

Extended Abstract

Title: Migrant Social Capital: Effects of Thailand's 1997 Economic Crisis and Post-Crisis Recovery

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Over the years, Massey's theory of the cumulative causation of migration has continued to evolve. In relatively recent work, he and his colleagues state, "Causation is cumulative in the sense that each act of migration alters the social context within which subsequent migration decisions are made, typically in ways that make additional movement more likely" (Massey et al 1998, p. 45-46). There is some evidence of an association between cumulative causation and contextual factors. Massey has suggested six factors that contribute to cumulatively caused migration momentum, but empirical evidence regarding the importance of these factors has been scattered at best. These six factors can be generalized into three domains: demographic, economic, and cultural. In this study, we measure the presence, composition, and distribution of economic, demographic and cultural factors and evaluating their influence on migration.

Employing longitudinal data from Thailand, we extend current knowledge of internal migration processes by analyzing changes in migration frequencies before, during, and after Thailand's economic crisis of 1997. We replicate recent studies of cumulative causation by measuring frequency of trips, duration of time away, and level of network aggregation (village or household), to estimate a model of migration among men and women in Thailand during recent periods of national economic growth and recession. Building on our earlier work showing that migrant social capital differently affects men's and women's migration, this study evaluates year and occupational sex segregation effects. Expected findings are that return migration of men and women to villages of origin increased during the economic crisis. Although rural-urban migration decreased for both male and female migrants, within two years, it began to increase again, first affecting female migrants in the manufacturing industry and then male migrants in all occupations.

The data come from the northeast region of Thailand. The Nang Rong Surveys are a longitudinal panel data collection effort conducted by the Carolina Population Center at the University of North Carolina and the Institute for Population and Social Research at Mahidol University in Thailand.¹ We employ the first three waves of data (collected in 1984, 1994, and 2000) for our analyses. The 1984 data collection was a census of all households and individuals residing in 51 villages within Nang Rong. It included information on individual demographic data, household assets and village institutions and agricultural, natural, economic, social, and health resources. Further, village-level data were collected from all of the villages in Nang Rong district. The 1994 survey followed all 1984 respondents still living in the original village, as well as respondents from 22 of the original 51 villages who had moved to one of the four

¹ The data and information about the surveys are available at <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/nangrong/>

primary destinations outside of the district, plus any new village residents. The 1994 surveys included all questions from the 1984 survey, as well as a 10-year retrospective life history about education, work, and migration, a survey about the age and location of siblings, and a special survey of migrants' migration experiences and histories. The 2000 round of surveys built on the previous data collection efforts by following all of the 1994 respondents and adding to the database any new residents and households in the original villages.

The 1994 and 2000 surveys included a migrant follow-up component. This was conducted among persons who had resided in 22 of the original 1984 villages, and defined a migrant as someone who was a member of a 1984 household and had since left a village for more than two months to one of four destinations: the provincial capital, Buriram; the regional capital, Korat or Nakhon Ratchasima; Bangkok and the Bangkok Metropolitan Area; or Eastern Seaboard provinces. Each of these destinations represents a distinct labor market: a regional, primarily agricultural wage laborer market; a primate city and its surrounding suburbs; a newly industrialized, state sponsored export processing zone; and an increasingly service sector oriented provincial capital. The migrant follow-up in 2000 included migrants identified and interviewed in 1994, and individuals who had lived in the village in either 1984 or 1994 but subsequently migrated to one of the four primary destinations.

In addition to the survey data, this study also draws upon secondary, annual data from national sources about provincial level education, employment, industrial development, and gross provincial product (covering years 1970-2004). These statistics will be used when evaluating how migration momentum is conditioned when economic and social opportunities vary across time and destinations. The education and employment statistics are also sex disaggregated, so that we can evaluate how destinations' gendered labor market conditions differentially influence the growth in migration prevalence out of villages.

The period of time captured by the data (1984-2000) coincides with dramatic economic growth in Thailand, as it shifted from an agricultural-based economy to a low skill, export manufacturing-based economy and, more recently, to a high-skill manufacturing and service-based economy (Bello, Cunningham, et al. 1998; Phongpaichit 1980; Phongpaichit & Baker 1996; Phongpaichit & Baker 1998; Warr 1993; Warr & Nidhiprabha 1996). With the growth in manufacturing export came an increased demand for labor. From the mid-1980s until 1997, industrialization in Thailand was concentrated in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area or the Eastern Seaboard Provinces as part of export manufacturing enclaves (Phongpaichit & Baker 1998), and rural migrants, many of them young, provided much of this labor (Chamrathirong et al. 1995; Mills 1997; Phongpaichit & Baker 1996). However, a number of factors led to the promotion of return migration and rural factory establishment in primary migrant sending communities between 1997 and 2000 (Curran *forthcoming*; Phongpaichit & Baker 1998). This study will focus on migration patterns between 1994 and 2000, in order to take into account the dramatic shifts in economic growth during those years.

We propose accounting for migrant social capital inequality by measuring and evaluating who has migration experience and where migration experience is most concentrated, using data from the Nang Rong Surveys, conducted in Northeast

Thailand. In preliminary work, Garip & Curran (2005) have shown that the distribution of migration experiences within a village can have a significant effect on migration probabilities (in that work we develop and evaluate measures of inequality, including a GINI coefficient for migration experiences across individuals within a village and a migration history index that measures both the level and the distribution of experience). When migration experiences are concentrated in just a few people or a few households then the impact of those experiences are significantly diminished upon others compared to communities with the same levels of experience but a more even distribution of those experiences.

In this study, we consider how demographic contexts shape migration momentum and the migrant capital-migration relationship. To our knowledge, Curran and Garip (Curran et al. 2005; Garip & Curran 2005) are the only researchers thus far to quantitatively examine this relationship. They considered how an individual's sex and age affect the relationship of village-level migrant capital and the likelihood of migration. Their results showed that the gender differential in the relationship of migrant capital and migration is reduced significantly for villages with high overall levels of migrant capital. They found no evidence that an individual's age affected the slope of migrant momentum, however. In that research we only used 10 years of data and suspect that migration experiences had not fully matured in enough villages. In this paper, we extend this analysis to considerations of village-level and household-level contexts, with an additional 6 years of data to evaluate by including the 2000 panel survey.

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