

FAMILY POSITION AND FAMILY NETWORKS IN MEXICAN AND SENEGALESE MIGRATION

ABSTRACT

This paper looks at the role of family position and network-derived social capital in Mexican and Senegalese international migration. Specifically, we investigate how expectations for men and women based on their birth order relate to migration decisions net of their family networks, or if family position does not matter too much, e.g., once a younger vs. an older sibling has previously migrated. We analyze two comparable household surveys in very distinct settings and in which family obligations may vary: the Mexican Migration Project (1998-2012) and the Migration between Africa and Europe – Senegal (2008) and apply discrete-time event history analysis. In addition, part of this project will include efforts to estimate network "effects" using sibling-level fixed effects to control for common family background, and see how networks matter in this context.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The familial roles and obligations of individuals vary with family structure (Sulloway 1996) and gender (Bott 1971). Family cultures also differ among countries and people groups (Reher 1998, Sorrentino 1990, Thornton and Fricke 1987). They are also dynamic. While certain characteristics of context-specific traditional family cultures persist, family structures and roles change as the context shifts in terms of urbanization, changing educational opportunity, labor market factors, and migration (Barou 2000, Gabrielli 2010, Seymour 1999, Sorrentino 1990). Although contextual factors have implications for many family dynamics, the way families are organized can also shape the context, particularly in the case of migration. For example, birth order can influence educational opportunities (Black et al 2005), educational outcomes (Booth and Kee 2009) and social behavior (Sulloway 1996, Warren 1966).

Despite the importance of family roles and obligations, studies of the influence of families on migration – surprisingly – often neglect birth order, family position, and sometimes even gender. In doing so, they miss an opportunity to explore the inherent heterogeneity and complexity of decision-making and families (e.g. Coltrane 2000, Hondagneu-Sotelo 1992, Kofman et al 2013). One focus in the literature, largely inspired by the New Economics of Labor Migration, focuses on testing whether migration is best characterized as a family-level strategy to minimize and distribute risks across market (e.g. Massey 1990, Taylor 1984, Sana and Massey 2005). This work generally conceptualizes the family or household as a unitary decision-making body, which can be useful for between family comparisons, but largely neglects intra-family heterogeneity and dynamics. For instance, given family obligations related to particular (gendered) family positions (e.g., being the eldest son), household labor allocation decisions may follow these set of rules.

Another group of studies, motivated by Social Capital Theory and, particularly, the migrant network hypothesis, explores the role of family migrant networks on migration itself (e.g. Creighton and Riosmena 2013, Curran and Rivero-Fuentes 2003, Curran et al 2005, Davis and Winters 2001, Kanaiaupuni 2000, Liu 2013, Stecklov et al 2010, Toma and Vause 2011). This work is relevant because the association between family position and migration could be an artifact of family network structure (e.g., younger sons being more likely to migrate due to networks created by their siblings and other relatives, not because of particular family

obligations). Further, the gender and family position-related structure of these networks is also relevant in itself to better understand how network formation (and the diffusion of migration) takes place.

Existing studies which consider family roles and obligations in understanding migration decision-making do find patterns related to inheritance, gender and birth order. In their study of internal and international Norwegian migration in the early 19th century, Abramitzky and colleagues (2013) find that oldest brothers in landowning families are less likely to migrate than their younger brothers. This is particularly the case in areas where primogeniture (firstborn males inheriting all) is particularly strong. On the other hand, in non-land-owning families, oldest brothers are *more* likely to migrate. Gender is also a key concept. Studying urban, rural and peri-urban migration in rural Mindanao (Philippines, where inheritance laws treat sons and daughters equally), Quisumbing and McNiven (2005) find that the number of older brothers (sisters) increases male (female) likelihood of migration. Studying migration in Malaysia, Smith and Thomas (1998) find that male solo mobility likelihood decreases with the number of younger brothers of either he or his wife. At the same time, female solo mobility increases with the number of her brothers, the number of her husband's older brothers and an absence of his older sisters. However, it is yet unknown how applicable these patterns may be to contemporary international migration, nor how universal they are across different cultures.

To understand how family obligations and roles relate to migration, exploring different contexts of family culture is crucial. In this paper, we analyze comparable migration data from two distinct contexts (Mexico and Senegal) and pay attention to how family influences migration, and how this may vary by gender, birth order. Given that the Mexican Migration Project and the Mexican context provide the basis for a large body of migration research, many scholars are interested in knowing how universal Mexico-US patterns are. Here, we have an opportunity to explore this directly by analyzing it together with the Migration between Africa and Europe household survey in Senegal.

CONTEXTS

Family

The concept of the Senegalese family is generally influenced by a triple (indigenous, Arabic Islam, European Christian) cultural heritage, and the Arabic Islamic influence is particularly strong (Bass and Sow 2004), although much heterogeneity exists among ethnicities and groups (Evers Rosander 2002, Riccio 2001). Extended families and the extent of collective decision-making have traditionally characterized the Senegal family context, in part due to the European Christian heritage's more limited role and ability to "nuclearize" the concept of family (Bass and Sow 2004). Indeed, polygyny is a rather common practice in Senegal and is recognized and protected by Senegalese family law. The traditional family structure is patrilineal and involves the co-residence of several brothers, their wives and children (Gabielli 2010). Generational hierarchies are important and respected in families (Bass and Sow 2004: 92-93) and in villages (Gabielli 2010). Marriage also tends to be a family decision, with many marriages occurring between maternal or paternal cousins (Bass and Sow 2004). Both urbanization (Gabielli 2010) and migration (Barou 2000) have led to a disruption of traditional family structures.

The traditional Mexican family is characterized by patriarchal gender relations, with women subservient to and serving men (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994, Vasquez 2011). Normative family roles and expectations about engagement, marriage, child-raising and gendered roles throughout the lifespan have been found throughout the socio-economic spectrum (McGinn 1966). However, international migration changes and disrupts traditional family patterns: with

changing gendered roles and expectations with migration (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994, Vasquez 2011), through substituting economic for time contributions in elder care (Antman 2012a); increasing father's investments in daughters' education (Antman 2012b), etc.

Household Roles & Gender

For Senegal, we expect birth order and gender-differentiated inheritance patterns and expectations of old age support to play roles. In a study of youth internal migration in Senegal, Herrera and Sahn (2013) find that women with younger sisters (but not brothers) are more likely to migrate and conclude that younger female siblings act as substitutes in terms of household responsibilities, while sibling effects are not significant for men.

In Mexico, household roles are traditionally structured by gender. In her review of the literature related to household roles and gender¹. Older sisters may also be more likely to migrate and send home money for their younger sibling's (brothers) education due to cultural expectations (Lean Lim 1993; Radcliffe 1990; Ware 1981 as referenced by Kanaiupuni 2000: 1315).

Inheritance patterns

Senegal's inheritance patterns strongly favor sons. Senegal has two forms of inheritance, regulated by civil law and Islamic law. Civil law grants equal rights to sons and daughters, while under Sharia law, daughters receive half what sons receive, and widows receive one-eighth of the husband's property (wikigender.org 2014).

In Mexico, inheritance is there patrilineal and mixed (Weisner 1989: 18). About half of Mexico's arable land is held under *ejido* or quasi-common property regulations (Haenn 2004). Due to *Ejido* regulations require bequeathing to only one heir and testamentary freedom, in Mexico, there is a strong male preference in land inheritance (Deere and León 2001: 288). Deere and León (2001) also report, that in the last 40 years, there has been a shift of the *ejido* inheritance patterns from the primogeniture model: more widows have inherited the *ejido* upon their husband's death. In a study of landowners' inheritance plans (Robles et al 2000, as referenced by Deere and León 2001), there was a strong male preference - for the youngest son, then the oldest - and only after were daughters considered with the youngest favored. Albeit technically illegal, partible inheritance (more than one heir) appears to reduce some of the gender inequality: 1/3 of heirs in this context were daughters, while only 20% were in one-heir situations.

DATA AND METHODS

Both the Mexican Migration Project (MMP) and the Migration between Africa and Europe – Senegal (MAFE) project collect representative household surveys in the origin countries: Mexico and Senegal. While MMP includes a changing mix of origin communities, MAFE-Senegal is representative of the greater Dakar region.

Respondents were surveyed using an ethnosurvey questionnaire that elicited information about social, economic and demographic characteristics of the household head, their spouse, the children of the head and other household members. This information includes sex, year of birth, relationship to household head, year of death (if applicable), marital status, highest level

¹ Kanaiupuni (2000: 1317) describes that “by accounts both new and old, the ideal woman is subordinate to men, primarily responsible for domestic duties, and crucial to the integrity of the family unit.”

of education, current occupation and birthplace. Important for our study's purposes, information was collected about *all* children of the head of the household, whether or not they were residents in the household at the time of the survey.

In terms of household migration, both surveys collected key information from each member of the household and all children of the household head: year at first international migration, first destination, year at first return to Mexico or Senegal, and current country of residence.

To estimate the likelihood of an individual migrating internationally, we apply a simple logistic regression model to discrete-time event history analysis. The preliminary analysis includes age, father's highest level of education, family rank (birth order), as well as different family migration indicators: father migrant, younger sibling migrant, older sibling migrant.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS (below)

NEXT STEPS

We will explore the data further for family background, beyond parental education. To do so, we plan to follow the work of Palloni and colleagues (2001) to analyze randomly selected sibling pairs. In this analysis, we will explore the connections among parental migrant networks, sibling migrant networks, birth order, and gender. We also plan on estimating network effects by using sibling-level fixed effects to control for family background.

We will also examine network effects descriptively. One focus will be families where a parent and one or more siblings migrate. Nearly all international migrants from Mexico head to the U.S, while the destinations of Senegalese migrants are much more diverse. In the case of Senegal, where are people migrating? What if fathers migrate within Africa and siblings to Europe?

Logistic estimation of being a migrant in a year: by survey and gender

	MAFE women				MAFE men				MMP women				MMP men			
	(1)	(2)		z	(1)	(2)		z	(1)	(2)		z	(1)	(2)		
B	z	β	B		z	β	B		z	β	z		β	B	z	β
Birth order	-0.107	(-1.45)	-0.116	(-1.03)	-0.143**	(-2.95)	-0.166**	(-2.88)	0.033	(1.74)	-0.0204	(-0.80)	-0.0078	(-0.57)	-0.0530**	(-2.97)
Father migrant			0.863*	(2.25)			0.871***	(3.39)			0.509***	(4.16)			0.369***	(4.66)
Younger sibling migrant			0.205	(0.49)			0.176	(0.53)			0.812***	(6.57)			0.818***	(9.59)
Older sibling migrant			0.150	(0.27)			-0.584	(-1.82)			0.469***	(3.83)			0.395***	(3.82)
Older sibling			-0.0534	(-0.10)			0.132	(0.40)			-0.0537	(-0.41)			-0.0682	(-0.84)
Father education	0.0873***	(3.51)	0.0688***	(3.34)	0.0397*	(2.20)	0.0337*	(2.04)	-0.0549***	(-3.55)	-0.0457**	(-2.99)	-0.109***	(-9.54)	-0.104***	(-9.29)
Age	-0.0158	(-0.85)	-0.0253	(-1.08)	-0.0401***	(-4.42)	-0.0335**	(-3.02)	-0.695***	(-13.47)	-0.0816***	(-13.30)	-0.088***	(-20.19)	-0.0961***	(-19.21)
Constant	-2.735***	(-5.26)	-2.534***	(-3.71)	-1.025***	(-3.63)	-1.322***	(-3.73)	-1.222***	(0.148)	-1.101***	(-6.18)	0.522***	(4.66)	0.643***	(5.19)
Person Year	12741		12297		13622		13246		165785		165785		156702		156702	
AIC			4960.3				8336.0				62169.5				107494.5	
BIC			5019.6				8395.9				62249.7				107574.2	

Source: MAFE-Senegal Household Survey 2008 and MMP (1998-2012).

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