Outmigration: The case of Paombong village families*

Belen T.G. Medina
Professor
Department of Sociology
College of Social Sciences and Philosophy
University of the Philippines

Studies on Filipino migration, both internal and external, fall under two categories: 1) secondary data analysis of migration trends and differentials drawn largely from census data, and 2) analysis of factors in migration and adjustment of migrants based on empirical surveys. Lacking from these studies is a focus on the specific dynamics of migration to and from the villages.

This study explores Filipino migration patterns among selected village families of Paombong, an area of outmigration located in the Central Plains of Luzon.

There are three specific objectives of the study. First is to ascertain migration levels and patterns as well as the geographic spread of outmigrants. Second is to identify who the outmigrants are by type of move, destination and ordinal position in the migration process. Third is to examine the role of kinship networks and other socioeconomic factors in the decision to migrate and in the choice of destination.

Setting of the study

Paombong is an old municipality in the southwestern tip of Bulacan, a province adjacent to the northern part of Manila. It is accessible from Manila by land and also by water since it is bounded on the south by Manila Bay. It is bounded on the east by Malolos, the capital of the

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province, and on the northwest by Hagoncy, another urbanized municipality.

As of 1981, Paombong had a total population of 26,261¹ distributed in 14 villages. The total land area of Paombong used to be 4,350 hectares, but the recent creation of a channel, a government flood control project, eroded the soil and reduced the entire area to 4,270 hectares.

Paombong has many rivers and creeks which serve as primary waterways connecting the more remote villages to the town center and to other surrounding municipalities. As a result, the soil is loamy and sometimes sandy and muddy, which is conducive to the growth of nipa, a kind of palm from which native wine (tuba) is derived and the famous Paombong vinegar is produced. One hundred and fifty hectares of Paombong land consist of these nipaswamplands on which many people are dependent for their livelihood, either as landowners or wagehands in vinegar production, or as distributors and peddlers of vinegar to nearby provinces, including Metropolitan Manila.

Aside from vinegar production and sale, a greater number of Paombong people engage in rice production and fishing that gives the municipality its biggest income, amounting to approximately 1.6 million pesos per annum in revenues from more than 2,000 hectares of inland fishing and some salt beds. Many hectares of nipa swamps have been converted to fishponds by an elite minority of absentee owners who have overseers all year long and hired help during harvest. This indicates the profitability of the fishpond over the vinegar business. Much of the fishing, however, is done by small-time fishers, especially those who live along the rivers. There is also deep-sea fishing among the inhabitants of the island villages off Manila Bay.

Other means of livelihood include masonry, carpentry, and landscaping, largely by contractual arrangements with customers outside Paombong. Those engaged in the transportation business are either owners, operators, or drivers of jeepneys, tricycles and motorboats which are the three usual means of public transportation within and between Paombong and Malolos, the provincial capital.

There are some people who commute daily to factories or offices outside of Paombong and as far as Metropolitan Manila, while those who work in farther provinces and cities come home only on weekends or even less frequently. Some have left the country for an indefinite period to work in Saudi Arabia.

¹Paombong Municipal Records and Statistics, 1981.

Unlike other municipalities in Bulacan Paombong has barely changed since the last World War except for more concrete houses, a new municipal building, a rural bank, a small medical center, and the renovated town church and Catholic school. Paombong has some ricemills and gasoline stations but no public market, bakeshop, drugstore, hotel, movie houses or any recreational establishment so the residents rely heavily on Malolos for marketing and recreation.

Methodology

Data was gathered in the summer of 1982 through structured interviews of twelve household heads from the most accessible to the most remote villages of Paombong as follows:

- 2 respondents from the Poblacion, the town center;
- 2 respondents each from Sto. Niño and San Isidro villages, both located along the highway connecting the provincial capital and another large municipality;
- 2 respondents each from San Jose and Malumot villages, both inland villages with nipa swamplands;
- 2 respondents from Sta. Cruz village, a fishing island thirty minutes away by hired motorboats, which run irregularly.

Structured interviews were conducted to gather information not only on all members of the respondents' household but also on their living parents and siblings. Therefore, data include families of orientation (parents, brothers, and sisters) and procreation (spouse and children) of each respondent. Since ten of the respondents are married and two are single, data gathered concern members of twelve families of orientation and ten families of procreation, or a total of 22 families with 140 living members.

Findings and discussion

Migration Levels

Migration, as defined in this study, is a change of residence involving movement to an area outside of one's birthplace or home village. Thus, if the current address is different from the village where the person was born and reared, that person is considered a migrant. In this paper, I

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used this fairly liberal definition of migration to include movements within Paombong.

Of the 140 living members of the families in this study, migrants comprised 60 percent while 40 percent remained in the villages of Paombong. As shown in Table 1, 52 percent of all migrants moved out of Paombong.

Table 1: Migration Status	
Status	Percent
	(N=140)
Migrants	
Within Paombong (intervillage)	6.43
Out of Paombong	52.14
Into Paombong	1.43
Non-migrants	40.00
Total	100.00

Outmigration from Paombong among the families studied resembles the pattern for Central Luzon. The region has experienced a net migration loss, even before 1960.² Bulacan Province itself, however, reversed its net migration status from out to in migration during the 1960s. Apparently, the industrial build-up that occurred in the vicinity of Manila³ did not seem to have affected Paombong in the same way it did other Bulacan towns.

Migration Patterns

Migrants may be classified as intraregional (those who moved within the region), interregional (those who moved from one region to another), and the international (those who moved out of the country). Regional movements are examined according to the three broad regions

²Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Population of the Philippines*, Country Monograph Series No. 5, Bangkok, 1978, p. 54.

Wilhelm Flieger; Brigida Koppin; and Carmencita Lim. Geographical Patterns of Internal Migration in the Philippines: 1960-1970, UNFPA-NCSO, Population Research Project, Monograph No. 5, NCSO, Manila, 1976, p. 30.

in the Philippines: Luzon in the north, Visayas in the central islands, and Mindanao, the frontier region, in the south.

Of the 84 migrants in the study, 61 percent moved only within the region of Luzon. Fourteen percent of the migrants moved to another region, i.e., Visayas or Mindanao, while 25 percent moved to another country. Thus the majority of the migrants are short-distance migrants.

Intraregional migration

A closer look at the data on intraregional migration shows a strong direction towards Metropolitan Manila. More than half (59 percent) of the 51 intraregional migrants moved to Metro Manila, 21 percent transferred to other towns of Luzon, mostly in the adjacent provinces, and 18 percent moved within Paombong.

As the nation's prime commercial, industrial and cultural center, population movement in the Philippines is generally directed towards Metro Manila.⁵

The relatively high mobility rate especially from Paombong to Manila and environs is due, in part, to the transportation and distance factors as "intervening variables." Paombong is accessible, being only three kilometers from the provincial capital which is connected by a national highway to all large urban centers of the Philippines, particularly Metro Manila. Furthermore, Paombong is 47 kilometers away from Manila, which can be covered in about one hour along a freeway constructed as an alternative route. In addition, public buses and trains run frequently.

The ease of travel to and from Paombong reflects the government policy of developing infrastructure and transportation networks by building more roads, improving existing national and provincial roads, and providing adequate bus and railway services.

There are three (3) broad regions in the Philippines: Luzon in the north, Visayas or the central islands, and Mindanao, the frontier region in the south.

⁸Kim Yun, *Not Internal Migration in the Philippines, 1960-1970,* Technical Paper No. 2, NCSO, 1972, p. 25, also p. 64.

^{*}Everett Lee, "A Theory of Migration," Migration ed. by J.A. Jackson, Cambridge University Press, 1969, Chap. 10, pp. 282-297.

Interregional migration

The 12 interregional migrants moved southwards; eight to Mindanao, and four to the Visayas. Migrants to Mindanao resettled in the provinces of Cotabato, Davao, Surigao and Misamis Oriental.

Cotabato was once considered the rice granary of the Philippines in the south and was favored by the government as a resettlement area for those in high-density provinces. The rest of Mindanao has also been an attraction as a frontier "Land of Promise" since the early 1900s. Lately, however, general unrest and Christian-Moslem hostilities in Cotabato and other parts of Mindanao have pushed many residents out of the area.

International migration

Among the 21 international migrants, 13 went to the United States, five went to Saudi Arabia, while Australia, France and Diego Garcia had each attracted one migrant.

The United States has pulled many Filipinos since the early 1900s, and even more after the 1965 amendments to the United States Immigration Law replaced the restrictive national origins quota system with a system of preferences for various categories of relatives of American citizens and immigrants. This amendment triggered a flood of Filipino migration to the United States.

Under the present United States immigration system, anybody can migrate as long as he or she can be petitioned by a close relative. However, ease of entry (gauged by the time lag between date of filing of petition and actual visa approval) varies according to the degree of relation to the person who petitions for the prospective immigrant. Topmost priority is given to the "immediate relatives" category (spouse, minor children, and parent of a United States citizen) which is not subject to numerical limitation.

Since the 1970s, many Filipinos have taken up overseas employment. Saudi Arabia emerged as a major destination of Filipino overseas contract workers. A confluence of forces—the demand for Filipino labor, Philippine labor policies, and the proliferation of recruitment agencies, among others—contributed to high levels of international labor migration from the Philipines well into the 1980s and 1990s.

Geographic spread of movement

Migration for education or employment has different implications on the range of movement. Tracing the movement of Paombong residents, including those who are past school age and those who are still in school, data show that the range of movement for education purposes is limited within Luzon. Nobody has gone abroad for schooling, nor has anyone gone to school in another region. The data indicates that Paombong residents who wish to pursue further education tend to move to the adjoining provincial capital for high school, and to Manila for college.

The range of movement for schooling reflects the pattern of distribution of educational services. Opportunities for schooling in Paombong are available only at the primary and secondary levels; hence, any vocational or college training was acquired in Metro Manila. In contrast, migration for work⁷ attracts people to various destinations, even over far distances. Table 2 shows that most professionals, administrators, and business executives, as well as clerical workers, have moved out of Paombong to work. On the other hand, the largest proportion of the self-employed (43.8 percent) and blue-collar workers, including fisherfolk (36.4 percent), have stayed in Paombong.

The wide range of movement for work emanating from Paombong implies that the local socioeconomic environment cannot absorb non-primary types or sectors of the labor force.

Migrant characteristics

Several important characteristics were considered, namely: sex, level of education, and occupational characteristics. Age and marital status at the time of migration could not be ascertained due to problems of recall.

 Clerical and related worker - includes bank teller, lay-out artist, draftsman, sales agent, and appraiser.

 self-employed, small business owner - includes garment distributor, grocery owner, canteen operator, poultry and swine-raiser.

d) Blue-collar workers - includes doraestic helper, driver, mechanic, cook, waiter, peddler, supervisor, farmer and fisher.

Work or occupation in this study is categorized arbitrarily into:

a) Professional, administrator, business executive-includes teacher, pharmacist, chemist, architect, engineer, composer, clergyman, comptroller, accountant, nurse, medical technologist and programmer.

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Findings show that 59.5 percent of the migrants are male, 56 percent are college graduates and 20 percent, a relatively high proportion, has had some vocational or college training. Likewise, the majority of migrants are white-collar workers, 46.4 percent being professionals, administrators or business executives, and 21.7 percent being employed in clerical or related work. Not in the labor force are nine retirees, three college students, and three homemakers.

Table 2: Range of Movement for Work

Place of	Professionals, Administrators, Business Execs. Percent	Clerical & Related Workers Percent	Self-Employed, Small Business Owners I	Blue Collar Workers, Fishers, Farmers Percent
Residence	(N=45)	(N=17)	(N=16)	(N=22)
				and the second s
Paombong	17.8		43.8	36.4
Malolos				
(Provincial				
Capital)	13.3	-	-	
Other Nearby				
Towns and				
Provinces in				
Luzon	*	11.8	25.0	13.6
Metro Manila	40.0	70.6	25.0	9.1
Visayas and				
Mindanao	15.6	•	6.2	13.6
Abroad	13.3	17.6	~	27.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Not included are 40 persons who are not in the labor force (students, minor children, retired, and housewives).

In general, migrants' profile suggest that migrants had to have higher education and higher status occupations. Perhaps those who have attained a higher level of education have difficulty finding local employment positions commensurate with their education. Or perhaps the better-educated know more about job opportunities elsewhere and feel better equipped to take advantage of them.⁸

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, los. cit.

According to type of move

Table 3: Sex and Type of Move

An attempt was made to relate migrant characteristics with type of move made. Regardless of geographic boundaries crossed, i.e., across or within regions, at least half of migrants are male, college-trained and in white-collar occupations (Tables 3-5).

	Intraregional Percent <u>(N=51)</u>	Interregional Percent (N=12)	International Percent (N=21)
Male	58.8	75.0	52.4
Female	41.2	25.0	47.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The insubstantial variation by type of move suggests that work opportunities, even if located in different areas, attract a homogenous group of people.

According to destination

When specific destinations are considered, male dominance persists in all destinations, except migration to the United States and other western countries (Table 6).

Other studies of Filipino migration to western countries have reported female dominance especially among the young professionals and initial movers. Even in the case of internal migration in the Philippines, women have been found to be just as migratory, if not more migratory, than men.

⁹Anita Beltran Chen, "Kinship and Chain Migration: Filipinos in Thunder Boy," Paper presented at the Canadian Asian Studies Association (CASA) Annual Conference, May 23-26, 1981.

Josefina Cortes, "Factors Associated with the Outflow of High-Level Manpower to the USA," Proceedings of the Conference on International Migration from the Philippines, June 10-14, 1974.

Peter Smith, "Social Demography of Filipino Migrations Abroad," International Migration Review, Vol. 10, No. 3.

¹⁰Kim Yun, op. cit., pp. 9 and 25.

¹¹Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, op. cit., p. 71.

Table 4: Educational Attainment and Type of Move

	Intraregional Percent (N=51)	Interregional Percent (N=12)	International Percent (N=21)
No			
Schooling	•	**	4.8
Some			
Elementary	13.7	8.3	4.8
Elementary			
Graduate	2.0	**	•
Some			
High School	2.0	180	-
High School			
Graduate	7.8	25.0	4.8
Vocational or Some			
College	01 C	105	10.0
Training	21.6	16.7	19.0
College	w.a. A		
Graduate	52.9	50.0	66.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 5: Occupation and Type of Move

	Intraregional Percent	Interregional Percent	International Percent
	(N=42)	(N=11)	(N=16)
Professional,			
Administrator,			
Business			
Executive	42.9	63. 6	43.7
Clerical &			
Related			
Worker	28.6		18.8
Self-Employed,			-
Small Business			
Owner	21.4	9.1	-
Blue-Collar			
Worker,			
Fisher,			
Farmer	7.1	27.3	37.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Note: Not include	i ana Duasinana 9		

Note: Not included are 9 retirees, 3 students, and 3 housekeepers.

Migrants to Saudi Arabia and Diego Gracia (an island military base off the Indian Ocean) are mostly men due to the demand for male workers in those countries.

This study also reveals that 75 percent of the migrants to the Visayas and Mindanao regions are male. Analysts have also observed similar male dominance in migration toward frontiers and over long distances. 12

With regard to educational attainment, there is a preponderance of college graduates among the migrants while a large proportion (44.5 percent) of those who did not move out of Paombong had only an elementary education. Thus, the majority of those who migrated to Metro Manila (70 percent) and the United States (73.3 percent) are college graduates. Evidently the less-educated tend to move only within Paombong while the highly-trained move to the metropolis or to the United States (Table 7).

As to occupational status, Table 8 shows that a large proportion (42.9 percent) of those who moved only within Paombong are self-employed or engaged in small business. Data suggest that the farther migrants move, the less likely they will be self-employed. Similar patterns were noted in a study of various categories of migrants¹³ in which the more mobile types of migrants were found to have more education and were more likely to be in service industries and private employment, while the least mobile types of migrants were less educated and were self-employed.

Table 8 also shows that 60 percent of those who moved to the United States, Australia or France belong to the higher-level, white-collar group while 67 percent of those who went to Saudi Arabia or Diego Garcia are blue-collar workers. This difference in the educational and occupational status of the migrants to the United States and to Saudi Arabia may be partly explained by the differing needs of the two receiving countries. Until the early 1970s, Filipino professionals have migrated to the United States to fill the demand for highly-qualified labor in that country, in contrast to earlier demands for cheap labor for the plantations of Hawaii and California. In Saudi Arabia, technical and skilled workers mainly for construction work were in demand in the 1970s. Thus, differentials

¹² Smith, loc. cit.

¹³Maria Lourdes Juan & Kim Yun, Migration Differentials by Migration Type in the Philippines - A Study of Migration Typology and Differentials, 1970, UNFPA-NCSO Population Research Project, Monograph No. 8, NCSO, Manila, 1977

Diego Garcia Saudi Arabia/ Saudi Amabia Diego Carcin Percent Percent (N=6) 9-10 16.7 100.0 83.3 16.7 33.3 50.0 99.9 US/Australia/ US/Australia/ Percent France (N=15)Percent France N=15) 60.0 100.0 40.0 6.7 6.7 73.3 13.3 Mindanao Windanao Percent Visayas/ (N=12)Visayas/ Percent (N-18) 25.0 75.0 0.00 50.0 100.0 25.0 16.7 Other Towns/ Metro Manila Metro Manila Percent (N=30) Percent (N=30) 0.09 0.09 0.00 0.00 6.7 16.7 70.0 Provinces of Luzon Provinces of Luzon Other Towns/ Percent (N=12)Percent (N=12)50.0 50.0 0.001 16.7 30 90) 90) 41.7 25.0 Table 7: Education and Destination Sex and Destination Paombong Paombong Percent Within Percent (S=0) Within (6=N) 88.3 100.0 44.5 33.3 100.0 Some vocational, High school Some elem. graduate Total Elementary graduate graduate College Table 6: Some h.s. College Female None Total Male

*Did not total 100 because of rounding.

0.00

100.0

Table 8: Occupation and Destination

16.7	16.7	1	66.6 100.0
90.0	20.0	•	20.0 100.0
63.6	4	9.1	27.3 100.0
23.1	58.8	23.1	100.0
85.	1.14	25.0	25.0 100.0
12	,		100.0
ator,	Related Worker Self-employed/	siness 4	10
	23.1 63.6 60.0	57.1 8.3 23.1 63.6 60.0 41.7 53.8 - 20.0	57.1 8.3 23.1 65.6 60.0 57.1 8.3 23.1 63.6 41.7 53.8 - 20.0 588 42.9 25.0 23.1 9.1 -

related to education and occupation may be partly attributed to different employment opportunities in particular destinations.¹⁴

Initial mover

The study also attempts to identify characteristics and destinations of the initial mover in families with at least two migrants. The study found 16 such families and the following facts were revealed about the initial mover:

- 1) The initial mover is most likely to be an older brother or son.
- 2) Initial movers are long distance migrants crossing regional as well as national boundaries.

Most of the first and second movers have college training and high-level occupations. These findings, particularly on educational attainment and occupation, however, should be taken with caution. Since no attempt was made to inquire into migrant characteristics at the time of migration, present data may not reflect true differences between initial and later movers.¹⁵

Reasons for migration and the role of the family

Of the 84 migrants, 50 percent gave economic reasons and 27.4 percent gave family-related reasons for moving to their current residence (Table 9). All of those who moved within Paombong, however, did so for purely familial reasons, usually to the village of the spouse.

It is interesting to note that aside from the purely economic (50 percent) and education (77 percent) motives, the rest of the migrants moved, partly or purely, for family reasons. This includes such motives as "to join a brother in his work," "spouse is from the place," "to accept the invitation of in-laws to join them," "husband's job is there," "to join a sister and study," and others. This implies that the presence of relatives in the area is an inducement for migrants to seek employment or to go

¹⁴The Proceedings of the Conference on International Migration From the Philippines, op. cit., Contains articles on the outmigration of high-level manpower to the US. See Gupta, M.L. "Outflow of Human Capital High-Level Manpower from the Philippines with Social Reference to the Period 1965-1971, International Labor Review, Geneva, Vol. 107, No. 2.

¹⁵Aside from differentials at the time of raigration, differentials may be brought about in the process of migrating and in the process of assimilation in the new area. See Thomas, Dorothy, "Research Memorandum on Migration Differentials," Social Research Council, New York, 1983.

to school there.¹⁶ This also indicates that the movement of one family member can probably entice relatives to migrate to the same destination.

Table 9: Reasons for Migration	
	Percent
	(N=84)
Economic	50.0
Familial	27.4
Both economic and	
familial	12.0
Educational	7.0
Both educational and	
familial	2.4
All-economic, educational	•'
and familial	1.2
Total	100.0

Analysis of the 22 families in this study reveals that eleven or half of them have two or more migrant members together in the same destination area. This reflects the familistic norm among Filipinos. A brief account of these eleven families is as follows:

- Case 1 The youngest son joined the United States Navy and later petitioned for his mother to join him in the United States. Later he petitioned for his three sisters. All five are now in the United States.
- Case 2 Three sons are in Saudi Arabia. One works as chief cook on a ship and the other two as waiters at the Hyatt.
- Case 3 The eldest brother was assigned as an army officer to Cotabato. Later, he was joined by his younger sister who put up a grocery-eatery business. After he retired from the army, he set up a construction firm to which he invited his two younger brothers to join him. All five are still in Cotabato.

¹⁸Similar observations were noted from the 1973 National Demographic Survey of the Philippines. See Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. op. cit., p.73.

- Case 4 The oldest son migrated to the United States as an immigrant-professional. He later petitioned for his parents. All three are now in the United States.
- Case 5-A brother moved to Metro Manila as a vinegar dealer. He was joined later by his youngest sister who now works as cashier-accountant in Manila.
- Case 6-A brother went to work with a shipping line in Saudi Arabia. Later, the sister joined him and is now working as a medical technologist there.
- Case 7-Two brothers are working in Manila and are taking care of the family property there.
- Case 8-A brother and a sister are both working in Manila and staying with relatives there.
- Case 9 All three children studied in Manila where the family has a house. Now they are working in Manila although their parents reside in Paombong.
- Case 10 The eldest brother stayed in Manila with relatives when he was a working student. After he married and settled down in Manila, his brother and sisters stayed with him as working students. He was responsible for helping them get their jobs. Later, he gave his married brother and unmarried sister the privilege of staying together in his other house in a suburban town.
- Case 11 A sister moved to Metro Manila to study. Two more sisters joined her until she emigrated to the United States. The other two sisters still live and work in Manila.

The proceeding account shows that the decision to migrate and the choice of destination is affected by the presence of relatives in the area. It is usually from the initial mover that prospective migrants in the family learn of job opportunities there. It is also the initial mover who helps ease the pain of adjustment of the new migrant through social, psychological and economic support.¹⁷

¹⁷See Chen, Loc. cit., and Laquian, Aprodicio, Slums and Squatters in Six Philippine Cities, SEADAG, Asian Society, New York, March 1972, cited in Castillo, Gelia T. Beyond Manila: Philippine Rural Problems in Perspective, UP Los Baños, December 1977, Vol. 3, Chapter X, pp. 838-839.

Conclusion

This is an exploratory study limited to 22 families. It is recommended that studies based on a bigger and more representative sample of the population be conducted to further explore the issues of outmigration not covered by this study. It would be helpful, for example, to study the characteristics of migrants at three points in time – before migration, at the time of migration and after migration – to produce more meaningful results. It would also be interesting to determine the characteristics of the population left behind – the values, aspirations and attitudes about leaving their birthplace.

Future research projects could also study the consequences of outmigration for the family and the community. For instance, what are the implications of the migration of contract workers for the "broken family" left behind, specifically husband-wife relations or parent-child authority patterns? How strong are the ties between migrants and the relatives left behind? What is the role of the returning migrant in broadening the outlook of his kinsmen and developing a favorable attitude, towards geographic mobility? Indeed, this study has raised more questions than it has answered.

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