China’s Floating Population: New Evidence from the 2000 Census*

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* This research is supported by a FIRST Award from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (1R29HD3487801A2). We thank Choi Kai-hang, Guotu Zhuang, Chunyan Guo, and Yiu Por Chen for assistance during the project.
1. Background

Unprecedented massive labor migration in the 1990s

- A rapid economic growth at the national level ($\geq 7\%$)
- Increasing inequality at all geographical units
- Laid-off workers and urban unemployment

Questions remains about migration in China:

(1) its basic patterns and trend ($\lor \land$);
(2) its effect on regional inequality ($\uparrow \lor \downarrow$);
(3) its potential in rural development
In this presentation, we will

• Discuss major migration theories and their relevance to China;
• Introduce migration information contained in the 2000 census;
• Focus on the major patterns and trend of temporary migration;
• Summarize findings and discuss their policy implications
## 2. Theories and Predictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theories of labor migration</th>
<th>Neoclassical Model</th>
<th>New economics of labor migration</th>
<th>Social Capital Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assume Markets Information</td>
<td>Complete Perfect</td>
<td>Incomplete in LDCs Asymmetric</td>
<td>High trans. Costs Imperfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Household</td>
<td>Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>Exp. Income $p^w$</td>
<td>Risk avoidance Capital acquisition</td>
<td>Chain migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuation</td>
<td>+ Urban unemp.</td>
<td>+ Relative deprivation</td>
<td>+++ ↓ risks/costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>+++ ↑p ↑w</td>
<td></td>
<td>+++ Share risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality</td>
<td>+ loss of labor</td>
<td>-- Remittances</td>
<td>-- pooling resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return migration</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>++ Business formation</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Migration Questions in the 2000 Chinese Census

Definition of temporary migrants
• Those who have left place of registration $\geq 6$ months
  
  1990: 1 year
  2000: 6 months

  unit of place: county

• Questions on migration from the long-form questionnaire (10%)
  **Household** (* = new)
  • # of members (M/F) moved outside (<6 months)* (>=6 months)
  • # of temporary resident (M/F) left their registration place (<6 months)

**Individuals:**
• Status of household registration
• Province of birth* and arrival time to the current location*
• County of Origin* and rural/urban type of original residence
• Reasons for migration (*construction of housing as a reason)
• Province of residence five year ago
Floating Population by Place of Hukou Registration, China 2000

- **Inter-Provincial**: 29.4%
- **Inter-County**: 25.2%
- **Intra-City**: 21.3%
- **Intra-Town**: 14.4%
- **Intra-County (Rural)**: 9.8%
Map 1. Percentage of Floating Population by Province, 2000, China

Definition of floating population: Those who left their place of registration (township, town and street) for more than six months.

Pie Charts
- Intra-county
- Inter-county
- Inter-province

Percentage
- 5 - 7.4
- 7.5 - 9.9
- 10 - 14.9
- 15 - 19.9
- 20 - 35
Map 2. Percentage of Floating Population by Province, 2000, China

Floating Population = those from other counties or other provinces

Pie Charts
- Inter-county
- Inter-province

Percentage
- < 5
- 5 - 7.4
- 7.5 - 9.9
- 10 - 14.9
- 15 - 30
The Choice of Destination Type of Floating Population by Registration Place, China, 2000

**Total (144 Millions)**
- City: 80%
- Town: 10%
- Rural: 10%

**Rural (intra-county 9.8 %)**
- City: 40%
- Town: 40%
- Rural: 20%

**Town (intra-county 14.4 %)**
- City: 60%
- Town: 20%
- Rural: 20%

**City (intra-county 21.2 %)**
- City: 80%
- Town: 10%
- Rural: 10%

**Inter-County (25.2 %)**
- City: 60%
- Town: 20%
- Rural: 20%

**Other Province (29.4 %)**
- City: 80%
- Town: 10%
- Rural: 10%
Map 3. Proportion of floating population to origin population
Top ten Interprovincial Migrant - Sending Provinces

- Sichuan: 6,937,793
- Anhui: 4,325,831
- Hunan: 4,306,851
- Jiangxi: 3,680,348
- Henan: 3,069,964
- Hubei: 2,805,206
- Guangxi: 2,441,815
- Jiangsu: 1,715,665
- Guizhou: 1,596,468
- Hebei: 1,218,975

Year

Millions


0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90
Map 4. Changing volume and adjusted growth rate of floating population by province, 1990 and 2000, China

Volume
- 1990
- 2000

Growth Rate (%)
- < 100
- 100 - 200
- > 200

Time frame of floating population
1990: > 1 year (inter-county + inter province)
2000: > 6 months (intra-county + inter-county + inter-province)
Map 4. Changing proportion and growth rate of floating population by province, 1990 and 2000, China

Chart (%)
- 1990
- 2000

Growth Rate (%)
- < 100
- 100 - 200
- > 200

Time frame of floating population
1990: > 1 year (inter-county + inter province)
2000: > 6 months (intra-county + inter-county + inter-province)
Reasons of Migration for Migrants 5+ Years Old, China, 1990 and 2000

- Business/factory work
- Job transfer
- Job assignment
- Education and job training
- Marriage
- Dependents of migrants
- To live with relatives and friends
- Retirement (1990 only)
- Demolition of old residence or moving (2000 only)
- Other
Reasons for Migration by Gender, China, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business/factory work</td>
<td>36.69%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job transfer</td>
<td>22.23%</td>
<td>6.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job assignment</td>
<td>6.08%</td>
<td>2.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Job training</td>
<td>12.87%</td>
<td>3.81%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>9.28%</td>
<td>2.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependents of Migrants</td>
<td>17.96%</td>
<td>10.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To live with Relatives and friends</td>
<td>13.04%</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of New Building</td>
<td>11.67%</td>
<td>4.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15.88%</td>
<td>6.42%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.58%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Educational Distribution of Interprovincial Migrants by Rural/Urban Origin, China, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No formal education</th>
<th>Elementary school</th>
<th>Junior high school</th>
<th>Senior high school</th>
<th>Technical high school</th>
<th>Junior college</th>
<th>Four year college</th>
<th>Graduate degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Rural</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Town</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>City</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Occupational Distribution by Migration Type, China, 2000

- Total
  - Cadre/managers
  - Professional/technical
  - staff
  - commerce/service
  - agriculture etc.
  - manufacturing, transp.
  - other

- Intraprovincial Migration
  - Cadre/managers
  - Professional/technical
  - staff
  - commerce/service
  - agriculture etc.
  - manufacturing, transp.
  - other

- Interprovincial Migration
  - Cadre/managers
  - Professional/technical
  - staff
  - commerce/service
  - agriculture etc.
  - manufacturing, transp.
  - other
Main Findings:

- Increasing trend of migration throughout the 1990s
- Increasing concentration in coastal regions
- Migration from the interior to the coastal regions

Implications:

- Urbanization: semi mode, fast rather than slow
- Concentration: it may exacerbate urban problems
- Hukou: reform to redirect population movement
- Inequality: migration as an opportunity for poor families

Future Research:

- Migrants’ settlement
- The impact of labor migration on rural developments
Figure 1. Temporary Migration in China, 2000

Percentages of provincial population:

- **a**: Intra-County immigration
- **b**: Inter-County immigration (same province)
- **c**: In-migration from other provinces
- **d**: Out-migration to other provinces
- **e**: In-migration from the same or other provinces (a+b+c)
- **f**: Out-migration to the same or other provinces (a+b+d)

Inter-provincial:
- 42.4 mil (28%)
- 36.3 mil (25%)

Intra-county:
- 65.6 mil (46%)