

Examining Characteristics of Post-Civil War Migrants in Ethiopia

Research Question: To what extent do the characteristics of people participating in various migration streams in Ethiopia fit the conventional model of migrants in developing countries?

Migration research in Africa has been expanding extensively in both scope and number, especially in southern and western portions of the continent. Yet very little work has been done on this topic in East Africa. There are a number of reasons for this shortfall, including the lack of data, the underdevelopment of the region even by African standards, and political instability. Population mobility is of increasing importance in East Africa, particularly in Ethiopia, where population mobility there has implications for the entire region, given its prominence geographically, population-wise, and politically.

Ethiopia has long had a colorful history that has greatly influenced the region. The country's civil war, which ended just fifteen years ago, certainly affected regional populations. Some social scientists have focused on the effects of civil wars on a country's population and found that during years of increased instability during a civil war, migration to cities increased, and in years where stability improved, rates of migration to cities diminished (Jenkins and Kposowa, 1990; Berhanu and White, 2000). Civil wars have a direct effect on fertility, mortality, and migration

Social scientists studying migration, in the context of a civil war or not, tend to use theories that focus solely on economic characteristics of migrants. While the migration literature has been dominated by economic factors, there has been an effort to concern migration with the interaction of economic and non-economic factors (Gugler 1969). This paper seeks to follow this approach in Ethiopia, and search for resemblances and differences between migrants there and the rest of the developing world. This study will also look at the role migration plays in Ethiopia's new social and political dynamic since the end of the civil war in 1991.

Data and Methods

Although researchers have touched upon demographic trends in Ethiopia, not much attention has been paid to internal migration. The purpose of this paper is to examine characteristics of recent internal migrants, that is, those who have migrated after the end of the civil war. This is a first attempt to use an Ethiopian representative census (1994) to look exclusively at the demographic characteristics of people. Since the end of the civil war, I would expect Ethiopia's internal migration rates and patterns to be similar to countries across much of Africa. I examine the determinants of migration by using multinomial logistical models and incorporating the independent variables seen in table 1. Migration literature focusing on non-economic characteristics has found that migrants are predominately male, educated, and be part of a minority ethnic group (Byerlee 1974; Shixun and Xian 1992; Martine 1975). I hypothesize that Ethiopian migrants will not differ to any large extent.

Preliminary Findings

The results of a preliminary multinomial logit model are shown in Table 3. The first model includes all demographic characteristics from table 1; the second model includes interaction terms. All results are presented in log odds.

Young people are more likely to move to both urban and rural areas, although urban areas are favored. Young people in Ethiopia today see their future much more optimistically than the two preceding generations who had to endure civil strife and constant famine. Young people view their optimistic future as more probable so long as they have some form of formal education. Formal education centers are located in urban areas rather than rural areas, and this would explain not only why young people have a greater chance of moving to an urban area, but also why those with formal education also tend to move to urban areas. Education provides young people with higher paying jobs and also social prestige. Urban centers contain the infrastructure to support education centers because urban centers also provide the jobs which require a formal education. That is why people with education in model one are less likely to move to rural areas.

Yet young people do tend to move to rural areas as well. This is because Ethiopia remains one of the most least urbanized countries in the world. Even compared to the rest of Africa, Ethiopia is overwhelmingly rural. But just as most of Africa is urbanizing, so is Ethiopia. In 1950, approximately 5% of Ethiopians lived in urban areas, but that figure increased to 15% in 1980 and is projected to be near 50% in 2025 (compiled from United Nations, 1991). Because agriculture is still the basis for the country's rural economy, we expect rural-to-rural migration to be a significant part of Ethiopian life. However, differences exist between men and women. First, migrants are not necessarily male. Second, women are more likely to move to urban areas since agricultural work requires more male manual labor than a female desires. Therefore, females are more likely to move to cities, where they find better infrastructure for education, jobs more suitable for women, and health facilities for their children.

The dominant religious group of people in Ethiopia, Orthodox Christians, are more likely than all other denominations to move to urban areas. The Tigreway, a minority ethnic group in Ethiopia, are in fact more likely to move to urban areas compared to the more dominant Amhara. The Tigreway may not be moving to urban areas just because they are a minority ethnic group. They are also more likely than the Amhara to move to rural areas, showing evidence of a very mobile Tigreway population. This is most likely because the Tigreway live in areas very prone to drought in the northern parts of Ethiopia. Drought forces people to move to areas, both rural and urban, where water is more readily available.

These findings confirm some of the characteristics of people participating in various migration streams in Ethiopia generally fit the conventional model of migrants in developing countries. Non-economic characteristics of migrants in Ethiopia vary across ethnicity, religion, sex, and education. Since the end of the civil war opened opportunities, both economic and non-economic, for Ethiopians, people have more of a choice of where they can move. No longer do migrants move only to urban areas when stability decreases. Rural-to-rural migration plays a large and dynamic role in Ethiopian life and should be considered by policymakers. At the same time, rural-to-urban migration is very important, and cities can more easily reach out to rural inhabitants who are young and desire educational opportunities.

**Table 1:
Univariate Statistics**

**Table 2:
Bi-Variate Statistics**

Characteristics		Percentage	Destination Status-Migrants Only (Non-Migrants Comprise Remaining Percentage)	
			Migrant to Urban Area	Migrant to Rural Area
Sex				
	<i>Male</i>	47.78%	7.81%	1.65%
	<i>Female</i>	52.22%	8.09%	1.53%
Age				
	<i>15-19 Years</i>	21.15%	10.06%	1.76%
	<i>20-29 Years</i>	28.81%	11.10%	2.03%
	<i>30-39 Years</i>	19.76%	7.76%	1.49%
	<i>40-49 Years</i>	12.84%	4.38%	1.25%
	<i>50+ Years</i>	17.44%	3.05%	1.02%
Educational Attainment				
	<i>No School</i>	57.14%	4.42%	1.94%
	<i>Primary School</i>	22.30%	12.15%	1.24%
	<i>Secondary School</i>	20.56%	13.22%	0.98%
Ethnicity				
	<i>Amhara</i>	39.20%	8.64%	1.49%
	<i>Guragie</i>	3.09%	9.78%	0.96%
	<i>Oromo</i>	29.55%	6.07%	1.74%
	<i>Sidema</i>	2.32%	1.90%	1.23%
	<i>Tigreway</i>	7.99%	15.27%	1.99%
	<i>Welaita</i>	2.23%	6.57%	1.15%
	<i>Other</i>	15.62%	6.79%	1.58%
Religion				
	<i>Orthodox Christian</i>	63.55%	9.26%	1.49%
	<i>Other Christian</i>	9.41%	6.86%	1.67%
	<i>Muslim</i>	23.27%	5.85%	1.68%
	<i>Other Religion</i>	3.77%	1.69%	2.47%
Resident Status in 1994				
	<i>Rural</i>	86.31%	0%	3.05%
	<i>Urban</i>	13.69%	17.00%	0.00%
Resident Status in 1991				
	<i>Rural</i>	87.05%	4.38%	1.41%
	<i>Urban</i>	12.95%	31.95%	2.79%
Migrant Status				
	<i>Recent Migrant (3 or fewer yrs)</i>	9.54%	7.95%	1.59%
	<i>Non-Recent Migrant or Non-Migrant</i>	90.46%	0%	0%
Destination Status				
	<i>Non-Recent Migrant or Non-Migrant</i>	90.46%		
	<i>Moved to Urban Area in last 3 yrs</i>	7.95%		
	<i>Moved to Rural Area in last 3 yrs</i>	1.59%		
Total Number of Observations		436,641	34,730	6,929

**Table 3: Parameter Estimates from Multi-Nomial Logit
Regression Predicting Migration**

Independent Variables	Model I		Model II	
	Move to Rural Area	Move to Urban Area	Move to Rural Area	Move to Urban Area
	β /(SE)	β /(SE)	β /(SE)	β /(SE)
Teen	0.739** (.045)	0.905** (.025)	0.808** (.045)	1.035** (.025)
Twenties	0.919** (.042)	1.013** (.024)	0.97** (.042)	1.117** (.024)
Thirties	0.531** (.046)	0.739** (.025)	0.561** (.046)	0.821** (.025)
Forties	0.266** (.053)	0.232** (.03)	0.286** (.053)	0.294** (.03)
Female	-0.106** (.025)	0.198** (.012)	0.143** (.029)	0.563** (.018)
Residence in 1991	-0.929** (.034)	-0.488** (.014)	0.133* (.054)	0.903** (.027)
Primary Education	-0.147** (.037)	1.09** (.016)	0.12* (.043)	1.682** (.021)
Secondary Education	-0.257** (.042)	1.24** (.017)	0.239** (.051)	1.77** (.023)
Other Christians	0.117* (.048)	-0.163** (.023)	0.113 (.049)	-0.199** (.024)
Muslim	-0.007 (.032)	-0.225** (.016)	-0.021 (.032)	-0.237** (.016)
Other Religions	0.275** (.058)	-1.296** (.062)	0.308** (.058)	-1.236** (.063)
Guragie	-0.368** (.092)	0.132** (.031)	-0.421** (.092)	0.092** (.031)
Oromo	-0.08* (.032)	-0.216** (.016)	-0.095* (.032)	-0.239** (.016)
Tigreway	0.395** (.044)	0.749** (.018)	0.383** (.044)	0.734** (.018)
Sidema	-0.798** (.1)	-1.332** (.076)	-0.827** (.1)	-1.375** (.077)
Welaita	-0.592** (.101)	-0.248** (.044)	-0.649** (.101)	-0.338** (.044)
Other Ethnic Groups	-0.209** (.042)	-0.107** (.019)	-0.243** (.042)	-0.148** (.019)
Primary Educ*Urban Res in 1991			-0.938** (.074)	-1.577** (.03)
Secondary Educ*Urban Res in 1991			-1.38** (.082)	-1.419** (.032)

Female*Urban Res in 1991

-1.029**
(.061)

-0.666**
(.024)

Log likelihood

-146,010.08

-144,213.84

Likelihood Ratio Chi²(df)

20,448.14(34)

24,040.61(40)

* p<.01 ** p<.0001