Circumstantial Migration, Social Networks and Feelings of Sadness in Rural Senegal

Yacine Boujila1, Laetitia Douillot1, John Sandberg2, Steven L. Rytina2, Valerie Deuany1, Cheikh Sokhna1, Insa Diouf1

1The George Washington University, 2McGill University, 3L’Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD)

What do we know about the relationship?

• Significant differences between migrants and non-migrants

Model of feelings of sadness in a rural Senegalese population as a function of migration experience and associated, differential network structures among migrants and non-migrants

Hypotheses

• Characteristics of migrant selection (higher education and younger on average) will be negatively associated with feelings of sadness

• Controlling for individual characteristics, migration will have positive relationship with sadness

• Network characteristics (indegree, network size, proportion of network accessible) will explain any association between migration and sadness

Migration and Mental-Well-Being

• Mobility may be a source of vulnerability for poor mental health (majority of research)

• Mobility as source of happiness and subjective well-being

• Lack of literature in the developing world

• Multiple, countervailing mechanisms

• Migrant selection on age and education

• Migrant stressors

• Contextual factors

• Largest identified cause is the loss of social support

• Some evidence suggests opposite effect depending on motivation

Research Objectives

How is temporary/circular migration associated with feelings of sadness, and what is the role of social networks in this relationship?

Table 1. Logistic regression of recently felt sadness or emptiness on individual and network characteristics (n=1215). Average marginal effects with other variables at their means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migrant status</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Non migrant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Migrant Dakar: interviewed in Dakar</td>
<td>-0.098*</td>
<td>-0.036</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dakar Migrant: Interviewed in Niakhar</td>
<td>-0.182***</td>
<td>-0.175***</td>
<td>-0.182***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Education level</td>
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<tr>
<td>No formal education</td>
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<td>Primary</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.021</td>
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<td>Middle school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Size of Network (network size)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proportion of network accessible to ego</td>
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Results

Figure 3. Average indegree

Migrants less often cited by others

• Smaller networks on average

• Smaller proportion of network is immediately available

• Lower centrality in network, more association with other migrants, more isolated

• Network characteristics reinforced by the migrant’s profile

Figure 4. Predicted probability of having recently experienced feelings of sadness by network size (other variables at their means)

Data and Methods

• Niakhar Social Networks and Health Survey (www.nshlp.org)

• Tied to Niakhar Demographic and Health Surveillance System (NDHSS)

• All adults aged 16+ were interviewed (n=1307) in one village

• Temporary migrants were identified and interviewed in Dakar

• 15 Name generators, 4 modalities of association

• Cited alters identified in NDHSS database

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Interpretation and Conclusions

• Migrants less sad, those interviewed in village more so (Models 1, 2 & 3)

• Reunion effect

• Happiness for migrants interviewed in Dakar explained by selection

• Reunion effect explained with network interactions

• Alter network and individual controls, migration associated with sadness

• Higher proportion of network in Dakar associated with sadness for those interviewed in Dakar

• Potential animoic

• Network size positively associated with sadness; effect stronger for migrants with larger networks.

• No effect for received support (indegree) on happiness

• Receiver might not necessarily be conscious of it

• Migration associated with network proximity and support

• Further investigation of motivations for migration needed

• Different network effects to be expected depending on motive

contact: yacine.bouijja@ird.fr