

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Socio-economic, political and geographical factors determine the labour market of an economy. The specific features which emerge are reflected in demand and supply of labour, wage determination, discrimination in labour market, public versus private sector wage differentials, feminization of labour market, wages and inflation, labour market and distribution of income, poverty and unemployment etc. All these are theorized and empirically analysed as the management of human resources concerns both developing and developed economies.

Being a Jordanian and a student of Economics, I used to think about the theoretical constructs within which Jordan's labour market could be studied. The geopolitical factors of Jordan are so unique that the labour market is subject to normal disequilibrium and jolts which dislocate the economy. This element of unexpected emergence of crisis in the backdrop of unfavourable geographical condition and backward agriculture and industrial sectors often leave Jordanian economy paralysed for fairly long periods of time.

The indigenous and exogenous economic factors lead to outmigration of labour and political factors result in sudden returns of Jordanians as well as refugees. Jordan needs immigrant/guest labourers for agriculture and construction activities which Jordanians do not prefer to have. Such

simultaneous outflow and inflow of labour is a unique feature of Jordanian labour market. The concentration of economic activities in a limited geographical area is special to Jordan. This has resulted in its being an urbanized service based economy. Since the commodity producing sectors are backward and the economy is dependant upon service sectors the growth process becomes doubtful. It was therefore necessary to study the labour market and out and in migration of labour and the unemployment problems in Jordan. It was essential to focus on unemployment because the issue is sensitive and has implications on other aspects of the labour market. Since outmigration is both a consequence and a solution of unemployment and the inflow of labour is a mixed blessing, it was felt that interplay of all these forces should be analysed. The present work is an attempt in this direction. It means to fill the gap in the existing literature on labour market studies of Jordan as it is comprehensive in its treatment of the issue. It updates the labour market scenario of Jordan as information after 1989 is scanty and attempts to examine the efficacy of the existing economic theory to analyse the labour market of Jordan.

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