

CITYWARD MIGRATION AND URBAN FERTILITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT. Studies of fertility differentials between native urbanites and rural migrants in developed countries usually show that the latter have higher fertility. That differentials of the same type are not necessarily found in a less developed country like the Philippines is demonstrated by a comparison of fertility levels of rural migrants originating in north-western Luzon and in Panay Island with those of native Manileños. A partial explanation of the relatively low fertility of Manila in-migrants is provided by the social-mobility theory which states that cityward migration is selective of persons with high-mobility aspirations and that migrants tend to participate in urban life – and consequently are exposed to its fertility-reducing tendencies – as least as much as native urbanites. Discrepancies between native-migrant fertility differentials found in the Philippines and in developed countries are reconciled by a theory of stages in the urbanization process. Hendershot's Manila data are from a 1966 survey; his rural data were gathered in 1967.

This is a study of the nature and causes of difference between the fertility of rural-urban migrants and that of urban natives in the city of Manila.

Problem and Data

In most previous studies of migrant-native fertility differences, especially those done in the United States, it has been found that rural-urban migrants have higher fertility than urban natives. For instance, in a study of ever-married white women in the United States, Macisco (1968:474-79) found that the age-standardized mean number of children ever born to migrants from non-metropolitan to metropolitan areas between 1955 and 1960 was 2.29 while the comparable number for urban "natives" who lived in metropolitan areas in both 1955 and 1960 was 2.15. Similar differences were found by Duncan (1965:240-49), using data from a 1962 sample of U.S. married women.

An "assimilation model" provides a theoretic

interpretation of this pattern of differences. In this model, rural and urban populations are assumed to possess significantly different sub-cultures: the values and norms of the rural sub-culture create and sustain behavior patterns which result in high fertility, while the values and norms of the urban sub-culture tend to produce lower fertility. Individuals who move from the rural population to the urban population bring with them the typically rural sub-culture which they acquired during their primary socialization. That sub-cultural heritage, like any other, is tenacious; it resists displacement by the urban sub-culture which the migrant encounters in the city. Gradually, however, the immediate and pervasive influence of the urban sub-culture overcomes and displaces the rural sub-culture; the rural-urban migrant becomes the cultural brother of the urban native.

Any large and representative sample of rural-urban migrants will include persons at all stages in the process of assimilation. Their group

average for any particular trait is likely, therefore, to fall somewhere between those of the rural and urban populations. Fertility is one such cultural trait; fertility is relatively high in the rural sub-cultures of most societies and relatively low in their urban sub-cultures. Consequently, the fertility of rural-urban migrants is lower than rural fertility, but higher than urban fertility, reflecting their marginal position between the two sub-cultures.

In some studies, however, especially in less developed countries, it has been found that rural-urban migrants have lower fertility than urban natives. For instance, Macisco and his co-workers (1970: 51–70), in a replication of Macisco's U.S. study cited above, found that migrants from non-metropolitan Puerto Rico to metropolitan San Juan, Puerto Rico, between 1955 and 1960 had borne an average of 2.89 children; while non-migrant residents of San Juan had borne an average of 3.01 children.

Macisco (1970:64–66) has suggested that this pattern of differences between the fertility of rural-urban migrants and urban natives may be interpreted by a "social mobility model." In this model rural-urban migration is assumed to be especially selective of those persons in the rural population who have unusually high aspirations and potential for upward mobility, because those persons are better able than others in the rural population to bear the psychic and economic costs which migration may entail. While the mobility aspirations and potential of the general rural population may be lower than those of the urban native population, the rural-urban migrants who have been especially selected by the migration process may have mobility aspirations and potential which are *higher* than those of the urban native population; persons born in the city have not, after all, been selected into that population by *any* social process, except indirectly. If migrants are more likely than urban natives to possess high levels of mobility aspiration and potential, it would be expected that they would also be more likely than urban natives to participate in and be influenced by urban culture: their greater desire to "get ahead"

makes them more sensitive to the new and changing opportunity structures of the city.

If it is assumed that urban culture creates pressures to limit family size, then it follows that those pressures would be felt first and most by the aspiring rural-urban migrants. They might be expected, therefore, to adopt contraception and other fertility limiting practices more often than urban natives. Their fertility would then be lower than that of urban natives, which is the empirical finding this social-mobility model attempts to interpret.

As will be shown below, the fertility of rural-urban migrants in Manila appears to be lower than that of native born Manileños. The social-mobility model seems, therefore, to be more appropriate than the assimilation model for this case. In the remainder of this paper, four ideas central to the social-mobility model developed above will be tested with empirical data. Those ideas are (1) rural-urban migration is especially selective of persons with high mobility aspirations and potential, (2) rural-urban migrants are more likely than urban natives to participate in typically urban activities, (3) rural-urban migrants are more likely than urban natives to be "family planners," and (4) the fertility of rural-urban migrants is lower than that of urban natives.

The data are from three household interview sample surveys conducted by the University of the Philippines Population Institute (Concepcion and Flieger 1968) in the communities of Manila, Calasiao (Pangasinan), and Miagao (Iloilo). In Manila, interviews were conducted during 1966 in a random sample of households containing an ever-married woman aged 18 to 39; about 900 interviews were completed. In Calasiao and Miagao – predominantly rural communities located 100 and 275 miles, respectively, from Manila – interviews were conducted during 1967 in random samples of households containing an ever-married woman aged 15 or more; about 1500 interviews were completed in Calasiao and 1350 in Miagao. In all three surveys the interview completion rate was over 90 per cent.

Findings

Migrant-native fertility differentials. Of the 813 Manila sample women for whom the data necessary to this study were available, 237 (29.2 per cent) were natives of the City, and 576 (70.8 per cent) had migrated to the City from other communities. Although information was not available on the origins of sample migrants, evidence from other studies (Social Welfare Department 1967) shows that a large majority are from rural areas.

Three measures of the cumulative fertility of migrant and native women are presented in Table 1 – the unstandardized, age-standardized, and marriage-duration-standardized mean numbers of children ever born. Comparisons of these measures indicate that *migrants have lower fertility than natives, and that the difference is not explained away by differences between the age or marriage-duration compositions of the two groups.*

Table 1

Unstandardized, age-standardized and marriage-duration-standardized mean number of children ever born to sample women by migrant status¹ (Manila, 1966)

Type of mean	Migrant status	
	Native	Migrant
Unstandardized	3.80	3.39
Age-standardized ¹	3.89	3.36
Marriage-duration standardized	3.67	3.43

¹Total sample used as standard population.

Although the overall fertility of migrants is lower than that of natives, the difference is not uniform for all ages and marriage durations, as is seen in Table 2. In general, *the fertility of migrants who are young (under 30) and those who have been married for a relatively short period of time (less than ten years) is higher than that of similar natives, but at older ages and longer marriage durations the fertility of migrants is lower.*

Table 2

Mean number of children ever born to sample women, by woman's age and marriage-duration, by migrant status (Manila, 1966)

Classifying variable	Migrant status	
	Native	Migrant
A. Age (years)		
15 – 19	1.12 (17) ¹	0.50 (16)
20 – 24	1.74 (34)	1.74 (102)
25 – 29	2.50 (74)	2.90 (168)
30 – 34	4.87 (55)	3.83 (143)
35 – 39	6.47 (57)	4.99 (147)
B. Marriage duration (years)		
0 – 4	1.01 (68)	1.40 (174)
5 – 9	3.06 (66)	2.96 (175)
10 – 14	5.05 (55)	4.63 (126)
15 or more	7.31 (48)	6.01 (101)

¹Number in parentheses is absolute frequency of cases.

These differences are consistent with the idea that migrants arrive in the city with rural norms and values which produce high fertility, but they rapidly adopt urban norms and values which produce low fertility; the latter effect is great enough among older migrants to offset the high fertility of recently arrived young migrants and produce an average level fertility among migrants below that of natives. This interpretation is entirely consistent with the social-mobility model.

The same differences could be explained in another way, however. If rural-urban migration were not especially selective among young rural women, but tended to select older rural women whose accomplished fertility in the place of origin was unusually low, then the observed pattern of differences might be expected:

young and recently married migrants would have the relatively high fertility of the rural population age group of which they are representative, but older migrants married for a longer period of time would have low fertility because many were selected by the migration process for that characteristic. Selections of older migrants for low fertility in the rural place of origin is plausible, because rural women with many children would find the trip to the city more difficult.

If this explanation were correct, however, it would be expected that the decline in the relative fertility of migrants with increasing marriage duration would not be found among women who arrived in the city as childless young women. Such women, being representative of the high fertility rural population, would be expected to have higher fertility than urban natives at all marriage durations. This is not the case, however, as Table 3 shows: the ratios of migrant to native mean numbers of children ever born decline regularly with increasing marriage duration among women of zero parity on arrival in the city; the pattern is very similar to that observed previously.

Table 3

Ratios of migrant to native mean number of children ever born, by marriage duration, by parity of migrants on arrival (Manila, 1966)

Marriage duration (years)	Parity of migrants on arrival		
	Total	Zero	1 or more
0 - 4	1.39	1.30	2.70
5 - 9	.97	.94	1.08
10 - 14	.92	.92	.90
15 or more	.82	.85	.76

Selectivity of rural-urban migration. According to the social-mobility model, rural-urban migration is especially selective of persons in the rural population with high aspirations and potential for upward social mobility. Data for testing that hypothesis come from sample surveys conducted in two rural communities, Calasiao and Miagao.

Calasiao is on the island of Luzon, about 100 miles northwest of Manila; most of its 29,000 people (1960) work on small family farms and in a variety of cottage industries. Miagao is on the island of Panay, about 275 air miles southeast of Manila; most of its 32,000 people (1960) work on small family farms or as fishermen. According to popular stereotypes (Agoncillo 1969:14-16), supported by empirical research (Pascual 1966), the people in the area around Calasiao are less mobile (geographically) than those in the area around Miagao, but both regions have been major sources of migrants to Manila. These two communities were selected for this study because they are typical of lowland Christian communities which have experienced substantial out-migration to urban destinations, and because they represent two important sub-cultures which differ in ways related to migration. The inclusion of two communities gives some assurance that the findings are not due to some peculiarity in one.

In each community respondents were asked to provide information about all persons 10 years old or older in 1960 who lived in the household at that time, but had since moved to another barrio. Information was obtained on 402 of these "out-migrants" in Calasiao; in Miagao the number was 743.

Probably the best way to determine the nature of selectivity in migration is to compare migrants with a representative sample of non-migrants. Because data of the latter kind were not collected in these surveys, such comparisons were not possible. Instead, comparisons were made among migrants to three types of destination: Manila, other urban destinations, and rural destinations. These comparisons, therefore, reveal differences between the characteristics of *migrants* to different destinations rather than differences between migrants and non-migrants. The data are appropriate for testing the hypothesis about selective migration in a slightly revised form: the more urban the destination of migrants, the more likely they are to possess traits associated with high aspirations and potential for upward social mobility. It is assumed that the order of the

destinations presented above – Manila, other urban, and rural – represents decreasing degrees of urbanism.

A summary of the results of comparisons of migrants on selected characteristics by destination is presented in Table 4. It is assumed, in accordance with previous research (Blau and Duncan 1967), that income, education, occupational status, and migration motivated by a desire for work or further education are all positively related to aspirations and potential for upward social mobility. Although the differences among destination groups are not always large and not always entirely consistent with respect to urbanism, it will be noted that eight of the 10 statistically significant associations are in the predicted direction, and the results are very consistent in the two communities. The reversals of the predicted relationship all involve measures of occupational status; this

may reveal a deficiency in the data rather than the theory, because occupations are difficult to classify and rank in a preindustrial society. In any case, the general conclusion is that the findings support the hypothesis – *the greater the urbanism of the destination, the more likely migrants are to possess characteristics related to high mobility aspirations and potential*; in other words, rural-urban migration is selective of socially mobile persons.

Participation in urban life: migrant-native differences. In the social-mobility model it is hypothesized that migrants, because of their unusually high aspirations and potential for upward social mobility, will participate more often than urban natives in typically urban activities. To test this hypothesis, migrants and natives of Manila were compared in a number of respects presumably related to their participation in urban life – residential distribution,

Table 4

*Proportion (%) of sample out-migrants having characteristics associated with social mobility, by urban-rural destination, measure of association, and level of significance:
Calasiao and Miagao (1967)*

Characteristics associated with social mobility	Destination			Gamma ¹	Level of Sig.
	Manila	Other urban	Rural		
A. Out-migrants from Calasiao (Pangasinan)					
<i>Household of origin</i>					
Annual income of ₱2,000 or more	39.0	40.4	15.7	.33	.01
White collar job, head	13.0	19.1	10.8	-.01	n.s.
Elementary school or more, wife	34.1	19.1	20.5	.19	.01
<i>Individual migrant</i>					
Left for work or education	71.5	38.0	14.1	.71	.01
White collar job at origin	4.1	5.3	7.0	-.13	n.s.
High school or more	84.3	70.6	61.5	.32	.01
B. Out-migrants from Miagao (Iloilo)					
<i>Household of origin</i>					
Annual income of ₱2,000 or more	27.3	43.0	23.8	.12	.01
White collar job, head	5.4	14.2	8.2	-.13	.05
Elementary school or more, wife	20.1	38.0	19.8	.15	.01
<i>Individual migrant</i>					
Left for work or education	85.7	67.8	48.5	.53	.01
White collar job at origin	2.9	10.0	6.8	-.16	.05
High school or more	71.7	83.5	62.6	.20	.01

¹The Goodman-Kruskal measure of association between ordinal variables; the variables being associated are the "urbanism" of destination, and the household and individual variables in the stub; although only the "high" value of each of the latter variables is presented here, the full range of values was used in computing gamma.

labor-force participation, and educational attainment (see Table 5). In none of these respects were the two groups very much different, although there is a statistically significant difference in their educational composition — as compared to urban natives, migrants are over-represented at both the low and high ends of the educational scale.

Table 5

Distributions (%) of sample women, by average income of residential district, labor force participation, and education by migrant status¹ (Manila, 1966)

Characteristic	Migrant status	
	Native	Migrant
A. Average income of district (pesos/month)		
Less than 200	12.1	15.8
200 – 399	24.9	26.1
400 or more	63.0	58.1
B. Labor force participation		
Held a job	21.5	20.4
Held no job	78.5	79.6
C. Education (highest level attended)		
Elementary or less	39.7	47.0
High school	40.5	30.0
College	19.8	23.0

¹Differences in the distributions of natives and migrants for residential area and labor participation are not statistically significant; for education the difference is significant at the .05 level.

The possibility that the educational difference “explains” migrant-native fertility differentials was considered and rejected — standardizing for education does not alter the size or direction of the difference between migrant and native mean numbers of children ever born; the means are 3.15 and 3.83, respectively. An interesting pattern is noted, though, in migrant-native fertility differences at varying educational levels: at the elementary level, migrant fertility is much lower than native fertility; at the high school level it is almost equal; and at the college level it is *higher*. This difference, which is found within age groups as well, suggests that

the migrant group has relatively low average fertility primarily because of the low fertility of its *poorly* educated members.

The finding that *migrants and natives differ little with respect to selected indicators of participation in urban life* does not support the hypothesis derived from the social-mobility theory, although it might be argued that overcoming the handicaps of a rural background to achieve equality with natives in this respect does indicate more active participation by migrants.

Migrant-native differences in family planning. According to the social-mobility theory, migrants in the city seek occupational and financial success; because a large family might be an obstacle to attainment of these goals under urban conditions, migrants act to limit the number of their children. This implies that migrants are rational and purposive in decisions about family size; in other words, they are “family planners.” It is hypothesized, therefore, that migrants will be more likely than natives to know about, approve of, and use family-planning methods.

In Table 6, however, comparisons of migrants and natives in Manila indicate that there is little difference in the frequency of family-planning acceptance; *migrants and natives are almost equally likely to know about, approve of, and use contraception.*

Table 6

Proportion (%) of sample women with knowledge, approval, and use of contraception by migrant status¹ (Manila, 1966)

Characteristic	Migrant status	
	Native	Migrant
Knows one or more methods	82.6	81.3
Approves of contraception	75.2	71.2
Used one or more methods	41.9	40.2

¹None of the differences between natives and migrants is statistically significant.

Table 7

Mean number of children ever born to sample women, by marriage duration by use of contraception by migrant status (Manila, 1966)

Marriage duration (years)	Use of contraception			
	Users		Non-users	
	Native	Migrant	Native	Migrant
0 - 4	1.80	1.82	.86	1.26
5 - 9	3.38	3.31	2.92	2.75
10 - 14	5.50	4.98	4.52	4.28
15 or more	7.36	6.76	7.21	5.43

Since migrants are no more likely than natives to accept family planning, it is unlikely that this factor could explain migrant-native fertility differences. This is tested directly in Table 7 by comparing the fertility of migrants and non-migrants separately among contraceptors and non-contraceptors; *among both users and non-users of contraception, the fertility of migrants is lower than that of urban natives*, although the difference is reduced among users.

Clearly family planning, the means of fertility limitation most congruent with the social-mobility theory, does not account adequately for the observed migrant-native fertility differential.

Migrant-native differences in age at marriage.

An alternative means of achieving lower fertility is postponement of marriage. Either because of the temporary disruption of life-cycle activities caused by migration, or by intention for the purpose of avoiding the mobility-limiting ties of family life, migrants might be expected to delay marriage. It is hypothesized, therefore, that rural-urban migrants tend to marry later than urban natives.

This hypothesis was first tested by comparing migrants to different destinations from Calasiao and Miagao. In Table 8 it is shown that among females classified by age *the more urban the destination of migrants, the less likely they are to be married*; in other words, migrants to cities, especially Manila, marry later than migrants to rural areas.

Table 8

Proportion (%) of sample female migrants ever married, by age by urban-rural destination: Calasiao and Miagao (1967)

Age (years)	Destination		
	Manila	Other urban	Rural
A. Calasiao (Pangasinan)			
Less than 25	26.9	72.2	86.4
25 or more	81.8	95.8	98.6
B. Miagao (Iloilo)			
Less than 25	6.1	11.1	41.2
25 or more	28.6	61.5	81.6

The hypothesis was also tested by comparing the age at marriage of migrants and urban natives in Manila. It was found that *migrants to Manila married later than urban natives*, although the difference is not large; for instance, the median age at marriage for migrants was 19.6 and for natives, 19.3.

Although migrants do marry later, as hypothesized, this difference does not explain the migrant-native fertility differential. The fortifying measures presented in Table 9 indicate that *among both late- and early-marrying women, migrants have lower fertility than urban natives*.

Conclusions

The social-mobility model, although deficient in some respects, does provide a

Table 9

Unstandardized, age-standardized, and marriage-duration-standardized mean numbers of children ever born to sample women, by age at first marriage and migrant status¹ (Manila, 1966)

Mean number of children ever born	Age at first marriage (years)			
	Less than 20		20 or more	
	Native	Migrant	Native	Migrant
Unstandardized	4.42	3.85	3.21	2.95
Age-standardized ¹	4.96	4.42	2.92	2.70
Marriage-duration-standardized	3.72	3.45	3.43	3.30

¹Total sample used as standard population.

plausible interpretation of many of the findings of this study. It correctly hypothesizes that migration is positively selective, that migrants participate as much as (if not more than) natives in urban life, and that migrants have lower fertility than natives. It does not adequately account for the means by which migrants achieve lower fertility; neither family planning nor late marriage provides an explanation.

Some of the shortcomings of the model in this study may be accounted for by inadequacies in the data. The data used in this study were not originally gathered for the purpose of testing the ideas in the model, and they only imperfectly measure the variables under consideration. The partial success of the model in this secondary analysis, therefore, gives promise that studies specifically designed to test the model will provide more conclusive confirmation.

If the social-mobility model should prove a valid interpretation of the relation between migration processes and urban fertility in developing nations such as the Philippines, it may be paired with the assimilation model to reconcile the apparently contradictory findings in studies of migrant-native fertility differences. In developing nations, where poorly developed systems of transportation and communication make rural-urban migration a potentially costly venture, migration will tend to select the upwardly mobile person, whose response to urban

culture will be a rather rapid reduction in fertility to levels below those of the urban natives. In more developed nations, however, where transportation and communications are easy, and many migrants have worn a smooth path from rural village to metropolis, the risk of rural-urban migration is greatly reduced. In such conditions migrations will be less selective, and rural-urban migrants will be more nearly representative of the rural population. With regard to fertility this means that migrants in the more developed stage will tend to retain the high-fertility patterns of the rural culture for a longer period of time; their average fertility, therefore, will tend to be high relative to that of the urban natives.

In other words, there may be stages of urbanization which differ in the selective tendencies of rural-urban migration and in migrant-native fertility differences in the city: in early stages of urbanization migration is highly selective and tends to produce migrant fertility below that of urban natives; but in late stages of urbanization, migration is not especially selective and tends to produce migrant fertility above that of urban natives. While this developmental sequence seems to fit what is known from empirical studies of migrant-native fertility differentials, a systematic compilation of results from previous studies and collection of new data will be necessary before it can be regarded as verified.

Note

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Changes in the Occupational Structure of the Philippine Labor Force
1958 - 1968

Occupational Group	Occupational Distribution				Percent Change	
	1958		1968		1958 - 1968	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
All Occupational Groups*	100.0 (5,998)	100.0 (3,239)	100.0 (8,202)	100.0 (1,635)	36.7	43.1
Professional, technical and related workers	1.8	3.4	2.5	5.8	91.7	146.8
Proprietors, managers, etc.	2.4	4.8	2.6	6.5	46.3	96.1
Clerical, office and related workers	2.5	1.4	3.4	2.9	83.4	195.6
Salesmen and related workers	3.2	12.4	3.8	13.5	65.8	55.3
Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers and related workers	69.6	41.7	65.8	41.9	29.3	43.6
Miners, quarrymen and related workers	0.4	-	0.4	-	45.4	-
Workers in transport and communication occupations	2.9	-	3.8	-	78.3	-
Craftsmen and related workers	9.7	22.6	10.7	16.0	50.6	1.1
Manual workers and laborers n.e.c.	3.4	0.2	2.4	0.3	-2.0	-
Service and related workers	3.8	12.8	4.3	12.8	54.8	43.7
Occupation not reported	0.3	0.8	0.2	0.3	6.2	40.0
Agricultural occupations	69.6	41.7	65.8	41.9	29.3	43.6
Non-agricultural occupations	30.2	57.5	34.0	57.8	54.3	43.8
Farm workers	69.6	41.7	65.8	41.9	29.3	43.6
White-collar workers	10.0	22.0	12.4	28.7	70.2	87.1
Blue-collar workers	16.4	22.8	17.3	16.3	44.5	2.2
Service workers	3.8	12.8	4.3	12.8	81.6	43.7

* Numbers in thousands

Taken from: Milagros R. Rañoa, "An Analysis of Working Force Activity in the Philippines, 1958-1968," Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of Chicago, 1972.