



Why They Say “Adiós”: A Critical Understanding the Political Economy of Contemporary Migration of Venezuelans

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to create a pattern by looking at the historical background of the migration movement in Venezuela and to reveal that the Venezuelan diaspora is a social movement that takes place with push factors, based on the push and pull theory. In this context, it has been focused on the economic and political background of the Venezuelan migration movement, and by looking at the political economy history, it has been determined that the migration movement took place in three different waves. By analyzing the push factors, the development of the migration phenomenon in Venezuela was followed and a framework was drawn with the sociological contexts of the target countries. The main argument of the article is the claim that the current Venezuelan migration movement took place with push factors, considering the economic and political conditions, while the first two migration waves were depending on the pull factors.

Key Words: Venezuela. Migration. Political economy. Push and pull theory. Economic crisis

Por Que Dizem “Adiós”: Uma Compreensão Crítica Da Economia Política Da Migração Contemporânea De Venezuelanos

Resumo

O objetivo deste estudo é criar um padrão olhando para o contexto histórico do movimento migratório na Venezuela e revelar que a diáspora venezuelana é um movimento social que ocorre com fatores push, com base na teoria push and pull. Nesse contexto, concentrou-se no contexto econômico e político do movimento migratório venezuelano e, analisando a história da economia política, determinou-se que o movimento migratório ocorreu em três ondas diferentes. Ao analisar os fatores de impulso, acompanhou-se o desenvolvimento do fenômeno migratório na Venezuela e traçou-se um quadro com os contextos sociológicos dos países-alvo. O principal argumento do artigo é a afirmação de que o atual movimento migratório venezuelano ocorreu com fatores de impulso, considerando as condições

econômicas e políticas, enquanto as duas primeiras ondas migratórias foram dependentes dos fatores de atração.

Palavras-chave: Venezuela. Migração. Economia política. Teoria push and pull. Crise econômica.

Por Qué Dicen “Adiós”: Una Comprensión Crítica De La Economía Política De La Migración Contemporánea De Venezolanos

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio es crear un patrón al observar los antecedentes históricos del movimiento migratorio en Venezuela y revelar que la diáspora venezolana es un movimiento social que se lleva a cabo con factores de empuje, basados en la teoría de empujar y tirar. En este contexto, se ha centrado en los antecedentes económicos y políticos del movimiento migratorio venezolano y, al observar la historia de la economía política, se ha determinado que el movimiento migratorio se dio en tres oleadas diferentes. Mediante el análisis de los factores de empuje, se siguió el desarrollo del fenómeno migratorio en Venezuela y se trazó un marco con los contextos sociológicos de los países objetivo. El argumento principal del artículo es la afirmación de que el movimiento migratorio venezolano actual se dio con factores de empuje, considerando las condiciones económicas y políticas, mientras que las dos primeras olas migratorias dependieron de los factores de atracción.

Palabras clave: Venezuela. Migración. Economía política. Teoría push and pull. Crisis económica.

Introduction: Discussing a Theoretical Framework

The aim of this work is trying to understand the dimensions of migration movements in Venezuela and analyze the reasons behind them. For this reason, our main goal is to use push and pull theory in migration studies to be able to claim on which grounds the movement waves took place in the country throughout the history. Looking at the factors that cause migration movements in history, one can come across with bunch of reasons such as economic conditions, cultural and social factors, political fluctuations and so on. In order to understand the factors behind mass migration movements and to reach an analytic conclusion about these waves in Venezuela, the very much first step is to take a deeper look at the literature in migration studies and Venezuelan experience of mass migrations. Then it comes to the point that we need to see qualitative and statistical data from the ground which is collected by both international organizations and national sources. Having this on hand lead us to get reasons and facts on the field to make it possible for us to make statements and conclusions related to this data. In other words, literature review in the first place and secondary data analysis is adopted as the methodology of the paper. As the theory we found appropriate to analyze the data we have and to give it a meaningful perspective, push and pull factors theory developed by Everett Lee is approached. All social, economic and political reasons such as conflicts, natural disasters, famines, epidemics and ethnic oppressions cause people to relocate. When this displacement is made for the purpose of survival, it finds a conceptual definition as forced migration.

Economic developments, advances in industry and technology, industrialization and internationalization of education and political

developments have increased the mobility of people on a global scale. ... In the evaluation of the causes of international migration in terms of the source country and the host country within the scope of push and pull factors, economic factors are handled more intensely (KÖSE, 2020, s. 41-42).

Especially with the 21st-century, wars, economic crises, social instability and natural disasters such as earthquakes have been the main factors triggering migration movements in Latin America as well as all over the world. Humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, environmental disasters, which are defined by Öberg as the cause of reactionary migration, as well as factors such as poverty, social marginalization and unemployment, which are defined as soft causes, are the elements of forced migration (ÖBERG, 1996, pp. 337-338).

Latin America is a geography with the most advanced refugee regulations in the world, such as the 1984 Cartagena Refugee Declaration (UNHCR, 1984), which is based on the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention (UNHCR, 1951) and includes a broader refugee definition. Latin American countries, together with the 1994 San Jose Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons (Regional Refugee Instruments & Related, 1994) and the 2014 Brazil Declaration (Regional Refugee Instruments & Related, 2014), draw up a comprehensive framework and have determined cooperation and integration measures for the IDPs in the areas of housing, education, health, work, and prepared humanitarian action plans on resources.

Programs to cope with migration movements in which national resources are mobilized, together with the Venezuelan migration movement, are pushing the capacities and possibilities of states. While governments in the region draw a collaborative profile for Venezuelan IDPs, they also face resource difficulties in meeting the needs of their own people. Therefore, to overcome these constraints and limitations, common platforms and collaborations involving more diverse actors are needed (HUANG & GOUGH, 2018).

El Salvador and Colombia, which are among the countries with the highest displacement relative to their population, due to violence and conflicts, have been the Latin American countries where violence is most intense. Forced displacement caused by organized crime and violence in North and South American countries causes hundreds of thousands of Latino Americans to migrate every year. Most of the 20 countries, 17 of them, with the most murders in the world are located in Latin America and the Caribbean (MUGGAH & TOBÓN, 2018, p. 4).

The qualitative and quantitative dimensions of violence are different in Latin American countries. Another commonality in Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, which share a common tradition, language, culture, is that they are weak and incompetent governments in the face of violence. According to the World Systems Theory, the source of the violence that triggers immigration in Latin America and the Caribbean is the US intervention in the Latin American governments, the decline in the welfare level of the countries, and the increasing poverty rates. All these reasons are due to the dependent position of the continental countries and their being periphery or semi-periphery (ALVARADO & MASSEY, 2010).

Every social event and phenomenon that emerges in today's societies contains multi-part structures. Migration in our age is also a part of it. Each migration has become autonomous within its own social event and phenomenon mechanism.

Push-pull theory has been developed by Everett Lee in order to understand the relationship between many social events and phenomena in the migration literature, and has taken its place in the migration literature as an important theory, which was later contributed by many field writers. According to Lee (1966), the focus should be on the phenomenon of immigration rather than immigrants, and immigrants should not be ignored at the same time. Identifying the common features of migrations, Lee developed an analysis basis considering the push and pull factors. First of all, the factors related to the place of residence, the characteristics of the place to be visited, the obstacles and finally the individual factors constitute the four basic levels of this analysis (LEE, 1966, p. 50).

There are push and pull factors both at home and destination, and all these are considered as personal and relative characteristics. Personal and relative status is due to the fact that many factors such as age, gender, educational status, ethnicity, race affect the migration phenomenon. Strong factors such as the threat of violence, loss of security, and financial problems that cause individuals or certain groups to go to another country and a new social context from one social context are considered as push factors. While it would be wrong to conclude that all push factors cause migration, the social conditions that result in material, physical or emotional harm are so strong that they often result in migration; these conditions are a substandard life; shortages of food, land or work; extreme famine or drought, political or religious persecution, pollution, and even natural disasters. Conditions in which the social context of another country becomes attractive with the idea that it has the potential to lead a better life can be considered as pull factors that encourage migration. These factors, which are caused by the conditions provided by the target country but not by the country of residence, are relatively less powerful than the driving factors; these factors are attractive factors such as the promise of freedom from religious or political persecution, the availability of career opportunities or cheap land, and the opportunity for better nutrition (LEE, 1966, pp. 47-51).

In addition, according to Lee, the push and pull factors of the place of residence and destination should also be evaluated in their own social contexts; because all these are subject to analyzes that can only make sense in their social whole. The push-pull theory therefore does not define a push or pull factor in an absolute sense. Push-pull factors, which vary depending on many factors, should be determined contextually. Factors determining migration can be personal or non-personal macro level factors. Residents who have the potential to become immigrants know the push and pull factors due to their positive and negative features in the place where they live and can evaluate this phenomenon in their own social context. However, they do not recognize the social context of the destination and the push and pull factors of the destination, and they do not have the experience of living here. Therefore, the determinant of migration is related to a risk assessment and how dominant the push factor in the place of residence is for the immigrant in question compared to the pull factor.

When viewed at the level of inhibitory factors, it is possible to say that if the factors between the place of residence and the destination are equal, the personal factors of the immigrant will be insufficient to explain. It is possible to say that micro-level factors related to personal characteristics include many factors such as legal and social uncertainty that will come with the migration phenomenon, the cost of

transportation and migration, and distance. On the other hand, many macro-level factors such as immigration policies, laws, identities, etc. of states are among the factors that prevent migration (TODARO, 1980, pp. 17-18).

Lee thinks that migration is a very complex and difficult to understand a phenomenon, and although he states that push-pull factors are very important in analysis, he is also aware that they are insufficient. Taking the importance of inhibitory factors very seriously, Lee states that push and pull factors are a fundamental step in migration analysis and that it is a plus-minus mathematical calculation. Considering today's migration phenomenon and various migration events, it is seen that push and pull factors are still a valid analysis method for internal and external migrations. However, on the other hand, many factors, especially globalization, deeply affect and change the phenomenon of migration. Although push-pull factors persist in the context of migration today, these push-pull factors are now even more difficult to calculate, as Lee mentioned in his theory.

Considering the push and pull theory, it is seen that the immigration phenomenon in Venezuela has the social conditions included by the pushing factors and the migration has emerged as a result of the pushing factors. It can be stated as the main argument of this article that many social problems such as economic bottleneck, famine, unemployment, violence and loss of security due to violence push Venezuelan citizens to leave their country and create social mobility.

In the next part of the study, first of all, Venezuela's political economy will be examined, and in the next part, the migration phenomenon brought about by these political economy conditions will be examined more closely. While looking at the historical background of the migration movement triggered by economic and political factors, the history of Venezuelan political economy will be analyzed at an international level and how it resulted in the Venezuelan diaspora will be the main concern of the article.

Political Economy of Venezuela – A Brief Historical Perspective

Spain's colonial activities in South America, which began in 1522, first manifested themselves in Venezuela. Indigenous peoples were enslaved for employment in mines and agricultural fields, but more slaves were brought from Africa as a result of increased demand. Thus, Venezuela was the first country in the Latin American continent to encounter colonialism (TARVER & FREDERICK, 2006, pp. 22-24).

In the 1600s, Venezuela became culturally different with the slaves brought from Africa, with Spanish and Portuguese immigrants settling in the region, and became a country where imperial Spain established its own administrative mechanisms. *Santiago de Leon de Caracas* emerged as the commercial and political center of the colonies during this period (TARVER & FREDERICK, 2006, pp. 30-34). The 30-year-long struggle for independence has begun with Francisco De Miranda, the pioneer of the Bolivarian Revolution. Then, under the leadership of Simon Bolivar, the Spaniards were defeated in the Battle of Carabobo and Venezuela gained independence in 1821. Simon Bolivar (1783-1830) is a leader who struggled for the independence of Latin America and became a symbol of independence on the continent as a result of his heroism in this struggle. In his opinion, the only way Latin

America can resist the imperialist initiatives of the European states and the United States is to establish large and powerful states and act together against the Western hegemonic powers (TOPAL, 2007, pp. 20-25). He managed to unite Colombia and Venezuela under the name of Great Colombia. However, after Bolivar's death in 1830, the Great State of Colombia soon fell apart due to the power struggle between the leaders of the region.

The colonial past on the continent was the basis for the Bolivarian anti-imperialist movement. With the independence struggles of Bolivar and his friends, Bolivarism has become an ideology that shows that Latin American countries have to fight together against colonialism. As Marx pointed out, Bolivar's anti-imperialism is not a struggle against inequality between social classes. In this context, Simon Bolivar describes independence and Marxism depicts the social revolution.

“In 1831, after the death of Simon Bolivar, General Jose Antonio Paez became the first president of independent Venezuela. However, the civil war that continued until the late 1800s led Venezuela to be ruled by a strict military regime” (BURGGRAFF, 1972, p. 5). Venezuela has been shaken by coups and political conflicts that continued until 1958. With the *Punto Fijo* regime, the left parties remained outside the system, and the country was ruled by two right parties, *Accion Democratica* (AD) and *Comite de Organizaçao Politica Eleitoral Indepente* (COPEI). The public fought and resisted both the military dictatorships, as well as against the two main parties that ruled the government in the period 1958-1998. This resistance turned into a guerrilla-style armed struggle in the 1960s.

In the early 1970s, the oil and steel industries were nationalized in Venezuela under the pressure of large masses by then President Carlos Andres Peres. However, as a result of the 1982 Economic Crisis, which emerged with the spread of the debt payment crisis caused by Mexico to other Latin American countries, attempts were made to privatize state economic enterprises with the neoliberal economic policies and the measures imposed by the IMF. These initiatives have caused the living standards of the people to deteriorate. The excessive increase in the foreign debt of the country and the steps taken to close state enterprises in inefficient industries to save money for this purpose increased unemployment and poverty significantly, and the rate of the poor reached 75% in the 1980s (YEŞIL, 2013, p. 69).

By the mid-1990s, inequality in income distribution in the country increased and per capita income fell below the 1960s. While the current industry is largely under the control of foreign monopolies, it is observed that the classes that dominate the country's economy are the bourgeoisie and large landowners (HAUSMANN & RODRÍGUEZ, 2006, pp. 1-9).

Chávez founded the "Fifth Republican Movement (MVR)" party in 1997 and was a candidate for the 1998 elections. When Chávez started his presidency in 1998 with 56% of the votes, the first government's ideological reference point was Simon Bolivar, who saved the country from Spanish colonialism. Chávez's election as president in Venezuela started a process called the "Bolivarian Revolution" in the country. The pro-Chávez, who call themselves Chavist, start this revolution when Chávez won the 1998 presidential election (SYLVIA & DANOPOULOS, 2003, p. 68). The primary purpose of Chávez's Bolivarism in the first stage is to establish a

constitutional framework through independent people and to reveal the true potential of the Venezuelan nation (LUDLAM & LIEVESLEY, 2012, pp. 107-110). The other purpose of the Bolivarian program was determined as the creation of a productive economy, and the idea of productive economy is associated with an economy that responds to the needs of people, not profit. However, at this stage, Chávez was constantly compressed by the market forces and it was seen that the discourses and policies of Chávez and his government were sometimes in contradiction with the views adopted by the public (LUDLAM & LIEVESLEY, 2012, pp. 107-114). Chávez's most important election promise was the creation of a new constitution based on the active participation of the masses in politics (SULLIVAN, 2009).

Chávez has attracted the attention of the world with the practices and projects he has implemented in both political and economic areas during his 14 years in power. In 2006 he founded the Venezuelan United Socialist Party (PSUV) by uniting the political organizations that supported him. In the elections held in 2012, he also sat in the chair for the fourth time with 54% of the votes. Chávez got cancer and received treatment in 2012. However, he passed away (HELLINGER, 2012, p. 51). He appointed Nicolás Maduro Moros, the Vice President of Venezuela, as his successor. Maduro was a student leader in his youth and played an extremely important role in Chávez's practices and reforms during his presidency (KORNBLITH, 2013, pp. 48-50).

One of the most important practices of the Chávez government is the end of the "Fourth Republic" with the adoption of the new constitution and the establishment of the "Fifth Republic". With the Fifth Republic, Chávez first changed the official name of the country to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. With this new constitution, state intervention in the economy has been increased, foreign capital in the economy has been limited, thereby strengthening the independence of the national economy (SULLIVAN, 2009, pp. 3-5). Some of the practices in this period are the enactment of laws regulating micro-economy and private sector activities, the establishment of the Venezuelan Social Development Bank and the re-expropriation of the oil industry. The backbone of economic policies pursued by Chávez is the growing public sector by transferring oil revenues from the macro level to the central budget (increasing the state share on oil revenues from 1% to 33%) and strengthening the tax system (ISBELL, 2007, p. 7).

The first field that Chávez went to restructure within the framework of economic policies was oil policy, and therefore he took initiatives aimed at the increase of oil prices by providing coordination between OPEC countries. Oil production has been kept under control within the framework of the compromise between OPEC countries. Due to the foreign policy pursued by the USA in the 1990s and 2000s and the resulting Afghanistan and Iraq interventions, oil prices started to climb due to the increasing oil demand of China and India (KAYA, 2014, p. 194).

The second element of Chávez's economic policies is the real state control of the Venezuelan State Oil Company (PdVSA). With the Hydrocarbon Law enacted on November 13, 2001, Chávez achieved complete control of the state over PdVSA and doubled the share transferred to the state over oil income. Chávez and his supporters assumed that oil revenues will be transferred to the public through social policies and

considered state control over the oil company as the basic condition for ensuring economic development (ISBELL, 2007, pp. 5-6).

Before Chávez came to power, a significant portion of the Venezuelan agricultural lands were in the hands of a small number of landowners. In 2001, Chávez ensured the "Land Reform Law" to be issued and distributed some lands that were seized by private individuals to landless peasants. This policy of Chávez led to the intense objection of the landowners and the local administrations under the control of the opposition and the clashes between the villagers and the local law enforcement agencies.

Venezuela, which has the largest oil reserves in the world, could not turn oil into a foreign policy instrument before Chávez. As for Chávez, he has managed to use oil as a tool in foreign policy, as well as making it the engine of the economy. By putting oil at the center of foreign policy, Chávez aimed to increase the country's income by raising oil prices through the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). With these strategies, Chávez tried to move the neoliberal financial institutions of the USA away from the IMF and WB from Latin America, supplying oil to neighboring countries, and signed oil contracts with emerging states such as Russia and China (KAYA, 2014, p. 200).

This situation has been met with concern by the USA, which consumes 25% of world oil production (MORRISON, 2000). The commercial and military agreements of Venezuela and Russia are interpreted as a challenge to the unipolar world system of the USA. The exercise of Latin America with Russian ships in the backyard of the USA and joint projects signed by Russia and Venezuela in the field of energy disturbed the USA (ELLIS, 2015, pp. 31-32).

Chávez targeted the establishment of oil companies belonging to Latin American countries and thus economic and social development of Latin American countries by supplying oil cheaper. For this purpose, Petrosur and Petrocaribe Agreements were signed within the scope of ALBA. With the Petrosur Agreement signed by the state oil companies of Brazil (PETROBRAS), Argentina (ENARSA) and Venezuela (PdVSA) on May 10, 2005, it was decided to construct pipelines to transport oil to these countries and to establish refineries for Venezuelan oil in Brazil. Petrocaribe is the Energy Cooperation Agreement signed on 29 June 2005. The organization, which was established with the signing of 14 member countries, has 18 members today (JACOME, 2011, pp. 1-6).

Chávez's efforts to formulate alternative foreign policy strategies to the US disturbed Bush, and the steps Chávez took in foreign policy until 2002 laid the groundwork for the US hegemony's attempts and preparations against the Chávez government. In Venezuela, support was provided to segments of society that were disturbed by Chávez's social policies, campaigns against Chávez were accelerated and strikes were held throughout the country. A military coup took place on 11 April 2002 to overthrow the Chávez administration (LEMOINE, 2013, pp. 107-111). "With the coup d'état, Venezuelan Businessmen Association Fedecamaras' President Pedro Francisco Carmona Estanga took a seat, the National Assembly was dissolved and all the laws of the Chávez government were declared invalid" (LEMOINE, 2013, p. 108). However, the pro-Chávez masses took to the streets against the coup, and after this failed coup attempt due to the pro-Chávez attitude of part of the army, Chávez government was restored on 13 April 2002 (LEMOINE, 2013, pp. 106-110).

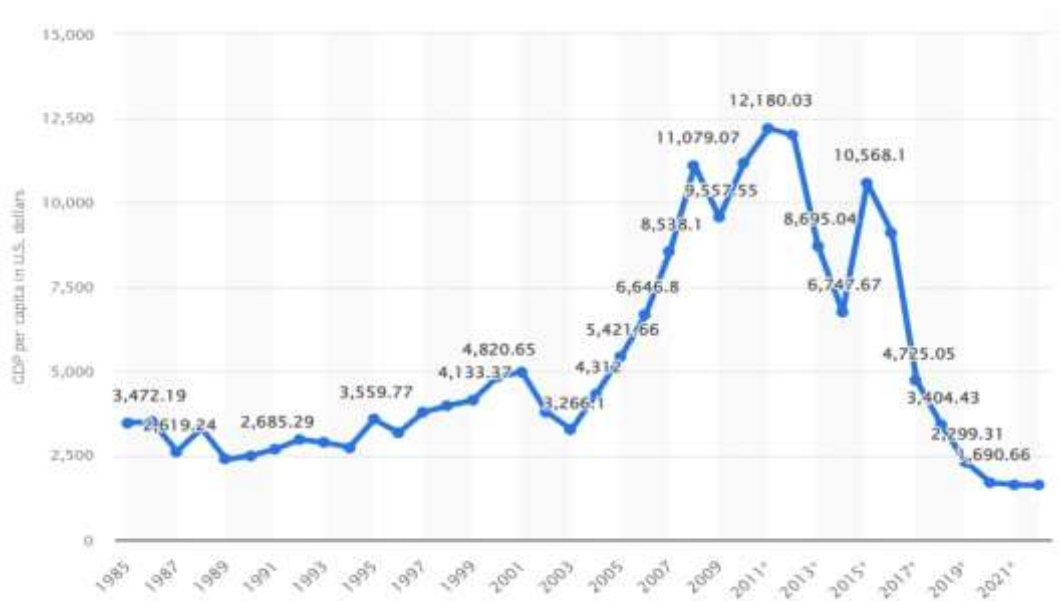
According to Chávez, Latin American countries should fight together against the US and global capital, not one by one. In this way, they will ensure economic and political development and get rid of the chains of neoliberalism. Chávez deemed it necessary to create an economic system that unites all Latin American countries and aims to reduce poverty, and to establish a bank for this system to function. Chávez has developed relations on an anti-US basis not only with Latin American countries but also with many countries around the world. Various agreements signed with many countries such as Iran, Russia and China and the commercial relations carried out in line with these agreements are the result of Chávez's anti-neoliberal policies. While Chávez takes the leadership of rescuing the region from US hegemony with anti-neoliberal policies, he aims to ensure that post-neoliberal governments are involved in Latin American integration, at least in their economic relations. For this purpose, Chávez has developed bilateral economic and political relations with Latin American governments (GÜDER, 2011, pp. 135-137, 146-152).

Venezuelan Diaspora and Consequences of the Current Migration Mobility

Venezuela is currently experiencing the largest and fastest migration movement in Latin American history. The United Nations has defined this mass movement as a humanitarian crisis, revealing how big a crisis the situation is (ÖZER, 2019, p. 280). Immigration, which increased due to the decrease in purchasing power in the face of unstoppable dollar exchange rate and high inflation in Venezuela, turned into mass migration in a short time, causing the largest mass migration movement of this century in the Americas. Known as one of the most severe crises in recent economic history, the Venezuelan economic crisis led to an exacerbation of the crisis and ultimately the recession of 2017, largely due to falling international oil prices in 2014 and inadequate response from governments. Looking at the immigrations of Latin America in the 21st-century, it is possible to say that Venezuela stands out in the region in terms of the rate of emigration from the country. Although it is quite clear that the current economic bottleneck has caused out-migration, the need to take a closer look at the sources of this economic crisis arises when it is kept in mind that Venezuela has oil reserves that make up a quarter of the volume of the OPEC organization, of which Venezuela is a member, and is one of the largest oil exporters in the World (TONELLA-TÜZÜN, 2021, p. 476).

Venezuelan immigration, also called the Bolivarian Diaspora, is a displacement crisis in which millions of Venezuelans immigrated from their home countries during the presidency of Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro. A number of economic and political revisions implemented by Chávez and later by Maduro with the Bolivarian Revolution resulted in a crisis in Venezuela within the globalized world capitalism built with the neoliberal economic structure. The Bolivarian government has denied any immigration crisis, stating that the United Nations and others are trying to justify foreign intervention in Venezuela (ALJAZEERA, 2018).

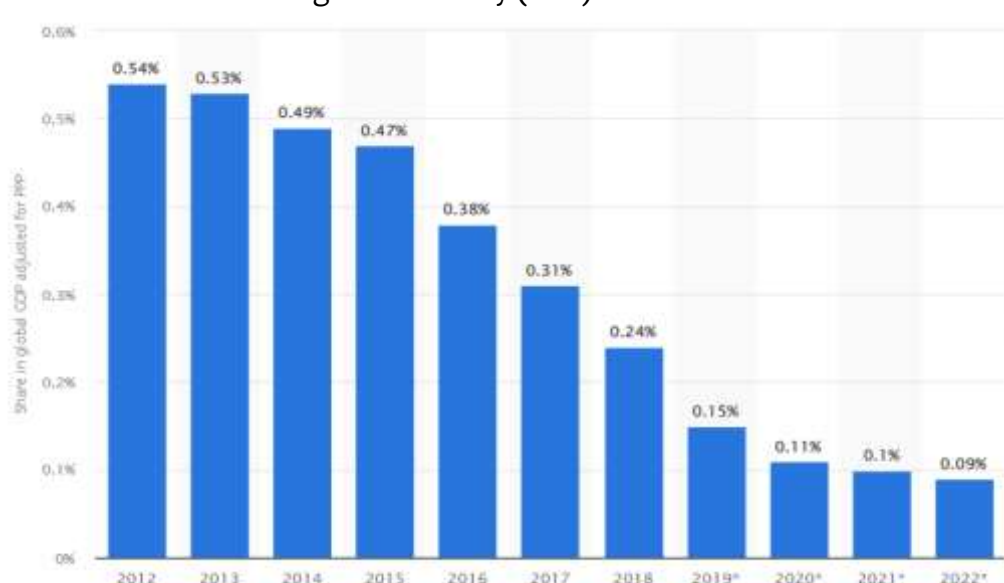
Table 1: Venezuela: Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in current prices from 1985 to 2022(in U.S. dollars)



Source: Statista

Due to the economic sanctions that the USA started to impose on Venezuela in 2018, there has been a serious decrease in the country's oil extraction, export standards and commercial benefits. The main reason for this is that the largest buyer of Venezuelan oil is the USA. As a result of the sanctions imposed by the USA on the Venezuelan economy, it caused a commercial decline in the Venezuelan economy in oil exports. Government's attempts to cope with inflation were inadequate and dysfunctional, and social problems increased in the country since even the most basic health needs of the people could not be met.

Table 2: Venezuela: Share in global gross domestic product (GDP) adjusted for Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) from 2012 to 2022



Source: Statista

Many social problems such as cases of violence, food shortages, insufficient drug supplies, and limitations of public services have emerged and laid the groundwork for mass migration. In the country where the minimum wage falls below 3 dollars a month, the crisis experienced in many areas from basic services such as electricity, water, internet, security, education and access to health triggers migration. Children and pregnant women are most affected by the nutritional problem that arises due to the depreciation of wages due to the effect of hyperinflation, the rapidly increasing prices of foodstuffs and the slowdown in production. Likewise, the continuous decrease in the share of the budget allocated to the health sector, the increase in infant deaths, the disruption of health services due to electricity and water cuts, the deficiencies in vaccines, drugs and medical devices, the increase in some infectious diseases such as malaria, HIV, and in addition the increase in COVID-19 cases, the problem of providing data and the consequent lack of perception of the problem reveals a collapsing health system. On the other hand, theft, deliberate murder cases, organized crimes, terrorist attacks, decreased trust in police services, lack of confidence in the independence of the judiciary, and increase in corruption create social unrest. Violations of fundamental rights such as extrajudicial executions, long-term detentions, excessive use of power, and restriction of freedom of expression are also factors that trigger the migration movement.

The mass migration movement has created a new social structure for all Latin American countries and not only the neighboring countries but all the countries of the continent have taken their share from the migration movement. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defined this migration movement in Venezuela in 2018 under the refugee category (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2018). The rapid increase in the number of Venezuelan migration movements has also had an impact on the social structures of the continental countries hosting the refugees. Legislative and domestic revisions have occurred in welcoming Venezuelan immigrants, and 11 Latin American countries signed the Quito Declaration on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region in the same year (FREIER & PARENT, 2019, p. 6). Later, with revisions such as the Quito Action Plan and the Road Map and then the Buenos Aires section, the regional participating countries outlined the regulations to be implemented against this migrant movement (Response for Venezuelans, 2020, p. 11).

The most important point to be noted here is how Venezuelan immigrants live in host countries legally and illegally, and how much they are protected in the context of basic human rights. By agreeing that it would be insufficient for the states to act alone, local governments, foundations and offices, non-governmental organizations and associations took an active part in the action plan regarding the social and legal effects of this migrant movement, and the UN and its bodies took an active part in issues such as health, education, housing, employment provided financial support and funds. Due to the diversity and multiplicity of the actors involved in the process, the international Venezuelan Migration and Refugee Coordination Platform was established in order to provide a good and efficient organization and it supports refugees at every point of need, from meeting at the border to future planning.

According to the Venezuelan Migration and Refugee Coordination Platform, there are approximately 5.1 million Venezuelan immigrants who are legally registered, of whom 4.3 million have settled in other countries in the Latin American continent (Response for Venezuelans, Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela, 2020); 8 out of 10 immigrants stay in Latin America and the Caribbean (CONNOLLY, 2019).

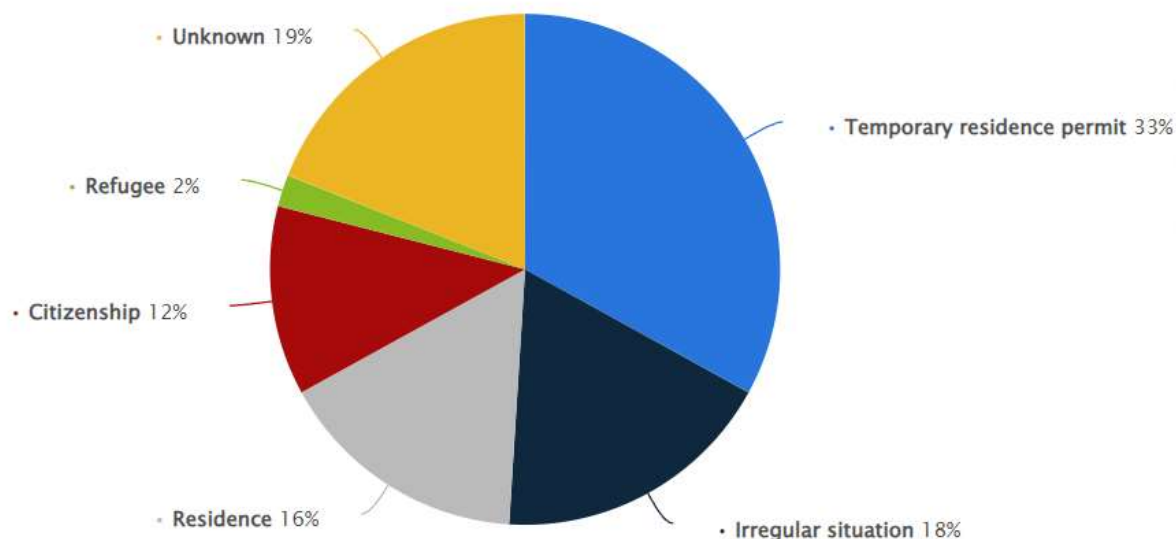
Table 3: Venezuelan Population per Country

Countries	Population
Columbia	1.84 million
Peru	1.29 million
Ecuador	508.9 K
Chile	448.1 K
Brazil	261.4 K
Argentina	173.2 K
Panama	121.6 K
Dominican Republic	115.3 K
Mexico	83 K
Costa Rica	29.9 K
Trinidad and Tobago	28.5 K
Guyana	24.5 K
Aruba	17 K
Uruguay	16.6 K
Curacao	14.2 K
Bolivia	12.1 K
Paraguay	5.64 K
Other Countries	1.05 million

Source: Author computing based on the Response for Venezuelans, 2021 report.

According to Response for Venezuelans, about 80 percent of Venezuelans immigrate to Latin American countries where they speak the same language and share common historical and cultural values. Table-1, where the numbers in the host countries can be seen, does not include the numbers for transit countries. Brazil and Colombia, where they are also widely used as transit countries, form a route for Venezuelans because they are border neighbors and do not recognize refugee status for all Venezuelans they received. Colombia's civil war caused the opposite of today's immigrant movement between Venezuela and Colombia in the 1980s, and Colombians immigrated to Venezuela; therefore, today's hosting is a ground of solidarity and unity for the peoples of the two countries (TONELLA-TÜZÜN, 2021, p. 485).

Table 4: Percentage distribution of Venezuelan emigrants in 2021, by migratory status



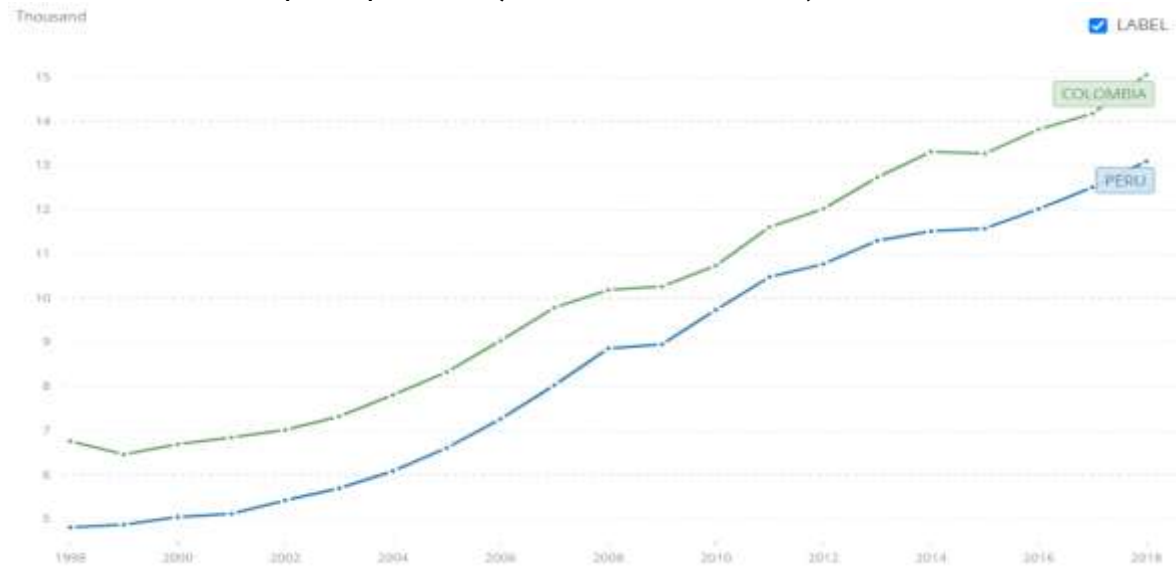
Source: Statista

Looking at the historical development of the Venezuelan migration movement, the period of the Chávez government attracts attention. The Chávez regime, known as 21st-century socialism, nationalized foreign private companies as well as nationalized the domestic private sector and created an atmosphere of unrest among the high-income population in the country (TONELLA-TÜZÜN, 2021, p. 486). At the beginning of the 2000s, groups with an economically advantageous position in the society and having higher education levels immigrated to the USA, Spain, Portugal, Italy and neighboring Latin American countries.

The economic crisis, which made its presence felt in 2013 and deepened in 2015, brought with it a second wave of immigration, and in parallel with the first wave, it was again realized by the educated and economical social classes (TONELLA-TÜZÜN, 2021, p. 486). Countries hosting this migration wave have adopted a selective way of accepting immigrants according to their domestic needs and accepted qualified immigrants.

Considering that the main claim of this study is that the first two of the Venezuelan migration waves depend on pull factors and the third wave depends on push factors, it is necessary to focus on the pull factors in the destination countries of the first two migration movements. Considering the economic records of Colombia and Peru, which received the most immigrants from the destination countries of the immigration waves, the data in the table below is quite interesting.

Table 5: GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$) - Peru, Colombia



Source: World Bank

Table 6: GDP per capita (current US\$) - Peru, Colombia



Source: World Bank

In the period up to the third migration movement in 2018, the GDP per capita and Purchasing Power Parity data of Colombia and Peru continued to perform better than Venezuela and acted as a pull factor for citizens immigrating from Venezuela. The graphs above showed that Colombia and Peru with these economic records play a role to pull waves of migration from the Venezuela. In addition, it would be reasonable to guess that the citizens who migrated due to concerns over political representation migrated with the idea that they are in a promising political structure due to the relatively good economic data in these countries. The claims of democracy

deficit in the political pillar of Venezuela's economic problems and the limited representation of the opposition cause the economic problems to deepen at this point. Considering that the sociologically upper middle and upper class migrated in the first two migration movements, the departure of this opposition group, who migrated due to the problem of political representation, caused the problems of the Venezuelan economy to increase. The political representation and economic dimensions of the migration movement are therefore highly intertwined.

The social instability environment experienced in 2017 caused the third migration wave of the 21st-century in the Venezuelan immigration history and, unlike the previous two migration waves, made a difference in terms of mass size. This migration movement, which does not only consist of the middle or upper economic classes of the society, is the movement of many Venezuelan immigrants who do not have any legal documents and therefore encounter irregular conditions in the countries they migrated to (TONELLA-TÜZÜN, 2021, p. 487). The economically lower classes of the society, who prefer the land route and sometimes the illegal sea route due to its cheapness, have increased the control of the governments on border security and measures as they massively cross over to other Latin American countries. Considering Lee's push and pull theory, it is possible to say that this migration movement takes place through push factors. The atmosphere of uneasiness caused by insecurity in the place of residence and uncertainty in the social context resulted in people feeling their lives in danger and deciding to relocate, and therefore, in this study, it is read as a migration movement that takes place with push factors.

There are also political factors on the basis of the migration movement, which is not only explained by economic factors. The mobility created by the political opposition section of the country through asylum is also quite striking. The spread of the idea that the political conditions will not change or cannot be changed within the group, which is accepted as an opponent in the social context, and this situation resulted in the decision to leave the country has also been an important pillar of the last migration wave. Considering the reasons for the immigration phenomenon that Venezuela is in, it is important to mention the economic and political factors that developed depending on the conditions. Venezuela, which hosts a significant part of the world's oil reserves, has been an important supplier for the USA and relations have been based on this exchange until 1998 Chávez government. The ideological change experienced in the country with the Chávez government constituted a breaking point in bilateral relations and this situation continued during the Maduro period (GÜDER, 2011, p. 218). The USA built its relations with the Venezuelan government, which adopted a socialist ideology in both governments, in a confrontational way, and it also caused the interest of Russia and China to shift to Venezuela. In fact, when we look at the economic relations, it is seen that the trade between the two countries increased 10 times in the 2003-2008 period, and it is seen that China has become the largest trading partner of Venezuela after the USA. Venezuela has been the country in which China invested the most in the region (AKGEMCI, 2011, p. 155.). The Chávez government has always held the card of directing a significant part of the oil sector to China as a move against the USA and has played an important role in the tension of bilateral relations (O'NEILL, 2008, p. 51).

The main problem of the USA with the Chávez government is an ideological concern and it is based on the fear that socialism will have a domino effect on the

continent. Mutually, the moves of the two countries in this situation of security stalemate have been to create tension in trade and military relations over Russia and China, and therefore to take very costly measures (CORRALES, ROMEO, 2016, pp. 214-216). With the Obama government, the previous period's soft-spoken and gentle sanction policy was continued and aimed to make relations less tense (CORRALES, ROMEO, 2016, pp. 220-221). Relations continued in the same course when Maduro, another socialist leader, formed the government in 2013, and this policy became the basis of the USA-Venezuela relations (CORRALES, ROMEO, 2013, pp. 222-223). The tension in relations was caused by the Obama government's accusation of the Maduro administration as a result of the Venezuelan government's violent reaction, resulting in the death of 43 citizens, after the people started protesting by taking to the streets in 2014 due to inflation and economic problems (CAWTHORNE, Farias, 2015).

With the decision to impose sanctions on Venezuela and the tension of relations again, Venezuela's economic and trade problems have deepened. Along with the Trump government, the USA developed a very harsh policy and rhetoric against the Maduro government and all left-leaning governments, and started to impose a heavy embargo on the Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA (CHINA, 2019, p. 24). After the re-election of Maduro's government in 2018, the US started to impose new sanctions on the financial sector, claiming that the elections were fraudulent and contrary to democratic traditions, which dealt a severe blow to the Venezuelan economy. After Juan Guaidó declared himself president in 2019, the USA even made a bilateral agreement by recognizing his presidency and later supported Guaidó's coup d'état. However, this attempt was unsuccessful and political instability was added to the economic instability of the country. As a result, the largest migration wave in the recent history of the Latin American continent occurred, resulting in the displacement of millions of people.

The immigration crisis of the Donald Trump era, which is the symbol of the return to the Monroe Doctrine, reveals the pressure and sanctions on Venezuela and the attitude of the Trump era in the context of Latin America-US relations and its stance towards preserving its hegemonic power. The USA, which started to impose economic sanctions against the Maduro administration in 2017, recognized the opposition leader Guaidó, who declared himself president in 2019 despite Maduro's victory in the 2018 presidential elections, as the president of Venezuela, and declared that Latin America is still its region. With this support, Guaidó attempted a coup against the Maduro government, but failed. After this unsuccessful attempt, US Secretary of State Pompeo revealed the putschist and interventionist attitude towards Venezuela, saying that the US could easily stage a coup if necessary. He justified this attitude with the discourse of protecting democracy in Venezuela, and this basis of legitimacy was accepted in the international arena. Almost all EU countries, Canada, Honduras, Peru, Panama, Guatemala, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Paraguay have repeatedly recognized Guaidó and supported the sanctions; this shows that the hegemony of the USA reinforces its power (AKGEMCI, 2020, p. 71).

Especially after the 2018 elections, the claims that there was a problem of legitimacy in the election disturbed the opposition segment in the country and emerged as a push factor for the third wave of migration.

It is true that there are some problems, although not at a level that will overshadow the legitimacy of the elections. The news that the elections were blocked in some parts of the country reflects the truth, and the election board was invited to take office in this regard. However, there is no concrete situation or planned case that would harm the legitimacy of the elections. In particular, the most important reason brought to the agenda, the claim of low turnout, is not of the kind to be taken into account. Because in a significant part of the Western countries that object to low turnout, turnout in the elections is much lower (GÜDER, 2018).

While the evaluation of political representation as a pull factor in the first two migration waves is related to the fact that it caused fewer people to migrate in the inter-election period, the most important reason for its evaluation as a push factor in the third wave is that it causes a very large part to participate in the migration movement and basically causes the feeling of living in an insecure political environment.

Conclusion

Like all immigration movements, the immigration wave in Venezuela has many social effects both for Venezuela and for hosting countries, and it creates a lot of social consequences due to the displacement of more than 5 million people. The displacement of such a large population brings with it social problems, which are not limited to the migrating population, but also include the hosting country populations. However, the main purpose of this study is to determine the place of the Venezuelan migration movement on the theoretical ground by looking at the migration phenomenon itself, rather than examining the effect of migration deeply. For this reason, Lee's push and pull theory was used to analyze the Venezuelan migration movement as the basic framework, and the research is conducted on how the third migration movement, which started in 2018, can be explained depending on push factors.

This study tries to make an analysis on the reasons why the migration movement in Venezuela developed in its social context, how it depends on the conditions, how the process takes place and in which framework it should be read. In the research, the economic and political reasons of the Venezuelan migration wave were determined and three migration movements with different characteristics that took place in the 21st-century were observed. While it was concluded that the first two waves of immigration were realized by the relatively upper social classes depending on pull factors, it was determined that the third and current movement was realized by the classes that constitute a much larger part of the society, depending on security and survival concerns and push factors. Accordingly, the article argues that there has been a break in the historical development of the Venezuelan migration movement in terms of the characteristics of the third migration movement and finds that the depth of economic and political reasons has more severe consequences than the previous two movements. There were, as in all case studies, few obstacles that we had to deal with during the data analysis. Firstly, it gets harder to reach certain data from the field when the movement is still taking place. Having statistics and literature review does not necessarily mean that we have

the latest and most accurate data from the field. Therefore, it is crucial to take look at different sources and data collections to be able to compare them to reach the most reliable one. However, since the movements is still developing and there are lots of difficulties to get the whole data from the field as well, one can understand that the data cannot be confirmed for a hundred percent sure. The second obstacle that we needed to copy with is to get in touch with people from the ground and to make a qualitative field search on our own since the situation of the people who are part of the migration waves is quite sensitive in terms of security and accessibility. That is why this article is mostly based on secondary sources and data collected by national, regional and international organizations.

The most basic finding and argument of this study is the claim that although the first two of the three migration waves experienced by Venezuela developed due to pull factors, the third migration movement emerged due to push factors. Considering the human and sociological characteristics of the three migration waves, the complete intertwining of economic and political factors and their pushing people to relocate resulted from reasons such as livelihood conditions, insecurity, problems of political representation and legitimacy, and economic bottlenecks. When all these are evaluated, it is seen how important the political legitimacy and the representation of the opposition segment are in economic and sociological terms, and the political-economic-sociological dynamics should be read within this framework. Improving the problematic structure of political representation and building trust in the functioning of democracy will both prevent economic problems from becoming so deep and reduce sociological mobility. Thus, the country’s structure, which became more problematic economically after the upper and upper middle class left the country, can be improved. Therefore, the fact that political representation forms the basis of economic problems through migration movements will only disappear when the structure of political legitimacy becomes reliable by the people.

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Submitted in: 10/03/2022

Approved in: 30/06/2022

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Funding sources: none.