Migration

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Objectives of the Lecture

- At the end of this lecture and the accompanying readings, students will be able to:
  - Identify common measures of migration
  - Distinguish among the different types of migration
  - Distinguish among the different explanations for migration
  - Define simple and complex humanitarian emergencies
  - Describe how immigration to the U.S. has changed in character over the past century
Section A

Introduction
“Big Three” Substantive Topics of Demography

- Fertility
- Mortality
- Population distribution
  - Migration of people from one “place” to another “place”
  - Urban demography
Measurement

- Migration rates?
  - In-migration: numerator is easy, denominator is hard
    - Population at risk is always the entire, global population
  - Out-migration: numerator is hard, denominator is easy
    - Countries don’t keep good track of people who leave
    - Difficult to distinguish permanent from temporary departures
Measurement

- Number (percent) not born in “place”
- Number (percent) not living in “place” a certain length of time before
- Migration histories from random samples of the population
- “Net” migration
Three Broad Categories of Migration

- “Internal” migration
- “International” migration
- Flight from danger
“Internal” Migration

- Traditionally, migration within a country
- Better definition might be “migration that does not involve crossing a regulated border”
  - NAFTA
  - European Union
  - Colonial and quasi-colonial relationships
“International” Migration

- Traditionally defined as movement from one country to another
- Better definition might be “movement across a regulated border”
  - Some countries do restrict movement within national border
Flight from Danger

- Individual asylum (random, not interesting to demographers)
- Humanitarian emergencies
  - Sudden large-scale movements of population that occur within a very short time frame
Section B

Why Do People Migrate?
Why Do People Migrate?

- Neo-classical economic explanations
- Family economics explanations
- Segmented labor market theory (sociology)
- Networks/cumulative causation
Neo-Classical Economic Explanations

- Assume that decisions are made by individuals
- Major cause is differential economic conditions
  - Differential wage rates
  - Differential unemployment
When Equilibrium Is Reached, Migration Ceases

Sending place

Labor

Destination place

Physical and human capital
Case of Puerto Rico

- No administrative or political barriers
- Differential economic conditions between Puerto Rico and four major receiving states accounted for net migration
- Natural experiment in 1970s when U.S. minimum wage laws began to apply to Puerto Rico
- Migration became more selective
  - PR to mainland—less educated
  - Mainland to PR—more educated
Family Economics Explanations

- Assume decisions about individuals’ migration are often taken by families
- **Motivations**
  - Family wants to diversify risk
  - Family wants capital to improve agricultural enterprise (mechanize)
- Relative socioeconomic status rather than absolute is important
Remittances* to Less Developed Countries, 1988-1999

*Money sent by workers living abroad
Source: International Monetary Fund, Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbooks.
Remittances

- Evidence is clear
  - Migrants’ remittances increase family income and have been shown to:
    - Increase physical capital
      - Multiplier effects
    - Increase human capital
  - Reduction of transfer fees and other reforms are an agreed-upon policy goal among development specialists
  - Improves credit of countries, lowers their borrowing costs, and has other macro-economic benefits
Segmented Labor Markets

- Advanced capitalist economies have two distinct labor markets
  - Primary (good jobs)
    - Returns to education and tenure
  - Secondary (bad jobs)
    - Few if any returns to education or tenure
    - No one wants these jobs
    - Migrants are recruited, explicitly or implicitly
Segmented Labor Markets

- Tests of segmented labor markets receive some support with a major modification
- Third labor market
  - Ethnic enclaves
    - Secondary labor market jobs with higher returns to education and tenure
    - Employers are same ethnicity as migrants, often migrants themselves
    - Women do not benefit as much as men from working in ethnic enclaves
Cumulative Causation

- Basic premise
  - Migration streams begin for reasons identified by family economists
  - Temporary labor migration
    - Individuals make multiple trips
  - Migrants exhibit desirable lifestyle
    - Changes in gender roles
  - Migration is common and normative
    - Rite of passage for young men
Cumulative Causation

- Migrants have increasing ties in destination place
  - Networks make individual decision less costly (particularly—but not exclusively—psychic costs)
- Remittances change income distribution
  - Increase the number of people who feel relatively deprived
Cumulative Causation

- Factors that once initiated become less and less important
- Self-perpetuating in the face of changes in economic benefits to individuals
- Some evidence that it only applies to rural sending areas
- Once begun, hard to stop
Section C

Flight from Danger
Simple Humanitarian Emergency

- For example, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, landslides
  - Happen in all developed countries
- Health problems
  - Injury, frail and vulnerable populations (sending population only)
- Prevention
  - Joint study between epi and engineering a few years ago
What would be a simple humanitarian emergency in a developed country are complex in countries with little infrastructure

- Floods in Bangladesh
What would be a simple humanitarian emergency if the population does not cross a border, when the population does cross a border
- Many parts of Africa
Complex Humanitarian Emergencies

- Famine in countries where the government is not accountable to the people (Sen)
  - North Korea
- Ethnically, politically, or nationally organized violence
  - Rwanda, the Balkans
  - Any war