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RURAL TO URBAN MIGRATION:

A COLOMBIAN CASE

by

William L. Flinn

All views, interpretations, recommendations and conclusions expressed in this paper are those of the author and not necessarily those of the supporting or cooperating organizations.

I. INTRODUCTION

Latin America has many faces. The 20 republics which together are called Latin--or Ibero--America differ widely in levels of agricultural and economic development, social structure, ethnology, and politics. History, language, and religion speak for the long and intensive contacts with Spain, Portugal, and France (Haiti).¹ In all this variation, there is at least one characteristic these countries have in common, a high incidence of migration and urbanization.

Even the most unobservant viewer of the larger Latin American cities cannot help but notice the evidence pointing to the mass migration of campesinos (peasants) to the city and the resulting inability of the urban areas to absorb migrants into productive industrial jobs. This exchange of rural underemployment for urban underemployment is manifested in the large shantytowns which ring most of the capitals and other South American cities. In Rio de Janeiro, for example, nearly one-third of the city's two million inhabitants lived in such conditions in 1957.² Ten percent of the population of Lima, Perú, most of whom originated in rural areas, lived in poor areas of the city called barriadas in 1956.³ The

population of the city of São Paulo increased 62 percent in the decade 1940 to 1950, and 72.5 percent of the growth came from migration. In the same decade, internal migration increased the population of Mexico City 28 percent.⁴

Because of the spectacular influx of migrants, the Bogotá city planning office has called that city the Ciudad Asilo (City of Asylum) or Ciudad Refugio (City of Refuge). In 1950, the population of Bogotá was 500,000. By 1958 it had risen to 900,000 and is expected to increase to 2,334,000 by 1970.⁵ As a result one study shows that 52 percent of the inhabitants of Bogotá and the special district surrounding Bogotá were born in other parts of Colombia.⁶

The inability of the system to absorb the migrants is apparent to the eye. The invadores (squatters) exercise their squatters' rights not only in the shantytown fringes that encircle Bogotá, but in vacant lots in the most fashionable sections of the city. Whole shantytowns such as Las Colinas, Los Laches, El Quindo, Las Mercedes, and Segundo Puente have sprung up on the outskirts of Bogotá.⁷

The present study attempts to shed some light on the factors involved in the migration of rural peasants to the urban setting of Bogotá, Colombia. The first part of the

investigation briefly describes the receiving area which was studied. The second deals with the reasons why people leave the rural area to go to Bogotá. The third part of the investigation is concerned with the migration processes, flows, and characteristics of the migrants.

II. SOCIAL SETTING

The present research project investigated Barrio El Carmen which is a shantytown on the southwest edge of Bogotá in the state of Cundinamarca. The neighborhood is not a typical shantytown because it has become permanent as a result of expropriation, improvement of land, and the addition of public services. The barrio is a flat, poorly drained area which occasionally floods during the rainy season. The streets are unpaved and often littered with garbage.

Approximately three-fourths of the houses are one or two story red brick with sheet metal roofs. The remainder are one-room shacks which are constructed of flattened tin cans, bamboo poles, mud, cardboard, and other scrap materials. Twenty percent of the houses are used for small business and residence. The remainder are used exclusively as residence. Nearly one-third of the houses have dirt floors.

Until the recent installation of an underground sewage system, all waste from the dwellings drained into open ditches which ran along the street. Today, approximately one-fourth of the houses still lack connections with the electrical, water, and sewage system. Other services such as garbage collection, police protection, street lights, bus service, and fire protection are inadequate or non-existent.

Approximately 46 percent of the families own the dwelling in which they live. Forty-seven percent are inquilinos (tenants) and 7 percent are squatters. Of the families who are tenants, 40 percent rent only one room and share the toilet, kitchen and laundry facilities with other families in the houses.

The city planning office describes the neighborhood as a workers' barrio. The main occupations of the men are brick masons, carpenters, construction workers, mechanics, taxi and bus drivers, along with a few businessmen. Most women do not work outside the house; however, a few work in milk plants, as street vendors, and in other marginal occupations. The place of employment of 95 percent of the workers is outside the barrio. Salaries range from nothing for the unemployed to \$75 a month for some workers with the

modal income being \$25 per month. The unemployed constitute about 5 percent of the population.

The 1964 Colombian pre-census counted 14,130 people in the 90 acre area. The data are comparable with the findings of a study conducted by the Centro Interamericano de Vivienda y Planeamiento which placed the population at 14,140.⁸ The Center also indicated that the average age of the adults was 36 and that pre-adolescent children and single families were over-represented in the population. The preliminary census conducted in the present investigation indicated that approximately 14,000 people and 2,230 families lived in the neighborhood.

For the purpose of the study, a random sample of the housing units was drawn and families within each unit were randomly selected. A total of 120 families were interviewed-- about 6 percent of the total number of the families living in the neighborhood. All non-migrant families were excluded from the sample, which left 106 migrant families. The interviewers were students from the Faculty of Sociology at the National University of Colombia. The interviewee preferably was the family head.

III. MIGRATION MOTIVES

Numerous factors, singly and in combination, influence migration. It is important to know the basis of migration to account for their differential effects on the adaptation of the migrants to the urban society.

Usually, writers have attempted to classify the factors in migration under two headings: those that tend to push and those that pull. This classification is useful, but one should fully understand that seldom is either set of factors working independently of the other. Moreover, difficulty arises when the researcher tries to classify some factors as either one or the other.

The problems with the push-pull polarity is not all of a classificatory nature. In addition, the polarity fails to distinguish between the motives of the emigrants and the objective social factors. For instance, Germani found no necessary correlation between the degree of rural poverty and tendency to migrate.⁹

The following discussion will review a few of the commonly given motives for migration to Bogotá and compare them with the objective factors in Colombia.

Economic Reason and Search for Employment

Agriculture provides approximately half of all the employment in the country. Thousands of rural people have low family incomes although there are a small number of families who possess adequate or high income.¹⁰

The average farm laborer was probably earning 13 or 14 pesos per day in 1963, and there were many farm operators who earned no more than farm laborers.¹¹

As late as 1965, however, in some areas of Antioquia laborers received 4 to 6 pesos per day with meals and 6 to 10 pesos without meals.¹² The rate of exchange for the pesos in January 1965 was 13 pesos to the dollar or in other words the farm worker was earning 31 to 77 cents per day.

Another study in an area of Antioquia indicated that the average for permanent farm workers was 8.40 pesos per day and 7.70 for transitory workers without meals and 4.50 with meals.¹³

In a study of the District of Romeral in Antioquia, the families of nearly ten persons who lived on a parcel of land less than 3.7 acres had an income, on the average, of 2,320 pesos a year or 232 dollars per year when based on an exchange rate of 10 to 1.¹⁴

A typical cash income of Colombian rural families would, however, fall within the range of 3,600 to 9,600 pesos per year in 1963 and is supplemented by a limited variety and quantity of home produced foods.¹⁵ Regardless, these figures are substantially lower than 1962 average income of 12,972 pesos for industrial employees in the Departamento (state) of Cundinamarca or the national average for industrial employees.¹⁶

In the migrant studies completed in Colombia, economic reasons and desire for employment are listed between 32 percent and 72 percent of the time as motives for migration.¹⁷

In the present study economic reasons were the prime motivator in 42 percent of the cases.

Violence

The two major political parties in Colombia today are-- as they have been for a hundred years--the liberals and the conservatives. They formed a unique common front government in 1957 which gives equal representation to both parties. This common front government was designed to end a bloody feud between the parties and provide political stability to the country. Violent incidents, however, still occur in the mountainous regions.

To date the estimates on the number of persons killed in the violencia ranges between 100,000 and 300,000. Most estimates, however, place the number at approximately 200,000.¹⁸ Just how many people moved to the cities or left their homes because of the violence is not known. There are very few documents on this aspect of the violence. Some sources, however, maintained that by 1961 emigrants to Venezuela numbered 150,000 and that approximately 800,000 persons have changed residences inside Colombia because of the violence.¹⁹ Thus, one sees that "La Violencia" in Colombia was a large impelling force. Barrio studies completed in Bogotá indicate that between 1 percent and 12 percent moved because of the violence.²⁰ In the neighborhood studies in the present investigation 13 percent of the people listed the violence as a motivating force for migration.

Education²¹

The structure of rural education in Colombia is a reason which induces people to leave the rural areas and villages to move to the cities. In all of Colombia there are only 1,084 colegios or high schools. Over 24 percent of these schools are located in the urbanized area of Bogotá

and a very high percentage of the rest are located in departamento capitals. If one wishes to obtain a good primary education, he may be forced to migrate to an urban setting. In Colombia there were 52,518 primary teachers in 1962. Approximately 65 percent of these were teaching in urban centers. These urban center teachers were much better prepared for the classroom than the rural teachers. Only 27 percent of the urban primary teachers had less than a secondary school education in comparison with 44 percent of the rural teachers. In addition to the teacher problem, the rural areas have "alternate" school systems -- they are attended by boys on one day and girls on the next day. In 1958, the Colombian government authorized on a temporary basis the creation of alternate schools. These schools offer two years of primary education. As of 1962, 53 percent of all the rural schools were of these alternate types. Thus, the students in these schools received a half-time education, had poor teachers, and received only two years of education instead of the normal five. The percentage of families who go the city for educational reasons alone is small when compared with the number

who go for other reasons.²² This variable usually constitutes between 1 and 9 percent of all reasons listed for migration to Bogotá. In the present community study, approximately 4 percent listed education as the primary reason.

Health Reasons

There is a very great disproportion between the extent of medical care obtainable in the village and that available in Bogotá and other large cities. Most of the hospitals, doctors, and dentists are concentrated in the large urban areas. Statistics indicate that for Bogotá residents 97 per thousand received an inoculation for typhoid or paratyphoid in 1960 compared to only 36 per thousand in the heavy rural departments of Córdoba and Nariño.²³

Recently, steps have been taken to adjust this imbalance.

All young doctors are required to devote a year to practice in rural areas. However, progress in improving facilities and buildings is slow.

Health is seldom listed as the primary innovating reason for migration and is listed only 4 percent of the time in the present study.²⁴

Military Service

Colombia has a compulsory military service, in which all able-bodied men must serve for two years. This service often acts as a compulsive motivating force. A considerable number of rural servicemen gain some experience of urban ways of life and often learn to read and write during their term of compulsory military service. Many stay in urban areas or return after military service.

Studies have shown that the military is listed as the reason for migration between 1 percent and 6 percent of the time.²⁵ In the present study, it constitutes 4 percent of the motivating reasons.

Better Living Conditions

Living conditions are generally better in the city than in the rural areas. According to the 1951 census, 68.0 percent of the rural houses had dirt floors, 92.6 percent had no water in the house, 88.7 percent were without sanitation service for sewage, and 95.8 percent were without lights.

In comparison the urban living conditions were as follows: 25.2 percent of the houses had dirt floors, 33 percent had no sewer connections, 50.6 percent were without bathrooms, and 35.7 percent had no lights.

Various studies of barrios in Bogotá indicated that desire for better living conditions is a motivating force between 12 and 18 percent of the time.²⁶ In the present investigation this factor constitutes 5 percent of the motives listed.

Dependents

Many individuals migrated at an early age with their families. For them, they have no choice--they move with their family. Barrio studies in Bogotá found that this is a reason for migration in 12 to 37 percent of the cases.²⁷ In the present study it accounts for 12 percent of the motives listed by the heads of the households.

Other Reasons

Other reasons given by the respondents were too varied to classify. The reasons ranged from being bored with rural life to wanting to see the city.

Summary

The data indicate that the flight from the countryside has been largely the result of impoverishment of the farmer and/or violence. (See Table 1.) Poverty, not progress, marks the flight of the peasant.

TABLE 1

MOTIVES FOR MIGRATION OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS OF

BARRIO EL CARMEN, 1964

Motives	Number	Percentage
Economic reasons	45	42.45
Violence	17	13.21
Dependents	13	12.27
Other reasons	11	10.38
No response	6	5.66
Better living conditions	5	4.72
Health reasons	4	3.77
Education	4	3.77
Compulsory military service	4	3.77
	<u>106</u>	<u>100.00</u>

IV. MIGRATION STREAMS

An economist once asserted that the best definition he know of an underdeveloped country was one with underdeveloped statistics.²⁸ In emerging Latin America, as in other parts of the world, the fragmentary nature of the data has determined to a large extent the categories in which internal migration may be classified. The available sources which are usually drawn upon have made possible the following divisions: state to state and rural to urban.

State to State

Data for a direct appraisal of internal migration movements in Colombia does not exist. However, one can gauge the magnitude by the direct method of counting people who are now living in other departamentos other than the one in which they were born.

In 1951, 1,617,000 Colombians or 14 percent of the total population were living in a state other than their native one. These data refer to the net internal migration between the states; they overlook the seasonal internal migrations and other cases of return of migrants to their state of origin. The data also overlook movements occurring within

the boundaries of each department. At any rate, it is extremely significant that 14 percent of Colombian people were living in a department other than the one of their birth.

For department to department migration the main areas of destination were departments with large cities: Cali, Valle; Bogotá, Cundinamarca; Barranquilla, Atlántico. National territories have also experienced high in-migration because of agricultural colonization.

The main departments of origin for the migrants were Boyacá, Tolima, Caldas, Huila, Cauca, and Antioquia. These departments contributed 59 percent of the migrants registered in departments other than their place of birth. According to the preliminary results of the 1964 Colombian census, these six departments contained 46 percent of the rural population. Most of these departments are areas of high concentration of minifundio and also the ones with the highest incidence of political violence.

A large area of origin for in-migrants of Barrio El Carmen seems to be the states of Boyacá and Cundinamarca itself. (See Table 2.) Also the table shows that approximately 12 percent of the population are native Bogotanos. Thus, one must not assume that this shantytown contains nothing but migrants.

TABLE 2

STATE OF ORIGIN OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

OF BARRIO EL CARMEN, 1964

State	Frequency	Percentage
Boyacá	46	38.33
City of Bogotá	14	11.67
Cundinamarca	29	24.17
Santander	5	4.16
Tolima	11	9.17
Other states	15	12.50
TOTAL	106	100.00

Rural to Urban

The importance and magnitude of rural to urban migration is difficult to assess. The separation of rural from urban movers depends upon the criterion adopted. Rural to urban migration usually consists of a change of residence from a place defined as rural because of an arbitrarily selected population size to an area defined as urban. The size of

the population used by researchers to draw the boundary has for the most part depended on the available data and the ease of comparability.

The Colombian census defined urban as an aggregate of more than 1,500 people. According to this definition nearly half of the country would be urban. On the other hand, some authorities state that Colombia cities or villages with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants generally have little non-farm economic activity except for the trade and services related to serving local agriculture.²⁹ By this criterion, at least 65 percent of the Colombian population is heavily dependent on agriculturally related employment.

One Colombian study defined the town, village, or the city which was the seat of the municipio (county) as the urban zone and the rest of the municipality as rural regardless of the size.³⁰ On the basis of this definition, the researcher found that 87 percent of the migrants were from urban areas.

In the present barrio study, approximately 59 percent of the household heads migrated from areas with a population of less than 2,000. Thirty-one percent of the in-migrants were born in medium sized towns of 2,000 to 20,000 inhabitants and 10 percent in larger cities.

Thus, the data indicate that migration may not be simply a movement of the peasant from a completely rural environment to the big city. Migrants also include a large number of representatives from the small villages and towns as well as from the countryside.

Intra-City

Little information is available concerning intra-city migration in Colombia.³¹ In the present investigation approximately one-third of the migrants had moved directly to the neighborhood studied. The point of entry for the other migrants was either the transitional zone around the central business district or the shantytown fringe. Both areas were equally important.

For most of the in-migrant families urban living consists of a series of moves. (See Table 3.)

TABLE 3

**NUMBER OF INTRA-CITY MOVES BY THE MIGRANT RESIDENTS
OF BARRIO EL CARMEN, BOGOTA, COLOMBIA, 1964**

Number of Moves	Frequency	Percentage
El Carmen only	31	29.3
One move	32	30.2
Two moves	24	22.7
Three moves	14	13.2
Four moves	3	2.8
Five moves	1	.9
Six moves	1	.9
TOTAL	106	100.0

The migrants consistently listed "cheaper rent" and "closer to place of work," in that order, as reasons for changes in their urban residence.

V. MIGRATION PROCESS

The process of migration to Latin American urban areas is still far from being clearly understood. Census and other data are scarce and provide only a rough, indirect measure of the movement. The few empirical studies are valuable but limited in their generality. In essence, little information on the sequence of moves from the village or rural area to the city is available.

Distance

Beginning with the classic work of Ravenstein three-quarters of a century ago, numerous research studies have demonstrated a close relationship between mobility and distance. Most people move a short distance; few people move a long distance.

Existing data lend cross cultural support to the short distance proposition. The data indicated that 58 percent of the in-migrants to Bogotá were from Cundinamarca, the department of Boyacá, and municipalities near Bogotá; and a much smaller percentage of in-migrants were from departamentos much further away, such as Atlántico and Huila.³² Another study showed that 40 percent of the in-migrants to

Bogotá were born in Cundinamarca, while still another found that 20 percent were born in Boyacá.³³

Six barrios studied in Bogotá by the City Planning Office further emphasized that most moves cover short distances. In the barrios studied migrants from Cundinamarca comprised between 20 and 45 percent of the in-migration.³⁴

In the present study approximately 67 percent of the in-migrants traveled 100 miles or less while only 4 percent were born 200 miles or more from Bogotá. (See Table 4.)

TABLE 4

DISTANCE TRAVELED BY IN-MIGRANTS TO BARRIO

EL CARMEN, BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

<u>Miles</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0-50	31	29.3
51-100	41	38.7
101-150	17	16.0
151-200	12	11.3
201-250	2	1.9
250 or more	3	2.8
TOTAL	106	100.0

Direct and Indirect Migration

Since a large number of the migrants move a short distance, one would expect that most of the in-migration to Bogotá would be of a direct nature and this is what available data suggests. Miguel Urrutia found that 65 percent of the migrants in his study moved directly to Bogotá. Of the 65 percent that migrated directly to Bogotá, Urrutia noted that the

proportion of rural and urban migrants were nearly equal.³⁵ This would indicate that the campesino is not necessarily looking for an intermediate place in his process of migration. One must remember, however, that Urrutia's definition of urban is quite broad. He classified people from the central village or pueblo of a county as urban regardless of the size of the village.

Reyes also used a similar sample of in-migrants to Bogotá. He noted that 70 percent of the migration was direct.³⁶ Other studies of small towns observed that between 46 and 62 percent of the in-migration was of a direct nature.³⁷

In the present investigation, 78 percent of the in-migrants moved directly to Bogotá.

Step or Stage Migration

A prevalent theory is that migration occurs by a series of stages or steps: rural area to village, village to town, town to city. The step-migration theory, whereby people move from small population centers to the next larger one, can be traced to Ravenstein's 19th century study of England. He observed a universal shifting of

displacement of the population which produced migration streams in the direction of the great cities. The gaps thus left are filled by migrants from more remote districts

The present investigation noted that the majority of the migrants moved directly to Bogotá without intermediate stops. These results seem to dispute the step theory.

Several Colombian studies, however, indicated that the migration steps take place but that the steps are not necessarily met by the same generation and, indeed, probably are not.

Small towns around Bogotá have experienced large in-migration. For example, 60 percent of the population of Chía was composed of in-migrants, while the population of Facatativá, Zipaquirá, and Chiquinquirá contained 48, 42, and 30 percent in-migrants respectively.³⁸ The data from these towns indicated that the majority of the in-migrants came from surrounding areas. The growth rates for these municipalities were approximately the same as the national average, indicating that out-migration is also taking place.

Reyes, Durán, and Hanneson stated that 68 percent of the emigrants from the Suárez River Valley, a municipio 36 miles from Bogotá, moved directly to Bogotá. The

researchers also noted that the largest amount of in-migrants to the area were from the surrounding areas.³⁹ A study of the Subachoque River Valley, another area near Bogotá, indicated that 10 percent of the heads of households were not natives of Subachoque but were from areas near Subachoque. The major focal point for the emigrants was Bogotá.⁴⁰

Kin and Friendship Linkage

A number of investigators have noted that the majority of the in-migrants, both rural to rural and rural to urban, have moved as a link in a kin chain.⁴¹ They were preceded and followed by kin and friends in their movements to the city. Often the husband comes to the city without the rest of the family who join him later. These findings are also consistent with a number of North American studies.

Pearce observed that the most important types of assistance given by members of kin groups to the in-migrant families were (1) financial assistance for the trip and transition period, (2) temporary housing, (3) assistance in finding employment.⁴²

In the present investigation 43 percent of the household heads of in-migrant families arrived alone.

Approximately one-fifth of these migrants were married and left their families behind until they had a job and economic security. Another 45 percent arrived with their families while 4 percent came with friends. The remainder arrived as children with their father and/or mother.

Friendship ties seemed to be important in the migration process. Fifty-six percent of the migrants had friends or godparents in Bogotá. Of these godparents and friends, 33 percent provided some form of assistance.

The kinship group proved to have even a stronger linkage. Only 26 percent of the in-migrants did not have a relative living in Bogotá. The most prevalent type of assistance was paying for the transportation of the migrant.

Another important form of assistance was securing employment for the in-migrants.

Few migrated to Bogotá without friends and/or relatives.

Thirty-four percent of the migrants had both friends and relatives in Bogotá while only approximately 8 percent had

neither. Nearly one-third of the in-migrants received some form of aid from either kin or friends.

Material Possessions of the In-Migrants

Most of the people arrived with little or no money or possessions. Half of the in-migrants had no money while 74 percent arrived with less than 500 pesos or 50 U.S. dollars. Eight percent, however, brought more than 2,500 pesos or 250 U.S. dollars.

The overwhelming majority brought no more than tools of their profession such as barber equipment, carpenter tools, etc., and some kitchen utensils. Not one brought animals other than a dog or cat. Less than one-fifth possessed an extra change of clothes.

VI. DIFFERENTIAL MIGRATION

Differential migration is usually defined as the tendency for a segment of a population to be more migratory than other segments. Little knowledge exists on the selective process by which some people leave and others remain in a community.

Aside from sex and age, the evidence of the selectivity of rural-urban migration in the United States is not clear. In 1920, E.A. Ross posed the question: "Is it milk or cream that the cities with their constant suction

abstract from the rural population?"⁴³ The question is still relevant in the United States today and even more so in the emerging nations.

Dorothy Swaine Thomas pointed out the existence in the literature of four conflicting hypotheses of the selectivity of rural-urban migration as follows: (1) cityward migrants are selected from the superior elements of the parent population; (2) cityward migrants are selected from the inferior elements; (3) cityward migrants are selected from the extremes, both the superior and the inferior elements; and (4) cityward migrants represent a random selection of the parent population.⁴⁴ Studies have supported all four of the hypotheses, but obviously the conditions under which these results were obtained varied greatly.

Sex

All of the available evidence points to the selectivity of rural-urban migration on the basis of sex as is true of the United States migration. Urrutia's study of in-migrants to Bogotá showed that a larger percentage of women than men entered Bogotá--57 percent women compared to 43 percent men.⁴⁵

Two studies of rural communities in the central highlands of Colombia showed that the majority of the migrants who went to the cities, in particular to Bogotá, were women, many of whom sought employment as domestic servants. The majority of migrants to rural areas outside of the community of origin were male.⁴⁶ The census in the present investigation shows more in-migrant females than males.

Age

The scant research available in Colombia seem to support the generalization from United States studies that persons in their teens, twenties, and early thirties are much more mobile than younger or older people.

Sixty-three percent of the in-migrants to the Suárez River Valley were between the ages of 15 and 29 years of age.⁴⁷ Another study calculated that 66 percent of the in-migrants ranged between 15 and 49 years of age.⁴⁸

Studies by Orlando Fals Borda and T. Lynn Smith indicated that mainly young adults migrated from the central highland communities which they investigated.⁴⁹

In the present study, 68 percent of heads of the household were between 20 and 40 years of age when they arrived in Bogotá.

Education

The limited Colombian data indicate that migrants have a higher educational level than non-migrants. Information on the educational level of in-migrants to secondary urban centers near Bogotá showed that migrants were more literate than non-migrants.⁵⁰ Reyes, Durán, and Hanneson obtained similar results among in-migrants to the Suárez River Valley.⁵¹ Eighty-seven percent of the migrants were literate in comparison with 64.8 percent for the total population interviewed.

The reverse was found in the present investigation. The in-migrants had less formal education than the population of Bogotá. In relation to the population of Colombia, however, the in-migrant may be above or well above the average, but data on this point are not available. Also, the area of the city in which the investigation was conducted acts as a selective factor. Better educated migrants probably secure higher paying jobs and live in better neighborhoods.

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF THE EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE IN-MIGRANT HOUSEHOLD HEADS OF BARRIO EL CARMEN WITH THE TOTAL POPULATION OF BOGOTA

Educational Level	Immigrants %	Total Population (a) Bogotá %
Without formal education	24.5	16.18
With some primary education	68.9	56.11
With some secondary education	5.7	22
With some university education	0.9	3.00
Without information	0.0	3.00
TOTAL	100.0	100

(a) Miguel Urrutia M. and Luis Castellanos ch., Estudio Económico-Social de la Población de Bogotá (C.A.R., Bogotá, Colombia, 1962), p.33.

Marital Status

One may safely assume that the extent to which migrants come to the cities in complete families (legal unions or consensual unions) probably varies considerably according

to the source of migration. Also a number of studies indicate that the majority of migrants appear to be young unmarried persons.

The data of Converse and Ramos on tugurios suggest that at least 60 percent of the heads of the households in Barrio Las Colinas migrated to Bogotá as single individuals.⁵² Marco Reyes' study of the population of Bogotá also suggests that the majority of the migrants were young single people, both men and women.⁵³ Also, a study of Sopó, an area near Bogotá, indicated that most youth left their community of origin as single individuals.⁵⁴ Studies by Orlando Fals Borda and T. Lynn Smith indicated that it was mainly unmarried adults who migrated from the central highland communities which they investigated.⁵⁵

The problem of assessing the importance of family or single person migration is not an easy one. A barrio study skews the results because most people who live in these areas live in family units. Single migrants may live in a pensión (rooming house) in another area of the city. Too, a high percentage of the single women migrants are domestic servants and reside in the houses of their employers in middle or upper class neighborhoods.

On the other hand, studies in rural areas are also skewed because if a whole family moves from the community no family member is left to report the migration. If only one or two children migrate, this change is more easily detected by an ex post facto study.

The data obtained in El Carmen indicates that about 51 percent of the household heads migrated as single, unmarried adults while approximately 41 percent migrated with their families or brought them later. The other 8 percent of the household heads migrated to Bogotá as children in their family of orientation. (See Table 6.)

TABLE 6

MARITAL STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS OF BARRIO EL CARMEN
UPON ARRIVAL TO BOGOTA

Marital Status (a)	Frequency	Percentage
Married and arrived with family	35	33.02
Married and arrived without family	8	7.55
Single	54	50.94
Child and arrived with family of orientation	9	8.49
	106	100.00

(a) Marriage is defined as both legally recognized and consensual unions.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

The forms which migration assumes are important to

socio-economic changes and development. Social planners

need to know if migration is of an unselective nature or

indeed a selective process with regard to education, age,

sex, etc. To date, data are too scant to draw conclusions

from which to develop sound governmental policies.

More studies need to be conducted in the major areas

of out-migration to determine who is leaving and why.

Social planners need to be able to appraise the effect of

such social reforms as land parcelization on migration

flows. In rural areas where education programs have been

introduced, research should be conducted to determine if

these programs act as a migration catalyst. Such data

could be obtained by a re-study of a community such as

Candelaria, Colombia, which was previously studied by

the Land Tenure Center and where at a later date an edu-

cational program was introduced. Thus, social planners

need to know if the introduction of education, land reform,

and other social changes in rural areas will permit a more

balanced migration flow to the urban areas or speed up the

process and drain the countryside of human resources badly needed in agricultural production. Also social planners need to know how these changes may influence the selectivity of migration.

The characteristics of the migrant populations are also important for urban planners who wish maximum efficiency and minimum cost in the application of funds to development in the urban sectors. Data on the educational level and the occupational skills of the migrants would be helpful in determining whether a dollar would be better spent in industrial development to increase employment or in providing public housing and services to relieve the pressure on the existing overtaxed system. Also, such information would be valuable in determining which industries would be best suited to the skills and capabilities of the migrants.

In short, rural to urban migration creates problems for socio-economic development in both the rural and urban sectors. The alleviation of these problems can be better carried out with knowledge concerning the selectivity, the flow, and the motives for migration.

The present study was only a small step in this direction. The data obtained in Barrio El Carmen indicate that the magnitude of migration will probably increase, as friends and relatives of the migrants become aware of the opportunities in the city, unless social reforms are instituted in the countryside. The overwhelming majority of these slum-dwellers stated that their housing, sanitation facilities, income, medical service, and educational opportunities for the children were better in the barrio than in their previous countryside residence. Few expressed any desire to return to their area of origin.

FOOTNOTES

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