

THROUGH THE LENS OF RESEARCH: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION *AND* DEVELOPMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

Turning Transnational? International Migration and
Development Prospects in the Philippines

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Outline of Presentation

- Research as a looking glass of key trends and patterns of international migration from the Philippines
 - Key issues concerning the 4-Rs of the migration-development nexus: rights, recruitment, remittances and return
- Research as a search light
 - Emerging issues and concerns
 - Linking research to policy and advocacy to realize the development potentials of migration

International Migration and Philippine Society

- ❑ 8 million overseas Filipinos “embody” the Philippines’ integration in the global economy
- ❑ Philippines: top supplier of workers and talents for the global labor market
- ❑ State-led labor migration program in the 1970s has developed an elaborate institutional and legal framework to govern migration
- ❑ Other institutions in the Philippines have become migration-savvy
- ❑ Culture of migration runs deep
- ❑ 3 of the 4Rs (rights, recruitment & remittances) are in place (?), but whither development (or what kind of development?)



International Migration and Philippine Society

- Different assumptions about international labor migration and development then and now:
 - 1970s: envisioned to be temporary (failure of development?)
 - Today: migration is part of globalization (part of national strategies for development?)
- Links between migration & development are implied, but starting and end points vary:
 - Migration as a pathway to development
 - Development is a must for truly voluntary migration



Research on International Migration in the Philippines

- International migration in the Philippines is well-researched in Asia (Asis & Piper, forthcoming)
 - At least three annotated bibliographies on international migration studies in the Philippines
 - Shiro Saito (1977)
 - Scalabrini Migration Center (1996)
 - Perez and Patacsil (1998)
 - Research on internal migration has been neglected?



Research on International Migration in the Philippines

- Data collection and migration research in the Philippines are considerable, but existing data do not provide a clear picture of international migration.
 - Various agencies produce migration data, but gaps are notable.
 - Some issues have been studied; others have been left out.
 - Some disciplines are more represented in migration studies than others.
 - Studies tend to be repetitive.
- Limited links between research and policymaking & advocacy

International Migration *and* Development: Research Findings

- Globally, there is of lack of information sharing and knowledge and experience in migration & development
 - “... the time has come to move from policies based on hunches and anecdotes to policies built on evidence...”
 - Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan
- There is a broad body of literature on the general causes and effects of migration, *but* much less is known about the specific links of migration to development
 - Improving the data base on the migration-development nexus
 - Improving the means of sharing information
 - Improving the links between research and policy



International Migration *and* Development: Research Findings


- Rights: protecting migrants' rights is central in promoting the development potentials of migration; violation of migrants' rights poses immeasurable human and social costs
 - NGOs are sources of information
 - In general, Filipino migrant workers are better protected compared to other Asian migrants
 - Labor migration from the Philippines fairly regulated
 - Filipino migrant workers are equipped with more human capital than other migrants
 - Filipino migrants have extensive social networks



International Migration *and* Development: Research Findings


□ Rights (cont)

- Pre-migration conditions: risks are present despite various interventions
- Gender matters: female migration is significant; concentrated in domestic work (also entertainment work until recently) –
- Legal status: legal vs. unauthorized vs. trafficked persons
- Context of destination countries



International Migration *and* Development: Research Findings

- Recruitment: treading the path as workers for the world?
 - The Philippines has been “successful” in establishing a presence in the global labor market; breached one-million deployment target in 2006
 - Unrelenting migration has generated concerns over the social costs of migration, esp. impacts on the left-behind families
 - Culture of migration has developed; “today’s left-behind children are tomorrow’s migrants”
 - Other social implications: nurse migration and impact on health delivery system; migration intentions and career aspirations
 - Notable: absence of research documenting positive social outcomes generated by migration




International Migration *and* Development: Research Findings

- Remittances (focus on other remittances)
 - The focus has been on economic, monetary remittances, transferred by migrants to their families in the Philippines
 - Relatively recent research on collective remittances sent to non-family recipients (migrant giving, diaspora philanthropy)
 - Studies on migrant giving mostly involve US-based Filipinos
 - Collective remittances support humanitarian projects, small infrastructure projects; minimal impact on employment generation; sustainability is also an issue



International Migration *and* Development: Research Findings

- Return migration: very significant gaps
 - Scale of return migration, profiles of returnees
 - International labor migration – tendency to re-migrate; returning for good=retirement?
 - Difficulty of economic reintegration most common
 - Other types of return for other types of migrants:
 - Virtual
 - Temporary, short-term
 - Continuing links instead of physical return



International Migration and Development: Some Knowledge Gaps

- Rights
 - Impact of political rights (e.g., absentee voting) and dual citizenship on transnational links and development
 - Advocacy of Filipino migrants' rights and improving the rights of local workers
 - Advocacy of Filipino migrants' rights and rights of foreigners in the Philippines




Migration and Development: Some Knowledge Gaps

□ Recruitment

- We need a more comprehensive picture of the overseas Filipino population; different migration contexts and different migrants (gender matters!) have varying implications for migration and development.
 - International Labor Migration
 - Domestic workers have been covered; we lack data on migrant workers in other sectors or industries
 - Except for nurses, few studies on the highly skilled and professional migrants
 - Labor migration trends and prospects and their impacts on (1) human capital formation; (2) national skills audit; and (3) domestic labor market. This will help address brain drain concerns.

International Migration and Development: Some Knowledge Gaps

- Recruitment (cont)
 - Migration for Permanent Settlement
 - Profile of permanent settlers by destination
 - Filipinos in international marriages (mostly Filipino women)
 - Other types of migration
 - Unauthorized migration; trafficking in persons
 - The other side of recruitment: the Philippines as destination country
 - Old vs. new “immigrant communities”: Korean communities in the making
 - Other prospects: medical tourism, retirement



International Migration and Development: Some Knowledge Gaps

□ Remittances

- Impact of financial literacy programs on the use of remittances
- Overseas Filipinos as partners of development
- Good practices of local institutions in working with overseas Filipinos as partners of development
- Other links generated by our migration experience: tourism, trade links, etc.



Migration and Development: Some Knowledge Gaps

- Return Migration
 - Return is given for less skilled migrants
 - Basic data are lacking: who returns, under what circumstances, with what, when, how many
 - Review of policies and practices on investments and businesses
 - Brain gain/circulation possibilities

- Key lesson from other countries: transforming 4Rs into development is not automatic.



Linking Research and Policy/Advocacy

- Establishing mechanisms to promote links between research and policy/advocacy on migration and development
 - Formation of Research Advisory Council
 - Establishing a regular forum between researchers and policymakers
 - Enhancing the use of research outputs by transforming them into policy/advocacy briefs
 - Mainstreaming research aspects in technical committees



Final Note

- Multi-level, multi-stakeholder links are important
 - Cooperation with overseas Filipinos
 - Cooperation with destination countries
 - Beyond deployment issues
 - Cooperation with South countries

- CLARITY OF VISION BEGINS AT HOME