The contribution of migrant enterprises and businesses in Ecuador's economic history

El aporte de emprendimientos y empresas de migrantes en la historia económica del Ecuador

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to make known the social and economic impact of migrants in Ecuador, through the study of bibliographic material from official sources and surveys conducted to compare the migratory and entrepreneurial reality in the country with international statistics that have the purpose of providing an amplified vision of the importance that this type of entrepreneurship has in Ecuadorian territory. Entrepreneurship has emerged as an alternative to carry out commercial activities by people who have creative and innovative ideas, nowadays it has become more frequent since it provides autonomy to entrepreneurs and the opportunity to implement projects to ensure their welfare and professional growth. Migrants usually have an entrepreneurial attitude due to the firm intention of improving their quality of life. In the development of this project, it can be observed that most of the migrants in Ecuador are of Venezuelan nationality, who were motivated to become entrepreneurs due to the lack of employment or jobs with insufficient salaries. Based on the data collected from the sources consulted, it was possible to make a comparison between the levels of





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education, where they highlight levels of study ranging between second and third level, showing an inclination to have a good academic preparation.

Keywords: Migration, Entrepreneurship, Immigrants, Employment, Economy.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este artículo es dar a conocer el impacto social y económico que aportan los migrantes en Ecuador, mediante el estudio de material bibliográfico de fuentes oficiales y encuestas realizadas para comparar la realidad migratoria y emprendedora en el país con estadísticas internacionales que tienen el fin de aportar una visión amplificada sobre la importancia que este tipo de emprendimiento tienen en el territorio ecuatoriano. El emprendimiento ha surgido como una alternativa para realizar actividades comerciales por parte de personas que tienen ideas creativas e innovadoras, en la actualidad se ha hecho más frecuente ya que le brinda autonomía a los emprendedores y la oportunidad de poner en marcha proyectos para garantizar su bienestar y crecimiento profesional. Los migrantes normalmente tienen una actitud emprendedora debido a la firme intención de mejorar su calidad de vida. En el desarrollo de este proyecto, se puede observar que la mayoría de los migrantes en Ecuador son de nacionalidad venezolana, quienes se vieron motivados a emprender debido a la falta empleo o trabajos con sueldos insuficientes. Con base en los datos recopilados de las fuentes consultadas, se pudo realizar una comparación entre los grados de educación donde resaltan niveles de estudio que oscilan entre segundo y tercer nivel, mostrando una inclinación a contar con una buena preparación académica.

Palabras clave: Migración, Emprendimiento, Inmigrantes, Empleo, Economía.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, different mass exoduses of certain populations have been observed as a consequence of economic, political or social conflicts. Latin America has always been a territory strongly affected by governments that have not been beneficial for the stability of the countries. Particularly in the case of Venezuela, a political conflict has generated the mobilization of a large number of people in search of a better quality of life.

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People continue to leave Venezuela to flee violence, insecurity, threats, lack of food, medicine and essential services. With more than 6 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela - the majority of whom live in Latin American and Caribbean countries - this has become the second largest external displacement crisis in the world. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, n.d.)

Ecuador is one of the countries in Latin America that welcomes a large number of Venezuelans, due to the accessibility of the Andean country for the arrival of migrants thanks to its proximity. As mentioned by Orbegoso (2019): "As of November 2019, according to UNHCR, more than 4.6 million people have left the country and 80% of them are in other Latin American countries". In addition to these data, it is estimated that the countries that have presented the greatest entry of Venezuelan citizens are Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, the latter having received 385,000 Venezuelan migrants for 2019 according to data established by the ANCUR(Orbegoso, 2019).

The governments of the main Latin American countries where Venezuelan migration arrives have implemented measures that seek the regularization of migrants so that they can integrate into society and develop economically and professionally; thanks to this more than 2 million temporary and permanent permits have been granted since 2015 between the different countries, thus allowing stabilization and development opportunities for migrants (Chang, 2020).

In the case of Ecuador specifically, within the different options of visas and temporary and permanent residences, around 107,000 residences had been issued by 2019 (Chang, 2020). Providing regularization to migrants who have professional training, knowledge and experience in different areas can become a booster for the economy of Ecuador thanks to the implementation of enterprises that provide jobs and profits for the country through the payment of taxes. As determined by the authors Arevalo and Arevalo (2015):

Entrepreneurship as a social and business phenomenon has revolutionized the conception of new business in today's world. Entrepreneurial activity is now a vital component of national and regional economic growth and development, since it fosters innovation, job creation and improves the global competitiveness of companies and entire countries (p. 28).

For immigrants, an entrepreneurial culture is represented by the determination towards the future and success, to overcome and move forward, as well as to face risks and uncertainties; they are eager to start different projects in a different country, where customs are different and in some cases also the language. They are willing to sacrifice in order to get their families out of the crisis or simply to give them a better quality of life and greater peace of mind.

According to articles in the newspaper El Universo (2021)(2022)In Ecuador, alliances and programs for social and economic inclusion have been created by the United Nations Agency for Refugees (UNHCR) and entities such as the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the Economic Promotion Agency of the Metropolitan District of Quito (ConQuito), alleging the legal, administrative and social difficulties that migrants have to be placed in decent jobs, since their opportunities are usually in the informal sector where their rights are not usually respected.

International support has also been present to support the skills and ideas of migrants in Ecuador, thanks to countries such as South Korea, who through the project "creating opportunities for prosperity" in conjunction with the Export and Investment Promotion Corporation (Corpei) provided their collaboration to grant up to USD \$2,600 in 2022 to 120 ventures of Venezuelan migrants legally residing in Ecuador. "The enterprises belong to the food, childcare, beauty, footwear, commerce, decoration, carpentry, education, industry, advertising, health, services, technology, textile, tourism and veterinary sectors" (El Universo, 2022). (El Universo, 2022).

The conditions of migrants are not always similar; there is a part of the migrant population that does not have the same opportunities, either due to lack of resources or lack of professional training, which leads them to resort to informal jobs. According to Bravo, Serrano and Serrano (2021):

Since the presence of Venezuelans in the streets, informal businesses have undergone changes, and new businesses are constantly being observed in the streets and avenues or the growth of those that already existed. Street businesses predominate in populated areas, but the control and tax agencies remain as spectators, trying to ensure that their competencies do not negatively influence these sensitive productive survival options (p.63).

As mentioned by Serrano, Bravo and Serrano (2021) in the country there are laws that support informal businesses according to the 2008 constitution, in which article 183 alleges the implementation of a social and solidarity-based economic system. In addition, the entities responsible for monitoring and regulating these businesses have provided some flexibility and leniency to them, in order to support the productivity and microeconomy of citizens (p. 63).

Jaramillo and Rodriguez (2019) mention "given the limited supply of employment, many people choose to engage in informal activities or sales in order to meet daily needs, such activities are witnessed daily in the bay sector of the city of Guayaquil" (p.2).

However, those who are able to formally incorporate their businesses or ventures usually make a positive contribution to the community and the local economy. Ganán (2019) states "the immigrant entrepreneur is not affected by the situation of the destination country. Faced with an economic crisis, immigrants do not consider the possibility of closing their businesses; rather, they look for new ways to keep it open" (p.21).

Serrano, Bravo and Serrano (2021) describe entrepreneurship as the attitude of people to take advantage of their qualities to surpass themselves in spite of the adversities they may face. Entrepreneurship has been described as a person's ability to move forward in a new way and with renewed ideas (p.61).

A determining factor for success in business ventures is to maintain a good relationship with customers, adjusting to their needs; likewise, a good service at the time of selling is relevant. It is important to point out that there are risks involved in entrepreneurship, since, being new in the market, it is necessary to achieve a position in it, gaining the customer's trust and offering a quality service or product, which helps to overcome adversities and move forward with the projects.

According to the author Siguencia (2010) migrants who have ventures normally carry out previous studies to avoid failures or failures. They implement a corporate culture where there is determination to achieve their objectives, fulfilling the necessary activities or tasks without setting limitations (p.34).

Ecuador is a country with abundant natural resources, which despite being in the process of development and maintaining economic and social setbacks, is an attractive destination for migrants from other Latin American countries, according to Arévalo and Arévalo (2015) "the country has become a preferred destination mainly for Colombian, Peruvian and Cuban citizens" (p.39).

Different economic events have taken place in the course of Ecuador's history, taking it into account and relating to it helps to create solutions to economic problems that exist today. Another important aspect is to learn from the solutions of similar negative situations in different parts of the world. In this sense, Acosta (2006) argues that:

Thus, since its origins, the economy of the Republic of Ecuador has gone through a series of periods of boom and crisis, closely linked to the cycles of the central capitalist economies; a link that is not limited simply to economic relations, but is completed with all the elements - political, social, cultural - that make up world power. This complex process gained strength as the capitalist system consolidated and spread and the Ecuadorian economy became integrated into world trade (p.15).

It is important, then, to know the economic background of Ecuador, and its economic history as a recipient of population from other countries, and from the other perspective, to recognize that many Ecuadorians have also been forced to migrate to other parts of the world for different factors, or to move internally from towns to cities. This phenomenon began decades ago, as explained by Cáceres and Guzmán (2018): "however, in the Inca and colonial times people had to leave the lands due to conquests, wars of independence, catastrophes, epidemics or other events that generate the transfer of people from one place to another" (p.19).

Acosta (2006) also explains that during the transformation of Ecuador from a colony to a Republic, multiple wars were fought in order to achieve independence, in this period Ecuador ended up becoming a base that supported the necessary resources for the war, being these war events the first articulations with the world economy due to the external debt that they cause. At the same time, based on the export of primary products such as cocoa, Ecuador began to integrate into the world market with a great influence on the English market, after independence from Spain, the Ecuadorian economy presented few changes (pp.23-24).

Couple (1992) argues that during 1920, with the fall of the New York stock market, there was a decrease in the price of cocoa, causing a long-term economic collapse. During the course of 1937, Ecuador was able to have a slow recovery in exports until 1944, when it reached incomes similar to those obtained before the crisis. At the end

of 1972, Ecuador incorporated oil into its exports, which meant an increasing rise in exports and during 1973 accelerated the socioeconomic evolution of the country, causing a significant modernization (pp.4-7).

Another important economic event in Ecuador's history according to Salgado (2000)Another important economic event in Ecuadorian history, according to Salgado (2000), took place in the last decade of the twentieth century, when a strong devaluation of the official currency at that time took place in Ecuador, generating multimillionaire economic losses in the international monetary reserves. These events caused the consequent bankruptcy of national banks that gave way to the event known as the national holiday, which would later serve as a basis for encouraging the country to carry out the dollarization process (p.9).

Clavijo (2022) points out that in the nineties in countries such as Ecuador and Venezuela, there were several damaging events that as a consequence originated a great period of instability that touched different important areas for their good development (p.19). The national holiday was one of these events in Ecuador and was the immediate propellant for a large number of Ecuadorians to emigrate to other countries, mainly Spain and the United States, in search of economic sustainability.

Some Ecuadorian migrants who have returned to their native country, have seen in entrepreneurship a good option to invest part of their savings, in some cases support has been provided by organizations but, despite this, there are deficiencies in such aid and in many cases do not fully meet the different needs of entrepreneurs, as noted in an article in the newspaper El Comercio: "Diego Proaño, economic analyst of Tungurahua, says that few businesses are maintained due to the pandemic and the lack of professional advice and training" (Moreta, 2022). (Moreta, 2022)

Ecuador, due to its foreign relations and exports of its natural resources, has been able to experience various moments of boom in the world market that have contributed positively to the country's economy, but, just as these relations have provided different economic benefits in the past, there have also been mismanagement of these resources that have prevented the progress that Ecuador deserves, especially for its characteristics and natural potential, coupled with the little creation of technology that keeps it as an exporter of primary products without achieving the much desired value added to its international sales.

As mentioned, Ecuador has been a country with different historical events, even from times prior to its beginnings as a Republic, which in some cases have harmed and in others have helped the country economically. Migration as a constant phenomenon in its history has made it possible to bring resources to Ecuadorian territory by the population that has migrated and continues to migrate to other territories. Ecuador, as a recipient of people of other nationalities, shows solidarity with the problems that caused their arrival and makes possible the creation of new enterprises of this group through state support with financing, considering them a vulnerable group.

An example of accompaniment in this context is the Development Corporation of Ambato (CorpoAmbato), which is an organization that has provided support to migrant

and Ecuadorian enterprises, as mentioned in the newspaper El Comercio "this organization works with 35 enterprises that are working. Seventy percent are Ecuadorian and the remaining 30 percent are foreigners" (Moreta, 2022).

For Loja, Nugra and Rivera (2020) the city of Cuenca, capital of the province of Azuay, turns out to be a promising city for the development of migrant enterprises, firstly because it is a city that offers better conditions in terms of basic services and security, in addition to the existence of a culture that gives greater relevance to the inclusion of new social perspectives and the implementation of municipal instances such as La Casa del Migrante (p.156).

Although Ecuador is a country that still has certain economic, political and social difficulties, which undoubtedly must be addressed and solved as soon as possible to ensure the welfare of the Ecuadorian population, the Andean country remains a noble country, full of natural wealth and valuable people, where despite the setbacks, it is allowed through work, effort and dedication, to stay on the road to achieving personal and professional goals to those who are in it.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research work was carried out by means of a survey of 255 entrepreneurs in the city of Guayaquil in November 2022, to review data on the percentage of migrants in this type of economic activity and specific characteristics that can be compared with other international statistics in order to establish similarities, differences and trends regarding this important topic.

The type of research to which it belongs is descriptive documentary because it is based on the consultation of documents where the necessary information is collected and in turn is responsible for detailing the quality of the population being considered, it is also established as qualitative and quantitative because comparisons are made of the nationalities of different countries that undertake in the country Ecuador, where surveys were conducted to a sample of people called entrepreneurs, from which data were obtained with which we proceed to the tabulation and analysis of results. It can also be established as a field research since at the time of obtaining the results of the surveys, the researchers went to the establishments of the entrepreneurs surveyed.

RESULTS

It is possible to observe the participation in percentages by nationality of the entrepreneurs surveyed in the field work carried out by the authors, highlighting a majority value of 89% of local people, followed by the participation of Venezuelan entrepreneurs with 5.88%.

The percentage that generally defines the level of education attained by the migrants surveyed in the fieldwork carried out by the researchers is represented, in which it is notorious that the majority have completed a third level of higher education, with a percentage of 39%, followed by secondary education with 29%. The percentage of formal

and informal enterprises of each of the nationalities belonging to the migrants surveyed in the fieldwork, where it stands out that Venezuelan migrants maintain mostly formal enterprises, while the Mexican and Argentinean migrants surveyed only manage formal enterprises, The number of collaborators that the surveyed migrants have in their enterprises in general, highlighting that most of the migrant entrepreneurs do not have collaborators with 29%, followed by a very close percentage of 25% that indicate that they have two collaborators in their enterprises. The percentage that corresponds to the classification of the enterprises of the migrants surveyed in a general manner in the fieldwork, according to which it can be observed that marketing stands out as the main means for migrant entrepreneurship, followed by the elaboration and sale of products. The percentage of migrant entrepreneurs surveyed who have received credit or financing for the establishment of their projects is shown, highlighting their nationalities, with 100% affirmative for the Argentinean population surveyed and 100% negative for the Mexican population surveyed, The fundamental motivations for the migrants surveyed, regardless of their nationality, to carry out their entrepreneurship, in which the main reason for entrepreneurship is to have a creative and lucrative idea, followed by low income with a percentage of 32%, followed by low income with a percentage of 25%. The percentages of migrants surveyed in general who have or have not received some type of training to strengthen their knowledge regarding the management of their enterprises, where it is shown that the majority, with a percentage of 61%, indicate that they have not received such training.

The different percentages of Venezuelan migration in the main host countries, where it can be observed that the mobilization of Venezuelan migrants has taken place mainly within Latin American countries, Colombia being the first with 33.83%, followed by Peru with a percentage of 21.02%, the migratory situation of Venezuelans in Ecuador can be observed represented in percentages, in which it is reflected that there is a high percentage of Venezuelan migrants who at the date of this study were in an irregular migratory situation, with 44%. However, it also stands out that there is a percentage of 36% of migrants who are in a regular temporary situation, the level of studies completed by Venezuelan migrants with potential to be included in the labor market, where it is observed that a higher percentage of migrants with 43% have completed their studies up to secondary school level, while 28% have university level studies, A comparison between the labor situation in Venezuela and Ecuador of the migrants in the study mentioned by the ILO, where it is highlighted that most Venezuelan migrants in Ecuador are unemployed, even in a higher percentage than when they were in their native country, hence the other important values in their labor situation in Ecuador are as informal workers 20% and self-employed 17%.

According to the results obtained from the surveys conducted among a sample of the entrepreneurial population of the city of Guayaquil, Ecuador, and the statistics provided by the international sources investigated, it is possible to determine certain relationships between these statistics. In the aspect of Venezuelan migration, there is clearly a greater mobilization of migrants to nearby Latin American countries, with Ecuador in third place,

and therefore it is a country that has received a large number of migrants from that country. This coincides with part of the results of the surveys, since of all the migrant entrepreneurs surveyed, the majority are Venezuelan, followed by Colombians and Chinese.

Of the Venezuelan population in Ecuador, studies from the year 2020 indicate that most of them were in an irregular situation, which to a large extent is an impediment to finding jobs with good opportunities for growth and personal improvement. In this context it is also important to mention that during the year 2022 a new regularization plan for Venezuelans and other migrants began, which will be a great benefit to have a solid migratory situation with the opportunity to carry out different projects.

As can be seen in the results of the surveyed population, migrants have a greater tendency to formalize their enterprises, which is something positive for the country, as it contributes to the contribution of taxes and possible employment opportunities with benefits for other citizens, as is also reflected in the results obtained, where despite the fact that most of the respondents indicated that they did not have collaborators in their enterprise, a significant percentage in second place emphasizes that they have two collaborators. In this order of ideas, the majority of the surveyed migrant population describes that a main motive for entrepreneurship is to have a creative and lucrative idea, thus providing opportunities to carry out these businesses represents growth for the participating individuals and for the nation.

Regarding the studies and academic preparation of the surveyed migrants, the majority indicate that they have completed third level studies followed by finished secondary school, being able to relate these results with information found in investigated sources, where it is established that Venezuelan migrants likely to enter the labor market have mostly finished secondary school and then completed third level.

These data are positive, since they favor the incursion of people academically prepared or with a good base to continue with their professional preparation, in many cases they also continue their studies in the national academies or institutes, generating a better use of the Ecuadorian education.

According to information sources compiled by the ILO and shown in Figure 12, one of the predominant labor situations in Ecuador is to maintain informal jobs without social security, this includes both Ecuadorian citizens and foreigners, since the entire population suffers the consequences of the labor deficit that exists in the country. For this reason, the idea that entities should support and provide the necessary tools to those who wish to become entrepreneurs continues to be outstanding. In graphs 6 and 8, which show whether migrant entrepreneurs have received financial loans or training, respectively, it is clear that most migrants have not received loans from government institutions or training, which is a limiting factor for their growth.

Valuing the innovative ideas that migrants may present and offering them support, training and follow-up is a relevant aspect to promote their possible proposals and help them increase the necessary knowledge for the management of any business. The growth

Articles

of these businesses undoubtedly has an impact on the economic and social growth of the country.

CONCLUSIONS

It can be determined that migration is a phenomenon that has taken place in different parts of the world at multiple points in history, due to the fact that populations are affected by economic, political and social events, these being reasons for mobilizations, sometimes massive, in search of better opportunities and a better quality of life.

Ecuador is an attractive destination for migration because, despite its internal and external conflicts, it is a country rich in natural resources and with multiple opportunities; in addition, its official currency is the US Dollar, which is considered a strong currency at an international level that provides good economic sustainability for those who make their wealth grow.

The Andean country has not only received migrants, but also a large number of Ecuadorian citizens were forced to migrate to other countries, due to the national holiday caused by the extreme devaluation of the previous currency, which resulted in the dollarization of the country.

The implementation of enterprises by migrants can bring various situations, both negative and positive, to the country of destination. Specifically speaking of the situation in Ecuador, changes have been seen in the streets with respect to informal entrepreneurship resulting in street businesses that circulate in urban areas due to the scarcity of jobs. On the positive side, many migrants arrive in the country with great business ideas, motivated by their skills or professional preparation, being this a possible propellant that contributes to the economy and the growth of the country, generating jobs and income.

A large part of the migrant population in Ecuador is of Venezuelan nationality; according to international sources investigated, it is the third country to which Venezuelans go. Similarly, other data investigated show that Colombians and Peruvians have also decided to migrate to Ecuador, being these migrants potential entrepreneurs.

The country considered "the center of the world" has implemented programs for the socioeconomic inclusion of migrants by institutions such as the UNHCR and the ILO, which have exposed the difficulties that migrants face when looking for decent work. Programs such as the Ambato Development Corporation are a clear example of the support that Ecuador provides to migrants so that they can undertake appropriate projects.

Despite the aforementioned projects, as can be seen in the results obtained in the surveys, most of the entrepreneurs, whether Ecuadorian or foreign, have not received financing or training to manage their businesses, so it could be concluded that more support and follow-up is needed from government agencies to provide greater support to entrepreneurs.

Finally, comparing the international sources investigated with the results obtained in the surveys of migrant entrepreneurs, it is possible to identify certain similarities between

the different aspects related to entrepreneurship, such as the motivations for entrepreneurship and their levels of study, which tend to be between second and third level academic. These factors are important because they strengthen the positive economic impact in Ecuador with creative entrepreneurial ideas that seek to meet the needs of the community.

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