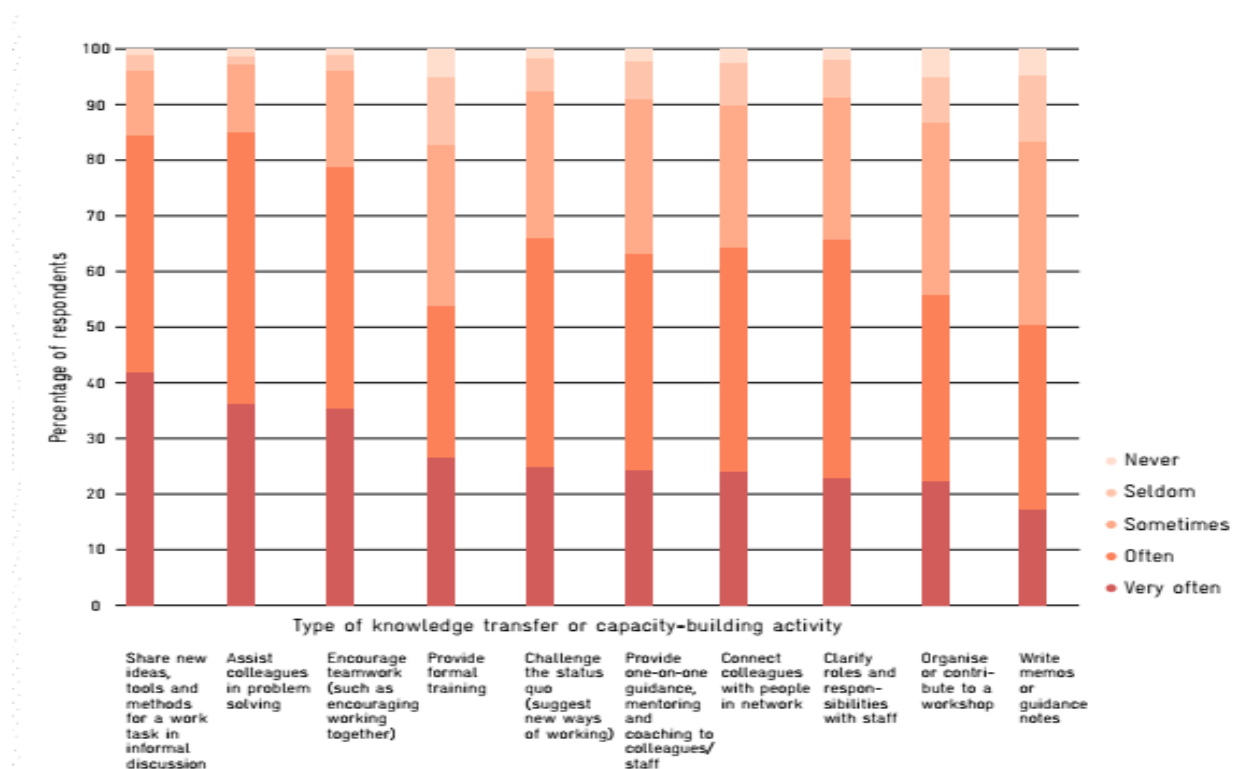
Knowledge has been classified in many and different ways. For example, Alavi and Leidner (2001: 113) classified knowledge as tacit, explicit, individual, social, declarative, procedural, casual, conditional, relational, and pragmatic. Although there are classifications that specify various kinds of knowledge, noticeably, the most substantial distinction is between tacit and explicit knowledge¹. Both types of knowledge penetrate into the daily tasks of organizations and both contribute to achieving organizational goals. However, sharing explicit knowledge over the organization is much easier than tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge outflow of knowledge remains a challenge for many organizations. For example, “70% of the employees in the sales department of some Fortune 100 corporations in the information technology industry have left in the year 2000, leaving a knowledge vacuum of stunning proportions that their successors are struggling to fill” (Beazley *et al.*, 2002, ix). Sometimes, the shortage and inefficiency of human capital may obstruct knowledge management processes. Distinctly, there is a growing realization about knowledge as the key driver of institutional development, as it leads to bringing down the cost of production and to increasing the assets of the organizations, which strengthens their competitive advantages.

¹ Tacit knowledge represents knowledge that cannot be written down, exists in people's heads and is extremely difficult to transfer (Yeh, 2005: 36). While, explicit knowledge exists in the form of words, sentences, documents, organized data, computer programs, reports, written instructions, and in other explicit forms (King, 2009: 4).

2.5.2. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER THROUGH CIRCULATION

The approach of knowledge transfer through people's mobility views skilled migration as an approach that does not definitely drive to the leakage of skills and knowledge for the countries of origin. Instead, there are some examples and role models that have indicated it can lead to brain gain. However, knowledge as one of the forms of remittances was first proposed by Peggy Levitt, where she defined it as "ideas, behaviours, identities and social capital that flow from receiving to source countries" (Levitt, 1998: 927). The organizations sought to share knowledge through the exchange of experience and group meetings. knowledge transfer is the first step in its utilization (Coakes, 2003: 42). Knowledge transfer would then indicate "conveying or moving knowledge from one person or place to another" (Cantoni *et al.*, 2001:665). Since knowledge transfer is a process of interaction among individuals and across organizational units, Marquardt, (2002: 30) claimed that knowledge transfer is "the mechanical, electronic, and interpersonal movement of information and knowledge, both intentionally and unintentionally, throughout the organization". Transfers of best practices are thus seen as dyadic exchanges of organizational knowledge between a source and a recipient unit in which the identity of the recipient matters (Szulanski, 1996: 28). Furthermore, Szulanski (1996: 28–29) stated four stages of knowledge transfer namely: initiation, implementation, ramp-up, and integration. Indeed, these stages are interrelated and move in a sequential manner. It should be noted that knowledge transfer could be affected by organizational culture. Some literature identifies the following cultural factors: "collaboration, mutual trust, learning, leadership and incentives/rewards" (Goh *et al.*, 2006: 104). Nonaka and Konno (1998) on the other hand, identify four basic patterns of transferring and sharing explicit and tacit knowledge: Socialization (tacit to tacit), Combination (explicit to explicit), externalization (tacit to explicit) and internalization (explicit to tacit). Meanwhile, the result of the study of Kuschminder *et al.* (2014) focuses on the main forms of knowledge transferred by returnees (*see Figure 2.2*).

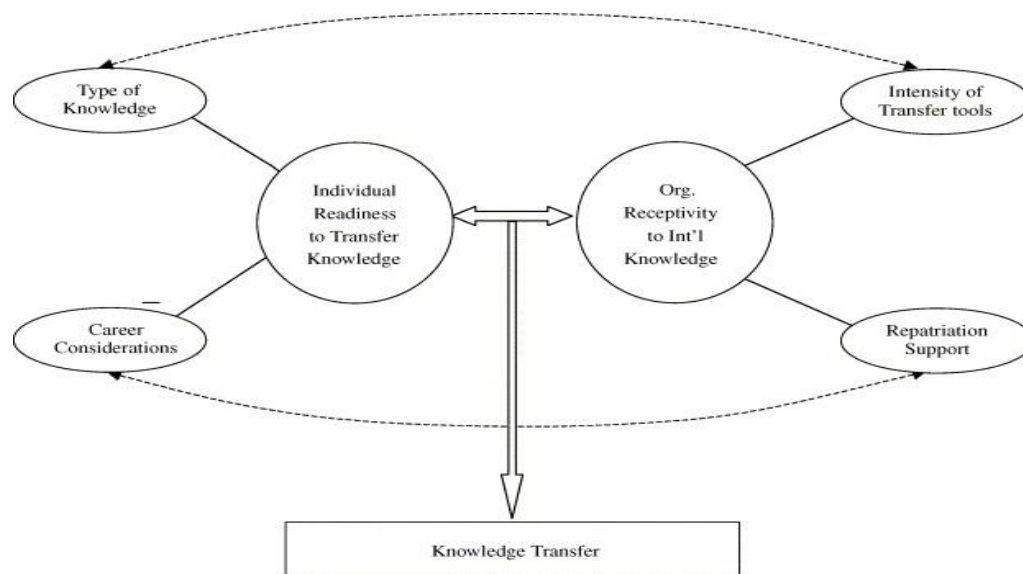
Figure: 2.2. The forms of knowledge transferred by return experts



Source: Kuschminder et al., *Contributions and Barriers to Knowledge Transfer: The experience of Returning Experts* (2014): p. 13.

The figure above shows the most forms of knowledge that have been used including sharing new ideas and methods, assisting colleagues, encouraging teamwork, suggesting new ways of working, and clarifying roles and responsibilities. This indicates that the contribution of skilled returnees in the transfer of tacit knowledge was more than explicit knowledge. Furthermore, to capture knowledge more effectively, organizations need to have “the right tools and create right incentives to repatriates to share their knowledge” (Lazarova & Tareque, 2005:10). *Figure 2.3* illustrates the knowledge transfer framework developed by Lazarova & Tareque (2005).

Figure: 2.3. Knowledge Transfer Framework



Source: Lazarova & Tareque, 2005: p. 370.

According to the above figure, the knowledge transfer achieves its optimal goals when there is a match between the captured knowledge and tools & mechanisms to transfer this knowledge. Moreover, the more this knowledge fits into the goals of the organization the better it impacts the organization.

2.5.3. BARRIERS OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

There is growing evidence that there are potential barriers and facilitators to knowledge transfer. Many authors (Kuschminder *et al.*, 2014: 24; Hubert & Lopez, 2013; Kaps 2011: 7; Goh *et al.*, 2006: 117; Riege, 2005; Bock *et al.*, 2005: 94; Szulanski, 1996) investigated barriers in knowledge transfer and they place more weight on cultural, technological, organizational and individual barriers. According to them barriers mostly inhibit better and efficient knowledge sharing. It is, therefore, “substantial to recognize and exclude or keep down as many of these barriers as possible” (Hong *et al.*, 2011: 14426). While Szulanski (1996: 30, 31) identify several barriers that affect knowledge transfer, namely: “causal ambiguity, an unproven record of knowledge, lack of motivation, lack of absorptive capacity of a receiver, weak intimacy and relationship between source unit and a recipient unit”. However, Riege (2005: 23) divided knowledge sharing barriers into three categories, which include personal, organizational, and technological category.

McLaughlin *et al.* (2008) highlighted four barriers connected with knowledge transfer in an organization, including cross-category barriers such as shortage of resources, organizational

barriers, personal barriers, and technology barriers. Furthermore, the result of a study by Goh *et al.*, 2006: 117) pointed out that cultural factors such as trust, leadership, and incentives play a crucial role in determining the outcome of knowledge transfer efforts. Ignoring these soft issues and focusing only on the hard technological issues may not bring the results that the organization is looking to achieve. The study of Lindsey (2011: 56) revealed that “Lack of knowledge sharing facilities, trust, common ground, reciprocity, contextual clause, willingness to share, motivation to participate, understanding of technical language, clarity and consciousness, resistance to change and time limitation” are the main barriers to knowledge transfer. Furthermore, Herrmann (2011) identified five knowledge management barriers: technology, content, routine and procedures, organization, and personal. He also identified solutions and new methods to overcome these barriers.

The literature above shows different points of view about knowledge transfer barriers in organizations. Although the technological barriers are crucial, the researchers place more weight on organizational and individual barriers. To overcome knowledge sharing barriers, Martinez (2016) claimed that self-efficacy and trust among employees have a strong impact on knowledge-sharing behaviors. Considering the importance of these factors in solving job-related problems “a number of studies have shown that people with high levels of expertise, skills, and capabilities are more willing to provide useful suggestions and advice” (Aliakbar *et al.*, 2013: 7).

2.5.4. SOME EXAMPLES OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER THROUGH CIRCULATION

Countries’ concern to involve the diaspora into the development process and knowledge transfer increased over the years. For example, Ireland has recently appointed a minister for diaspora affairs, and for the first time in Ireland’s history, underlined that managing relations with the diaspora is a government responsibility (Department of foreign affairs and trade, 2015: 14). Actually, Ireland has been widely cited for its policies to encourage return migration (Lowell & Gerova, 2004: 11). Also, Ethiopia is one of the best examples among other African countries. “Since 2002 the Ethiopian government wooed diasporas by offering them special legal status, providing tax breaks and other incentives to potential entrepreneurs and investors, lowering barriers to their involvement and supplying its nationals abroad with the required information” (Chacko & Price, 2009: 12).

Taiwan is one of the fortunate countries in return migration and knowledge transfer. The governmental policies and efforts ensured the engagement of many skilled migrants and their return to their homeland (Lowell & Gerova, 2004: 10). For example, Taiwanese R&D professionals back in Taiwan, had 2,563 returnees in 1996, a number that more than doubled by 2000, reaching 5,025 (Lucas, 2004). It is also important to note that in 2004, India established the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) “to address the lack of government policy coordination on migration, the ministry has programs that reach out to the Indian diaspora” (IOM & MPI, 2012: 74). Besides, “the Indian government tasked a high-level committee with recommending a broad but flexible policy framework and country-specific plans to engage the estimated 20 million members of the Indian diaspora” (Ibid: 74). The engagement of Indian skilled migrants in the development of their home country in recent years has been an obvious one. “Thousands of skilled professionals, mostly from the IT sector, are returning to India, driven by job opportunities, economic development and family ties in India, and pushed by the economic recession and restrictive immigration policies in the host countries” (Tejada *et al.*, 2013: 7). For example, “the estimated number of the IT professional returned to India 2000-2004 was 25 thousand since the reverse flow is relatively small” (Chacko, 2007: 134). “The digital Partners organization which is based in Seattle established a mechanism to join the IT diaspora from India and help transfer their accumulated knowledge and expertise of IT systems to reduce poverty in India” (Johnson & Sadaca, 2004:58). Though, “returning immigrants who were part of the knowledge diaspora bring skills, connections, and capital that helped thrust the Indian IT industry to the forefront” (Chacko, 2007: 138). Regardless of the debate among “experts on the extent to which the Indian diaspora impacted their origin country basically in the area of technology and IT industry in India, undoubtedly Indian labour abroad, has played a key role in its development” (Newland & Tanaka, 2010: 6).

While “China, India, Mexico, and Ireland have all achieved a degree of success in benefiting from their significant expatriate communities, however, there are considerable examples to the contrary. Armenia and Afghanistan have not been that fortunate in this regard (Lowell & Gerova, 2004: 11). For example, Afghanistan is one of the countries that experienced temporary return migration of some highly skilled migrants. “The Government of Afghanistan and some international organizations have explicitly encouraged temporary return since 2001” (Kuschminder, 2011:4). Indeed, Afghanistan was among the countries in

which temporary return migration programs were implemented. Three of these programs have run by IOM and other international organizations which are summarized below.

- Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals (TRQN). This program was one of the most successful programs, and yet least well-known (Majidi & Hart, 2016). It provides an opportunity to “migrants in the Netherlands who have the desire to participate in the reconstruction of their countries of origin to sign up with IOM for a paid temporary placement varying from a few weeks to three months” (IOM & MPI, 2012: 168). It “has been launched in cooperation of the IOM and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to strengthen the institutional capacity and bridge the gaps in the public sector” (Kuschminder, 2011:8).
- Return of Qualified Afghans (RQA) program. After the collapse of the Taliban regime, IOM in cooperation with the new Afghani government facilitated the return of highly skilled Afghans from around the world. “Participants were given important positions due to their high qualifications” (IOM & MPI, 2012: 166). The skilled returnees worked in both the public and private sectors. The subsequent evaluation of the program showed that “most participants were well suited to their position and possessed the required skills, which were usually gained at previous jobs”. (Ibid: 166).

Despite some degree of success to these programs in Afghanistan, and the increasing level of aid (Bizhan, 2016:6), the programs were criticized because of the low compensation packages and incentives they offered. Furthermore, “the salary offered does not even begin to cover the highly inflated cost of living in Kabul” (Jazayery, 2002: 244). According to Kuschminder (2011: 16), the main challenges of these programs were “Lack of training and capacity of the local staf and shortage of resources in the host institutions”. Likewise, the evaluation of the RQA program showed that “institutions were unprepared to receive or utilize an EU-RQA as an employee” (Altai Consulting cited in MOI & MPI, 2012: 177). In Afghanistan, people mostly remained concerned about security, safety, and economic conditions (The Asia Foundation, 2015:7).

Some Arab countries also provide examples of good practices in managing their relations with their diaspora and tap into the technical and knowledge-based resources of these communities abroad. The governments of Morocco and Tunisia have millions of expatriates abroad. It is worthy to note that these two countries have government offices purposely to serve their expatriate members with the sole aim to inform them about the local content

issues and opportunities in their country of origin. Additionally, they allowed their nationals to obtain dual citizenship and vote from abroad. Morocco is one of the countries that engaged in what is a so-called city-to-city partnership; these are projects focusing on strengthening local governance, basically concerning waste management and education. Indeed, the commitment of Moroccan migrants to engage with these projects was very significant (MOI & MPI, 2012: 173). Algeria is also making some efforts to engage millions of its expatriates and give them the right to vote. However, some Algerians in France, for example, may choose not to vote because they see themselves as French Algerians, not just Algerians.

Learning from the experience of other countries is one of the main landmarks of diaspora engagement in knowledge transfer to the home country as a development approach. This brief review of the experiences of some other countries reveals different levels of success in the engagement of skilled diaspora. Successful experiences of others have taught us that the engagement of skilled diasporas in knowledge transfer and development must be based on evidence and concrete data on highly skilled migrants, place of residence, qualifications, experiences, and so on. However, the presence of a national strategy to engage skilled diaspora in development is still a crucial tool in this regard.

2.6. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

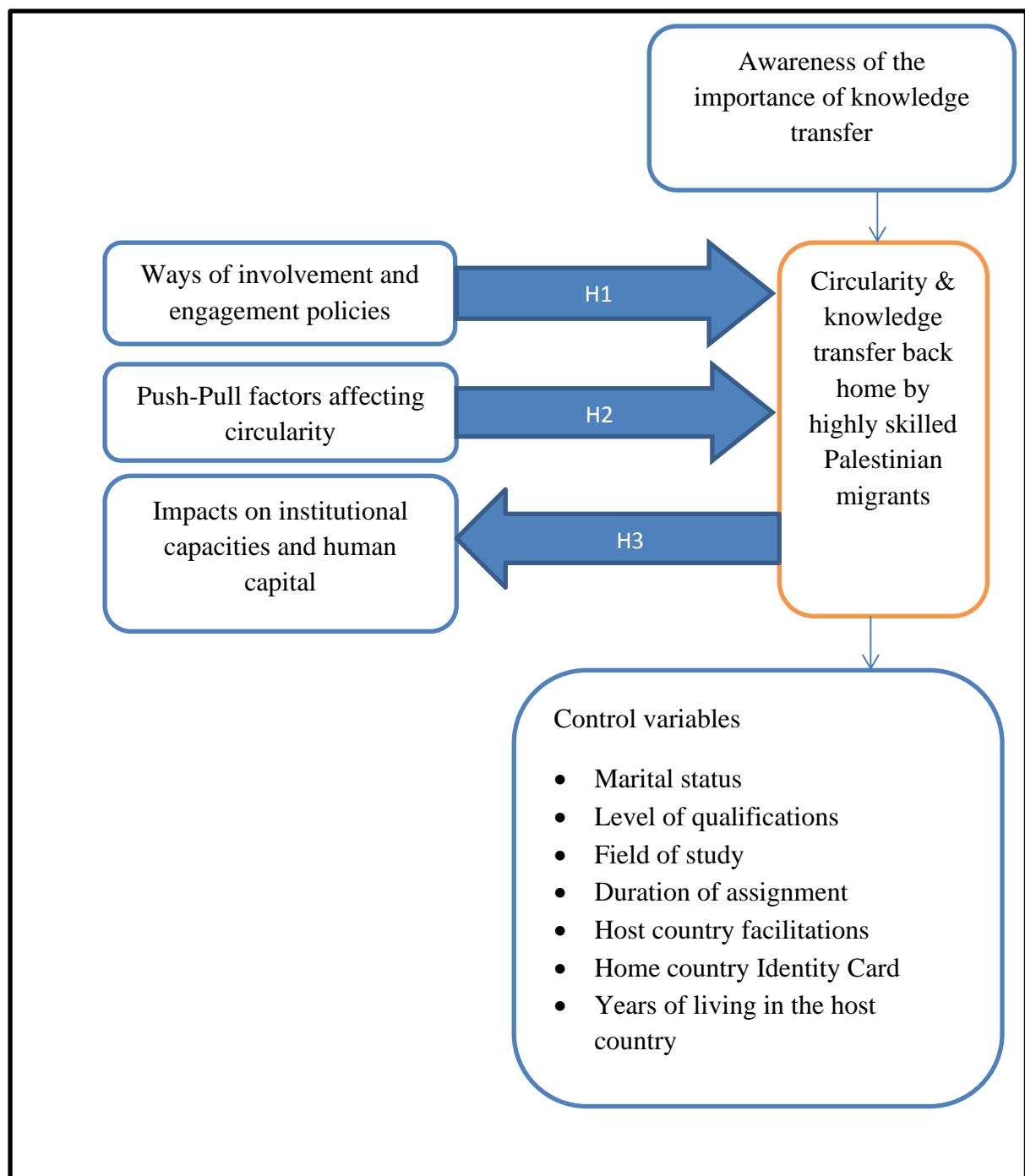
Based on the foregoing review of related literature regarding circular migration and the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer, a conceptual framework was developed in order to examine the viability of knowledge transferred through circular migration as a development strategy in the case of Palestine taking into account the peculiarity of the Palestinian territories as a country that is still under occupation. Inspired by the principles of the transnational theory, this conceptual framework was designed to explicate the relationship between the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer and the impacts of this knowledge on Palestinian institutions and human capital. The different factors influencing this relationship have been incorporated.

Knowledge transfer through circular and return migration is not a discrete process that takes place independently of the various factors of influence. Literature review and international organization for migration publications and interventions indicated that knowledge transfer through circular migration occurs under the influence of various push-pull factors that interact with each other and operate in an intertwined manner. These factors include the host

country factors, the country of origin factors, the diaspora factors, and the individual factors. However, this study examined these four factors and added another factor that is related to the occupation measures. This addition is necessary to reach accurate and credible results since Palestine is still under occupation and its harsh measures.

Figure 2.4 shows the analytical framework of this thesis. It illustrates the factors that influence the relationship between the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer and the impacts of this engagement. This model is inspired by the idea that the mobility of people across international boundaries is controlled and guided by multiple push-pull factors. First and foremost, the host country factors, mainly gained experiences, getting citizenship, and the presence of bilateral programs. Second, the other factors are the push-pull factors at the country of origin, and how they affect the decision of highly skilled people to engage in knowledge transfer through circular and return migration. The main sub-factors to be discussed here take into consideration the importance of knowledge transfer, the willingness of the country, and its preparedness. The third influencing factor discussed in this thesis is the diaspora factor, which includes networking and mobilization. Additionally, the fourth factor is the individual factor, which includes individual motives and family interests. Finally, the fifth factor is the occupation measures, which are specific to the case of Palestine. Also, the ways of involvement and engagement policies are part of this model. *Figure 2.4* illustrates this model.

Figure: 2.4. The Conceptual Framework for Engaging Skilled Diaspora



Source: Author's own compilation based on the research methods.

2.7. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWO

The topics reviewed in this chapter highlight the complexity of knowledge transfer as a development strategy and a field that holds implications in different spheres. In this chapter, the author aimed to outline and explore the main themes related to knowledge transfer by

highly skilled migrants taking into consideration the different arguments and approaches. This included a mounting discussion on the role of circular and return migration of highly skilled migrants and its potential impact on capacity building in home countries. Additionally, migration and return migration theories and perspectives have been traced. Likewise, the author aimed in this chapter to shed more light on the different points of view of what factors affect knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants. Notably, the analytical framework shows that knowledge transfer through circulation is human mobility that is remarkably influenced by different factors that operate together in an intertwined manner. In the fourth chapter, the author reviewed certain fundamental topics related to migration and return migration within the Palestinian context.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. OVERVIEW

This chapter presents the design and methodology of the research study. In point of fact, it summarises in detail the procedures adopted in the research study as well as the statistical analysis. Inspired by the fact that, research methodology is a systematic road plan for conducting academic researches, and “the general principle which will guide the researcher in his study” (Dawson, 2002: 14). The researcher first identified the problem statement, the gap to be bridged, the research questions, and the scope of the study. However, the methodology of this dissertation is built on the insight from transnationalism that migration is not just an individual process, but that it is also influenced by external factors both in the home country and the host country. Thus, to achieve accurate and meaningful results, the researcher determined that the most convenient method to accomplish this case study is the mixed approach.

This chapter discusses how the research is conducted including the methodological tools applied in this research to reach sound and accurate findings. Additionally, it clarifies and justifies the reasons for choosing the research strategy and explains methods of data collection through questionnaires and qualitative interviews. This chapter also illustrates the procedure of data analysis and identifies the scope of the research, reliability, and validity of the tools, community, and the sampling design that were used in the research. Finally, it explains the difficulties and limitations of the research work.

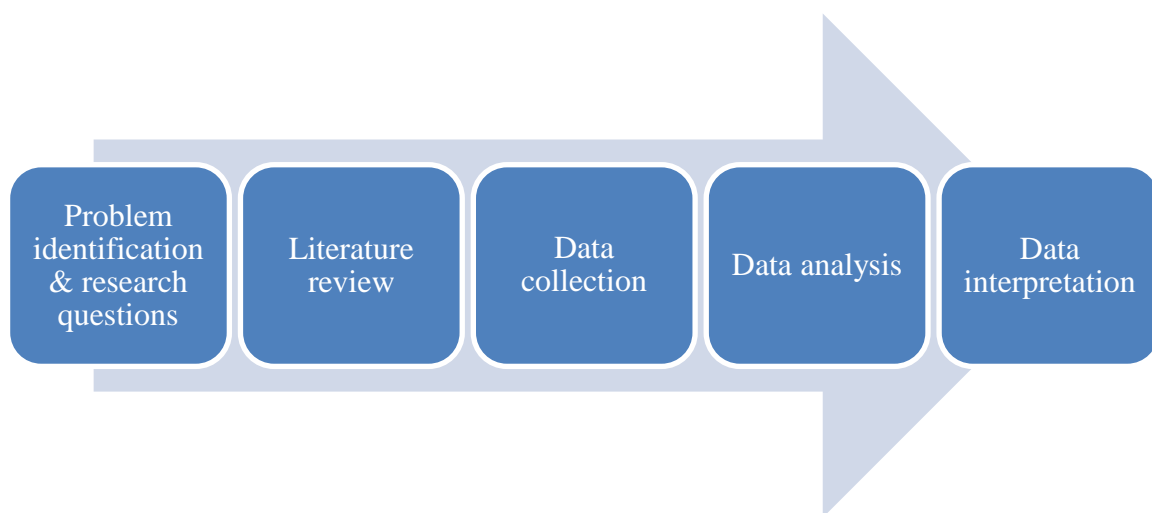
3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND STRATEGY

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in a procedure (Kothari & Garg, 2014: 29). Indeed, the research design describes the procedures you plan to follow in conducting the research (McNabb, 2018: 105). The researcher applied the descriptive-analytical approach in this research study, as it is the most suitable approach for

the diagnosis of this topic. In the first phase, the researcher studied relevant studies related to the topic, whether directly or indirectly, collected data and information for the research, both published and unpublished work from various sources, such as books, previous studies, newsletters, governmental and non-governmental organizations' reports, and plans as well as the Internet and relevant websites.

The researcher applied both quantitative and qualitative approaches and mainly relied on the primary sources using questionnaires and interview tools (soft indicators). The sources of the indicators are international organizations such as the IOM, the global competitiveness index (GCI) released by the World Economic Forum, and previous research studies (Siar, 2012, Williams & Balaz 2005, Williams & Balaz 2004 & Kuschminder *et al.*, 2014). This research study was carried out taking into consideration Creswell's (2012: 7) steps in scientific research which consist of defining the problem, reviewing the literature, determining the purpose of research, collecting data, and lastly analysing and interpreting the data. According to this approach, the research questions were designed and distributed to the target group, then they were collected and analyzed by using SPSS statistical program, and finally, answers and conclusions were drawn. *Figure 3.1* illustrates research design and steps.

Figure: 3.1. Research design and steps



Source: Author's own compilation based on the research methods.

3.3. Justification for the Use of a Mixed Method

As “the use of either quantitative or qualitative approaches by themselves is inadequate to address some complex problems” (Creswell, & Creswell, 2017: 203), many scholars claimed

that a mixed approach is more reliable, provides in-depth information and supports findings (Borrego *et al.*, 2009: 60, Frost, 2011: 7, Castellan, 2010: 12). Although the qualitative approach provides a better understanding of the research topic, and “it limits the contacts with the population to the strict necessary” (Courbage, 2011: 160), quantitative data helps to understand the phenomenon in general and to generalize the results.

The research questions determine what kind of approach should be adopted to answer them. Furthermore, the research design is guided by the main research question which is: To what extent is knowledge transfer by highly skilled Palestinian migrants through circular and return migration applicable and viable as a development strategy within the Palestinian peculiarity? However, after reviewing different literature and formulating research questions, the need for a mixed methodology technique to accomplish and enrich the thesis was evident.

Inspired by Creswell *et al.* (2003: 211) argument, “the rationale behind mixed methods research is that we can often learn more about our research topic if we can combine the strengths of qualitative research with the strengths of quantitative research while compensating at the same time for the weakness of each method”. The rationale for selecting a mixed method in this thesis is the fact that the author believes he can clarify the relationships between different aspects or factors in general through a quantitative questionnaire. At the same time, using qualitative interviews conducted on a one-on-one basis can enable the author to extract deeper and valuable information. Accordingly, the most convenient method to study the engagement of highly skilled people in transferring knowledge to their home country is the mixed method as it assists the researcher to access more resources and more individuals of the target group, which is very crucial in enriching and generalizing the results. *Table 3.1* shows the specific research questions and the method used to answer them.

Table: 3.1. The specific research questions and the methods used

No	Research questions	Methods
1	To what extent are Palestinian policymakers and highly skilled migrants aware of the importance of knowledge transfer by skilled diaspora as a strategy that may contribute to the development of Palestinian institutions?	Qualitative
2	Are there any government policies to engage highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer and development in Palestine?	Quantitative + Quantitative
3	What factors affect the decision of highly skilled migrants to transfer knowledge and the viability of circulation as a development strategy in Palestine?	Quantitative + Quantitative
4	To what extent do Palestinian highly skilled migrants influence development, institutional building, and human capital in Palestine?	Quantitative + Quantitative
5	How can knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants be improved and properly institutionalized at the Palestinian institutions?	Qualitative

Source: Author's table made based on the research questions and methods.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION

The research method is the tool used to collect data. Although in social research there are many tools to collect data, Dawson (2002: 27) mentioned four main ones namely: interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and participant observation. These tools are carefully selected to answer the research questions and generate useful data. In this research study, the data was collected through an online questionnaire and through semi-structured interviews, which complement each other. Both contain questions about the following themes: personal data, engagement in knowledge transfer, impacts on institutions, human capital, and highly skilled migrants, factors affecting the engagement, and there are also questions on institutionalization and policy landscape.

3.4.1. QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is a specific set of paragraphs and questions designed to collect data from the respondents about the research area of interest (Suhail, 2003: 52). Questionnaires are important to reduce the level of bias that may occur when designing and asking questions, as respondents respond to the questionnaire freely without any interference or influence from the researcher. The survey questionnaire of this thesis consists of four parts, each of which includes a group of questions as shown in *Table 3.2*.

Table: 3.2. Sections of the questionnaire

NO	Section	Number of questions
1	Socio-demographic data questions	10
2	Involvement in knowledge transfer	3
3	Factors affecting the knowledge transfer	30
4	The usefulness of knowledge transfer	32

Source: Author's table made according to the research questions.

The engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge to their home country was evaluated using an index of a 75-item scale, developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents using social media platforms, face-to-face, and via email. The questionnaire consists of three types of questions; the prevailing type is the closed-ended questions. The answers for these questions were on a scale from 1 to 5 (Likert scale), such that 1 refers to no extent, and 5 to a very great extent. The second type of question is open-ended questions. The third type is a checklist question, whereby each question is assigned a score of 1 if the answer is yes, and 0 if the answer is no. The sample survey instrument collected background information that included gender, host country citizenship, field of study, educational level, duration of the assignment in Palestine, and duration of living in the host country, as indicated in Appendix B).

The questionnaire was designed in both the English and Arabic languages, and it was distributed and retrieved in a period of six months. The design of the questionnaire was quite decisive as some of the respondents did not speak English, so the availability of the Arabic version made it possible for these people to fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed mainly with the assistance of universities, hospitals, and NGOs, where highly

skilled migrants are concentrated. Some institutions were very cooperative and they helped in the distribution of the questionnaire among the target group; notable among them are Bethlehem University, Palestine Polytechnic University, Hebron University, Arab American University, and Al-Najah University Hospital. It is worthy to mention that, before the distribution of the questionnaire; it was refined and reviewed through pilot testing. According to Creswell (2007: 133), “this refinement is necessary to develop research tools, estimate the degrees of observer bias, and tailor research procedures”.

As mentioned above, half of the Palestinian people live abroad. However, there are no exact statistics on the number of professionals and highly skilled people among them. It is worthy to note that data on highly skilled Palestinian migrants is not available, whether in terms of numbers or qualifications. It can be said that there are hundreds of thousands who are highly skilled people. Surely, the vast majority are not part of a circular/return migratory movement, which is the main focus of this thesis. Within this diffuse and unclear community identifying and surveying the high-skilled migrants within the Palestinian diaspora is not an easy task. Practically, the research community consists of those highly skilled migrants who started arriving in Palestine since the second part of the nineties with the aim of transferring knowledge to their home country. These newcomers came mostly from North America, Europe, and some Arab countries. They differed from other returnees in that their status was closer to circular movement between the host country and the country of origin. According to the League of Arab State (2008), “until 2008 Knowledge transfer programs contributed to bringing more than 220 experts to the Palestinian territories”. While Al-Labadi (2018) pointed out that about 350 highly skilled Palestinian experts participated through knowledge transfer programs and they provided technical support and advice in terms of public policy-making. Furthermore, according to the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture – up to 2018 – this number is estimated at 940 experts. However, there are those who came with medical or scientific delegations, while others were directly attracted by Palestinian universities or institutions. Thus, the sample size was collected based on a rough estimate and the judgment of the researcher taking into account the available data. In fact, the researcher's judgment is supported by previous literature and relevant Palestinian institutions, which estimated the numbers by three thousand.

The sample size was calculated using the sample size calculator available on the sampling website <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>, with a margin of error of 0.06. Based on the calculation of the sample size, the numbers of questionnaires that should be distributed

were 250. In all, the respondents were selected such that they should be a holder of at least a Bachelor's degree. It is also important to mention that the sample represents both males and females.

According to Creswell (2012: 145), "It is not always possible to use probability sampling in educational research. Instead, a researcher can use nonprobability sampling, in which the researcher selects individuals because they are available, convenient, and represent some characteristic the investigator seeks to study". As such, the researcher selected snowball sampling which is one of the nonprobability sampling approaches.

The researcher tried his best to access as many respondents as possible using networking and snowballing techniques. This was crucial in convincing the respondents to fill out the questionnaire and thus in increasing the sample population to minimize any possibility for sampling error. The snowballing method was firstly based on meeting the well-known respondents or those who were nominated by the relevant institutions, and the subsequent step was using the current respondents to reach more new respondents. The researcher asked the respondents to recommend new individuals to fill out the questionnaire. This technique was extremely conclusive, especially that many highly-skilled returnees know each other as well as the places where they work.

3.4.2. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Interviews are one of the considerable methods for data collection as they provide in-depth information on the target group. To increase the validity and credibility of the collected data, two interview protocols were designed. The first was for highly-skilled migrants and the second was for Palestinian policymakers and directors. By choosing two interview groups, "the researcher seeks to know specific information which can be compared with information gained in other interviews" (Dawson, 2002: 28). Both types of interviews consisted of a set of open-ended questions. These questions were refined and reviewed through pilot testing more than once in order to reduce the degree of researcher bias and increase the reliability of the research tool. The feedback from the pilot study revealed a need to reduce the number of questions and to reformulate some of them. After that, the interview questions and protocol have been edited and finalized.

An interview seeks to obtain a description of the interviewee's lived world with respect to interpretations of the meaning of the described phenomena (Kvale, 2007: 11). Therefore, the

required data was collected by organizing 26 in-depth semi-structured interviews in order to obtain the required data and knowledge on the role of highly-skilled migrants in transferring knowledge to Palestine. Even though there are several forms of interview design that can be utilized in qualitative research (Creswell, 2007: 129), the researcher preferred a face-to-face approach. With open format questions, it is probably the most common form of interviews used in research studies because it allows participants to contribute as much detailed information as they want and the researcher is allowed to ask and investigative questions as a mean of follow-up (Turner, 2010: 756). However, the main disadvantage is that in-person interviews can be very time-consuming and expensive.

No doubt that the sample size in qualitative research is much smaller than that in quantitative research. Sampling was purposeful. Purposeful sampling is one of the most common methods, whereby the sample is selected taking into consideration the diversity in certain criteria such as gender, age, profession, and academic field. Definitely, the interviewees were selected for their specific knowledge and experience, and for capturing a wide variety of information and details about the research topic. Thus, the different views ought to be taken into account to ensure that the sample is representative. As such, the author used semi-structured interviews with 19 highly-skilled Palestinian migrants and seven Palestinian policymakers and directors as indicated in Appendices C and D.

The interviews have been conducted face-to-face with the interviewees at their office, place of work, or home. Maintaining the openness of participants was one of the important issues the researcher continued to keep. The duration of the interview varied from one to another, but approximately lasted for 50 minutes. Particular attention was given to the protocol or the procedure used in conducting these interviews which can be summarized as follows: First, the researcher contacted the interviewee and invited him/her to participate in the research project and provided him/her with the objective of the interview. The researcher informed the interviewee that his information will be used to help in writing the outcome of this thesis and will be kept confidential and data will be stored securely. If the interviewee accepted, the researcher will schedule an appointment. Secondly, before any interview, the interviewee was informed that the researcher will record the interview; fortunately, most of the interviewees accepted that. Nevertheless, for those who refused the interview to be recorded, the notes and ideas were taken manually. The interviews were conducted in either English or Arabic, twenty out of the twenty-six interviews were held in English while the others were held in

Arabic. Finally, the interviews were transcribed and the responses were classified and contrasted according to the thematic analysis.

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS

This section aims to explain the procedure of data analysis used in this research study. Data was collected using both structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, so data analysis included both the analysis of the questionnaire as well as interviews analysis. To obtain useful and reliable data, quantitative and qualitative analyses were applied in this thesis.

3.5.1. QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Researchers use quantitative analysis in order to discuss the relationship between different variables. As stated by Kothari and Garg (2014: 126), data analysis “particularly in case of survey or experimental data involves estimating the values of unknown parameters of the population and testing of hypothesis for drawing inferences”. Notably, data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) computer program. This analysis is necessary to interpret the raw data and convert it into a readable and manageable one so that the link between the variables can be easily found. Descriptive statistics gauged knowledge transfer scores among the sampled population. In general terms, however, several statistical techniques were employed: standardized regression, Cronbach's Alpha, and factor analysis. To understand the findings of the study, the mean score key in *Table 3.3* shown below will be useful.

Table: 3.3. Mean score key for the findings of the study

No.	Mean score	Degree of knowledge transfer	Standard
1.	1 – 2.33	Low	One Standard Deviation below
2.	2.34 – 3.67	Moderate	Mean
3.	3.68 – 5	High	One Standard Deviation above

Source: Author's table based on the research methods.

3.5.2. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The last stage in the interview design protocol is the analysis and interpretation of the gathered qualitative data. The categorization and interpretation of qualitative data begins with bringing the primary data into some level of order. Using thematic analysis, “as it is considered the simplest way for categorizing qualitative data” (Priest *et al.*, 2002: 35), the researcher manually transcribed the data from the recorder into papers to be used later in the analysis phase. After that, the researcher read them carefully and in-depth to understand the interviewees’ attitudes and to discover the differences and similarities between the views of the participants. The next phase was the categorization, where all related themes or codes were grouped into common themes. Lastly, the results were interpreted and a correlation between the different attitudes and the common theme was established which was crucial in the analysis of the interviews.

3.6. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Validity and reliability increase the credibility and transparency of the research, and “decrease opportunities to insert researcher bias in qualitative research” (Singh, 2014 cited in Mohajan, 2017: 60). In this research study, several steps were taken to ensure reliability. Firstly, during the piloting stage, the questionnaire was tested repeatedly. Moreover, the respondents filled out the questionnaire freely and willingly without any influence or interference from the researcher. Finally, the reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha to ascertain the reliability and consistency of the survey. Cronbach's Alpha for the instrument sub-scales was between 0.81 and 0.78, indicating very good reliability and consistency.

With regards to the validity, the questionnaire was designed as a tool to gather data for the purpose of answering the research questions and for examining the hypotheses. Validation of the questionnaire proceeded in two main phases. The initial phase includes a group of referees and expert arbitrators, who provided comments on the tool. The second phase implied the implementation of a pilot study (N=30) to validate the survey using exploratory factor analysis. Factor loading for all items exceeded 0.60 (0.62 to 0.90), which meant that those items were suitable for measuring every item of the engagement of highly-skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country.

To maximize the validity and reliability, the interview protocol passed through the same process as that of the questionnaire and was updated more than once for refinement and upgrading. Moreover, 26 semi-structured interviews were conducted with the target group. This number of interviews was considered sufficient to get a valid result. According to some scholars, to obtain a valid and credible result, the minimum number of interviews is six (Morse, 1994: 225). However, according to Bertaux (1981: 35), 15 interviews is the smallest acceptable sample size. Most importantly, “Creswell contends that the appropriate size of the sample ranges from 20 to 30, while others claimed that studies that use more than one method require fewer participants, as do studies that use multiple very in-depth interviews with the same participant” (Mason, 2010: 2).

3.7. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Taking into account the peculiarity of the Palestinian case and the general conditions prevailing in Palestine on the political, social, and cultural aspects, the research’s main limitations can be summarized as follows:

- The main limitation of the research study is the difficulty to generalize the findings due to the inability to accurately identify the number of highly skilled migrants who contributed to knowledge transfer to the Palestinian institutions. The researcher depended mainly on the relevant institutions and organizations to provide him with the required information on those individuals. However, some of these institutions did not have such data. Knowing this gap at the Palestinian institution in advance, the author used a mixed data collection method to collect more information from as many respondents as possible to overcome this limitation. Additionally, and despite the fact that the use of the snowball method may sometimes lead to bias as it may unintentionally neglect some members of the research population.
- Shortage of data and documentation on the engagement and contribution of highly-skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to Palestine. The lack of such information was a serious challenge for the researcher because knowledge transfer to Palestine has started since 1994 and the lack of such data was considered a critical problem.
- The shortage of previous researches on the contribution of highly-skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country (Palestine) is one of the limitations of this

research study. The researcher struggled to find related studies on this topic whether it be at Palestinian universities, research centers, or on online platforms.

- Another limitation was the difficulty in setting precise dates with some Palestinian leaders and officials due to the existence of other obligations as well as because of frequent travel abroad. Moreover, access to professors and highly specialized returnees also was not an easy task because most of them were busy and their schedules were very crowded. In many cases, the researcher was forced to reschedule a meeting with some individuals from the target group. Likewise, due to this crowded schedule, some interviewees were in a hurry, which forced the researcher to reduce the interview time, but the researchers asked the interviewees the questions to be more specific and precise.
- Some of the interviewees are living outside of Palestine at the moment especially in European countries and Jordan, thus the researcher had to travel more than once to these countries according to their spare time to interview them.
- Some of the interviewees were hesitant to reveal their identity or to provide certain kinds of information, which they considered personal or sensitive. To overcome this obstacle, the researcher assured them that the collected information will be kept confidential and the data will be stored securely.
- One of the limitations that challenged the researcher was the limited cooperation of some of the respondents; they were reluctant to fill out the questionnaire. Nonetheless, to overcome this challenge the researcher contacted them repeatedly either through social media platforms, emails, or mobile phones, but unfortunately, many of them did not respond.
- Another limitation was the lesser cooperation of some organizations and institutions. The researcher contacted the focal point at the institutions to circulate the questionnaire to the respondents, but unluckily, some of these institutions did not take it seriously. To overcome this challenge, the researcher depended basically on personal relationships with some friends in these institutions to distribute the questionnaire to the respondents.

3.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics refer to the application of moral standards to decisions made in planning, conducting, and reporting the results of the research (McNabb, 2018: 23). In this research study, the researcher was basically interested in applying ethical research principles throughout the various stages of the research work which include according to Mitchell

(1998: 14): truthfulness, thoroughness, objectivity, and relevance. During the planning phase, the researcher decided on the research population, the size of the sample as well as the methodology of the research to be applied. Furthermore, a consent letter was prepared to be distributed to the respondents to confirm that the participation of the respondents is both voluntary and confidential. The letter included reassuring the respondents that the collected data will be kept confidential and their anonymity is fully assured (as indicated in Appendix E). Also, the researcher tried his best to adhere to the various ethical standards while gathering data. As a point of fact, the author treated respondents and interviewees with respect while collecting data and provided them with an introduction about the purpose of the research. Also, the researcher was very polite when asking any sensitive questions during the interview. Furthermore, the respondents were informed that they had the right to withdraw at any time if they felt unable to continue. Accordingly, all interview data was recorded. Notes were also taken during each interview to validate data by cross-checking the notes with the recorded information. While transcribing the interviews, and to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, the researcher listened to the recordings more than once.

Three issues are of special importance when disseminating the results of the research study: keeping the particularity of participants, securing the anonymity of participants, and respecting the confidentiality of the individuals involved in the study (McNabb, 2018: 31). All these issues were taken into consideration while disseminating the findings of this study. The researcher was very concerned to keep the privacy of the participants and that their data would not be used except at the interpretation stage. Moreover, the collected data were stored securely. The issue of anonymity and confidentiality was very crucial in dealing with the data, especially the questions aimed at getting a deep and clear idea of the engagement of highly-skilled migrants in knowledge transfer back home. However, few interviewees had their own circumstances and they expressed their desire to keep some of their marginal data confidential.

3.9. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE

This chapter explained the methods used in carrying out this thesis, and the justifications for using a mixed-method approach. Essentially, the mixed-method approach was chosen to suit the theoretical framework of the thesis. In fact, transnationalism is a matter in this regard as it encompasses different actors. These actors include but are not limited to, home country

government, host country government, Diasporas' associations, and the highly-skilled migrants. Thus, the researcher chose to highlight this topic from a variety of methodological standpoint by using semi-structured, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and secondary data. The adoption of the mixed-method approach was crucial to the study. This was adopted in order to overcome the disadvantages of each model if it would be applied individually, thus maintaining the balance and credibility of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

MIGRATION AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PROGRAMS IN THE PALESTINIAN CONTEXT

4.1. OVERVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of Palestine's migration profile, including the history of migration from Palestine and its main drivers. It provides a thorough review of knowledge about circular and temporary return migration and it assesses the programs supported by international organizations like the UNDP that exist to facilitate knowledge transfer to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This chapter is primarily based on data collected from secondary sources. The chapter is divided into six parts. The first part provides an overview, while the second section, which addresses how Palestinian migration emerged, places more emphasis on the historical background. The third part traces the main drivers of migration from Palestine, including political and economic factors. The fourth part is dedicated to discussing circular and return migration in the Palestinian context, while the fifth section reviews knowledge transfer programs that target Palestine.

4.2. THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PALESTINIAN MIGRATIONS

Although migration is a global phenomenon, especially in developing countries, the migration of highly skilled people from Palestine is a peculiar case in terms both of its historical context and the socio-economic factors that have affected it. While in other contexts, migration is generally driven by job opportunities and better standards of living in host countries; Palestinian migration is mostly forced and promoted by occupation measures and practices. According to Kana'na (2000: 51), Israeli policies have focused, on the one hand, on displacing as many Palestinians as possible, and, on the other hand, on importing as many Jewish immigrants as possible from different parts of the world.

Historically speaking, migration from Palestine began at the end of the nineteenth century, a period which was characterized by political instability and security disorder, economic recession, bribery, nepotism, administrative corruption, and high taxes. An analysis of the

Ottoman statistics shows that there was little permanent migration of Arabs into or out of Palestine from 1860 to 1914 (Lubbad, 2007: 4). One of the most important features of immigration in the Ottoman era was that it was voluntary and optional, and people's main destinations were North and Latin America. During the British period, the political situation worsened as a result of the on-going confrontations between Jews, supported by the British colonial forces, and the Palestinians. The instability that resulted "contributed to the migration of additional numbers of Palestinians who were no longer able to continue to live under these unstable conditions. Some approximate estimates published in 1936 mentioned the migration of 40,000 immigrants during that period" (Musalam, 1991: 40).

In 1948, after the majority of historic Palestine fell under Israeli occupation, waves of forced mass migration began from the various Palestinian cities and villages. The characteristics of Palestinian migration therefore changed from voluntary to compulsory. In fact, the Israeli-Arab wars in 1948 caused the displacement of about 725,000 Palestinians who fled their homes and lands to seek refuge from the Israeli army, mainly in neighboring countries (Kossaifi, cited in MPC, 2013:1; Bartolomeo *et al.*, 2011: 1). The catastrophe faced by the Palestinian people in 1948 – known as 'the Nakba' – is the most prominent and tragic event in the modern history of the Palestinian people, and the suffering it produced continues to this day as a result of its many repercussions.

The Nakba is still alive in the Palestinian collective memory. The collective memory of the Palestinians is one of the most important strengths that enhances the survival of the Palestinian narrative through successive generations. Collective memory is the shared pool of knowledge and information in the memories of two or more members of a social group. In short, "collective memory" can be defined as the way in which groups remember their own history. Thus, the memory here is not an individual or a private and independent act by itself, but rather a societal phenomenon with a collective dimension influenced by societal environments and the surrounding political factors. Obviously, this means that this shared memory can only be created within a certain social and cultural framework. Collective memory is an important factor in maintaining national identity and group cohesion. When applying this assumption to the Palestinian case, it can be claimed that the current Palestinian generations clearly remember important historical milestones in the history of the Palestinian people's life, such as the Catastrophe, even though these generations did not live that event and it did not constitute a particular or concrete experience in their lives. Since the shared memory of a certain human group is a prerequisite for the existence of this group, as it

defines its identity and shapes its society, the Nakba has become part of the collective memory of the Palestinian people, which later generations remember as a reflection of societal identity and an unforgettable event in history. It is interesting to note that this shared memory has become one of the components of mobilization of Palestinians all over the world.

According to immigration statistics, about 400,000 Palestinians left the West Bank and the Gaza Strip between 1948 and 1967, heading to Jordan, America, Canada, Australia, and the Arab Gulf states (Hasasian, 1991: 72). These large and successive migrations undoubtedly led to the destruction of the structure of Palestinian society, and they also destroyed emerging industries. The middle, professional, and educated classes within Palestinian society became dispersed across a range of countries. The loss of these people hindered the formation of a cohesive society, and, at the same time, created a significant diaspora.

Waves of migration from the West Bank and Gaza Strip continued after 1967, and Palestinian emigration rates became some of the highest in the region (Matareya *et al.*, 2008: 6). There have been fluctuations in immigration from one period to another since Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, and a range of political and economic developments have also occurred in the Palestinian territories since then. Nevertheless, several studies have shown that a clear migration phenomenon occurred between 1967 and 1986. In fact, 362,500 people or 31% of the population in the West Bank emigrated, while migration from the Gaza Strip in the same period involved about 119 thousand people, or 18.5% of the population (Abu Shukr, 1990: 6).

A 1999 study of migration from Palestine in the years after 1967, produced by the Birzeit Institute of Women's Studies, indicated that "migration from the occupied territories to Europe increased after 1967 from 10% in the period 1967–1987, to 23% during the first intifada; it increased further to 24% in the period 1994–1999 and was expected to have been higher again during the second intifada" (Lubbad, 2008: 2). The same survey also revealed that "around 50% of the reported household emigrants live in Jordan, a quarter live in the Gulf and other Arab countries, 15% live in the USA and Canada, and the rest are found in Latin America, Europe, Australia, and elsewhere" (Hilal, 2007: 8). It is also interesting to note the results of a survey conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) which included 15,050 families and indicated that "about 22,000 individuals emigrated to reside outside the Palestinian territories between 2007 and 2009. This number does not

include families that have migrated completely” (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011: 21).

According to Israeli statistics, from 1967 to 2003 the net migration balance of the Palestinian territories was negative, apart from during the period from 1990 to 1994, during which many Palestinians returned home following the Oslo agreements (Bartolomeo *et al.*, 2011: 3); the Gulf crisis was also a factor at this time. *Table 4.1* shows the outflows and inflows of Palestinian migrants between 2005 and 2009.

Table: 4.1. The outflows and inflows of Palestinian migrants in the period 2005 –2009

Year	Outflows of Palestinian migrants	Inflows of Palestinian returnees
2005	5,841	7,077
2006	5,205	6,054
2007	7,290	5,000
2008	7,390	5,854
2009	7,122	6,426

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, “Migration survey 2011”, p. 58.

The data in Table 4.1 indicates that the influx of Palestinian returnees was higher than the outflow of Palestinian migrants in both 2005 and 2006, when a kind of security and stability, accompanied by an improvement in the Palestinian economy, existed after the presidential and legislative elections. On the other hand, we can see that over the next three years from 2007 to 2009, external migration flows were higher than those of returnees due to the political split in 2007 and the Israeli war on Gaza in 2008. These findings match the data compiled by international aid agencies, as, according to statements made by United Nations relief organizations, about 61,000 citizens left the Gaza Strip in 2018, while some 37,000 returned (Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, 2019: 2), producing a surplus of approximately 24,000 departures. These facts and figures confirm a clear correlation between migration and the socio-political context in Palestine.

With regards to any correlation between migration, age, and gender, the percentage of those who think of emigrating from Palestine is greater among young people than it is in other groups within Palestinian society, and it is also higher among men than women. The results of the migration survey produced by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2011: 59) showed that the desire to emigrate among youths aged from 15 to 29 years was the highest

among the various age groups: 33% of both genders wanted to emigrate, with 34.2% of young men and 31.3% of young women expressing a desire to leave. It seems that the prevailing conditions in Palestine were increasing the desire to emigrate at this point, and these findings correspond with the results of a later survey conducted by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (2016: 37, 41), which revealed that 26% of the surveyed Palestinians wanted to emigrate. That report showed that the majority of respondents (37%) wanted to emigrate to Europe, while 20% preferred the Arab Gulf States, and 12% opted for the US. Despite these stated preferences, the top five destinations for tertiary students in 2013 were Jordan, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the US (UNICEF, 2013: 2).

4.3. THE MAIN DRIVERS OF MIGRATION FROM PALESTINE

There is no doubt that migration from Palestine has been affected by a range of factors, but the primary drivers have been political instability and economic deterioration, both of which have arisen as a result of the continued Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and the absence of Palestinian control over resources. According to a study conducted in 2016 by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (2016:5), a high percentage of respondents were considering emigration: 45% of respondents in the Gaza Strip said they were seeking to emigrate to other countries, while this percentage in the West Bank stood at 22%. Another more recent survey conducted by the same organization in 2019 revealed that 24% of the respondents said that they wanted to emigrate due to political and security problems, as well as economic conditions (Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, 2019: 7). Historically speaking, there have been diverse drivers of Palestinian migration which have included but have not been limited to labor migration, as people migrate to work abroad; marriage and family unification; and academic study. However, another study revealed that “age and education were significant factors in the desire to emigrate” (Hilal, 2007: 9). Youth and highly educated people are more likely to migrate. This study cited a range of drivers of migration from Palestine, which are discussed below.

4.3.1. OCCUPATION MEASURES

Palestinians have been living in an environment that is full of uncertainty and characterized by fluctuation across a number of different political variables. The challenges created by this environment restrict their opportunities to satisfy their basic needs and obtain access to services such as education, health, and social welfare. The oppressive practices of the

occupation play a huge role in Palestinian thought, and many Palestinians have been forced to emigrate either in groups or individually from their country because of the political, economic, and psychological restrictions they faced there.

Whereas in independent countries governments have full control over the state's resources and their use without any external interference, the Oslo Accord did not give the PNA full sovereignty over all of the Palestinian territories: "Most of the Palestinian territories and people are still under occupation, which prevents the government from utilizing and using its natural resources" (Al-Razeq, 2016: 1). This situation has adversely affected the main services provided by successive Palestinian governments. According to Shahwan (2007: 4), "the provision of public services to the local communities was severely affected mainly in the rural areas, where people depend on on the government for basic services such as health and education".

The impacts of these restrictions are not limited to the direct costs paid by Palestinians; they also include the indirect costs that result from missing out on the development of vital industries which depend on such access (The Applied Research Institute, 2015: 6). This volatile political climate dramatically affects the ability of the Palestinian public administration to provide services to the people. Moreover, Israel often intervenes in the activities of international aid organizations to restrict development or hamper development opportunities: "International development agencies reported in 2011 that Israeli policies are forced these agencies to change their programs" (Shigagi & Seringo, 2015: 2). The resulting programs are often less effective than those originally planned and do not serve the most vulnerable and poorest people. All these measures and practices make the lives of Palestinians very difficult and force people to start thinking of leaving their homes and land to emigrate outside Palestine and look for other destinations where they can find safety and reassurance.

4.3.2. ECONOMIC FACTORS

According to the PCBS's 2015 Palestinian Youth Survey, economic factors were among the main drivers of migration as reported by 83% of surveyed individuals (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2016: 25). In general, the economic situation in many Arab countries including Palestine is distinguished by the fact that it is still suffering because of the instability and geopolitical influence in the region. In this section, I will try to explore some

economic indicators related to the socio-economic environment in the MENA region. The first of these indicators is public debt. Indeed, subsequent developments in the MENA region have added to the complexity of public debt in some Arab countries. The total public debt of Arab countries increased from USD 665.9 billion in 2017 to about USD 707.8 billion in 2018 (Arab Monetary Fund, 2019: 12) due to loans from the World Bank to finance the deficit in its public budget, given the continuous rise in the volume of spending. In Palestine, the situation is worse as a result of decreasing international aid and the shortage of resources. The general budget of the PNA has permanently suffered from a deficit where the current expenditures were higher than the revenues; this deficit fluctuated up and down from year to year. The persistent budget deficit has led to an increase in the public debt ratio. The rate of increase in the public debt of the PNA during the 2018–2019 period was 1.5% (MAS, PCBS, PMA, & PCMA, 2019: 11).

Another indicator used by the United Nations to evaluate human development is the equality index. According to the Human Development Report 2019, social and economic injustices have been identified as one of the top reasons for Arab uprisings (UNDP, 2019: 23). As a point of fact, large numbers of Arab citizens are still deprived of the opportunities and resources to live a meaningful life. Undoubtedly, inequalities in human development constitute barriers to achieving sustainable development plans in many Arab countries, especially in Palestine. The scarcity of resources and the absence of justice in terms of income distribution have repercussions on the level of the individual and society, on top of which is immigration and the search for better opportunities in other countries. It is worth mentioning that the latest available data show that poverty rates in the MENA region were one of the highest worldwide: “the spread of multidimensional poverty in the Arab countries resulted from a modest level of social services such as health, education, and housing, as well as the persistence of harsh conditions in some of these countries” (Arab Monetary Fund, 2019: 5).

By following human development reports periodically issued by the United Nations Development Program from 1990 to 2019, one clearly observes that no Arab country ranks in the top ten countries. Those included Canada, Japan, and the Scandinavian countries that have already achieved high scores in human development.

The per capita income is one of the indicators adopted in human development reports as well, and it is an economic indicator of the well-being of individuals. In theory, the higher the per-

capita income, the lower the willingness to migrate to other countries. The highest six Arab countries in brain drain (Egypt, Morocco, Iraq, Lebanon, Algeria, and Syria) are suffering from a low level of per capita income (Hassan, 2008: 13). This indicates a correlation between the per-capita income and brain drain. As for the Palestinian economy, it has been characterized by unsteadiness and unpredictability and has been constantly fluctuating between periods of growth and stagnation, reflecting the per capita share of the gross domestic product (GDP) rate. According to the available Palestinian data: "the per capita share of the GDP in 2018 reached USD 859.4 per capita, however, it declined to USD 832.9 in 2019" (MAS, PCBS, PMA, & PCMA, 2019: 2). The growth rate of the Palestinian economy continued to decline in recent years. For instance, "the growth rate of the GDP at constant prices of the Palestinian economy declined to 0.9 percent in 2018 compared to 3 percent in 2017. Additionally, the year 2018 witnessed a decrease in public revenues by 4%" (Arab Monetary Fund, 2019: 25).

The unemployment rate is one of the most important indicators of the economic situation in any country, and the inability of the labor market to absorb the growing numbers of graduates is one of the main push factors in Palestine and in other Arab countries. As for unemployment in the Arab countries, it is one of the highest in the world, especially in countries such as Palestine, Syria, and Yemen. The unemployment rate in Palestine in 2018 was 26.8%, while the average rate of Arab countries was 10.0% (UNDP, 2019: 23). Often times, unemployment in Palestine is at one of the highest rates in the MENA region, and while the general average remains relatively steady, the unemployment rate in both the Gaza Strip and West Bank fluctuated in line with economic and political developments. The unemployment rate among youth (aged 15–24) in 2019 was higher than the average and increased proportionally with people's educational level (MAS, PCBS, PMA, & PCMA, 2019: 6). For example, unemployment rate among individuals with an intermediate diploma or higher was 35.7% in 2015 (MAS & PCBS, PMA, 2016: 11). *Table 4.2* illustrates the unemployment rate in Palestine between 2013 and 2016.

Table: 4.2. Unemployment rate in Palestine 2013–2016

Year	General Average %	Gaza Strip %	West Bank %
2013	25.2	38.5	18.2
2014	26.9	43.9	17.7
2015	25.8	41.6	22.8
2016	26.9	41.7	18.2

Source: MAS, PCBS & PMA 2016 (Information adapted from the original resource).

As Table 4.2 indicates, there are obvious differences in the unemployment rates between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. While the unemployment rate in the West Bank remains relatively stable, it increased steadily in the Gaza Strip. Under these circumstances, migration inevitably became the best option for Palestinian youth: “This phenomenon has entailed also a brain drain, characterized by the permanent departure of a large number of highly-skilled people, including qualified graduates and postgraduates” (Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, 2019: 1).

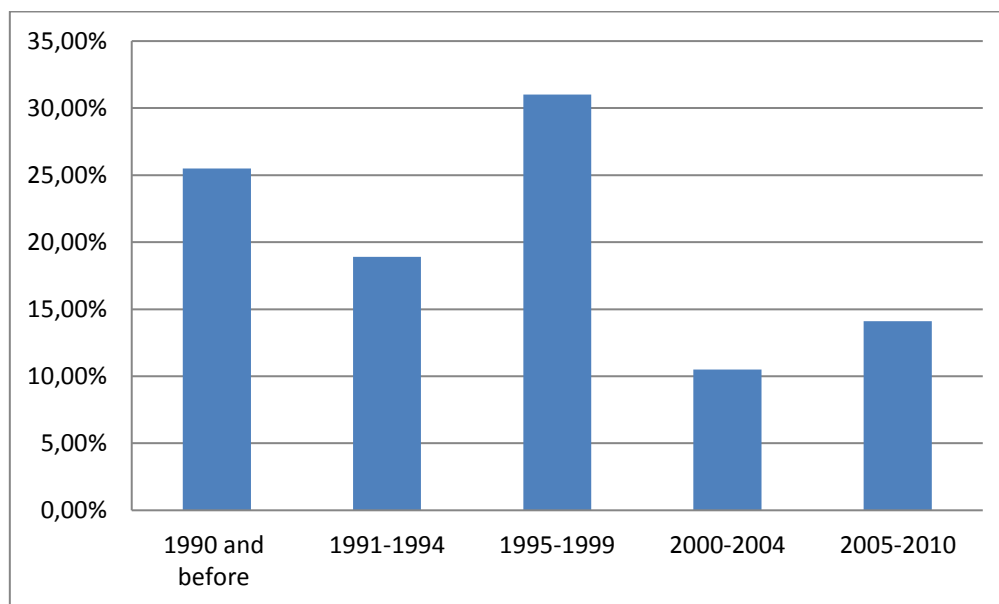
4.4. CIRCULAR AND RETURN MIGRATION IN THE PALESTINIAN CONTEXT

The case of Palestine is particularly interesting for the following reasons. First, Palestine is the only and maybe the last country in the world that is still under occupation. The Palestinian border and main entrance border points are still under the control of occupation security forces, and the freedom of movement of people in and out of the Palestinian territories remains elusive because of occupation restrictions. These restrictions do not make it easy to engage highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge and experience to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Second, generally speaking, in the last few decades, migration from the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been temporary in nature. The purpose of migration has generally been to gain education rather than employment: “About 34.4% of total emigrants left for education and studying purposes, 14.6% for improving living conditions, while 13.7% left because of the lack of job opportunities in the Palestinian Territory” (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011: 17). In this context, return migration is an indication of the success rather than the failure of those who have returned.

Third, “the return of Palestinian diasporas started mainly in the 1990s where the outbreak of the Second Gulf War and the Oslo accords together generated a wave of returnees to the West Bank and Gaza Strip” (Hilal, 2007: 11). More than 267,000 Palestinians from the Gulf countries, Jordan, and elsewhere returned to the West Bank and Gaza (Lubbad, 2008: 11). However, these numbers declined dramatically after 2000 because of the outbreak of the second intifada and confrontations between the Palestinians and the occupation army. “Although the percentage of returnees 2000–2004 did not exceed 10.5% out of the total returnees from abroad, it reached about 31.0% in the period 1995–1999 and about 18.9% 1991–1994, while 25.5% returned before 1991” (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011: 72). It should be noted that the percentage of returnees during the period 2005–2010 has increased compared to the period 2000–2004. The highest percentage of the returnees (54.9%) were coming back to the West Bank and Gaza Strip as companions, while only 11.3% said they were returning for work (Malki & Shalabi, 2000: 70). *See Figure 4.1.*

Figure: 4.1. Percentage of Palestinian returnees 1991-2010



Source: Author's own compilation based on the PCBS data, 2011.

Figure 4.1 shows that the percentage of returnees to Palestine declined remarkably after 2000, due to the second Palestinian uprising (intifada) and the large-scale, restrictive measures used by the Israeli occupation.

Fourth, the academic qualifications of Palestinian returnees are better than those for non-returnees and are characterized by a significantly high level of educational attainment. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2009: 56) indicated that 12.6% of the returning

migrants had completed their university degree at bachelor's level or above, compared to 6.6% of non-migrants. This finding seems reasonable since, as has been noted, most of the emigrants' purpose for travel is educational attainment or the desire to gain new skills and qualifications abroad. Migrants who engage in circular migration and temporarily return to Palestine tend to be experts in heterogeneous educational fields, and this allows them to distribute the benefits of their knowledge and skills across different sectors, especially education and healthcare.

Fifth, Palestinian endeavors slightly succeeded in engaging international Palestinian capital in investment and development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the establishment of the PNA. However, the invasion of the West Bank in 2002, and the subsequent imposition of severe restrictions on the movement of labor, goods, and capital, brought additional challenges and uncertainties that caused a decline in expatriate investment in Palestine.

4.5. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER THROUGH CIRCULAR MIGRATION IN THE PALESTINIAN CONTEXT

Knowledge is crucial for the evolution of organizations. Accurate and precise knowledge increases the level of accuracy in decision-making and improves its impact. Unsurprisingly, ESCWA (2003:1) relates rationality in decision-making to knowledge, and it defines knowledge as "information used to make better decisions, which lead to rational actions". This thesis addresses the concept of knowledge from a particular point of view in order to ascertain how it is derived as a result of transnational activities and the circular migration of highly skilled Palestinian migrants. This study's broad understanding of the meaning of knowledge encompasses awareness and document-sharing, policy formulation, learning by doing, training and lecturing, guidance, problem-solving, sharing new ways of working, and the clarification of roles and responsibilities (*See Figure 7.1*). The four main areas on which this thesis focuses are healthcare, education, engineering, and management, as these specialties are essential to the process of building state institutions and are needed in the country, as many Palestinian decision-makers have mentioned. In fact, every additional unit of knowledge in these areas, when used effectively, leads to a clear increase in the performance of Palestinian institutions.

Although advanced knowledge and modern technologies can be accessed through other tools such as multinational organizations, this thesis has chosen to focus on the skilled diaspora as

a primary and reliable means of knowledge transfer back home. According to Meyer & Brown (1999: 12), the engagement of skilled diasporas in development and knowledge transfer to their home country can be achieved through two main possible means, either by physical return or through remote mobilization that connects the skilled diaspora with local people through social networks. In the case of Palestine, in addition to the contributions made by individual and organizational initiatives, the transfer of knowledge by migrants returning to their home country has been enabled thanks to the cooperation of three main actors: diaspora organizations; initiatives instigated by Palestinian institutions; and international organizations. Since its establishment in the mid-1990s, the PNA has become more interested in engaging the skilled Palestinian diaspora as a potential source of knowledge transfer and investment. Although the engagement of this skilled diaspora has remained somewhat weak, some programs have been formulated to enhance the participation of diaspora communities in economic development and the nation-building process. The most prominent initiatives launched in this regard were the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals program (TOKTEN), and Palestinian Scientists and Technologists Abroad (PALESTA). The first one used temporary return and circular migration as its main approach, while the second adopted remote connectivity and technological engagement and aimed to engage highly skilled Palestinian migrants through virtual participation in academic, scientific, and cultural programs at home. The following is a summary of knowledge transfer programs in Palestine:

- *Attracting Expatriate Economic Competencies for the Development of Mediterranean Countries*: This European Union project was implemented in Palestine in partnership with two local partners: the Palestinian Information and Communications Technology Incubator (PICTI) and The Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency (PIPA). The project aimed to “connect Palestinian skilled diaspora members who had success in Europe with local entrepreneurs in Palestine. Although a national working group was formed from a group of Palestinian governmental and private institutions, its accomplishments were very modest” (Al-Labadi, 2018: 11).
- *Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals program (TOKTEN)*: This program aims to convince skilled diaspora members to come back temporarily. The reason for its success is that it has mainly focused on people who are professional and distinguished in their fields. The participants have contributed to developing hospitals and changing practices (Murphy, 2006). TOKTEN programs appeared initially in the 1980s, but this is an on-going program and it focuses on a number of countries of origin. Recent TOKTEN

programs have focused on Afghanistan, Mali, Palestine, Rwanda, and Sudan (Kuschminder, 2011: 8). Although the mission has time limits, some expatriates have permanently returned.

In Palestine, the program was established by the United National Development Program (UNDP) in 1994. “The UNDP recruited many highly skilled Palestinian experts to serve as returned volunteers for a period ranging from three weeks to three months” (League of Arab States, 2008: 95). The UN offers them as a solid platform for return, and by providing security and living allowances and securing travel it removes obstacles to participation while reinforcing all of the good reasons for migrants to come and volunteer. Almost 600 experts have come to Palestine through TOKTEN, for either short- or mid-term periods. Most of them came to serve in Palestinian ministries or institutions of higher education. The contributions of these experts included “city planning, medical services, university curriculum development, academic networking, the upgrading of film and television capacities, or cultural preservation including the Bethlehem 2000 project” (Hanafi, 2001: 8). The objectives also included human development and building the capacity of the Palestinian National Authority.

The program made only a modest impact, since the need for skilled experts in Palestine greatly exceeded the capacity of the two hundred returned migrants involved. The program concentrated on the public sector, rather than on the private and NGO sectors, and this is likely to have reduced its efficiency and effectiveness. Also, there was a problem reported concerning communication between visiting experts and the staff of their host institutions. This problem was caused by misunderstandings and feelings among local staff that the visiting experts were overestimated and received higher salaries than them. In addition to its developmental and capacity-building achievements, “One of the advantages of the program is that some 34 TOKTEN experts continued living in the Palestinian Territories after their assignment” (Ibid: 8).

- *PALESTA*: Four years later, in 1998, the Palestinian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation initiated a program called Palestinian Scientists and Technologists Abroad, or *PALESTA* (League of Arab States, 2008: 95). It sought to utilize the scientific and technological knowledge of highly skilled migrants in support of social and economic development in Palestine. *PALESTA* created a database of engineers, scientists, and technologists and made it available on the internet, which was the main means of communication between participants. *PALESTA*’s database currently contains the details of around 1,300 expatriate Palestinian professionals. Only about a

third, however, are active members. This active membership is concentrated in the United States (56%), while 17% live in Europe (Hanafi, 2001: 10). The cumbersome central administration of the project, combined with the voluntary and sporadic nature of communications, rendered it rather ineffective (League of Arab States, 2008: 103).

Despite their limited results, these initiatives highlight some of the characteristics of the relationship between the Palestinian diaspora and the home country. Most notably, the mobilization mechanism used by the PNA concentrates on centralization rather than on a participatory approach. Another major feature of these programs is that the vast majority of highly skilled experts and immigrants who have contributed to the transfer of knowledge through them are from North America and Europe. The end of these programs does not definitely mean the end of the return skilled migration pathway to Palestine; in fact, other sporadic initiatives are led by individuals, health organizations, and academic institutions. Emotional ties and patriotic feelings appear to be important factors in driving the contribution of highly skilled migrants towards development and knowledge transfer to Palestine. However, the contribution made by highly skilled migrants and the diaspora is still relatively modest, and incentives from the Palestinian government are vital to promote and encourage return migration and knowledge transfer by talented and skilled migrants.

These incentive mechanisms should include improving the absorptive capacity of national institutions and technological infrastructure and the adoption of specific kinds of policies that facilitate diaspora engagement. The presence of less restrictive immigration laws and policies, and of promotion channels that call for participation in the transfer of knowledge to the home country, is also vital. Diaspora engagement must be a two-way process, and the relationships between diasporas and origin countries must be based on confidence, respect, and evidence.

4.6. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter has briefly reviewed the features of Palestinian migration and return migration since the Ottoman era. Moreover, it has aimed to review the knowledge transfer programs that have been launched in Palestine in the past, as well as the evolution of the expatriate profile across Palestinian institutions. Secondary data from existing academic literature has been used to produce useful and credible results. Because of the occupation, many Palestinians were deported or migrated voluntarily to evade a limiting and oppressive socio-

political environment. The Palestinian diaspora was formed in this abnormal and complex context. Historically speaking, decades of conflict, political instability, and the absence of a national authority have made the possibility of benefiting from these highly skilled expatriates unlikely. Nonetheless, the need for these experts has increased significantly since the initiation of the PNA created a requirement for help in the building of Palestinian institutions. Since the mid-1990s, highly skilled Palestinian migrants have been able to share and contribute their experience and knowledge to their home country, either personally or through work with international organizations. This contribution was evident in the launch of the so-called knowledge transfer programs created by some international organizations, which targeted countries of origin. Fortunately, Palestine was among the countries that benefited from these programs. On the whole, it is worth mentioning that knowledge transfer programs organized by international organizations provide a considerable platform for cooperation and coordination between these organizations and Palestinian institutions. These platforms enable individuals, groups, and institutions in Palestine to tap into the expertise of the Palestinian diaspora and facilitate the mobility of people and knowledge from other countries to the occupied Palestinian territories. Information-sharing and decentralization are vital to the success of such endeavours; however, the government should foster partnerships rather than monopolize resources. All skilled Palestinians should be welcomed, especially since the permanent return of migrants remains unlikely.

CHAPTER FIVE

CIRCULAR MIGRATION PATTERNS AND POLICY CONTEXT

5.1. OVERVIEW

In order to mobilize a diaspora to transfer knowledge and experience to the home country, it is crucial to build awareness of the importance of the skilled diaspora as a source of knowledge and experience. Therefore, the first aim of this chapter is to examine the respondents' perceptions about the importance of knowledge transfer as a development strategy in the case of Palestine. The second purpose is to explore the ways through which knowledge has been transferred by highly skilled Palestinian migrants to their home country. Although engagement in circular migration and knowledge transfer back home can occur at an individual level, there are other ways to facilitate this process. These can include, but are not limited to, bilateral programs between host and home countries, knowledge transfer programs supported by international organizations, and diaspora organizations. Therefore, this chapter aims to address the following main questions:

- What are the demographic characteristics of the respondents?
- To what extent are Palestinian policymakers and highly skilled migrants aware of the importance of knowledge transfer from skilled people in the diaspora as a strategy that may contribute to the development of Palestinian institutions?
- What were the pathways through which highly skilled Palestinian migrants got involved in knowledge transfer to their home country?

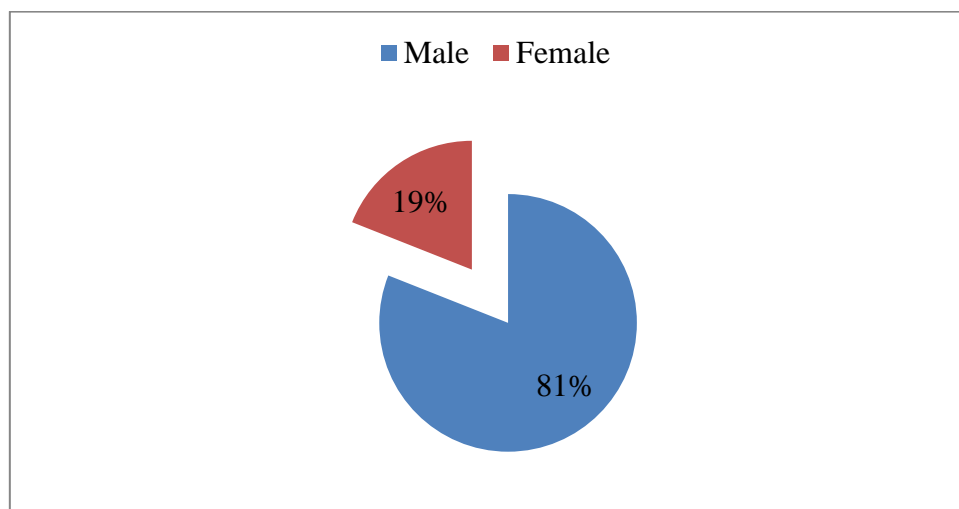
Another key purpose of this chapter is to explore if there are any government policies that target skilled people in the Palestinian diaspora to engage them in development and knowledge transfer in Palestine.

Finally, one of the main purposes of this chapter is to examine the first research hypothesis which states that the “Engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer is not an on-going and regular process; it occurs often individually or through international organizations without any shared national policy or vision”.

5.2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

One hundred and ninety-three respondents participated in this study's survey questionnaire. The sample distribution shows that, among 250 respondents, 202 of them were males, which represents 81% of the sample, and 48 were females representing 19% of the sample, as indicated in *Figure 5.1*. This percentage indicates that the contribution of women is remarkably less than that of men; this is maybe because the numbers of highly skilled female migrants who engaged in circular migration are lower than those of highly skilled male migrants, as many men leave to work abroad. Unlike men, women prefer to find a job and work in their home country. Generally speaking, and under any circumstances, this percentage does not reflect the pattern of engagement and the real contribution of highly skilled women migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country of Palestine. However, some women were reluctant to participate in the questionnaire for personal reasons.

Figure: 5.1. Sample distribution by gender



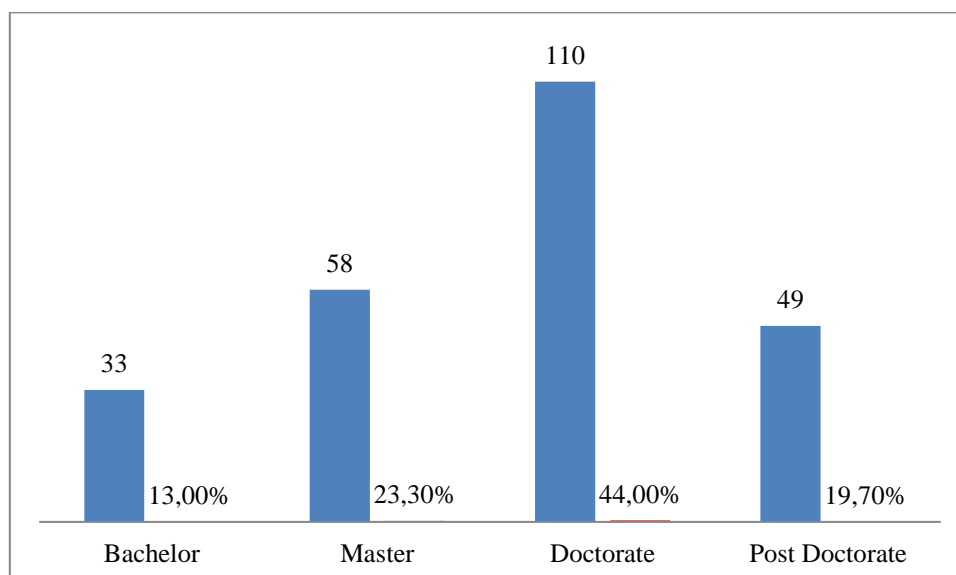
Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

In terms of marital status, the majority of this study's respondents were married (85.5%). This means that a family did not constitute an obstacle to the contribution that highly skilled migrants made to transferring knowledge to their home country. Some of them returned with their families to stay in Palestine during their assignments, while others chose to return alone and left their families in their host countries, where they visited them regularly from time to time. Those who came for a few weeks or months were not accompanied by their families. As regards the participants' field of study, the majority of respondents were from scientific disciplines (73.1%) compared with (26.9%) from arts disciplines. These percentages appear

to be reasonably acceptable, since Palestinian institutions need experts in scientific fields such as healthcare, cardiology, engineering, and technology rather than arts disciplines. The majority of respondents (63.7%) held a doctorate or post-doctoral qualification.

These academic levels indicate that the skilled diaspora contains eminently qualified people who work in important positions in their host countries, whether they are doctors, engineers, or work in other professions. The data indicate that the engagement of highly skilled migrants increases in line with their level of scientific qualification as they become more experienced and ready to share their knowledge, especially in the homeland. *Figure 5.2* shows the distribution of the sample according to scientific qualifications.

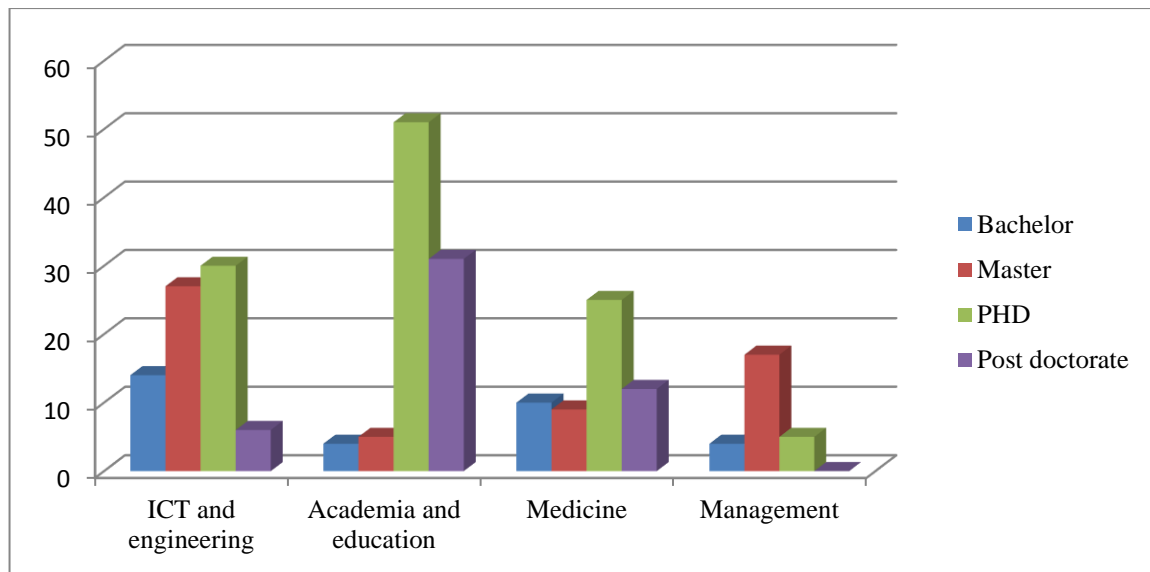
Figure: 5.2. The scientific qualifications of the respondents



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

Additionally, *Figure 5.3* shows the educational profile of the respondents. The results revealed that Ph.D. and post-doctoral qualification holders dominated the academic and educational field, with Ph.D. and master's holders dominated the ICT and engineering sector. Similarly, Ph.D. holders represented the largest group in the medical field, while master's holders dominated the management sector.

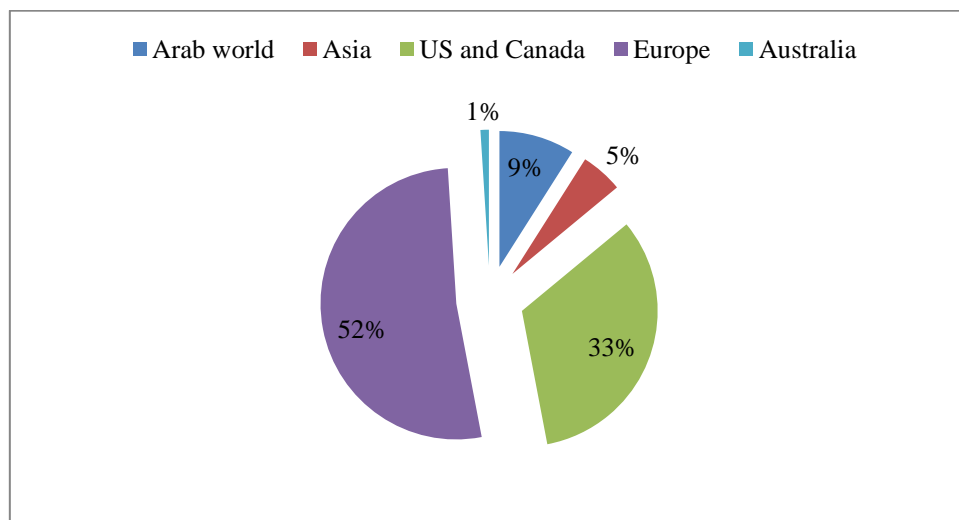
Figure: 5.3. Professional profile of the respondents



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

In terms of sample distribution by host country, the sample was divided into five main categories: Europe, the US and Canada, Arab countries, Asia, and Australia. This question was asked to compare the varying contribution of highly skilled migrants to knowledge transfer by host country. Analysis of the results detected that the largest contribution was from Europe (52%) and the second-largest contribution came from the US and Canada (33%). However, the contribution from the Arab world was 9%, while it was only 6% from Asia and Australia, as indicated in Figure 5.4.

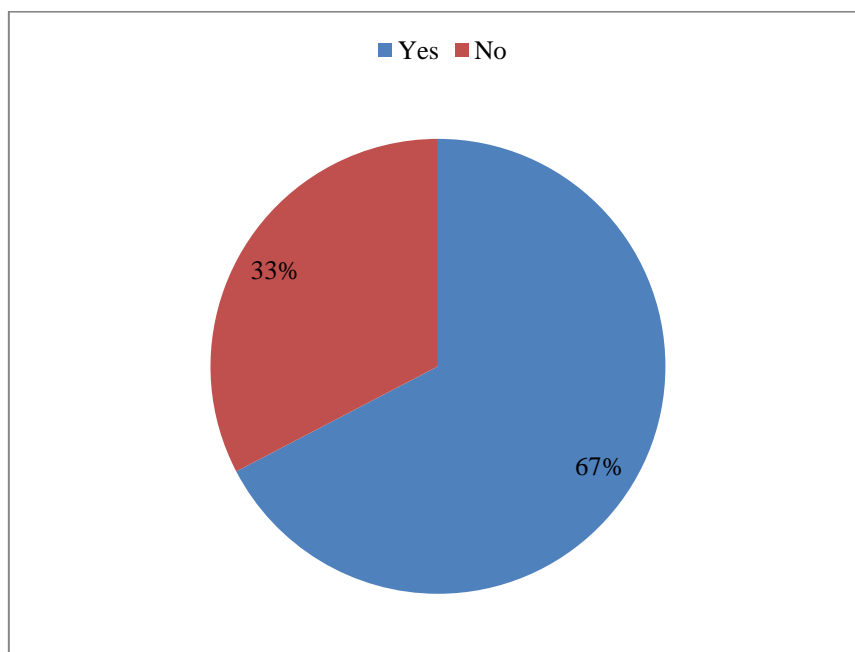
Figure: 5.4. Sample distribution by host country



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

These differences in contributions made by host countries can be explained by the fact that many highly skilled Palestinian migrants in the US, Canada, and European countries have obtained the passports of these countries, which makes it easier for them to enter the Palestinian territories. If a highly skilled migrant has Canadian, American, or European citizenship, then he or she may get a visa, but if they come from Arab countries, they will face real challenges in terms of access. Palestinians who have neither Palestinian identification documents (ID) nor a foreign passport cannot enter the country because of Israeli restrictions. This undermines any possibility of the country benefiting from or making use of many Palestinian experts because some people with expertise are not allowed to enter Palestine on Arab passports due to Israeli measures. In fact, 67.0% of the respondents have foreign citizenship, and some of them hold Palestinian identity at the same time, while 33.0% did not hold foreign citizenship and came back using their Palestinian identity. *Figure 5.5* illustrates the distribution of the sample in terms of host country citizenship.

Figure: 5.5. Sample distribution by holding the citizenship of the host country



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

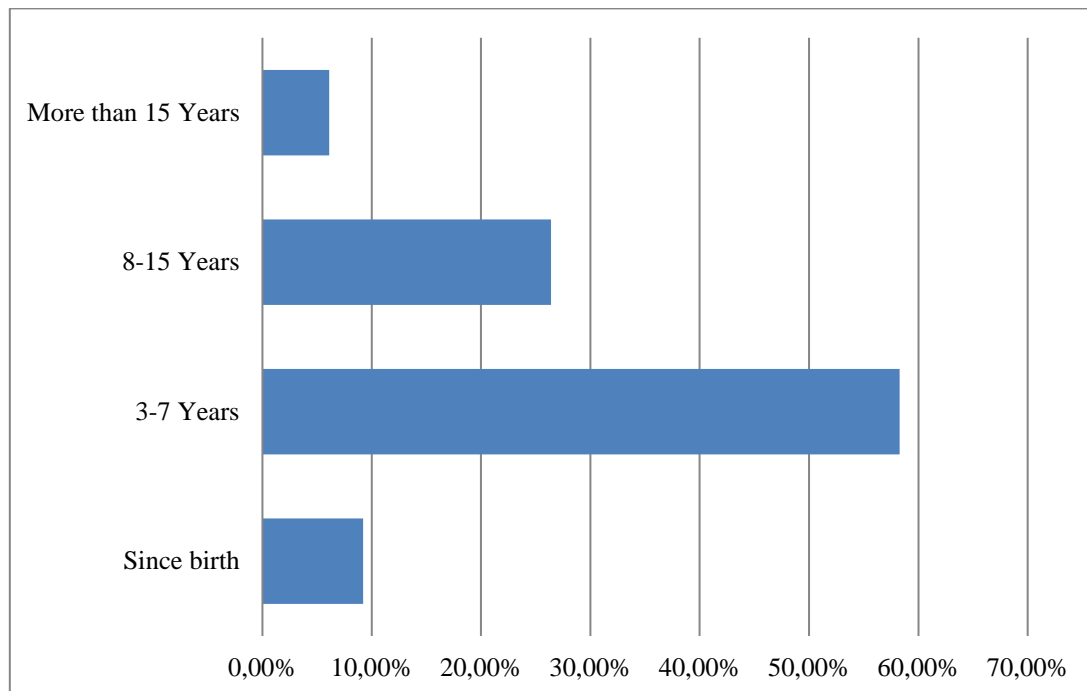
The results revealed that there were three categories of contributors to knowledge transfer according to citizenship. Those who had foreign citizenship only represented 22.8% of the respondents, while the second group included those who had both foreign citizenship and Palestinian ID (dual citizenship); they represented 44.2% of the respondents. Due to their short stay in their host countries, 33.0% of the respondents had not obtained foreign

citizenship but they had obtained a residence permit, and they used their Palestinian passport in their movements between countries.

Concerning the period of time that respondents had spent living in their host country, the results showed that the minimum period spent living in the host country was two years, while the maximum was fifty years. Although a small percentage of the respondents (11%) began to transfer knowledge back home early, after just a few years, the outset of contribution for most of them (89%) was five years after migration. The contribution of those who had lived in their host country for 10.1–20 years was the highest (35%), while the percentage of those who had lived there for more than 20 years was 32%, making them the second-highest group in terms of their contribution to knowledge transfer to their home country. This suggests that highly skilled migrants start to think about transferring knowledge and experience back to the home country several years after migration as they need a fair amount of time to settle and arrange their own career pathways first. In fact, “the length of the stay and work abroad tends to be conclusive because people who spend a reasonable period of time in a foreign country are likely to have accumulated more working experience, skills and social capital in the form of networks, contacts, and linkages than those with shorter stays” (Tejada *et al.*, 2013: 13). Generally speaking, people start thinking about transferring knowledge to their home country after they have become well-qualified and have developed expertise, which takes a fairly long time.

The majority of the respondents held citizenship of their host country, as many of them could not contribute before getting citizenship, which normally takes considerable time. The results showed that 58.3% of the citizenship-holding respondents had achieved citizenship between 3 and 7 years into their residence in the host country, while 26.4% of them had got citizenship between 8 and 15 years into their residence in the host country. However, 9.2% of the respondents had held host country citizenship since birth, and only 6.1% of the respondents had received citizenship after 15 years of residence in the host country. *Figure 5.6* shows the distribution of the sample by years of residence in the host country before getting citizenship.

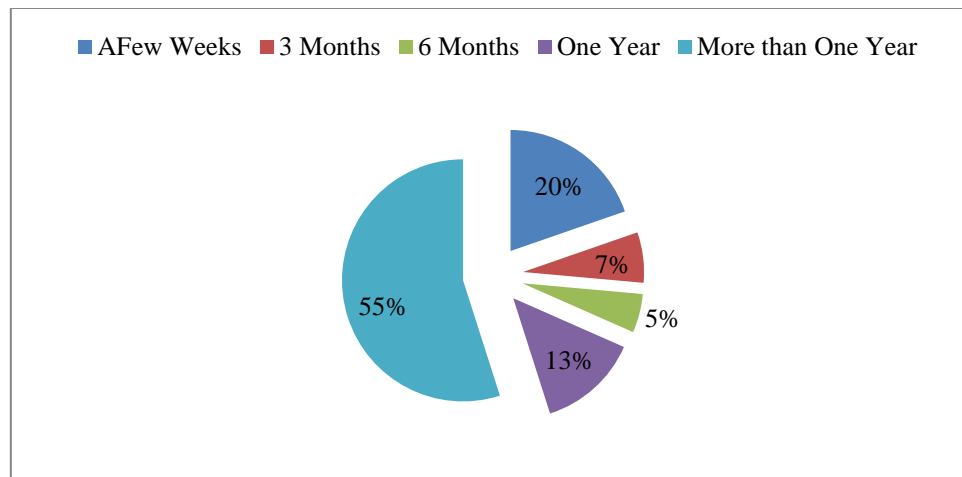
Figure: 5.6. Distribution of respondents based on the years spent in the host country before getting the citizenship



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

As regards the distribution of the sample in terms of the respondents' assignment duration in Palestine, the answers were divided into five time periods ranging from a few weeks to more than one year. The findings showed that more than half of the respondents (55%) were assigned for more than one year, 20% for a few weeks, and 13% were assigned for one year, while 7% of the respondents were assigned for three months, and only 5% were assigned for six months (*See Figure 5.7*). It should be noted that this research targeted only those who returned to transfer knowledge to Palestinian institutions, regardless of the duration of their assignment. However, some highly skilled Palestinian migrants who have relatives or friends in Palestine visited them in their leisure time. Those who did not meet the research criteria were excluded.

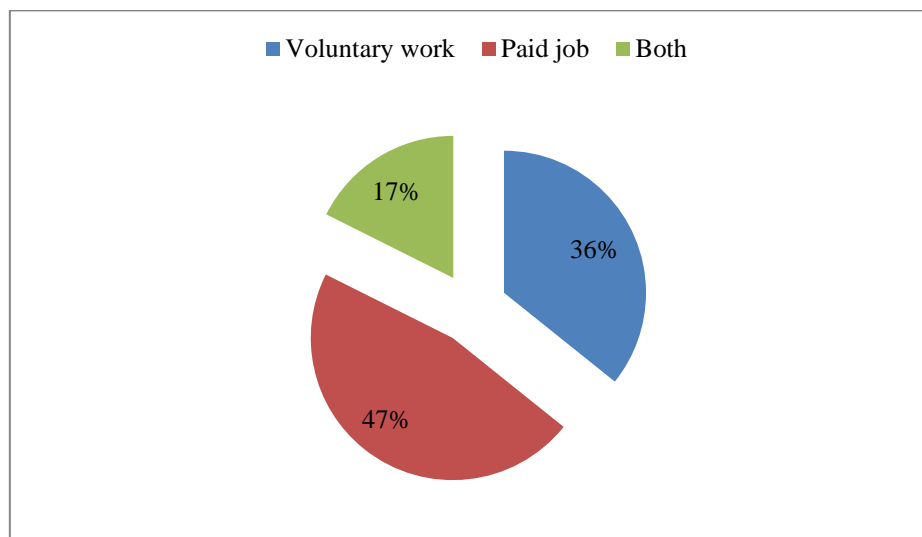
Figure: 5.7. Sample distribution by duration of the assignment in Palestine



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

These results seem reasonable and logical, since most of the highly skilled Palestinian migrants return to their home country either to do paid jobs, normally for a period of more than one year, or to contribute voluntarily for a maximum of a few weeks. *Figure 5.8* shows the distribution of respondents based on the type of assignment they undertook (paid, voluntary, or both).

Figure: 5.8. Distribution of respondents by type of assignment



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

The results revealed that those who came to work in a paid job made up 47% of the respondents. This is consistent with the results of respondents' distribution by duration of assignment, which shows that 54.9% were assigned for more than one year and received a salary for their work. By contrast, those who came voluntarily represented 36% of the

respondents. However, this percentage is slightly closer to the percentage of those who had returned for several weeks to three months, which is 26.4%. This confirms that their engagement in knowledge transfer to Palestinian institutions occurred voluntarily.

5.3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERVIEWEES

The main reason that interviews were used in this study was to allow for an in-depth understanding of the current engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to Palestine. A total of 26 interviews were held with Palestinian policymakers and highly skilled migrants. Majority of those interviewed for the study, (20 out of 26) hold a Ph.D., while the rest were a master's degree holders. Regarding the place of residence, 16 out of 26 people live in Palestine, while 10 of them live abroad at the time of the study. *Table 5.1* shows the professional background of the interviewees.

Table: 5.1. Profession of the interviewees

Interviewee profession	No
Policymakers	
Minister	3
Ambassador	1
Chairman of a chamber of industry and commerce	1
Director	2
Highly skilled migrants	
Professor	9
Specialist physician	5
Organization manager	3
Consultant (expert)	2
Total	26

Source: Author's table based on the interviews.

The findings of these semi-structured interviews are summarized in the next section. According to Kumar (2011: 248), data processing in qualitative studies involves four steps including identifying the main themes, assigning codes to these themes, classifying responses under the themes, and integrating themes and responses into the text of your report. In line with this research process, the outputs from the semi-structured interviews were classified

into four main themes. *Table 5.2* shows the arrangement of the various themes, codes, and issues discussed.

Table: 5.2. Summary of assigned codes, issued discussed, and main themes

Codes	issued discussed	main themes
Palestinian peculiarity	Importance of knowledge transfer Knowledge transfer perception	Circular Migration Patterns and knowledge transfer
Policies	List of means of engagement	
	Presence of government policies	
	Monitoring and Organizational reform	
Institutional capacity	Impact on institutional performance	Usefulness and viability of engagement in knowledge transfer
	Conformity between the transferred knowledge and the needs of the institutions	
Human capital	Skills, knowledge, and culture gained Learning a new approach to work	
Immigrant's benefits and satisfaction	The new things that have learned or benefits gained by highly skilled migrants	
Home country factors	Home country absorptive capacity	Factors affecting highly skilled engagement
	Presence of a conducive environment	
Host country factors	Citizenship	
	Immigrants experience and skills	
	Knowledge transfer programs	
Diasporas factors	Role of associations	
	Role of embassies	
	Presence of database	
	Solidarity among diaspora members	
Individual factors	Motivation and incentives	
Political	Occupation restriction and political instability	Barriers and obstacles
Organizational	trust with colleagues	
	Willingness	
	available resources	
	Transparency and bureaucracy	

Source: Author's table based on the research methods.

5.4. AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SKILLED DIASPORA IN KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER BACK HOME

The first theme identified in this section focused on awareness of the importance of circulation and knowledge transfer (interview question number one). In fact, the findings indicate that Palestinians abroad realize the importance of transferring knowledge to their home country, and they have the willingness to be part of these kinds of transnational activities. For them, knowledge transfer to Palestine is essential, and the possibility of carrying out that transfer represents a big milestone for the development of Palestinian society. All responses revealed that transferring knowledge back home is particularly important in the case of Palestine, as Palestinians are still in the process of building their institutions and need to benefit from expertise, especially that which has been acquired by those Palestinians who are living abroad. As most of the interviewees stated, there are large numbers of highly skilled Palestinians working around the world and they represent a bank of knowledge and experience. The interviewees were very ambitious to see their country become more like the countries they have experienced outside Palestine. All of the interviewees felt that the experience and knowledge they had acquired abroad represented the best and most significant way in which a skilled Palestinian diaspora could contribute to development in the home country. Furthermore, they believed that engagement from highly skilled migrants could bring in innovative ideas and good practices which could have a significant impact on institution-building and development back home. This sentiment reflects the nostalgia felt by Palestinians abroad towards their home country, as well as their desire to retain an ongoing connection with it. Palestinians can draw on this pool of available expertise from reputable people who have very high levels of skill and educational achievement. From another point of view, the transfer of these skills and the diaspora's knowledge to the locals is essential for the viability of institutions in Palestine, and it will definitely help people to improve their capacities in various fields. This kind of engagement is particularly significant since the Palestinians are still under occupation and do not possess the full set of skills required for various, essential state-building activities. The transfer of knowledge from people in diasporas to their home countries becomes more important when people and countries are facing difficult and abnormal circumstances. It is equally important to mention that knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants produces additional advantages for their home country because it costs less in terms of money and time to take advantage of

existing skills from the diaspora than it does to send people out of Palestine to begin acquiring those skills for future use.

Skilled Palestinian people from the diaspora are willing and eager to contribute to the building and development of Palestinian institutions. In fact, to date, most of the Palestinians who have done well in public administration, institution-building, training, and advanced technologies have been Palestinians from the diasporas. The survey's results revealed that their levels of awareness regarding the importance of circulation and knowledge transfer to their home country were pretty high. They have the willingness and readiness to come and volunteer their services to support the building of the Palestinian state and transfer knowledge through their expertise.

5.5. WAYS FOR THE DIASPORA TO PARTICIPATE IN CIRCULARITY AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

The second interview question and the eleventh question in the questionnaire asked participants to share information about how they became involved in knowledge transfer to Palestine. The reason for asking these questions was to examine the ways in which highly skilled Palestinian migrants engaged in knowledge transfer to their home country. The largest group of the respondents – a remarkable 45.0% of the study participants – confirmed that their engagement in knowledge transfer began as a result of their own initiatives, while 15.0% of them had become involved through international organizations. Those who were invited by friends or colleagues made up 11.0% of the sample, and 10.0% became involved through diaspora associations, as is indicated in *Table 5.3*.

The interview results produced a diverse range of responses: 6 of the 19 highly skilled migrants interviewed answered that they actually became engaged through links with an international organization, and most often this was the UNDP. Six other interviewees claimed that they were recruited individually by Palestinian universities. However, 4 of the 19 highly skilled migrants interviewed answered that their engagement occurred on an individual basis and on their own initiative; while three of them pointed out that they were engaged through diaspora associations and organizations. The results also showed that Palestinian universities and international organizations played a key role in recruiting and engaging highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country.

Table: 5.3. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages for the ways that highly skilled Palestinian migrants engaged with their home country

Means of engagement	Mean*	Standard Deviation	No	%
Personal initiative	1.76	0.42	112	45.0
International organizations	1.30	0.46	38	15.0
Invited by friends or colleagues	1.19	0.39	28	11.0
Family members/relatives	1.19	0.39	28	11.0
Diaspora associations	1.16	0.36	26	10.0
Found the information in an advertisement	1.10	0.30	16	6.4
Other, Please specify	1.02	0.12	4	1.6
Total	1.24	0.13	250	62.0

Source: Author's table based on the research questionnaires and findings

These results draw attention to another substantial facet of the transnational approach by revealing how cooperation between international organizations and diaspora associations can facilitate these kinds of transnational activities. One of the study's participants, Dr. M. Z., has associated himself with these kinds of organizations in the UK. He is currently the executive director of the International Medical Education Trust (IMET 2000), which is a British association with a branch in Palestine. It seeks to help doctors, nurses, and other health workers to complete their studies, whether in Britain or other countries. He explained how he had become involved in certain activities to help his home country, working generally in the academic field.

"In 2004, I joined the IMET Association and I had the opportunity to participate in the transfer of knowledge. My participation was mainly in the field of education. I participated in the programs provided by this association, which included the training of doctors, nurses and all workers in the health sector. My participation also included organizing special conferences. The last conference was held in July 2018".

Although the study revealed positive examples of this kind, it also demonstrated that, despite the volume of Palestinian communities abroad, especially in OECD countries, Palestinian institutions have shown limited abilities to mobilize Palestinian expatriates and highly skilled

migrants to engage in development and knowledge transfer to their home country, and their progress in this area is still modest and below expectations. However, highly skilled Palestinian migrants have still engaged in transnational activities in various ways, mainly through involvement with international organizations or on an individual basis. The results revealed a significant weakness in the role of governmental institutions and ministries in mobilizing and engaging skilled diasporas. This weakness is reflected in the absence of clear initiatives or systems to govern the transfer of knowledge. According to the vast majority of the interviewees, Palestinian institutions must pay more attention to communication with the external world in order to tap into the benefits of modern technology and update their knowledge. Professor D. E., who is affiliated with the Department of Engineering and Technology at Birzeit University and is currently working as an assistant president at the Palestine Technical University, associated with different national and international organizations with the aim of networking with international scholars and connecting scholars inside Palestine with scholars elsewhere. He confirmed that while people returned individually, they did not come in a systematic way. He explained his own involvement in knowledge transfer in the following terms:

“I was recruited by Birzeit University, I came with my wife, and she is a professor. We came back to Birzeit University. The main reason for our return is that Palestine is our home country. We want to contribute to building our country. We are so ambitious to see our country like the countries we have experienced and we have seen in diaspora”.

Learning from and networking with scholars abroad, and the presence of an organizational body to bring people in from the diasporas, is crucial to the work of building reliable institutions in Palestine. A system is needed both to attract scholars and highly skilled migrants from the diasporas and to network with them to encourage engagement in the transfer of knowledge back home. Now people are living in a technological era, and they can use the internet and social media to connect with each other, as well as face-to-face encounters, and these opportunities should be exploited in positive ways.

The respondents reported some endeavours to transfer knowledge and experience from diaspora associations, particularly in the US and Europe. These associations include, but are not limited to, the International Medical Education Trust in the UK, the Palestinian Medical Association in Europe (Pal-Med), and the Palestine Children’s Relief Fund (PCRf). These organizations send doctors and experts to Palestine on a regular basis to perform particular

types of surgery at Palestinian hospitals and medical centers. This kind of knowledge transfer is extremely important for two reasons. It provides Palestinian institutions with opportunities to access modern knowledge and technology through their engagement with talented Palestinians who work elsewhere, and it is also very important because Palestinian institutions have a great need for such expertise. An interviewee, Dr. S. S., who is an associate professor of cardiology, was born in Kuwait, lived in Jordan and moved from Jordan to the UK. He has never lived in Palestine. However, he is currently the associate head of the cardiovascular center at the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation hospital. He highlighted his own views about his engagement in knowledge transfer through links with diaspora associations:

“I used to come to Palestine only for visit. This is the first time I come as an expert. I always have been part of organizations that support the Palestinian cause and send highly skilled people to Palestine, since I left for Britain in 2001. I was a member of the Palestinian medical associations in Britain, which is a body that includes many doctors in the UK and Europe who come regularly to Palestine to perform some operations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip or even for the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Syria. So, I am part of such body and my move here is just natural progress from there”.

Other interviewees explained that they had been recruited by Palestinian institutions for specific tasks. All of them felt that they were playing their part in supporting Palestine, and they were very satisfied that they were contributing to building a good society aligned with their values and ethics. They also claimed that they were playing a crucial role in developing Palestinian institutions to meet the standards of those in developed countries.

Quite a few respondents came through the TOKTEN program, which is financed by the UNDP (As mentioned previously in chapter four). This program provides highly skilled Palestinian migrants with the opportunity to come back and work in Palestine, where they are engaged as consultants or experts in Palestinian ministries and institutions. Indeed, many Palestinian experts have been engaged through this program, which operates under the umbrella of the United Nations. Undoubtedly, the advanced techniques, methods, and expertise that can be transferred to countries of origin through circular migration are effective and influential. Being familiar with the cultures of both the origin and the host countries, highly skilled migrants are fully equipped to minimize gaps in practices between the country of origin and their countries of destination. Moreover, the skilled diaspora's connections and

interests in the home country reinforce the formation of networks and platforms for cooperation.

Universities and higher education institutions have been the organizations best-prepared and best-equipped to engage with and make the best use of these highly qualified experts. These universities include, but are not limited to, Birzeit University, An-Najah National University, and the Arab American University. Additionally, they were the best performers in terms of recruiting highly skilled Palestinian migrants from abroad. Portes *et al.*, (1999: 219) attributed the remarkable engagement of the skilled diaspora to regular and sustained social contacts over time and circular activities. This appears to be evident in the Palestinian case too, as the results of this study showed that all of those who came back, either for a short or a long period, had taken the decision to return in advance. In fact, many of them had visited Palestine more than once before their involvement in knowledge transfer assignments, either as volunteers or to visit their relatives. This reinforces the transnational approach that says return takes place once resources are available and reintegration into the mother society occurs through regular visits to the home country.

5.6. INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

The purpose of this theme is to address the expatriate profile in Palestine and the endeavours to institutionalize it. This section also aims to determine whether or not there are government policies and strategies in place for recruiting highly skilled migrants to transfer part of their acquired knowledge to Palestinian institutions. Another purpose of this section is to explore whether or not there are monitoring or evaluation mechanisms in place to track the engagement of the skilled Palestinian diaspora.

The widespread and large number of Palestinian diasporas abroad has increased the demand for effective and sustainable management of Palestine's immigration and expatriation profile. In fact, good and optimized management of this profile helps institutions to control the flow of migrants on the one hand, and increases the favourable impacts of migration on the other. Planning, policies, and monitoring are crucial to the development of institutionalization and professionalism. There is no doubt that the existence of government policies is a key factor in engaging expatriates and skilled members of the diaspora in national development and knowledge transfer back home. Hence, several questions were formulated to measure the existence of such policies.

Not surprisingly, the results showed a high level of willingness among Palestinian institutions to benefit from the experiences of Palestinian expatriates. However, the absence of policies or strategies that set out how to approach the diaspora is a shortcoming that hampers the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants. When asked if Palestinian institutions have such policies or plans in place, all policymakers confirmed that these institutions do not have any policies related to diaspora engagement. Similarly, the highly skilled interviewees claimed that they did not experience or touch upon such policies during their work in Palestine. Frankly speaking, while I have sought to find evidence of coherent policies on how to engage with the Palestinian diaspora, I have not succeeded. No such policies and strategies are included in the plans or documents of any Palestinian institution, and the lack of diaspora-targeting policies represents a critical gap in the performance of the Palestinian government and its institutions. All of the policymaker interviewees confirmed that, to date, there is no such policy or vision, and there is not even a list or a matrix in existence that might help to identify who is doing what in relation to people in the Palestinian diasporas. According to some interviewees, skilled diaspora engagement policies and a clear vision for bringing back Palestinians abroad existed until 2005, but since then there has been no vision or policy in place to target the Palestinian diasporas.

It should be noted that many Palestinians, including the majority of interviewees, called for the development of a specific platform with the goal of mobilizing the skilled diaspora in an efficient way. They think that this kind of strategy is not available in Palestine right now. Obviously, the relationship between the PNA and the Palestinian diasporas still lacks a solid evidence-based strategy. There is a need to figure out how to improve the relationship and to come up with a vision on how to mobilize diasporas and use their expertise effectively. Undoubtedly, this will help to put the situation on the right track.

M. Q., an interviewee who was the former director of the employment program at UNDP, expressed his personal view about the lack of a diaspora engagement policy or vision, and he mentioned the differences that exist between universities and civil society organizations and governmental institutions in terms of their approach towards the engagement of highly skilled migrants:

“There is no such item in the strategy that is just to bring in highly qualified people. I did not come across certain papers or documents. Actually, NGOs and universities; they are interested to bring good people. They are looking for qualities, they want quick decisions and

they want a contribution to something really substantial and sustained, not like in the ministries – let him come and do the job but when he leaves nothing is left behind”.

It is important to note that policies and strategic plans can rarely be achieved by only one party but instead often require the involvement of all stakeholders. Experience from other countries shows that “programs are more likely to succeed if diasporas are involved either directly or indirectly, in planning them. Consulting the diaspora also generates trust and ownership. Governments should take care, however, to avoid creating a privileged group of diaspora partners” (IOM & MPI, 2012: 92). Seemingly, there is no vision about how to set up a platform to link Palestinian diasporas to their home country. Good cooperation and effective communication represent important steps towards developing this engagement, but unfortunately, they are not yet in place.

Regarding the provision of incentives to highly skilled migrants, the results of this study indicated the weakness of incentive systems that target highly skilled returnees. Furthermore, most interviewees confirmed that they did not hear about any efforts that had been undertaken by the PNA to encourage people to come back to Palestine. Interestingly, the interview findings revealed that 21 out of 26 interviewees stated that there are no incentives provided to highly skilled returnees, while only 5 out of 26 said that there are some small incentives offered. One interviewee Dr. S. S. expressed his belief that incentives should be provided to highly skilled migrants by the PNA:

“I don’t think there are any incentives provided by the PNA to encourage highly skilled migrants to come back. I haven’t seen a materialized element of that. When you make the efforts that leave your family and take the risk to come here to give and give, so I would like to see a respect”.

Incentives are an important element in encouraging expatriates to return to or invest in their home country. The post-Palestinian Authority period was characterized by a package of incentives for returnees, especially those who returned with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). For some Palestinians, the problem with these incentives was the lack of clarity and the shortage of information about them. Consequently, many highly skilled returnees did not know about these opportunities and did not benefit from them. Undoubtedly, the absence of a specific body or agency with responsibility for informing or educating highly skilled migrants about their rights represents one of the deficiencies in this area. It is interesting to note that some Palestinian institutions have provided generous

incentives for the highly skilled Palestinian immigrants who come to serve in these institutions. However, there are clear differences between the incentives granted at the national level and the incentives that some institutions may provide to highly skilled returnees who work for them.

The needs of each individual institution or ministry were the criterion for determining the type of incentive offered. If the institution was interested in a specific expert, then that person will obtain access to all possible facilities and incentives. However, it is equally important to mention that those who returned voluntarily have been treated like all other inhabitants and they have received no incentives, unlike those experts who came to work for certain Palestinian institutions. For example, those who worked with the negotiating team, the Palestine Monetary Authority, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, received high salaries and exemption from taxi fares and they were offered special allowances for things like housing, family expenses, schools, and other things. It is clear that there is no unilateral policy in relation to this issue.

With regard to monitoring and follow-up, most of the interviewees indicated that there is a lack of seriousness concerning this issue, and they called for the establishment of a department with the task of monitoring and following up on knowledge transfer programs in Palestine. They also indicated that there is a disparity between institutions in terms of how they monitor and evaluate the performance of highly skilled returnees. They argued that the performances of NGOs and universities were pretty good, while the performances of government ministries were inadequate. Apparently, the PNA was very flexible with regards to monitoring and evaluation. In most cases, Palestinian institutions did not take part in the preparation of the evaluation reports or endorse them. Reporting, reviewing, and evaluation are not essential aspects of their relationship with experts like highly skilled migrants. Unlike universities and NGOs, the government has some shortcomings in this regard. This is evident in statements made by one of the Palestinian policymakers, Ambassador I. H., who referred to two levels of monitoring, at institutional level and governmental level in his analysis:

“Maybe at the individual level, yes, I mean at the level of the institutions that host those returnees I think there are monitoring and evaluation. But at the level of the PNA, I don’t think there is monitoring or evaluations of the performance of those skillful people who come from abroad”.

Overall, the results revealed considerable weakness in the management of Palestine's expatriate profile. Indeed, the Palestinian experience and practices in the area of public administration, including the transparency of roles and the distribution of responsibilities, are key benchmarks for the Palestinian government's ability to govern vital profiles such as its relationship with the Palestinian diaspora.

In Palestine, there are several agencies involved in the management of the expatriation and migration profile, and these include governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Notable among them are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates and the Department of Expatriates' Affairs within the PLO. Interestingly, despite the fact that many diaspora institutions are created with a promising and broad mandate, a review of the communication strategies, structures, and responsibilities of these institutions and agencies showed that "The existing organizational structures of them are developed individually in the absence of any national policy or plan, which sometimes causes overlapping in functions and conflict of responsibilities" (Suliman, 2018: 32). Furthermore, difficulties in inter-institutional coordination and institutional capacity shortages are identified as significant challenges in the migration and development field (ICMPD & IOM, 2010), and this is clearly evident in the Palestinian context. The Palestinian diaspora-associated institutions have no holistic approach towards the diaspora, and they carry out their tasks separately without any shared vision or coordination. The results of this study's questionnaire revealed that their degree of transparency is low. The respondents confirmed that there are power conflicts and overlaps between the responsibilities of different departments and institutions. This was evident when the same request was sent out more than once by different agencies. An interviewee, B. R., who worked as a consultant in one of the Palestinian ministries explained that overlapping roles and an absence of clear role distribution remain challenges for some Palestinian institutions:

"Unfortunately, there is plenty of overlapping among Palestinian institutions. Overlapping is the biggest issue; they are suffering from the blurring of roles. Until this time we have certain ministries you can't draw the line about where they start and where they stop. A lot of work has to be covered regarding this issue".

The main consequence of the lack of collective work and coordination between ministries and institutions is a shortage of data concerning Palestinians living abroad. The shortage of information and data about their needs and opportunities undermines any possibility for effective and efficient engagement with the skilled Palestinian diaspora's involvement in

knowledge transfer or investment. This study's findings revealed that building a database of highly skilled migrants and mapping the pool of potential contributors were high priorities for the skilled Palestinian diaspora.

The poor management of this profile is a major factor in disrupting effective communications and preventing the adoption of a sustainable approach to targeting Palestinian communities abroad. Calls for the more active involvement of Palestinian embassies in knowledge transfer issues appear to be overwhelming. Furthermore, "creating a conducive framework is generally not tied to a specific development goal. It may, nonetheless, have a significant developmental impact, in part by gaining diaspora members' trust and therefore encouraging their contributions to development" (IOM & MPI, 2012: 95). Many countries such as the Philippines, Mexico, and Chile have already established institutions or agencies to facilitate ties and organize the relationships between them and their diasporas. "Enhanced coordination across government departments is an important potential outcome from these relationships, which can mainstream migration into other portfolios such as development and ensure that officials have a common understanding of the force behind migration" (Papademetriou, 2011: 10).

The creation of effective and viable government institutions and building a platform for cooperation between individual institutions are not easy processes, especially when these reforms are applied to government institutions and their public administration. Nonetheless, in the last few years, the Palestinian government has started to pay more attention to the evolution of this profile and they have taken some measures to tackle this issue. These measures have included changing the name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates. In a similar vein, the Palestinian leadership appointed a new head of the PLO's expatriate department to activate it. Moreover, a national team was put in place to develop this profile in a manner that ensures harmony and the removal of overlaps between the mandates of diaspora-associated institutions. By adopting these measures, the Palestinian government aspires to respond to the needs of various stakeholders and improve the performance of Palestinian institutions in relation to the expatriate profile.

However, these procedures remain insufficient to repair and develop this complex profile, and the dispersed agencies and departments that work individually without any coordination among them may need some restructuring. To overcome overlaps, the Palestinian government should initiate and develop a framework based on the restructuring of these

agencies, so that they can work in a coordinated manner. Undoubtedly, these procedures will improve the governance of this profile and may eventually lead to a more beneficial relationship with the diaspora.

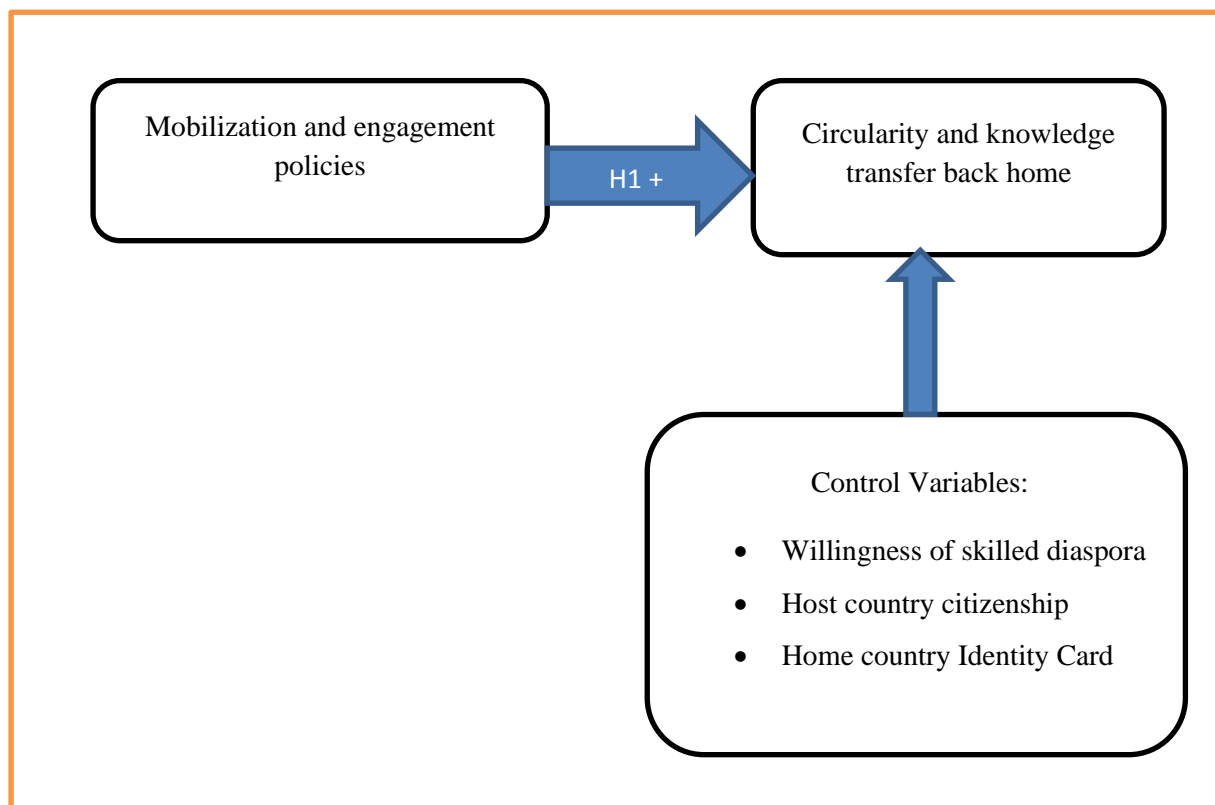
To summarize, the PNA would definitely like to see Palestinian intellectuals and scientists come back and contribute to the building of institutions and the state, as has happened in other countries. However, in order to attract and encourage skilled people in the diasporas to engage in development and knowledge transfer, the Palestinian government must adopt additional measures and policies as part of an incentive package to recruit highly skilled migrants. Interestingly, all of the policymakers who participated in this study confirmed that the absence or omission of diaspora policies from the national policy agenda does not mean that engaging diasporas in development back home is not a priority for the government. The absence of these policies may owe to a lack of awareness about the role that diasporas can play in national development, it may arise from a lack of resources, and it may also be affected by conflicting priorities among different stakeholders which may have impeded attempts so far to enhance the governance of Palestine's expatriate profile. Nevertheless, there is ample evidence to stress the need for well-articulated policies on how to approach Palestinian communities abroad and tap into Palestinian expertise there. This study's interview findings also revealed that processes for monitoring and following up on engagements with migrants from the diasporas were impaired, particularly among the ministries. It is of paramount importance to assess the performance of highly skilled returnees and volunteers to ensure the achievement of mission objectives. Close attention to engagement with migrants from the diasporas is also important because it is likely to enhance the feasibility of future engagements and institutionalize good practice in harnessing skills from the diaspora.

5.7. EXAMINATION OF THE FIRST RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS (H1)

This section aims to examine the first research hypothesis which states that:

Engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer is not an on-going and regular process; it occurs often individually or through international organizations without any shared national policy or vision.

Figure: 5.9. Conceptual Model 1



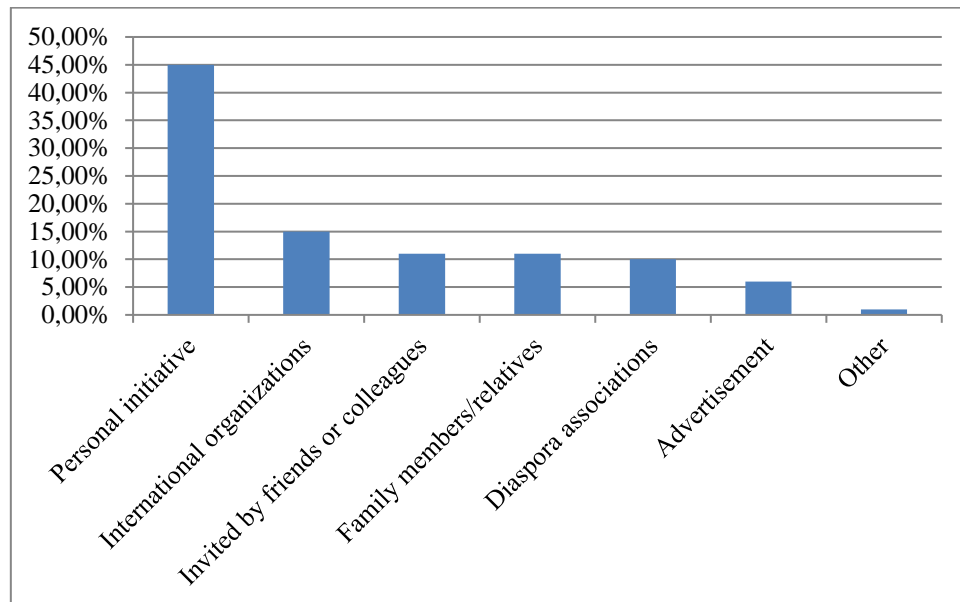
Source: author's own compilation based on the research methods.

As Figure 5.9 shows, this hypothesis examines one major variable related to the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer which could have a direct and significant effect on knowledge flow between the skilled diaspora and their home country. The need for Palestinian engagement policies is a high priority, as it represents an effective path to institutionalizing this process.

Thus, the first hypothesis examines whether or not such policies exist. The previous results revealed that the most frequently used pathway for the engagement of highly skilled migrants was through their own personal initiative. International organizations offered the second most

common pathway to engagement. *Figure 5.10* illustrates how highly skilled Palestinian migrants were engaged in the transfer of knowledge to their home country of Palestine.

Figure: 5.10. Pathways through which highly skilled Palestinian migrants engaged in knowledge transfer to their home country



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

The figure above indicates that the majority (60%) of highly skilled Palestinian migrants engaged in knowledge transfer either through international organizations or individually, while those who engaged in other ways, including through governmental endeavours, accounted for only 1.6% of the respondents. Moreover, the results of the interviews confirmed that Palestinian institutions do not have any policies for engaging highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer. In order to ascertain this, I contacted all Palestinian diaspora-related institutions, but unfortunately I did not find any policy documents concerning how to engage the skilled diaspora in transferring knowledge or skills back home. The PLO's Department of Expatriate Affairs provided me with a general concept paper containing an explanation of Palestinian immigration and the tasks of the department, but it did not include any policy paper that targets the Palestinian diaspora. Accordingly, the first research hypothesis (H1) was accepted.

The engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants clearly often occurs on an individual basis, without any involvement from governmental initiatives. Indeed, sentimental factors and national affiliation have shaped the decisions of many skilled people in the Palestinian

diaspora to participate in circular migration and return visits. Despite the fact that Palestinians are dispersed all over the world, Palestine is still alive in their minds and consciences. Palestine's historical catastrophe (Nakba) and the subsequent injustice and oppression that the Palestinian people have endured have not faded from the Palestinians' collective memory. There is no doubt that the successive calamities afflicting Palestine have played a major role in promoting Palestinian identity. This explains the readiness of many Palestinians to come to the home country as much as possible and contribute in one way or another to state-building and serving people there.

Overall, despite the diversity of people and communities in the Palestinian diasporas in terms of their educational qualifications and levels of integration into host societies, they have retained a constant craving for Palestine. They are always ready to serve their home country and engage in circularity, but the absence of mobilization and participation policies to organize their potential efforts is a major factor that exacerbates the effects of the occupation restrictions that already diminish their involvement.

5.8. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter addressed three main sub-topics; awareness among Palestinians about the role of the skilled diaspora in transferring knowledge and best practices to their home country; Palestinian circular migration patterns; and the policy landscape. Its goal was to explore the relationship between these variables and the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer back home; it also examined the first research hypothesis. To extract the results from this research, descriptive statistics and standard deviation were used in addition to correlations between the different variables. The need for knowledge increases when societies are facing challenges such as occupation, colonization, and poverty, and knowledge is always a tool that is needed to help a society overcome difficult situations. It is very important to teach and encourage people to transfer knowledge because that is how people grow. Therefore, Palestinians in diasporas, and particularly the highly skilled among them, can be agents of change in their home country.

This study has shown that awareness of the importance of knowledge transfer back home is very high among skilled migrants in the Palestinian diasporas. The transfer of knowledge back home is a viable option regardless of a migrant's country of origin, but in the case of Palestine it becomes more important because of Palestine's unique situation as a country

under occupation that suffers from the resulting shortage of resources and limited access to modern technologies. Mobilizing and recruiting Palestinian expertise, especially from those who are living in diasporas, can play a crucial role in the state-building stage. Fortunately, the willingness of migrants to engage in circularity and knowledge transfer activities was significant among this study's respondents and can be considered as an auxiliary factor that facilitates knowledge transfer.

This study shows that most of the highly skilled Palestinian migrants who engaged in knowledge transfer did so on an individual basis, with some of them being recruited by Palestinian universities. International organizations have also provided a platform for skilled people in the Palestinian diaspora to come back and share their knowledge with people in Palestine. Some others have been mobilized by diaspora associations in the absence of government policies or a clear role played by the Palestinian ministries. This result is consistent with the findings of an ICMPD and IOM study (2010) which identified a lack of coherent policy frameworks as a significant challenge in the migration and development field. Where personal or internal incentives have been provided, they were offered by host institutions rather than governmental bodies. It is also important to note that some people came to Palestine because they wanted to return, rather than to reap any personal benefits.

CHAPTER SIX

PUSH–PULL FACTORS AFFECTING CIRCULARITY AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER BY HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS

6.1. OVERVIEW

Scholarly literature has, to date, placed emphasis on migrants' characteristics in its bid to explain what makes some people migrate while others do not. "It is generally argued that migration is a selective activity and a number of characteristics such as age, gender, academic level, socioeconomic situation or the possession of resources, motivation level, and place perception play a crucial role in mobility decisions" (Tejada *et al.*, 2013: 10). In fact, the immigrant's decision to return is guided by the expected benefits and opportunities available in both the home country and the host country. People's motivations move them from place to place to achieve a financial return, and/or to do something for their home country. This mobility is not an isolated process; instead, it is influenced by a variety of push-pull factors. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an in-depth understanding of the push-pull factors that affect the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge to their home country. It also addresses the relationship between the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants and the push-pull factors that affect this engagement. The chapter aims to examine whether there are correlations between these factors and the engagement of skilled diaspora, and which ones are more influential than others.

A number of factors are examined here to explore to what extent they affect the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer back home. They include home country factors, host country factors, diaspora networks, occupation measures, and individual motivation. The results discussed and interpreted in this chapter are based on data collected using semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. Fieldwork was carried out between July 2018 and January 2019. This chapter sets out the interviewees' different arguments about the push-pull factors that affect circular migration and the engagement of the skilled diaspora in knowledge transfer to their home country. Another key aim of this chapter is to examine the second research hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There are significant differences in the effect of push and pull factors in the case of Palestine, and the motivation of highly skilled Palestinian migrants to engage in the development and knowledge transfer processes of their home country is driven by specific factors.

6.2. HOME COUNTRY FACTORS

The purpose of this theme was to examine how a country's absorptive capacity and socio-political factors affect the engagement of its skilled diaspora in knowledge transfer and development in their home country. As has been mentioned in earlier scholarly literature, creating a conducive environment and improving the absorptive capacity of the home country's institutions is essential to facilitate the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer processes. Obviously, the results revealed that the role of home country factors in supporting circulation and knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants was fairly humble ($M=2.30$). Furthermore, the results produced by this study show variations in highly skilled migrants' perceptions about the absorptive capacities of Palestinian institutions and about whether or not the Palestinian government provides a conducive environment for returnees. Indeed, the results disclosed that Palestinian institutions are not yet ready to fully utilize the experience of highly skilled migrants. These institutions also suffer from limited resources and limited opportunities.

6.2.1. THE ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY OF PALESTINIAN INSTITUTIONS

Not surprisingly, the overall results of the questionnaire showed that fewer than half of the respondents (49.9%) confirmed that home country factors supported and facilitated knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants. The role of home country factors in the engagement of the skilled diaspora was therefore shown to be fairly weak. In response to questions that sought to determine the effect of the absorptive capacity of Palestinian institutions on the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to Palestine, 71.0% of the respondents asserted that Palestinian institutions are willing to utilize and share knowledge. Meanwhile, 61.0% of them confirmed that the quality of higher education and training supports knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants. In relation to other enabling factors, 53% of the respondents indicated the availability of equipment and apparatus required to accomplish tasks, and 52.2% of them stated that the level of technological

infrastructure in Palestine supports knowledge transfer. With regard to prevailing organizational culture in Palestine, about half of the respondents confirmed that this culture is supportive and can facilitate the transfer of knowledge. *Table 6.1* presents the findings.

Table: 6.1. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages for the home country factors that support the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country, ranked in descending order

Home Country Factors	Mean*	Standard Deviation	%
The willingness of Palestinian institutions to utilize and share knowledge	3.50	1.02	71.0
Quality of higher education and training	3.00	1.00	61.0
Level of trust between you and local Palestinian colleagues	2.70	0.99	54.0
Availability of equipment and apparatus required to accomplish tasks	2.65	1.23	53.0
Level of technological infrastructure in Palestine	2.60	1.00	52.2
Prevailing organizational culture in Palestine	2.51	1.05	51.1
Administrative procedures and bureaucracy	2.50	1.09	50.2
Incentives for highly skilled migrants	2.25	1.05	46.0
The investment environment and business opportunities in Palestine	2.35	1.03	46.2
Transparency of roles and responsibilities in the Palestinian institutions	2.17	0.89	44.2
Level of corruption and nepotism	2.20	1.25	43.0
The condition of the role of law	2.15	1.00	42.1
The political situation and level of stability	2.00	1.03	39.0
Total	2.30	0.67	49.9

Source: Author's table based on the results of the questionnaires.

In terms of willingness, the majority of the respondents confirmed that the willingness and preparedness of Palestinian institutions to utilize and share knowledge is pretty high. A willingness for institutional change and development is crucial if new knowledge and technologies are going to be utilized. However, Palestinian institutions – particularly universities, private sector companies, and healthcare agencies – have become more oriented towards engaging highly skilled people from Palestinian diasporas. This is evident in the number of delegations that come either to volunteer or to work in these institutions. As the director of the international cooperation unit at the Ministry of Health mentioned, that ministry receives many delegations from different specialties and different parts of the world each year, and these medical delegations come to help the Palestinian healthcare sector, especially in areas where expertise and scientific competencies are lacking. These delegations include Palestinians who have practices in their host countries in Europe, Scandinavian countries, the American continent, the Gulf States, and other locations but they are committed to their homeland and to serving their people here. They come on a voluntary basis and they work side by side with their counterparts in local institutions and facilities.

However, this willingness is, by itself, not enough to mobilize skilled diasporas and utilize their expertise: “Policymakers’ best bet is to put in place a regulatory framework that promotes diaspora involvement. Such a framework should create a web of privileges and obligations designed for a highly mobile population with multiple affinities”. (Agunias & Newland, 2012: 95). The willingness and preparedness of the home country to engage highly skilled migrants in transferring their knowledge back home is a crucial component in this process. The results of this study revealed that the absorptive capacity of Palestinian institutions does not support knowledge transfer, and, according to the majority of interviewees, the absorptive capacity of Palestinian institutions still lags behind that of their counterparts in many other countries. Additionally, the interviewees stated that the abilities of these institutions to create a conducive environment were inadequate. The absorptive capacity of any country is critical as a pull factor for skilled diasporas. The presence of reliable institutions and a supportive environment encourages intellectuals and scientists to come back and contribute to the building of Palestinian institutions. However, others (3 out of 26 interviewees) drew more attention to differences in the absorptive capacity between government institutions and other societal institutions. According to them, the private sector, NGOs, and universities are better prepared and better equipped to welcome highly skilled

Palestinian migrants, and benefited more from their engagement than government institutions.

It is worth mentioning that, although some universities, hospitals, and the business sector have utilized and benefited from the expertise of some of the excellent Palestinian professionals who are willing to do things for their home country, the key question here is whether the Palestinian institutions are ready to absorb more of them or not. Some of the interviewees attempted to answer this question by addressing the reliability of Palestinian institutions, and they expressed a certain level of frustration with the ability of those institutions to absorb this expertise. According to them, even though the PNA was established 25 years ago, it has unfortunately failed to create real institutions. Instead, it has created bodies that look like, but do not function as, actual institutions.

While those returnees who come as volunteers for a few weeks only need to be provided with the hospitality, materials, and resources they need to do their jobs, the main challenge is how to attract skilled expatriates for a long time and integrate them into Palestine's prevailing institutional systems and organizational culture. With this in mind, I would like to draw special attention to two questions, the first of which relates to financial capacity: can the PNA pay good salaries to these people at levels that will allow them to achieve the same standard of living that they were used to in their host countries? The second question relates to the rules and regulations in our institutions and the extent to which management structures can accommodate those who have been working for a long period in different systems or working environments. Dr. B. R. is one of the highly skilled Palestinian expatriates who has undertaken assignments in Palestine, both with the Council of Ministers and at Birzeit University. In addressing these questions, he expressed his own scepticism about the absorptive capacities of Palestinian institutions and their abilities to tap into external expertise:

"I don't think that the Palestinian institutions are well prepared and solid enough to support the transfer of knowledge and experience of Palestinian expatriates. If we use the Palestinian diasporas in the right way, I think we will be in a much better position in healthcare, education, and others".

Obviously, the competitiveness of Palestinian institutions is still modest compared to that of migrants' host countries, and Palestinians need to develop their institutions further, as many interviewees emphasized. However, some participants were more positive about the current

situation and expressed the view that Palestinian institutions are doing well, and are even sometimes better than their counterparts in some Arab countries. Interestingly, some of the interviewees argued that the absorptive capacity of Palestinian institutions does support knowledge transfer, and they claimed that the Palestinian government has succeeded to a certain extent in creating a conducive environment, despite the obstacles created by the occupation. One interviewee N. M. AL., touched upon some of their achievements and stressed the importance of professionalism in Palestinian institutions, but also expressed some caveats related to the preparedness and quality of the highly skilled migrants:

“I believe that in recent years there has been an improvement in the performance of these institutions as they are more open to acquiring new knowledge. I believe that the issue is not only about the readiness of these institutions, but also about the professionalism of the highly skilled returnees. If they are not qualified, the impact will be modest and vice versa”.

Regardless of the absorptive capacities of Palestinian institutions, it is worth noting that, in recent years, Palestinian medical and educational institutions have been open to benefiting from Palestinian experts who come into the country from outside. However, many Palestinians believe that Palestine still suffers from some administrative and technological challenges, as well as from other difficulties that curb the development of Palestinian institutions. These challenges include poor resources, weak institutional structures, poor institutional coordination, and non-supportive institutional leadership. The most important and final conclusion in this section is that there is huge potential to engage great people with great skills who can achieve different things, but what they need is direction and leadership at a very high level to facilitate their engagement and work. Most people who can provide support for Palestine at this level would want support to be provided for academic lines of engagement, as well as for professional, operational, and business-focused involvement. This lead us to another challenge that the Palestinian institutions face: there is currently no needs assessment document available that would help them to mobilize and recruit the right people from the Palestinian diaspora. The current inability to compare and match the country's skills needs with the skills available in the diaspora represents a serious problem, and a concerted approach is needed to resolve it.

6.2.2. LEVEL OF TRUST WITH COLLEAGUES

This section deals with the relationships that exist between highly skilled Palestinian returnees and their local colleagues. It aims to measure the extent of trust between the two parties and the impact of trust on the engagement process in general. Notably, the results of the questionnaire revealed that the level of trust between highly skilled migrants and local Palestinian colleagues was fairly moderate ($M=2.70$). Nevertheless, there were differences of opinion between the interviewees about the levels of trust that existed between the two parties. A slight majority of the interviewees confirmed that their relationship with their colleagues was absolutely excellent. They acknowledged that highly skilled returnees may find some people who do not like them, but, ultimately, they had succeeded in building trust and cooperation with their colleagues. By contrast, other interviewees thought that people within the same profession were not very welcoming and feared competition. Highly skilled returnees can sometimes be considered a threat to their peers, since their skills and expertise may be better than those of their local colleagues. These findings have been confirmed by studies of teamwork which suggest that “trust was a factor that was many times observed to be relationship-driven” (Moynihan, 2009: 908). Trust can be therefore be considered as a very decisive factor in terms of whether or not relationships can be built and maintained between highly skilled migrants and local colleagues. Indeed, it is a critical factor for the success of knowledge transfer. While some returning migrants unfortunately miss out on this feeling of trust, the majority of interviewees did not see this as a major challenge for themselves. One study participant, A. M., who was frustrated by the way her colleagues treated her at first, explained that her main strategy to develop trust with her colleagues basically depended on self-affirmation and on reassuring them that she was not there to replace any of them. She explained that her relationship with colleagues evolved over time:

“They make it very difficult for me. I was determined to come and work and I had a good pass – this is what helped me to stay here. We have a culture here in Palestine, when somebody comes from outside, people start to feel a threat. After a few months of work, I think eventually they realized that I don’t want anybody else job and I am coming to work like anybody else. Thus, my relationship with them became good”.

Other interviewees similarly described how their colleagues tried to avoid or bother them from the beginning; nevertheless, they outlined how their relationships gradually improved over time. Indeed, relationships of this kind depend on both the sender and the recipient and

they also rely on an enabling environment that facilitates knowledge transfer. Transferring knowledge effectively is not an easy task as knowledge varies widely, taking forms that can be sophisticated and complex or simple and straightforward. However, the management of tacit knowledge, which potentially offers significant advantages, poses the greatest challenges (ESCWA, 2003: 4). While disseminating and accessing explicit knowledge is an easy process, efforts to convey and transfer tacit knowledge are seemingly not as smooth, and the leakage of tacit knowledge represents the main challenge that contemporary organizations have to face, as valuable, undocumented knowledge may be lost due to staff turnover, retirement, or work termination. However, there is little understanding about the importance of tacit knowledge management within Palestinian institutions. This is despite the fact that tacit knowledge can be a key driver of institutional development, and it can also reduce production costs and increase the assets of organizations in ways that enhance their competitive advantages.

Differences in culture, procedures, approaches to work, and strategies, sometimes contributed to strengthening distrust on both sides. The situation and the environment which faced highly skilled migrants who engaged in transferring knowledge to Palestine or came back there was not always encouraging, because of the gap between what they were used to encountering in their host countries and what they found in their home country. Having learned and worked in developed countries, they returned to a developing and occupied country with limited resources. In some cases, Palestinian institutions did not receive them with open arms, while in other cases the capacity to absorb and utilize the benefits they brought was not always available. Additionally, the behavior of some of their colleagues sometimes made things worse. The returnees have had to overcome these obstacles and find innovative ways to change some of the narratives and judgments that work against them. While they can do this by securing achievements and building effective ways to communicate with others, they sometimes feel alienated and disappointed due to these circumstances. Another main hurdle is that the Palestinians seem to have a problem with working as a team and this poses a real challenge for the highly skilled returnees. As an interviewee, D. E. who was working as a professor at one of the Palestinian universities explained:

“In Britain frankly speaking there is a share of knowledge; there is participation, collaborations to a high extent different than here. Here we are working as individuals; we are not working as groups”.

A mutually beneficial relationship that is built on partnership and mutual trust is more likely to succeed than a one-way process. It is understandable that people within the same profession are not too welcoming when someone new arrives in their workplace, but, on the other hand, sometimes a returnee can convey a superior attitude and a level of haughtiness that can produce these kinds of tensions and reactions in their local colleagues. Some interviewees stated that some highly skilled returnees make the terrible mistake of coming back with a degree of arrogance. This puts people off them and creates lots of tensions. Certainly, if highly skilled migrants who come back to carry out certain assignments are not humble enough and treat other people without respect, they will encounter a lot of resistance to what they do.

This study's results revealed that there are two main factors that affect the level of trust between highly skilled migrants and local colleagues: the first is the duration of their assignment and the second is whether their work is voluntary or a paid job. It is clear that people feel the most jealousy towards highly skilled returnees because their salary is very high compared to the salaries of local employees. This creates some tension in the workplace and some local colleagues make things more difficult for them by not giving them enough of the information and the support they require to do a good job. By contrast, those highly skilled migrants who come for short-term missions are made very welcome by their local colleagues because they usually participate on a voluntary basis and often teach them new ways to work. Secondly, highly skilled people who come for a few weeks or months are made more welcome than those who come for one year or longer. Less qualified people fear highly skilled returnees when they come for a long time as they are well-trained and strong competitors. In general, people fear that these highly qualified experts may take over their position. Employees at a certain level of governmental hierarchy felt that these experts were a threat to them and drew attention to their weaknesses. There is no doubt that differences in approach and ways of thinking affected the relationships between skilled members of the diaspora and their local counterparts and made situations more tense in some cases. However, this challenge can be overcome through patience and achievement.

6.2.3. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND BUREAUCRACY

The relationship between bureaucracy and the decisions made by highly skilled people to engage in knowledge transfer is quite clear. Generally speaking, administrative and bureaucratic procedures are either a factor in promoting or impeding the engagement of

highly skilled migrants in development and knowledge transfer to their home country. Although the results of the questionnaire indicated that administrative procedures and bureaucracy in Palestinian institutions moderately facilitated knowledge transfer, most interviewees claimed that the proliferation of bureaucracy in some Palestinian governmental institutions was another obstacle that could hinder knowledge transfer by skilled members of the Palestinian diaspora.

Some interviewees who had medical expertise explained their experiences and the difficulties they had faced in acquiring the license to practice medicine in Palestine. According to them, the bureaucracy in some governmental sectors, and particularly the health sector, is one of the obstacles faced by doctors who want to come back and serve their people. Unsurprisingly, these problems frustrated them, and they felt that the level of bureaucracy they encountered represented a kind of underestimation of the value of their scientific certifications, as well as a disincentive that could discourage doctors from returning home. Dr. I. M. is one of those medical experts who still suffers from dealing with this bureaucracy. He holds a Ph.D. in radiology and worked for a long time at Italian hospitals as an X-ray expert. He is also the director of the Pal-Med Center in the West Bank, which brings together Palestinian doctors based in Europe. He argued that the bureaucracy in some Palestinian institutions prevents people from bringing their knowledge and expertise back to their home country:

“I could not practice the profession of medicine in Palestine as in Europe since I did not hold the Palestinian board. To get the Palestinian board for a doctor who studied abroad is a bureaucratic procedure and a legal impediment, especially that I hold the Italian and European board. A couple of my friends and I were stopped from practicing our profession due to this exam. I was informed that I needed to take a written examination and not an interview as agreed in advance”.

Highly skilled Palestinian expatriates who are surgeons, doctors, engineers, academics, or work in other professional roles, had to have their certifications approved by the Ministry of Education. Several people with tremendous experience who had held their doctorates for more than twenty or thirty years shared stories about struggling to naturalize their certifications when they came to Palestine to serve their country and people. These types of complicated administrative procedures and the continued existence of this kind of bureaucracy may convince many people to leave in order to avoid putting themselves in the difficult and embarrassing situation of having their qualifications questioned.

It should be noted that non-high mutual trust, combined with the weak readiness and preparedness of public institutions, a proliferation of bureaucracy, and overlaps between the powers of some Palestinian institutions undermines the willingness of those institutions to tap into this pool of highly skilled people and utilize the benefits that migrants can transfer to their home country. In fact, the cultivation of engagement with the diaspora is a long-term process and it requires effective communications and mutual trust at every stage.

Overall, the host institution in which highly skilled migrants engaged was a critical factor in influencing their opinions about the absorptive capacity of Palestinian institutions. Those who engaged with academic institutions, and particularly universities, health sector institutions, and NGOs, were more satisfied than others with their knowledge transfer experience, and they confirmed that these institutions provided them with the tools and resources they needed to accomplish their assignments. By contrast, the interview findings showed that those who engaged with ministries and other governmental institutions were less satisfied and complained about lack of support and cooperation. It is clear that universities and academic institutions are doing well at recruiting and absorbing highly skilled, talented Palestinians who live abroad, and universities can be considered as centres of excellence in other ways too, given that most of the people who come to them – men and women from all fields – are highly qualified specialists.

6.2.4. SOCIO–POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Unsurprisingly, the socio-political environment is another significant factor that affects the engagement of the skilled diaspora in development programs back home. Indeed, the prevailing conditions of the rule of law, corruption, political instability, and approaches to governance are significant factors that influence the decisions of highly skilled migrants about whether or not, or how, to engage in knowledge transfer or investment back home. Despite Arab citizens' optimism that the Arab Spring would lead to the promotion of the values of justice, equality, and participation in the Arab world, the reality indicates that the opposite is true. With the exception of the Tunisian experience, it can be claimed that “the majority of Arab countries are far from perfecting the transition to an inclusive society. Indeed, contemporary Arab societies developed around a state model that is not leading to social cohesion” (UNDP, 2019: 5). The prevailing view in the MENA region is that the state is the source of oppression and coercion because it compels its citizens to comply with its politics, does not establish justice or the rule of law, is economically corrupt, and does not

provide sufficient public services to its citizens. The failure of many Arab countries to build their institutions according to the principles of good governance has negatively affected the standard of living and individuals' quality of life. Although the Palestinian state has not yet been established and remains an unrealized dream, the PNA's institutions operate in the same type of socio-political environment that dominates in other Arab countries, and in fact the socio-political climate in Palestine has become worse than that in other Arab countries because it is also characterized by the political instability that arises from occupation practices and internal friction.

Palestinians have been living in an environment that is full of uncertainty and is affected by fluctuation across a range of different political variables. This environment is one of the challenges that has hindered their progress and limited their opportunities to meet their basic needs and obtain services such as education, health, and social welfare. The policymaking process has been directly influenced by the absence of stability in the political sphere, and this dilemma has dominated the Palestinian situation. The Palestinians are continually suffering from political fluctuations due to either external or internal factors. In a study conducted in 2008, which targeted 933 families in Palestine, 20% of participants said that one or more of their family members had emigrated to look for work, educational opportunities, better living conditions, or simply security (Matareya *et al.*, 2008: 7).

The results of this study confirm that political instability is one of the factors that negatively affects diaspora engagement. The mean of this question was the lowest and it was, in fact, remarkably low in terms of supporting knowledge transfer by highly skilled Palestinian migrants. According to the majority of the respondents, the absence of political stability obstructs the engagement of highly skilled migrants in development and knowledge transfer. The results of the interviews confirmed this finding.

According to one interviewee, Dr. A. Z., opportunities for engaging skilled members of the diaspora depend to a significant extent on political stability. Furthermore, he argued that:

"In the absence of political stability, it would be hard for people to go and share their experience or even to invest their money there. For this reason, the engagement is very limited".

With regard to corruption, Palestine is not affected to an exceptional extent, although there may be some corruption here or there. Nevertheless, the results of the questionnaire indicated

that the majority of respondents (57.0%) believed that the level of corruption and nepotism in Palestine does not support or facilitate knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants. Furthermore, they considered corruption and nepotism to be some of the main obstacles that prevent knowledge transfer back home, followed closely by the condition of the rule of law. Undoubtedly, propaganda, rumors about corruption in Palestine, and the idea that some Palestinians are engaged in corrupt activities, affect the decisions that people abroad make about coming back to invest or share their knowledge with others in their home country. According to the findings of a survey conducting by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (2020: 7), 85% of people believe that there is corruption in the Palestinian Authority, while 65% believe that there is corruption in the public institutions controlled by Hamas in the Gaza Strip. These types of belief were also evident in the results of the interviews for this study. Most of those interviewed considered corruption to be one of the obstacles that prevents the engagement of highly skilled migrants in development and knowledge transfer. They believe that corruption adds more difficulties for Palestinians abroad who want to return. As a separate issue, the decisions made by skilled people in the diaspora about whether or not to return are affected by their impressions about certain factors, including but not limited to the prevailing situation in relation to the rule of law, levels of corruption, and nepotism. These factors hinder efforts to ensure that Palestinian institutions can benefit from skilled labor drawn from abroad. One interviewee, Dr. B. R., set out his own view of the multifaceted characteristics of corruption in Palestine:

“I think we still have a certain level of corruption. It is less than before but it is still there. In fact, corruption has different faces, so it is not necessarily people getting money or getting contracts, but sometimes using personal influence, using bodyguards too much. Also, corruption is overdoing things, or not doing things in a proper way”.

The views of some of the Palestinian policy-makers interviewed did not align with these opinions. Instead, they highlighted the fact that corruption exists everywhere and that claims about Palestinian corruption are both grossly exaggerated and politically motivated in order to discredit the government and imply that problems are caused by Palestinian failure and not by Israeli pressure and the difficulties caused by the occupation.

In general, highly skilled expatriates are motivated by the desire to help the Palestinian people who are living under occupation. However, it is important to mention that the way institutions are managed negatively influences all areas of life, including the possibility of

engaging support from the skilled diaspora. Notably, in addition to the Israeli occupation, the absence of a role for the Palestinian Legislative Council and the weakness of the judiciary are other elements that hinder anti-corruption efforts (Transparency Palestine, 2016: 17). The weakness of monitoring institutions, which is an effect of political division, has limited the oversight capacity of the executive authority. More importantly, half of the citizens of the West Bank and Gaza Strip believe that they will not receive a fair trial if they find themselves before a Palestinian court (PCPSR, 2020: 8). Consequently, many highly skilled people have fled, not because they cannot find a job, but because they do not wish to live in this kind of socio-political environment. By contrast, Palestinian universities are subject to fewer complaints that they suffer from corruption. Palestinians abroad can do many useful things for their home country, but they need trust and the presence of institutions that can guarantee transparency and honesty. Unfortunately, the widespread reputation of the PNA suggests that it is corrupt, and so the question that is always asked by highly skilled migrants is why they should play a role in supporting it. In fact, the Palestinian government has taken many measures to improve its fiscal policies and administrative performance, but poor communication and a lack of transparency have contributed to a lack of awareness about these reforms in the skilled diaspora. More efforts must therefore be undertaken in order to convince Palestinian people who are abroad to come back. To convince people to return or send money home is a process that depends on an effective communication plan. It seems certain that, if the government provides that and demonstrates that it is capable of managing its relationships with highly skilled people in the diaspora, people will see these developments and take the decision to come back or engage in one way or another.

In general terms, however, this study's result show that institutional constraints and the socio-political context negatively influence the circular mobility of highly skilled Palestinian migrants. Although Palestinian institutions are willing to utilize and share knowledge from the diaspora, they vary in their levels of preparedness and readiness to absorb and benefit from the diaspora's expertise. According to this study's results, universities and NGOs are doing better in this regard. In higher education, the level of trust with colleagues and the prevailing organizational culture are more supportive than they are in other institutions and this facilitates the transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants. However, political instability, the condition of the rule of law, corruption, overlaps in roles and responsibilities, the absence of an environment conducive to investment, and a lack of incentives are factors that adversely affect the diaspora's engagement.

All of the factors explored here lead to a specific and undeniable conclusion, which is that the capacity of Palestinian institutions is one of the factors that negatively affects the engagement of skilled people from the diaspora in development and knowledge transfer in the case of Palestine. It is also important to mention that the effect of the home country on the engagement of highly skilled migrants is still weak, and therefore there must be other more influential factors that push them to come back and engage in the transfer of knowledge to their home country. *Table 6.2* summarizes the main findings related to home country factors.

Table: 6.2. Effects of home country factors on the engagement of skilled diaspora

Home Country Factors	Positive	Negative	Remarks
Willingness to utilize and share knowledge	Institutions become more oriented towards engaging skilled diaspora	Willingness does not include all institutions and areas	Although willingness exists, it mostly does not transform into policies
The absorptive capacity of institutions	Educational and health institutions and the private sector are more reliable than others	Still lagging behind their counterparts in neighboring countries	Presence of reliable institutions encourages emigrated expertise to come back
Corruption and nepotism	Fortunately, they are not a pervasive phenomenon	They are present in one way or another in Palestinian institutions	They negatively affect expatriates' decisions to return and transfer knowledge.
Political instability		It is a prevailing atmosphere	Undermines any efforts to engage the skilled diaspora in development or knowledge transfer
Transparency of roles and responsibilities	Some efforts have begun to define roles and eliminate overlap	Presence of overlapping in responsibilities	Many interviewees complained of this overlap and stated that it negatively affected their tasks
Level of trust with colleagues	It is moderate and supports knowledge transfer	People within the same profession are not very welcoming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It depends on both sides. • Competition, jealousy, and superiority affect mutual trust.

Source: Author's own compilation based on the results of the questionnaire and interviews.

6.3. HOST COUNTRY FACTORS

The purpose of this theme was to investigate how host country factors affect the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer. The three main factors investigated here are getting citizenship, gaining skills and experiences, and international and bilateral knowledge transfer programs between the host country and home country. This section also examines to what extent these factors support and facilitate knowledge transfer by highly skilled Palestinian migrants to their home country. Thus, this section aims to answer key questions about the extent to which living in the host country had an impact on highly skilled Palestinian migrants and helped them to gain opportunities and transferable knowledge. It also investigates how they use the opportunities and experiences they gain in the host country to contribute to development in Palestine. The results of the questionnaire revealed that the overall effect of host country factors on knowledge transferred by highly skilled Palestinian migrants to their home country was moderate. *Table 6.3* presents the findings.

Table: 6.3. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages for host country factors that support the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country, ranked in descending order

Host Country Factors	Mean*	Standard Deviation	%
Gain new knowledge, skills, and experience	3.64	1.06	85.0
Getting citizenship in the host country (dual citizenship)	3.50	1.54	80.0
Presence of bilateral programs for knowledge transfer between the host country and home country	2.98	1.17	59.0
The host country provides facilities to assist knowledge transfer to the home country	2.97	1.29	59.0
Total	3.27	0.93	71.0

Source: Author's table based on the results of the questionnaires.

6.3.1. GAINING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Immigration to developed and scientifically advanced countries increases access to opportunities that later benefit both the migrant and the country of origin. Knowledge, skills, and experiences are among the most valuable assets in any organization, and together they form what is known as human capital. These intangible resources, coupled with the existence of policies and plans designed to take advantage of and benefit from internal talent and as well as the potential of external expertise, are critical to institutional growth and performance. Certainly, access to these kinds of knowledge, skills, and experiences, is one of the major factors that enables skilled people in the diaspora to engage in circular activity and transfer knowledge back home. This is evident from the results of the questionnaire, as most of the respondents confirmed that their skills have improved as a result of living and working in their host countries, especially as they were able to work in their chosen field of study. Not surprisingly, the years that highly skilled migrants spent in host countries helped them to acquire a lot of experience and knowledge and provided them with an opportunity to access and become familiar with best practices and modern technologies. As indicated in the results of the questionnaire, 85.0% of the respondents thought that the host country had helped them to gain more knowledge and experience. At the same time, all interviewees pointed out that the education they had received and the work experience they had acquired had developed them and given them the skills they have today.

While these findings are specific to the Palestinian experience, this result is consistent with the findings presented in earlier scholarly literature about other diasporas, including the Nigerian diaspora, for example. According to Sveinsson (2015: 152), “migration has a lot to offer Nigerian doctors which they could use to promote health development in Nigeria. The training they receive in England is greatly superior to what they can hope for in Nigeria”. Furthermore, the results conform with a transnational theory which states that migrants start to think about taking part in development back home or transferring knowledge there once they have collected enough resources, either in the form of knowledge or wealth (Cassarino, 2004: 264).

It is notable that the overseas exposure and experience gained by highly skilled migrants have substantial impact on their professional maturation and personal development. All of the interviewees confirmed that the experience and knowledge they gained abroad were crucial to the contribution they were able to make to their home country. They reported that they have

acquired diverse experiences of roles in leadership, management, administration, and biotechnological innovation, among other areas. They think that it is their responsibility to transfer these techniques and technology to their home country. They have been able to contribute not only by lecturing and teaching but also by designing certain directorates, units of higher education, and ministries. They have also been able to guide certain research projects or develop and implement specific policies using their skills and high levels of strategic thinking. This was especially true for people who came from developed countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom who had already been involved and engaged in institutions of higher education where they had been enabled to make high-level contributions very quickly.

It is important to note that the acquisition of skills and experience is less likely to occur in the absence of an incubator that provides individuals with opportunities to work and practice in areas that allow them to utilize what they have learned. Another important point is whether or not their work or job is relevant to their field of education. The results revealed that all interviewees and most of the survey respondents are working in the field in which they studied. This has helped them to be more reliable and more confident about sharing their knowledge with others. There is no doubt that getting an opportunity to work with international organizations such as a United Nations agency or USAID helped highly skilled Palestinian migrants to access more knowledge and experience and facilitated their engagement in knowledge transfer to their home country.

One interviewee, A. M., expressed her view about how her experience in the host country had shaped her life:

“I think for me as a person growing up in another country I worked very hard and doing what I have to do to survive. This is what makes me who I am and I grow up with these values. So, with this, I was able to gain knowledge and experience and share it with people here in Palestine”.

Most of the interviewees shared this view and explained that they were learning things that could be applied or taught in Palestine. Moreover, they used the approaches and techniques they had learned in the host country to deal with students or patients and to enhance the capacities of Palestinian institutions. Basically, they have been absorbing a variety of skills and experiences and transferring them to Palestine, where they have demonstrated and shared their knowledge and skills and led people to understand how things can be done in more

efficient, better, faster, and cheaper ways. The main advantage here is that the vast majority of highly skilled migrants have gained skills and knowledge in their host countries, which can be used later on to the benefit of their home country. They therefore collectively represent a potential knowledge pool that can be activated upon need or whenever it becomes possible or practical to capitalize on their expertise.

6.3.2. HOST COUNTRY CITIZENSHIP

Acquiring permanent residency and/or citizenship not only helps to foster immigrants' integration within their host country; it can also lead to positive interactions between migrants and their homeland. The legal status of highly skilled migrants is important as it opens up the option of circular migration. Also, migrants are more likely to bring more capital and skills back to their country of origin if they have settled status (Triandafyllidou, 2013; Vertovec, 2007; Maroukis and Gemi, 2013: 20). This finding was confirmed in the cases of the highly skilled Palestinian migrants who participated in this study, as the majority of respondents (80.0%) confirmed that getting citizenship was an advantage for them and had a significant impact on their engagement in knowledge transfer. They noted that it facilitated their movement in and out of Palestine, making travel possible and much easier to arrange. Without foreign citizenship and a passport, they would not have been able to come and contribute to development and capacity-building in Palestine.

One of the interviewees, Professor S. H. Y., outlined how having a foreign passport facilitated his movement in and out of the home country and enabled him to transfer his knowledge of modern technology from developed countries to institutions in Palestine:

“The foreign passport gives me more flexibility if I need to go for fundraising, for conferences, to make inter-institutional networks between our institutions and the international institutions. Actually, it has big advantages. Well, if I don't have it, my movement would be restricted and my impacts would be less and less”.

Obviously, the contribution made by highly skilled migrants who live in countries that impose more barriers to obtaining citizenship is lower compared to that of their counterparts in countries with less stringent citizenship policies. Gaining citizenship in some host countries takes an excessively long period of time, and this delays the transfer of knowledge from the host country to the country of origin. Thus, flexible citizenship regulations help migrants to win appropriate and secure legal status, which can help them to access more

resources, such as jobs. However, in the case of Palestine, a foreign passport in itself is not sufficient to allow a person to stay in the country for a long time. It facilitates entry, but if the person does not have Palestinian identification documents (ID), it becomes difficult for them to stay in Palestine for a long period, due to Israeli measures. Palestinian ID facilitates people's movement, but the decisions about who can obtain this ID are controlled by the Israeli authorities, and the movement of people in and out of the country will remain in the hands of Israel until the final status negotiations take place in accordance with the Paris Protocol.

6.3.3. INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL PROGRAMS

Some international organizations and host countries have launched specific knowledge transfer programs that provide a platform for transferring knowledge, experience, and skills from host countries to countries of origin. These programs also incorporate a wide range of activities that support government agencies, universities, industries, NGOs, and the private sector. As has already been noted, knowledge transfer programs have existed in Palestine since the establishment of the PNA, and this section aims to examine their role in transferring knowledge and skills to Palestine.

The results from the questionnaire showed that 59.0% of the respondents agreed that bilateral programs play an auxiliary role in transferring knowledge from the host countries to Palestinian institutions. Less positively, the interview findings revealed that bilateral programs for knowledge transfer have rarely existed between the host country and the home country. Nevertheless, some interviewees pointed out that there are some bilateral programs that transfer knowledge and experience to Palestine in certain areas like training, scientific research, and medical collaboration with international institutes and universities, especially the UK's University of Glasgow, the University of Bristol, and the University of Cambridge. Some relationships with American universities were also noted. These programs established bilateral relationships between certain institutions or universities in Palestine and their counterparts in other countries. Other interviewees confirmed that they were involved in certain programs through the UN, which provided them with opportunities to transfer knowledge and experience to their home country. It is equally important to mention that the UN runs a few programs in Palestine in various fields, and many Palestinians abroad were selected to go and serve in Palestine through these programs.

One interviewee, A. M., claimed that knowledge transfer programs supported by international organizations have helped highly skilled Palestinian migrants a lot and provided them with a platform for coming back and sharing their knowledge and experience with people there:

“I came through the TOKTEN program in 2008. Actually, this program provides me the opportunity to come back and work in Palestine. They engaged me as a consultant for the minister of health. I did everything basically”.

Evidently, bilateral programs, where they exist at all, are very random and ad hoc, and they are rarely official. When they are official, they are often organized by the UNDP and IOM and rarely by the PNA’s organizations, because the PNA has very limited resources with which to influence the engagement process. In fact, most of the knowledge transfer programs implemented in Palestine have been carried out by international organizations rather than by bilateral programs.

To conclude, governments cannot succeed in their efforts to engage with the skilled diaspora unless the other party is willing and prepared to take action for this joint cause. It is indisputable that living in the host country has contributed to developing and upgrading the skills of highly skilled migrants. Indeed, Palestinians abroad, especially those with high-level skills, have worked hard to become better experts in their fields, and this has helped them to engage in the transfer of knowledge through circular migration. All of the interviewees confirmed that the experience and knowledge they gained abroad were crucial to the contribution they were able to make to the home country. It is clear that there is a direct relationship between the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge back home and skills acquisition in the host country. Transnational engagement appears to increase in line with professional seniority, and, undoubtedly, these experiences enabled highly skilled Palestinian migrants to contribute to development in Palestine and help their people there. Furthermore, achieving foreign citizenship helped them a lot and facilitated their mobility to Palestine. Moreover, the involvement of many highly skilled Palestinian migrants in certain programs run by international organizations like the UN provides them with an opportunity to access more resources and opportunities to transfer knowledge and experience to their home country. Indeed, there are a lot of programs that the UN runs in Palestine in various fields, and many Palestinians abroad were selected to go there and serve Palestine through these programs.

6.4. DIASPORA ASSOCIATIONS AND NETWORKS

The aim of this section is to analyse the role of Palestinian diaspora associations and networks in helping Palestinian migrants to find work that suits their qualifications in the host country. Moreover, it aims to explore the readiness and abilities of these diasporas to mobilize people who live abroad to take part in building institutions in their home country. It also explores the role of Palestinian embassies in providing facilities to members of the skilled Palestinian diaspora to support them in transferring knowledge and experience to their home country. Unsurprisingly, the existence of databases that track information about expatriates, their prevalence, their numbers, and qualifications is a critical factor in engaging members of the diaspora in development and knowledge transfer to their home country. Therefore, one of the main purposes of this section is to examine to what extent this kind of database is available to Palestinian embassies or even diaspora associations.

There is no specific scholarly literature focused on the Palestinian diaspora. Migrants' experiences of dispersal, diasporic trends, and relationships with their home country have not received enough attention in Palestinian and Arab studies. As mentioned above, the socio-political factors experienced by Palestinian people have led to the displacement of large numbers of them to various parts of the world. As a matter of fact, the Palestinian diaspora constitutes about half of the Palestinian nation. Despite their remoteness from the home country, Palestinians' commitment to their homeland and its historical grievance still lives in their consciences. Historically speaking, Palestinian people have formed an important component of the history and cultural renaissance of their host countries, especially in Arab countries such as Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, and other Gulf states. The Palestinians have made distinct contributions to the educational, health, and urban development of these countries, and although Palestinians are currently scattered all over the world, they are concentrated in four main areas: the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel, Arab countries, and Western countries. However, "one cannot place Palestinians into just one or the other of the groups. Frequent movement between the groups continues to occur" (Hammer, 2009: 14).

It is interesting to note that, wherever they have been living in various countries in North and South America, Europe, and the Arab countries, Palestinians have established their own expatriate communities. Some of these communities can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century, like those in Latin America. The level of organization of Palestinian communities varies according to their host country. In some countries, Palestinians are a

notable community, while in others it is difficult for them to define themselves as a community at all: “In Lebanon, for example, there is no question that the Palestinians are and consider themselves to be a community, by contrast in Jordan, questions may arise as to whether it is in the Palestinian interest to present themselves as a community” (Hijab et al., 2010: 1–2). The strongest and most highly structured Palestinian community exists in Latin America, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians live. In fact, “the USA and Latin America were Palestinian immigration destinations even before 1948” (Koinova, 2017: 611). Perhaps unsurprisingly, most of the Palestinians in these countries belong to the middle and educated classes, and the vast majority of them hold the passports of those countries.

There are now large Palestinian communities in most European countries too. As in Latin America and the US, Palestinians in Europe have established their own communities. However, with the exception of the United Kingdom, these communities are fairly recent. Despite their closer location, the link between the Palestinians in Europe and the motherland appears to be looser than that between the Palestinians in the US and their homeland. True enough, Palestinian immigrants in the United States continue to maintain strong ties with their cities and relatives. It is interesting that the vast majority of them are of Ramallah origin. Palestinian associations abroad are interested in serving their people in the host countries, and, at the same time, they are working to deepen ties with their home country. For example, some of these associations send academic and medical missions to transfer expertise and knowledge to Palestinians at home.

Like other diasporic communities, Palestinian communities comprise a diverse mix of teachers, academics, doctors, engineers, accountants, and other professionals. However, “the percentage of out-migrants among white-collar jobs varied by host country. 73% of Palestinian migrants in the Gulf States were employed in white-collar jobs. In the USA and Canada, the percentage of Palestinian migrants in white-collar jobs was 44%,” (Hilal, 2007: 20).

6.4.1. THE ROLE OF PALESTINIAN DIASPORA ASSOCIATIONS IN MOBILIZING KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

According to the results of this study’s questionnaire, the role of Palestinian diaspora associations in the engagement of highly skilled migrants in transferring knowledge to their homeland was significantly low. This finding draws attention to a weakness in the

performance of the Palestinian communities abroad concerning this key issue. However, the results showed that more than half of the respondents were not satisfied with how their diaspora associations were treating this problem. Furthermore, only 44.4% of the respondents confirmed that a diaspora website existed to communicate with immigrants, while 43% of them stated that the Palestinian diaspora had helped them to find a job in the host country. Most importantly, when it comes to the availability of a database that tracks the Palestinian skilled diaspora, only 35.0% stated that a database exists to track immigrants' skills, qualifications, experience, and places of residence in embassies and diaspora associations. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages were used to answer the above question. *Table 6.4* presents the findings.

The results of the interviews revealed that 16 out of 26 participants agreed that the performance of Palestinian diaspora associations is below expectations. The vast majority of the interviewees confirmed that Palestinian diasporas and embassies do not collect any statistical data or other information about Palestinians living abroad, including highly skilled migrants. By contrast, 8 out of 26 stated that they were doing well and what they needed was some communication between Palestinian locals and the diasporas. They thought that the Palestinian government and embassies should work harder to make the most of connections between the Palestinian diasporas and their home country because the people in the diasporas have so much to give and are ready to give it.

Table: 6.4. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages for the diaspora factors that support the engagement of Palestinian highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country, ranked in descending order

Diaspora Factors	Mean*	Standard Deviation	%
Diaspora associations and networks play a role in mobilizing highly skilled migrants to transfer knowledge to Palestine	2.48	1.16	49.6
There is a diaspora website to communicate with immigrants	2.22	1.11	44.4
The Palestinian diaspora help highly skilled Palestinian migrants to find a job in the host country	2.15	1.00	43.0
Presence of facilitators to induce knowledge transfer between the host country and home country	2.09	1.03	41.8
The embassies work to identify and mobilize highly skilled migrants to transfer knowledge to Palestine	1.88	0.88	37.6
There is a database about immigrants' skills, qualifications, experience, places of residence, etc. in embassies and diaspora associations	1.75	0.77	35.0
Total	2.09	0.76	42.0

Source: Author's table based on the results of the questionnaires.

Palestinian migrants are among those who are increasingly mobilizing transnational social networks to migrate to Western Europe (Al-Ali, 2004: 3), yet when it comes to the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge back home, the results indicated high weakness. Moreover, the Palestinian communities abroad are facing challenges in terms of organization and networking, and their communications with

Palestinian expatriates abroad is not the best. These shortcomings affect their capabilities and efforts (if any) to mobilize people and engage them in development at home. In fact, this result is inconsistent with the network approach which states that a diaspora network functions as an agent that facilitates the engagement of a diaspora in the development and flow of knowledge back home. Historically speaking, Palestinian diasporas are more likely to be involved in political action than other issues like knowledge transfer or development in Palestine. One of the interviewees, Dr. I. M., expressed his pessimistic sentiment about the performance of Palestinian communities abroad:

“Unfortunately, the role of expatriate communities is still modest or absent. These communities have a passion for their country, but there are no organized elites to lead them. From my point of view networking and social relations play a role that impacts the expatriates, and their solidarity and cohesion”.

In general terms, however, the results showed that the performance of some diasporas in mobilizing highly skilled people to come back and share their knowledge varied from one host country to another according to the level of organization of these communities. Indeed, it depends on community associations and how they are organized. If they are organized, they can provide a lot of support. Strictly speaking, diasporas in the US, Latin America, and some European countries like the UK, Italy, and Germany have been the best in this regard. In these countries, diaspora associations were established with the aim of lobbying host institutions and international organizations. Among these associations are the National Arab American Medical Association (NAAMA) in the US, the International Medical Education Trust (IMET 2000) in the UK, and the Palestinian Medical Association in Europe (Pal-Med). Normally these organizations send highly qualified and specialized physicians as volunteers to perform surgeries for Palestinian patients in local hospitals. Usually, their assignments last for a few days or weeks. Furthermore, many Palestinian expatriate physicians are working in advanced hospitals and universities in these countries. Some of them joined certain associations in the host country, which enabled them to access more resources and opportunities. This helped them to transfer updated knowledge and best practice to their home country and continues to provide much assistance to Palestinian hospitals and universities as well. On the other hand, such opportunities are not available in places like Arab countries and East European countries. Definitely, the existence of scientific or academic cooperation between the host country and the home country can provide skilled diaspora in the host country with more opportunities to serve their home country and

participate in its development. An interviewee who is a director at the Ministry of Health highlighted her view about the contribution of Palestinian expatriate physicians to transferring their knowledge and experience to Palestinian institutions:

“Those Palestinians who have their practice in their hosting countries may be in Europe, Scandinavia, the USA, and others, but they are committed to their homeland and to serve their people here. So they come on a voluntary basis and they work hand in hand with their counterpart in the local hospitals and local facilities, either in operations or in diagnosis, the treatment, screening and all of these.”

In absolute terms, diaspora considers as a potential resource in contributing to development back home. Certainly, there are some initiatives on the side of Palestinian diaspora associations that contribute to certain fields, including medical and academic fields. The results showed some role models and examples of this kind of engagement where Palestinian volunteers come to Palestine and help people there. Choosing the already mentioned areas to engage in is a critical issue since Palestinian institutions need experts in these two areas, particularly healthcare.

Actually, this kind of engagement should be a high priority, in the sense that it helps Palestinians to access modern approaches to work without the need to send staff from Palestine to be trained outside. Highly skilled migrants share knowledge and experience with local staff and build their capacities, as well as providing them with opportunities to access new and updated knowledge and skills in their various fields of endeavour. Moreover, their engagement reduces the number of cases where patients have to be referred outside for treatment. To put it differently, the main advantage of Palestinian expatriate physicians' engagement is the reduction in the cost of patient treatment and the cost of training staff. This is a critical issue for a country like Palestine that suffers from a shortage of resources. Although these initiatives and efforts are very important and fit in well with the needs of Palestinian institutions, they are very limited and intermittent. Furthermore, the results of the research indicated that Palestinians abroad are like any other community, in that they have their associations and networks and they always think about their home country, but the main problem they have is that these associations are unorganized and factionalized because of political reasons. These circumstances undermine the abilities of these associations to become active in engaging people to serve their home country or even to serve their communities

abroad. Consequently, highly skilled people become more reluctant to contribute in such cases.

It should be noted that some Palestinian diaspora associations, like the Ramallah foundation, are involved in bringing people to Palestine for a few days or weeks, but these efforts are limited in their impact because they are focused on social engagement and participants are not involved in imparting any skills or knowledge at all. It is important to hold conferences and help people to get to know each other, as these activities can create platforms and connections that keep people connected to Palestine. Nevertheless, these conferences and meetings do not necessarily provide the kind of support needed to transfer knowledge outside the social realm. Some interviewees commented on the fact that activities organized by some diaspora associations basically concentrate on public relations and social issues rather than skills and experience. According to them, these activities fail to focus on fundamental issues.

The inevitable conclusion is that engaging people in development and knowledge transfer cannot occur without the adoption of a demand-driven approach and the building of a well-constructed database that brings together information on diasporas. Unfortunately, the results of this study have revealed that there is a significant impairment in relation to these two factors. Moreover, there are no visible and pro-active efforts being made by Palestinian communities, the embassies, or the PNA to begin building such a database. What makes matters worse is that the Palestinian diaspora has often been affected by the same types of political disputes that have hampered the home country. Interaction with political issues at home is normal behavior in diaspora communities. Furthermore, these associations often experience difficulties caused by “the absence of a vision and strategy for the Palestinian people articulated clearly and cogently by the leadership” (Hijab, 2004: 8).

6.4.2. PALESTINIAN SOLIDARITY EXPERIENCE ABROAD

Palestinian communities abroad are characterized by their diversity: they bring together doctors, engineers, managers, teachers, workers, businesspeople, and people from all walks of life. Their diversity has not prevented them from working together to assist vulnerable groups, especially newcomers; nor has it stopped them from organizing meetings and collective activities to strengthen relations and ties among themselves or serving the cause of the home country. In fact, “Palestinians abroad have formed communities that are almost self-enclosed within which they develop their patriotic feeling, generosity, and special

culture” (Abu Baker, 2000: 35). This is particularly true in countries like the US, the UK, and the Arab Gulf States.

Although the results of this study’s questionnaire revealed remarkable weakness in the role of the Palestinian diaspora in helping Palestinian migrants to find a job in the host country, intra-Palestinian relations between members of Palestinian communities abroad have been maintained. In general terms, solidarity among Palestinians abroad continues to be one of the features of the Palestinian diaspora, and “Over the years, several associations have sprung up to nurture and maintain relationships among Palestinian diaspora communities. These include institutions such as the Ramallah Association in the United States and the Association of Palestinians in the United Kingdom” (Hijab, 2004: 4). Furthermore, skilled people in the Palestinian diaspora and businesspeople provide assistance and opportunities for Palestinian students who are studying abroad. The interview findings revealed that most of the highly skilled migrants who participated in the study stated that they had helped some Palestinians abroad or are ready to assist them in the future in cases where they need any assistance. Notably, one interviewee Professor S. H. Y., explained the practical ways in which he had helped and supported some Palestinians as they pursued training in the host country:

“I have been one of the directors of Foundation for Al-Quds Medical School (FQMS) for almost 10 years from 2001 up to 2012. We recruited Palestinian doctors, bringing them to the UK for training – that was before I came back to Palestine. We gave them fellowships, experience, and so on. We look after their fees, their travel, their living and accommodation, and everything. And after 3 years, they have to be committed and signed to come back and contribute to the development of Palestinian institutions”.

There is no systematic role for Palestinian diasporas in helping highly skilled Palestinian immigrants, and support mainly depends on who knows who. Nevertheless, Palestinians often work in a synergistic way in the diaspora and support each other, whether they have come to study, work, or even when they have arrived as a result of a forced exodus, as happened several years ago when thousands of Palestinians came to Europe from Syria. For example, some Palestinian communities in Europe have awareness programs for newcomers, which are tailored to include things like consultations about the host country; information about opportunities, including language acquisition opportunities; and the names of the companies where they might find jobs. One of the interviewees provided an example of this kind of support when he described how Palestinian associations in Austria support Palestinian

refugees from Syria, providing them with interpreters and helping some of them to find housing and work.

The interviewees were also asked about how possible it was for Palestinians to become entrepreneurs in the host country, who they would employ, and how likely they would be to give preference to Palestinians. Most of the interviewees pointed out that they would definitely employ Palestinians and would give them priority as long as they were highly qualified for the job in question and had good experience in their field. Otherwise, they would employ other efficient, well-trained people, regardless of their nationality. This practical position reflected the fact that their businesses involve private investment and they want to make as much money as possible. Where they feel that there will be mutual benefit in supporting other Palestinians, they will bring them into their businesses. Nevertheless, commitment and qualifications will always be the main criteria for selection. As regards their relationships with their counterparts back home, entrepreneurs in the diasporas indicated that they are very careful about how they build relationships with their counterparts in Palestine, because of the seriousness of becoming involved in markets abroad. They pick their partners very carefully because they do not want any problems or to risk their businesses.

The solidarity activities undertaken by the Palestinian diaspora are not limited to the support they provide for Palestinians abroad; they also extend to include many Palestinians in the home country. Historically speaking, the interest of the skilled Palestinian diaspora in philanthropy and development in the home country began in the 1980s, and grew out of their sense of social responsibility to the home country. Hilal pinpoints the starting point as “1983 when a group of businessmen and intellectuals met in Geneva and established welfare association with the aim of funding projects for Palestinian education, health, human resources, and social development” (Hilal, 2007: 26). This association served the Palestinians and contributed to strengthening their steadfastness, especially in geographically marginalized areas. It also encouraged small enterprises and home production. Furthermore, “wealthy Palestinian immigrants (in North America and the Gulf States) did, and still do, send money to their needy villages and families when the latter face a serious problem” (Ibid: 29). It is worth mentioning that some Palestinian migrants have built schools and other types of infrastructure, such as community centers and even mosques, in their towns and villages. One interviewee Dr. M. Q. demonstrated the level of solidarity that some highly skilled expatriates show to people in Palestine when he summarized some of the social activities that he supports:

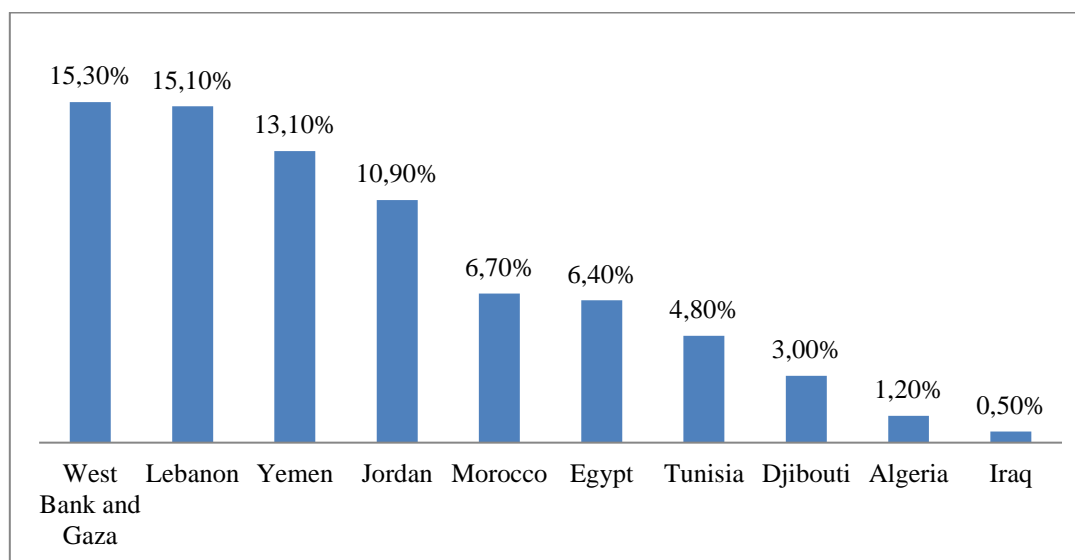
“I worked in the US for many years and I used to transfer money and remittances back home to help Palestinians. I donated to organizations such as UNRWA and Palestine Children’s Relief Fund and many other groups, and I also direct help to other people who are needy and to some of my relatives. Also, I helped some Palestinian students paid their tuition. I started this clinical lab with my own money – basically donated to Bethlehem University. I was willing to help people here in Palestine”.

Similarly, other interviewees explained how they try to support social activities in Palestine, in order to add something at the local level. Generally speaking, the diasporas’ contributions towards their home country take more than one form, and may include money given directly to relatives and needy families, funds transferred to philanthropic projects or funds given to associations to support their social activities. Whatever specific forms it takes, it is evident that solidarity is a clear characteristic of Palestinian communities abroad. All of the highly skilled migrant interviewees who participated in this study mentioned that they are ready to help other Palestinians, either in Palestine or in the diaspora, by supporting them as they work to achieve important objectives, and “many Palestinians abroad have helped their relatives in completing higher education as it was expensive” (Lubbad, 2008: 9). However, the main shortcoming of this kind of solidarity is that it is not organized. Instead, it depends on personal relationships because people usually help their relatives or friends.

Remittances, in the form of money sent back to the home country by Palestinian migrants, represent another means by which skilled people in the diaspora show solidarity with other Palestinians. In fact, remittances represent one of the main benefits received from migrants by origin countries. However, “the volume of remittances depends primarily on income, the propensity to save and the strength of social ties on the part of the migrants, and the institutional mechanisms for money transfers on the part of the governments of the sending and the receiving countries” (Tejada *et al.*, 2013: 21). Although remittances played a crucial role both in the Palestinian economy during the 1980s (Lubbad, 2008: 15) and in the creation of a large Palestinian middle class (Hilal, 2007: 12), they began to decline after 1984, and this trend continued following the second Gulf War which led to the expulsion of 300,000 Palestinians from Kuwait and other Gulf states (Ibid: 16). Remittances from Palestinian emigrants abroad have fluctuated since the 1990s, and while Palestinians’ total remittances during the period 1995–2012 averaged 22.3% of GDP, there were wide variations during this period. The proportion of remittances to GDP ranged from 14.1% in 2005 to its highest level

at 31.3% in 2002 (Qubbaja, 2014: 9).² This increase in the value of remittances as compared to those received by other Arab countries is due to the fact that they include remittances from Israel.³ Figure 6.1 shows the ratio of remittances to GDP in some Arab countries, including Palestine.

Figure: 6.1 Ratio of remittances to GDP in some Arab countries 2017



Source: World Bank Group, 2018: p. 31.

Figure 6.1 shows that the West Bank and Gaza Strip receive among the highest ratios of remittances to GDP among Arab countries, with remittances representing 15.30% of GDP, while Iraq's ratio is just 0.05%.⁴ This study's interview findings revealed that most of the interviewees did not send remittances back home, because they have no families or relatives there. However, some interviewees stated that they send money to their relatives, while others used to send money to their fathers and mothers in the past. It is worth noting that sending money back home is part of Palestinian culture, particularly when the expatriate has relatives and family in the home country. In Arab countries, including Palestine, remittances are generally used to cover the cost of household expenses and healthcare. A few of the interviewees stated that they have sent remittances for investment or to start a business in

² The data above only cover remittances that transfer regularly. Remittances are not included if they are sent in an emergency or brought by expatriates when they return.

³ According to another Palestinian study, remittances from Palestinian workers in Israel constituted 30% of GDP in Palestine before the outbreak of the second intifada in 2000 (Shtayyeh, 1998: 34).

⁴ Although the data above show that Palestine has among the highest rate of remittances, the inflow of remittances is still in decline. The inflow of remittances to Arab countries was as follows: Egypt \$20 billion, Lebanon \$8 billion, Morocco \$7.5 billion, Jordan \$4.4 billion, Yemen \$3.4 billion, Algeria \$2.1 billion, West Bank and Gaza \$2.0 billion, Tunisia \$1.9 billion and Syria \$1.9 billion (World Bank Group, 2018: 31). This indicates that the population size affects the ratio of remittances to GDP.

Palestine. This means that remittances correlate more closely with private consumption than with investment purposes in the Palestinian context.

6.4.3. THE ROLE OF PALESTINIAN EMBASSIES IN MOBILIZING SKILLED PEOPLE IN THE DIASPORA

Discussions of the Palestinian diaspora prompt questions about what, if any, role Palestinian embassies play in mobilizing and engaging skilled members of the diaspora to participate in development back home. We need to ask, what kind of relationship exists between these embassies and Palestinian communities abroad. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there are over 100 Palestinian embassies and consulates dispersed all over the world. The vast majority of respondents indicated that the role of embassies in mobilizing highly skilled Palestinian migrants to transfer knowledge to Palestine is very weak. Likewise, most of the interviewees confirmed that they do not know of any role that these embassies play in supporting and mobilizing skilled members of the Palestinian diaspora to transfer knowledge to Palestine. This result indicates that the Palestinian embassies are not doing what they have to do in order to boost the home country's relationship with Palestinian communities abroad and encourage the transfer of knowledge to the homeland. Moreover, the interviewees reported that embassies do not update them or provide them with information about Palestine and the opportunities available there. This explains part of the weak performance of these communities in terms of knowledge transfer, in addition to their weak role in networking. One interviewee, Dr. S. A. addressed the weak role of embassies in mobilizing the diaspora and suggested that they fail to take up the opportunities they have in relation to the issue of knowledge transfer:

“Unfortunately, the Palestinian embassies do not take any part in the effort to engage highly skilled expatriates in transferring knowledge to Palestine. Frankly speaking, almost embassies are not doing what they should do, and this is one of the aspects that we have to work on. So, you don't limit the embassies just to follow certain consulate affairs. I think we still need to build this relationship between the country and the people in diasporas, just to see where are our experts, and how we can get them here and benefit from their experience”.

As well as being asked about the state relationships between the Palestinian diaspora and embassies, interviewees were also asked about how these relationships affect collective Palestinian activities in the diaspora, including the transfer of knowledge or investment to the

homeland. The majority of interviewees confirmed that the relationship between the Palestinian communities and the embassies abroad is not the best, as, generally speaking, neither the Palestinian communities abroad nor the embassies have any major role in transferring knowledge back home. Unfortunately, the process of transferring knowledge to or investing in the home country is not a priority for Palestinian embassies and communities.

This study's results have clearly revealed that Palestinian embassies do not exert enough effort to link Palestinian diasporas to their home country. The weakness of the resources of Palestinian embassies abroad may help to account for their limited impact, and their relationships with Palestinian diaspora communities that are also insufficiently engaged in these issues may adversely affect any efforts they make to do something regarding diaspora data collection. However, these factors do not justify the absence of a database that draws together information on Palestinians in the diaspora, since mapping the pool of Palestinians abroad and identifying potential contributors to the home country is an important step towards engaging skilled people in diasporas to engage in development and knowledge transfer in their home country. In fact, the absence of a database and strategies for needs identifications are real challenges in the Palestinian case. They represent critical shortcomings that should be addressed by the Palestinian government, embassies, and communities abroad.

The building a database is a crucial first step in the engagement of diasporic people with expert skills and knowledge. Palestinian embassies should have a list of people, details about their backgrounds, information on whether or not they are willing to return, and, if so, at what time of the year, for how long, and under what conditions. Another critical step involves work to determine what kinds of knowledge are needed and where. If the Palestinian government believes there is a certain sector in the home country that is negatively affected by the lack of technology or the absence of know-how, then they can look to the database to see who can be brought in to fill these gaps. A sophisticated system is required that brings highly skilled Palestinians from abroad into the country, while taking account of their skills, needs, and potential, as well as the needs and situations of local projects and stakeholders. Indeed, success can only be achieved if a coordinated demand-driven approach is formulated.

Some conclusions can be drawn from this study about the role of Palestinian diasporas in supporting and facilitating the engagement of highly skilled migrants in development and knowledge transfer to their home country. First, neither Palestinian communities nor

Palestinian embassies have socio-demographic data on Palestinians abroad. Second, Palestinian embassies and diasporas do not provide Palestinians abroad with up-to-date information about their home country and opportunities there. Third, there is a slight disparity between the performances of Palestinian communities abroad from one country to another in terms of their engagement in development and knowledge transfer to their home country. Fourth, the defining feature of the current Palestinian approach to knowledge transfer activities is that it is not systematic. Internal disputes in some Palestinian communities and the convulsive relationship between Palestinian communities and the embassies negatively affect their ability to engage skilled people in the Palestinian diaspora in transferring knowledge to, or contributing to the development of, their home country. Fifth, although there is a kind of solidarity among Palestinians abroad, it is more evident in the social and humanitarian fields than in other areas such as employment and job opportunities. Sixth, the contribution of Palestinian diaspora associations in the health field is much greater than it is in other sectors. This is very evident in the number of medical delegations that come to Palestine annually through diaspora associations. Finally, Palestinians abroad send remittances to their home country in cases where they have families or relatives in the home country, and a few of them send money for social and educational purposes, but they are not otherwise interested in sending money back home. When they are sent home, these remittances tend to be used mostly for consumption purposes rather than investment. These factors all help to explain why the role of embassies and diasporas in mobilizing people abroad and engaging them in development and knowledge transfer remains humble and below expectations.

6.5. INDIVIDUAL MOTIVATION AND FAMILY FACTORS

Motives are engines of behavior and create the inner drive that prompts people to carry out actions. This section explores the individual motives that drive the engagement of skilled Palestinian in the diaspora to contribute to knowledge transfer and development in the home country. According to the results of the questionnaire, highly skilled Palestinian migrants are to a large extent motivated to return and transfer their knowledge back home by a feeling of responsibility towards their home country. Philanthropic motives and a sense of a social responsibility to help the home country were mentioned by the vast majority of the respondents (76.1%) as the most important reasons for their decision to engage in knowledge transfer to Palestine. However, the study's findings show that the national component was

present to a remarkable extent in the responses and this reflects the nostalgia experienced by Palestinians in the diaspora towards their home country. Unsurprisingly, 69.4% of the respondents stated that their motivation was an emotional and cultural attachment with the home country, while 52.3% of people engaged because they had family ties to the home country. Professional orientation as a scientist or academic is, to a lesser extent, another motivating factor for the Palestinian skilled diaspora to engage in transferring knowledge back home at an estimated rate of 42.5%. Interestingly, only a small percentage of the respondents were motivated by financial return and economic interest. This may reflect the fact that those who had engaged in transnationalism came to serve their home country voluntarily. It is also unsurprising to note that the salaries received by those who came to work through contracts were much lower than the salaries participants usually received in their host country. For them, coming to Palestine is about making a contribution, belonging to Palestine, and playing a part in state-building. *Table 6.5* presents the findings.

Table: 6.5. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages for the motivations for knowledge transfer created by highly skilled Palestinian migrants

Motivations for Knowledge Transfer	Mean*	Standard Deviation	%
Philanthropy (feeling of social responsibility to help home country)	1.76	0.43	76.1
Emotional and cultural attachment with the home country	1.69	0.46	69.4
Having family ties in Palestine	1.54	0.50	52.3
Professional orientation as a scientist or academics	1.42	0.49	42.5
Social (e.g., gain friends, contacts, connections)	1.30	0.46	30.5
Obtain a financial return and economic interest	1.19	0.39	18.1
Other. Please specify	1.03	0.17	2.6
Total	1.41	0.18	71.0

Source: Author's table based on the results of the questionnaires.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that there was some overlap between motivations for some individuals, as some of the respondents selected more than one option. For example, some respondents who mentioned that they had become involved because of emotional and cultural attachment to the home country also indicated the importance of family ties or having contacts in Palestine as reasons that motivated them to come back and engage in knowledge transfer. The interview findings confirmed those of the questionnaire when they showed that all interviewees consider coming back to the home country, engaging in development, and serving people to be national issues. Dr. M. Z., who currently lives in Britain, where he was able to obtain his doctorate, specialize in his chosen field, and secure British citizenship, explained his motives for involvement:

“I feel indebted to this country and it is my duty to repay this debt. Similarly, my home country, Palestine, played a fundamental role in helping me achieve my university education as I studied medicine at Al Quds University for 7 years. I pay this debt through the transfer of knowledge and expertise to benefit the cadres and the academics in Palestine. I always try to do something for my home country even when I live outside”.

While national issues are paramount, economic benefits were not excluded as a motivator. Some of the highly skilled migrants wanted to help their people, but they also wanted to improve their incomes and so they had mixed motivations for becoming involved.

Knowledge transfer is an international human endeavour, but it takes on more significance when people abroad contribute to the development and capacity building of national institutions and state-building in their home country, and this is particularly true in a country like Palestine that is operating under particularly difficult political conditions. It is clear that a combination of several motives push highly skilled Palestinian migrants to return and contribute to development and knowledge transfer to their home country. Sentimental links, a connection to the home country, and a sense of responsibility towards one's people are the primary motives of skilled Palestinians from the diaspora who contribute to their home country. Their efforts represent a commitment to justice and solidarity, and – while their motives may be multiple and overlapping – they can generally be understood to be located within an ethical framework. The study's results suggest that the vast majority of Palestinians abroad have a strong sense of duty and commitment towards their home country, and, in principle, they are dedicated to the idea of transferring their acquired knowledge and experience to their people back home. The clear distinctions between motives explored here

are a function of the fieldwork tools used in this study. In practice, these categories are only analytical tools, and many highly skilled migrants have multiple and blurred motivations with a strong ethical component.

In terms of family circumstances, evidence collected in interviews suggests that, at least for those interviewed, family-related factors were considered very important. The effect of return on families and their personal lives is a concern that must be taken into consideration when someone makes a decision to come back to the home country, and this was confirmed in this study's findings. First, the issue of their family's security was paramount for highly skilled migrants who were considering engaging in knowledge transfer assignments, and they placed additional weight on their family's safety over other issues. Many were concerned about moving to a country that was more unstable than their host country. Things like healthcare services and the quality of the education available for children were other important issues. For example, Dr. W. A. R., who served as an associate consultant and then as a minister in the PNA, reflected on the limitations that affected life during his time working in healthcare and education in Palestine and the ways they shape the decisions of people who are thinking of returning:

“There are some limitations related to the transportation system, schools, and health services. Indeed, there were not many options. Good services, good school, good banking systems are factors that affect the decisions of people to come back”.

Unsurprisingly, the main concern for many highly skilled returnees was to find an excellent school for their children. Those who brought their families with them were looking for an education system relatively close in standards to the one their children were used to in their host country, and they felt that only a handful of schools in Palestine could offer that kind of quality. Many others chose not to bring their families and children with them, as they did not want to expose them to unforeseen difficulties and, having made that decision, they then spent a lot of their time traveling between Palestine and their host countries. Some interviewees, who shared their feelings about their decision to move regularly between home and host countries, stated that they did not want to make a rash decision about moving them to Palestine because of differences in the quality of schools. By choosing to live between two countries, they were giving themselves more time to think about bringing them or not. Whatever decisions they made, these skilled people made them as parents. Any decision

made about return by skilled people with families will focus to a large extent on their families and kids, as well as on professional and ethical motives.

It is worth mentioning that, some interviewees addressed the issue of culture and belonging in the context of their motives to return. They pointed out that they wanted to see their children grow up in their home country so that they could grasp the norms and traditions of their people. Nevertheless, this motive was held in balance with their belief that the academic future of their children lay in the host country; moreover, they thought that the host country could provide their children with access to other valuable norms and values like creativity, innovation, and advanced learning, for example, which might not be available, or accessible in the same way, at home. Dr. D. J., addressed the issue of culture in explaining how he weighed up factors in his own decision-making process:

“I don’t want my children to be full Americans, you know there are good things in the American culture, but also it is important for my children to learn the Palestinian culture, to learn the Arabic language and to know how to communicate with people here. I am more satisfied living here with small income compare to what I used to make in America and compare to the luxury life I used to have there. I am happier here a hundred times more than when I was living there. The reason is I never felt home over there, here I feel home”.

Obviously, the decision to engage in circularity and knowledge transfer back home is not only related to the individual migrant’s experience; it is also part of their family life and their livelihoods. Admittedly, the key driver of the highly skilled migrants interviewed for this study was the comfort and happiness of their families, and they thought that the future and welfare of their children was a crucial consideration in terms of their decisions to stay or go back to their host countries. To put it in another way, national feelings and a sense of responsibility to the home country, along with family interests, have emerged as the two most important drivers that shape how highly skilled migrants engage in circular activities. The ways in which they engage in circularity and knowledge transfer to their home country cannot be separated from family dynamics, and indeed, they are more influential than other factors. The main challenge facing most highly skilled Palestinian migrants is how to come back and serve their home country while providing the standard of living for their families that they have in the host country. The strategy used by the vast majority of highly skilled Palestinian migrants to overcome this challenge is to come back individually while their families remain in host countries.

6.6. OBSTACLES AND BARRIERS

This section examines the obstacles encountered by highly skilled migrants who would like to transfer knowledge to their home country. The focus here is on two main categories of obstacles: obstacles created by the Israeli occupation and barriers that are generated by the Palestinians themselves.

6.6.1. ISRAELI OCCUPATION OBSTACLES

While Palestinians in the home country lack control over their resources and their mobility is severely limited due to the presence of checkpoints and Israeli restrictions, the occupation remains the main factor that restricts all areas of Palestinians' lives, physically and/or mentally. This was evident from the results of the questionnaire and the interviews. The main objective of the occupation is to create more obstacles and difficulties for the Palestinians, on top of which, freedom of movement is limited and there are bans on many people entering the country. Many Palestinians who are currently working in Palestine have experienced barriers because of what are known as "visa issues". Undoubtedly, getting or renewing a visa is the most important challenge that highly skilled Palestinian migrants face when they come to Palestine. Without a visa, they will not be able to continue living in the country, and many of the international staff at Palestinian universities and institutions are among those who have faced problems with visa renewals over the past few years. Moreover, restrictions and threats to academic freedom in occupied territories are used in a continuous and relentless way against professors and lecturers at Palestinian universities. The Right to Enter campaign reports an example of this kind of practice:

"On 8th June 2018, seven international faculty members at Birzeit University (BZU) one-third of the international staff at the university were refused visa extensions by the Israeli authorities. This development portends a dramatically negative impact on education at BZU, and ultimately for many other Palestinian universities, as it will further extend the isolation of Palestinian universities from the global academic community, reducing their capacity to maintain internationally recognized standards of higher education" (Right to Enter, 2018: 1).

This pattern was confirmed by 66.0% of the respondents who said that they had experienced difficulties in renewing a visa (residence permit) because of Israeli restrictions. According to some interviewees, many efforts to recruit experts and academics have failed because Israeli

authorities refused to issue a visa for them to live in Palestine because they did not carry an American, Canadian, or European passport. To overcome visa limitations, many Palestinian universities use video conferencing to facilitate teaching by external professors who transfer their knowledge to Palestinian students online.

Another major obstacle faced by Palestinians is that Israeli authorities have control over all international borders. This creates a situation in which all goods and machines are subject to inspection by the Israeli army. Some interviewees stated that they are suffering because of these arbitrary measures. All Palestinians emphasize that the occupation makes it more difficult to bring materials into Palestine. Indeed, the blacklist concerning this issue is too long. The results of the questionnaire revealed that 83.8% of respondents stated that they had faced difficulties in transferring materials into Palestine because of occupation procedures. This result was confirmed by all of the interviewees, and was described by engineer, A. Z., who works as an ICT expert for the UN at their office in Vienna:

“The main obstacle is the occupation, Palestinians who live in diasporas – they don’t have the free mobility to go to Palestine. Their mobility is very limited if they want to transfer anything. To do anything in Palestine, the main issue is occupation, lack of mobility, and lack of political stability. Knowledge transfer will be impeded if it doesn’t meet Israeli measures”.

Meanwhile, the time required at the border because of Israeli procedures is the biggest obstacle that affects people’s return journey. Unsurprisingly, 80.4% of the respondents stated that the time required at the border because of Israeli procedures was the main obstacle for them. This is hardly surprising, as the Israeli side creates complications that affect entry or efforts to reside in the country, and they always try to make the cost of coming back or doing business in Palestine too high (See Table 6.6).

One of the major obstacles created by occupation is that people are prevented from moving freely, especially to Jerusalem. Israeli measures undermine Palestinian plans to develop their institutions and they also hinder access to global experiences. Moreover, by imposing such procedures, the occupation increases the isolation of Palestinian institutions and prevents them from attracting and utilizing external Palestinian expertise. The study participants also made clear that the occupation measures continue to affect Palestinian institutional development including policymaking processes. Palestinians often find it difficult to abide by their plans because of the measures used by the occupation political instability, and these continued difficulties dominate the Palestinian situation.

Table: 6.6. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages for Israeli occupation obstacles that affect knowledge transfer by highly skilled Palestinian migrants to their home country, ranked in descending order

Israeli Occupation Obstacles	Mean*	Standard Deviation	%
Difficulty in transferring some materials into Palestine because of occupation procedures	4.19	0.89	83.8
The time required at the border because of Israeli procedures	4.02	0.97	80.4
Preventing work in certain areas by Israeli authorities	4.01	1.09	80.2
Difficulty in renewing a visa (residence permit) because of Israeli restrictions	3.30	1.33	66.0
Fear of deportation or detention	3.27	1.32	65.4
The time required to get a visa from Israeli authorities	3.19	1.38	63.8
Total	3.66	0.83	73.0

Source: Author's table based on the results of the questionnaires.

6.6.2. INTERNAL PALESTINIAN OBSTACLES

Although the occupation is the main obstacle that limits the possibility of the home country benefiting from the skilled Palestinian diaspora, this study's results revealed many obstacles that arise on the Palestinian side. It is clear that these obstacles have contributed to reducing the process of involving Palestinians from the diaspora in the development of their home country. Below is a summary of the most important of these obstacles, which are headed by poor communication and resources in addition to the PNA's underpowered role in engaging with this issue, and the aforementioned lack of a vision and strategy to mobilize the Palestinian diasporas.

In terms of organizational and individual barriers, there are a number of obstacles that make highly skilled Palestinian migrants hesitate to come back to their home country or stay there. First and foremost among them, are the differences that exist between work approaches in the home country and the host country which emerged as a key constraint facing highly skilled migrants returning home. Gaps between the organizational culture and work environment in the host country and what returnees found in their homeland cannot be overlooked or denied, and highly skilled returnees can sometimes feel shocked in their own minds because they are used to different procedures and different plans being implemented at work. According to some interviewees, there is a disparity in the general level of coordination and collaboration between employees in the host country and what is going on here in Palestine. In Palestine, the staff work as individuals, while in the host country they are working as groups. Additionally, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the lack of support and internal jealousy from local colleagues creates other challenges for highly skilled returnees. The feeling that a highly skilled returnee is more knowledgeable is sufficient reason for some local colleagues to put more obstacles in front of them.

Another obstacle is presented by the absence of seriousness on the part of some returnees. Some consultants came here just because they had a passion for Palestine. Their goal was to come back and spend some time with their families and relatives. One interviewee, W. A. R., highlighted his distaste for this approach:

“Expatriates should know when they come to Palestine that this is not a vacation. Some of them when they came, they say “it is three weeks – I want to see my friends and relatives”. This is one of the shortcomings of TOKTEN program where some experts came and visited their families and relatives. I used to bring a lot of them and my experience is not so good about them. It is good to meet your relatives and family, but you should work also”.

The shortage of resources and low levels of income in Palestine appear to be other obstacles that hamper the abilities of Palestinian institutions to recruit highly skilled migrants from abroad. Palestinian institutions cannot compete with their counterparts in this regard. However, according to some interviewees, the ultimate goal of most highly skilled migrants is to contribute to development in their home country. For them, money is their last concern.

Another obstacle arises from internal frictions and contradictions in Palestinian communities abroad, which stops them from acting as a unified group. Palestinian communities abroad have been affected by events in Palestine over the years. The contradictions in Palestinian

society back home are totally transferred to diasporas and affect the relationships of Palestinian people in the various diaspora communities. One interviewee, Professor M. H., the Palestinian Ambassador to Hungary, shared his perspective on the performance of the Palestinian diaspora communities and the extent to which they are fragmented and challenged:

“It is very unfortunate that our Palestinian diasporas are totally fractionalized and there is total factionalism. I came from London, from a divided Palestinian community, to another divided Palestinian community in Hungary. So, I wouldn’t really count on the Palestinian community per se as a community, but I count on individuals. Individuals, they are patriotic and love their country and contribute to their country as materially or politically”.

Poor communication between the PNA and diasporas emerges as one of the main obstacles that spoils the relationship between them and influences the willingness and preparedness of skilled diaspora to engage in development and knowledge transfer back home. Indeed, this is an important issue that Palestinian policy-makers must address in order to formulate an approach to the Palestinian diasporas that includes a strategy for improving their relationship with the PNA. Likewise, it is important to have plans for supporting the Palestinian diasporas’ work to convey and transfer best practices, sophisticated norms, and a culture of human rights to their communities, rather than a litany of local problems and internal contradictions based on problems in the home country.

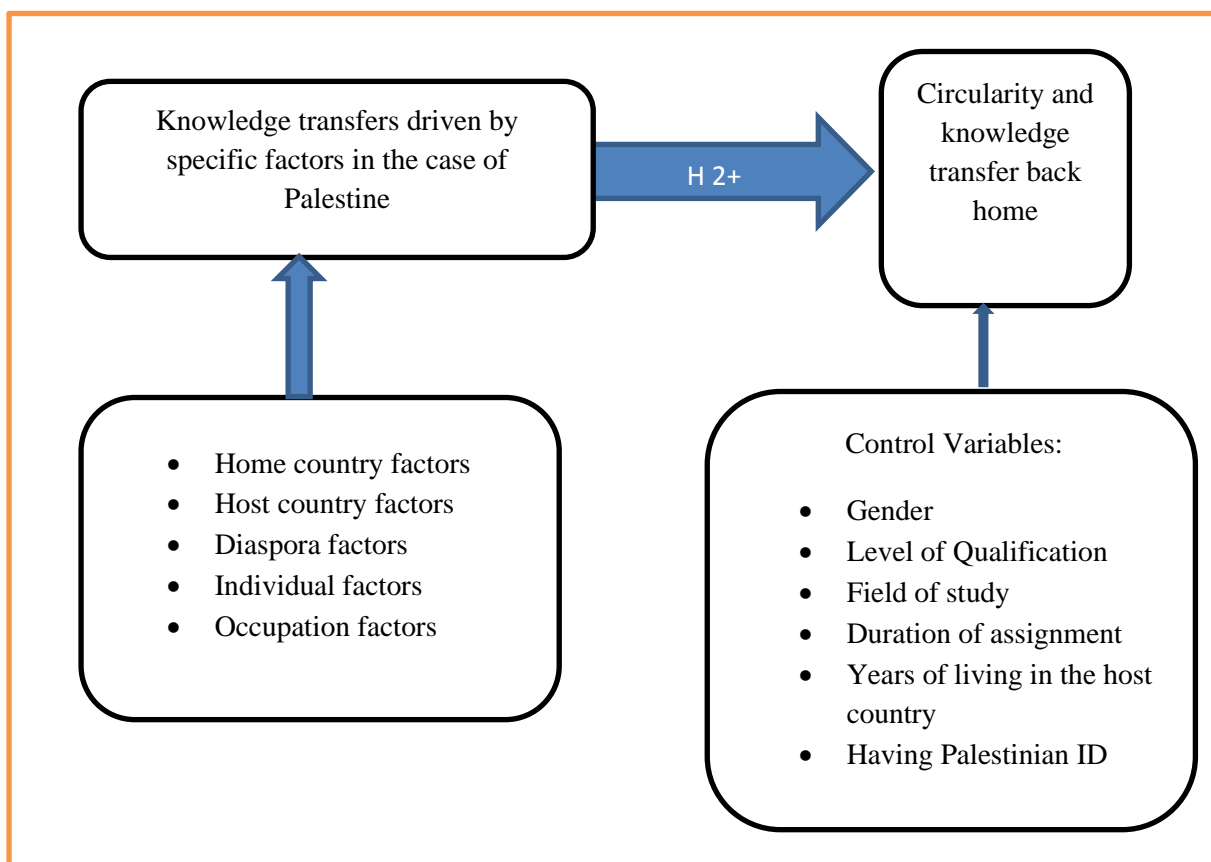
Palestinian policymakers need to come up with a vision for how to mobilize diasporas, make use of their expertise, and exploit their abilities and competencies to put things on the right track. It is clear that occupation is the main obstacle that affects all areas of Palestinians’ lives including the engagement of highly skilled migrants in development back home. However, Palestinians cannot simply blame the occupation all the time, because some measures must be taken on the Palestinian side to enhance the relationship with diasporas. They can also contribute to the unification of Palestinian communities abroad, and activate their role in mobilizing people abroad to do something positive for their home country. Palestinians abroad are patriotic, and they experience a life-long nostalgia for Palestine, so the Palestinian government should create appropriate channels to address these people and contact them in a proper and effective way that engages and mobilizes this sentiment. This is vitally important, because it seems that the traditional means or channels are no longer valid.

6.7. EXAMINATION OF THE SECOND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS (H2)

The final section of this chapter aims to examine the second research hypothesis (H2). As indicated in Figure 6.2, the second model looks at the different variables that are most likely to influence the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge and best practices to Palestine. The validity of this hypothesis was assessed in relation to the results of the interviews and questionnaires. A computer test was also used to investigate the relationship between different variables to examine whether or not relationships exist between them.

Examining hypothesis (H2): There are significant differences in the effect of push and pull factors in the case of Palestine, and the motivation of highly skilled Palestinian migrants to engage in the development and knowledge transfer processes of their home country is driven by specific factors.

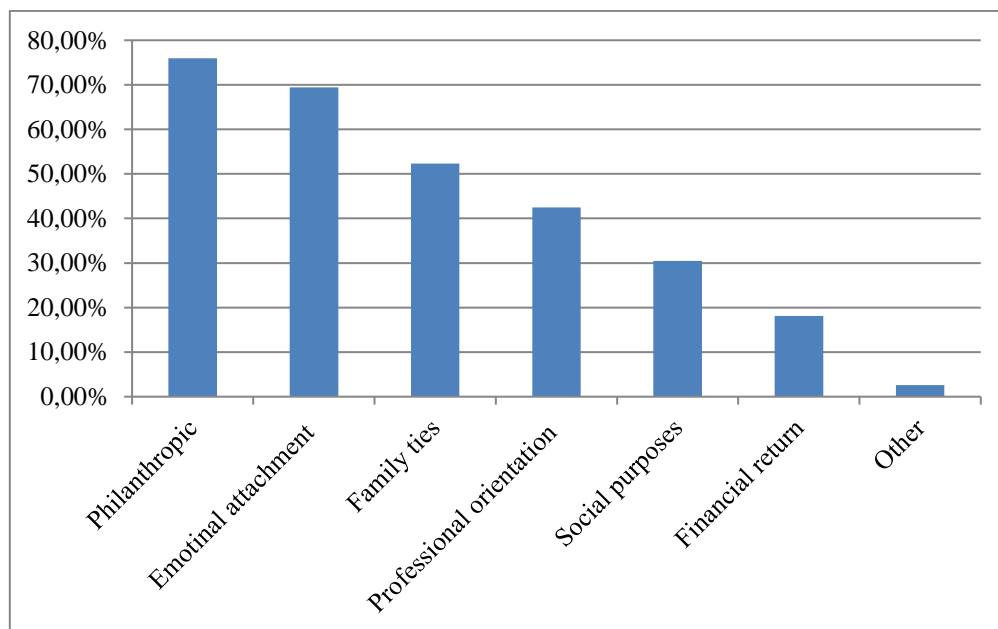
Figure: 6.2. Conceptual Model 2



Source: Author's own compilation based on the research methods.

This hypothesis aims to identify the push-pull factors that influence the engagement of highly skilled migrants in transferring knowledge, as well as their different levels of influence. To examine the validity of the hypothesis, a standard regression test was used. The results show that there is a positive correlation at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between host country factors and the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge to their home country. Furthermore, findings revealed that the effect of these factors was moderate (See Table 6.3). Concerning the individual factors, the results show a positive correlation between individual motives and the engagement of highly skilled migrants, with philanthropic motives and emotional attachment being the main drivers (See Figure 6.3).

Figure: 6.3. Individual factors that affect knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants



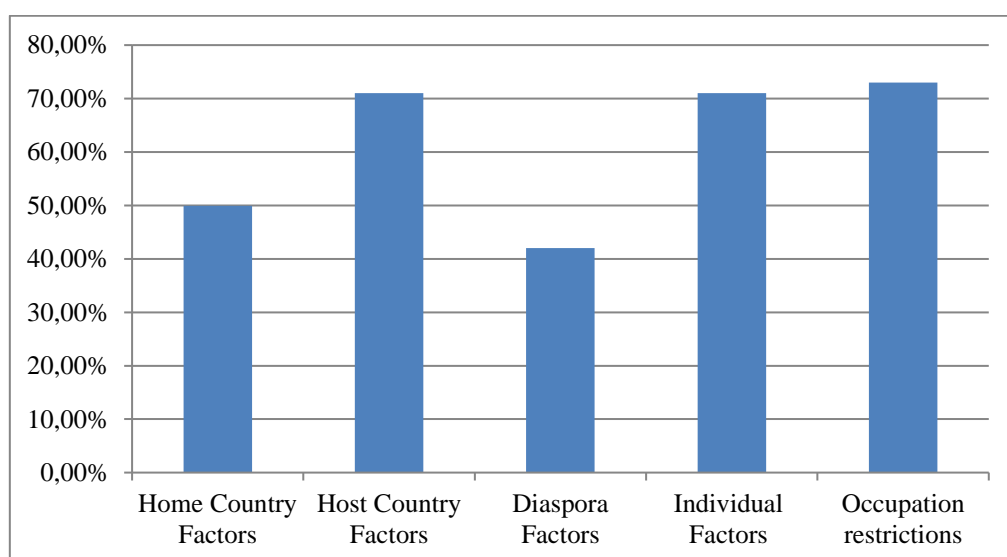
Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

On the other hand, there is an inverse relationship between occupation restrictions and the engagement of highly skilled migrants. Unsurprisingly, the effect of occupation factors was remarkably high, and they negatively affect the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants. However, the results revealed that neither the home country nor the diaspora factors significantly affected the engagement of highly skilled migrants in the transfer of knowledge to Palestine. Table 6.1 shows that the majority of the respondents confirmed that the role of the home country factors in supporting and facilitating knowledge transfer by highly skilled Palestinian migrants was fairly weak. In a similar vein, the results revealed that the diaspora factors did not significantly affect the engagement of highly skilled migrants in transferring

knowledge to Palestine, and their role is noticeably weak, as is shown in Table 6.4. Regarding the role of Palestinian embassies, findings revealed that the Palestinian embassies do not engage in any activities outside their consular mission. Consequently, the findings indicate a variation in the degree to which these factors influence the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge to their home country. This confirms the second hypothesis that skilled diaspora engagement is driven by specific factors, and not all of the push and pull factors can be identified in the case of Palestine. Accordingly, the hypothesis is accepted.

The concept of diaspora engagement cannot be applied or interpreted simply in the case of Palestine because the conventional triangular relationship between diasporas, home country, and host country simply does not match its peculiar context. However, this hypothesis sought to shed more light on other push-pull factors that exert an influence on the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants, particularly occupation measures and individual motives. Actually, the highly skilled Palestinians who are living abroad have their own patriotic motives, which drive them to come back and share their knowledge and experience despite the occupation measures and the absence of a supportive environment in Palestine. *Figure 6.4* shows the percentage of the effect of each factor on the engagement of skilled Palestinians from the diaspora from the point of view of the respondents.

Figure: 6.4. Percentage of the effect of each factor on the engagement of skilled Palestinians in the diaspora



Source: Author's own compilation based on the findings.

6.8. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER SIX

To conclude, in general terms, push-pull factors can include a wide range of circumstances at internal and external levels. These factors may include socio-economic conditions of various kinds, when people are looking to move from places or countries where they are less likely to get employment or seeking opportunities to go to other destinations where they may be more fortunate. However, the Palestinian case is distinguished by its specificity, and this is evident from the results that show that some factors are more influential than others in driving people to return to their home country and contribute to development there. In order to establish the results, descriptive statistics were used in addition to the correlation and regression analysis between the different variables.

The immigrant's decision to engage in transnational activities and circular migration seems to depend on several key factors: the structural conditions back home, immigrant's preparedness and human capital, host country factors, the role of diaspora associations in mobilizing highly skilled people to engage in activities that support their home country, individual factors and family circumstances, and finally the availability of incentives. Among other issues, the Palestinian diasporas and the absorptive capacity of Palestinian institutions emerged as being the factors that least support knowledge transfer. The results that emerged also drew attention to some other pertinent issues. The results indicated a negative relationship between the obstacles created by the occupation and participation in the transfer of knowledge back home. Indeed, occupation restrictions emerged as the main obstacles that curb any endeavours to mobilize Palestinian diasporas to contribute to the development of Palestinian institutions. The occupation has actively undermined the ability of successive Palestinian governments to benefit from knowledge and experience from talented Palestinians scattered across various parts of the world who could contribute effectively and successfully to building the institutions of the Palestinian state.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE USEFULNESS OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFERRED BY HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS

7.1. OVERVIEW

Knowledge is a crucial factor in the development of human resources and institutions. However, knowledge by itself is only valuable when it is actually used by people. The more important question is actually how the knowledge transferred by highly skilled migrants affects institutions and human capital in Palestine. It is a complex task to grasp the benefits of migration and taking part in home country development, because migration and development as a field cover a broad spectrum of several sub-themes that includes remittances and economic investment, social capital, and the transfer of knowledge and skills. Interestingly, the contributions made by many highly skilled migrants – is guided by philanthropic and national sentiments – has led to the improvement of local services and capacity-building in different towns and cities all over the world. It can also be important to distinguish between the scientific, social, economic, and cultural impacts of the engagement of skilled people from the diaspora back home. However, achieving considerable impacts in the field of migration and development within the Palestinian context necessitates an integrated approach and coordinated interventions, which is unavailable so far as mentioned earlier in Chapter Five.

This chapter aims to identify the usefulness and viability of the knowledge that has been transferred by highly skilled migrants to date and how it affects Palestinian institutions including forms, techniques, methods, and norms that have transferred, and the interventions that have been made in this context. The chapter aims to conceptualize the impacts of knowledge transferred through circular migration at two main levels: macro-level impacts that affect Palestinian institutions and micro-level impacts, which include the benefits gained by migrants as well as improvements in local human capital. Additionally, one of the main purposes of this chapter is to examine the degree of conformity between transferred knowledge and the needs of the institutions which receive it. Moreover, this chapter sets out to make clear the skills, knowledge, and approaches which have added to local human capital. Another aim here is to examine what kind of benefits are gained by highly skilled

migrants and whether or not they are satisfied with their experience. Last but not least, this chapter aims to examine the third research hypothesis which is as follows:

Hypothesis 3: “The engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants through circular and return migration significantly improves the capacities of Palestinian institutions, mainly as regards their human capital”.

Indeed, this chapter aims to establish a clear picture of the various perspectives on migration and development, with an emphasis on the benefits gained by institutions and human capital.

7.2. THE EFFECTS OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER ON INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES

The transfer of knowledge and open access to global technology are both imperative to the development of institutions. The transfer of knowledge is the most important factor, because this is how we gauge the development of governmental institutions, the private sector, and civil society organizations. Highly skilled migrants can contribute to the economic and social development of their host countries and home countries alike. When skilled people in the Palestinian diaspora engage in the transfer of various forms of knowledge and experience to their home country, their contribution can be one of the levers that helps Palestinian institutions to conform to international standards in many fields. They have evidently contributed to the formulation and development of plans, policies, and structures, as well as to training, teaching, and surgery. It is important then to explore the feasibility of knowledge transfer by highly skilled Palestinian migrants and how the above mentioned professions impact on the performance of Palestinian institutions.

When asked about the impacts of their contribution on the efficiency and effectiveness of Palestinian institutions, around 64.4% of the respondents stated that they contributed towards reducing the time needed to accomplish tasks, and 61.4% felt that they had contributed to the development of inter-institutional networks that connected institutions in their home and host countries. The results also revealed that 61.2% felt that they had contributed to an increase in the number of Palestinians visiting international institutions, and 58.8% had contributed to reducing the costs needed to accomplish tasks. Areas where the lowest percentage contributions were reported involved bringing new tools and devices to Palestinian institutions (55.4%), a finding which seems understandable and expected, given that bringing

materials from abroad requires the approval of the Israeli occupation, and the prospect of winning that approval is very complicated if not far-fetched. *Table 7.1* presents the findings.

Table: 7.1. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages for the effect of knowledge transfer by the highly skilled Palestinian migrants on the institutional capacities ranked in descending order

Impacts of Knowledge Transfer on Institutional Capacities	Mean*	Standard Deviation	%
I contributed to reducing the time needed to accomplish tasks	3.22	1.26	64.4
I contributed to inter-institutional networks between institutions of the home country and the host country	3.07	1.41	61.4
I contributed to an increase in the number of Palestinians visiting international institutions	3.06	1.34	61.2
I contributed to reducing the cost needed to accomplish tasks	2.94	1.23	58.8
I brought new tools and devices to Palestinian institutions	2.77	1.46	55.4
I have helped Palestinian institutions to get scholarships	2.77	1.38	55.4
Total	3.00	0.86	59.5

Source: Author's table based on the results of the questionnaires.

In fact, the results of this survey revealed that the overall effect of knowledge transferred by highly skilled migrants on Palestinian institutions was moderate, while its effect on human capital was moderately high. Nevertheless, according to Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995:59) “knowledge creation leads to its expansion through two sets of dynamics: transformation of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge and transformation of knowledge from the individual level to the collective level”. The weakness of Palestinian institutions in transferring

knowledge from the individual to the collective level is a shortcoming in their performance which undermines the overall impacts of knowledge transfer. According to Obaid (2016: 13), the work of sharing knowledge among teams and working groups leads to the transformation from individual to collective action. Meanwhile, ESCWA (2003: 63) emphasized the role of knowledge sharing when it stated that “Knowledge sharing is essential to innovation. Innovation is not only impossible without knowledge sharing but, moreover, every innovation is powered by knowledge”. Actually, knowledge-sharing significantly affects the capacities of both individuals and organizations. Strictly speaking, when knowledge is deployed in an efficient manner across an organization, individuals and employees are more likely to come up with innovative ideas and more likely to practice strategic thinking rather than just preserving knowledge, and so organizations become more willing to make wise and influential decisions.

Along the same lines, the overall survey results pointed out that about 59.5% of the respondents stated that Palestinian institutions have been positively impacted as a result of their contributions. This result is fairly close to what the interviewees reported during the interviews. All interviewees agreed that they had shared something with the host organization and that the contribution they had made by transferring knowledge to Palestinian institutions has prompted positive changes in these institutions. One of the most important issues regarding knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants is that it is less costly than sending people abroad for training. Furthermore, it also increases the assets of organizations, which enhances their comparative advantages. Therefore, it is important to encourage skilled expatriates to share their knowledge and experience with their home country to build the capacity of the individuals and institutions there. All of the participants further confirmed that their contributions fitted in well with the needs of Palestinian institutions, and they asserted that their engagements were prepared in advance in coordination with either international organizations or Palestinian institutions.

There is no doubt that the skilled Palestinian diaspora has contributed to some extent to the development of Palestinian institutions. For example, they have contributed to improving education methodology; introduced new techniques and work methods; taken part in improving curricula; designed structures, projects, and programs; reviewed certain studies; and striven to create networks between Palestinian and international institutions. Some of them even established directorates. Highly skilled Palestinian migrants who came from some developed countries worked to resolve certain issues to help the Palestinian government to

reform its organizational structure, particularly in relation to the Ministry of Planning, as one interviewee (M. Q.) noted:

“Highly skilled Palestinian migrants contributed not only in lecturing or training but also in designing certain directorates and units of higher education and ministries. In addition, guiding certain researches or doing certain policies with an upper hand and an upper-level way of thinking, especially people who came from Australia, from the USA, from the UK who were already involved and engaged in institutions of higher educations – they contributed very rapidly. Even they contributed to a dialysis unit like in the Gaza Strip and open heart surgery at Almakassed hospital in Jerusalem”.

One of the best examples of how skilled people from the Palestinian diaspora have contributed to building and supporting Palestinian institutions relates to the negotiation supporting unit.⁵ The PNA brought many Palestinian expatriate experts in to join the team supporting the negotiations which were focused on the legal and technical aspects of conflict issues. These experts contributed to helping the Palestinians build their case through the introduction of international experience and perspectives. Most of the experts involved were Palestinians who had studied abroad, graduating from excellent universities around the world, and getting citizenship in their host countries. This study has found that the overall impact on Palestinian institutions was fairly moderate, but regardless of how strong engagement from the skilled Palestinian diaspora is, it has brought about a positive impact on the performance of Palestinian institutions.

Today, 26 years after the signing of the Oslo Accords and the initiation of the PNA, many Palestinians acknowledge the benefit of having these highly qualified people available. This view is reinforced when we consider the first five years of establishing the PNA and how valuable it would have been to have had these highly skilled Palestinian migrants participating then in building the state's institutions.

⁵ This unit was established by President Mahmoud Abbas when he was the secretary-general of the PLO. He established the unit specifically with the aim of avoiding all of the problems that had occurred during the Oslo negotiations. The idea was not to make the same mistakes again, especially in preparation for the permanent status negotiations. Permanent status issues include borders, refugees, Jerusalem, water, and settlements, as well as building state-to-state relations.

7.3. EFFECTS OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER ON HUMAN CAPITAL

Human capital symbolizes the investment that individuals themselves make to enhance their own capabilities and productivity. Human capital theory emphasizes that education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing their level of cognitive stock (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008: 479). This section aims to examine the effects that knowledge transferred by highly skilled Palestinian migrants has on local human capital, particularly in providing them with new knowledge, skills, and new approaches to work. This section also focuses on identifying the forms of knowledge that have been transferred by highly skilled Palestinian migrants to their home country. Moreover, it aims to find out whether highly skilled Palestinian repatriates have contributed to the transfer of new cultures or values to their native community.

Interestingly, there was some correspondence between the results of the questionnaire and the findings of the interviews regarding the effect of knowledge transferred by highly skilled migrants on human capital. The results of the questionnaire indicated that the degree of human capital benefits was moderately high ($M=3.82$). However, it is interesting to note that 84.2% of respondents said that they helped local colleagues to gain new ideas and 82.0% stated that they had helped local colleagues to learn new skills. Meanwhile, 71.6% of the respondents pointed out that local colleagues had gained or modified certain attitudes and 71.8% of them confirmed that local colleagues enhanced their abilities to deal with challenges and stressful situations. The mean score, standard deviation, and percentage were used to answer the above question. *Table 7.2* presents the findings.

Table: 7.2. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages for the effect of knowledge transfer by Palestinian highly skilled migrants on Palestinian human capital, ranked in descending order

Impacts of Knowledge Transfer on Palestinian Human capital	Mean*	Standard deviation	%
They acquired new ideas	4.21	0.77	84.2
They learned new skills	4.20	0.83	84.0
Ability to work as a team	3.83	1.01	76.6
They learned new approaches to work	3.71	1.04	74.2
Maturity and personal development	3.62	1.08	72.4
Ability to deal with challenges and stressful situations	3.59	1.10	71.8
They gained or modified attitudes	3.58	1.09	71.6
Total	3.82	0.76	76.4

Source: Author's table based on the results of the questionnaires.

7.3.1. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN SCIENTIFIC AND ACADEMIC FIELDS

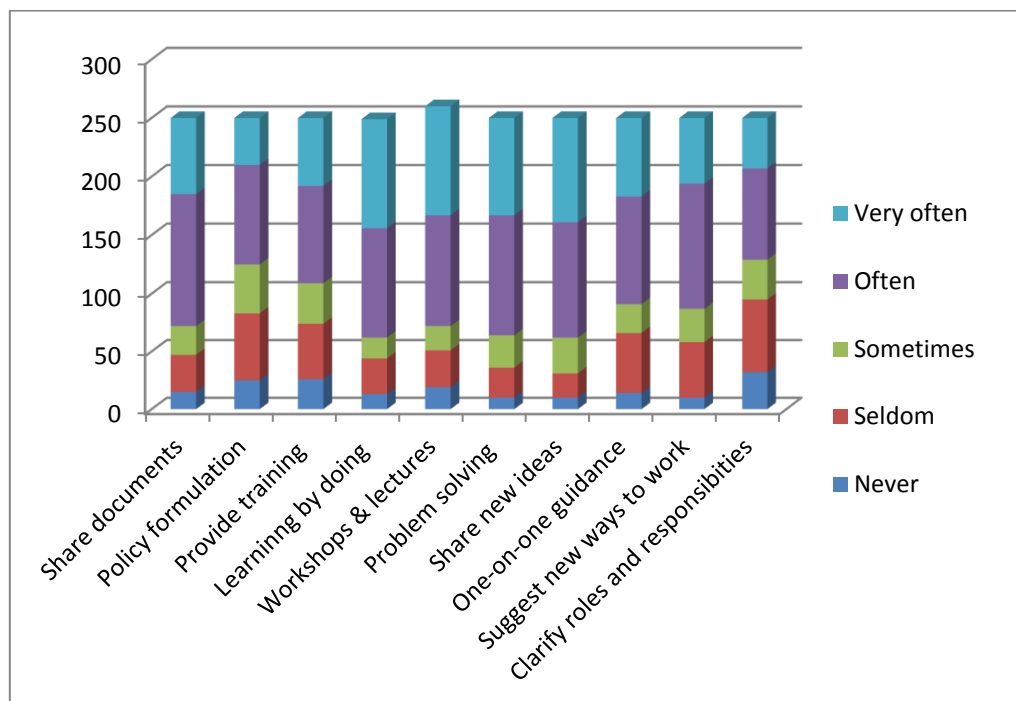
The presence of talented expatriates working in the Palestinian healthcare system and academic institutions makes a noticeable contribution to raising public confidence and reassuring local people about the performance of these institutions. Living and working in developed countries, highly skilled migrants have gained a deep understanding and high-level skills in their fields and this sophisticated level of knowledge reduces risk and avoids mistakes that could limit the success of Palestinian organizations. All interviewees considered the knowledge and skills they had gained in the host country to be of high benefit to their local colleagues. One interviewee, W. A. R., discussed his own experience of knowledge transfer and how it affects local human capital. He argued that:

“Investment in people is the best investment – learning by doing, showing them, and working together with them it adds a lot and accumulates experience. So I feel when I was there I

contribute a lot to capacity building of institutions and enhancing performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of people I used to work with”.

In terms of the form of knowledge that was transferred by highly skilled Palestinian migrants to their home country, the results of the study revealed that they were involved at several levels. Among other contributions, they shared new ideas, assisted in problem-solving, promoted learning by doing, organized or contributed to workshops and lectures, shared documents, suggested new ways of working, provided training, and provided one-on-one guidance. Based on the findings of this study, the forms of knowledge transfer used by highly skilled Palestinian migrants can be ranked in descending order as follows: the most prevalent forms of knowledge transfer involved sharing new ideas for a work task in an informal discussion (79.4%), assisting colleagues in problem-solving (78.2%), and learning by doing (78.0%). Participation in the formulation of plans or policies and clarifying roles and responsibilities with the staff were the two lowest forms of knowledge transferred, and were reported by 64.6% and 63% of the study participants respectively. *Figure 7.1* shows the forms of knowledge transferred.

Figure: 7.1. Forms of knowledge transferred based on the questionnaire



Source: Author's own compilation based on the questionnaires.

It should be noted that these forms of knowledge are interconnected and there is no clear division between them, but what is clear is that most methods of transferring knowledge are tacit. It is not an easy process to transfer, store, share, or retrieve tacit knowledge: it is much easier to absorb and disseminate explicit knowledge. Argote & Ingram (2000:153) claimed that “Knowledge is embedded in the three basic elements of organizations, the human components of organizations (members), tools, and tasks”. The first element (human capital) is the most complicated and sophisticated, because a human being is the main messenger needed to transform tacit into explicit knowledge, on the one hand, and to share it with others so that it can become shared knowledge, on the other hand. The abilities of Palestinian institutions to utilize, share, and retrieve knowledge is to some extent humble as has been noted, and this problem is exacerbated when transferred knowledge is tacit. While highly skilled migrants with experience transfer knowledge, it would appear to be wholly related to their current jobs as professors, doctors, IT experts, engineers, or specialists in another field. In practice, however, it is all about transferring to colleagues in Palestine the full range of formal and informal knowledge that they have learned or acquired from abroad whether educationally or from their work experience. They try to change their local colleagues’ attitudes and their approaches to work and, not surprisingly, this knowledge is only acquired if the person who is a recipient is interested in and seeks to benefit from it.

Some of the interviewees engaged in knowledge transfer back home at different levels. An interviewee, Professor S. H. Y. who is a chief executive officer and cardiothoracic and lung surgeon at An-Najah National University Hospital (NNUH), as well as Dean of Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at An-Najah National University, illustrated his contribution to knowledge transfer and the levels at which he engaged in it:

“I am involved in several levels in terms of sending doctors for further training in Europe and the UK. I train physicians here in cardiac surgery, lung surgery. We develop a teaching hospital where we recruit highly skilled doctors – emigrants from the diaspora – to transfer their skills to the students”.

Professor S. H. Y. engaged in transferring a variety of knowledge and skills including medical and scientific knowledge, surgical skills, values, ethics, and a humanitarian approach, as well as a variety of research skills. Recruiting the best Palestinian experts from abroad allowed him to bring in modern approaches to work and updated forms of knowledge. Indeed, the professor runs the largest facility of health and medicine sciences in the West

Bank, and doctors who work there transfer knowledge and experience to a massive number of students.

Another interviewee, S. B. who is the director of the RITAJ organization, which specializes in managerial solutions, participated in building some Palestinian enterprises, including a telecommunications company, and he noted that:

“There was a chance of transferring knowledge in terms of managerial style. Palestine at the time 1994 did not have a corporate culture; it was a very small business culture. So my main contribution was building systems and large scale companies to the Palestinian environment”.

A variety of forms of knowledge have been transferred by skilled Palestinians from the diaspora in scientific and academic fields. These forms include both tacit and explicit knowledge. In fact, it is not always easy to distinguish between these forms while they are in use among people and institutions as they are intertwined and interact with each other. However, it is obvious that tacit knowledge is the most dominant form of knowledge transfer at work in the circular activities of highly skilled Palestinian migrants.

7.3.2. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN THE BEHAVIORAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

The impacts that highly skilled migrants can produce are not limited to the transfer of scientific and academic knowledge and skills. Migrants may also produce cultural impacts or “social remittances” that affect culture, behaviour, values, and innovation, and which may have a positive effect on the socio-political context in their home country. Certainly, living in the host country offers highly skilled migrants exposure to sets of ideas, values, and behavior that can be transferred back home as part of their knowledge package. Returning home and working at the institutions there provides highly skilled Palestinian migrants with an opportunity to come into contact with others including colleagues, students and patients, and this gives them an opportunity to intentionally and/or unintentionally influence the community in which they live in Palestine. The utilization of the culture and social attitudes brought into Palestine by highly skilled returnees depends on the abilities of the people they encounter to grasp and absorb them. As Bastian (2006: 610) has noted, “the quality of human capital or the knowledge base should match the quality of social capital; otherwise, the transfer process will face insurmountable difficulties in getting connected to the global migration flows of new knowledge”. For example, Dr. M. Q. used his classes at Bethlehem

University not only to transfer academic knowledge and skills but also to convey certain values and principles that can produce changes in the lives of his students. He believes that the information he shares with others is the information they want and that is relevant to their life. Indeed, he provides a thorough explanation of how he advises them about how to empower themselves and overcome difficulties:

“The empowerment and self-confidence of the people is the most powerful thing for me. Respecting our self as Palestinians. We don’t want to be mentally occupied ... physical occupation, nothing compares to mental occupation. When people respect themselves, they have empowerment. They feel their strength and nothing can stop them. These are values that I am always try to transfer to my students”.

These respondents suggest that it is important to returning migrants to change people’s behavior and make a difference in the culture and values of Palestinian society. Those migrants who returned to work as entrepreneurs and opened a business in Palestine were not only initiating a new business in Palestine; they were also transferring new knowledge, cultures, management and communication styles, human behavior, and best practices in different areas. The values and culture they brought with them were pretty significant in enhancing the socio-economic context back home. Mr. A. Q. talked about the working conditions he created in his factory and how he trained his employees according to the prevailing standards in developed countries. He attributed the success of his work to the approach he adopted in dealing with his employees:

“The most important thing I have worked on was the integration of women and men in this profession, which increases the level of individual activity, the acceptance of the other gender, and removes the differences and barriers between them”.

Mr. A. Q. is an example of the kind of highly skilled returnee who replicates and reproduces their experience in the host countries once they return home. Social change is a broad process that affects values, customs, and cultures, and it is undoubtedly linked to development, urbanization, and technological capacity. In fact, social change is a continuous process that extends for successive periods of time during which certain adjustments occur in human relationships, institutions, and/or social roles. Despite the limited role that expatriates can play in this immense process, their contribution to anchoring enlightened values is crucial in this regard. Finally and most importantly, it is worth mentioning that, although practices such as being more disciplined and time-bound sometimes create tension with some local

colleagues due to cultural and background differences, this is part of the social package that comes with returnees and is part of the price that they have to pay in order to contribute to change.

7.3.3. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN THE AREA OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS

The goal of this section is to identify the different developmental trends assumed by highly skilled members of the diaspora back home. It also aims to explore some examples of the contributions that skilled people from the diaspora play in knowledge transfer in the area of entrepreneurship and innovation in Palestine. It is important to note that, alongside knowledge transfer in the area of education, technology, and health, diaspora initiatives also tap into business and entrepreneurship. Indeed, “realizing the notable impacts that diaspora involvement in business and investment could have on capacity building and development back home is crucial. Therefore, many countries possess policies and programs targeting their diaspora abroad” (IOM, 2005: 205). These kinds of projects are particularly important because they provide facilities and offer opportunities for others who are ready to invest or transfer knowledge to their counterparts in their home country. Governments and private sector initiatives have chosen different approaches in their bids to tap into their diaspora resources to engage them in economic development. These initiatives can include “supplying training programs directly, with a one-stop shop for investment information or organizing business events for diaspora members. In other cases, local entrepreneurs are encouraged to establish links with their diaspora counterparts” (IOM & MPI, 2012: 131).

Economically speaking, the diaspora can enhance foreign direct investment (FDI) and the business environment in their home country, which in turn can generate jobs and trigger growth. Furthermore, diaspora entrepreneurship is particularly important for the domestic market which is, in general, less attractive either due to its small size or the absence of certainty. The main advantage offered by the skilled diaspora is their ability to make connections with other partners, both in the host and home countries. Consequently, they can create opportunities to transfer knowledge and technology from developed countries to developing countries. The engagement of the skilled diaspora in entrepreneurship and investment in the country of origin also allows them to tap into cheap labor and resources back home. However, and not surprisingly, maximizing the potential of diaspora engagement in business is not an easy process, especially in a risky and unstable environment like that

which exists in Palestine. According to Hanafi (2001: 9), the substantial factors that determine the engagement of the skilled Palestinian diaspora in development back home are the “current political and economic situation and bilateral relationships between the PNA and the host country”. Given this context, it is not expected that the West Bank and Gaza Strip will witness a massive return movement of Palestinian businesspeople and investors in the foreseeable future.

The vast majority of the respondents insisted that political considerations are not negligible. This view is evident in the results of the questionnaire, where a percentage of the respondents indicated that their desire to initiate a new business in Palestine was pretty weak ($M=2.11$). This finding is consistent with Hilal’s study (2007: 23) which stated that “the political uncertainty as to the future of the Palestinian territories kept away external investment in the Palestinian economy with its fragmented and small market, and expatriate investment remained, at best, partial, watchful and hesitant”.

Despite this modest and not surprising result, the existence of successful models in entrepreneurship carried out by skilled Palestinian diaspora can be observed. For example, a study of US Palestinians in the 1990s, found that “diaspora interest in homeland investment did not wane during periods of increased political or economic risk” (Riddle & Nielsen, 2011: 236). In fact, the transfer of knowledge related to business and investment assumed more than one form. Some diaspora members created manufacturing operations or established subsidiaries of businesses based in their host countries, or set up consulting companies or other service operations in their home country, while others chose to share market information with their counterparts in the home country. The Palestinian associations abroad continued to support Palestinians back home in a number of ways, which included providing “protection for Palestinian resources and investments by mobilizing diaspora communities to help schools or provide free passage for goods and services” (Hijab, 2004: 2). Likewise, other Palestinian expatriates established the Arab Palestinian investment company (APIC) which set up many subsidiaries, including in consumer goods, medical services, shopping centers, and food. It also invested in other companies such as PALTEL and the Arabic Islamic International Bank (Nasr, 2004, cited in Hilal, 2007: 23). The following examples help to demonstrate the contribution that the Palestinian skilled diaspora has made in transferring knowledge in the field of investment and entrepreneurship.

Engineer A. Q. was one of the role models in this regard. After completing his high school studies, he moved to Italy to study the precious metals industry. After finishing his studies, he worked in Italy in a precious metals factory for three years. Then, he established a precious metals factory in partnership with a number of Italian friends, and, later, they opened several branches in different Italian cities. In 1994, he opened the first gold factory in Palestine. He explained how he created his factory, his work was expanding rapidly, and he started to think about how he could help other Palestinians to initiate their own businesses in this field. He explained his experience as an entrepreneur:⁶

“In the past, the gold trade was dependent on the import of 90% of the Palestinian market’s needs of precious metals from abroad. Today, 90% of our consumption is a national industry. This is the result of the transfer of knowledge on how to manufacture precious metals. Today, there are 65 gold factories in Hebron alone. Most of the owners and managers of these factories were trained at my factory”.

The success story of engineer Ahmad lies in the fact that he is a manager and owner of the well-known gold factories in Palestine. Moreover, he has also played a crucial role as a knowledge sharer. He contributed to the establishment of a diploma to help workers specialize in precious metals and this is run at Dar Al Kalima College in Bethlehem and at the Palestine Polytechnic University in Hebron. This has put Palestine at a similar level to Italy in terms of its skills base for making precious metal. Many students graduate every year from these two colleges and it is not too difficult for them to find jobs. Indeed, there is a considerable demand for such professions.

In line with this view, there are several examples of skilled Palestinian migrants who learned and worked abroad as an entrepreneur and transferred their knowledge and experience back to Palestine. They saw that there was an opportunity to contribute to the development of state-building, and they chose to contribute by using their skills in business development, as that is their focus and skills set. Their engagement in knowledge transfer in the field of investment and entrepreneurship takes several forms including consultancy, training, the transfer of new technologies, workshops, planning, policy formulation, education, and so on. They used the opportunity to come to their home country and contribute to its development.

⁶ The New Oxford English Dictionary defines an entrepreneur as “a person who organizes and operates a business, taking on greater than normal risks in order to do so” (Newland & Tanaka, 2010: 20).

Their experiences show that there are many innovative ways to contribute to a home country, beyond sending money.

Another success story related to knowledge transfer and know-how in the area of investment and entrepreneurship is provided by Mr. S. B., whose passion for Palestine started when he was very young. Based mainly in the United States, he was repeatedly involved in visiting Palestine during the first intifada and became politically active in his American environment. When the Oslo peace accord was signed, he saw that there was an opportunity to contribute to the development of state-building. He used the opportunity to come in and build the first Palestinian telecommunication company.⁷ The PNA at that time took the decision to privatize telecommunications, and the investors selected two people to come back and establish the company, one of whom was Mr. S. B.. He was also one of the Palestinian experts who created a relationship between institutions in Palestine and the US. For example, in Chicago there is an organization called Americans for a Vibrant Palestinian Economy (AVPE), he organizes the connection between this organization and Palestine business communities.

The Palestinian diaspora has also contributed to the initiation of many other companies, banks, power plants, universities, and commercial centers, such as Bank of Palestine, the Arab American University and Plaza mall in Ramallah. These big projects provide Palestinian people and customers with services and products that were previously being provided by Israel, which can reduce dependency on Israel. Establishing a business in Palestine is conclusive to providing jobs for graduate students and decreasing unemployment among them. Hence, the main impact of these larger projects is that they are able to hire and employ at a time when everything the Israeli government is doing is designed to push people out of the country. Moreover, these projects contribute to the diffusion of knowledge and know-how to the initiators' home country because they act as technological intermediaries.

7.4. EFFECTS OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER ON HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS

While there are many studies that focus on the role and impact of highly skilled migrants' contribution to development in their home countries, this may not always be the case when it comes to the benefits that migrants can achieve because of their engagement in development

⁷ The initiation of a telecommunications company was one of the items in Oslo Accord no 36, which was signed by the PLO and the Israeli government, and it gave Palestinians the right to initiate an independent telecommunications company. This billion-dollar company is one of the largest private sector companies in Palestine.

back home. Knowledge transfer is a two-way process in the sense that highly skilled migrants share their knowledge and skills with local colleagues, but they also gain benefits. This section explores to what extent highly skilled Palestinian migrants have themselves benefited from their assignments in Palestine. It will study the impacts on their academic, professional, social, and economic standing and assess the level of satisfaction among highly skilled Palestinian migrants in relation to their experience of circularity and knowledge transfer to their home country.

The results of this study's questionnaire show that the degree of benefits reaped by highly skilled returnees was moderate ($M=3.52$), with 70.4% of the respondents confirming that they were positively impacted by engagement in knowledge transfer to their home country; 83.2% of the respondents mentioned that they see themselves being involved in knowledge transfer to their home country on a regular basis, and 81.8% of the respondents confirmed that they gained new friends and built new relationships with people in Palestine. Meanwhile, 75.6% of the respondents pointed out that they had learned from the people they met in Palestine, and 69.6% confirmed that they had acquired new knowledge about their home country. However, the figure for those who said that they had acquired new ideas was just 65.2%, and 42.2% of the respondents said that they had initiated a new business in Palestine. Obviously, general benefits are acquired by returnees while they are working in their home country: they learn and discover more about certain issues and about the people there. They also have the chance to travel around Palestine and see sites, which they have not seen before. *Table 7.3* presents the findings.

Table: 7.3. Mean scores, standard deviation, and percentage for the effects of knowledge transfer by highly skilled Palestinian migrants on returning migrants, ranked in descending order

Impacts of Knowledge Transfer on the Returning Migrants	Mean*	Standard Deviation	%
I see myself being involved in knowledge transfer to my home country on a regular basis	4.16	0.88	83.2
I gained new friends and built new relations with people in Palestine	4.09	1.03	81.8
If I got a chance to stay in Palestine, I would accept it	4.08	1.07	81.6
I am satisfied with this experience	3.80	1.13	76.0
I have learned from people I met in Palestine	3.78	1.07	75.6
I acquired new knowledge about my home country	3.48	1.24	69.6
I acquired new ideas	3.26	1.27	65.2
I gained new norms	2.97	1.24	59.4
I initiated a new business in Palestine	2.11	1.45	42.2
Total	3.52	0.74	70.4

Source: Author's table based on the results of the questionnaires.

Analysis of the interviews also revealed that making friends and building relationships with people in Palestine was perceived as one of the main gains for highly skilled migrants who had completed their assignments in Palestine. Moving to another place and getting to know new people will undoubtedly provide new knowledge and experience. It also broadens people's knowledge about the issues there, even if that place is someone's home country. According to the findings of this study, the majority of the respondents confirmed that they have acquired new information about Palestine and they had the chance to visit places they never knew about before. The results of the questionnaire and the interviews were consistent

in this area. Furthermore, their assignment in Palestine assisted them in dealing with unforeseen situations or incidents. The findings revealed that many highly skilled Palestinian migrants who have worked or volunteered in Palestinian institutions consider engagement with development in Palestine represents added value for them. They have learned how to manage challenges and to work in exceptional circumstances with limited resources and in situations where uncertainty prevails. Their work in Palestine also taught them patience, endurance, and the ability to deal with emergencies, which are predominant and permanent attributes in their home country. In explaining his own perception of how engagement in knowledge transfer had impacted on the development of his skills, one interviewee, Dr. A. N., who works in a German hospital as a specialist in the field of joint implants, mentioned the benefits he gained as a result of his frequent visits to Palestine, both at the personal and scientific levels:

“As for the impact on the scientific level, I had seen complex conditions that I would not have seen in Germany. For instance, there were several injuries that I treated because of bloody or explosive bullets resulting in tissue and bone damage. In addition, there have been cases at a late stage of the disease. This gave me the opportunity to learn from these cases and challenges”.

In line with this view, one interviewee, S. B., mentioned his experience and how he managed to deal with abnormalities and volatility in the market, which are prominent phenomena within the Palestinian context. He also mentioned the differences between America’s documented society and Palestine’s non-documented society:

“In the USA we are a highly documented society everything is paperwork you get a contract and you start working. We learned here maybe how to deal with more oral commitment and the paperwork follows”.

Oral and writing-based societies represent two different modes of operation. A person must re-prioritize and adapt to changes on the ground when they switch to operating in an unfamiliar, unstable, and undocumented environment.

In terms of the level of highly skilled migrants’ satisfaction with their work experience in Palestine, the results indicated that the majority of the respondents were satisfied with their experience of transferring knowledge to and working in their home country. Their satisfaction rate was fairly high. Many interviewees expressed their satisfaction and explained that they were looking forward to getting another opportunity to return to Palestine to do

something useful for their home country. For them, it was a unique experience and added value to their careers.

By contrast, some of the interviewees were not satisfied with their experience in Palestine and they mentioned some reasons for their dissatisfaction. Judging whether or not you are satisfied is not about individual issues, such as income, for example; instead, it is related to other practices that a returning migrant encounters while they are working in Palestinian institutions. It is worth noting that some were shocked after returning to their country. They had a rose-tinted view of Palestine and raised expectations, but when they became more involved after their return, they discovered that the reality was different and this sometimes made them feel alienated and shocked. For them, this was unexpected and disappointing. Living in a foreign country for many years and returning to your home country to discover profound changes there may be a difficult experience; however, as an expatriate, you can expect to face some problems and challenges upon return. Expatriates need to be educated about changes in cultural nuances, customs, and methodologies. As an immigrant to a foreign land, it may be difficult to tune in to these things without the support of awareness programs. Here, the responsibility lies with the government and its embassies to organize and operate such programs to target the diaspora.

It is evident that highly skilled Palestinian migrants' satisfaction with their experience in their home country is closely related to factors concerning social relations, local environment, and organizational issues, and this sometimes generates feelings of alienation. From another perspective it is worth noting that variations in satisfaction levels among highly skilled Palestinian migrants who return to Palestine are often related to the presence or absence of incentives or obstacles.

Although the interviewees confirmed that their migration to the host country helped them and contributed to who they are, they were also realistic about some of the downsides of their experiences and particularly those experiences that related to cultural changes. If they had spent a relatively long time studying and working in the host country, this distanced them from their relatives and any changes in values and norms that had taken place in Palestine. They were eager to be in contact with their home country to update themselves about the latest developments there, and the fairly high levels of satisfaction among highly skilled migrants about their experience in knowledge transfer is an encouraging factor that can be

built on; furthermore, a high percentage of returning migrants (83.2%) confirmed that they were ready to engage in knowledge transfer to their home country on a regular basis.

Lastly and most importantly, the inflow of highly skilled migrants to their home countries in recent years has had a reasonable impact on the Palestinian human resources and Palestinian society's institutions, but immigrants can also reap benefits from their engagement. This is evident in the Palestinian case. This study's findings have revealed that highly skilled Palestinian migrants have also benefited in social, economic, and scientific ways from their engagement in transferring knowledge and best practices to their home country. I can therefore confidently claim that circular migration in the Palestinian context has brought benefits both to the country of origin and to the skilled diaspora. It is therefore important to take advantage of those highly qualified migrants who see themselves as preferred sources for knowledge transfer and as agents of organizational change.

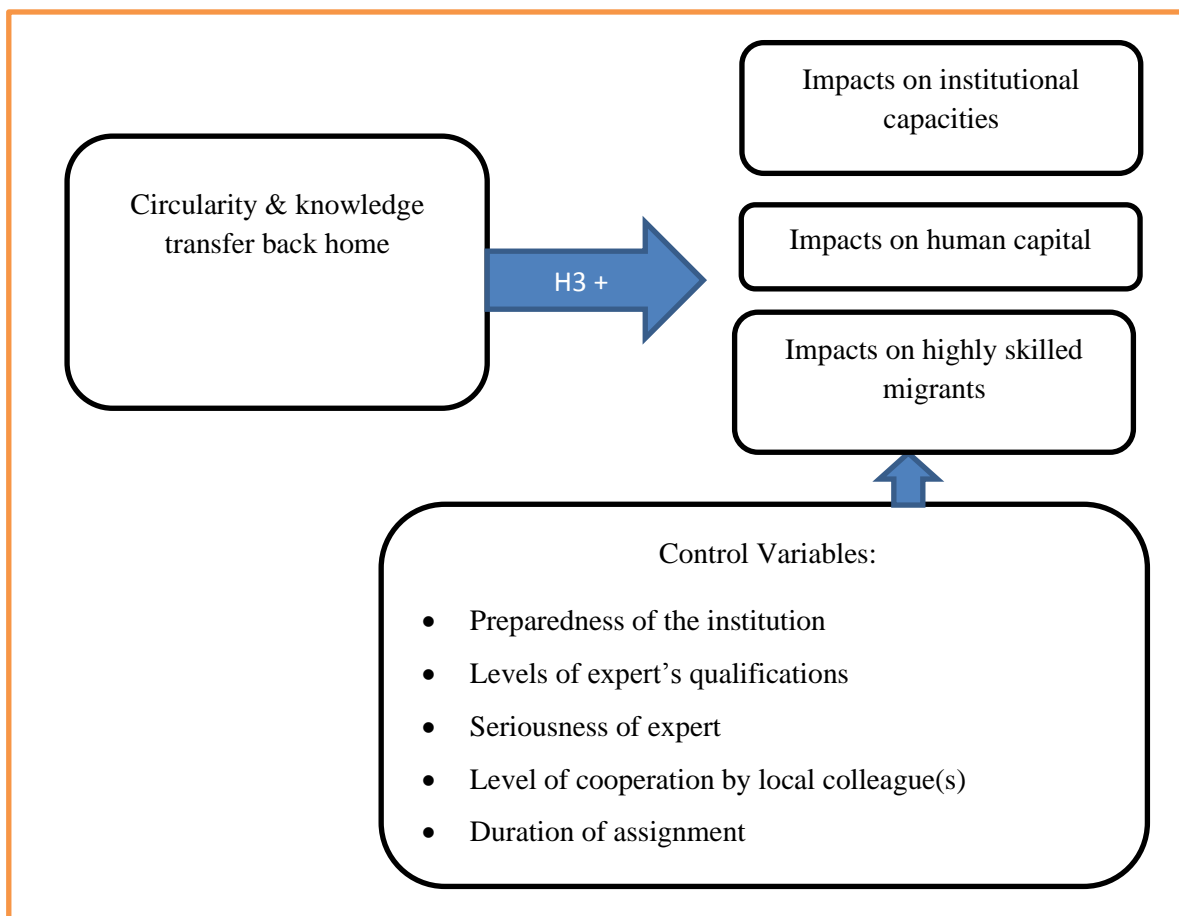
7.5. EXAMINING RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS Five (H3)

This chapter's last section examines the third research hypothesis of this thesis which states that:

H3: The engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants through circular and return migration significantly improves the capacities of Palestinian institutions, particularly in terms of their human capital.

The relationships between the different variables for this hypothesis are shown in *Figure 7.2*.

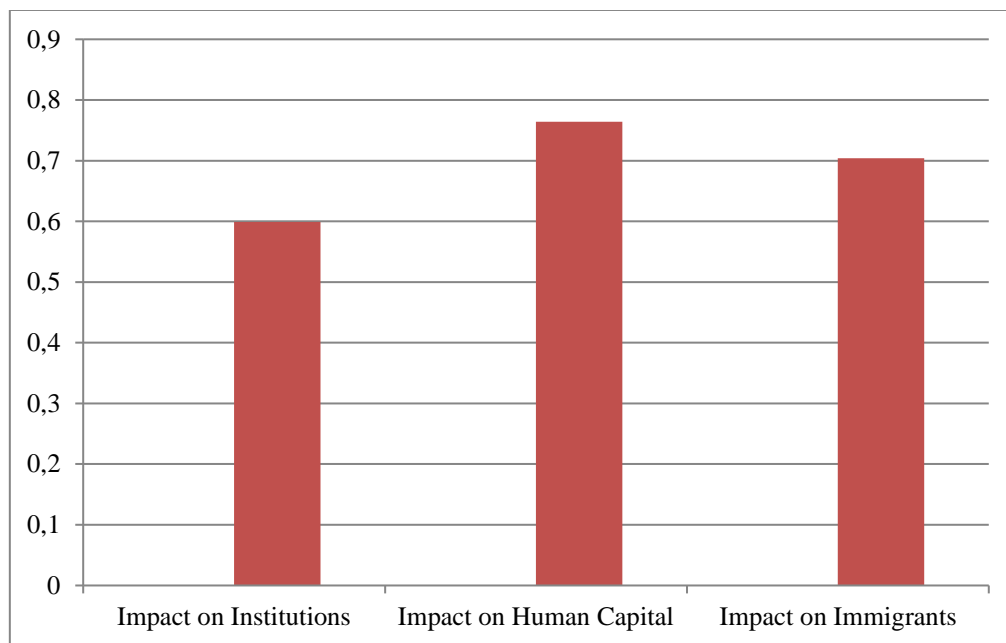
Figure: 7.2. Conceptual model 3



Source: Author's own compilation based on the research methods.

As a point of fact, the impact was explored at two main levels; the macro and the micro. As shown in Figure 7.2, this hypothesis proposes to look at the impacts of circular migration experienced by skilled Palestinian diaspora on the capacities of Palestinian institutions, human capital, and highly skilled migrants. Furthermore, it aims to examine which one of them is affected most as a result of this engagement. The results of the questionnaire and interviews indicate a significant positive correlation between the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country and the impacts on institutions, human capital, and immigrants, where the overall effect is moderate. However, the results revealed that the impact on Palestinian human capital was pretty high, which is greater than that on the capacities of Palestinian institutions, and highly skilled migrants themselves. *Figure 7.3* illustrates the impact of the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in transferring knowledge to their home country on these three components.

Figure: 7.3. The impact of engagement on institutions, human capital, and immigrants



Source: Author's own compilation based on the research findings.

Generally speaking, highly skilled Palestinian migrants helped by providing technical assistance and healthcare; they also offered some educational opportunities. Certainly, it is clear that engaging them in knowledge transfer to their home country positively impacted both institutions and individuals. However, there is a remarkable variation in the degree of this impact, where the benefits on the individual level were greater than on the institutional level. Broadly speaking, Palestinian institutions are still unable to utilize and share knowledge transferred by highly skilled migrants effectively, This may either be due to the lack of efficient and effective knowledge management processes that would allow them to acquire, store, retrieve and share knowledge across their organizations, or because Palestinian institutions do not yet have enough resources or technological tools to disseminate knowledge and transform it from the individual level to the institutional one. However, it is equally important to mention that the impact of the contribution of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country is not only limited just scientific and academic: it also includes cultural and behavioural aspects. There was a fair impact on the highly skilled migrants themselves, especially in terms of social relationships, as well as opportunities to enhance their expertise in many areas. The impact also included the ability to deal with certain types of extraordinary circumstances such as those in Palestine.

There is no doubt that the integration of knowledge management processes is a vital issue for the success of knowledge transfer. It is not enough to transfer and acquire knowledge; you also need to retrieve this knowledge and share it with others in order to transform individual knowledge into collective and institutional assets. Indeed, knowledge transfer is not limited to individuals, rather it encompasses two basic learning forms, individual and organizational learning (Edmondson & Moingeon, 1999: 160). These two levels of learning in organizations interact together and are inseparable. According to Alavi & Leidner (2001: 123), “Knowledge management consists of a dynamic and continuous set of processes and practices embedded in individuals, as well as in groups and physical structures”.

Notably, the overall effect of engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants was significant. Furthermore, the relationship between the engagement and the impact was positive, which means that the greater the engagement the greater the impacts. Accordingly, the hypothesis was accepted.

7.6. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER SEVEN

To enhance the role of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer and development, a framework must be established for cooperation and coordination between different local actors, as well as between home countries and their diasporas. There is no doubt that hosting Palestinian experts, doctors, and students from OECD countries gives local organizations new experiences and ideas about how institutions operate and how things can be done more perfectly. This is especially important, when some of the work methods used in those countries differ from those currently used in Palestine and where transferring these best practices represents an advantage for Palestinian institutions.

In this chapter, I have attempted to address how useful it is for Palestinian institutions and Palestinian human capital to engage with highly skilled migrants, and I have demonstrated that this engagement also brings benefits to the highly skilled migrants themselves. The chapter has examined which of these three components has benefited most. In order to formulate the results, descriptive statistics were used and a correlation and regression analysis was also conducted to establish relationships between the different variables. According to the results, and despite the modest participation of the skilled diaspora in transferring knowledge to the home country in the Palestinian case, the following observations can be made in relation to these questions on the basis of this study:

- A considerable amount of knowledge has been transferred by skilled people in the diaspora to Palestine. Many highly skilled Palestinian migrants have come back for a certain period and have helped Palestinian institutions to resolve problematic issues in a range of different fields, including but not limited to education, healthcare, engineering, agriculture, information technology, entrepreneurship, and infrastructure. They have also tried to improve work methods and techniques and assisted in improving curricula and certain technological systems, and they have developed structures and plans. Indeed, skilled people in the Palestinian diaspora have also participated in bridging gaps and tackling human resource shortages in the above-mentioned fields.
- Another valuable aspect of highly skilled migrants' engagement in knowledge transfer is networking. Some initiatives were only able to achieve high levels of networking with the help of international scholars.
- The impact of engagement on human capital was greater than that on institutions. Highly skilled Palestinian migrants focused on changing ways of thinking rather than on structural changes, and in doing so they have given their Palestinian counterparts different approaches. Furthermore, they have helped to broaden knowledge about methods that are in use in developed countries, and they have transferred good practices and know-how to Palestine.
- The effects of circular migration on Palestinian highly skilled migrants are varied. They include opportunities to build relationships with people in Palestine and visit places migrants have not seen before, improving migrants' skills and experience in certain areas, and even establishing a viable business in their home country.
- Having excellent Palestinian experts from the diaspora in their home country is very helpful in building the capacities of Palestinian institutions and developing local human capital. Nevertheless, the Palestinians have not fully benefited from the presence of well-educated people who are based abroad, and they could do better to access and tap into this pool of expertise.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8.1. OVERVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to put forward and summarize the findings of this research study and draw out the conclusions and policy implications of these findings. This chapter consists of four sections. The first part reports the comments of the previous studies in terms of the effect of the engagement of highly skilled migrants in transferring knowledge to Palestine and the factors affecting this engagement. The second section displays the research conclusions drawn from the results and discussion. As a summary, the researcher will evaluate the knowledge transfer process with the help of the so-called SWOT analysis. The results of this analysis provide an opportunity to formulate policy implications and make recommendations in order to improve and institutionalize the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country, which will be the focus of the third section. This chapter also contains recommended models to institutionalize the engagement of skilled Palestinian Diasporas in knowledge transfer to their home country. Finally, this chapter provides some insights for further research directions.

8.2. COMMENTS ON PREVIOUS LITERATURE

Although the growth of remittance inflows towards the MENA region was notable in recent years, “the rise in human capital has exceeded the rise in remittances. In other words, the average amount of money remitted per unit of human capital has decreased. A shift from remittances driven to a human capital-driven pattern of migration is underway” (Fargues 2008:21). Certainly, the case of Palestine is the best among other Arab countries in terms of human capital abroad. This calls for greater concern for the ways in which diaspora knowledge and skills can be better put to the advantage of the home country development. Indeed, the contributions made by skilled diaspora to the development of their home countries through transnational engagement and circular migration have received considerable attention from many scholars. Likewise, migration and development have become the object of extensive academic and policy research and identified brain circulation

as a priority area for addressing brain drain and skilled out-migration from countries of origin and their negative consequences.

Several comments can be stated from the previous discussion with regards to the role of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home countries. First, transnationalism is one of the main theories that has addressed return and circular migration. It provides a theoretical framework for the engagement of skilled diaspora in development and knowledge transfer to their countries of origin. A review of knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants' literature reveals that more attention has been paid to discuss this topic mainly since the 1990s (Lanzieri & Novkowska, 2016; Farrell *et al.* 2014; Farrell *et al.* 2012; OECD, 2008; Lubbad, 2008; Klinthäll, 2006; Cassarino, 2004; Johnson and Sedaca, 2004). However, prior empirical studies had very little focus on the socioeconomic factors and diaspora variables that affect knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants.

Secondly, although all these studies have agreed upon the importance and impacts of the contributions of highly skilled migrants to development and knowledge transfer either on the macroeconomic or microeconomic level of the home countries, they differed on the extent of those impacts that such contributions could have. While some researchers have argued that knowledge transfer through skilled circular migration can compensate brain drain from developing countries, some skeptics have argued that the success of knowledge transfer is linked to several factors such as the depth and equality of the knowledge and experience gained abroad (Lazarova & Tarique, 2005; Lanzieri, & Novkowska, 2016), and absorptive capacity of the origin countries (Siar, 2014), as well as the ability of highly skilled migrants to integrate into the organizational and societal culture after their return (Yeaton & Hall, 2008; IOM, 2013; Cassarino, 2004). Notably, successful examples of knowledge transfer by skilled diaspora to their home can be traced in countries like China, India, Ireland, Taiwan, and South Korea. However, the success of these countries to mobilize and recruit their skilled diaspora could be attributed to certain pull factors. These include, but are not limited to, the robust absorptive capacities and high level of preparedness of their institutions. This raises a question about the possibility to replicate these successful models to other countries that have limited resources and weak institutions.

Thirdly, while the contributions of circular and return migration to knowledge transfer and capacity building in the home country have attracted some attention recently on the global level (Wahba, 2007; OECD 2008; Kuschminder, 2011; Jackson, 2012; Chacko & Price,

2009; Kuschminder *et al.*, 2014; Sveinsson, 2015, Strobl, 2016), the Palestinian studies were very few and were mainly focused on the social and demographic dimension of return migration rather than its role in knowledge transfer or its impacts on development and institutional building.

Both the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2009) and Malki and Shalabi (2000) discuss internal migration and the returnees in Palestine. Both reports focused on the demographic and social trends of returnees such as the reasons for return, the distribution of returnees according to the type of locality in the Palestinian territory, returnee gender, age, educational level and thereof. Similarly, Lubbad (2007) and Lubbad (2008) addressed the demographics and characteristics of returnees and the economic benefits of Palestinian return migration and he focused mainly on remittance and its increasing impacts on education and the families' welfare. While Hilal (2007) assessed the socio-economic impacts of migration on the Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in terms of remittances and social capital, he pointed out that migration has impacted the Palestinian economic and social capital in one way or another. On the other hand, the study of Hanafi (2001) was one of the few studies that investigated the topic of knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants. It was based on fifty-four interviews with Palestinian professionals in some European countries. The research was carried out in 1998 and was mainly focused on their economic activities and their relationship to the home country. He used TOKTEN and PALESTA programs. The results of that study revealed a moderate degree of success of these two programs despite some shortcomings.

Although the current research study is complementary to the previous ones, it aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field in question. Moreover, it is distinguished from previous studies in several aspects. Numerous studies have been conducted on various facets of return migration, the reason for people's return to their home country, and their contributions to development, which only a few studies discuss in detail the factors that affect these contributions, and the extent to which they impact the development and capacity building processes of those home countries. Among the few studies that discussed the transfer of knowledge were Sveinsson (2015) the case of Nigeria, Jackson (2012) the case of Serbia, Siar (2012) the Philippine case, Kuschminder (2011) the case of Afghanistan, Wahba (2007) the case of Egypt. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the different factors that affect the contributions of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer in the case of Palestine and the extent to which these contributions affect the capacity

building and human capital in Palestine. Reviewing all of the Palestinian studies, the author can claim that this is the first study in the Palestinian case that addresses the role of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country. The author also states that the focus of this research is institutional building and human capital rather than demographic or social dimensions, which has not been studied in previous Palestinian studies.

8.3. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH MAIN RESULTS – SWOT ANALYSIS

The results of the questionnaire and interviews revealed crucial facts and points related to the engagement of skilled Palestinian Diasporas in development and knowledge transfer to their home country. However, I would like to draw special attention to the weaknesses and strengths in the engagement process obtained from the data analysis to provide the required remedies to the weaknesses and to enhance the strong points. Along the same lines, opportunities and threats have been stated. Based on the structure of the SWOT analysis, the main conclusions are categorized under the following headings: strengths, points for improvement, opportunities, and threats.

8.3.1. STRENGTHS

- *A high level of awareness of the importance of knowledge transfer.*
Findings revealed profound and significant agreement and awareness among highly skilled migrants and policy-makers on the importance of the engagement of skilled Palestinian diasporas in development and knowledge transfer to their home country. Skilled diasporas believe that it is their duty to come back and transfer whatever knowledge and experience they learned abroad to their home country.
- *High level of willingness to engage in knowledge transfer and development in the home country.* The results showed that highly skilled Palestinian migrants have the willingness and readiness to come and volunteer their services towards the building of Palestinian institutions and to share their knowledge with their community in Palestine. Furthermore, this strong willingness is mainly guided by the emotional attachment and feeling of responsibility to help their communities.
- The results showed that the two main common means of engagement in knowledge transfer among highly skilled Palestinian migrants are *personal initiatives and international organizations*. After several years of living abroad, some Palestinians started

thinking about their home country, and how they could pay part of their debt. So they began to look for ways to contribute to the development of their country. On the other hand, others got opportunities to do that through international organizations or sometimes through diasporas associations.

- *Widespread, deep impacts.* Additionally, one of the noticeable outcomes was that highly skilled Palestinian migrants impacted their community in Palestine not only scientifically or academically, but also socially and behaviourally.
- *High-level satisfaction as a factor of motivation.* The results indicated that the level of satisfaction among highly skilled migrants about their assignment and experience in Palestine was considerably high. They were very happy to get the opportunity to come back and live in their home country for a period of time to share their experience with the people in their community. At the same time, the vast majority confirmed that if they got another opportunity to work in their home country, they would accept it.
- *Privilege and benefits of the international working environment.* Living in the host country provided highly skilled Palestinian migrants with opportunities and privileges which included foreign citizenship, gaining new knowledge and experience, and working in international organizations. All these benefits have helped them become more confident to engage in circular migration, and transfer knowledge to their home country.
- *Efficient forms of knowledge transfer.* The findings also showed that highly skilled migrants indeed transferred various forms of knowledge and skills. These forms include a wide spectrum of knowledge such as sharing new ideas for work, assisting colleagues in problem-solving, learning by doing, and giving lectures and workshops.
- *The role of solidarity.* This pertains to the availability of solidarity among the Palestinian diaspora in terms of assisting new immigrants in finding jobs and in integrating them into the Palestinian communities abroad.

8.3.2. POINTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- *Non-systematic way of engagement.* Palestinian endeavours to engage the diaspora in knowledge transfer are still humble. The key point in this regard is that the engagement is done away from the Palestinian official institutions and in the absence of any government initiatives or any systematic way of engagement.
- *Limited national capacities and resources.* Despite the fact that Palestinian institutions have the willingness to tap into skilled diasporas expertise, they suffer from limited

resources and weak infrastructure. Besides, their absorptive capacity is not entirely ready to take advantage of the experience of highly skilled migrants. Clearly, governmental institutions are less prepared to utilize such expertise.

- *Weak home country institutional background.* The feasibility and benefits at the level of the individual were better than that at the collective level, which indicates that Palestinian institutions are still lagging behind and facing real challenges in utilizing and disseminating knowledge especially those related to tacit knowledge.
- *The weak performance of embassies in this field.* It is apparent that the role of the Palestinian diaspora associations remains modest in mobilizing their highly skilled migrants to be engaged in development in their home country. Additionally, the Palestinian embassies are not doing rather well regarding this issue. As a point of fact, the results indicated that these embassies do not have any databases about their people in their host countries, which raises a big question about the performance of these embassies.
- *Inefficient diaspora-associated institutions.* Palestinian diaspora-associated institutions are scattered and they suffer from overlapping functions and a low level of coordination. Indeed, expatriation management functions are spread across several agencies and stakeholders, which often lead to a lack of information sharing.
- *Absence of legislation* that organizes the relationship between Palestinian diaspora and their home country.
- *Lack of official incentives.* The efforts that are done by the Palestinian institutions to encourage skilled diasporas to come back to Palestine are still modest and dispersed. The findings indicated that there are no incentive policies for the mobilization and recruitment of the skilled Palestinian diaspora. For instance, the Palestinian Government did not provide any incentives to the highly skilled returnees who came back and chose to stay and live in Palestine. Nonetheless, if there are any incentives, they are often personal or internal incentives provided by the host institution rather than the government.
- *Lack of recognition and approval systems.* Often times highly skilled returnees feel that they are not welcomed by some decision-makers or colleagues as obstacles are placed on their way back. This is clearly evident in the case of Palestinian doctors, who have spent many years studying abroad, and are required to take a professional practice exam (the Palestinian Board) to be able to work in Palestine.

- *Weak monitoring and evaluation systems.* Notably, the weakness of monitoring and evaluation of the performance of those skilled people who come from abroad is another shortcoming in their engagement in development and knowledge transfer. The results showed the absence of such monitoring and follow-up systems especially at the national and ministerial levels with some exceptions such as the Ministry of Health.
- *Limited benefits.* Overall, it can be concluded that Palestinians have not fully benefited from the presence of skilled diasporas and that more can be improved in this regard.

8.3.3. OPPORTUNITIES

- *Presence of many highly skilled Palestinian migrants* who are willing to come back and share their knowledge in their home country.
- *Presence of international programs* to engage the skilled diaspora in transferring knowledge and best practices in various fields to their home country.
- *The role of facilitating factors.* The results indicated that the contribution of European countries, the USA, and Canada were the highest among others. This is due to the presence of facilitation factors such as knowledge transfer programs organized by international organizations or diasporas in these countries. Also, obtaining passports from such countries facilitates circular migration. However, most contributors are those who have dual citizenship due to the fact that they can move freely and easily within and outside the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- *Some diaspora associations* are very active in organizing knowledge transfer programs. Furthermore, there were some examples of the cooperation between international organizations and some diaspora associations.
- *Nostalgia for the culture of home.* Many Palestinians abroad prefer seeing their children grow up in Palestine in order to keep them in touch with the traditions and culture of their home country.

8.3.4. THREATS

- *Occupation-related restrictions* remain the main obstacle affecting Palestinian life, including the transfer of knowledge and movement within and out of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- *An unstable political environment and poor opportunities* limit the efforts of the Palestinian Government to mobilize and recruit more highly skilled Palestinian migrants

to return or to engage in circular migration between the home country and the host country.

- *Perceptions of some bad practices* in Palestinian institutions and exaggeration of corruption there negatively affects the decision of highly skilled Palestinian migrants to engage in transferring knowledge in their home country.
- *Unorganized and fractionalized diaspora.* Additionally, the relationship between embassies and communities is often not in harmony thereby undermining access to these communities.
- *Disparities in the standard of living* and salaries between the home country and the host country. Palestinian institutions cannot afford to pay salaries to these experts similar to those available in the host countries. Moreover, there are remarkable differences between working environments. There are also disparities in the level of education and healthcare between the home country and the host country. In many host countries, there are a lot of social and healthcare facilities and sophisticated learning system which are not available in Palestine.
- *Feeling of superiority by some highly skilled migrants*, creating a psychological gap between them and their local colleagues, which reduces the level of cooperation and trust between the two parties.

8.3.5. NEW SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS

- *Two-way processes.* Another observation in this research study is that knowledge transfer is a two-way process. Highly skilled migrants are not only knowledge senders, they can also achieve benefits such as gaining new experience, learning from the difficulties and challenges they face in Palestine, building new relationships with people in Palestine, and learning new things about their home country.
- *Universities, NGOs, and the private sector are the best in engaging and utilizing highly skilled Palestinian migrants.* Indeed, they had the upper hand compared to public institutions in this regard. However, healthcare institutions were the best among other governmental agencies.
- The transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants had a *significant impact on capacity building* in Palestine; however, the impacts on human capital were greater than those on Palestinian institutions.

- *Skilled diaspora engagement is driven by particular factors more than others.* The thesis findings revealed that the most significant and influential factors in diaspora engagement are sentimental and national feelings in addition to host country factors such as obtaining a foreign passport and gaining new skills.
- *Lack of specific diaspora policy.* The Palestinian government does not have a clear vision or strategy to build a two-way effective relationship with its communities abroad. Furthermore, the engagement of skilled diasporas in development in their home country is still not a priority for decision-makers.
- *Absence of a database on the skilled diaspora.* The results revealed that the lack of databases on expatriates and skilled diaspora remains the main weakness in diaspora engagement. Collecting and building this database is crucial for approaching the diaspora and engaging them in development in their home country.
- *Absence of a demand-driven approach that matches* the needs of the home country with the skills and qualifications of highly skilled Palestinian migrants. Previous initiatives to launch knowledge transfer programs quite often originate from donors with less governmental involvement.

Finally and most importantly, it is clear that the engagement of highly skilled diaspora in knowledge transfer is applicable and viable as a development strategy in the case of Palestine. However, it can be concluded that Palestinians did not fully benefit from the presence of skilled diaspora and that more can be improved in this regard.

8.4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although brain drain has been one of the greatest challenges for Arab countries including Palestine, skilled Palestinian diasporas are a promising and potential pool of knowledge and experience that can be transferred and utilized back home. Converting brain drain into brain gain is possible if certain approaches and policies were adapted to facilitate access to those skilled expatriates. Furthermore, given that migration is a multi-local process, the need to improve the performance of the relevant Palestinian institutions both on the national and local levels are also immensely advocated. To enhance the relationship with the diaspora and fully reap the potential developmental impact of the skilled diaspora, the following policy implications and recommendations ought to be considered by the Palestinian government and institutions:

- *Developing a distinct strategy for effective and sustainable engagement of Palestinian skilled diasporas.* To gain the confidence of the diaspora, the government must adopt a bottom-up approach that is based on the diaspora's involvement in describing migratory trends and making use of the collected data. The inclusion of skilled diaspora in the formulation of this strategy is very substantial and normally produces significant results. As a point of fact, this strategy must stand on a set of pillars. First and foremost, the identification of goals that include both the needs of the diasporas and the home country. To get proper outcomes, these goals must be supported by mechanisms and tools. The second pillar is to know and identify these diasporas by building a comprehensive database on Palestinians abroad. Thirdly, it is not surprising to note that anchoring a sustainable partnership between the diasporas and the Palestinian government is more likely to succeed if there is mutual trust. Indeed, there are various approaches to enhance the relationship with the diaspora and build such trust. These include, in addition to providing incentives, educating and updating diasporas about the local context in Palestine to keep expatriates in touch with their home community. Moreover, one of the most important things that can be accomplished in this regard is the launch of a website that allows expatriates to share and contribute knowledge to their home country.
- In general terms, return and circular migration profiles should be developed and organized in conjunction with relevant legislative framework and policies since the two are interrelated. The legal framework also affects the scope and extent of the engagement of the skilled diaspora in development at home.
- *Creating a database on expatriates and Palestinian communities abroad.* Engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer and development in their motherland cannot be achieved effectively if it does not rely on profound data. The increased concentration on development impacts of individual mobility between countries and the need to mainstream migration into other sectoral policies have created a demand for new types of evidence. Policymakers in the country of origin are no longer satisfied with knowing only the absolute number of their migrants abroad. However, Palestinian-associated institutions particularly embassies need to develop a systematized database on Palestinians abroad to properly identify the Palestinian diaspora. This data must include the characteristics of the Palestinian expatriates, such as who they are? Where they are? What do they do? What experience do they have? How can they help? And so on. The main objective should be to focus on how to better benefit from the experience of highly

skilled migrants. Additionally, it must aim to build an effective relationship with these diasporas and efficiently mobilize them as they can be of benefit not only in the matter of transferring knowledge but also in other issues. Accordingly, data must first be prepared on the capabilities and competencies of highly skilled migrants and then checking their willingness to return home. If they choose not to engage, what benefit can they give to their home country while they are abroad? It is also unsurprising to note that highly skilled migrants can sometimes contribute more than being brought in person just for teaching or training. There is a need to connect the Palestinians who work abroad and encourage them to have affiliations with scientific and academic institutions in Palestine even considering prestigious positions, such as visiting scholars in order to improve the ranking of Palestinian education institutions. Moreover, Palestinian institutions and universities could ask those scholars to stay abroad and lead research projects and research groups from Palestine to encourage and create potential researchers. This requires reliable data collected by Palestinian embassies and communities abroad in order to formulate evidence-based policies.

- *The involvement of all actors and the identification of different stakeholders* is extremely important for the success of the strategy targeting the diaspora. Although the diaspora profile is seen as a government-owned process, the role of civil society organizations, local governments, and research institutions is considerable. Expatriates profiles tend to encompass a wide range of topics such as migration trends and indicators, migrants' rights, the integration of migrants, impacts of migration, etc. Therefore anchoring an on-going regular sharing process with other stakeholders is crucial. Seemingly, the private-public partnership is to some extent reasonable as the private sector and non-governmental organizations have the capabilities to allocate more resources and budget to support engagement programs that the government may not be able to implement individually. Indeed, the main challenge for the Palestinian Government is organizing programs or events that will drain the already limited budget. Therefore, creating a good system that incorporates the various stakeholders in Palestine is crucial for reaching these skilled people and engages them in development and transferring knowledge to their home country. The Palestinian Government may also develop partnerships with international organizations working in this area such as IOM and UNDP. Broadly speaking, these organizations support and finance certain programs such as the return of talented individuals to their home countries and knowledge transfer programs. Furthermore, they may provide some technical support to facilitate the implementation of

these programs. Effective engagement of skilled diasporas should be based on smart technologies and service delivery methods. The success in creating such operational skills and techniques is extremely beneficial. It is interesting to note that, experience with the TOKTEN program organized by the UNDP was one example of this kind of relationship between Palestine and international organizations. However, more lessons learned are needed to avoid the mistakes of TOKTEN.

- *Providing incentives and opportunities* to attract skilled diaspora. Creating a conducive environment is a key factor in the effective engagement of skilled Palestinian diasporas. The findings indicate that the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants occurred individually or through international organizations with little or no governmental endeavours or initiatives. Moreover, the engagement of highly skilled migrants in development and knowledge transfer without offering them incentives may be inadequate to attract Palestinian talents scattered over the world. The absence of incentive policies is one of the main weaknesses of the engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer back home. Furthermore, under the current political conditions, one would not like to risk their life to return unless they have an ideological or emotional drive to do so. Therefore, recruiting and utilizing these highly intellectual expatriates to return and contribute to capacity building at home can be done through financial rewards and the adoption of a package of incentive policies. These incentives may include tax exemption, social insurance, one-stop-shop service for returnees, and thereof. Indeed, the expectation of skilled diaspora is more than that. For example, diaspora investors often look for a trustworthy, reliable relationship, an efficient market where supply and demand can interact smoothly. These privileges are very substantial needs, and they will give the people an indication that they are welcome to return home.
- *Coordinated institutional background*. Supporting an inter-agency collaboration platform, leading to a better flow of information, and more sustainability for diaspora-oriented institutions through the implementation of well coherent policy actions ultimately enhances the effectiveness of these institutions. Furthermore, reinforcing the absorptive capacity of Palestinian institutions is another worthwhile recommendation to increase their preparedness to absorb and utilize the experience of these highly skilled individuals. However, to articulate effective relationships with the Palestinian diasporas and engage them in development and knowledge transfer in their home country, these institutions must undergo restructuring or be replaced by new institutions. Restructuring of diaspora-

associated institutions should address any overlaps or gaps in their function. If certain functions are not adequately covered by existing structures or if some functions overlap with others, it is important that these shortcomings be addressed during the restructuring process. It is also essential to analyze the mandate and function further to ensure efficient allocation of resources and to avoid conflicts. This is likely to lead to significant efficiency gain and sharing of resources across Palestinian institutions and communities abroad. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that working as a team and consolidating data related to expatriates and migratory flows in a concise consistent manner between the various institutions and departments in the PNA is a demanding need for the success of the engagement process. This inter-agency coordination framework should be developed at two levels: technical and decision-making. While the technical level is necessary to collect and analyse reliable data on skilled diaspora, the decision-making level will ensure the government's approval of the various activities.

- *Qualitative and quantitative analyses in order to provide a balance between the demand and the supply of skills.* Palestinian institutions must adopt a demand-driven approach to identify the needs and gaps that can be filled by highly skilled migrants. Certainly, this matter requires an assessment study which may take some time, but it is an indispensable condition for institutionalizing the process of transferring knowledge and building a correct and balanced relationship with skilled Palestinian diasporas. A clear focus on the needs of the home country is a critical and important step for attracting and engaging highly skilled diaspora individuals. Unfortunately, the research study findings indicate that this demand document has not yet been prepared in most Palestinian institutions. As a matter of fact, the absence of a matching approach between local needs and experience abroad was a cost-effective way of engagement as it sometimes brought in unneeded or not so serious individuals, which negatively affected the success of this engagement. Experience of other countries on circular migration and knowledge transfer programs shows that ensuring government ownership helps transform the collected needs into a policy-making tool.
- *Improved information flow.* Weakness in the flow of information towards diasporas about the local context was another drawback that hinders the effectiveness of engagement of skilled Palestinian diasporas. Therefore, one of the interventions the Palestinian Government must take is educating Palestinians abroad about the local conditions inside Palestine and inform them of the opportunities available there. This process is quite

significant as many Palestinian emigrants are born outside their home country, while others have left many years ago, so they often lose track of the current local conditions back home. There are a lot of Palestinians who worry about what is going on in Palestine and who need to understand safety issues in the region. As a point of fact, providing diasporas with information on a regular basis can be carried out by embassies or by creating a website so that highly skilled migrants and other interested individuals can access it and explore any potential opportunities or perhaps businesses or cultural events in Palestine. Indeed, many governments have used such websites to facilitate links with their diasporas in a systematic and steady way. It is important to create networks⁸ within and across Palestinian communities. Likewise, these networks and other Internet paraphernalia can also be used to support entrepreneurship and provide investment opportunities. The main goal here is to reduce uncertainty about investment and entrepreneurship in their home country on the one hand, and to promote relationships between various Palestinian communities and enhance their ties with their home country on the other hand.

- *Conducting and considering innovative programs* especially those aimed at small-scale entrepreneurs. These programs should address the needs of both home country institutions and diaspora communities. However, to achieve better impacts, these programs must be implemented at both the national and local levels. Although some programs seem necessary on the national level, they may be inapplicable and may waste resources at the local level. Therefore, wherever possible, these programs must be carefully planned and executed taking into account the specificity of Palestine and the socio-political context there. Knowledge transfer programs launched so far have evolved unilaterally without consulting local government institutions.
- *Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of programs to encourage diaspora engagement.* Setting the stage for follow-up actions is important for the success of skilled diaspora engagement efforts as well as for the further enhancement of know-how transfer programs. In general terms, monitoring and evaluation usually generate invaluable feedback from different stakeholders particularly, direct beneficiaries and other people on the ground. Although assessing circular migration impact in a reliable manner is not an easy process, efforts to develop an effective approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of the engagement of skilled diaspora in knowledge transfer is now of high priority. Undoubtedly, permanent and constant monitoring and evaluation allows for frequent and

⁸ A network is a social group that also provides updates about the local context and the opportunities available there for everyone interested in the matter and want to contribute in one way or another in the development back home.

timely adjustments in light of the evaluation results and former experience. Thus, to increase the feasibility of skilled diaspora engagement, the Palestinian government and institutions must regularly evaluate and prepare reports on the effects of these engagements and missions. Analysis of existing monitoring and evaluation approaches (if any) that is deployed in different institutions is a critical step in managing the profile of expatriates. Not surprisingly, many governments place more emphasis on such monitoring and evaluation which is carried out either individually or in cooperation with international organizations such as IOM. Likewise, with some coordination, this opportunity may be available to the Palestinian Government as well.

- *Developing a Palestinian approach in terms of relationships with internationally funded knowledge transfer programs.* In the event that there are further programs to transfer knowledge back home by any international organization, Palestinian institutions should not only play the role of the receptor, but they must also be full partners in planning and implementation. They must identify needs, develop proposals, and initiate steering committees from both sides. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs must distribute circulars to Palestinian embassies to encourage them to promote knowledge transfer programs and to launch a website so that experts can register and put their *curriculum vitae* for review by interested groups. Indeed, efficient governance and capacity-building tools for the diaspora profile assist the government in taking ownership of organizing and controlling knowledge transfer programs

Although several recommendations emerged during interviews regarding effective and better engagement of highly skilled Palestinian migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country, the author would like to highlight the following points too:

- *Establishing units at certain ministries to do new activities in accordance with international standards.* For example, at the Ministry of Labour, they do not have recruitment specialists, labour market specialists, or vocational training professionals who can design vocational training centers. They can bring Palestinians from vocational training centers in Germany who hold a Ph.D. in this field. Also from Jordan, they can bring many people who would contribute to social security and can benefit from that. Besides, they can bring younger people during the summer to transfer knowledge to the younger generations notably in music, storytelling, and media to name a few.

- *Reformulating the approaches of Palestinian institutions*, investing in industries and services, developing the Hi-Tech industry, and economic sectors that utilize high-level human resources. Develop hospitals to attract high-level doctors to sell products to Palestinians from home and abroad, allowing them to pay high salaries to doctors. There is a need to seriously develop Palestinian economic plans to provide these individuals with the appropriate tools to be able to contribute to the Palestinian community.
- *Establishing more specialized healthcare programs*, such as the neurosurgery program making it more systematic. Additionally, there is a need to broaden the scope of programs to include different disciplines.
- Facilitating the return of highly skilled migrants in terms of *licensing* to work whether it is in law, medicine, engineering, or any other field to make their return process as smooth as possible.
- *Establishing an international organization* that can organize the relationship with highly skilled individuals abroad to give them the opportunity to get to know and interact with each other.
- Creating a specific type of *financing by the private sector*, this budget should be allocated to the development of infrastructure by scouting and recruiting those who are interested in participating and giving them financial rewards to encourage them to return.
- *Preparing brochures* with information on the various departments of the PNA concerned with expatriate affairs. This facilitates communications between these departments and the Palestinian Diasporas.
- *Expanding the role of embassies* to play a greater role in mobilizing individuals and directing expatriate communities to transfer knowledge and experience in addition to investing as much as possible in their home country.
- *Establishing research centers* to integrate expatriates in the development of their home country and benefit from their experiences. This research center may also investigate and study diaspora issues and their relationship with the home country and host country.
- *Building a Palestinian university outside of Palestine* for all the Palestinians who cannot reach Palestine. The main topic of study could be the challenges that people face in Palestine. All Palestinian students from everywhere can come to that university. It will be work on live issues.

8.5. FURTHER RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This thesis is one of the studies that target the skilled diasporas and their role in development and knowledge transfer to their home country. Therefore, it paves the way towards more academic research about this topic and other related areas. Limited studies and discussion in both academic and policy literature about this topic prompted the researcher to recommend further studies which may include:

- One of the potential researches is to study the reasons for the reluctance of highly skilled migrants to return home whether it is due to occupation restrictions or other reasons. There are overwhelming numbers of highly skilled Palestinians abroad, and many seem to be reluctant to come back and contribute to the development and knowledge transfer in their home country for various reasons. So, one of the top priorities is to explore the reasons for this hesitation.
- The Palestinian community abroad is one of the largest among other Arab communities. It is distinguished by its strong networks and its ability to integrate into the societies of the host countries at all levels. Additionally, the Palestinian diaspora has managed to maintain ties with their home country while integrating into the host societies. Therefore, further research can be conducted to discuss and explore ways and forms of integration and how it is possible to coordinate integration into host societies while preserving their national identity and belonging to their home country.
- It is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore developments in the relationship between the home country and Palestinian communities abroad but it is also important to bear in mind that, it is an issue that should be further explored, especially in the context of the diaspora targeting policies. Furthermore, an exploratory study of the views of the Palestinian expatriates on the relationship between their homeland and communities as well as issues of common concern should be discussed. Building trust with the Palestinian diasporas is a prerequisite for enhancing this relationship and engaging the skilled diasporas, therefore, studies on how to reinforce this trust are vital.
- The remittances of the Palestinians abroad were among the highest in the region, these means to have decrease over time. Based on these it is imperative for more studies to be taken on the role remittances play in development and whether the money transferred home is used for the intended investment or household maintenance. Moreover, exploring the reasons for its decline is vital.

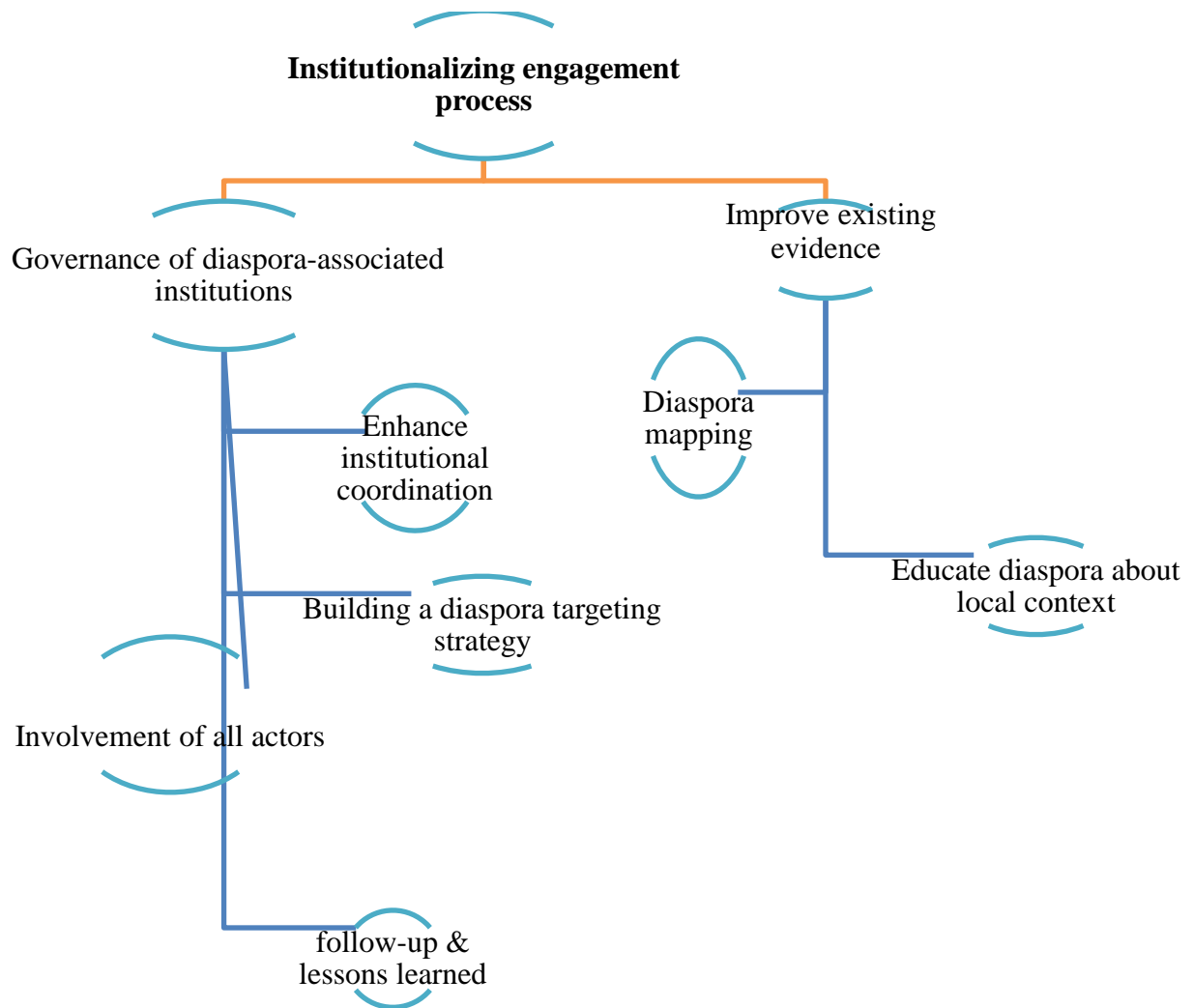
- The results revealed that the role of the Palestinian embassies is very minor in mobilizing the skilled Palestinian diaspora. Moreover, their relationship with the diaspora communities is not intimate in many cases. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct studies on the role, mandates, effectiveness, and relations of these embassies with Palestinian communities abroad.
- It is worth mentioning that, more research is needed on the effects of the activities of the Palestinian diaspora in the cultural and social fields in the motherland, especially at the local level. It would be also interesting to examine certain initiatives like twinning endeavours, city to city partnerships which are agreements between Palestinian municipalities and their counterparts in some host countries to explore the usefulness of these initiatives and how they help in mobilizing and engaging the Palestinian diaspora in these cities with their home country.
- Adopting a mixed approach has proven to be a pretty good choice to reach more credible and reliable information. Therefore, future studies can also use this approach to focus on other aspects of the engagement of skilled diasporas.

8.6. A RECOMMENDED MODEL FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE SKILLED DIASPORA DIASPORAS BACK HOME

Developing this model comes in response to the need to improve the relationship between the Palestinian diasporas and their home country. The proposed model for the governance of the expatriate profile was formulated and designed taking into account the peculiarity of the Palestinian situation, the lessons learned, and the experiences of other countries in this field. This model adopts the principle of good governance as the best and shortest way to institutionalize diaspora-associated institutions. It is based on the fact that a skilled Palestinian diaspora has the willingness and potentials to contribute part of his/her knowledge and experience to their home country, at the same time Palestinian institutions need such a vital contribution. This model includes a set of components, namely building the capacities of diaspora-associated institutions is a cornerstone in this regard. The main task of these institutions is to formulate a diaspora's engagement strategy. Building a national strategy is a key step for the engagement of skilled diasporas in development and knowledge transfer. This strategy needs to identify goals, interventions, tools, and engagement mechanisms. The main goal should actually be how to effectively mobilize these people. Furthermore, the

involvement of all actors in this field and the creation of an environment of cooperation and inter-institutional coordination are essential to support sustainability in this profile. However, it is interesting to note that involving diaspora leaders in building the diaspora profile is absolutely essential to rebuilding trust with them. Frankly speaking, it seems rather difficult to convince the skilled diasporas to be part of any strategy if they are not involved in formulating it or at least consulting their organization about its goals and contents. As a point of fact, knowing of the diasporas and improving existing evidence are critical steps in this model. Therefore, the need for a database on diasporas is extremely important for their active and effective engagement. Hence, building trust with the diasporas is a prerequisite towards broad and unlimited contributions of highly skilled migrants in transferring knowledge to their home country. Indeed, educating diaspora about the local context and providing them with incentives and facilities is also another important factor in making engagement smoother and more valuable. The engagement of skilled diaspora is a two-way process that must stand on a vigorous platform of mutual trust, transparency, and effective communication. Finally, monitoring and evaluation stand out as the last component of this model. It is necessary to monitor the overall performance and assess the achievement of goals and the level of success as a consequence. Not surprisingly, the results reveal that Palestinian institutions rarely assess the impact of skilled diaspora knowledge transfer programs or assignments. Thus, adopting an M&E approach is important in providing critical measures on performance and degree of achievement that will be used later so that the same errors are not repeated. *Figure 8.1* illustrates the components of the recommended model.

Figure: 8.1. A recommended model for effective engagement of skilled diasporas in the knowledge transfer back home



Source: Author's own compilation based on the findings.

8.7. FINAL COMMENTS

The increasing dependence of contemporary institutions on knowledge-based services and products has inspired many countries to increasingly view knowledge as a factor leading to development, economic growth, and social welfare. Visibly, one of the sources of this knowledge and experience is the diaspora where there are many highly skilled expatriates who have gained their knowledge and skills over the years while studying and working in host countries. Unquestionably, circular migration can counter-balance the negative impact of brain drain in strengthening the ties between the home country and the host country and reducing the disparity in knowledge accumulation among countries. In short, accessing skilled diaspora and engaging them with development in their home country has become a

vital strategy for many countries. Thus, home countries have demonstrated increasing interest in strengthening the relationships with their diaspora in order to reap benefits from their expertise and talents living abroad.

It is worth mentioning that globalization has facilitated the movement of people and contributed to the easy flow of information across the world through modern Internet applications and social media platforms. Knowledge transfer is no longer difficult. Yet many countries have not reached the level expected to link their nationals and communities abroad. There is no doubt that the success of some countries in reaching and engaging their diasporas through return and circular migration raises many questions about the policies and methods that they used to make them entitled to reap the benefits of skilled diaspora. The answer is obviously due to the presence of factors that shaping the relationship between highly skilled migrants and their home countries.

On the part of highly skilled immigrants, the main and most important factor is willingness and preparedness. They must have the desire to develop their cognitive entity and acquire new skills and knowledge that will enable them to participate in circularity and knowledge transfer. Motivation is another significant factor in the engagement of the diaspora. Immigrants must have the drive to devote part of their time and effort to participate in knowledge transfer programs including travel and possibly staying away from their families for a period of time. Additionally, the ability to transfer knowledge and deliver it to the recipient away from complexity and superiority is crucial in this regard. Interestingly, it is not enough to possess the knowledge and the desire to transfer it, in fact, the method used is a key factor for the recipient to understand and absorb this knowledge. Furthermore, building trust with colleagues at work is remarkably effective in facilitating the mission of highly skilled migrants at home and making it smoother.

On the other hand, the ability of home countries to attach their communities abroad and engage them in transferring knowledge and best practices in their home country depends on a combination of factors which collapses to the following:

- A comprehensive perception and framework of the relationship between the home country and their diasporas is another key factor in the engagement of communities abroad in knowledge transfer and development. This framework should include policies, plans, and programs to clarify needs. And what kind of knowledge must be transferred by highly skilled migrants to their home country to meet these needs? To be effective and efficient,

these policies and programs must be formulated in cooperation with the diaspora. It is interesting to note that Ireland is one of the best in the world in diaspora engagement, as its policy is based on five main pillars: support, connection, facilitation, recognition, and involvement. So, the way the government approaches the diaspora is a matter. Irish policy is very soft and easy to understand and absorb by the diaspora.

- In general terms, the role of the home country government is questionable in this regard. The government role should be clarified to show whether it prefers to play the role of implementer or facilitator. The author can claim that the best and most powerful role for the government in diaspora engagement is to act as a facilitator rather than an implementer. Providing a convenient environment and formulating promising policies. By doing this, the government can play the role of the owner of the diaspora engagement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the governments of the country of origin must be realistic that the myth of return may not be realized in many cases. If there are successful people abroad and have their works and families, they will not engage easily. Therefore, home country governments should adapt to such reality and look for creative and alternative forms of engagement to take advantages of their diaspora, for example, coming for a few months or helping during their stay abroad emerge as good alternatives. Notably, a need to re-conceptualize the notion of return is crucial, as migration becomes a flexible process and not a return of people to settle forever.
- Knowledge transfer as a development strategy is not enough per se if it is not implemented and shared all over the organization. Effective mechanisms must be applied to preserve and disseminate this knowledge within the institution so that everyone can benefit from it.
- The need for modern technologies to mobilize more highly skilled expatriates and facilitate the transfer of knowledge back home is crucial. It is not easy for governments or institutions to attract and recruit skilled diaspora while they suffer from poor technology, education, health care, and other services. Most highly-skilled expatriates are concentrated in developed countries where they have high standards of living, and thus it becomes difficult for them to relinquish it easily.
- It is also unsurprising to note that one of the main barriers to diaspora engagement is the mistrust. The relationship between the home country and the diaspora must rely on mutual trust and common interests. The experiences of some countries have shown that they were able to mobilize and recruit their skilled diasporas by building such a balanced relationship. For example, India has started many years ago to take a series of measures

and reforms to enhance bilateral relations with the diaspora. Thus, the Indian Government created a committee that spent a couple of years talking to their diaspora in order to know their interest and needs. Consequently, India now is among the best in diaspora engagement. Strictly speaking, the process of engaging expatriates cannot succeed effectively unless it is demonstrated on the basis of mutual trust between the two sides. If expatriates feel that their country is full of corruption and the political system there is rife with nepotism and embezzlement, they will be more reluctant to return or engage in knowledge transfer or other transnational activities in their home country, because they do not want to work in such a corrupt socio-political context. Many expatriates do not want their efforts to be part of a process that can foster corruption in their home country. Hence, the existence of democratic political systems that promote transparency, good governance, and the fight against corruption are decisive to strengthening the relationship with the diaspora and increasing their trust in the government of their home country. Ultimately, this may significantly affect the engagement of highly skilled migrants in transferring knowledge to the country of origin.

Undoubtedly, transferring knowledge through circular migration has maximum implications when accompanied by capacity-building activities in the country of origin and supported by a well-formulated diaspora oriented policy. Therefore, the readiness of diaspora-associated institutions, smart policies, building trust with the diaspora, and providing facilities must be indispensable components of any cohesion strategy to induce return and circular migration as the best and effective way to engage the skilled diaspora in knowledge transfer and development in their home country. Unquestionably, the diaspora can be a key driver for transferring knowledge and best practices to the countries of origin. However, supporting them, realizing the importance of their role in developing their home country, and building a constructive relationship with them is a matter in this regard and it will prosper over time.

8.8. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER EIGHT

This chapter has addressed a summary and interpretation of the most important results that were concluded as indicated in the previous four chapters, where these results were discussed in the light of the theoretical literature in the field of migration and development. It was concluded that some of these results are consistent with previous studies, while others are not, and this reflects the Palestinian privacy as a country that suffers from occupation and its

measures. Additionally, this chapter covered the most important recommendations that focus on strengthening the relationship with the diaspora and fostering its contribution to the development and knowledge transfer to their home country. Likewise, this chapter includes recommendations for other researchers on potential future research topics. These recommendations aim to fill the gaps discovered by this research study. Furthermore, this chapter provides a recommended model for the effective engagement of skilled diasporas in transferring knowledge to their home country.

Appendices

Appendix A

Percentage of International Migrants in Selected Age Groups, by Development Group over a certain period (1990, 2000, 2010 and 2013)

Development group	Year	0-14	15-24	25-34
World	1990	14.3	15.1	19.6
	2000	11.9	13.6	19.7
	2010	10.0	12.7	20.4
	2013	10.1	12.2	20.6
Developed countries	1990	9.6	13.6	19.5
	2000	7.7	12.5	19.1
	2010	5.7	10.6	18.7
	2013	5.9	10.2	18.9
Developing countries	1990	19.6	16.7	19.8
	2000	17.9	15.1	20.4
	2010	16.3	15.6	22.9
	2013	16.2	14.9	23.0
Least developed countries	1990	8.2	22.6	19.7
	2000	24.8	21.7	21.2
	2010	23.9	21.3	20.6
	2013	23.1	20.9	20.8
Other developing countries	1990	18.1	15.7	19.8
	2000	16.7	14.0	20.3
	2010	15.3	14.9	23.2
	2013	15.3	14.2	23.2

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2013, *Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Age and Sex* (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2013).

Appendix B

Engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country (Case of Palestine).

Questionnaire for highly skilled migrants

Engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country

Case of Palestine

Dear Sir/Madam

You are invited to participate in a research project on the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to Palestine. This questionnaire is part of a Ph.D. research project at the Doctoral School of Public Administration Science, National University of Public Service in Hungary. The purpose of this in-depth research is to investigate the extent to which highly skilled Palestinian migrants are transferring their knowledge and skills to their home country, Palestine, through circular migration.

This questionnaire consists of six parts and needs about 15 minutes to be completed. Your accurate answers will contribute to the success of the study. Be assured that your information will be kept confidential and used for the research topic. I confirm that respondent anonymity is fully assured and that your participation in the research is entirely voluntary.

Thank you for your time.

Contact

If you have any questions about this project, please contact me at saqersul@yahoo.com.

Saqer Sulaiman

National University of Public Service

Hungary- Budapest

*** Section 1: Socio-demographic data**

1. 1. Gender a. Male b. Female
2. Marital status a. Married b. divorced c. Single
3. Level of your qualification

A. First university degree (Bachelors) B. Master C. Ph.D. D. Post-doctorate
4. What is your field of study.....
5. Do you have a Palestinian identity card (national number)? A. yes B. no
6. Duration of your assignment (work) in Palestine

A. few weeks B. 3 month C. 6 month D. one year E. more than one year
7. Name of the host country.....
8. How long have you been living there?
9. Do you have the citizenship of the host country? ____yes ____No
10. If your answer is yes after how many years did you get it? _____

Section 2: Involvement in knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants

11. How did you get involved in knowledge transfers to Palestine? Was it through? (You can choose more than one)

- ☐ Personal initiative.
- ☐ Diaspora associations.
- ☐ International organizations.
- ☐ Family members/relatives.
- ☐ Invited by friends or colleagues.
- ☐ I found the information in an advertisement.
- ☐ Other. Please specify_____

12. Your involvement in knowledge transfer to Palestine is.

1. Voluntary work 2. Paid job 3. Both of them

13. In what field do you transfer knowledge? Please choose one at least.

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Technology and engineering
- ☐ Management
- ☐ Other, Please specify _____

Section 3: Usefulness of knowledge transfer

14. Please specify to what degree you transferred the following types of knowledge to your home country (5= to a very great extent, 4= to a great extent, 3= neutral, 2= to a small extent, 1= to no extent).

No	Forms of knowledge transferred	5	4	3	2	1
1	sharing documents, & information					
2	Policies formulation					
3	Provide formal training					
4	Learning by doing					
5	Organize or contribute to a workshop and lectures					
6	Assist colleagues in problem-solving					
7	Share new ideas, tools, and methods for a work task in informal discussion					
8	Provide one-on-one guidance, mentoring and coaching to colleagues/ staff (expert consultation)					
9	Challenge the status quo (suggest new ways of working)					
10	Clarify roles and responsibilities with staff					

15. To what extent do you consider yourself a contributor to the development of the institutional capacities in Palestine with respect to the following areas (5= to a very great extent, 4= to a great extent, 3= neutral, 2= to a small extent, 1= to no extent).

No	Impacts of knowledge transfer on the institutional capacities	5	4	3	2	1
1	I brought new tools and devices to Palestinian institutions					
2	I contributed to reducing the cost needed to accomplish tasks					
3	I contributed to reducing the time needed to accomplish tasks					
4	I have helped Palestinian institutions to get scholarships					
5	I contributed to an increase in the number of Palestinians visiting international institutions					
6	I contributed to inter-institutional networks between institutions of the home country and the host country					

16. To what extent do you think your contributions in knowledge transfer has affected people you worked with, with respect to the following areas ((5= to a very great extent, 4= to a great extent, 3= neutral, 2= to a small extent, 1= to no extent).

NO	Impacts of knowledge transfer on Palestinian human capital	5	4	3	2	1
1	They learned new skills					
2	They acquired new ideas					
3	They gained or modified attitudes					
4	Ability to deal with challenges and stressful situations					
5	They learned new approaches to work					
6	Ability to work as a team					
7	Maturity and personal development					

17. How do you think your experience in knowledge transfer in Palestine has benefited you, in the following areas (5= to a very great extent, 4= to a great extent, 3= neutral, 2= to a small extent, 1= to no extent).

NO	Impacts of knowledge transfer on the returning migrants	5	4	3	2	1
1	I have learned from people I met in Palestine					
2	I acquired new knowledge about my home country					
3	I acquired new ideas					
4	I gained new norms					
5	I gained new friends and built new relations with people in Palestine					
6	I initiated a new business in Palestine					
7	I am satisfied with this experience					
8	I see myself being involved in knowledge transfers to my home country on a regular basis					
9	If I got a chance to stay in Palestine, I would accept it					

Section 4: Factors that affect the engagement of highly skilled migrants to knowledge transfer to the home country.

- **Home country factors**

18. To what extent do the following home country factors facilitate the transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants to Palestine (5= to a very great extent, 4= to a great extent, 3= neutral, 2= to a small extent, 1= to no extent).

NO	Home Country Factors	5	4	3	2	1
1	The willingness of Palestinian institutions to utilize and share knowledge					
2	Administrative procedures and Bureaucracy					
3	prevailing organizational culture in Palestine					
4	Incentives for highly skilled migrants					

5	Level of technological infrastructure in Palestine					
6	Transparency of roles and responsibilities in the Palestinian institutions					
7	Level of trust between you and local Palestinian colleagues					
8	Quality of higher education and training					
9	Availability of equipment and apparatus required to accomplish tasks					
10	The investment environment and business opportunities in Palestine					
11	The condition of the role of law					
12	Political situation and level of stability					
13	Level of corruption and nepotism					

- **Host country factors**

19. According to your own experience to what extent are the following host country factors support and facilitate knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants to Palestine (5= to a very great extent, 4= to a great extent, 3= neutral, 2= to a small extent, 1= to no extent).

NO	Host country factors	5	4	3	2	1
1	Getting citizenship in the host country (dual citizenship)					
2	Gain new knowledge, skills, and experience					
3	Presence of bilateral Programs for knowledge transfer between the host country and home country					
4	The host country provides facilities to assist knowledge transfer to the home country					

- **Diaspora social Factors**

20. To what extent are the following diaspora factors available and facilitate the transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants to Palestine (5= to a very great extent, 4= to a great extent, 3= neutral, 2= to a small extent, 1= to no extent).

NO	Diaspora factors	5	4	3	2	1
1	Diaspora associations and networks play a role in mobilizing highly skilled migrants to transfer knowledge to Palestine					
2	There is a diaspora website to communicate with immigrants					
3	The Palestinian diaspora help highly skilled Palestinian migrants to find a job in the host country					
4	The embassies work to identify and mobilize highly skilled migrants to transfer knowledge to Palestine					
5	There is a database about immigrants' skills,					

	qualifications, experience, places of residence, etc. in embassies and diaspora associations					
6	Presence of facilitators to induce knowledge transfer between the host country and home country					

- **Individual motivations**

21. What was your motivation for engaging in these knowledge transfers? (Please choose one or more from the following choices)

- ☐ Obtain a financial return and economic interest
- ☐ Having family ties in Palestine
- ☐ Social (e.g., gain friends, contacts, connections)
- ☐ Philanthropic (feeling of social responsibility to help home country)
- ☐ Emotional and cultural attachment with the home country
- ☐ Professional orientation as a scientist or academics
- ☐ Other, Please specify _____

Section 4: Occupation obstacles to knowledge transfer

22. To what extent do the following occupation measures restrict the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to Palestine (5= to a very great extent, 4= to a great extent, 3= neutral, 2= to a small extent, 1= to no extent).

NO	Occupation procedures and practices	5	4	3	2	1
1	The time required to get a visa from Israeli authorities					
2	Difficulty in renewing a visa (residence permit) because of Israeli restrictions					
3	The time required at the border because of Israeli procedures					
4	Preventing work in certain areas by Israeli authorities					
5	Difficulty in transferring some materials into Palestine because of occupation procedures					
6	Fear of deportation or detention					

Appendix c

Interview questions for highly skilled migrants

Engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country

Section 1: involvement in knowledge transfer

1. To what extent do you think the transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants is important and viable in the case of Palestine?
2. How did you get involved in knowledge transfers to Palestine?

Section 2: Usefulness of knowledge transferred by highly skilled migrants.

1. What are the benefits of your contribution to institutions and human capital?
2. What types of knowledge have you transferred? Please describe or explain your experience in knowledge transfer to Palestine.
3. What are the new things you have learned or benefited from other people or from your previous experience in Palestine?
4. Could you tell us about a success story you experienced during your mission in Palestine?
5. Are you satisfied with your experience? If you get another opportunity to work in Palestine would you accept it again?

Section 3: Factors affecting highly skilled migrants' knowledge transfer to their home country.

6. Would you tell us briefly about your experience in the host country, and how it affects your engagement in the transfer of knowledge to Palestine?
7. Do you have the possibility to become an entrepreneur in your host country? if yes, Who would you employ? Would you prefer Palestinians? How would you select your employees?
8. Do you transfer part of your income back to Palestine? If yes, what is your objective?
9. Do you support a social objective related to knowledge transfer? Do you invest your money there? Please, give reasons for yes and no answers too.
10. To what extent do you consider the capacities of the Palestinian institutions are ready to assist you to accomplish your assignment (work) in Palestine?

11. To your own experience, are there any government policies or incentives provided by the Palestinian Authority to encourage knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants? If yes, what are these incentives?
12. Are there any roles for Diasporas' associations and networks in knowledge transfer to Palestine by highly skilled migrants?
13. What are your motivations to engage in knowledge transfer and how does it affects your engagement?

Section 4: Challenges and obstacles

14. According to your own experience, are there any obstacles restricting the contributions of highly skilled migrants' knowledge transfer to Palestine? How does Israeli occupation affect the knowledge transfer of highly skilled migrants to Palestine?

Section 5: Suggestion for improvement and institutionalization

15. If you are asked to make a suggestion to improve and institutionalize the contribution of highly skilled migrants' knowledge transfer to Palestine, what would you recommend?

Appendix D

Interview questions for Palestinian policymakers

Engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country

Section 1: Individual data

- Name.....
- Current job
- What type of organizations are you working in?
Academic institution_____
Government institution_____
Non-governmental organization_____
Private sector organization_____
Other (please specify)_____

Section 2: Involvement in knowledge transfer

1. To what extent do you think the transfer of knowledge by highly skilled migrants is important and viable in the case of Palestine?

Section 3: factors affect the engagement of highly skilled migrants in transfer knowledge to their home country.

2. To your own experience, are there any incentives provided by the Palestinian Authority to encourage knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants? If yes, what are these incentives?
3. Do you think the capacities of the Palestinian institutions are well prepared and ready enough to support knowledge transfer by highly skilled migrants?
4. Is there any cooperation between your organization and Palestinian embassies about the engagement of highly skilled migrants in KT to Palestine?
5. Did Palestinian embassies or any diaspora association provide information about highly skilled migrants & their potential contribution in development to their home country?
6. As a director/policy-maker can you turn to the embassy for information on highly qualified (potential) migrants? How could you help their activity?

7. According to your own experience, do occupation practices and procedures affect knowledge transfer? If the answer is yes how it affects?
- **Section 3: Impacts of knowledge transferred by highly skilled migrants.**
8. Did this engagement fit in well with the needs of the Palestinian institutions? If yes, can you mention some examples?
9. What are the impacts of the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country?
- **Section 4: institutionalization and suggestion for improvement**
10. Do you have policies and plans to engage highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer and development in Palestine? Do you involve diaspora in the formulation of these policies and plans? If the answer is yes, how?
11. Are there any monitoring and evaluation of contributions and activities carried out by highly skilled migrants? If yes how?
12. If you are asked to make a suggestion to improve the contribution of highly skilled migrants to knowledge transfer to Palestine, what you would recommend?

Appendix E

Consent Letter

Interviews for highly skilled migrants

Engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country

Case of Palestine

Researcher: Saqer Sulaiman

The National University of Public Service.

You are invited to participate in a research project about the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to Palestine. The study investigates to what extent highly skilled migrants contributed to knowledge transfer to their home country through circular migration in the case of Palestine.

The study will be carried out through a questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire and interviews will focus on your engagement in knowledge transfer including the fields and types of knowledge transferred; factors affect your decision to engage in knowledge transfer, the obstacles and challenges to knowledge transfer, the impacts of knowledge transferred on Palestinian institutions, Palestinian human capital and immigrant himself; finally, the study aims to provide suggestions and recommendations on how to improve and institutionalize the engagement of highly skilled migrants in knowledge transfer to their home country.

The interviews will be held in English and they are expected to take about 40-60 minutes. If you agree, the interview will be recorded on a voice recorder. Information from these interviews will be used to help in writing the outcome of this thesis. Information will be kept confidential and data will be stored securely. I confirm that respondent anonymity is fully assured and that your participation in the research is entirely voluntary. Moreover, you may withdraw from the study at any time, if so, your data will be removed from the study.

Contact

If you have any questions about this interview, please contact me at saqersul@yahoo.com.

I agree to be audiotaped. Yes, ____ No ____

Signature

Date:

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List of Publications

- 2018: Knowledge Management in the Palestinian National Authority Institutions. *International Humanities Studies* 5.1 (2018).
- 2018: Brain Drain in the Arab Countries. Chapter in a book, *Ajövő Közigazgztás Tudmoány*, 2018.
- 2018: Network Governance of Migration Profile in Palestine. *International Humanities Studies* 5.3 (2018).
- 2019: Public Administration in Palestine. *AARMS Journal*/ 2019/ vol 18, Issue 1.
- 2019: Risk Management in Palestinian institutions. *Aeronautical Science Bullettins (RTK)*, 2019/2.

Curriculum Vitae



Personal Information Skills Experience Education Research Training

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Ph.D. Thesis: “Engagement of Highly Skilled Migrants in Knowledge Transfer to their Home country”

Ph.D. Student 2016-2020	The National University of Public Service- Faculty of Public Administration	Supervisor- Prof. Dr. Pásztor Szabolcs
2013	GIZ & General for training & consultant, Amman, Jordan	Risk Management and its Implementation in Public Institution
2011	Olefpalme center	Strategic Planning & Administration by Result
2010	AMIDEAST	English Language
2010	al- Quds open university	Train of Trainers (T.O.T)
2007	Al-Quds University	Master in Human Development and Institutional Building
1992	Al-Quds University	B.A in Science and Technology

Work Experience

1994-1998	Ministry of Education	Teacher of Science & Technology
1998 up to date	Ministry of Interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of associations in Bethlehem directorate- MOI (1998- 2007). • Director of Development department– MOI (2007 – 2010). • Director of projects department

		in the planning & development MOI (2010- up to date). • National focal points of Euromed migration project

Training Experience

2012 up to date	General Staff Bureau and the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission	Code of conduct and ethics of a profession
2006 up to date	Non-Governmental Organizations	Conflict resolution - violence & non- violence.

Languages

Arabic	Native
English	Advanced/ writing, reading, listening, speaking
Hebrew	Moderate/ writing, reading, listening, speaking
Russian	Basic/ writing, reading, listening, speaking

Publications in English Language

Year	Name of Journal	Title of the Publication
2018	International Humanities Studies, the USA	Knowledge Management in the Palestinian National Authority Institutions
2018	Chapter in a book, Ajövö Közigazgatás Tudomány, Hungary	Brain Drain in the Arab Countries
2018	International Humanities Studies, the USA	Network Governance of Migration Profile in Palestine
2019	AARMS, Hungary	Public Administration in Palestine
2019	Aeronautical Science Bulletins (RTK), Hungary	Risk Management in Palestinian institutions

Lectures and Presentations in English

Date/Year	Title	Conference	City/ Country
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2-4/11/2017	Migration from Arab countries and its implication on government policies.	International conference in public administration	Cluj-Napoca/Romania
22/11/2017	Public administration in Palestine	At Home Service	Budapest/Hungary
22/4/2018	Arab immigrants in Europe	Nation-building and minority rights in the world	Budapest/Hungary
10/10/2018	Network governance of migration profile in Palestine	International doctoral workshop	Budapest/Hungary
21/11/2018	Arab Youth Migration to OECD countries	In service of the nation	Budapest/Hungary
15/5/2019	Risk management in Palestinian institutions	Critical thinking of public administration	Budapest/Hungary