

Abstract

Migration of Young Adults in Rural Northeast : A Case Study of Gender Differentials

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The main objective of this study is to determine factors affecting the migration of young adults from rural Northeast Thailand. It is a quantitative study supplemented by qualitative approach. The quantitative analysis uses a model that has factors measured at several levels. The sample used in the study is young men and young women aged 15-29 who were living in households selected by the Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University, in a study called "Migration in Thailand" in 1992 and who were re-interviewed in a survey called "Northeast migration follow-up survey" in 1994. The result from the study shows the following factors that influenced the migration of young adults between 1992 and 1994:

Sex has an influence on migration, with males having a higher probability of migration than females. When comparing between males and females, it is obvious that in the process of migration decision making, males are selected for migration on the basis of age and education. Females are selected for migration on the basis of marital status and status within the household. At the level of the household, of demographic, economic and social variables, only the presence of elderly in the household acts to stop out-migration of both males and females. When there are females in the household with previous migration experience the probability of a female migrating increases. However, there is no effect on male migration of previous migration experience of other men in the household. For those factors related to occupational risk, it is found that only a high proportion of household agricultural labors in the household increases the probability of male migration. The probability of female migration is affected by all the household risk variables. Migration probabilities increase when the household risk is related to source of income from agriculture other than rice growing, when the proportion of the household labour force in agriculture is low, and when the level of

land per household member used for productive is low. The study finds that factors influencing the migration of males can be explained by human capital theory. For female migration, factors explaining migration are mainly household risk factors. This reflects difference in male and female social roles. Women perform a larger role in the household. Therefore in a risky condition, women have to take charge of household economy. A critical suggestion is to lessen risk of household production. At the same time, women's status should be enhanced so that they are regarded as equal to men. Then women may become less obligated to household condition and may independently consider migration.